

THE SAN FRANCISCO CALL

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IMPROVED AGRICULTURE.

THE Colusa Sun comments upon the criticism, in a San Francisco paper, of a proposition that the Agricultural Department exert itself to find a stock food equal to Indian corn, that will grow where corn does not. This proposition is made the text for a discourse on the departure of the Federal Government from the safe moorings of the constitution. We are unable to find a breach made in the constitution by the Agricultural Department. The Federal Government, under all administrations, has considered it a duty to introduce new plants in order to diversify agriculture and add to its profits.

This work of plant introduction cannot be done by individuals. It involves tours of investigation and discovery all over the world, and a knowledge of botany and physics that is not general. The Agricultural Department was capable of introducing the blastophaga into California to fertilize our Smyrna figs, when the effort of individuals had failed. That work of the department enabled California last year to export 680 tons of dried figs of excellence equal to the imported article. Then the department found certain varieties of the date ripening in California farther north than elsewhere in the world. It started its expert, Mr. Swingle, upon an investigation of the date palm. Then for the first time our general public learned from him that there are dates and dates, the varieties being certainly as numerous as the varieties of peaches. On a far oasis in the Sahara he found the deglet noor, the highest type of date.

Turning his attention to California, by patient investigation he found that the Colorado Desert was even better adapted to this date than its home on the oasis. Revisiting the Sahara he procured the plants, packed them on camels hundreds of miles across the desert and planted them on our desert. Their rapid growth verifies his conclusions, and there is presented now the prospect that this State will become as celebrated for date production as it is in the growth of citrus fruits, and that in a very few years we will dominate the markets in oranges, figs and dates. Surely the States cannot do this work, nor can individuals, and it is the specific work for which the old Patent Office was partly designed and which belongs to the Department of Agriculture.

If the Federal Government discovered these new and valuable plants, proved the adaptation of our soil and climate to their profitable cultivation, and then itself monopolized them, as a producer, to the exclusion of citizens, it is admitted that it would be doing something constitutionally questionable.

The Secretary of Agriculture has been criticized, and indeed denounced, as an unscientific man. But he is a practical farmer and was a professor of practical agriculture in a college when appointed to his present position. His immediate predecessor, Mr. Morton of Nebraska, was not educated in a laboratory, but he also was a practical farmer and made in the department that organization of the sciences contributory to agriculture, which has been so largely and so usefully developed and applied by Mr. Wilson. We are of the opinion that if civil liberty face no greater danger than is incurred by the operations of that department, the days of our enslavement are as remote as the fixed stars.

Poultney Bigelow, sharp of speech, clear of vision and sure of analysis, says that observation is reason for an assurance that we have not a friend, sincerely considered, among the nations of Europe. If nations, as well as men, are to be judged by the company they keep, we are to be congratulated. We may well afford to lose friends whose friendship is a synonym for selfishness and whose well-wishes inevitably spell trouble and entangling alliances.

MEDAL TEST FOR ORANGES.

THE St. Louis Exposition will afford great opportunities for rival industries, rival sections and new inventions to place themselves in evidence before the world and to determine by the wise verdict of disinterested mankind at large whether claims that have been made in their behalf are justified by the facts. Jurors will be appointed to consider the relative merits of applicants for medals. Supposedly the jurors will give fair hearing, will bring skilled and impartial observation to their tasks and will decide in accordance with sound thinking in at least a majority of the instances. At the conclusion of their labors they will award diplomas, ribbons, medals, etc., to be used as lasting evidence by the fortunate winners.

To this test the orange growers of Northern and Central California may submit their citrus fruits and their reputations as growers of such fruitage, confident that the results will be satisfactory. In various parts of California preparations are in progress to have oranges selected and prepared for show, competitively, at St. Louis. Where oranges grow to perfection the climate is mild and agreeable; the soil is fruitful and moisture is available in sufficient quantities to endow the orange with the finest flavor and the most presentable rind, together with the largest percentage of juice.

Sunshine and abundant rain are, in their proper proportions, pleasing to mankind. They are efficacious in making the orange crop certain in climes where citrus fruits thrive at all. Given therefore the highest type of orange and it will be readily conceded that it implies a

delightful place for dwellings. The winner of the gold medal for oranges will need no better advertisement for his neighborhood.

