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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1911.



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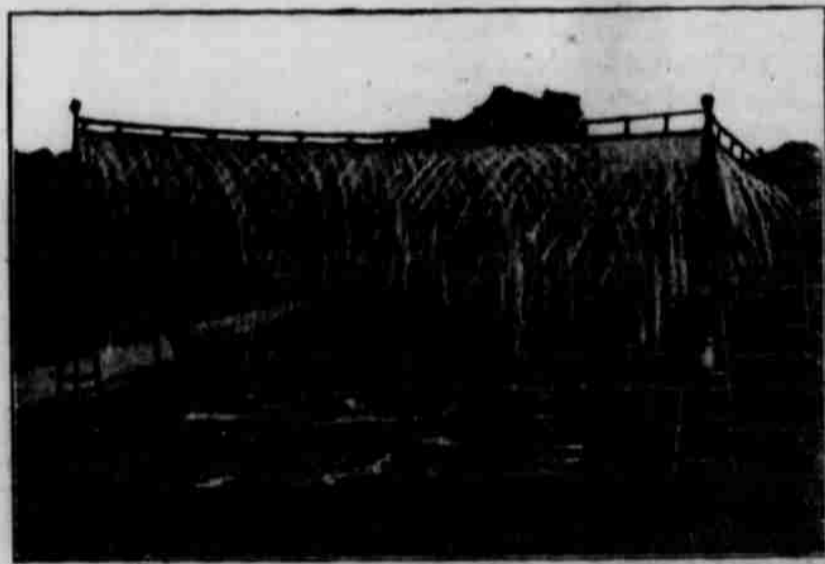
(FROM THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.) We have had occasion in these columns to refer repeatedly to experiments carried on by Sir Oliver Lodge and others on the influence of electricity on the growth of plants. Mr. Emilio Olsson of Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic, at present in the United States, has of late years been giving his attention to the practical development of a process in which it is proposed to make use of electrified water for sprinkling fields. The inventor claims that his experiments demonstrate the practical utility of such a procedure. The benefits which are said to be secured are two-fold. First, there is a direct advantage to the plants, and secondly, Mr. Olsson states that according to his observations various harmful insects and other organisms are destroyed because of his process.

The need or artificial irrigation is severely felt in many places where, owing to the nature of the climate, long terms of drought have to be contended with. It is particularly in such districts as these that Mr. Olsson proposes to introduce his system, by the aid of which he expects to increase the crop and to combat effect-

water is raised to a suitable height by a motor or traction engine. The supply may be drawn from a river, stream, artesian well, or any other suitable source. Two high towers may be installed, from which pipes are suspended by means of suitable supporting cables. The pipes apply circular spray nozzles which revolve automatically, and five to ten acres of land can readily be thus supplied with an evenly distributed shower of water.

When it is desired to use electrified water, a reservoir is used, into which the water is pumped, to be subsequently distributed in the manner indicated above. The reservoir consists of an iron tank placed on an insulated support and charged from a dynamo supplying 0.5 ampere at 110 volts. The iron wall of the tank serves as positive pole; the negative pole consists of a copper wire insulated all except the tip. It is claimed that certain chemical reactions take place in the water, with production of oxygen, ozone, and hydrogen peroxide at the anode, and that certain of the products formed are beneficial to the plants. Mr. Olsson further suggests that this electrification of the water would tend to purify it and render it better for drinking purposes.

Mr. Olsson has installed his apparatus in a plantation near Buenos Aires and states that by the use of six sprinkling nozzles at a height of five meters above ground some 600 acres of ground under cultivation were treated with beneficial results. The apparatus has also been adopted by the municipality of Buenos Aires and is giving satisfaction in the public parks and gardens in that city. Mr. Olsson also states that during the long drought from which the republic suffered for over six months in 1910, he



(FROM THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.) Irrigation by Means of Artificial Rain.

tually drought, insects and other troubles. The cost of the Olsson system is estimated at a figure which is quite moderate as compared with the benefits to be derived. The cost of installation for the sprinkling apparatus is figured at \$50 to \$100 per acre, according to local conditions. The system is very simple. The

was able to produce a very fine crop of alfalfa and vegetables and to supply the owners of race horses with fresh fodder. By installing a system of artificial irrigation over some part of their crop, farmers should be able to insure themselves against drought, falling back upon artificial sprinkling in case natural rain fails.

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