A GREAT CHRYSANTHEMUM SHOW

GUY ELLIOTT MITCHELL.

Perhaps nowhere in the world can one find such a varied and magnificent collection of chrysanthemums as may be seen every autumn at the Nation's Capitol. The chrysanthemum shows of Washington have become a fixed institution so that society—diplomatic circles as well—look forward interestedly for the opening of the government hothouses which display the finest of Uncle Sam's experiments in this branch of flower growing.

THE TWO STAR CHRYSANTHEMUMS.
The Mrs. Roosevelt, A Yellow Beauty 10 Inches Across, and the Beatrice May, A Dazzling White Ball.

The annual chrysanthemum show of the Department of Agriculture, under the auspices of the bureau of plant industry, of which Dr. B. T. Galloway is chief, has just been held in the new greenhouses of the department. The building was one mass of bloom with its several thousand of plants, representing about 130 different varieties. Many of these are the product of the government's gardeners, artificial pollenation and cross breeding valuable varieties, bringing about most startling results. This year the most successful of the department's efforts is a magnificent yellow flower fully ten inches in diameter. The petals are extremely heavy, well shaped and all in all the bloom is a huge ball of molten gold. The flower is not merely one for show; florists who have seen it declare that it is of much commercial value.

The Mrs. Roosevelt Chrysanthemum.

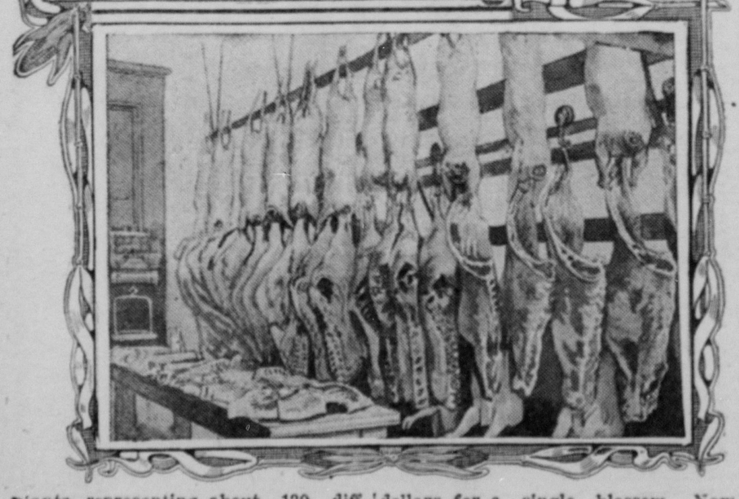
Secretary Wilson was so pleased with this "Seedling of 1905" that he authorized it named Mrs. Roosevelt, in honor of the first lady of the land. But the department's experiments along the line of chrysanthemum crossing are not always a success. Last spring efforts were made to cross two varieties—Merza and Lieutenant-Colonel Du Croisset—the largest of the white and yellow kinds—with the hope of producing a combination of value. When the flower of the new plant unfolded itself it presented an ugly mass of brown, red, yellow and white, and of but ordinary size. It had gone back. Other hybrids have a tendency to go back to single petal varieties and to distinctly different color from the parents. And yet each year the efforts of the government gardeners are rewarded, even though they produce one good specimen, by obtaining a chrysanthemum of rare beauty and shape.

Good Grafting.

A plant at the Department's show this year which attracted more than usual attention was a specimen about four feet tall on which grew eighteen different and distinct varieties, some white, some yellow, while others were pink, brown and red. This was obtained by grafting stems from valuable sorts on a good stock.

The first chrysanthemum known to florists was yellow and was grown in Japan. It was carried over to China and from that country rapidly spread all over the world. The passing years however, wrought wonders, and the chrysanthemum, the "autumn queen," now claims the whole world as its home. Many of the present generation can remember how but a comparatively few years ago the only chrysanthemums exhibited were to be found in the show windows of florists and the flower fanciers were taxed sums ranging from one to three dollars for a single blossom. Now, however, when plant experts have simplified the art of cultivating the flower such prices would shock even the most extravagant minded.

Skim Milk Fed Calves at Supper.



Skim Milk Fed Carcases.

Practical Farm Experiments.

Of the various publications of the Department of Agriculture the most useful and probably the most popular, is a farmer's bulletin issued five or six times a year on experiment station work. "Practical Farm Experiments" would probably be a comprehensive title for these bulletins, as each pamphlet of about 30 pages is composed of a dozen or fifteen short descriptions of practical farm matters, the outcome of the experiments and tests of the variocs government experiment stations all over the country. Their value lies largely in the fact that each article is only a couple of pages in length and it can be picked up and read through at odd moments, whereas when a farmer receives a longer bulletin he is more likely to lay it away for some future reading when he has more time, and as time is usually pressing on the farm, it is likely never to get read at all.