Hence the significance of the medal test for oranges that is impending at St. Louis. For a long term of years Southern California has claimed to have a climate superior to any to be found in Northern or Central California. On the other hand the northern and central sections of the State have called into the court of public opinion the evidence supplied by the official figures of the United States Weather Bureau to prove that the temperatures in their neighborhoods are as equable and that the extremes of heat and cold are not more marked than they are south of Tehachapi Pass. Red Bluff, for instance, has been compared with Redlands climatically. Official statistics covering considerable periods have seemed to fully justify all statements that have been made in favor of northern and central points in general as compared with the southern sections.

The stranger, however, will not pore over statistics when he is in St. Louis. He will instantly appreciate the fact that an orange country is delightful. He will see oranges from Northern, Central and Southern California. He will inquire to some extent regarding the conditions under which they were produced. He will learn about the rainfall of the different places that vaunt oranges as evidence of their natural advantages. He need not be a great expert to realize that oranges are sweet, juicy, fair to look upon, palatable in every respect. He will get literature dealing with orange-growing to a large extent as representative alike of the north and south. Finally if he is interested in California he will watch to see which particular locality is awarded the first gold medal for oranges.

Counties hundreds of miles north of San Francisco and those south of Tehachapi will be rivals for the gold medal distinction. The foothills of the Sierra will advance to the fore with their oranges and show them proudly. The inland valleys of Central California will show what can be done in a list of counties. The Sacramento Valley is confident. W. D. Nichols, who is in charge of the Sacramento Valley fruits, writes to a prominent orange-grower of Placer County in reference to oranges ready to be sent to St. Louis, "I am confident they will carry off a gold medal." The contest will be noteworthy and the prizes worth struggling for.

The bartenders of Oakland threaten to boycott the saloonkeepers if demands already made with insistence are not immediately met by compliance. What a strange and refreshing incident it will be in the scheme of modern municipalities to see a saloon boycotted anywhere by anybody! Oakland is bidding for enduring fame by a single coup.

OUR TREATY RIGHTS.

COMPLAINTS are made in St. Petersburg that English reports and rumors are set going to embroil the United States with the Czar. To this class it is said belongs the statement that the American man-of-war Vicksburg did not rescue floating Russian marines at Chemulpo.

Americans are rather skeptical as to the Russian complaint. The position of our Government is one thing, and the sympathy of our people is quite another. No Russian can deny the exceeding patience of our Government with Russia. When the Czar proposed the secret treaty with China which foreclosed against the commercial rights of the rest of the world in Eastern Asia, and the sinister pact was exposed by our Minister to China, St. Petersburg promptly denied that any such treaty had been mooted and flatly accused our Minister of lying to his Government. Subsequently the Chinese Foreign Office disclosed the terms of the proposed treaty, which were found to be exactly as our Minister had stated them.

The United States could not accept such conduct on the part of Russia as a challenge to war, and short of that there was nothing to be done except show our position by supporting our Minister. Subsequently we publicly negotiated and concluded a commercial treaty with China. It was ratified and ratifications were exchanged between the Chinese Minister in Washington and Secretary Hay, and of this our Minister at Peking was notified by cable.

The French press, spiteful in manifesting sympathy with Russia in order to block the diplomatic game of Germany, immediately denounced this treaty and insultingly characterized the telegraphic notice of its ratification as "resembling the telephone marriages in vogue in the United States." This was unfriendly to our Government and was a gratuitous insult to our people, by a slanderous accusation against them.

Now, along with the Russian complaints that England is in the rumor business, comes the indorsement in the Russian official newspaper of this piece of French impudence, and a rather brazen criticism of our right to make a commercial treaty with China at all! Americans would like to know when and how it became obligatory upon their Government to ask the consent of Russia before making a treaty?

The Czar has no suzerain rights in China. To secure such rights was the object of the secret treaty which the Czar tried to force China to accept under duress. Our commercial treaty was the conclusion of the policy of the open door in China, for which Secretary Hay laid the foundation three years ago in his identical note to the European governments. His remarkable foresight established our commercial rights in China, and they are now secured by the treaty which excites ire in St. Petersburg.

