

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

J. P. STELLER, EDITOR.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE—All communications intended for this department should be addressed to Prof. J. P. Steller, Fort Worth, Tex.

THE SCUPPERNON GRAPE.

Some seven or eight years ago we began making a special study of the scuppernon grape with a view to learning, if possible, why it fruited well in some localities and not at all in other localities apparently equally favorable for it. Among the regions in which it did not fruit was Texas west of the pine belt, along the eastern border of the state, at least. In those regions the vines grew magnificently, especially on the sandy lands, appearing to be entirely at home, in every respect, but they bore no fruit. The late Hon. C. C. Langdon, who owned the extensive Langdon nurseries near Mobile, Ala., and who sold an immense quantity of stock in Texas, had a world of trouble over his scuppernon grape vines. They would not bear in this state, and hence it was impossible to convince the people that he had not supplied them with bad stock. This invariable failure of his scuppernon grapes hurt Col. Langdon's nurseries here worse than anything else that took place. Everybody ordered scuppernons and everybody's scuppernons failed, hence every body lost confidence in the Langdon nurseries.

In the course of our investigations we finally discovered the cause of this shortcoming on the part of the scuppernon grape. We found that the *Vitis vulpina* family of the grape (the muscadine) is strictly dioecious; which, in plain English, means that the male flowers and female flowers are each borne on separate plants. No plant bears either perfect flowers carrying both male and female organs, or separate flowers of different sex. As a consequence, two vines are absolutely necessary to the production of fruit—a female vine and a male vine. The female vine can develop no fruit unless fertilized from the flowers of the male vine, and the male vine bears no fruit at all, of course.

The scuppernon is simply a freak of the wild muscadine. It bears fruit under favorable conditions, hence it is a female vine. Its flowers are fertilized, not from a scuppernon vine (for there are no male scuppernons), but from male plants among the wild muscadines. As a result, when the scuppernon is planted in regions where the wild muscadine does not grow there can be no fertilization of its flowers, and therefore no fruit. The wild muscadine does not grow in Texas, west of the long-leaf pine belt, a fact in which we find an easy explanation of why the scuppernon is a failure west of that belt.

When we had made this discovery we published it broadcast. We assured the people of Texas that if they would plant a few male muscadines in their scuppernon vineyards those vineyards would become as fruitful as were the scuppernon vineyards east of the Mississippi river, but somehow or other the suggestion didn't seem to take with them. No botanist had yet mentioned this dioecious character of the *Vitis vulpina*, therefore nurserymen winked at each other and expressed their doubts, and the people thought the nurserymen knew all about it, and there the matter rested.

From time to time we have been hacking away at that thing since its first discovery up to this present writing, and now it affords us no small degree of pleasure to announce that at last we are victorious, and to advance the not at all unreasonable theory that as a consequence Texas will speedily become the greatest scuppernon grape state in the Union.

Undoubtedly the best American authority on grapes is Professor T. V. Munson of Texas. His eminence in this direction is so fully realized that for years the United States government has had him making a special study of the vine in all parts of the country, with a view to bringing out an exhaustive work on the subject, for national circulation at the hands of the nation. That work is now going forth the press, and will soon be put forth as our standard on grapes.

Professor Munson is furthermore a nurseryman. His latest catalogue of nursery stock has just been received by us. Judge, then, of how well it made us feel, under all the circumstances, when we read from that catalogue, in the department devoted to grapes, as follows:

Flowers medium, black, good wine, 15 cents; Thomas, very large, black, good wine, 15 cents; scuppernon, large, brownish yellow, good wine, 15 cents; male muscadine, if planted near the above, renders them very fruitful anywhere in the South. Without such pollinators near by, they are unfruitful; 25 cents each.

