

To Make Island in Mid-Ocean for Air Port.

Man-made islands in mid-ocean, serving as floating ports of call for British aeroplanes flying from port to port of the British Empire are the subject of a scheme now being considered by the Imperial Conference sitting in London.

The idea is that of Blin Desplede, aeronautical expert and he aims at enabling British aeroplanes to keep in touch with British territory, instead of having to depend on foreign countries to provide links in the flying route between Imperial ports.

These island air ports would be situated at carefully determined spots," states Desplede. "They would possess true harbors, which would produce the reliability and safety needed to make long distance transoceanic airlines of real value to the British Empire's communications."

Each island would be 1400 feet long and 755 feet wide. The depth of the harbor would be 20 feet. Such a mass could not be anchored, so the island would be constructed to float in about 80 feet of water.

The island would be built of reinforced concrete, "electric" cement being used, which resists all action of seawater. It would carry in the lower portion and in its sides a system of caissons and water ballasts to insure equilibrium and floatation at the desired level.

Shaped like a boat, the island would offer relatively little resistance to winds and currents.

Three lighthouses, placed at water level and projecting vertical beams of light, would enable the locating of the island at night.

On one of the sides of the island there would be a hotel for air travelers and visitors, the wireless installation and meteorological and administrative offices. On the other side would be the repair shops.

Under the rear lighthouses would be the propulsive machinery driven by Diesel engines developing 11,200 h. p. Only a fraction of that power would be normally needed to keep the island constantly at its appointed place in spite of currents and maintain it always nose into the wind.

The floating island air station would thus offer the advantages of being able to change its place according to the requirements of the moment. It could be defended by anti-craft, batteries and all kinds of naval means.—Exchange.

1-Cent Post Card Restored in Bills Passed House.

Restoration of the one-cent stamp to private post cards was voted by the House on Monday in making quick work of five bills to revise various postal rates.

All of the bills introduced on the first day of the sessions by Chairman Griest of the Postal Committee await action by the Senate. They came before the House with the recommendation of the Postoffice Department.

One of the measures passed, produced after long hearings, would authorize transmission of business reply cards, the return postage of not more than two cents to be paid by the original mailer when the card is returned.

A third bill amending the postal act would fix at one cent an ounce the rate on publications when mailed as second class matter by others than the publisher or his agent, while another bill would provide for an additional charge on first class matter mailed with insufficient postage.

The House also approved a bill to extend special delivery service to parcels when labeled "special handling" and on which extra postage is paid. The rate would be 15 cents for two pounds, 25 cents for 10 pounds, and 35 cents for more than 10 pounds. If the mailer does not desire delivery the rate for more than 10 pounds would be 25 cents.

Makes Oysters Look Fat.

The oyster, when transferred from sea water, where it normally grows, to water free from salt, at first has a tendency to absorb comparatively large quantities of fresh water, swell up, and look fatter and smoother than is actually the case. In this bloated condition such an oyster commonly impresses the purchaser as more attractive in quality than its real condition warrants.

With a view to protecting oyster consumers a conference was recently held at the Department of Agriculture at which it was agreed that any process of washing or floating oysters should be so conducted as not to increase unduly the normal water content, and further that oysters which contain excess water should not be offered for sale. Any process of washing or of floating before shucking, which results in the incorporation of excess water, will bring the product within the prohibition of the federal food and drugs act, says the department.

A Concrete That's Like Coral.

"Gassing" concrete to give it added lightness is a novel idea recently developed in Sweden. While the concrete, a mixture of sand, gravel and cement, is still soft, gas is introduced into the mixture. This, says Popular Science Monthly, has the same effect on the concrete as yeast has on bread, filling it with small holes. The concrete so produced is said to be just as strong as the ordinary product, but much lighter, requiring less steel to support it.

The use of pullet eggs for hatching is to be discouraged and the use of eggs from pullets that have been under lights during the fall and winter is much worse.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT. One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward Never doubted clouds would break; Never dreamed though right was wrong, would triumph; Held, we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, Sleep to wake.

