Solving Agricultural Problems at North Platte Experimental Substation

THERE is but little known of the work being done at the Nebraska experimental substation at North Platte or the work attempted, even. In fact, there are not a great many of our people who seem to have knowledge of the existence of this experiment station. This may be accounted for owing to the newness of the enterprise and the consciousness of the management in not yet having things fixed up and in shape to make a favorable display.

The North Platte experiment station, which is a substation to the greater, the experimental farm at Lincoln, is designed to deal with agricultural problems peculiar to western conditions of soil and climate. The greatest effort of the present time in crop work has been to secure crops that will adapt themselves to the moisture and soil conditions of the districts they are intended to grow in. Western Nebraska has been a subject of anxious inquiry and study for many years by the scientific agriculturists of the state farm in an attempt to find a series of crops that would yield profitably on the rich but arid lands of that district.

The North Platte experiment station lands, consisting of three sections, were purchased and possession acquired in the early part of 1904. These lands are located three miles south of the town of North Platte and south of the Platte river. They comprise about 280 acres of valley land, none of which is low bottom or overflow lands, being thirty to forty feet above water, and 150 acres of smooth table lands, all in crop, 225 feet above water. The balance of the tract is hill and rough pasture lands, well covered with buffalo, gramma and other native grasses, and most admirably represents the average hills grazing lands of the western part of the state.

Location Well Adapted to Work.

The selection of this site seems to have been a very wise one in many respects. Its accessibility by railroad, its diversity of physical character, representing at least three distinct conditions of lands that the western part of the state has to deal with in farming and ranch operations, are features of special interest to the observer. While some may say that this station should have been located farther west or north, more central in the part of the state its work will be largely taken up with, there can be but little criticism of well grounded merit against the location.

The operating force of this enterprise consists of W. P. Snyder, superintendent; W. G. Weakly, farm foreman; George Felt, live stock feeder, and W. W. Burr, in charge of government experimentation work on the farm. This is the force that practically handles all the farming and live stock operations. Some of the many things that have been commenced and are now in successful progress of crop test and feeding experiment may be of interest in gaining a better knowledge of what is being done on this farm. The cultivated crops of various kinds grown under experimental test occupy 150 plats and in size are from one-tenth of an acre to thirty-five acres.

The tests in wheat crops are made with five varieties of spring and twelve varieties of fall or winter wheats. These tests were made to determine methods of cultivation and varieties of wheats best suited to the soil and climate. The winter varieties average forty-one to forty-six bushels. The spring wheats, local varieties, eleven bushels, against twenty to twenty-four bushels of other varieties. A test was made in 1904 of macaroni and the common local spring wheat, seed raised in the neighborhood. The macaroni produced twenty-two and one-half bushels and the local wheat eight and one-fourth bushels, planted on adjoining plats. This was made to test the advantage of macaroni over the local spring wheats as crop producers.

The tests in oats have been mainly in the different depths of seeding. Some broadcast sowings have been done, but the main seeding process has been by drilling at different depths. The drilled oats have done best in all tests; start earlier and make a stronger growth. In variety tests, where they do not prove of good quality, they are discarded. Twenty bushels per acre have been secured for local varieties against forty-five to forty-seven bushels with the Kherson variety.

Tests in Fodder Plants.

The tests in cane, kaffir corn and such varieties of fodder are quite extensively carried on and will result in much information beneficial to the growers. There are twelve plats of one-half acre each of cane, different varieties tested for methods of planting, dates of seeding, quantity of seed used per acre, etc. Some of these plats were listed, some single row drill, some double row drill, some straight drill and some broadcast. In kaffir corn the tests are mainly to mature seed. This plant stands dry weather even better than cane, but is difficult to mature seed.

A specially interesting and vigorous two-acre breeding plat of field corn of the Reed-Hogue cross, originated at Lincoln station and intended to determine its adaptability to western Nebraska conditions, was a feature that looked quite practical. There are ten varieties of field corn growing on the farm. It is designed next year to make corn fodder feeding tests. The fodder will be shredded and prepared in all respects for getting its full value as feed.

