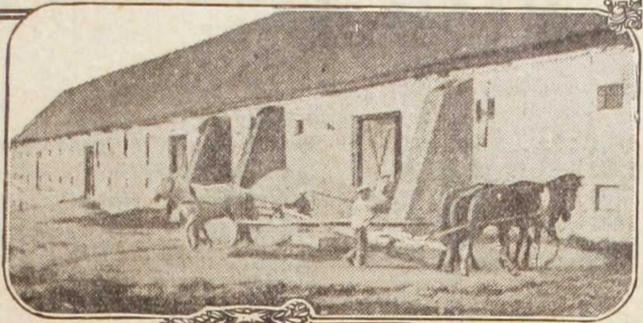


AGRICULTURE IN RUSSIA

A country of such vast dimensions as that ruled over by the czar, the methods of agriculture naturally vary enormously in the different districts; but during a visit of three weeks' duration—a visit now just drawing to a close—I have been able to see a good deal of the methods of the Russian peasant and landowner.

In the Petersburg district scientific agriculture is practically unknown. Here the summer is too short to allow the successful raising of crops, and tillage is confined to the lands belonging to the village communities. In Russia practically every village is state-owned—that is, under the control of no landlord, and every village has within its bounds a certain acreage of common land. The inhabitants of the village have each one a fixed amount of this land assigned to them; but, to avoid favoritism, a peasant does not farm the same strip two seasons running, but a rotation is practised whereby each member of the village in time goes over the whole land of the community. The birth of a son is a source of great joy on the part of a Russian peasant, for on such an occasion an extra amount of land is given to him. In the north of Russia wheat is never grown. Oats are produced, but rye is the staple crop, and it is from this cereal that the peasant makes his bread. The rye is put into the ground in September, and thus is able to make a start before the advent of the winter snow, early in November. Between Petersburg and Moscow agriculture is in a primitive condition. The fields are extremely small and have a neglected appearance, while the houses of the villagers are in a dirty condition, the cattle and pigs in some instances sharing the dwellings with their owners. The rotation here practised is rye, oats and then fallow, to allow the land to recover somewhat. Proceeding south, however, one finds better conditions prevailing. The fields become larger, wheat takes the place of rye, and one gradually enters the enormous wheat producing district of Russia. Passing through this district, which extends from Kharkoff to the beginning of the Crimean peninsula, for hundreds of miles the country, as far as the eye can reach, is given over almost entirely to the raising of cereal crops. The fields are enormous, more than one field stretching for several miles by the railway line, and as the whole district is sparsely populated, the problem at once presents itself: From where are the landowners to obtain an adequate supply of labor? They must depend entirely on the services of the villagers, and as the latter are quite independent of them, they have no power to force them to work should they be disinclined to do so. An instance of this occurred a short time back. A landlord who owned a farm of 40,000 acres had a fine crop of 900 acres of beets. When the time arrived for the harvesting of these roots the peasants of the village—on the excuse that, as their own harvest was an abundant one, there was no necessity for them to work—point blank refused to do the harvesting of the beets, and the whole of the country had to be scoured—naturally, at considerable expense—to procure laborers. Throughout the extensive corn-growing district referred to above there is an almost entire absence of root crops, with the exception of beets, and only a very small proportion of the land is under grass or hay. How the stock can be maintained under these conditions through the winter months is difficult to understand, but the animals seen were in poor condition as compared with the English cattle. The most important breed of Russian cow is the Yaroslav, but on the estate where the writer has been staying the stock consisted of Jersey cattle, and crosses between these latter and the Yaroslav are looked on favorably. English pigs, Yorkshire and Tamworth, are also kept. Very little stock is kept on the majority of Russian farms. As well as the cereal crops, one frequently noted fields given over to the raising of sunflowers. These are reared for the production of salad oil, which is used extensively during Lent, and the seeds are also eaten largely by the poorer classes. The farm land of a village community is easy to distinguish from that owned by the landlord, from the fact that the former is invariably in narrow strips. On



