

CALIFORNIA PEAT FARMS

Ground Burns For Weeks or Months on Catching Fire

MACHINERY IN FARMING

Agriculture Carried On Under Conditions not Matched Anywhere Else in the World—At Times Yields Fortunes to Its Owners—Boundaries Marked by Ditches.

These delta lands are an imitation of Holland in the New World. The Sacramento and San Joaquin are widespread streams. Like most Californian rivers, they are wide, rushing torrents in winter and not much more than creeks in summer.

Toward their mouths they used to spread irregularly over a district twenty miles wide in some places, finding a new channel every winter. All over that district was a thick growth of tule—a fat six foot reed.

Here millions of wild ducks and geese used to feed on the seeds of the tule. It is still one of the greatest ducking grounds in the country. Along in the early '70s California capitalists began to study these deltas with a view to reclaiming them. It was found that the decayed tules had formed a light, rich soil twenty or thirty feet deep on the river bed. The needles of the great mountain forests had added to its richness and sand from the placer diggings in the Sierra had tied it down.

They began to dig out islands in the middle of the river, fending it back by heavy walls of earth and rubble. The first island carved out—Rough and Ready, it is called—was a gold mine.

Those were the days when wheat prices were high, and the crops taken off this land were incredibly large. Rough and Ready, devoted to the present time to fruit and to the rearing of blooded dairy cattle, is now one of the most productive areas in California.

The farmers went into it on a larger scale. They carved out Union Island and Bouldin Island, further down the river, and began work on the mouth of the Sacramento.

Early in the game there appeared a new trouble. Those lands, after they had dried out and before they were tied down by the first year's crops, would burn up on the slightest provocation.

The tule reed packs in a mass something like peat. When dry it burns with a slow, sullen flame, like a fire in a sawdust pile.

The regular process of reclamation is to get the dike built hard and fast, leaving a kind of swamp, and then to pump out the water. After that it is left through one dry baking California summer to get ready for the plough.

A spark from a combined harvester or from a distant grain fire would set it going. Then it would smolder and smoulder, advancing perhaps only a few inches a day, but burning down as far as hard pan.

It was found to be a most persistent kind of fire. In the early days they used to run lines of hose from the dredges and pump in water by the million barrels.

After the land is thoroughly burned it is left fallow until the rains of two winters have packed the ash. Then it is ploughed and planted like any other land.

The days of dear wheat are over. There is very little in that business now, even on the broad areas of California. It is only lately, however, that the owners of delta lands have begun to put their incredibly rich soil to other purposes.

A Chinaman, one Wong Jim, showed them the way. One summer he approached a Stockton landholder and asked permission to plant some delta lands in potatoes on shares.

The American refused. Wong came back with another proposition. He would rent the land, cash down, for its average profit in wheat and an advance of a few dollars an acre.

On that basis he went to work, much joked by the American farmers. Next year the Texas potato crop failed and the East had a poor crop but Wong Jim dug out potatoes like nuggets and sold them at famine prices. He returned to China next year to live as a magnate on a fortune estimated at \$40,000.

Then Bouldin Island found that the land was prime soil for asparagus. Small fortunes were plucked up there from canned asparagus for the Eastern markets.

There are no fences; the landholders mark boundaries by ditches. There are very few houses. The islands are not comfortable places for homes, and most of the owners live on the mainland.

When the grain is yellow and drooping big traction engines come in from the mainland, drawing those combined harvesters peculiar to a California harvest.

The combined harvester is mower, threshing machine and sacker rolled into one. It is a gigantic piece of machinery, almost as big as a Mogul locomotive. Among the intricacies of its beams and levers stand the eight men who run it.

The machine goes along behind the engine nearly as fast as a man can walk. A twenty foot scythe cuts the stalks just below the head, and drops them on a canvas belt. A moment later a man on the other side of the machine pulls a lever. Three sacks of grain and a little pile of chaff drop in the swath. The stalks are left standing to be ploughed under for fertilizer in the spring.—New York Sun.

DRAINING THE EVERGLADES.

Vast Areas in Florida Becoming Available as Garden Land.