It may be well enough for us to explain here that the *Vitis vulpina* and the *Vitis rotundifolia* are simply freaks of the wild muscadine, the same as is the scuppernon grape. They are merely better muscadines than the ordinary wild kinds common in the woods where the *Vitis vulpina* grows. Some one's attention was attracted by their unusual appearance and superior quality, and this led to their appearance in cultivation. Being female muscadine vines they require the same conditions to make them fruitful as does the scuppernon, hence they, like the scuppernon, are a failure in Texas where the wild muscadine does not grow, unless male muscadines are planted near to fertilize their flowers.

This position taken by Professor Munson will doubtless start these grapes on a boom, and particularly the scuppernon, which is more marked in its variation than is either of the others, and all things considered, decidedly the best grape of the three, we think.

There is no risk in planting the scuppernon (or the other two kinds, for that matter), at almost any point in Texas, especially on our sandy lands. And the scuppernon is certainly a very fine grape. It has no insect enemies whatever that are worthy of mention, and is entirely exempt from all known diseases of the grape. No other grape demands so little attention—in the states east of the Mississippi river they call it "the lazy man's grape." Its yield is enormous under favorable conditions—on several occasions we have known so much as three barrels of good wine to have been made from a single scuppernon vine in a single season.

THE PEANUT IN TEXAS.

Several articles on peanut culture for Texas have appeared in these columns. We had never heard of any particular effort

at peanut culture made within the state, but our familiarity with the crop in other states led us to feel that Texas possessed every natural requirement for the crop, and that, therefore, it might be made a grand success here. Those articles led to the making of several tests this season, some of them on a pretty large scale. From each of these, so far as we have yet heard, the report is entirely favorable—the crops have panned out better, even, than we had predicted that they would.

Among the peanut testers of this section of the state was Mr. J. M. Robbins of Fort Worth. He planted a small patch on sandy lands two miles northeast of the city. His crop is now harvested, and the yield has proved so enormous as to astonish all who see what he has gathered. With many bunches, grown from a single seed, he has brought up half a gallon as fine nuts as ever went upon the market. Numerous nuts measured by us have averaged two and one-fourth inches in length, and contains three perfect kernels.

Any person desirous of seeing what the peanut may be made to do in Texas can accommodate himself by calling at Mr. Robbins' painting, papering and glazing establishment on East First Street between Jones and Calhoun. The vines are there on exhibition with the nuts and leaves still hanging on them just as they grew.

The lands upon which this test was made were the ordinary sandy lands of Texas with sandy-loam subsoil. No fertilizers were used, and no special attention was given the crop in its culture. Mr. Robbins says no other growth in that region appeared to stand drought so well—after all weeds and grass had been parched and finished up by the dry weather the peanut vines appeared as green and flourishing as in early spring, and so remained until harvested.

This fairly settles the question of peanut culture for Texas. As stated by us in a former article, Texas ought to be leading the world in peanut production. The quality of her product must rank in the very highest grade, as to excellence, and the heavy yield within her capabilities must make the crop one of the most profitable crops that could be grown.

It has been intimated by some of our peanut roasters that Texas nuts do not roast so well as nuts from other regions. This is all nonsense, undoubtedly. If anyone has found Texas peanuts not roasting as well as nuts from other states, it has sprung from the fact that they were not thoroughly dried. Green or undried nuts will never roast well. A thoroughly dried peanut roasts the same, no matter where it was grown.

TEXAS AHEAD, AS USUAL.

The United States department of agriculture report on the condition of crops, average yields, etc., is before us for October, 1891. A glance at the tables relating to average yields shows Texas far ahead of all the other Southern states proper, as usual. The averages per acre in bushels are given on the crops then harvested as follows:

Wheat—Texas, 12.0; North Carolina, 6.5; South Carolina, 5.5; Georgia, 7.5; Alabama, 8.0; Mississippi, 7.8; Arkansas, 8.6; Tennessee, 9.7.

Rye—Texas, 11.2; North Carolina, 7.0; South Carolina, 6.0; Georgia, 7.6; Alabama, 7.5; Mississippi, 7.0; Arkansas, 9.3; Tennessee, 8.7.

