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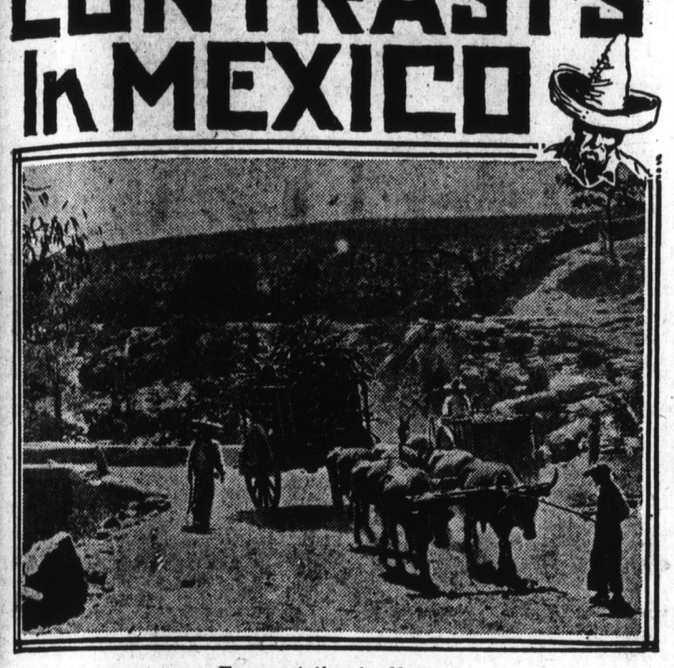
CONTRASTS in MEXICO



Transportation in Mexico.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

PERHAPS nowhere else in the world is there a country so full of contrast as Mexico. With a university established before John Harvard, Elihu Yale, or William and Mary were born, the masses of its people are ignorant. With a hospital founded before Jamestown was even dreamed of, it is backward in a medical way. With natural riches greater than those of a thousand Midases, its masses are as poor as the proverbial church mouse.

Here you will see a Mexican half-breed, barefooted, wearing a dollar pair of trousers, a fifty-cent shirt, and a ten-dollar sombrero. There, at a single glance and within the length of a single city block, you may see an Indian cargador, a donkey, an ox-cart, a carriage, a railroad train, a street car, and an automobile—almost every type of locomotion since Adam.

You may tread the burning sands of a tropical desert with the wet of the perpetual snow of towering mountains still upon your shoes. You may take a single railway journey of 36 hours in which the people you see at the railroad station will be dressed in four different weights of clothing.

Land of the inordinately rich and of the abjectly poor; land of the aboriginal Indian and of the Twentieth-century business man; land of perpetual snow and of unending summer—everywhere you turn there is contrast, high lights and deep shadows.

Mexico has an area approximately one-fourth of that of the United States. It has a coast line some 6,000 miles long, although its greatest length is less than 2,000 miles, and its greatest breadth only 750 miles. Although its area is only one-fourth that of Brazil, its population is approximately equal to that of the empire of the southern continent. Some 14,000,000 souls live within its borders, of whom more than two-thirds can neither read nor write.

Of the total population, only about 19 per cent are white, 43 per cent are mixed parentage, while 38 per cent still maintain their Indian blood uncorrupted.

Vast Agricultural Resources.

The agricultural possibilities of Mexico, despite its vast central desert plain, are great. It has millions of acres of the finest grazing land, great bodies of land that will produce two crops of corn a year, large areas of banana lands that can match those of Guatemala and Costa Rica, coffee lands that produce coffee not only fit for the "queen's table," but used on it, rubber lands, and cocao lands—all lying accessible to good railroads.

Go to Yucatan, go to Colima, go to Chiapas, go to Vera Cruz, and everywhere outside the great desert you will find a soil teeming with possibilities. And portions even of the desert land, if we may judge by what we have done with our own western alkali plains, may yet be made to blossom when the irrigationist and the plant breeder join hands.

A trip along the Pan-American railroad, with its magnificent forests and great ancient estates, among them one on which the cattle still wear the brand of Cortes; over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, where the tropical jungle rivals that of the Motagua river valley in Guatemala, which has been pronounced by travelers one of the richest in the world, and then on up through the great Atlantic plain of middle Mexico, suggests the immense undeveloped resources of the country.

In the middle and lower altitude belts of the country the banana and the orange flourish. The excellent railroad facilities of Mexico give a good outlet to the ports at Vera Cruz and Tampico, where ships are constantly loading for European and American ports. The organgeries of eastern Mexico are nearer to the eastern part of the United States than are those of southern California, and crop failures among them are unknown. With the same methods of cultivation that are pursued in Florida and southern California, they should be a source of vast wealth to the country.

Although the value of the corn produced in Mexico each year is greater than that of any other product, not even excepting gold or silver, the country still has to import a part of its supply. The reason is not far to seek—it is the nation-wide love for the tortilla. There are vast areas where it is easy to produce two crops of corn a year and where each crop grows with an exuberance that would delight the heart of any corn-club contestant in the United States.

Cotton a Prehistoric Crop.

History does not recall the time when cotton first was cultivated in Mexico. The Spaniards found it there. Indians clothed with cotton garments were first seen by Columbus along the coast of Yucatan at the very dawn of the Sixteenth century. The Toltecs wrote in their sacred books that Quetzalcohuatl, god of the air, grew cotton of all colors in his garden and taught them its many uses. In the times of Cortes the Indians quilted armor of cotton, which was proof against arrows.