The Washington Government has in no particular been unfriendly to Russia, but has gone to the verge of international patience with that power in overlooking its distinct aggressions and Punic faith. No matter what may be the sympathies of our people, they intend that their Government shall do no more than maintain its rights, without military aggression. One need not seek far for the cause of Russian objection to our Chinese treaty. It unconsciously discloses the Russian purpose to make conquest of China. Treaties run with the territory and are not abrogated by change in its sovereignty. If China be absorbed by Russia our open door treaty will block her policy of closing China to the rest of the world, in order that she may gnaw the Celestial bone in peace.

Reports from the public schools of this city indicate that the greatest enthusiasm has marked the preparation of the display that will be made at St. Louis. This certainly is a matter for the deepest congratulation. Public school education is the best and most thoroughly representative reflector of a community's ideals in civilization.

TALK OF THE TOWN AND TOPICS OF THE TIMES.



A Clever Impostor.

The story of the man Meyers, now "the" mystery in the Detention Hospital, reminds some of the old San Francisco residents of a similar fake, if faking it is that Meyers is doing. It was in 1871 that a young woman created quite a sensation by claiming that she had lost her hearing and power of speech in one night. She alleged that through the shock of an earthquake during the nighttime this sad happening was occasioned. The woman was subjected to the most critical examination by the then leading physicians in the city, including Drs. A. J. Bowie, J. C. Shorb, H. H. Toland, James Murphy and others, but all agreed that it was a mystery beyond their medical ability to solve.

So much interest was manifested in the woman's case that the charitably disposed people showered contributions into her hands, so that she soon became more wealthy than she ever dreamed of being. The case became so notorious that Captain Lees, then chief of detectives, took a hand in the matter, believing that the public were being imposed upon. He was determined to sift the woman's story to the bottom. Lees and two of his detectives planned to interview her one night in her room on Dupont street, and at the same time conducted a ruse by hiding another detective in a clothes closet with instructions to explode a detonating cartridge right behind her at the time that she was engaged in written conversation with her pad and pencil. The object of this was that the sudden noise would cause her to turn her head involuntarily in the direction of the explosion, thus showing that her hearing was not affected. Everything went just as Lees had planned, but the woman never winked an eyebrow when the explosion took place. Lees became convinced of her muteness and left.

The sequel was that the woman had been coached by a clever scoundrel who afterward married her to possess her money. Then he deserted her and she confessed the whole scheme.

Clothes Make the Man.

"A good many years ago the street railroad companies issued an order that fares be collected from policemen when they are not in full uniform," said the old police reporter a few nights ago, "but it didn't take them very long to countermand it. The late Sam Alden, who at that time was detailed for duty in the City Prison, convinced the managers that it was a poor rule that did not work both ways.

"Sam was off duty a few days after the order had been issued, and decided to visit friends residing in the Mission. He boarded one of the old bobtail cars of the Mission street line, and being in civilian's dress was told by the driver to drop his fare in the box. The star would not pass him over the road. Sam contributed his nickel and took a stand on the front platform with the driver. The car had gone but a few blocks when a leaky sand cart pulled in on the track. The carman sounded the bell for the cart to pull out, but no attention was paid to the signal. After ringing the bell for nearly two blocks and realizing that the man ahead of him had no intention of giving him the right of way, the now thoroughly exasperated driver, turning to Alden, exclaimed, 'Mr. Officer, I demand that you arrest that man for obstructing this car.'

"Alden took in the situation at a glance, and with a merry twinkle in his eye drawled, 'You just wait until I go home and get my uniform, and you bet I'll land that fellow in jail in a jiffy.'

Vincit Qui Se Vincit.

A hammock, a chair and a cozy corner. An old young man and a young old maid.

Whispers, lies, in the summer gloaming; Feigned emotion, complaisant shade.

His Heart believed she was fresh and lovely.

And loved her dearly, and all of that; While a boyish faith from some far off corner.

Enshrined and cherished—his Heart did that.

But his Head, old critical, versed in wickedness.

Saw naught but a faded, old coquette; Brilliant, but vain, and ungratifying.

To whom Fidelity meant Forget.

So his Heart kept calling his Head a liar.

While his Head knew all that it saw was true.

Yet the stubborn Heart refused to tire.

Till a whispered sentence made things all new.