The department of agriculture is especially interested in the project now on foot of draining the Everglades. These half-flooded swamps to the south of the huge pond known as Lake Okechobee are to be converted into dry and productive land by constructing dikes and pumping out the water—an achievement which, when carried into effect, will bring about the shipment, a dozen years from now, of immense supplies of tomatoes, new potatoes, cabbages, string beans and other fresh garden produce to northern markets all through the winter.

It has even been suggested that Lake Okechobee might be drained by connecting it with the Atlantic ocean by a canal 50 miles long, thus redeeming 600,000 additional acres of first class farming territory.—Outing Magazine.

Men Are in Majority in the U. S.

Taking it "by and large," the male sex is in the majority in our country by some 1,648,221, according to a recent census bulletin. In some of the states, however, the women exceed the men in number, notably in the District of Columbia, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Usually men are in excess in sparsely settled communities and women in thickly populated regions; cities, for example, as a rule have more females than males. In the later years of life the women exceed the men, which seems to indicate that they are longer lived. In the period from 15 to 25 years of age, also, the reports show them to be in excess.—Success Magazine.

King Alfonso's Body Guard.

King Alfonso is perhaps more securely and carefully guarded during the hours of darkness than is any other European monarch, except, perhaps, the sultan of Turkey. For four centuries the slumbers of successive sovereigns of Spain have been watched all night by the "Monteras de Espinosa"—a body of men to whom is relegated the exclusive privilege of guarding their monarch from sunset to sunrise. They must have an honorable military career, and be natives of the town of Espinosa. Ceremoniously, they lock the palace gates at midnight, opening them at 7 the next morning.—London Tatler.

Hospital Cars in Prussia.

The Prussian ministry for railways has placed at every important railway center throughout the kingdom a magnificently built and appointed car for the transport of sick persons. These cars have been specially fitted up from plans supplied by sanitary authorities. Spring seats and every medical device for the alleviation of sufferings during transit have been utilized. There are ice safes, gas stoves for cooking, rooms for attendants and ingenious devices for muffling the sound caused by the motion of the train. It is not intended to make these carriages pay; they have been instituted chiefly on the ground of humanity.

England's Best Known Church.

The name of St. George's, Hanover square, seems to be well known to every American who comes to England, says the London Chronicle, not so much because it is the fashionable "marriage church" in this country, as because President Roosevelt was married in it. A few years back an American dropped into the vestry and looked up the marriage registers, in which, under the date of Dec. 2, 1886, he found the signature of "Theodore Roosevelt, 28, widower, ranchman," and that of "Edith Kermit Carow." Till then even the clerk, J. Moisey, did not know that the American President's signature was in the book.

Japs the Yankees of the East.

The Japanese traders, officials, soldiers and workers are pushing irresistibly into Manchuria, and now that the war is ended the Yankees of the east will guide and instruct the Chinese and dominate them and their markets. It seems likely that, without any Chinese boycott whatever, American industry will be put to the test to compete on fair terms with the Japanese before many years have elapsed.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Number of Feet a Second.

Few men could tell if they were asked how many feet per second they walk. A press photographer, whose work requires him to know all manner of speeds, said the other day:

"The average man walks four feet per second. A dog on its ordinary jog goes eight feet a second. A horse trots 12 feet a second. A reindeer over the ice makes 26 feet. A racehorse makes 43 feet. A sailing ship makes 14 feet."—Chicago Chronicle.

Large English Families.

A report of the awards made by the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society to farm laborers who bring up the largest families without having received parochial relief shows that eight men are fathers of 124 children. One of the men had 20 children born, brought up 17, and placed 12 out in the world.—London Tit-Bits.

London's Consumption of Ice.

London uses in one way or another quite 200,000 tons of ice a year. Although a great deal of ice is made artificially, most of that consumed here is natural and Norwegian. The Norwegian ice crop in an average winter varies from 600,000 to 600,000 tons. At least half of this comes to the United Kingdom, the rest going to the continent.—Tit-Bits.

If you tell a woman that a 50-cent article is worth \$1.50 she will cheerfully give up 98 cents for it.