—Robert Browning. —The turn of the year is an in-between time, too early in the year to go into ecstasies about a Spring wardrobe and just a little late to try to do much with a Winter outfit. Consequently the only alternative left is to look over one's wardrobe to see what little things can be done. Perhaps a bow attached here, a flower tucked on the shoulder, a new belt placed at a different line and similar added touches will make enough difference in the general appearance of a costume to make it do new duty and yield much service. To further such designs there are available many accessories which will lend invaluable service. Bags, gloves, belts, neckwear and some novelty jewelry, wisely selected, can literally work wonders.

One of the new bags may be carried at this time of the year and again in the Spring, but then in lighter colors. In place of the quilting of the last season, designs are worked out in the same general conception but in serial and mural effects. They are done by hand and copied from the old Italian work, which is very effective, especially when heavy silk crepe is used. The frames are either of amber or imitation tortoiseshell, with fancy lap-overs and clasps. Linings too are fancy, showing quaint prints and very rich tones in the plain materials. The handles are long, so that the bag may be carried well up on the arm, as is the case in Summer time.

An American creator of fashions in stockings is putting out something new in color composition. It follows the familiar ombre toning, but instead of having patches of the variegated shades sprinkled all over the surface it is regular in effect. In the back part of the stocking the color is much deeper and fades off gradually as it approaches the front. In this way a slim and graceful appearance of the leg is accentuated. Not to be lost sight of is the fact that these stockings may be dyed to match any of the evening shades as well as new subtle Spring colors for daytime wear.

Children's dresses, especially those for the very small child, are being shown in the quaintest of prints, checks and plaids. Most of them have smocked yokes done in various colors and patterns that show trim little cuffs on the ends. In many plain materials are used for collars and cuffs. Pongee is also a time-favored material for children's dresses, but it is more often combined with another color or lavishly embroidered in gay colors. Yoke styles and long waists are both seen in dresses of this material.

Blouses give every indication of returning to favor, largely because suits are coming in. So far only the tailored and sport types have appeared, and these, it must be said, are indeed lovely. Because of their simplicity greater attention is naturally laid on finish and fit. Buttonholes are of pearl whiteness. To satisfy all demands, the same styles are being shown in models to be worn either outside or tucked inside the skirt. Some have breast pockets, and in the outside blouse a tiny hip pocket is often seen. White seems to be the favorite color, with, of course, the few occasional colors, such as tan, light blue and flesh. Fabrics include broadcloth, crepe de chine, radium and regular men's shirtings. The collars on all the new blouses are distinctive this season, for they follow the trends in men's styles, with a wider neckline that gives a very flattering effect.

Each season Lelong presents a new and original way of obtaining the kinetic effect, of which he is the apostle. This time he secures it by making the skirts of his gowns in a series of fluttering, overlapping pieces, like orange-section in shape. They are attached to the centre edge to a skirt foundation. One gown in yellow, following the pattern, has first a flap of yellow lace, then alternating flaps of georgette bound in satin. The waist is bloused all about and confined under a wide belt of satin.

Among the novelties in lingerie is the tomboy step-in, so positively designed for the young lady of athletic activities that the word tomboy is embroidered on the front of the garment, which is of crepe de chine or of tub silk. Another athletic model is the "Breezy" suit of tub silk. This consists of short drawers similar to those men wear for track exercise, and an undervest gathered on an elastic at the normal waistline, with ribbon suspenders over the shoulders.

One new and exceedingly interesting point in the French designs as well as in the American is the fitted shoulder which has superseded the ribbon strap. The ribbon support which has so long been accepted has come to be seen as a bit of a nuisance, always involving perplexing problems of adjustment of color and inventive ways of fastening. At last the chemises, step-ins, brassiers or whatever, are cut with the upper part in one piece, fitting over the shoulder to the enhanced comfort of the wearer.

Some women do not know it, but a pan that is to be used for an omelette should not be used at any time for anything but cooking eggs. If there is the least roughness in an omelette pan, or if anything has burned on or stuck to it in its previous use the egg will be likely to stick. A good pan for an omelette is white or colored enameled ware, not too deep and large enough so that the egg will form a thin, quickly set layer and can be rolled up. In cooking over a gas flame the heat will be better distributed if there is an iron plate over the burner when the pan is used. Enameled ware used in this way will make a perfect omelette, and such a pan, when it looks clean, is clean!

