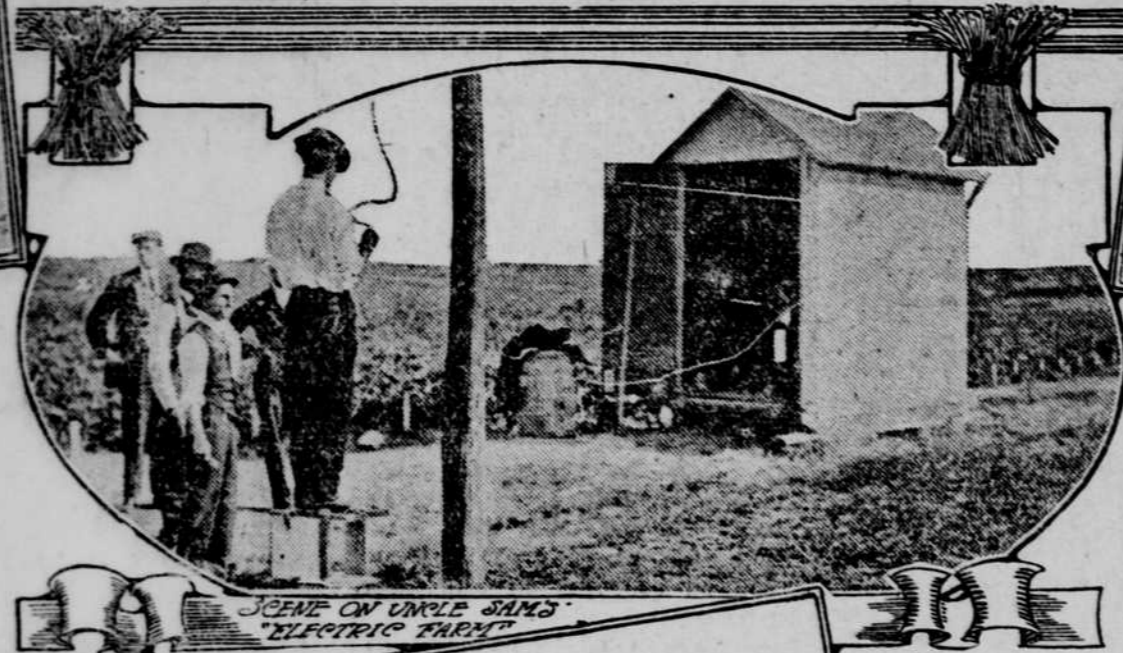




DR BRIGGS WIRING HIS EXPERIMENT FARM

FARMING BY THE AID OF ELECTRICITY



SCENE ON UNCLE SAM'S "ELECTRIC FARM"



AT WORK ON THE ELECTRIC WIRE ABOVE THE WHEAT AREA

UNCLE SAM is making a try at using the magic current to help the growth of crops. In order to test this new idea the government has recently laid out what is believed to be the first "electric farm" in the United States. It isn't a very big farm, to be sure, having, to begin with, a total area of only an acre and a half. All the same, the progress of vegetation on this little plot will be watched with keen interest, for it may point the way to helping the farmers of the future in important respects and even may be the means of making some of them independent of climate.

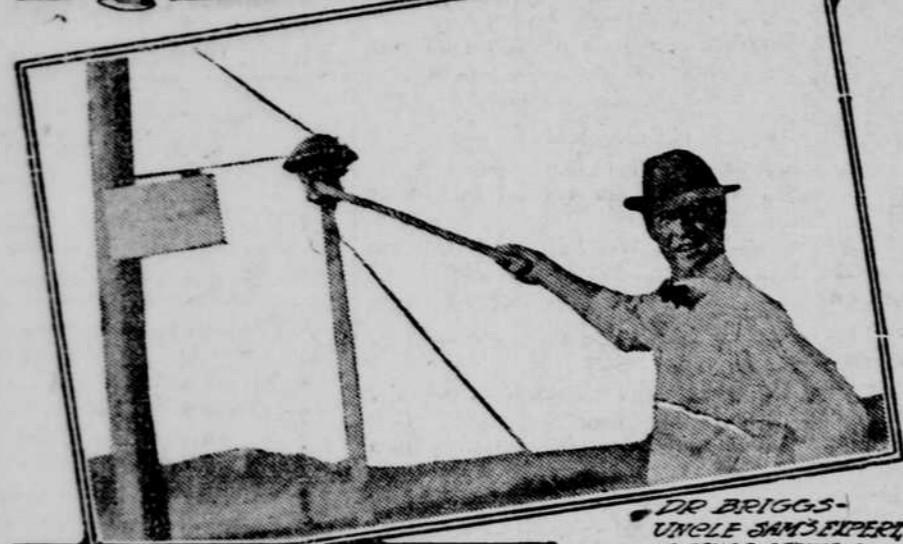
Of course it is not sought to convey the impression that the present undertaking by the United States department of agriculture at its most important experiment farm is the first effort to make electricity useful on the farm. Public as well as private enterprise invaded that field long ago and thus we find today many farmers in various parts of the country developing electricity for home consumption by means of power plants right on the premises, the energy for generating being supplied by the gasoline engines which are becoming so common in the rural districts, or through the harnessing of water power which has been done successfully on so many farms. Moreover, the electricity thus generated is not used merely for illumination, etc., inside the farm buildings. Progressive farmers and dairymen have adapted the twentieth century power to many tasks that had formerly to be done by human hands—as, for example, milking and churning and feed cutting.