MRS. HUBBARD IN LABRADOR.

Discovered the Nascappee Indians and Studied Their Customs.

When in June, 1902, it was announced that Leonidas Hubbard, an assistant editor of a New York magazine, had left New York for the purpose of discovering the Nascappee Indians, who had never seen a white man, and of exploring the wilderness of upper Labrador where no white man had ever been, little attention was paid to the report. When six months later the story of the amateur explorer's heroic struggle with the wilderness, which resulted in his death, made its way back to civilization, the world he had left behind him came to an immediate realization of the difficulty of his attempt.

Dillon Wallace accompanied Hubbard on the expedition and when the latter could go no farther left him with their guide, George Elson, while he went to seek aid. Wallace never again found the spot where he had left Hubbard and the head of the expedition perished of starvation.

After the publication of Wallace's book, "The Lure of the Labrador Wild," no secret was made of the distrust with which Mrs. Hubbard



Mrs. Leonidas Hubbard.

regarded her husband's friend. Certain criticisms in the book in regard to her husband's lack of preparation for his last sortie into the unknown was particularly resented. While Mr. Hubbard's family acknowledged publicly the service Wallace performed for his friend on the ill-fated expedition and absolved him from all blame, he was never forgiven by Mrs. Hubbard for what she considered the desertion of her husband.

When on May 30, 1905, Wallace told of his intention of taking up the work of exploring Labrador where Hubbard left it, the announcement was made that Mrs. Hubbard had already made her preparations for a similar journey, not in the cause of science, but to substantiate her own theory of her husband's death.

The first sign of the rivalry of the two parties came in the report that George Elson, the half-breed Cree Indian who had acted as guide for the first expedition, was going with Mrs. Hubbard.

After four months of successful exploration she came back supplied with information that will undoubtedly cause the Canadian government to order its topographical board to draw up a new map of this wild region.

She witnessed the annual migration of the countless thousands of caribou, a spectacle which the uncivilized savages of Labrador only have before been privileged to witness. She saw the rushing rivers coated with ice in August and shivered beneath the blasts of snow and icy sleet that transform night into day in these weary solitudes.

She discovered a new river which she may yet be given the honor of naming. She traced this river from its source to its mouth, and only she and the intrepid Indian guides who accompanied her know the fearful perils that beset those who may in future attempt to navigate it.

Mrs. Hubbard disproved the general belief that the Indians whom she found near the big lakes in the interior never visit the coast, saying that they occasionally go out to trade and barter. She said both the Nascappee and the band of the Montagnais tribe were startled when she appeared among them, but accorded her royal treatment.

She says: "I have secured to the name of my husband the honor of having been the first white person to traverse these rivers and furnish a correct map."

A Matter of Title.

It has been suggested that the Czar abandon one of his titles, "autocrat of all the Russias." Like many other high-sounding phrases applied to royalty it is regarded as now out of place. The King of England was until 1801 "defender of the faith of France." The word "czar" is never used in Russian society. Czarina is not Russian at all; czarita is, but is employed only in ecclesiastical ceremonies. The word used to describe the Czar means "lord." Americans speak incorrectly of the German emperor as "the Kaiser," as if there were but one. He is of, course, Kaiser Wilhelm, just as the Austrian emperor is Kaiser Francis Joseph, and the British sovereign King Edward. "Sublime porte" does not correctly describe the Sultan of Turkey, any more than the "government" would describe the President. The "mikado" is a term unknown in Japan. The mistake most common, however, is to describe Kaiser Wilhelm as Emperor of Germany. He is King of Prussia, German emperor.—Chicago News.

STERN CODE OF THE HINDUS.

Ideal of Truthfulness Held High and Carefully Practiced.

Absolute self-mastery is the ideal of a Hindu, writes Swami Abhedananda in Good Housekeeping. Every man and woman in India struggles hard to accomplish it by practicing austerities, fasting and various kinds of devotional exercises. The householder is not supposed to indulge in the desires of the flesh. He should practice moderation in eating and drinking. He should hold the ideal of simple living and practice it in his daily life. The Hindu men and women are not allowed to drink liquors, and the higher the social rank the more rigorous becomes the law of self-restraint.

