

Packing Oranges in the Sunny South

January and February are the months when the best of the American orange crop is picked, and in California, Florida, as well as in the West Indies, the yellow blouses shine golden as lamps among the glossy green foliage of the groves.

Long, light ladders are reared against the trees, and the pickers, each with a sack-like apron and a pair of clippers, get busy.

The oranges are next taken to the packing-house, where they are laid out on racks to "sweat" for two or three days. This process hardens the skin and renders the fruit less liable to rot in transit.

Down the centre of the shed runs a long, narrow chute, or trough, sloping at a moderate angle. At the top is a large bin; on either side of the trough are other bins, and into each bin is an outlet. The trough is so constructed that the small oranges drop through first, and find their way into the nearest bin. These little oranges run 250 to the box. Next come 225, 175, 150, and so on, until the largest and coarsest fruit of all, which are practically unsaleable in the ordinary market, tumble out at the end into a big barrel.

By each bin stands a packer, with

a box in front of him. On a stand to his left is a pile of soft wrapping paper. With his right hand the packer takes an orange from the bin, with his left a sheet of paper. The two hands meet, one quick twist, and down goes the orange, neatly wrapped, to its appointed place in the box. When the box is filled it is lifted aside, and another man calls on the lid and stencils upon it its description and destination.

The packers are paid by the box. The price to-day is usually ten cents, and the speed at which the men work is startling. I have myself packed seventy boxes in a day, averaging 150 oranges apiece, and I attained that speed in less than six weeks. But I have seen men pack over one hundred boxes in a day. The record in our packing-house was 104 in ten hours' work. Frequently the day's output for eight packers ran to three hundred boxes, which was the load for a closed truck.

An overseer keeps a sharp eye on the packers, for it is all-important that the fruit should be packed tightly and that no pricked or damaged oranges should be included. A pricked orange will start a rot which, within a week, will spread through and contaminate the whole box.

Forest Conservation by Efficient Use.

There are several aspects of forest conservation. Forests are conserved by keeping them from being destroyed by fire. They are also conserved by seeing that the trees when cut are put to the best possible use. This was the reason for the establishment of the Forest Products Laboratories of Canada, under the Director of Forestry, Ottawa.

A few years ago the wood of balsam fir could not be used for pulp because of certain of its chemical constituents. Chemists discovered how these elements might be got rid of and now balsam fir enters largely into paper. The laboratories cooperate with manufacturers and producers in solving problems which are too large for any one corporation to undertake and which affect, directly or indirectly, the people of Canada as a whole. Among the investigations which the laboratories are at work on are the strength and durability of different woods for mill-timbers, methods of beating pulp, durability of untreated and treated railway ties, suitability of different woods for paving blocks, the utilization of the waste products of paper-making, utilization of wood waste in factories, decay of timber in buildings, decay of pulpwood, etc. Besides this the laboratories answer many hundred inquiries sent in by citizens who have met with some problem connected with wood in their work.

English Court Gasps at Juror Alknighting

The traditions of the King's Bench got such a shock this week that the head-pieces nearly fell from the crowns of the bedewed barristers when one of three women jurors, sitting in court for the first time in its history, calmly took out her knitting and thus occupied herself while listening to the evidence, says a London despatch.

Neither Justice Coleridge nor counsel made any comment, but it was apparent that the move on the part of the woman was a new one on them. The case was that of a libel action against the Daily Herald. The woman showed keen interest in the case, but her apparel gave a new touch to the musty chambers, one of the feminine jurors wearing a light blue jumper.

Mistake Somewhere. "Ma, did you ever hear a rabbit bark?" "Rabbits don't bark, dear." "That's funny! My story book says that rabbits eat cabbage and bark."

Intended for home, school or business use, a new motion picture projector uses pictures arranged spirally on a disk instead of a film.

The "Flags" of Grandma's Garden

In grandma's garden there used to grow a bed of iris. She called them "flags." There were other flowers there—marigold and zinnias, bleeding hearts, four o'clocks, "lilies" and things like that—but "flags" were the backbone of the garden. They were always there, blooming year after year, an institution as permanent, almost, as grandma herself. Sometimes the bed would thin and die out in the centre, leaving only a ring of foliage and flowers, where before there had been a solid mass of green and lavender, but that was because somebody had forgotten to thin out the struggling plants choked together in the centre of the bed.