Farmers' Bulletin No. 233 is the last issue of these bulletins and its little stories are decidedly interesting. Information given on the root system of field crops will be a surprise to probably even some of the best informed farmers. An illustration is shown of corn roots as they occupy the ground in the corn rows. It shows a myriad of small rootlets, entirely encompassing the ground in every direction for a depth of almost four feet. The root systems of various other plants are described. Wheat roots occupy the ground to a depth of four feet. Flax roots go down three and four feet. Grass roots, four to six feet. Red clover completely occupies the upper three feet of soil. Crimson clover roots in a single year grow three feet. Alfalfa roots go to the enormous depth of twenty to thirty feet. All of which may give some farmers new ideas as to cultivation which breaks the roots of plants, and the distance at which to plant. When late potato hills are three feet apart each way the soil is very fully occupied by the roots to a depth of three feet. Each potato hill, therefore, occupies twenty-seven cubit feet of soil.

Salt Not Needed For Asparagus.

Another short article is on the Proper Fertilizers for Asparagus. Although salt has been considered a time-honored necessity for this crop, it has been found that asparagus will yield as well without as with it except for the fact that the salt prevents the growth of weeds.

Growing Mushrooms for Home Use, is another short article and Onion Culture covers another. Another short article gives the remarkable results of forcing early rhubarb with ether.

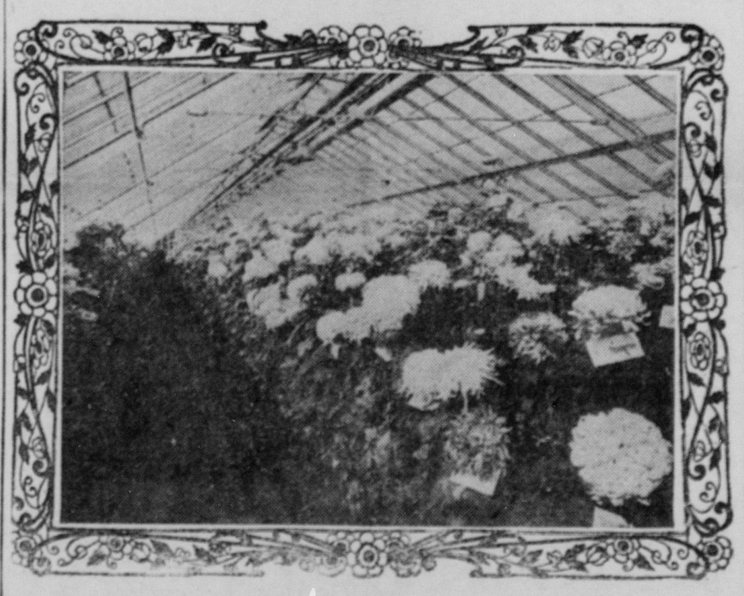
Raising Calves on Skim Milk, supplemented, of course, by grain, is an instructive little article, covering the results of experiments in this line in the government stations in Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska and Utah. Entire success has been had with the skim milk diet and the practice is considered even more desirable by some authorities than allowing the youngsters to have natural milk.

Other topics discussed are Noodles, a product prepared by European housewives and some manufacturers from flour with the addition of a certain amount of eggs and salt the dough being rolled into sheets and cut into strips or fanciful shapes; Condition Powders and Special Stimulating Feeds for Fowls and Farm Animals; the Relative Cost of Producing Meat from the Beef Type and the Dairy Type of Cattle; the Use of Animal Food for Young Ducks, showing the gains of ducklings on rations containing different proportions of animal food; the Bad Effect of Using Milk from Diseased Cows and the Production of Cider Vinegar.

This is a free bulletin and application should be made to your senator or member of congress, or to Secretary James Wilson at Washington.

Coffee For the Army.

The yearly contract for supplying coffee for the United States Army is about to be let by the Quartermaster General, and the Department of Agriculture has been called upon to decide which brand shall be purchased. This test was made under the supervision of Dr. Wiley, Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry. He selected a jury of veteran coffee drinkers who know and can tell good coffee from bad by flavor and by the odor with the pot at probably a hundred yards distant. The jury assembled in Dr. Wiley's office, where the bureau cook had prepared several small lots of coffee from the samples submitted. They were tested by the jury from cups and spoons. After the test the jury was dismissed and the members each wrote a separate report, giving his views of the coffee, and stating which of the samples he considered the best. These were placed in sealed envelopes and sent to Dr. Wiley who opened them and submitted the finding to the Quartermaster General. Dr. Wiley also constituted a part of the jury—a foreman, as it were—to ascertain whether his findings and judgment of the quality of the coffee coincided with those of the others.



CHRYSANTHEMUM WEALTH IN THE GOVERNMENT GREENHOUSE.

One Minute Butter.