The majority of the Hindus live strictly upon vegetarian diet, and do not eat animal flesh. They do not kill animals for food, and they train their children to practice this virtue of non-killing. They do not believe that lower animals are created to sustain human life; but, on the contrary, they hold that in the process of evolution the life of the lower animal is as important as that of the human being.

There are many families in India whose ideal is to sacrifice everything for the sake of truth, because they believe that the eternal truth cannot be realized by one who is not absolutely truthful.

Feathers on Hire.

Ostrich plumes are as much of a necessity to the London coster girl on her outings as are the pearl buttons to her masculine companion, and the big trimmed hats with their drooping feathers are familiar in all gatherings of this class. Many of the girls cannot afford to keep their money tied up in useless plumes, and there thrives a brisk industry in the hiring of these feathers. The loan of a single plume for a day costs but 1s., or for 1s. a gorgeous trio may be had for an outing, to be returned promptly the next morning. Weather conditions determine the terms somewhat, since a wet, foggy day will take the curl out of the feathers and make recurring necessary, for which "Arriet" has to pay an extra 1s. On a bank holiday some shops rent out several hundred plumes, while on other occasions there is a steady trade with young women who wish to adorn themselves for an outing.—London Tit-Bits.

Kaiser to Suppress Gambling.

Drastic police action is on the initiative of the Kaiser, being taken against the gambling clubs of the German capital, owing to the numerous scandals of recent years. The 1900 Club is especially the object of suspicion. It cost £50,000 to build, another £20,000 was spent in equipment, and the club's commission on the stakes changing hands amounts to £5,000 a month. As this commission is small, the sum reveals that the money changing hands in the club in a year must be reckoned at hundreds of thousands of pounds. A systematic inquiry has been instituted into the affairs of this and other clubs, the principal points raised being: Has any member lost his fortune by gambling? Are members suspected of being professional gamblers? Do guests take part in gambling?—The London Globe.

Ambassador Reid in England.

It is estimated that if Ambassador Whitelaw Reid shall keep up the social pace he has set in England his term as American representative there will cost him about \$500,000. He is laying plans for a social and diplomatic campaign such as none of his predecessors thought of undertaking. Dorechester house the London mansion which the Reids have taken, cannot be fittingly maintained under \$75,000 a year. West Park, a country place he has engaged, will cost \$25,000 more, exclusive of elaborate entertainments planned there. Then there are the opera, trips to the continent, etc., which will bring the total up to or beyond the formidable figure mentioned.

In Printing a Newspaper.

In how short a time a tree can be converted into a newspaper was tried recently. At 7:35 a. m. three trees were felled and taken to a nearby paper factory. By 9:34 the first sheet of paper issued from the machines. The printing works of the nearest newspaper were about two miles distant. The paper was carried there in a motor car at full speed, the presses set to work and at exactly 10 a. m. the newspaper was ready to be printed. The whole process from the forest to the reader thus only occupied the space of two hours and twenty-five minutes.

The Steam Watering Wagon.

The excellent results obtained with the steam watering wagon in the streets of Paris, have induced the Municipal College to order an automobile combined watering and street-cleaning machine, in which all the motions are given by an oil engine, at a cost of 12,000 francs (£480). Trial has shown that 15,000 square meters, 16,666 square yards of road, can be cleaned mechanically in an hour, thus accomplishing four times the work of a horse road cleaner.—London Engineer.

Bathing in Berlin.

A Berlin landlord has not only sued a tenant for loss sustained through her excessive use of water for bathing purposes, but has promulgated the extraordinary theory that "no respectable woman takes a bath every day."

Poverty in Japan.

Real destitution is rarely seen in Japan. Though some of its inhabitants are very poor, yet all seem to be fairly well fed, clothed and housed and are invariably cheerful. Nearly all the Japanese are of cleanly habits and rarely untidy.