But Uncle Sam's new venture in electric farming pursues quite a different path. This latest function of the magic current is not to supplant manual labor, but to assist nature. To particularize, in popular form, it may be explained that the idea is to have electricity supplement sunlight in its influence upon growing crops. The artificial warmth and glow will be called into play as a proxy for the burning beams from the orb above on days when there is no sunlight and in the mornings and evenings of the short winter days when old Sol is working shorter hours than in mid-summer. Perhaps electricity cannot ever be expected to prove so great a stimulus to growing plants as is powerful sunlight, but preliminary experiments have proven that it will help some and the object of Uncle Sam's present undertaking is to determine just how much assistance electricity will render under the conditions of soil and climate, etc., which confront the average American farmer.

The reader might naturally suppose, if he hasn't been informed otherwise, that if Uncle Sam was going to employ electricity to counteract sunbeams he would do it by calling into use powerful electric lights, which seem to be about the next best thing to sunlight in brilliancy. Well, that was the way it was done by several of the leading scientists of Europe who have rather gotten ahead of us in such tests. They hung big arc lamps in greenhouses and they lengthened the growing day for plants and vegetables by flooding the hot houses with light for several hours after sundown each day. The result was that one prominent foreigner has produced splendid strawberries in a much shorter time than would have been possible had nature been allowed to take her own course, and our own Cornell university in New York state was equally successful in hurrying the growth of lettuce, radishes and other vegetables by this same method. But Uncle Sam is not going to follow blindly in this beaten path. He is taking a new tack.

The principle of Uncle Sam's new "electric farm"—if we may call one miniature wheat field a farm—is to employ the electric current itself and not the electric lamps to spur nature in her work. This is interesting in itself and the project will be of added value in its results from the fact that the growing under electricity is to go on out of doors instead of in the artificial atmosphere of a hot house. Moreover, in order to approximate average conditions the experts of Uncle Sam's bureau of plant industry have chosen as the scene of their experiment, not a prize farm, but a tract on the largest experiment farm of the United States department of agriculture located near Arlington, Virginia. This land was formerly a part of the historic estate of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, but it was neglected for many years after the war and it cannot be said to offer more than average opportunities for tilling, if they are that good.

The appearance of Uncle Sam's "electric farm" is well calculated to rouse the curiosity of any chance farmer riding along the road, even if he did not see the warning signs cautioning him that he must not get within four feet of the wires carrying a current of 100,000 volts—electricity powerful enough to do all sorts of damage if given the opportunity. What the farmer beholds is a plowed area dotted at intervals of a couple of rods with slender wooden poles about seven feet in height. At one corner of the field is the so-called "power house" of this farm, a small frame building from which leads a wire connecting with the wires of a nearby interurban trolley system. If the farmer looks close he



DR BRIGGS-UNCLE SAM'S SEPERATE TOYING WITH A CURRENT OF 100,000 VOLTS



STYLE OF POLE, INSULATOR, DISCHARGE WIRES, AND WARNING SIGN ON ELECTRIC FARM

will observe that the slender posts support a perfect network of wires. Stretching from post to post are main wires, supported by huge insulators of a pattern usually seen only in the vicinity of Niagara Falls and elsewhere where high-power current is generated or transmitted. Crossing these principal wires at right angles—six to the span between each two poles—are finer wires, so that, taken as a whole, there is provided a sort of wire screen suspended about the height of a man above the furrows.