—The Watchman publishes news when it is news. Read it.

FARM NOTES.

—Give the birds protection; they will repay you next summer.

—Practice crop rotation to hold down the danger of scab and other potato diseases.

—Start mixing poultry droppings with gypsum, an excellent fertilizer and a convenient way of handling it.

—It is none too early to look around for a supply of bean poles. They are always hard to locate when you need them.

—Have you put up any houses for the birds? Rustic ones are practical and ornamental. Put them up before spring comes.

—House plants which have been frozen should be thawed out gradually. Spray them with cold water and keep them away from the sunshine and intense heat until they are completely thawed.

—When shoveling snow off walks and porches be careful not to bury flower borders and fancy dwarf evergreens under masses of snow. After heavy snowfalls, and especially after ice storms, beat the load off branches of evergreens to prevent breakage.

—Large trees may be transplanted to the home grounds now. Move with a frozen ball of earth attached. A block and tackle and rollers or a stone-belt will be necessary in moving the larger trees. Do not attempt to move trees more than six inches in diameter.

—Apply water to the house plants when the soil about them requires it. The amount of water used and the frequency of application depend largely upon the temperature. High temperatures bring loss of water by evaporation. Pot-bound plants require more water than newly potted ones. Plants with fibrous roots usually need more than those with fleshy roots.

—During April when your garden operations begin there is a great demand for stable manure. It is often difficult to obtain manure at that time, often impossible. During January and February there is little demand for manure and in cities and towns this must be moved. Order the manure need early, to be delivered any time and place it on a pile in the garden where it will be accessible next spring.

—The drains make a better crop in any years, wet or dry; lengthen the growing season, spring and fall, by warming the soil; remove surplus water, permitting earlier cultivation after rains; reduce heaving or throwing out by frost, and "winter killing," increase the supply of available plant food; help the growth of desirable organisms; improve aeration; reduce clod formation; deepen root zone for crops; reduce hillside erosion; cut seepage from lowland, and make a big return on the investment when properly applied.

—There is less risk and greater profit in feeding calves for the late spring or early summer market than in feeding any other class of live stock, according to Dr. C. W. McCampbell of the Kansas State Agricultural College.

"In feeding calves for the market," Doctor McCampbell points out, "it is important to remember that a calf should be prime to sell at a profit. No other class of cattle is discriminated against so severely as the half-fed calf."

"A heavy feed of grain is necessary to put the calf in condition to sell at advantage. We find that it requires approximately 180 days as a minimum feeding period and about 40 bushels of corn to put the calf in best market condition."

—Sweet clover thrives best on good, well drained and well prepared soils, but due to its extensive root system and to the fact that it can draw its nitrogen requirement from the air, it will give good returns even on poor soil. The climatic and soil requirements of sweet clover are well described in a bulletin distributed by the publications branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, in which the results of experiments in Manitoba are given. These experiments show that sweet clover does not suffer from winter injury to any great extent. It is also more resistant to drought and to spring frost injury than the other common legumes. Lack of lime and poor drainage are detrimental to its growth.

—Very naturally all kinds of fowls need a little extra feeding during cold and stormy weather. When it is cold fowls consume quite an amount of food for their fuel—that is to keep them warm—and this must be done before egg production will go forward. If the supply is sufficient only for the real needs of the body, and nothing extra, we need look for but few eggs. If we have been feeding a certain amount of feed during the warmer weather of the summer and fall, and it has been just about right for egg production, it is then up to us to increase the amount both of mashes and scratch feeds. The mashes are especially easily assimilated and made use of. If hens have not started their fall and winter laying campaign, in order to get them to work, we have found that a little run of warm mashes in the morning if well managed will help materially.