Oats—Texas, 25.5; North Carolina, 9.5; South Carolina, 10.6; Georgia, 11.7; Florida, 11.4; Alabama, 12.8; Mississippi, 11.5; Louisiana, 11.3; Arkansas, 16.5; Tennessee, 14.4.

Barley—Texas, 15.2; Tennessee, 12.7.

Of the ten Southern states on the list, Florida and Louisiana raised neither wheat nor rye, and Texas and Tennessee are the only states that seem to have raised barley. Aside from her much greater yields there is another thing to take into consideration, which shows vastly to the advantage of Texas as an agricultural state. The Texans use no fertilizers in the production of their crops, while the farmers of all the other states, with the exception, possibly, of Louisiana and Arkansas, were forced to fertilize heavily.

With these plain facts from an official and impartial source staring us squarely in the face, one can scarcely help feeling himself at a loss to make out why it is that every farmer in the other states, who desires to do the best that can be done at his calling, does not make an effort to transfer himself to Texas.

MUST PRODUCE SOMETHING.

The Bald Star seems to be in full accord with us in our position to the effect that a region of country must produce something or it can become entirely prosperous. It cannot get along all right if it depends solely upon the products of other regions—it must of itself add something to the world's goods as an original product of its own, and the more it adds in this way the greater its prosperity. And the Star goes on further to an advancing of the idea that the same rule holds good with relation to individuals. Some farmers, says the writer, are so busy saving the country and telling what ought to be done to make the people prosperous that they have no time to attend to the weeds and crab grass in the cotton patch, so they don't make the cotton patch produce much, save hard times for themselves. "If money was floating down every stream in the land and sub-treasures existed by the score, a man must produce something, or he could not get a dollar." His talk on saving the country might do something towards boosting a few leaders into fat positions, but so far as he himself was individually concerned it would never pay for the salt in his corn-dodger.

Of course the farmer has just as much right to talk about saving the country as has the man of any other calling, and doubtless he makes as much at it as do the chinch-muscians in other parts—it don't pay any of them. The bell-wether of the flock got it all, and once secured they very soon forgot all about how they got it.

OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

This department is devoted to answering such questions as may be asked by our subscribers, which may be of general information. Inquiries of personal character, that require answers by mail should have stamps and postage paid. Please give full name and postoffice

address in addition to any such signature as "Subscriber," "G. D.," "D. D.," etc., for the purpose of answering them. If the writer, out to some of direct communication should such a thing be deemed necessary. Address as directed at head of this page.

WHAT BIRD WAS IT?

As you give through *THE GAZETTE* many good answers to inquiries about agriculture in general, and bugs, plants, etc., in particular, I have concluded to try you with a bird of a kind entirely new to me. I shot it from a lot of two or three flying over today. Its greatest measurement from tip to tip of wings is two feet eleven inches. From point of bill to end of tail it measures fifteen inches. Bill is something like that of a pigeon, but larger; color of the bill black to the point end, where it is red.

The entire color of the bird is hard for me to describe, owing to the fact that I do not well understand naming different shades of color. The top of the head is covered with a mixture of black, bluish and white feathers, giving it a somewhat dark appearance. The eyes are very bright and black. Below the head comes a wide white band around the neck, extending well down towards the body. Next to this comes a coat of bluish or dove-colored feathers, which extends along the back and wings to the point of tail. The long feathers of the tail are bluish-white. The ends of the wings are black, with a little white, and extend beyond the tail.

Underneath the bird beginning at the bill, the color is white with a definite pink shade. Taking the bird as a whole, I would call it very beautiful. In general appearance it resembles a pigeon more than anything I can think of, with the exception of its legs and feet. Its legs are much too long for those of a pigeon and its feet are webbed. The general color of the bird may be classed as white, varied by the black, blue and dove colors already mentioned. Please name it and oblige, D. S. TROTTER, Elmore, Hall county, Tex., October 1.