Were it a case of switching on electric light when it was desired to give impetus to crops in the ground it would be apparent to the casual onlooker when the activity was in progress, but with Uncle Sam's method of administering the electric treatment things are not so obvious, hence the warning signs hang from the wires. Nevertheless, for all that,

there are no lamps the electric current is so strong that at night, the wires give off a sort of glow that is visible to any person approaching them. In daylight only a scarcely audible sound indicates the "leakage" from the electricity-laden discharge wires.

The theory which the government scientists, under the direction of Dr. Lyman J.

Briggs, are trying to demonstrate is that static electricity when applied to soil and air will stimulate the growth of plants in such environment. There is ample evidence of the soundness of the theory within reasonable limits. Indeed, the benefit that may be conferred by such electric discharges is illustrated by the flourishing development (until frostbitten) of plants in the Arctic regions where there is, of course, mighty little sunlight, but where the atmosphere is heavily charged with electricity. Moreover, preliminary experiments which were recently conducted in England along the same lines that Uncle Sam is pursuing indicated that there was an increase of 30 to 40 per cent in the yield of wheat that had been thus dosed with electricity, and the wheat likewise brought a better price per bushel after a test had evidenced that it was superior for bread baking.

The officials of the department of agriculture make it very clear that their present venture in electroculture—as the new activity is termed—is purely experimental and they make no prophecies as to just what they hope to discover. The interesting point is that they are determined to find out just how much electricity will do to add the farmer. They have made the most elaborate plans, too, for measuring the influence exerted. To this end the experimental area has been apportioned in fourteen plots of uniform size and all have been planted in the same good grade of winter wheat. Seven of the beds lie under the network of wires and thus receive the benefit

of the electric discharges, while side by side with each of these electrified beds is a "check portion" or plot of equal size where no electric shower falls. By conquering the yield from the two plots in each pair and by contrasting the production by the seven pairs of beds the officials will be enabled to gauge very accurately just what influence the electrical factor exerts on the harvest. It may be added that it is not the intention at any time to keep the electric current flowing over the wire-sheltered area continuously day and night. That would be likely to do more harm than good. Late afternoons and early mornings will be chosen for giving an electric boost to the growing wheat and in no instance, probably, will Dr. Briggs have his odd cultivator at work for more than one-third of the time in any given twenty-four hours.

THE EVERGREENS

By R. B. BUCKHAM.

To tell something really new about the evergreens would be a difficult task indeed, since the reader has doubtless been familiar with their principal traits and characteristics since boyhood, and knows them all, root and branch. But a few facts relative to them may never be less than of interest to the reader, and interesting and suggestive.

First of all, then, they are distinctly desirable as shade and ornamental trees, though many fail to recognize their value as such. In time, however, they will surely come to receive the place as such which is due them.

No tree can add more to the landscape than one of these, and especially in the winter season, when so many others are leafless and forlorn. The wonder is that we do not see more of the evergreens in the streets of cities, and about fine country places.

Again, they are of prime value as timber. The price of soft wood lumber is steadily increasing, yearly. When this country was first discovered, and grants of land were given by the king, in most cases great care was taken to reserve the pine thereon to the crown. Its value was recognized then. Shall we fail to appreciate it, today?

The evergreens are all of them hardy, and easily grown, and adaptable to almost any climate and condition of soil and surroundings. You will find the spruce growing on the exposed and chilly upper slopes of mountains, and again equally well along the muddy banks of a river, or in the depths of wet and gloomy swampland, or out upon the sandy plain. Only give them a fair chance and the evergreens will look out for themselves. There is no portion of our nation in which they cannot be grown with success and to advantage. The present is always propitious with them. They care not whether times are good or bad, or what political faction is in the ascendancy. They are ready to launch out with you on a venture in the lumber business at any time, and they make pretty good partners to tie up with, too.

The several varieties of the evergreens have their peculiarities, traits and habits, but means of which they can be selected to conform to one's individual circumstances. Thus, the hemlock and the larch seem to be able to endure almost any amount of moisture in the soil, whereas the pine is best constituted to thrive in the most barren sands, and to endure long continued droughts. The spruce is the most successful of them all in doing without sunshine, surviving dense shade, and making itself at home on northern mountain slopes, where the snow lingers far into the spring, and the sun makes out to shine but a little time each day.

Almost any condition of soil and situation can be met by these hardy growers, and they seldom fail to return a good profit to the man who is willing to loan them the use of his land.