The main feature of the test in the potato plantings is to determine the seed advantage in the whole potato, the half potato, the two-eye piece and the one-eye cutting. Also the Red River potato of the north is placed in comparison with the home grown or local seed. Different methods of cultivation, rate of seeding and time of seeding are also factors in the tests.

An Interesting Alfalfa Plat.

Notwithstanding this is the real home of the alfalfa plant in this division of the world, the experiment station cannot resist the temptation of cultivating it on every idle plat, just to see it exert itself to outgrow the weeds or any other form of vegetation in sight. A very interesting alfalfa plat of several acres, located on the table lands 225 feet above water, this year shows a remarkable contrast in condition of growth with that of the season of 1905, when its tumble-down and tangled-up condition, resembling that of a big-growthed field of mammoth clover, demonstrated the ability of alfalfa to grow and produce a crop, regardless of where the water lies beneath the surface as long as it has the seasonable shower.

This year the table alfalfa was cut about June 10 and approximately three-fourths of a ton per acre secured, the weather being very dry. It made no further growth during the drouth period up to August 1, when a rain started the growth again, and it has been doing well and produced a good second crop, with good fall conditions of aftergrowth. In ordinary years it will produce three good crops. This illustrates the tenacity of alfalfa to stand in the ground and wait for rain, then resume growth. This alfalfa is now in its sixth year since seeding and is yielding very satisfactorily.

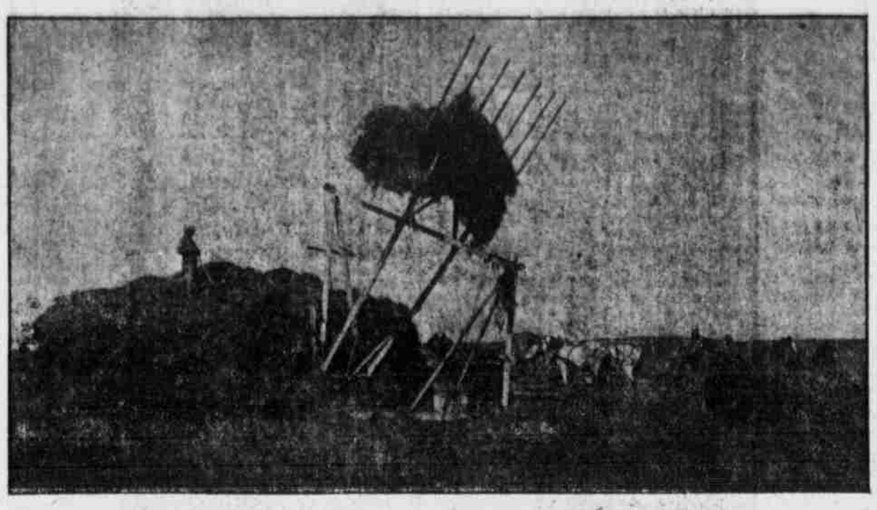
The station is conducting experiments with a number of one-tenth-acre plats of alfalfa. Many varieties are being tested, seeds having been procured from several countries of Europe and Asia. It is a test of variety value. The general recommendation, however, by Mr. Snyder, the station superintendent, is to use home-grown seed as nearly as can be. The imported seed does better after being acclimated. The farm has sixty acres of bottom or bench land devoted to alfalfa for general hay crop, which is cut three times each season and yields about one and one-fourth tons per acre per cutting.

Several varieties of millets are being tested for best results. Spelts also has plats representing a seeding of five, seven and nine pecks per acre. There is but little, if any, difference shown in the prospect for yield. The estimate is put at fifty bushels per acre. Spelts is believed to be one of the profitable feed crops for western Nebraska.