You have evidently shot a seashore bird generally known by the common name of tern. There are a large number of species in the same family, all more or less alike, but your description leads us to suppose that the species taken by you is scientifically called *Sterna caudata*. There is but one slight hitch in your complete description of this species, and that lies in the color of the point of the bill; it ought to be orange color instead of red. But considerable variations in color do sometimes occur so far as relates to the bills of birds, and therefore we must conclude that your specimen is the *Sterna caudata* of ornithologists.

The terns are "birds of passage." In the spring of the year they go north to rear their young along the upper coasts, but when the weather gets cold up there they return to pass the winter on the shores of the Southern seas. They are by no means uncommon along our Gulf shores in the winter season, though one does not often meet with them far inland. On account of having long and pointed wings the sea-coast people usually consider them a kind of gull, though they are something entirely distinct from the gull. They feed about as the gulls feed, depending mainly upon the sea for their sustenance.

SORGHUM AS STOCK FEED.

Please state through *THE GAZETTE* whether or not there is any difference in feeding value between sorghum handled in every respect as is ordinary hay, and sorghum cut and put up in shocks after the manner of cutting and shocking corn in the North-west, supposing each lot to be equally protected from rain. I have fancied that the breaking of the stalk in handling as ordinary hay would have a tendency to make the stalk sour. Often I have observed that joints broken by handling on the hay plan were very sour, while the adjoining joints on the same stalk were sweet at the time of feeding. GEORGE L. PATILLO, Gordon, Tex.

If sorghum is grown in the ordinary way, as for making syrup, the best plan for saving it as a stock feed would be to cut and shock it—convert it into "stover," as they would say up North. Such has been the decision rendered by several of our best expert stations. If sown thickly and harvested before its arrival at full maturity, then the hay plan of handling and curing would be the best. You are entirely correct in your surmises with reference to a souring of the stalk being brought on by rough handling—every stalk bruised by rough handling, at maturity, would become more or less acid, and hence would be lowered in point of value as a stock feed.

IRRIGATION BOOK WANTED.

Will you please let me know where I can obtain a book on general truck farming by irrigation? Would like to have it give full information with reference to opinion culture. I have a four-inch flow of water on the Paluxy, near Glen Rose, with good land. Am desirous of putting the land to something better than cotton. Any information in the direction mentioned would be thankfully received by a regular subscriber to *THE GAZETTE*. J. T. FOSTER, Stephenville, Tex.

Several letters similar in character to the above from Dr. Foster have been received by us of late. Making this a sweeping reply to all, we would state that so far as we are aware no book on irrigation agriculture has yet been published, though one is much needed, evidently. It may be that there is such a work—if so, our subscribers could possibly get themselves put upon the track of it by addressing Col. Richard J. Hinton, chief U. S. irrigation inquiry, care department of agriculture, Washington, D. C.

PLANNING TO RAISE BARLEY.

Please refer me to some firm handling barley, in order that I may draw upon them for information with reference to prices paid, the best variety for the market, and whether or not barley sown in December and January is suitable for brewing purposes. It is very dry in this section and there is little plowing done as yet. I would like to sow some other paying crop in addition to wheat. Have been thinking of trying barley, rye and flax. Is there any market for rye in Fort Worth? Where would be found the best market for flax, and what does flax usually sell at? I fully believe that flax would do well in these parts. Wichita Falls, Tex.

We would refer you to the Texas brewing company, Fort Worth, Tex. This firm handles an immense quantity of barley, and is interested in having as much of it produced near home as possible. The concern would doubtless favor you with all the barley information that you might ask for.

Barley and rye would do better in Texas than in any other Southern state—see our first article appearing on this page. We think there is always a fair market for good rye in Fort Worth. As to flax culture in Texas, we think it highly probable that flax might be grown very well, though we are not sure that it would be an overly profitable crop—it is not considered a crop of much profit, now-a-days, in any of the states of this country, therefore American flax culture is rapidly on the decline. We have no information relative to a market for flax.