If the large leaved trees retained their foliage throughout the year it is difficult to imagine what havoc wind and sleet and snow would not occasion among them; but the foliage of the evergreens is so shaped that though retained throughout the year, no damage results in the fiercest gales. What would be the destruction of other trees, but makes music among the evergreens. Long may their lyes be attuned throughout the hills and valleys of our country!

That Piano Music.

Mrs. Tubbs—Don't you think there is feeling in Maria's playing, John?
Mr. Tubbs—I certainly do. When I hear it it always makes me feel that I'd like to kick the cat!—Yonkers Statesman.

A Drawback.

Sage—Know thyself.
Cynic—What's the use? It's not an acquaintance from whom you can borrow money.—Judge.

ons. In view of the fact that two deaths have already occurred, the salesman is placed in a serious position by his failure to comply with the law.—Paris Correspondence London Telegraph.

Bluff Called.

"He told her that he would gladly die for her."
"The same old bluff. Did it catch her?"
"No. She told him she would gladly let him die for her."

PLATT'S WIDOW A BRIDE

Mrs. Lillian Janeway-Platt Once Popular in Washington, Marries W. B. Atwater.

Washington.—The marriage, recently, of William B. Atwater to Mrs. Thomas C. Platt united a somewhat noted aviator and the widow of a United States senator whose fame may be said to have been almost world-wide. As the bride of Mr. Platt Mrs. Platt's youth contrasted most noticeably with the decrepitude of the aged senator. Now, in the culmination of her latest and, by the way, third romance, she having been Mrs. Lillian Janeway, a charming widow, active in the society life of Washington when Mr. Platt made her his bride, it is her husband's youth which may be



Mrs. Atwater.

looked upon as the incongruous feature of the alliance. Mr. Atwater impresses those who know him as a light-hearted, life-loving boy, while the lady of his heart—well, she's still charming in appearance and manner but not by the greatest stretch of the imagination could one call her girlish.

As the wife of the senior senator from the Empire state Mrs. Platt was prominent socially. As his widow she has lived a somewhat retired life in Central Valley, N. Y., and there, while deputy town superintendent of roads, Mr. Atwater made her acquaintance. His mother's bungalow is not far from that which has been occupied by Mrs. Platt.

For seven years Mr. Atwater was in the United States navy and served on board a dispatch vessel plying between Hong Kong and Manila at the time of the Spanish-American war. For a time he was third assistant engineer on board the steamship St. Paul. He is considered an expert with automobile and other motors. Mr. and Mrs. Atwater will spend the winter on the Pacific coast, where the young aviator will pursue his study of aviation.

SOME OF WAR'S HORRORS

Cruel Death of the Prisoners in the Stone Quarries of Ancient Syracuse.

London.—All the horrors of war have not been eliminated in these modern days by any means, although fighting between nations is becoming less frequent and less ferocious than of old. Today no nation would be permitted to deliberately starve to death its prisoners, for instance, as was done in ancient Syracuse. We have passed the rude, barbaric age, it seems, but there is room for further improvement, for all that.

The picture shown herewith has the appearance of quiet, peaceful days, yet it is a wonder that the rocks are not covered with red streaks, for it was in these old quarries near Syracuse that some 9,000



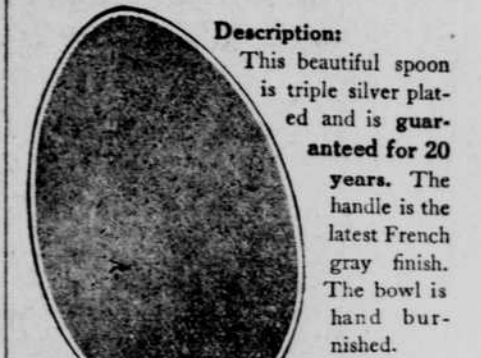
Where Prisoners Perished.

Athenian prisoners were confined and left to die of hunger and thirst. This happened in 413 B. C., when the Athenians under Nicias and Demosthenes were defeated by the Syracuseans, who were aided by the Spartans. History records that the ships of the Athenians were destroyed and about 30,000 men killed, while 9,000 were made prisoners. The quarries where the prisoners were placed to perish so miserably cover many acres in extent, having been hewn from the solid rock by a multitude of slaves. Tradition does not say whether they are haunted, but it would be no matter for surprise if the spirits of those old Athenian soldiers yet hung around the scene of their greatest misery watching for a chance to get even with some one.

Buffalo Herd Seeks Range. Kallsipell, Mont.—The shaggy manes and red eyes of three score buffaloes gave many a farm team palpitation of the heart and frightened timid persons in town and country the other day. The intentions of the buffaloes, however, were strictly peaceable.