The sugar beet is also receiving its share of attention. There cannot be much, however, presented in this district of the state that is not already known about this plant, in its growth and cultivation, except how to grow it without work, and this feature is about given up now by those who are making a success of the business. The growing of sugar beets without irrigation has been an easy proposition this season, though in seasons of short rainfall the irrigator saves his crop.

Live Stock Experiments.

The live stock feature of the farm has not been developed rapidly, but a substantial and good practical foundation has been laid. The summer of 1904 fifty yearling, high-grade Shorthorn heifers were purchased in southeastern Nebraska. These heifers now show good growth, are developing into a creditable herd of breeding cows, and by such attention and breeding as they should receive a better start could scarcely be desired.



STACKING ALFALFA AT THE NORTH PLATTE BRANCH EXPERIMENT STATION.

PROVO MILLET AT THE NORTH PLATTE BRANCH EXPERIMENT STATION.

FOLLOWING THE BINDER WITH A DISK PLOW TO CONSERVE THE MOISTURE—PHOTO TAKEN ON THE NORTH PLATTE FARM.

In 1905, 100 head of steer calves were bought for feeding experiment tests and divided into five divisions of twenty each. These calves for roughness in the winter of 1906 were fed sorghum, alfalfa and prairie hay. Each lot a different combination of these feeds, with two pounds of grain per head once a day. They had good roomy lots with open sheds, and each lot supplied with pumped water. When grass was ready to turn on in the spring these calves were marked so as to be readily distinguished and turned out in the same pasture. They will be sorted up and go back in the feed lots this winter to be fed as yearlings for growth, and will be run on grass during the summer of 1907 and sold for feeders or fat cattle in the fall, as they seem to fit best when put on the market. These calves were bought in the neighborhood of North Platte and are graded Shorthorns and Herefords.

The swine division is an especially interesting one. The Duroc-Jersey has been selected as the breed to work out all hog problems from. Breed, in fact, has nothing whatever to do in the tests, therefore but one breed is used. There are about 350 hogs of all ages kept on the farm. The purpose being to market these hogs as fast as tests are completed, in which hogs are finished for market.

These tests have been conducted mainly as to cheapness of growing hogs on alfalfa, using as little corn as possible. As an example, three lots of pigs, seventeen in each lot, were taken after weaning in July last year, and each placed in a five-acre alfalfa pasture. One lot was given three pounds of corn per head per day and the remaining lot one-half pound per head per day for a period of twelve months, except that during the winter they were given alfalfa hay to take the place of the pasture. When the spring growth of alfalfa was ready to turn onto they were replaced in the alfalfa pastures. The first lot was marketed in June, the second lot in July, but had an increase of corn for six weeks to finish them. The third lot in August was still in pasture, in good stock order, but not growth, nor exhibiting evidences of a profitable hog to own.

A brood sow feeding experiment with alfalfa, and one which carries a great deal of interest with it, is where ten sows, after their pigs were weaned in July, run on alfalfa pasture all summer, no feed being given them. At the beginning of winter they were turned on alfalfa haystacks as a substitute for alfalfa pasture, and to each sow was given an added ration of two pounds of corn per day, until a short time before farrowing, when the grain feed was increased. Prof. Snyder says that two and one-half to three pounds of corn per day would have brought these sows through to farrowing in splendid condition.

There are now 240 shoats on the farm about 6 months old, which are on alfalfa pasture and a light feed of corn, that present about as wholesome an appearance for thrift and rapid development as could be desired in a lot of pigs of this age. These pigs will be divided and used in experimental feeding tests a little later in the season. Sows are bred to have two litters, March and October, usually. Sows, after pigs are weaned, run on alfalfa and get no other food or drink, except pure water, which is supplied from drinking fountains, with which each lot is supplied. As soon as these sows have their fall litters they will be put on a light feed of grain.

Uncle Sam Is Interested.