THE OLD SPANISH PEACHES.

I must say that I have been greatly benefited by your articles on peach culture for Texas, and am especially interested in what you have said concerning the old Spanish strain of seedlings. Everything advanced by you under that head appears entirely reason-

able. And now, can you inform me how or where I can procure seeds or pits of those old-time peaches? I have found none of them about here. It is now too late to hunt them up by the fruit, but I would like extremely well to get some of the seeds, in order that I might plant an orchard of them this fall or winter. Can you give me the name of some person living where you know that they grew last summer? Possibly the county clerk or some old settler of a county in which they grew could put me in the way of getting the seeds by having them sent to me.

Please allow me to express my appreciation of the agricultural department of the Fort Worth Gazette, and to say that I enjoy reading it very much. M. S. GORDON, Finis, Tex.

The old Spanish strain of peaches may be met with in almost any of the older settled portions of Texas, particularly in the regions well back from the frontiers. The people would not be apt to call them Spanish peaches, as a rule, but would refer to them merely as "seedlings." Any good peach found in those back regions, that had not sprung from a nursery, would be very apt to be safe enough to risk. There is no one to whom we could refer just now, but it may be that our articles mentioned by our correspondent have induced many persons to save seeds of good varieties of seedlings on their places. It so, they could confer a favor on him and us by informing Mr. Gordon of the fact, provided they could spare him some seeds.

PROTECTING CALADIUMS.

After reading your article appearing in *THE GAZETTE* last spring about the Caladium esculentum as a desirable foliage plant for Texas, I sent to a nurseryman and procured three bulbs. They have given entire satisfaction, but of course frost will soon put an end to their attractiveness for the present. I write to ask how I must treat the bulbs through winter. Will they live in the ground and come up of themselves next spring, or is it necessary to take them up and give them protection? Fort Worth, Tex. A LADY.

They would have lived out and unprotected through last winter, but our winters are not always so mild as that winter was. It would be safest to give them protection.

THE LANTANA IN DALLAS.

While in Dallas last week I visited the city park and saw some kind of flowering shrub in great abundance which I took, from your previous descriptions, to be the lantana. It was five or six feet high, and was certainly the most magnificent thing I ever saw. I was very much interested in it, and do not wonder that you should have recom-

MACHINE TESTIMONIALS.

MR. EDITOR: Your High-Arm Singer machine has given perfect satisfaction. It is all you said it was. W. H. BROOKSHIRE, TALLMAGE, TEX., Sept. 19, 1891.

Editor Gazette, Fort Worth, Tex.: We received the sewing machine on the 15th of September. Are well pleased. It is as good a machine as agents sell for \$55, and a nicer finished machine. Success to *THE GAZETTE*. I. D. HARTMAN, VERNON, TEX., March 21, 1891.

SO MUCH MORE THAN EXPECTED. The Democrat Pub. Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: GENTLEMEN—The machine I came all O. K. It is a good one, so much better than I was looking for at so small a price. It is just as good as my \$45 one, and looks better to-day, and does just as good work as any machine. Thanks for the bargain in it. Good luck to *THE GAZETTE*. Respectfully yours, R. P. SANDERS, BOX 65, VERNON, TEX., March 23, 1891.

ALL THAT IS CLAIMED FOR IT. Democrat Publishing Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: GENTLEMEN—The No. 4 High-Arm premium sewing machine was received in good order, and my wife finds it to be all you claim for it, and is quite satisfied that it is equal to any other machine of twice the price you ask for this one. The case, too, is exceedingly handsome and very well finished. I am yours truly, E. L. MOURANT, MOODY, TEX., March 23, 1891.

AS GOOD AS HIGH-PRICED MACHINES. Democrat Pub. Co., Fort Worth: GENTS—The machine I ordered from you arrived safe, and, after a thorough test, my wife says she likes it fully as well as any of the high-priced machines on the market now. Respectfully, E. LAPP, TULLIA, TEX., April 6, 1891.