—Where manure is difficult to procure, advantage should be taken now to secure leaves in as large a quantity as possible. While these may be applied directly to the soil and plowed in, it is much better to pile them in a compact form in a corner or out of the way place and leave them to rot and decompose for a year before using them in the garden. Sulphate of ammonia, an excellent nitrogenous fertilizer, can be used to advantage with the leaves, as it will hasten the process of decomposition and increase greatly the fertility of the humus. From 10 to 20 pounds of sulphate of ammonia may be used with every cubic yard of well-tramped leaves or one ton of vegetable refuse, but it should be spread throughout the pile. Make the pile in layers of four inches and on each layer sprinkle the sulphate of ammonia at the rate of one pound per square yard, and build up the pile to at least a height of four feet so that there will be no leaching of available plant food.

SEEKS DEATH TREE IN DARKEST AFRICA

Explorer Goes on Long, Dangerous Trip.

Cape Town—A man who is searching for what is termed "the death tree" arrived in South Africa recently. He is Alex Clive, and he intends to penetrate into the heart of Africa to seek for the tree which means death to those who drop asleep beneath. The death tree, Mr. Clive declares, grows somewhere in the heart of Africa. It gives off a very powerful perfume which probably means death to an unwary person in its vicinity, for if anyone rests beneath it he is overcome by the scent and falls asleep never to wake.

This tree, Mr. Clive believes, contains some powerful drug which might possibly mean a great deal to science and humanity, but the death tree is not the only reason for the expedition, as he is also keenly interested in entomology, geology, and botany, and intends to collect specimens for exhibition in London, which, he hopes, will reach in about 18 months, and will place his specimens before the board of scientific research.

Mr. Clive states that he is proceeding to Bloemfontein and Durban, and thence to Lourenco Marques, Beira, Mombaza, Nairobi, and on to the Victoria falls, and Nyanza, where he will cross the lake to Kampala. At Kampala his quest for the death tree begins in earnest, as he will have to strike inland on foot.

Making of Matches Gives Jobs to Many

Wadsworth, Ohio.—"Got a match?" A simple request easily complied with, but not so prosaic is the story of the making of the wood sliver with inflammable tip.

The match starts its journey to somebody's vest pocket in a towering pine forest, hundreds of miles away from the final center of manufacture. Forests, railroads and sawmills are owned by the match companies, which have great factories here.

One company owns a great tract of timber in the Coeur d'Alene mountains of Idaho. A company railroad, 24 miles long, takes the logs to the main line of the Spokane International railroad, which hauls them to Coeur d'Alene lake, where they are put into booms and towed to the company's sawmill on the Spokane river.

The logs are sawed into two-inch planks and seasoned for a year or 18 months. When ready for use, they are sent to the company's block plant at Spokane. Selected lumber there is cut into blocks 2 3/4 inches long, which is the exact length of a match. The blocks are sent to the factory here, a 2000-mile journey.

The first manufacturing step is to feed the blocks into a match machine, which cuts them up and forces the sticks into holes in an iron plate, holding 500 sticks.

Over sprigs and brushes the plates are carried and all the weak and imperfect ones are automatically culled.

Next comes treatment by paraffin and chemicals. Then the first composition is put on the head. The sticks pass over a roller, which turns in a box containing the composition. The ignition tip is applied the same way.

The use of phosphorus as an active ingredient in match making was barred by congressional act in 1913. The poisonous phosphorus used to affect the bones and the jaw of workers. Sesqui-sulphide of phosphorus now is used, which is nonpoisonous.

Teach "Thumbing"

Omaha, Neb.—Scientific "thumbing" is to be taught. The national convention of hoboes has decreed that a field agent shall instruct hikers in the ethics of stopping motorists and indicating that a lift is wanted.

Happy Children

Willows, Calif.—Children in Glenn county are happy. All the high schools are on an enforced vacation pending settlement of a controversy between the teachers and the county treasurer over salaries.

"Brighter" Burials

London.—"Brighter" burials have been determined upon by the British Undertakers' Woodwork association. New casket designs are for beautiful and graceful workmanship.

Emulating Elephant Is Urged for Longevity

New York.—To be cool and calm at all times and impervious to the unpleasant titillation of nerves emulate the elephant, says Thomas R. Gaines, a lecturer before the Brooklyn Institute on "The Science of Health."