The government co-operative work in dry land agriculture that is being carried on at this station, in charge of E. C. Chilcott at Washington, D. C., and under the management of Superintendent W. P. Snyder, is conducted by W. W. Burr, recently of the Agricultural College of Nebraska. This work consists in rotation of the ordinary crops for a period of three to six years. The rotation work is planned, however, to be carried on indefinitely.

The main plan of this work is conservation of moisture in the soil, to compare summer fallowing with corn growing, to seed which of the two methods of fertility of soil produces best results, green manuring some plats by turning under rye when about heading, to compare summer fallowing. There are other plats that are constantly cropped, some in grass for a period of years, and compare these as to advantages in fertility. There are ninety-one plats of one-tenth of an acre each devoted to this work.

There is located on these lands a tank for testing the evaporation. An ordinary galvanized stock watering tank eight feet in diameter is used. The tests are conducted by a wire stretched across the top of the tank and measured every ten days. A rain gauge will be set beside the tank to get correct measurement of rainfall in the meantime. There are about 100 acres in the valley and eighty acres on the table devoted to experimental corn crops and tests. These plats contain from one-half of an acre to five acres. Variety tests and methods of cultivation are the main features considered in the corn-growing operations.

Work Is Well Done.

The work of this station is being well conducted. Few men could have been placed at the head of such an institution, under the existing embarrassment of needs in buildings and accommodations, to do the work such as Mr. Snyder has to contend with and make so creditable a showing.

There can be no question as to the wisdom of creating a western Nebraska experiment station. The location is a good one, the natural advantages of this particular site are all that could be desired from a practical working standpoint and the only thing now lacking is improvements and additional help to carry on the work. Every citizen of Nebraska, regardless of his residence location in the state, should give this experimental enterprise his hearty and active support. There is great need for more buildings. They are needed for the convenience and business advantage of properly carrying on the work; they are needed for the credit and reputation of the state of Nebraska.

This is not a play farm, a matter of needless expense. It is an institution that is laying the foundation for western agriculture that will influence in production millions of dollars for the state's future wealth. Western Nebraska citizens particularly should see to it that a liberal appropriation is urged for creditably equipping this farm with all needed buildings and appliances for properly conducting the work.

Theodore P. Shonts Talks on Work at Panama

(Copyright, 1906, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—"The people would like to know just what Uncle Sam is doing at Panama."

I made this remark to Mr. Theodore P. Shonts, the chairman of the isthmian canal commission, as we chatted together in his office near the War department not long ago. In reply Mr. Shonts brought out a lot of maps and we traveled together across the canal zone inspecting the work. The War department receives weekly reports as to just what is going on and any changes of note are recorded by cable.

My first question was as to whether the dirt had really begun to fly.

"In one sense it has," replied Mr. Shonts, "and in another sense it has not. The work of the canal construction is properly divided in two parts. One is the getting ready to build and the other is actually doing the work. The getting ready is what we are doing now and we are rapidly advancing in that respect. We are making the isthmus healthy, housing our men, building terminals, railway tracks and working out a large number of engineering problems. In this sense the dirt has begun to fly as far as is possible in connection with that preparation. It will fly faster and faster as time goes on and within a few weeks from now we shall be making a perceptible impression on parts of the excavation.

"The month before my last visit we had moved 240,000 cubic yards from the Culebra cut and we had then at work an average of less than eleven steam shovels. Within a short time Engineer Stevens expects to have forty steam shovels in operation and he will then be handling 1,000,000 cubic yards per month."

Uncle Sam Really at Work.

"Tell me in simple language what 1,1000-000 cubic yards means?"

"We generally estimate a cubic yard of earth or rock as a ton. It is a load for a two-horse team over a common country road. The product of one month will be enough to load a wagon train of 1,000,000 teams, and supposing that each team took thirty feet on a roadway, the train would be 30,000,000 feet in length. Dividing by 5,000 feet to the mile for easy figuring, the teams would be 6,000 miles long, or just about long enough to reach from New York to San Francisco and back again. We expect to be doing that long before the snow falls. When we are doing it we shall consider that we have begun work seriously as to the excavation part of the problem."