BEYOND HIS EXPECTATIONS. To the Gazette: GENTLEMEN—I received *THE GAZETTE* machine in good order. It is beyond expectations in finish, and is simple in construction and convenience. I have shown it to several, and they say it can't be beat. J. P. SCOTT, HOWE, TEX., May 12, 1891.

\$20 TO \$25 CAN BE SAVED. Democrat Publishing Company, Fort Worth, Tex.: DEAR SIR—In answer to yours of recent date in regard to sewing machine, bought by you, can recommend the machine. As to work, it does equal to any high-priced and is neatly finished, runs light, and we can recommend the machine to all those in need of a good machine. You can save \$20 to \$25 by one of these machines, and you will be well pleased with your bargain. Yours truly, A. G. MARVEL, FLATONIA, TEX., May 13, 1891.

AS NEAR PERFECTION AS POSSIBLE. The Gazette, Fort Worth, Tex.: The machine received in good order and is pronounced a jewel by myself and neighbors. It is as near perfection as it is possible for anything to be. In fact only one unit could be found, and that is the thread post is too short. Yours respectfully, MRS. A. HANOVER, ROANOKE, TEX., May 21, 1891.

WELL PLEASED WITH IT. The Democrat Pub. Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: SIR—I received the High-Arm premium sewing machine in due time and am well pleased with it. It does excellent work, and is a novelty of cheapness. Yours respectfully, MRS. M. E. REYNOLDS, TULLIA, TEX., May 5, 1891.

FIRST CLASS IN ALL RESPECTS. To the Fort Worth Gazette: GENTLEMEN—The High-Arm sewing machine is all you claim for it. It is first class in every respect. It is as good as one my son paid \$37 for on the same day I received it. No one can be dissatisfied with it at the price paid for it. Truly yours, J. A. SCOTT, TULLIA, TEX., May 11, 1891.

DELIGHTED WITH IT. Democrat Pub. Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: GENTS—I have one of your High-Arm premium sewing machines. My wife is delighted with it. It is neat, well finished, light running, and gives entire satisfaction. I like it better than anything I have had offered at from \$35 to \$45. Respectfully, F. FAULKNER, DEKALB, TEX., May 10, 1891.

AS GOOD AS ANY \$50 MACHINE. Fort Worth Gazette: I received your High-Arm premium sewing machine. We have tried it thoroughly, and find it first class. It is as good a machine as the people have been paying \$50 for. There is no humbug about it. Respectfully, J. D. O. REAR, JOSHUA, JOHNSON CO., TEX., May 10, 1891.

SATISFIED AFTER THOROUGH TEST. Democrat Pub. Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: GENTLEMEN—I received the High-Arm premium sewing machine in good order. My wife has given it a thorough test; she finds it to be everything represented, and is well pleased with it. I will say to all that want a good machine, subscribe for the Weekly *GAZETTE* and get a premium machine. The paper is just splendid. Yours respectfully, W. P. FLACK, TOLOSA, KAUFMAN COUNTY, TEX., April 20, 1891.

WELL PLEASED WITH IT. To the Gazette: SIR—My machine arrived in due time and is all or more than you recom-mended. My wife is well pleased with the work that it does. Your respectfully, G. M. PITTMAN, BOX 65, VERNON, TEX., March 23, 1891.

ALL THAT IS CLAIMED FOR IT. Democrat Publishing Co., Fort Worth, Tex.: GENTLEMEN—The No. 4 High-Arm premium sewing machine was received in good order, and my wife finds it to be all you claim for it, and is quite satisfied that it is equal to any other machine of twice the price you ask for this one. The case, too, is exceedingly handsome and very well finished. I am yours truly, E. L. MOURANT, BOX 65, VERNON, TEX., March 23, 1891.