The longevity of the elephant, Mr. Gaines asserts, is directly attributable to his poise and repose, and those in turn may be traced fairly certainly to his habit of slow breathing. The elephant breathes only five times a minute as compared with eighteen for the normal human.

While his audience made experimental sniffs, Mr. Gaines enunciated the requisite remainder of his theory: "The general attitude should be one of wholesome indifference."

ARCH DAM STANDS AGAINST ALL TESTS

Experimental Structure in High Sierra a Success.

New York.—The "arch dam," erected in a steep canyon of the Sierra, near Fresno, Calif., to settle problems that have baffled engineers of all countries for centuries, has so far withstood every test. It is announced in New York by the Engineering Foundation, a committee of which is directing the project.

For many months the engineers have been building and testing this dam to a height of 60 feet and at a cost of \$10,000, contributed by more than fifty firms of bankers, manufacturers, engineers and power companies.

It is the purpose of the engineers to test the dam to destruction in the interest of science, but the structure's stamina in resisting the onslaughts of water that has been impounded will force them to build higher. The end may not come and with it an answer to their questions, until the dam has been built up to 100 feet at an additional outlay of \$30,000.

Much Work Still Ahead.

Many tests have been made, but they are still incomplete, according to the foundation's announcement, which said that months of work are still ahead. Thousands of records have been made, and are being studied, tabulated and graphed by the testing staff.

The dam, constructed of concrete, did not break at 60 feet, even when the reservoir back of it was filled so that water flowed over the top of the dam. The engineers will gradually increase the height of the dam until it finally gives way under the increasing pressure. It is planned first to extend the height of the dam ten feet, and then twenty, thirty or forty feet if necessary.

"While this is a unique example of the romantic side of engineering, it is, nevertheless, a straightforward endeavor to solve an everyday problem affecting engineers, bankers and the public," Director Alfred D. Flinn of the Engineering Foundation, 29 West Thirty-ninth street, said.

"The investigation is attacking important questions of engineering research in the application of scientific knowledge.

"A correct answer will tend to safety of lives, of millions of dollars in property and may make possible the construction of less costly dams for power development, irrigation of lands now useless, water supply of cities and towns and flood prevention.

"A less expensive type of dam than has heretofore been preferred by many engineers and governmental authorities would make possible some of the projects for water power and irrigation which are not now commercially feasible because of the handicap of expense.

"Successful financing and development of projects of this kind will add to the wealth of states, communities, and, in fact, the whole nation, as well as provide power, food and water for a larger population, and increase the basis of taxation, for the support of government.

Built to Height of Sixty Feet.

Early in April, after months of work, excavation in the granite sides and bottom of the gorge for the foundation of the dam across Stevenson creek was completed, April 19 the first concrete was placed in the wooden forms, and on June 4 the last concrete had been laid to build the dam to a height of 60 feet.

The reservoir back of the dam can be filled not only from the water of the creek, which at times almost dries up, but from one of the great water supply tunnels of the hydroelectric plants of the Southern California Edison company, which pierces the mountain just above this reservoir.

Consequently, the engineers are able to fill and empty the reservoir back of the experimental dam in a short time, just as one fills and empties a hand basin through the faucets and the waste pipe. This permits experiments to be made at will under conditions of full control very much as if this huge "specimen" were in a laboratory.

New Kite and Balloon Cameras Take Movies

San Antonio, Texas.—A "kite camera" operated by the pulling power of 100-foot centipede-type bamboo and paper kites has just been used successfully for the first time in making motion-picture long shots of troop movements at Camp Stanley, near here.

The camera, wound up with a spring, is set and released at a height of seven feet, grinding away all the time as it ascends a kite string to a height of 1,000 feet. The camera weighs seven pounds and is carried up by a butterfly contrivance with a trap, or catch of rubber bands. When it strikes the kite the catch breaks, the wings automatically fold, and the camera is carried back by its own weight to be reloaded.

A "balloon camera" also is being developed for some battle scenes. A gas bag 20 feet in circumference will have a carrying power of 80 pounds. It will hold a 60-pound camera suspended in a cradle and operated by two men, being held by handles and then released on signal to rise to a height of 100 feet, shooting down on the action for a scant 50 feet of film, grinding automatically.

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