Instead of gore they were after grass and, cherishing pleasant recollections of their winter pasture at Smith Valley, came to Kallsipell and started by different roads to the east side Conrad ranch.

Free with Mother's Oats



Description: This beautiful spoon is triple silver plated and is guaranteed for 20 years. The handle is the latest French gray finish. The bowl is hand burnished.

This advertisement is good for 10 coupons—cut this out and send to us with only 2 more coupons taken from two packages of Mother's Oats and we will send this beautiful 20-year guaranteed spoon free. Only one advertisement accepted from each customer as 10 coupons.

This advertisement will not appear again. Buy two packages of Mother's Oats and secure a sample spoon FREE. Address

Mother's Oats, Chicago

A COLD DINNER.



Mrs. Benham—I see that they have found the North Pole.
Benham—That's no reason why you should do your cooking there.

No Claim for Reciprocation. Jack Reeves tells us on Felix McCarthy, who used to drive a night hack before he retired to the presidency of a reformatory, where the goods are sold from the wood:

"I didn't see you at Murphy's funeral," said an acquaintance to McCarthy. "What's the reason you didn't go?"
"Why should I?" returned McCarthy, somewhat touchily. "Sure, Murphy never attended my funeral."—New York Telegraph.

Was Testing the Baby. Little Phil Warringer, of Addison road, was detected in the act of pulling out the baby's hair despite her frantic protest.

"I just wanted to see," he said in explanation, "whether she was cold storage baby. Teacher told us that's the way you can tell a chicken. If the feathers come out easily the chicken has been in cold storage."
Needless to say, Phil is doing penance.—New York Times.

Some women never take anything seriously, not even their husbands.

IN MATCHTOWN. Fortunately no Faith Was Required, For She Had None.

"I had no faith whatever, but on the advice of a hale, hearty old gentleman who spoke from experience, I began to use Grape-Nuts about 2 years ago," writes an Ohio woman, who says she is 40, is known to be fair, and admits that she is growing plump on the new diet.

"I shall not try to tell you how I suffered for years from a deranged stomach that rejected almost all sorts of food, and digested what little was forced upon it only at the cost of great distress and pain.

"I was treated by many different doctors and they gave me many different medicines, and I even spent several years in exile from my home, thinking change of scene might do me good. You may judge of the gravity of my condition when I tell you I was sometimes compelled to use morphine for weeks at a time.

"For two years I have eaten Grape-Nuts food at least twice a day and I can now say that I have perfect health. I have taken no medicine in that time—Grape-Nuts has done it all. I can eat absolutely anything I wish, without stomach distress.

"I am a business woman and can walk my 2 or 3 miles a day and feel better for doing so. I have to use brains in my work, and it is remarkable how quick, alert and tireless my mental powers have become." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"There's a reason," and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

MUSHROOMS KILL IN PARIS

Several Persons Poisoned by the "Amanite Phalloide" From the District of Loiret.

Eight persons, of whom one is already dead, were poisoned by the mushrooms in Paris through eating mushrooms. Four families, all of whom bought the mushrooms from the same dealer are affected. The dead man is a wine dealer named Berotel, living

in the Rue Saint Jacques. One other person, M. Delascaden, is in hospital in a dying condition. The poisonous vegetables were bought from a greengrocer in the Rue Saint Jacques, who had obtained his supply in the ordinary way from the Central market. The mushrooms, which have been identified as belonging to a very poisonous species, were sent to the market from the district of Loiret, whence large

supplies of this kind are daily received in Paris.

Enormous quantities of mushrooms are used there by all classes, and it is rare that any poisonous varieties pass the inspectors at the Halles. In the present case the fatal comestible belonged to a variety known as "amanite phalloide," which bears a dangerous similarity to perfectly innocent kinds, and it was this similarity which led to its being sold without question at the Central market. Among those affected is the

cook of the greengrocer who sold the mushrooms, but as she ate only a small quantity, she is not in so serious a condition as some of the others who partook of the poisonous food.

As I write another death is reported from the mushroom poisoning, and five of the still surviving victims are in grave danger. M. Lepine has issued a statement to the effect that the agent at the Central market sold the mushrooms without first submitting them for examination to the inspector as required by police regula-

ons. In view of the fact that two deaths have already occurred, the salesman is placed in a serious position by his failure to comply with the law.—Paris Correspondence London Telegraph.