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mended it so warmly for culture in our yards at Fort Worth. No one in the park seemed to know what it was. Have you ever visited the Dallas park, and if so is the hedge of flowering shrubs to be seen soon after entering the grounds from the west the lantana? Mrs. — Fort Worth, Texas.

Yes, we have been there. The shrubs to which you refer are the lantana, and very fine plants they are. Of course we might have them equally as fine in Fort Worth. It is possible those Dallas plants may be two or three years old from their setting. The older the roots the larger the plants with each succeeding year for a number of years.

WINTERING SWEET POTATOES. Please give through *THE GAZETTE* an article on the best methods of keeping sweet potatoes through winter in this climate. At Ocean Springs, Miss., where I spent one winter, nobody seemed to think of housing sweet potatoes, nor even of putting them under shelter, and yet they kept right along without any trouble whatever until they were all used. Near every negro cabin in that region had two or three conical-shaped sweet potato hills in its yard—they called them "tater banks." I don't know exactly how these banks were fixed, but I do know that the potatoes kept well, a thing we cannot always make them do here. TARRANT COUNTY, TEX.

We will endeavor to give you the article next week. Sweet potatoes ought to keep as well here as in Mississippi.

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PRICE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL

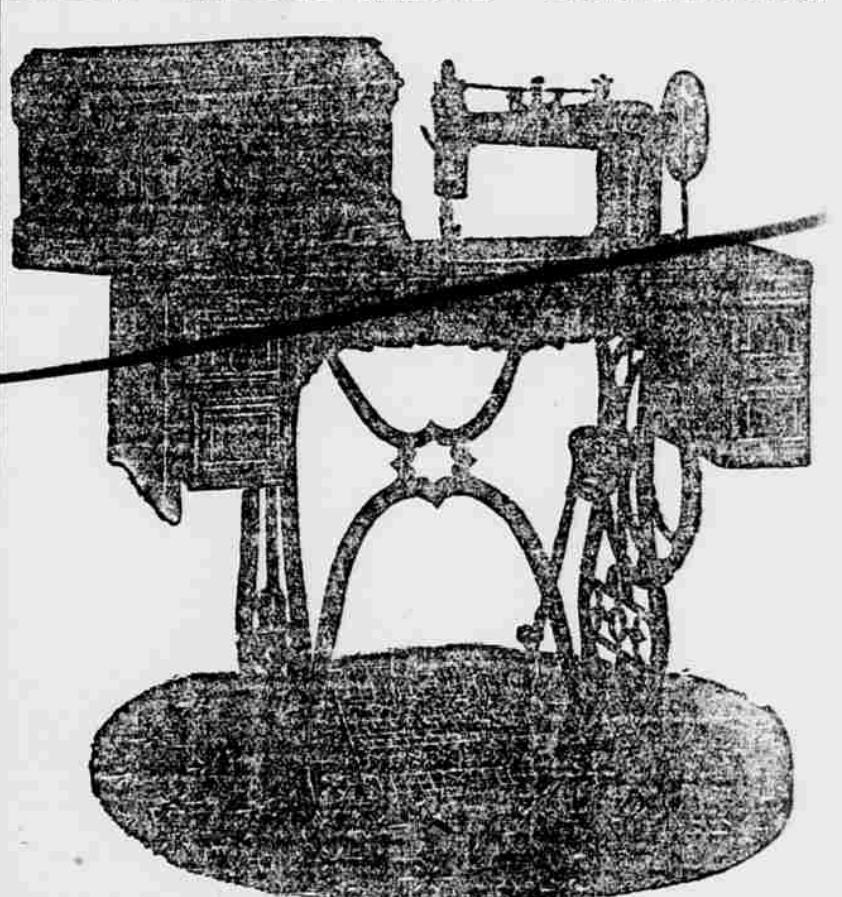
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THE GAZETTE, Fort Worth, Texas, Sample Machine at Gazette Business Office.

Children Cry for Pitcher & Castor.