

FARM NOTES.

Work of the United States Department of Agriculture.

GUY ELLIOTT MITCHELL.

The New Stingless Bee.

A gentle bee! Is such an insect in existence? Surely every thought of our honey-makers brings up an association of our childhood days when we used to rob the hives and partake of the stored-up sweetness, perhaps to be amply rewarded with swollen cheeks and hands as a result of the resentful nature of the busy workers. So, then, the announcement from the Department of Agriculture that it has discovered a stingless bee, or rather a bee with no inclination to sting, comes as something of a shock, making us wish that we were children again and able to once more enjoy the hidden treasure of a hive without having projected into our systems the irritating venom of the bee's sting.

To the beekeeper, and especially the amateur, this discovery of the bee ex-

Bee Hives in New York City.

The roof of a prominent business house in New York City is known to contain a prosperous apiary, while



READY FOR ANGRY BEES.

another of about 40 colonies is located on the roof of a store in the business portion of Cincinnati, Ohio, and from which 30 to 40 pounds of honey per colony are usually obtained each year.

Mr. Benton, in speaking of the present methods of bee culture, stated that it is always desirable to have gentle bees, but that other essentials are a good smoker and a veil of black bobinet or Brussels net, to draw over the hat, and a pair of gloves, preferably of rubber, may be used at first. These appliances may be safely dispensed with if the gentlest bees are kept.

The Department of Agriculture maintains a modern apiary just a short distance from the main building where the various experiments with different varieties of bees have been made.

Government Apiarist Bee Foraging.
Mr. Benton has just departed on a tour of the globe hunting for desirable types of honey-makers. He will make a collection of the Caucasian bee, but perhaps the most interesting feature of his trip will be his visit to India and the Philippine Islands for the purpose of securing the giant bee of those countries. This bee has never been subjected to domestication, and its artificial culture is unknown. It is very much larger than any of the bees now being raised in apiaries, and the length of its tongue enables it to reach the sweets of many honey-laden flowers and plants which our own kinds cannot gather.

CARE OF LIVE STOCK IN TRANSIT.

Secretary Wilson's late visit to Chicago to inspect the incoming stock trains and the manner in which they are loaded with cattle will, it is stated, bring about an improved condition in the handling of interstate shipments of livestock. Mr. Wilson gave the Livestock and Railway Committee, appointed to confer with him, to understand that while he expected them to obey the law, his department had no intention of unduly hampering shipments, and that he would modify certain existing orders; but he demanded of them in return that they do everything in their power to make livestock shipments still more humane.

Speaking of the condition of cattle arriving in the yards, Secretary Wilson said: "They appeared to have been well cared for. The department is not trying to impose hardships on the railways or the shippers, only to secure the best care for the stock sent out on the hoof. The railways have not observed the law, in my opinion, as closely as they might have done, but I am now assured that they will do so, and are anxious to co-operate with the government. If they do so, we will have no more trouble over this question."

Scoping Them Up by Handfuls.
They were even scooped up by the handfuls and poured back on the rack. The operator was not even stung once, and all through the experiments the honey-givers retained the amiability which has made them famous at the Department.

While bee raising is carried on successfully in the small towns in the country, few persons know that the city is well adapted, to a limited extent, to this interesting industry. The city of Washington is an example of this, bees located there doing better

not far from the facts in the case, and he can well point with some pride to the splendid organization of his department at this time, even though much hue and cry has been made over the recent discovery of "graft" in the statistical division of the department. It is only due Mr. Wilson also to say that it is entirely to his own enthusiasm and the enthusiasm and energy with which he has instilled the corps of chiefs and assistants which he has gathered about him that his department has advanced during his eight years of incumbency by such leaps and bounds. Although a department in name—a branch of the Cabinet—it was, prior to the present Secretary's appointment, little more than a bureau. It now takes rank as one of the foremost, important and most popular branches of the administration. The cynics declare that with less enthusiasm and more caution and conservatism there would have been less scandal. The proven facts brought to light thus far do not, as a matter of fact, disclose anything very terrible, or any concert of action to defraud the government or the people, and the individual cases which have been proven, and which may be proven, have and will be accorded summary action. The housecleaning now in progress will undoubtedly have a beneficial effect and any official decapitations will tend to improve future conditions.

In the meantime, the Department machinery is grinding ahead turning out extremely valuable products to the American farmer.

Growing and Making Maple Sugar.

The Maple Sugar Industry is an interesting bulletin (No. 53, Bureau of Forestry), prepared by William F. Fox and William F. Hubbard, and containing also a discussion of the adulteration of maple sugar by Chemist Wiley. Mr. Hubbard, one of the brightest young men of the Bureau of Forestry, was drowned recently while canoeing on the Potomac River, near Washington.