Marion Harland in Beth-lehem

Interesting Christmas Experiences in the City of Christ's Birth

The little city of Beth-lehem is set upon a hill which is crowned by the Church of the nativity, writes Marion Harland in the December Lippincott's. The Grotto, which all sects of believers have agreed upon as the birthplace of our Lord, is directly under the church and entirely dependent for light upon artificial means. A silver star is set into the pavement of a semicircular niche, above which is an altar adorned with the usual churchly symbols. By the light of fifteen colored lamps suspended under the altar we read the inscription in Latin:

"Here Jesus Christ was Born of the Virgin Mary."

The long line of pilgrims prostrated themselves, one by one, and kissed the star, some with dropping tears—all, silently—solemnized beyond the range of speech. It did not add to our solemnity to be shown the manger, decorated with lace and an embroidered altar-cloth, and defended from sacrilegious fingers by a gilded railing. The really impressive things were occasional glimpses of the rough stone walls and roof of the ancient stable, visible here and there between the gaudy decorations.

The service of Christmas-Eve began at half-past ten at night and concluded at half-past two in the morning! At midnight a lullaby from the organ preluded the supreme moment of the occasion—the sudden folding back of a curtain above the altar, revealing a manger cradle and a big wax doll. The exultant outburst of organ and choir in a magnificent Gloria in Excelsis accompanied the stately procession of the entire staff of priests and acolytes, chanting and swinging censers while they bore up one isle and down another, back to the high altar, the same doll, dressed in cambric and lace, nestling in the embrace of the richly apparelled bishop.

Every incident of our last night in Jamal's camp in Beth-lehem recurs to me with peculiar distinctness. How, as the darkness deepened, the red, blinking eyes of the charcoal craters of the wonderful portable stove presided over by our accomplished chef in the door of the kitchen-tent—the night being breezless—shone upon the under sides of the olive boughs over our heads, while our quiet talk went on of what had happened in the old town behind us.

We spoke longest of David's Greatest Son, and of the Birth that was to draw the eyes and thoughts of all nations to the little city on the hilltop in the land of Juda.

At midnight, kept wakeful by the rush and burden of thought, I arose to look from the tent door upon the watchful stars that here have a conscious majesty I have never recognized elsewhere, and wondered anew where, amidst the glittering hosts "marshalled on the nightly plain" had flashed the Star of Bete-lehem. For the last time in our eventful journeyings we saw the dawn redden the Mountains of Moab, the thin crescent of the waning moon dying, while we gazed, before the brightness of the coming sun.

I shall always be grateful that that night of ineffable calm and the beauty of the new day are prominent among the pictures conjured before my mental vision, as at the wave of an enchanter's wand, by the name of "Ephrath—which is Beth-lehem."

NOTICE.

In Re the Application of Walter Katz, for Pension. Notice is hereby given that an application will be made to the Board of Pensions, at its next regular meeting at Harrisburg, on Wednesday, December 30th, 1906, for a pension for Walter Katz, who was convicted at No. one, December Sessions, 1905, in the Court of Oyer and Terminer of Columbia County, of the crime of horse stealing, and sentenced to the Eastern Penitentiary for a term of ten years. WALTER SHIPMAN, Atty. for Walter Katz, No. 25, 1906, 332 Market St., Sunbury, Penna.

Professional Cards.

- N. U. FUNK, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Ent's Building, Court House Square, BLOOMSBURG, PA.
J. H. MAIZE, ATTORNEY AT LAW, INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE AGENT, Office in Townsend's Building, BLOOMSBURG, PA.
A. L. FRITZ, ATTORNEY AT LAW, Office—Bloomburg Nat'l Bank Bldg., 2d floor BLOOMSBURG, PA.
JOHN G. FREEZE, JOHN G. HARMAN, FREEZE & HARMAN, ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELLORS AT LAW BLOOMSBURG, PA. Office on Centre Street, 1st door below Court House.

Advertisements for various professionals and businesses in Bloomsburg, PA, including attorneys (McKulip, Yost, John, Keler, Yetter, Rhawn, Herring, Johnston, Montgomery Smith, Flynn, Berman, John, Brown), a dentist (Hess), an insurance agent (Watson McKelvy), and a general insurance company (Lutz & Son). Also includes notices for a telephone exchange and a city hotel.