A HORSE ON THE WAY TO THE CHAFF-CUTTER



BLOWING



THE BEST HARVEST

this common land the whole of the cattle and sheep of the village are pastured together, looked after by one of the villagers, and the mixed stock presented a remarkably pretty sight. On the large farms horses are largely employed for plowing, and one often saw a young foal following its mother patiently up and down the furrows. A noteworthy point is the entire absence of hedges—as far as the eye can reach, field after field stretches away with monotonous regularity, often not so much as a single tree breaking the uninteresting landscape. Comparatively little of the cereal straw is stored up, but most of it is burnt in the engines driving the threshing machines. Where farming is practised on so extensive a scale as in the wheat-growing districts of Russia, the farmer naturally is unable to have his servants under his eye, and cases are on record of farm laborers carting the corn to their own standings instead of those of their employer. The absence of any organized system of manuring the fields is all the more evident after one has passed through the rich agricultural district of Eastern Austria. In Russia, I have it on the authority of an eye-witness that a certain heap of manure exists of the age of no less than sixty years, and no steps are ever taken to distribute it over the fields. Again, the peasants actually use their manure in

making embankments over gullies, these embankments being ironically known as "golden bridges." The Russians depend mainly on leaving their fields periodically fallow for the recuperation of the soil, and a certain amount of good is also effected by the grazing of the rye by the stock in early spring—the wheat and oats are never put into the land in the autumn, and so are not grazed. A point perhaps worth noting is the fact that little land is under leguminous crops, which enrich the soil by virtue of their power of fixing atmospheric nitrogen, so a powerful factor in the amelioration of the land is absent.

A large proportion of the wheat grown in the South Central district of Russia is exported to England and Germany from the port of Odessa by steamers which reach that port with cargoes of coal. On several occasions, on the journey from Moscow to the Crimea, we saw a dead pig enveloped in burning straw, and learned that the pig, as soon as killed, is placed on straw, which is then set fire to in order to burn the animal's hair. After the desolate and monotonous country of the wheat producing district, one was most favorably impressed by the Crimea. The Crimea may be said to be the wine and fruit-producing district for the whole of Russia, and at the moment I am writing these lines (April 27) the vines are just commencing to shoot. The Crimea is essentially a land of hills, and it is on these hillsides that the vines are grown. Cereals are produced only in small quantities—the climate is too dry and the soil too rocky to permit of extensive operations in this line. A little wheat and oats are grown, and occasionally one sees a field of rye already bursting into ear, while far up the hillsides orchards with fruit trees—apple, pear, apricot, plum—laden with blossom, throw their perfumes far over the land.

TREES WARD OFF HEAT AND COLD

He who plants a tree, he plants love; Tents of coolness spreading out above. —Larcom.



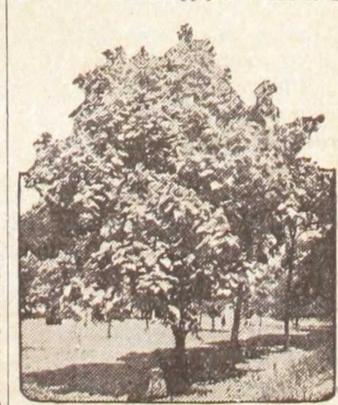
BY THEIR grateful shade trees screen us from the too fervid heat of the sun. They abate the winds and protect from the chilling blasts of winter. Their leaves prevent the spread of germladen dust and help to purify the air. They encourage the birds and save our crops from many an insect injury. They lend a grace and beauty to every homestead and every roadway that they border.

For shade, trees should be planted wherever it is desirable to be shielded from the hot rays of the summer sun. Not all shade is agreeable. The shade of some trees is too dense and others too light. A heavy woolen blanket properly suspended will make a shade; so will mosquito netting, but it would not be best to use either. Trees with a close, compact head and large, heavy leaves may make too dense a shade.