BODILY HEAT OF ESKIMOS.

Normal Temperature Frequently Over One Hundred Degrees.
Observations made in our Alaskan territory show that the bodily temperature of the Eskimo is considerably higher than that of Europeans. While the mean temperature of the party making the observations, in December and July, was 98.1 degrees and 97.7 degrees, respectively, that of the Eskimos for the corresponding dates was 100.2 degrees and 98.4 degrees. Although the Eskimos live at a temperature of zero Fahrenheit they, at times, seem to be totally unconscious of the cold around them and occasionally open their clothing around the



ESKIMO AND REINDEER.

walst and expose their bare skin to the cold air. Just as one in a temperate climate would open his coat when abnormally warm through violent exercise, Arctic travelers have found that as a rule the Eskimos strip when in their houses and sleep naked. They seem as much addicted to drinking less-cold water as do the people of the more civilized countries.

USE OF HERBS DECLINING.

Good Old Remedies Our Grandfathers Dug in Woods Have Passed Away.
In the village of Greenwich, England, in a quaint old street where the buildings are so thick that they tangle themselves together in a knot, there is a queer little shop with a sign over the door that reads, "An Herb for Every Pain."
On the shelves of this shop are to be found hundreds of different kinds of herbs for the cure of all bodily ailments. There can be found all the old-time herbs that our grandmothers used to have hanging around the walls of the kitchen and stored away in the attic, ready to be made into teas and syrups in case of sickness.

People who still have old-fashioned ideas about health and sickness go there for hucklewood, sunnatch, winter green, sassafras, camomile, horehound, yellow dock, catnip, cherry bark, mullein, extract of oats, lobelia and so on. All these herbs have the reputation of being good for some one or more ailments. Catnip for nervousness, sassafras for the blood, horehound and boneset for colds, sunnatch for sore throat, wintergreen for rheumatism, lobelia as an emetic in case of poisoning, mullein for consumption, etc.

Nearly all of these herbs are made into teas. Sassafras tea, boneset tea and catnip tea are brewed and served either cold or hot. Among the many hundreds of herbs that are sold in this little shop are some that are deadly poisons, and they are labeled and sold under the same restrictions as other poisons.

The good old remedies that our grandfathers hunted and dug in the woods, those that our grandmothers planted and tended in the garden, have given way to harmful remedies, to drugs that leave the patient in a worse condition than when he began their use. We believe it has been a mistake to give up the old remedies.

No Rebate Tribulations There.
From the Washington Post.
It is certain that the President will have no difficulty in adjusting the railway question in China, where there is no obstinate Senate in the way.

SOUTHERN TIMBER SUPPLY.

SUFFICIENT FOR NATION'S DEMANDS IF RATIONALLY USED.

Young Trees Planted on Cleared Areas Constantly Coming Forward to Maturity, Thus Making a Constant Supply.

Since the vast timber lands of the Northwest have been practically denuded the lumbermen in that region are seeking new fields in the South, for a lumberman is always a lumberman and a pioneer. The yellow pine and hardwood forests of several of the southern states, which have been long-neglected for the lack of transportation facilities, have now attracted the attention of northern lumbermen and the southern forests are being visited by the railroad and the saw mill. Timber land which a few years ago was considered worth a dollar an acre now brings from \$10 to \$25, and with the advent of this practically new industry and increased population, much of this land after being logged has been disposed of for agricultural purposes at a large advance over what was paid for it with the timber standing, and has been converted into prosperous farm homes.

Lumber Waste and Forest Fires.

The average American lumber camp is known to be a most wasteful institution, little regard being paid to the growth of new timber, but the greatest danger comes from forest fires which are fostered through the dried tops and brush left by the lumbermen.

The excellent work of the government Forestry Bureau is, however, calling the attention of broad-minded men to the national seriousness of such waste, and it is stated that in the South the Southern Railway is doing its utmost to encourage ordinary business prudence on the part of land owners and mill operators to insure the perpetuation of our great timber resources. Throughout the South several species of pine trees grow up quickly on cover land, and even on new land. The New Orleans Times-Democrat states that with land comparatively cheap and worthless for agricultural purposes, the growing of pine in the South makes one of the best investments, provided fires are kept out.

Rational Forest Cutting.

The rules and regulations adopted by a large lumber company in Louisiana, which has seen fit to co-operate with the Bureau of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture, provide for the cutting of its timber so that the supply will never be exhausted, only the surplus trees being cut, and for the planting of all cleared areas in young trees, constantly coming forward to maturity.

While our present timber consumption is far in excess of the supply of maturing trees, it is stated by the Bureau of Forestry that if a similar system of forestry were applied to all American forests, it would insure an ample and continual supply of lumber for the needs of the nation.