For the words dropped the veil from the woman's ego.

Baring a glittering, crimson soul; Grasping the brilliant, shameful, frail.

And glittering image of Self—its goal.

So the boyish faith fed back to its corner;

The wise old Head wore a cheerful smile;

And the Heart, philosopher made, through mourning,

Thought it an episode well worth while.

A Dry Sea.

"I was spending a few days in Strathaven, Scotland," said Robert B. Mantell, the actor, recently. "At the inn where I was stopping lived an old couple who were preparing to visit the United States. Naturally enough, they questioned me at some length about the trip, and the old gentleman was anxious to know if it was very dangerous to cross the ocean. I assured him that it was not at all hazardous, although it was often very rough. His sister listened intently, and then remarked with a sigh of contentment: 'Aweel, aweel, it's been a gay dry summer and I think the sea'll no be very deep.'

Humble Patriotism.

Many times and in many ways the devotion of ants to their commune has been tested. The rule is well-nigh invariable of instant and absolute self-abnegation, and surrender of personal ease and appetite, life and limb, to the public welfare. The posting of sentinels at gateways is customary, and they are apt to know first the approach of danger. With heads and quivering antennae protruded from the opening, these city watchmen not

INSTRUCTIVE STUDIES BY NOTED MEN AND WOMEN



Suppressing Nasal Tones.

BY ANICE TERHUNE

(Song writer, formerly director of music in the College of St. John the Baptist, New York.)

Standing in singing position (as already explained in other lessons), the pupil must sing part of an ascending scale, beginning on the note G and traveling upward, note by note, till he reaches D. He then comes down the scale again, until he once more strikes



SINGING EXERCISE.

G, after which he sings D again, using G once more for the final note.

The accompanying illustration will simplify the exercise greatly, but to insure against any chance mistake by the student I will analyze the exercise. It is to be sung in "four-four time," and as the notes in the first measure are eighth notes there will be, of course, two notes to a count, making eight notes in the first measure. The first, third, fifth and seventh of these should be accented slightly, as in this way the rhythm will be kept perfect and the voice will run smoothly through the whole measure.

Care must be taken that the pupil does not neglect the intervening unaccented notes. They must be treated just as are the unaccented notes in an accented piano scale. In other words, each unaccented note is as important as those that are accented, and must be held the full length of the beat, taking all the time that it is entitled to, and so preserving the necessary smoothness. Great care should be taken about this, as otherwise the tones may become jerky, instead of just the reverse, as the exercise is designed to make them.

So much for the first part of the exercise. When the voice has ascended to D and has come down again to G the pupil must be ready for the jump to D and back.

As soon as he strikes G his mind must be at once to D (while he is still holding G its allotted time) and take the note mentally before he actually sings



MENTAL INVERSION OF SAME EXERCISE.

It. The G and D are half-notes, so are to be held for two beats. The final G is to be sung as a whole note.

In order to give the proper swing to the exercise let the pupil describe a circle with his hand and arm at every beat (not every note), thus making four circles to each measure. He must do this according to the rules given in the former lesson. He must try to "think ahead" from beat to beat, so as to be prepared for each note as it comes. He must also try to think just as high as possible and if he is able to concentrate his mind he will find it a great help to invert the exercise mentally as he sings it. I have found this to be of almost greater advantage than anything else in acquiring good tones and it is not at all difficult, although it may sound so until one has tried it. The idea is merely this—while singing G, A, B, C, D, C, B, A, G, D, C, B, A, G, D, which the pupil will find (if he tries it) of the piano) is exactly the same thing as the exercise itself, only that one goes up while the other goes down and vice versa. The idea will be readily understood. It is only another form of welding notes together, so that one tone shall become as perfect as another and there will be no idea of distance. Here, as in all else pertaining to music, the mind has a wonderful power to smooth the way over difficulties. Strange as it may seem, the very thought of taking a high note is in itself enough to tighten the vocal chords concerned unless some sort of mental preparation is resorted to. The note always seems much more unattainable than it really is, and the thought of the leap frightens us. If, however, the pupil resorts to the aforementioned methods of placing the note in his mind before actually taking it he will at once admit the value of this self-imposed ruse.