There is much bad tree planting, and even worse lack of care after planting. Much has been written about how planting should be done. It may be well to note a few things that should not be done. The following are some of the things to be avoided:

1. Don't plant trees that are more than four to six years' old.

2. Don't overcrowd trees in planting.
3. Don't plant trees in straight lines.
4. Don't plant shade or ornamental trees in anything except good soil.
5. Don't plant a tree in a bowl-shaped hole that is deeper in the center than elsewhere.
6. Don't forget to cut off all mangled or broken roots.
7. Don't fail to apply a mulch to a



An Enjoyable Shade, the Result of Somebody's Planting.

transplanted tree if there is the slightest danger of drought.

8. Don't allow trees to be used as hitching posts.
9. Don't forget that good shade trees are the result of intelligent choice and care.

PLAY FOR INSURANCE MONEY

Companies Have to Be Constantly on the Watch to Prevent Heavy Losses Through Swindlers.

One of the dodges that insurance companies have to guard against is that of the man who insures his life for a large sum and then disappears, his relatives subsequently claiming the money.

Some time ago a man insured himself for £5,000, and a month later

went out in a sailing boat alone at an English seaside resort. He took good care that his departure in the boat was well noticed by people in the vicinity. Next morning the boat was found dismantled and tossing on the waves—empty. He had disappeared.

His hat and other personal effects were found floating on the water, but no trace of the man could be found, and the relatives conveniently assumed that he had been drowned and claimed the insurance money. The insurance company, however, refused to

pay. They made diligent inquiries, and discovered that a man greatly resembling the "deceased" had landed on a not far distant island, had caught the next boat to the mainland, and had then taken a passage for America. The matter came to court, and, owing to the suspicious circumstances, a verdict was found in the company's favor.

Cambric

On what supposition could a house be built with a pocket handkerchief? If it became brick (cambric).

PARDONED PRISONER SLEEPS IN A CELL

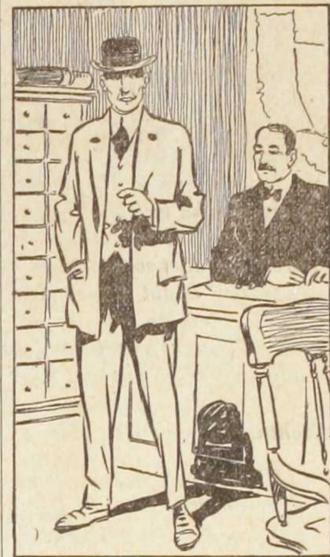
His Home for Fifteen Years and Is the Only One He Knows.

Baltimore, Md.—Pardoned by Governor Goldsborough on December 21 last, Matthew Jones, a prisoner in the Maryland penitentiary, refuses to leave. Although he is given absolute freedom about the institution and permitted to go out when he chooses, he always comes back. After serving 15 years on the inside of the big gray walls he is lost to any employment in the outside world.

He has visited practically every moving picture show in the neighborhood of the penitentiary. With his own money—about \$70—turned over to him when his pardon was granted, he is free to do what he chooses. But the outside world seems uninviting. He doesn't know what to do nor where to go.

"I'll be back," he always informs the authorities when he goes out for his daily visits to the "movies."

He is interested in the automobile, which has been developed during his



"I'll Be Back!"

incarceration. A hundred other things are entirely new to him.

At night he is free to let the rules of the penitentiary go unobserved. Though he may feel like retiring when the hour comes, when all prisoners are supposed to go to bed, Jones will remain up until midnight simply to experience the sensation of freedom.

He still does errands and serves as trusty, a position he has occupied for years. He is a favorite with Warden Leonard, his conduct having been above reproach ever since the day, 15 years ago, when he came into the penitentiary from Cumberland.

Jones was convicted of murder in the second degree. His home was in Cumberland. He went out on a little spree one night. The next morning he awoke in a police station, unaware of why he was being held. The police informed him that he had killed his most intimate friend.