"Where will this excavation be first done?"

"The most of the work now is in the Culebra cut, and a great deal of it will be right there. This cut has in the past been considered the key to the time required for doing the work. It is not so. The work upon the locks, if a lock canal is built, will require more time than that in the cut. The locks will be about 1,200 feet long and several hundred feet wide. They will be so small that it will be impossible to work a large number of men in them at one time, and this will limit our possibilities."

When in Full Swing.

"Is forty steam shovels the maximum capacity of operation?"

"No, we shall install more and more as rapidly as we can. We have now sixty-one steam shovels on the isthmus and we shall eventually be working 100 or more. I think the time will come when we shall work by night as well as by day, using electricity to give us the light."

"What are you doing with the old French machinery?"

"We are still using some of it, but are introducing modern appliances just as rapidly as they come. There is no economy in working over the French stuff. It is out of date, out of repair and will go to the scrap heap just as soon as new tools and tracks can take its place."

Uncle Sam's New Tools.

"Give me some idea of what you have already bought."

"I can hardly do that in detail," replied Mr. Shonts, "although we have it item by item. We have spent more than $9,000,000, and this covers all kinds of materials from steamships to blasting powder. We have sixty-one steam shovels, 1,300 flat cars and more than 300 dump cars. We have more than 5,000 tons of steel rails, much of which is already in place. We have laid tracks through the Culebra cut of steel rails which weigh seventy pounds to the yard, and we are double-tracking the road across the isthmus. We have a large number of tracks running from the Culebra cut to a distributing yard, where the cars will be made up into larger trains for heavier engines to take off to the dumping grounds. This will enable the engines on the tracks to the cut to be kept busy all the time bringing in loads and carrying back the empties.

"In addition to these," continued Mr. Shonts, "we have new and powerful locomotives, hundreds of box cars, a number of modern passenger coaches, hoisting plants of various kinds and twelve hoisting engines. We have bought more than a million pounds of dynamite and blasting powder and 152 rock drills. As to building material, our lumber purchases alone have been more than 30,000,000 feet, and we have also something like 10,000,000 bricks and 500,-000 square feet of roofing tile. The work of house construction is going on throughout the zone and we are steadily improving our quarters for the men."

23,000 Men Working.

"Just about how many men have you at work?"

"Something like 23,000," said Mr. Shonts. "By far the greater part of them are foreigners and a considerable number are Spaniards."

"Tell me something about the Spanish labor?"

"This is made up of men whom we imported from the north of Spain. They are of the same character as those used by Sir William Van Horne in building the Cuba railroad, and we find them excellent workmen. We have tried a few hundred as an experiment and we hope to increase the force to some thousands. They are far superior to any labor we have so far secured, excepting the Americans."

"How many Americans have you at work?"

"About 3,000. They are chiefly mechanics, engineers, foremen, carpenters, masons, plumbers, etc. They are good men and are to a large extent in charge of the work."

"How does the Spanish labor compare with the native labor?"

"Engineer Stevens estimates it as two or three times as efficient," was the reply. "It is almost equal to the American labor. The ordinary native labor, including that of the Jamaican negroes, is equal to about one-third the working power of the American."

The Eight-Hour Day.

"How about hours?"

"We use the eight-hour day. This is the law and we cannot do otherwise. That it is so is a mistake. I don't think the eight-hour law, the contract labor law, or the Chinese exclusion act, should obtain on the isthmus. Four-fifths of our employes are bound to be foreigners, who are accustomed to longer hours and who work so much less intelligently and energetically than the Americans, that it is hardly fair to consider them on the same basis. However, that is a matter that congress will have to determine. We pay our men by the hour, and we can by law give them only forty-eight hours a week. If we could work them for ten hours a day, we could give them sixty hours a week; and in that case they would accept lower wages than they now receive. As a matter of fact the skilled laborers would rather have the ten-hour day, and some of them would be glad to work overtime at extra pay. As it is now, they expect to get time and a half for all work done over eight hours."