DAIRYING ON SAN JUAN HILL.

Historic Spot Now the Abiding Place of Contented Cattle.
An official of the Department of Agriculture, in making investigations in Cuba shortly after the close of the Spanish-American war, found an illustration of the old truth that the business of peace follows closely upon the tracks of devastation of war. Close to the summit of San Juan Hill, up which Colonel Roosevelt and his Rough Riders plunged on that memorable July day, was found a dairy house sufficiently large to house three or four cattle.



THE MODERN DAIRY ON SAN JUAN HILL.

Around this was a fenced enclosure constructed of timber and barbed wire, evidently collected from the remnants of the trenches and entanglements constructed by both the Americans and Spaniards when they faced each other in deadly combat.

THEY EAT MOSQUITOS.

Young Fish Make Short Work of "Wrigglers."

Last March some 400 whitetfish were born in the hatchery of the New York Aquarium, and they have now grown to an average length of about two inches. Naturally such little fishes, when born under the conditions of nature, would feed on minute forms of animal life usually present in water, but in the Aquarium it was necessary to provide food collected by man. First they got herring roe chopped up very fine and strained through cheesecloth. Later they were given finely chopped liver, but now they are partaking of a fish delicacy in the way of mosquito larvae.

For two or three years the aquarium has had a mosquito exhibit, showing the various interesting periods in the life of a mosquito. One of these, familiar to most of us, is the wriggler of the rain-water barrel and of stagnant pools and ponds. The aquarium collector often comes across places where perhaps a half a hundred thousand wrigglers can be scooped up in a gallon of water, and so it has been no difficult matter to provide in ample supply of live food for the tiny white fish, and other babies of the finny tribe being artificially reared.

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AGE OF A COMMON CROW.

Tag Would Indicate That One Lived More Than Twenty Years.

George McCarren, a farmer living near this city, has just received a much prized little aluminum plate marked as follows: "Return to George McCarren, Orrville, Ohio," with which an interesting story is connected.

George McCarren, Sr., father of the man who received the little billet of aluminum, was an eccentric naturalist, and spent much time in the study of birds and insects. During McCarren's youth, about twenty years ago, he says he remembers being told by his father, the elder McCarren, of a dispute the latter had had with a fellow-naturalist of Akron, Ohio, as to the age to be attained by a common crow, and finally to settle the matter McCarren attached an aluminum tag to a crow captured in the fields and sent the bird forth with the plate securely fastened to its neck by wire. The legend on the plate requested the finder to return it to McCarren in case anything should happen to the bird.

As McCarren, Jr. remembers it, the two men made a bet as to whether the plate would be returned within twenty years. If the crow was killed or died they counted on the little billet being found and returned to the address on the plate. If it was not returned they believed it would be sufficient evidence that the bird would be still alive. McCarren bet that the plate would not be returned within that time; hence he won the bet. The crow was shot by a farmer boy named Angers in Holmes county recently and the billet returned to the son of the better, the elder McCarren having died before he could realize the proceeds and the satisfaction of winning his wager. The little billet is highly prized by the McCarrens as a memento of the father's eccentricity.

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NEW STINGLESS BEE.

ports comes as a thing long looked for and greatly to be desired. They have had dreams of bees that could be handled without gloves or masks, without smudge of stings as though they were handling but common flies. It is true that some bees are more amiable than others, and with many persons where care is not taken to avoid all stings the system eventually becomes accustomed to the poison, so that beyond momentary pain a sting causes little or no inconvenience.

Has a Stinger; but Never Stings.

Of the races already in general cultivation, the Carniolans are the gentlest, but the "gentle" bee now exploited by the Department is the most amiable honey-giving insect of all, and is practically stingless, although he has a sting. This bee is the discovery of Mr. Frank Benton, the Apiarist of the Department of Agriculture, who was instrumental in hav-



FRANK BENTON, GOVERNMENT APIARIST.

ing it introduced from the Caucasus. This Caucasian bee is not inclined to sting, and may be handled at all times without resort to the protection of the bee veil or the smoke pot. Experiments were made to test the temper of the new bee by giving the hive containing them half a dozen severe kicks and then when they were well stirred up, by taking out several racks of the bees, handling them carelessly and making no effort to keep them from alighting on the hands or face.

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BEE CORNER IN GROUNDS OF DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AT WASHINGTON.

during the spring and summer months than those in the surrounding country, owing to the excellent pasturage afforded for the bees in the numerous gardens, parks and nectar-yielding shade trees.

Graft in the Department.

Secretary Wilson's recent somewhat facetious remark that when he entered the Agricultural Department he found a corps of half-starved scientists was