Though he had been under the influence of liquor at the time, and though the family of the man he had killed endeavored to secure his release, he was found guilty and an 18-year sentence imposed. On good behavior more than two years came off his sentence. He would have had another year to serve had not his pardon come from the governor. The prison authorities are wondering what they will do if Jones insists upon staying with them.

DEER BESIEGES MAN UP POLE

Big Buck Keeps a Telephone Lineman on a Lofty Perch for Hours.

Winsted, Conn.—Raymond Logan, a lineman employed by the Southern New England Telephone company at New Milford, after clearing trouble on a line on Candlewood mountain, a few days ago, started to descend the pole, and when half way down discovered a large buck deer waiting for him. He went up the pole again, cut in and told central of his predicament.

"I don't know," he said, "how long I will be held up."

After a vigil of several hours the deer wandered away, but not until the animal was out of sight did Logan dare to leave the pole.

Murphy Government Head

Ithaca, N. Y.—"Who is the head of government in America?" said Justice Sewell to John Solomon, Syrian applicant for citizenship. "Charlie Murphy," said Solomon. Even the judge laughed.

Wanted Room to Fight

New York.—When John Lucue decided to lick Alex Joblowski in Alex's parlor, he wanted room, so he pushed Alex's baby and carriage out a front window. Both fell on an astonished policeman.

Deer Chases Children

Hackensack, N. J.—John Jackson, a farmer, is afraid he will be forced to kill a big buck deer. The animal insists on chasing his children and Jackson has asked permission of the game warden to kill it.

PARROT CALLS THE ROLL AT SCHOOL

Warfare Upon Tardiness Cleverly Solved by a Schoolma'am in Texas.

PUPILS ARE ON TIME

Bird Learns Names of Youngsters Without Much Trouble and Also Masters Part of Multiplication Table, It Is Said.

Brenham, Tex.—Miss Dorothy Booker, a charming young schoolmistress of twenty years, has solved the problem of having pupils in the rural districts attend school on time for the morning roll call. Miss Booker has trained a pet parrot to call the roll. Professor Tom, as he has been called since he began his duties, is an interesting bird to the pupils, and they all arrive on time to hear him call their names.

There is not a pupil in the Independence school who could be made to believe that Professor Tom does not know them by sight as well as by name.

Miss Booker, when she accepted the school at Independence, near Brenham, a year ago, was bothered by the pupils not arriving on time, especially during the rainy season. She immediately began to plan to overcome this, but was unsuccessful for a time.

Some months ago a trained parrot was sent her by a friend who was touring South America. Fortunately, the parrot had been owned by English-speaking people.

No sooner did the young schoolmistress see the bird than she evolved the idea of training it. At first she did not have much success, but diligent efforts brought the reward.

When the process of training was first under way the bird was allowed to sit upon a perch in the schoolroom and listen to the teacher call the roll. He was allowed to do this for two weeks, and at first always was removed from the room immediately after the roll call. Soon he was trying to call the roll with the teacher, and in a short time was able to do so by himself, as he found his efforts were always rewarded with a cracker.

After the bird first had the roll memorized it would persist in answering the "present" or "absent" after the pupils, but was soon broken of this habit. Now he sits, dignified, on his perch and interrogates in his nasal tones, "Willie Jones?" or whatever the name might be, and looks to see



Interrogates in His Nasal Tones: "Willie Jones?"

if the teacher marks the said young Jones "present" or "absent."

The bird long ago learned the multiplication tables; that is, the first few, and the teacher cites this to the erring pupils when they are slow to learn the "two times two," and that which follows. She declares none of the pupils "wants a mere bird to learn more readily than they."

Miss Booker says she has other duties outlined for Professor Tom, but does not wish to divulge them until they have proved successful. She is a strong advocate of the "parrot-in-the-schoolroom" as a stimulus to punctuality and studiousness, and declares the large red and green plumed bird is indispensable to her.