THEODORE P. SHONTS.

Chances for Young Men at Panama.

"What do you now think of the chances for young Americans at Panama?"

"They are good. The wages are higher than in the United States, and there is no more risk of health there than there is in railroad building in many parts of our southern states."

"Do you have many applications for places?"

"Plenty of them. Our mail is filled with letters from men of all classes who want to go to Panama; and we are sending down mechanics and others by almost every steamer. We have no trouble in getting all the men we want; and those who are now applying are far better than those of the past. Among the first corps that went there to clerk and do other work were a lot of sissy boys, who expected to lead a luxurious life in the tropics with seltzer and apollinaris on tap. The men we have now are earnest and hard working fellows, who go down to stay and grow with the work."

"Is there much dissatisfaction among the clerks?"

"No, I heard no complaint during my stay on the isthmus. In fact, I attended a dinner there of the mechanics and others at Corozal, where the men made speeches denouncing some recent newspaper criticisms of the work and eulogizing the officials in charge. I am safe in saying that there is no dissatisfaction in Panama."

New Homes and New Food.

"Have you sufficient quarters for the men, Mr. Shonts?"

"Yes. We have done a great amount of building since we took charge and we could give quarters to 3,000 more employes than we now have. We are building and improving right along. We have nine hotels on the canal zone and nearly every American has a room looking out on a veranda, sometimes alone and sometimes with a roommate. The Tivoli hotel at Ancon, which is intended more especially for the administration employes, has 100 sleeping apartments. We have a practical builder in charge of the new construction and more than 2,000 men are now putting up new buildings and repairing the old ones."

"How about food?"

"We have organized a good system of supplying the men with meals at low rates. The native workmen are charged 10 cents a meal and the Americans pay 30 cents a meal at the hotels. The native food is, of course, much cheaper than the American. A 10-cent meal consists of soup made of meat and some rice, sweet potatoes or yucca and bananas. That is a sample. Of course, there is considerable variety. I have eaten such meals and they are not bad."

"How about the 30-cent American meals?"

"They are to be found at the hotels and mess houses. They are just about equal to the 50-cent meal that one gets at a country hotel in the United States. The bill of fare usually includes several kinds of meat, some vegetables, fruit and perhaps ice cream or pie. We have established cold storage plants and put refrigerator cars on the railroads, and we are doing all we can to make the men comfortable."

"How about amusements?"

"We have been very busy improving the sanitary conditions and have not done as much in that line as we should like to do. Nevertheless, we have established reading rooms in the hotels at Corozal and Culebra and equipped a brass band which has been organized by the employes of Christobal. The Americans are adapting themselves to conditions there. They are forming clubs of various kinds, and, among other things, an International University club, which is composed of American and Panaman college men. The Masonic and other orders already have branches there."

About Health.

"Do you think you have stamped out the yellow fever, Mr. Shonts?" I asked.

"We have had no cases since last November, and the warfare on the mosquito seems to have largely abolished it from the isthmus. Many of the men are growing careless and fail to put down their mosquito nets at night, and the fear of yellow fever has for the time departed. Indeed, I was surprised to find so few mosquitoes. Take La Boca, where our wharves are. I had occasion to stay there over night, and slept on one of the Pacific mail steamers without mosquito netting or any other similar protection. During the evening I did not see a mosquito, and it was only after going to bed that I heard one buzzing. I got up, turned on my light and killed it, and then went back to bed. The work done by the sanitary commission in that respect is wonderful. A year or so ago one stopping at La Boca would have been eaten up by mosquitoes. Now there are not, I venture, on the ten-mile zone one-hundredth as many mosquitoes as on any similar strip along the New Jersey coast."

"Is the malaria also disappearing?"