The instantaneous ice-cream maker seems about to give way to an instantaneous butter maker. This is a churn capable of making butter in sixty seconds. The machine is so handy that it might very well be placed on the tea table as an accessory to the cups and teapot, and yet not look out of place. All that is necessary is to furnish the cream with a temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and butter can be made at any time desired—while you wait. The "Empire Churn," reports Consul Liefeld, of Freiburg, Baden, does not even need a special vessel for holding the cream. The cream is placed in the vessel so that the dasher is in the center, and about 1 1-2 inches below the surface. The handle is then turned slowly for a few seconds, and then at a good speed, and within one minute butter is formed. Then some fresh cold water is poured in and the handle turned slowly two or three times when the butter is ready for washing, salting and eating.

ALFALFA TWO YEARS OLD.

OLD AGE PENSION.

Much Attention Given in France to the Care of the Indigent.

France evidently does not believe that the old should be chloroformed and put out of the way, for, according to official reports received from United States officials located at Paris, that government has a system of pensioning for the aged. For more than a century the French government has been experimenting with schemes for giving an annuity to the old, not, however with entire success.

At the present time deposits are received from any person, regardless of age, but the amount may not exceed 500 francs ($96.50) in the course of a year. An account may be opened for a child of three years of age; a married woman may deposit money without her husband's consent. At any age between fifty and sixty-five (or earlier in case of permanent disability to work) the depositor may claim his annuity, which is calculated according to the amount of his deposit and interest and the probabilities of life, but the annuity may not exceed 1,200 francs ($231.60).

In rural districts the tax gatherer is empowered to receive deposits, and in many factories a certain percentage is deducted from the wages and paid to the Caisse in the workman's name. A branch of the Caisse may be founded in any town or village, with the permission of the prefect of the department, and there are about 2,300 of such branches, with nearly 340,000 depositors.

There are several large institutions for the care of the indigent aged. Some of these are free and in others a small charge is made for board and lodging. At Issy, near Paris, is an institution for widowers, widows, or married couples, of whom both are over sixty-five years of age and who have been married at least fifteen years.

There are many small institutions founded by private persons for old officials, at some of which the charge is as high as $250 a year. Some religious orders still shelter a few aged persons, either gratuitously or at a small sum per annum.

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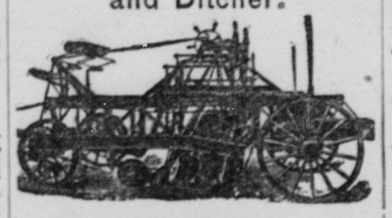

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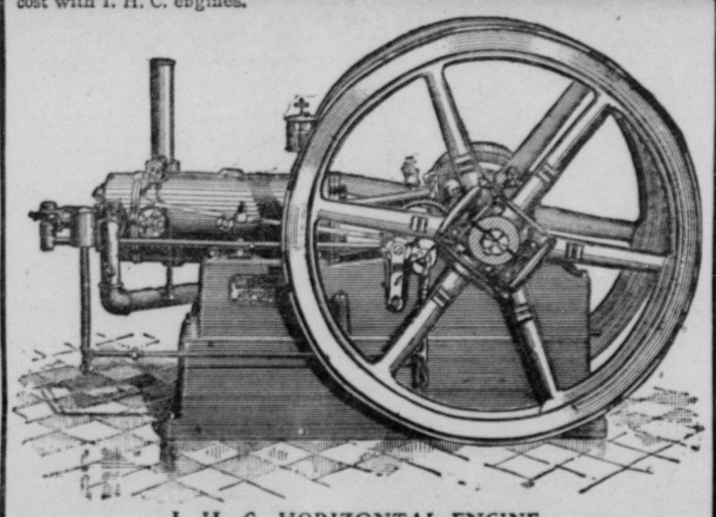

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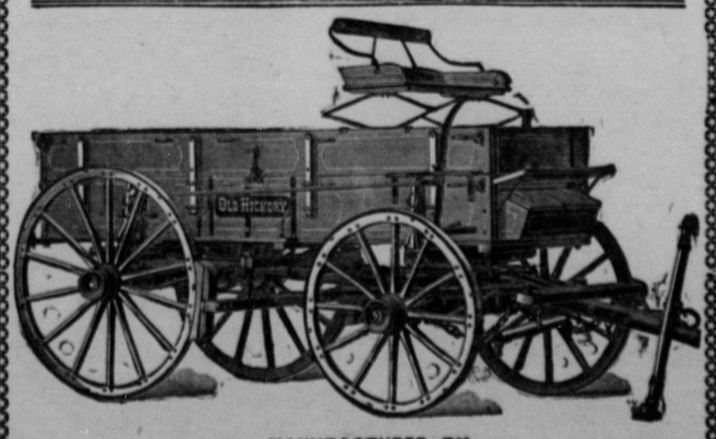

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