

OPTIMISM EXPRESSED BY SEC. W. M. JARDINE

Government Agricultural Officer
Feels Sure Rural Electric Prob-
lem Will Be Mastered.

Secretary of Agriculture W. M. Jardine is confident that the right steps are being taken to discover the key to the farm electrification question. He feels certain that a satisfactory solution of the matter will be finally arrived at.

Secretary Jardine has expressed his views in a letter to the electric utilities of Nebraska, in which he summarizes the problem and declares it to be an undeniable truth that the farmer would find himself better off in every way if he could make liberal use of electric power.

"The farmer needs electrical power," said Mr. Jardine, "both because of the added pleasures its use brings to farm life and also because of its economic value to the agricultural industry. The use of electrical energy not only makes a more efficient application of power possible in many cases, but it opens up an extensive field of new uses for power application for which other types of power are not adapted.

"Agriculture has benefited from the use of power as well as other industries, but unfortunately it is handicapped in the efficient application of its power due to the diversity of the operations, the small size of the power unit usually in the hands of one operator and the seasonal demands for the power in proportion to the quantity of work to be done. This situation has resulted in a relatively high cost per unit of power utilized, and it would appear as though the adoption of electrical distribution of power might reduce this cost in many cases if an economical method of rural electrification can be developed.

"The utilization of electrical energy for curing foods and field crops, combating insect pests and for the stimulation of plant and animal growth, while not as yet fully understood, would appear to have considerable possibilities that may also in time prove of great aid to agriculture.

"While undoubtedly the rural electrification problem is such that it will require serious thought and extensive research before its final solution can be obtained, I believe that the right steps are now being taken to reach this solution and that the electric light and power companies should look forward to this field as one that will prove to be of great importance to their industry in the future."

Electric Way of Threshing Grain

If experiments conducted on an Illinois farm can be taken as a guide, the threshing of wheat and oats by electricity offers attractive possibilities for economy. Two young farmers near Bloomington, Ill., DeLoe and Eugene Funk, have demonstrated to their own satisfaction that electrical threshing is 50 per cent less costly than steam threshing, in the case of oats, and less than half as expensive for wheat.

They gave both methods a thorough trial, and in addition also experimented with a gasoline tractor. Their figures, however, compare steam and electricity.

The cost of their steam equipment amounted to \$4,772, with operating costs of \$1,577, a total of \$6,349. The cost of the electrical equipment came to \$2,260, and the operating costs were \$455, or a total of \$2,715.

The same amount of work was performed by each method—sixty thousand bushels of oats and fifteen thousand bushels of wheat were threshed.

ELECTRIC LAWN MOWER

Motor-Driven Machine Cuts Swath of 20 Inches in Fast Time.

On farms where the trim appearance of the grounds around the farmstead is part of the daily objective the advantage of an electrically-driven lawn mower is likely to have an appeal. Such an apparatus has recently been brought out, the electrical equipment consisting of a one-half horsepower General Electric motor which operates at 110 volts on either direct or alternating current circuits.

The motor was especially designed for the mower after electrical engineers had studied the particular requirements of this machine for some time. It drives the mower with ease, either on level ground or on grades. Reduction gears carry the power from the motor to the wheels, and these gears are enclosed in dust-proof housings and run in oil.

The machine cuts a swath twenty inches in width, and the revolving cutter is equipped with five blades.

Discovery of Etching

A Bohemian glass cutter was working one day, when a few drops of nitric acid fell upon his spectacles. When he picked them up he was astonished to find that the acid had corroded and softened all the glass with which it had come in contact. He drew figures on a sheet of glass with a kind of varnish and then painted round the outline with acid. As soon as the latter had had time to set he cut away the glass round the outline. When the varnish was wiped off his drawing appeared raised against a dark background. This is how etching and the process of decorating glass was discovered.

Keep Smiling

There is something buoyant and cheery and breezy about any person who can live above his surroundings—that is, can find something to cheer in every state, and who prefers to ponder on the brightness of the sun rather than discover the spots in it.

If you would sing and whistle and laugh more, heartaches would be fewer. Laughter is a contagious thing. It calls forth a similar response. People feel the tingle of life, and experience the thrills as they laugh. And there is such a lot in life to smile over.—Exchange.

Father Was a Christian

The primary teacher had taken great pains to explain the distinction between surnames and Christian names, after which she called on the children to give examples of each kind from their own names and those of other members of their families.

When Jennie was asked to tell to one statement the surname and the Christian name of her father, she responded, after a little hesitation, "My father's surname is Johnson. His Christian name is Methodist."—Brooklyn Eagle.

HOW

PARENT RAVENS PROTECT NESTINGS FROM HUMAN.

"I was once concealed in my 'hide' watching and photographing a pair of ravens at their nest on a wild and desolate crag on the Welsh mountains," writes Oliver G. Pike, English ornithologist, in the London Spectator. "Among other things I discovered that they have a language of their own. Several times during the eight hours I spent in my shelter the parents brought food to their young.

"Long before the former got to within sight of the nest the young heard the loud call which told them food was coming. When they heard this they became very excited, ran about the nest and gave out answering cries. Twice during the day a man passed over the mountains and the parent raven on guard high over the nest, seeing him and looking upon the intruder as an enemy, uttered quite a different call.

"Instantly the three young birds threw themselves flat in the nest and remained quite motionless until they heard a third cry, which again was different from the others, which told them the coast was clear. Then they quickly jumped up and were immediately at ease."

How France Encourages Ideas of Matrimony

In order to encourage matrimony in France, the Friendly Society of Parisian Youth has organized a "marriage fair" at Chateau.

Three hundred and twenty-eight young men and women left Paris with a band at their head, went to Chateau, and strolled the famous fair by an alfresco luncheon, followed by a ball.

Each of them had previously filled up a form, giving details as to their situation and prospects, and making known their ideas regarding their life partner-to-be. In return for these forms each person received a numbered badge.

If, at the ball or elsewhere, a young woman was attracted by the wearer of a certain number she could find out all about him by simply quoting his number.

Most of the men wanted wives who were "food of home," while the principal stipulations made by the girls were that their prospective husbands should have safe jobs and satisfactory incomes.

How Paint Preserves

Most people paint their homes for the sake of good looks. But houses should primarily be painted for the sake of preserving the wood, which is very porous. When the wood was still in the tree state the pores were filled with sap, and when cut the sap died out, leaving the pores open. If the wood should be left in the unprotected state, minus its bark, fungi and moisture soon would begin to rot and destroy it. So when painted, the paint penetrates the pores and forms, when dry, a tough, elastic coating, which is "anchored" to the surface by countless little "hooks" that extend into pores of the wood, and this coating or film preserves the wood by protecting it from those things which otherwise would quickly and surely destroy it.

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