"We are decreasing the malaria," said the chairman of the Isthmian Canal commission, "but there will always be more or less of that at Panama just as in many parts of the United States. I would say, however, that the health of our employes is extraordinarily good. We have a sick rate of only twenty per thousand, and that is a better showing than in New York City. Dr. Gorgas reports that there are 450 beds vacant in the hospitals, and he is sanguine that he can now control the health situation. Our quarantine arrangements are good and we shall do everything we can to keep out yellow fever and other diseases. Indeed, I doubt if there is any place in the world so carefully watched from a health standpoint as our stations at Panama. When we open a new labor camp the sanitary engineers go ahead and lay it out. They attend to the cleaning and the men are not allowed to begin until the dangers of ill-health are minimized."

"Have you a good water supply?"

"Yes. Panama has its own water works, with a reservoir in the mountains of something like 800,000,000 gallons. Empire has a big reservoir, and so also have Gorgona and Colon. Bas Obispo is supplied by a running stream. The water has been analyzed at all these places, and it is good with the exception that it contains a slight percentage of vegetable matter. Notwithstanding this at some places they are boiling the water."

Chief Engineer Stevens.

"Tell me something about the chief engineer, Mr. Stevens? Is he the right man for the place?"

"We think so," replied Mr. Shonts. "He is a man of extraordinary ability, great industry and inflexible integrity. He is as straight as a string. He has been dealing with big undertakings and is accustomed to handle large bodies of men. He understands how to organize his work and he has selected able assistants. Indeed, it seems to me that Uncle Sam could not have gotten a better man for the place."

"When are you going to finish the canal?"

The chairman of the canal commission smiled as he replied:

"That is a question which depends much upon congress, and also largely upon what kind of a canal is decided upon and how the work is carried out to a conclusion. If a lock canal, such as we have recommended, shall be permanently decided upon, we can finish it and have some of the largest steamers that float the ocean going through it within eight years. I think Engineer Stevens puts it at seven or seven and a half, but I will say eight. These figures are based upon our present calculations and investigations, and we think them not far from right." FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Repents a Bad Bargain

A stranger in the Indian country was much amused by the quaint dress of the squaws and their method of carrying their babies on their backs. He conceived the idea of jokingly trying to buy one of the sharp-eyed infants.

"How much catch him, papoose?" he asked one of the squaws in the most approved Indian fashion for inquiring the price.

"Two bits," the woman replied readily.

"All right, take him," the white man said.

He produced a quarter and the woman put the papoose in his arms. As she released her hold on the baby it set up a howl.

"Here, here," the alarmed purchaser exclaimed. "Take the kid. I was only joking. I don't want to buy it."

"No, no. You ketch him," the Indian mother said. "Two bits you ketch him. Two bits more I ketch him back."

The white man was glad to be released from his bargain for another 25 cents. He learned later that he was only one of many that had had the same experience in mock purchases of Indian babies.—Kansas City Times.

Prattle of the Youngsters

"Look, mamma," said small Dorothy, "here's a hole in my stockings as big as a dollar."

"Oh, it isn't quite that large, dear," rejoined her mother.

"Well," continued Dorothy, "it's as big as 9 cents, anyway."

"Oh, dear!" sighed small Harry. "I wish I was a clock."

"Why do you wish that, Harry?" asked his mother.

"'Cause I wouldn't have to wash my face and hands then," explained the little fellow.

"Mamma, I've been praying every night for a new doll," said little Dorothy, "and God hasn't sent it yet."

"Perhaps God doesn't think that you need another doll, dear," answered the mother.

"Then why doesn't he tell me," asked the little girl, "so I could pray for something else?"

"Now, then," said Tommy's mother, "that's the last straw. I'm going to whip you for that."

"O! say, ma, pleaded Tommy, "let's compromise this thing."

"What?"

"Just call it quits an' I'll use my influence with pa to get you that new dress you want."