The "flags" of grandma's garden are one of the widely known flowers in the world. They are at home anywhere; Japan, Siberia, North America, Europe, Palestine, Syria know the iris. There are 170 kinds and more than a thousand distinct varieties have been named. They grow all the way from the tiny pumila, which is but six inches high, to the gigantes, often found five and six feet tall. They grow in widely diverse climates and soils; they grow at sea level, and are found up as far as 9,000 feet on mountain sides.

The iris gets its name from the

Greek. The name means the "rain-bow." Practically every shade of color seen in the rainbow can be found in some one of the many varieties of the iris, although the commoner colors of the "poor man's orchid" are lavender and yellow. As the fleur de lis, the iris has been known for centuries in Europe; it has long been a symbol in France, it figured in the history of Florence.

Only of late years has the iris begun to appear in the florist's shops as cut flowers; they have long been thought too delicate to handle as other flowers are handled for sale, but when cut in the bud they can be marketed without injury, and, odd as it may seem, the flowers when opened in water have a greater delicacy of color and texture than when left to bloom upon the stem.

Thus the modern lover of flowers seems to be awakening to the beauties of a flower that grandma knew a long time ago, a flower that Longfellow knew and to which he dedicated one of his most graceful poems: Born in the purple, born to joy and pleasure, Thou dost not toll nor spin, But makest glad and radiant with thy presence The meadow and the linn.

—and the worst is yet to come



BEAVER FARMING IN WESTERN CANADA

LARGEST RANCH AT EDGERTON, ALBERTA.

Close Season Proclaimed by Alberta Government Resulted in Increasing Numbers.

When in Alberta, the energetic little beaver which, from the appearance of its couchant figure upon the Canadian national arms has come to be so distinctively emblematic of the Dominion, seemed to be faced with extinction due to extensive settlement and trapping, a permanent close season was governmentally proclaimed. The result of this is evidenced in the remarkable manner in which the surviving animals have multiplied, and from a few scattered colonies about the less settled areas of the province, have thrived to unprecedented numbers in prairie and parkland, penetrating even to the heart of the city of Calgary and on the bare plains where a clump of bush has the highest of sentimental and economic values, menacing the carefully guarded shade and shelter belts.

Calgary, the largest city of Alberta, springing picturesquely out of the prairie, woke up to the fact that she was harboring a colony of these little animals and resented the fact deeply, as they chose to make their home in a beautiful park which is a distinct acquisition to the prairie city and as such jealously guarded by the Calgary city fathers. The depredations of the beavers to the park's trees and shrubs first drew public attention to the serious menace they constituted, and before action was put under way, the landscape near the river presented a rude scene of destruction, much of the underbrush being cleared off and collected in heaps and many heavier trees felled, cut up and hauled to the water for the construction of dams.

Upon application, a permit to trap was secured from the provincial game authorities, and the destruction of the valuable fur-bearers, who have constituted themselves such a menace, is under way, the pelts being sent to Edmonton for sale by the government. The beaver is a precious animal. The value of its pelt remains consistently high, and the protection the animal has enjoyed widely in Canada for so long a period has been an additional factor in keeping prices up. Government protection in the past has practically precluded the domestic ranching of the animal, which has been found so interesting and profitable a pursuit in comparison with less valuable fur-bearers, but with the rapidity of multiplication to pest proportions, ranching under Government permits is becoming increasingly popular and promises to develop into an Alberta industry of some importance.

What is probably the largest fur farm in the West is a beaver ranch at Edgerton, in Northern Alberta, where more than one hundred beavers are being raised with the confident expectation of providing a handsome yearly revenue as soon as it is believed that they have multiplied sufficiently to justify trapping. The ranch is located on the banks of a small creek which has been the home of a colony of beavers for years. Government protection gave them opportunity to increase to such proportions that they became a general nuisance when the owner of the land applied for permission to fence them in, breed them, and sell the increase. This was given and another line has been added to the diversified sides of farming in this section of Alberta.

At Lacombe, in Central Alberta, S. W. Paisley became interested in two colonies of beavers on his land, set

out to study them, and became a master of the knowledge of their habits and ways. When they commenced to over-run his farm, he got permission to fence them in and "farm" them, and is now anticipating a substantial profit from his yearly toll. Three other farmers along the Ribstone Creek, where several farmers are being annoyed by the large numbers to which colonies on their farms have attained, followed Mr. Paisley's example, and by fencing them in and encouraging them to build their dams, control the damage they do and secure a fine source of revenue.