Borrows Knife to Cut Leg

Parsippany, N. J.—His leg shattered when his gun exploded while hunting, Edward Campbell crawled a mile to a farmhouse, borrowed a penknife, took a drink of water and cut off the fragments—splinters. The leg was wood.

Hugs Old Lady Bear

Alpine, Texas.—Wood Mendel engaged in a hugging match with a mother bear, whose cub he killed. Mendel was the better hugger and squeezed the old lady bear to death.

"Mary's" Brother Alive

Lancaster, Pa.—Richard K. Powers, who says he is a cousin of "Mary," who had that famous lamb, is celebrating his 103rd birthday. Mary has been dead 40 years.

PISTOL IN MOUTH REMOVES HIS SMILE

Hotel Clerk Takes It Seriously When Money, Watch and Stranger Disappear.

Chicago.—Bruce Clark, clerk at a hotel in East Eighteenth street, pressed lightly on the desk with his finger tips and assumed an air of polite expectancy when a baggageless but seemingly prosperous stranger approached him early the other morning.

Even when the stranger rudely shoved aside the pen offered to him, Clark was unruffled.

"Thought you wished to register, sir," he apologized. "What else can I do for you, sir?"

"Now you're talking," said the visitor. "Fork over!"

He took two large revolvers from his pockets and aimed both of them at Clark's right eye.

"Ha, ha! Very good, very good!" laughed the affable clerk. "I wish



Aimed Both of Them at Clark.

I could keep my face straight like that."

"If you laugh any more I'm going to kill you," earnestly remarked the man with the revolvers, showing one of the guns into Clark's open mouth. "Now try keeping your face straight!"

Clark tried and succeeded admirably, for he had a sudden hunch the stranger wasn't joking. He was surer than ever after \$7 and a watch which had been in his pockets went into the other's and the man, the watch the revolvers and the \$7 left.

KILL A WOUNDED PRISONER

Two New Jersey Policemen Capture Mortally Injured "Burglar" and End His Sufferings.

West Orange, N. J.—Two policemen captured a burglar the other night, found the culprit had been mortally wounded, and killed him to end his sufferings.

Returning to his home on Valley Road at midnight Thorwald Jensen, an Edison works employe, heard strange noises on the second floor. So did his wife and she fled with her child.

Jensen took a gun from a closet and started up the stairs. But a crash caused him to retire for second thought. Four policemen arrived, summoned by Mrs. Jensen. Two waited outside while two others entered. They went up the stairs and heard these strange noises. Drawing their revolvers they shouted: "Surrender, or we'll fire!"

No answer came, so the two bluecoats rushed into the pitch dark room. A blow from an unseen source knocked off Patrolman O'Connor's hat. As he swung his revolver it caught in his coat and was discharged.

Just then the other policemen found the push button and switched on a flood of electric light. They looked around.

They saw nobody. Yet pictures lay on the floor, flung from the walls. The policemen stared around again and the mystery was solved. Perched on a chiffonier was a wild duck. It had flown into the room in the storm and had imprisoned itself by knocking over the stick which propped up the window. O'Connor's bullet had struck the duck on the leg. It was killed as an act of mercy.

Bring in Illinois Half

Chicago.—"Bring in the Illinois half," phoned the police to an officer who discovered a supposed lunatic astride the monument on the Illinois-Indiana state line, proclaiming himself king. The copper followed orders.

Justice Going Broke

Pana, Ill.—Shelby county spent \$500 in prosecuting Thomas Farrell on the charge of stealing three bananas from a Frisco freight car, and then he was acquitted.

Woman Is Richest

Berlin.—Frau Bertha Krupp, from being the richest woman in Germany, has become the richest person of either sex, according to the new catalogue of millionaires.

Limit Diamond Output

Berlin.—The imperial chancellor limited Germany's African diamond output to 1,000,000 carats for 1914, because overproduction threatened the market.