In the next exercise, which is to be still longer than the last, the "mental inversion" will help him still more. This exercise is to be sung in four-four time, but in a group of triplets, making twelve notes to the measure. The pupil begins on middle C and sings the exercise in this form: C, B, C—D, C, D—E, D, E—F, E, F—G, F, G—A, G, A—B, A, B—C (held a whole beat). Then, returning, C, D, C—B, C, B—A, B, A—G, A, G—F, G, F—E, F, E—D, E, D—C (held a whole beat).

In this exercise the first note of each group is to be emphasized, thus making the accented notes, C, D, E,

only dispatch with news of threatening peril, but rush out with utter abandon to face the foe. With anti patriotism is not "second nature"; it is instinctive, inborn, seemingly as strong in the callow antling as in the veteran brave.

It must be confessed, however, that it is rigidly exclusive. Racial catholicity is not an emmetorian virtue. Ants are without that elastic hospitality which embraces and assimilates all foreigners. Even the slave-makers hold their domestic auxiliaries strictly distinct.

It may be due to overmastering patriotism that one fails to discover individual benevolence in ants. Friendships and personal affection, in the limited and specialized sense familiar among domestic animals, are as yet unknown. And thus it is with other social insects.—Harper's Magazine.

The Pump Garden.

Any one who has a back yard and a pump may have a novel bit of garden for semi-aquatic plants which will be a pleasure to every one, says Country Life in America. The cost is very small—a half day from the carpenter and a dollar's worth of roots from the florist; the care is nothing. The interesting group of wild flowers which can be raised by the aid of the pump will be quite different from the usual row of dusty geraniums and the straggling nasturtiums essayed by the average woman with a bit of yard.

A small catch basin should be paved with pebbles or broken bits of marble, the stones rammed well down into the turf. This basin helps to spread out and distribute the water. The ordinary daily use of the pump for domestic purposes is quite sufficient to keep a piece of ground ten feet square in a damp condition.

A small garden of this kind may be started with such plants as carnation flowers, purple gentians, blue flags, Japanese umbrella plants, water sunflowers, myosotis or forget-me-nots, violets, marsh marigolds and swamp mallows. These furnish a succession of blooms for many weeks. The roots of all these plants may be obtained from any florist for about 10 cents each.

Marking the Spot.

The Mexican railroad has erected a monument with suitable inscription, marking the point where the globe is crossed by the Tropic of Cancer. The monument is of wood, twelve feet high and twenty-four feet long. On the top there are two arms pointing out to the two zones. It is situated on desert ground a few miles south of Catorce.

Answers to Queries.

ST. LOUIS—G. D. K., Los Gatos, Cal. The average moisture (annual) in St. Louis, Mo., is 41.8 inches. The average temperature is 56 1/2 degrees.

MIRRORS—W. L. K., City. The Call's index does not show that there was published an article on "How to Make Transparent Mirrors."

PENSION—An Admirer of The Call, City. For information relative to a pension and how to make application to the officer in charge of the pension office in this city.

WEBER AND FIELDS—Subscriber, City. Weber and Fields, the actors, when in San Francisco about fifteen years ago, appeared in the Bella Union Theater, the Wigwam and the Orpheum.

HYDROGEN GAS—A Subscriber, City. Gas used for inflating balloons is hydrogen gas, which is 14 1/2 times lighter than air. If a balloon occupying as much space as 1000 pounds of air, but weighs itself, covering, gas and appendages, 600 pounds, it will be impelled upward with a force of 400 pounds. Ordinary coal gas, sometimes used to inflate balloons, is three times lighter than air.

LIFE INSURANCE—A. S., City. Life insurance has been traced back to 1693. In that year in London there was a hint at modern life insurance in an organization, and this was followed by another two years later. The methods of these two passed away without giving to their successors any clear account of their plans of operation. A third society called the "Amicable Society for a Perpetual Assurance Office," was founded in London in 1706. It was mutual; that is, each member, without reference to age, paid a fixed admission fee and a fixed annual payment per share on from one to three shares; at the end of the year a portion of the fund was divided among the heirs of the members who had died during that period, in proportion to the shares held at the time of death. There grew up with this the election of members, then with this the election of members, then with this the election of members, health and other suggestions, which were finally developed by other organizations on scientific principles and the work of development along those lines is still going on.

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