An Economic Enterprise. Beaver farming is an economic enterprise when a colony has settled in a stream running through a farm, and the expense of operating is practically nil, it being only necessary to fence above and below the dam with a moshed wiring, and a few rods on either bank. Where several farmers along a stream are desirous of co-operating in such a venture, all that is needed is to fence the extreme ends of the water course, and by trapping in their own territory are fairly sure of getting the animals from their own colonies, as beavers seldom travel overland. Nor do they usually move their colonies so long as food is plentiful, so that when a shortage of natural nutriment occurs the provision of a supply of such vegetables as carrots and turnips, planted near the banks where the sharp-toothed little creatures can reach them readily, will keep them from changing their location.

Beavers reared thus are still to be trapped under the regulations that cover "wild" beaver trapping, but with the new industry proving popular, it is possible that the Act will be amended.

Our Solid Earth. One often hears the expression "as solid as the earth itself," but it is doubtful if the truth of it is ever fully tested by a comparison with the weights of those bulky planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

Though Jupiter is no less than 1,264 times bigger than the earth, it is only 318 times as heavy, which shows pretty conclusively that the Giant Planet, as it is called, is in the condition of an unfinished world, and as yet far from being habitable. Then there is the great ringed planet Saturn. It looks very beautiful in a big telescope when the rings are showing at their best, but it is about as solid and weighty as a ball of cork of the same size. Briefly, Saturn would make 759 globes like ours, so far as bulk is concerned, but they would be much lighter, for it is only 95 times heavier than the earth.

As for Uranus, which few people have ever seen without a telescope or binocular, its bulk is 45½ times that of the earth, and yet it weighs only 4½ times as much. Neptune, the most distant of the sun's family of planets, would just balance 17 earths in the scale, despite that it is 32 times as big.

Tea for Travellers. The Chinese, on their new-built railways, have established a service which in its line is beyond anything we know in this country. It is free boiling water.

At each important station there is a boiler under a queer-looking circular roof which looks like a huge umbrella. The traveller can help himself from one of several taps. Why boiling water? For making tea, of course. The traveller brings his teapot, or at least a cup, along with him; also some tea. He gets his favorite beverage fresh, just as it would be made at home.

A little boy was taken to a hospital to see a sick relative. On returning home he was asked what he thought of it. Said he, "It is the slowest place I ever saw—nothing doing—all the folks were in bed."

"The Kingdom of Heaven is Within You"

"But seek ye first his kingdom," says Saint Matthew, and we can imagine that this outburst was the child of a new and mighty experience that had changed his whole outlook. A kingdom within! That is something to arouse the imagination and stir the soul.

Everyone knows how difficult it is to develop a kingdom in the world. Every European nation has tried it, and bohemianism is trying it now. One often feels like the youth in the French Revolution: "How could the heavens be so clean and calm above, while the earth beneath was so stormy and dark?" But the Master of the soul, looking at men said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you."

Passing through a chemical laboratory, the visitor sees a set of delicate scales, inclosed in a glass case. They are kept thus inclosed, so that no dust or dampness can come near. These scales must be accurate. They must be able to weigh the merest grain, and weigh it accurately. And here is the soul. It is a vastly more delicate instrument than metric scales. It, too, depends for its strength upon its freedom from soil and dirt. And this is the seat of the kingdom. A man who has no kingdom within himself certainly cannot create one without, for the outer is the reflection of the inner. And this inner kingdom was no imaginary thing, to the early Christians. They sang in prison, and they were content when persecution drove them far from home. When Paul and Silas sang in the jail, the jailer admitted right then and there, that they possessed something to which he was a total stranger.

And the entrance to this kingdom is faith. That sounds just like a sermon, doesn't it? Preachers are al-

ways talking about faith. But faith is also the entrance to every worthy enterprise. It is the reasonable way, and the scientific way, and in fact the only way. That is the way the explorers found new lands and new waterways. Columbus waited and hoped. He was certain there were secrets to be found beyond the seas. His faith was child-like. And he had his reward, beyond his wildest dreams. He looked for a new route to India. He found a new world. Childlike trust has been a characteristic of all inventors. While others made romances, they were making experiments. And trust, or faith, or confidence, or optimism, call it what you will, has always been at its best in religion. The unbeliever shuts himself out of the kingdom. He closes the door on himself. It seems almost ridiculous to watch Philip go into the hostile city of Samaria, and expect to make even a dent on its citizens. But he has confidence. He knows that he represents a great Saviour. He dares the experiments. 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