

Panama Found to Need Farmer.

Panama, R. P.—In a territory along the Panama Canal to a distance of 40 miles from the axis of the waterway, there are found to be not 500 acres of land in full cultivation, out of a total of 2,400,000 acres, and with a population somewhat in excess of 100,000. It is doubtful if there is a city as large as Panama anywhere else contiguous to fertile soil and having abundant rainfall where the people engage in so little agricultural industry.

The Panama railroad across the isthmus runs through 40 miles of untilled jungle, though within the last year efforts at utilizing the land for pasturing cattle have been begun. One might suppose that there must be some defect in the soil to account for this total neglect of agriculture close to such a large and steady market. But this is not at all the case. Out of the 4000 square miles in question, there are not more than 200 covered by the waters of Gatun Lake and the Chagres and other rivers; nor more than 50 where the land is too low and marshy for cultivation. The topography of the country is a slope from sea level at both oceans, up to about 900 feet at the summit of the continental divide along the canal, while the mountains at the head of the Chagres River rise to 3000 feet. The average elevation of the whole region is easily more than 50 feet above sea level.

The soil is mostly a red clay sub-soil, with considerable humus in a large part of the area; with limestone in some places, and volcanic clays in others. It is probably better, on the whole, than that of North Georgia. Fifty bushels of corn have been produced on an acre of new ground, without fertilizer and with very primitive cultivation. Yams and sweet potatoes produce 200 to 300 bushels per acre easily. The rainfall amounts to about 100 inches per year, with four dry months. The temperature rarely rises above 95 degrees Fahrenheit, or falls below 65 degrees Fahrenheit.

Part of this belt is heavily timbered with both hard and soft woods, indicating its original fertility. In the whole of the 4000 square miles adjoining the canal there are no roads or means of communication except those running through its center, including the canal, the Panama Railway, which parallels the canal at a distance of between a mile and a few yards in places; and a road paralleling the Panama Railway for about 20 miles on the Pacific side, and seven on the Atlantic; with a short suburban road out of the Panama City some five miles, and another from Colon to one of the points on the bay, of about five miles also. That is, all the roads are practically within half a mile of the canal across the isthmus; they furnish transportation to only 100 square miles out of the 4000, allowing a distance of one mile on each side as that to be counted. The remaining territory is entirely without roads, a few rough trails of the worst possible sort affording a way for pack animals to get through the jungle in a few places.

This lack of roads is one of the causes of backwardness in agriculture, but the real cause is deeper. Although the isthmus was discovered and settled before Virginia or New England, it would seem that for 300 years every possible influence exerted itself against the oldest Spanish settlement on the American hemisphere. Columbus and Balboa found the country thickly settled with industrious tribes of Indians, but they were soon decimated by the oppression and exactions of the buccaneers and conquistadores. Alternate raids by Spanish and English, the destruction wrought by Drake and Morgan on the Spanish settlements in turn, after the Spaniards had destroyed the Indians, nipped each successive rising colony in the bud. Then came the tyrannous conduct of the Spanish crown against its own colonists; and even after Bolivar had freed the country, the Columbian Government from Bogota began a series of petty discriminations against the Province of Panama, which led to one revolution after another, with all the disturbance and loss such conditions entail. Farm houses were burned, cattle killed, crops neglected and the people had to take to the cities or the remote mountains.

and some being started now by the supply department of the Panama Canal. If the 4,000 square miles next to the canal were fully developed, agriculturally, it is estimated that they could feed the city of Chicago.—Christian Science Monitor.

The Value of Play.

Most people would say that play's first requisite was that it should consist of something one doesn't have to do. Play is in reality, however, of all sorts and descriptions. Those that produce something useful besides giving rest are greatly to be preferred. There are many sorts equally stimulating to the mind and to the body and productive of valuable results. One essential to beneficial play is that it be wholesome and be performed in a healthful environment, that is, where we have pure moving air of the right temperature and preferably sunlight.

The body should be maintained at such position as to permit an even circulation of the blood and normal respiration. The object of the exercise would otherwise be very much discounted. The air carries very much to the blood which it furnishes to the tissues, and the blood in turn takes away the debris and returns it to the outside atmosphere. This will make plain to any reader the necessity of what has been said about the proper environment in which to exercise. Unless the blood is supplied with what nature has provided for her normal function, the digestive system will fail and the body will be wanting in nourishment. When this condition takes place man becomes susceptible to the disease germs that are ever present in the atmosphere. The greatest safety is to be found in keeping up the resistance. It is much easier to battle against the germ organisms before they get established in the system. Once they establish themselves in the tissues they generate poisons which interfere with the normal working of the body and enable them to nourish themselves and increase, often at an alarming rate. In fact some of them reproduce themselves to the extent of thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands in a minute of time.

Variation of types of work properly adjusted will often substitute for what is generally known as play. For instance, one's brain center may become weary at a momentous occupation, and a decided change of occupation, notwithstanding it be what we usually call work, will permit the first brain center involved to rest while another works.

But we come back to the fact that what most people regard as play is an occupation that they are not required to perform, and, it would seem from a psychological standpoint to give greater rest if it be an occupation that is particularly useless from the standpoint of producing economic results. Therefore, there should be time to set aside in the work of the day, no matter whether it be varied or not, when the environment may be changed and play should be taken up.

I speak of games in a broad sense. For instance, after sitting at a task for a given number of hours, a walk in the open air, the body held erect and the limbs swinging so as to produce circulation, and attention given to surroundings so that the mind may be occupied and contented, constitutes one of the best kinds of play, preferably performed in company.

"Pinching Zeppelins" Odd Stunt. The Associated Press representative was invited this week to pay a visit to a place in London where a number of British officers were engaged in "pinching Zeppelins." At first sight these "Zeppelins" seem to be Indian clubs. Then you see that they are of leather, and you notice a wire paper-clip at the handle end. The paper-clip holds the mouthpiece of an inflated rubber bag inside the leather Indian club.

These "Zeppelins" are found in the gymnasium of a hospital workshop, where convalescent officers are trying to regain the use of their hands and fingers. The officers sit in ostensible idleness with one of the "Zeppelins" in the injured hand. They appear to hold them anyhow, some by one end, some by the other. They appear to do nothing but hold them. But in fact they are all the time "pinching" them. They are working their stiffened fingers continually on the inflated rubber clubs, first at the thin end and then as their fingers get more open and supple, moving up and up to the thick end.

It is an odd sort of gymnasium. Like a camouflage factory, it is full of things that are not what they seem, and men are working hard who appear to be doing nothing. All round the room are odd pieces of apparatus that look like horizontal bars for children of two to five years old, equipped with curious bars and pulleys. At these men labor who have injured wrists or forearms, winding the weights up and down.

In another part of the room is a great polished plank, on two supports, the patient sitting under it and drawing himself up and down. At first the visitor is uncertain whether it is an impossibly massive jumping apparatus or a gallows. It is for the training of weakened shoulders, and arms, the patient sitting under it and drawing himself up and down.

Russia's Enormous Farm Acreage.

Russia's economic resources are of a richness and variety fully commensurate to her extent. In fact, Russia is a land of great latent opportunities, for lack of capital, bad political and social conditions, and insufficient means of transportation have hitherto notably retarded her economic progress. How far Russia's actual production lags behind its potentiality is strikingly illustrated by the state of Russian agriculture. Russia is pre-eminently an agricultural country. Seven-eighths of the population of European Russia are engaged in agricultural pursuits of one kind or another, 81 per cent. of the people being officially listed as "peasants." The area devoted to cereal crops and stock-raising is enormous. In 1913 the area under cultivation for these purposes alone totalled 368,000,000 acres, divided as follows: Cereal crops, 257,000,000 acres; potatoes, 11,000,000 acres; flax and hemp, 5,500,000 acres; meadows, 96,000,000 acres. The output of this acreage yields imposing totals. In 1913, reckoned in Cereals (1 peck 36 pounds), they were: Cereals, 5,636,000,000 pecks; potatoes, 2,191,000,000 pecks; sugar, 106,000,000 pecks; hay, 3,246,000,000 pecks. Besides these major crops, Americans would do well to note that Russia is also a large-scale producer of cotton and tobacco. In 1914 the cotton acreage in Central Asia and the Caucasus was 1,800,000 acres, yielding 1,250,000 500-pound bales, while in 1913 the tobacco acreage was 154,000, yielding 6,500,000 pecks. As might be inferred from the size of the hay crop and the extensive stock ranges in the steppelands of the Empire, Russia is also a great producer of live stock and dairy products. In 1914 Russia possessed 35,000,000 horses, 52,000,000 horned cattle, 72,000,800 sheep and goats, and 15,000,000 pigs.

Now, at first blush these figures would seem to indicate great agricultural prosperity, especially when we remember that the great "black earth" belt of South-Central Russia is akin to our best prairie soil, while vast areas in Siberia are the counterparts of the wheat lands of the Canadian Northwest. Certainly, even as things stand, Russia is one of the leading agricultural producers of the world. And yet, when we come to examine social conditions, we find such

ignorance of modern scientific farming, antiquated methods, lack of capital and general inefficiency that the Russian peasant is usually poor, debt-ridden and threatened with chronic starvation. That Russia, under these handicaps, can still produce so much, shows what Russian agriculture might accomplish under methods similar to those prevailing in America.—American Review of Reviews.

Where Grammar Came From.

The world reached its highest known stage of intelligence before grammar was even invented, much less studied, declares Ernest C. Moore in the Yale Review. I have had some curiosity to find out where and how so great a blight upon young life first came into being and why it ever became a school study, and I find that the Greek's knew it not, that their triumphant literature and their matchless oratory came to flower before grammar was dreamed of. That it was not in any sense one of the great arts which they wrought out and with which they armed the human race. That after Greece had declined a barbarous Macedonian made himself the owner of all Egypt, and in order to surround himself with the most spectacular form of ostentation of which his vain mind could conceive, he set to collecting not only all the rare and precious objects and books and manuscripts there were in the world, but he capped it all by making a collection of the living men of the world who had any reputation anywhere for knowing and thinking; taking them from their homes where they had some relation to the daily necessities of human beings, and had really been of some use, he shuts them up for life in one of his palaces at Alexandria, which the folks there were in the habit of calling "the hen-coop of the muses;" and out of sheer desperation, since they could do nothing better to amuse themselves, they counted the words in the books which real men had written, and prepared tables of the forms and endings which the users of words employed. The lifeless dregs of books which their distilling left we now call grammar, and study instead of books and even speech itself. In their lowest depth of indifference to the moving, pulsing life of man not even the Alexandrians sank so low as that.

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