To this day cotton is cultivated with profit in many parts of the country. In the Laguna region it is perennial and does not require to be planted oftener than once in ten years.

Mexico probably has a greater range of remarkable vegetation than any other country in the world. The parrot fruit tree produces an odd-shaped fruit, bearing a close resemblance to green parrakeets. Evidently mindful of this striking resemblance, when the parrakeet is frightened it makes a dash for the parrot tree, where it assumes a position which makes it look like the fruit itself.

Another remarkable tree is the "Arbol de Dinamite"—dynamite tree—whose fruit, if kept in a warm place, bursts with considerable force and a loud report, scattering its flat seeds to a surprising distance.

Rich in Minerals.

Humboldt once pronounced Mexico "the treasure-house of the world." It produces one-third of the world's silver, a considerable percentage of its gold, one-ninth of its lead, and one-twentieth of its copper. The country's mineral production, exclusive of iron, coal and petroleum, amounted to $158,000,000 in 1910, but the output dropped after the fall of Diaz. With the exception of Campeche, Tabasco and Yucatan, every state in the Mexican republic possesses mines, of which there are 21,000, covering 633,000 acres of mineral lands. They gave employment at one time to half a million men. Yet probably less than one-fourth of the mineral possibilities of the republic have been exploited. Prior to the outbreak of the Madero revolution, upward of 5,000 mining claims were registered each year.

The famous iron mountain at Durango is estimated to contain 6,000,000 tons of iron ore, which is worth seven times the value of all the gold and silver mined in Mexico in two centuries. It is believed that this deposit was formed by the same process that made the Hudson river palisades, near New York city.

The Santa Maria graphite mines are the largest and most important in the western world. There are seven beds of graphite deposits, varying in thickness from 9 to 10 feet. They were formed from coal beds by the changes brought about by flows of molten granita.

The KITCHEN CABINET

(©, 1926, Western Newspaper Union.)

Let the one who sighs for comfort
Feel a handclasp true;
It will cheer the way, and surely
Can't impoverish you.

Lives are human, though so often
We disguise our pain.
Some are hungering for your comfort;
Give and give again.

WORTHWHILE GOOD THINGS

Here is a good pudding and one that is not extensively known.

Banana Pudding.—Take a quarter's worth of vanilla wafers, put through a meat grinder with a pint or less of nuts. Cook one pint of sweet milk, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one cupful of sugar, and two egg yolks. Make alternate layers of the nuts, wafers and cream filling, adding six bananas and a can of crushed pineapple. Serve with thick whipped cream.

Date Pudding.—Mix one pound of walnuts (measured in shell), one-half pound of dates stoned and chopped, one and one-half cupfuls of sugar, one cupful of crushed and rolled bread crumbs, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder and six eggs, yolks and whites beaten separately. Add the dry ingredients, then the yolks and fold in the stiffly beaten whites. Bake in a sheet and serve with whipped cream spread over the top.

Asparagus With Cheese.—Take one can of asparagus, six hard cooked eggs, one-fourth cupful each of butter and of flour, one cupful of milk and one-half pound of cream cheese. Make a white sauce of butter, flour and milk. Place a layer of the asparagus in a baking dish, cover with the cheese and white sauce, then another layer of asparagus and finish with the white sauce and cover with buttered crumbs. Bake about twenty minutes. Season well to taste with salt, paprika and pepper.

Pickled Peach Sherbet.—Prepare a lemon sherbet, using one pint of water, one-half cupful of sugar, one teaspoonful of gelatin, one-fourth cupful of mashed pickled peaches, and the juice of a lemon. See that the gelatin is well dissolved and the mixture well blended; turn into the freezer and freeze. This is unusual and especially delicious.

Seasonable Dishes.

A good salad which may be prepared at almost any season of the year is:

Banana and Green Pepper Salad.—Remove the skin and veins from three bananas and slice, add half a cupful of finely diced tender celery, one green pepper cut into fine shreds, a handful of blanched almonds shredded and mayonnaise to moisten. Serve on lettuce.

A nice luncheon dish when it is hard to think of anything new is:

Golden Buck.—Prepare a plain welsh rabbit as follows: Combine three tablespoonfuls of flour, one tablespoonful of butter, one teaspoonful of salt, one-fourth teaspoonful of paprika, an egg, and two cupfuls of cheese put through the food chopper. Add two cupfuls of milk and cook over the hot water, stirring frequently until thick. Serve on large slices of buttered toast with a poached egg on top of each.

Cherry Cake.—Bake a sponge cake in a sheet pan and when cold spread with the following mixture made from either fresh or canned cherries: Pit a quart of fresh cherries, add two cupfuls of sugar and let stand a while, then boil fifteen minutes. Drain the juice and when cool add a cupful of cherry juice and a cupful of water and boil, pour over two tablespoonfuls of gelatin dissolved in one-fourth of a cupful of cold cherry juice. Stir in the pulp and when thick spread over the cake. Top with whipped cream sweetened and flavored with almond.

Green Corn Pudding.—Take twelve good-sized ears of corn, slice off half the kernels with a sharp knife and with blunt edge scrape out the milky germs that remain, leaving the husks on the cob. Add a tablespoonful of butter, salt and pepper and three-fourths of a cupful of milk. Bake with dots of butter over the top. Bake forty-five minutes.

Cucumber Sauce for Fish.—Grate two small cucumbers and cook in two tablespoonfuls of butter closely covered; stir frequently; when well cooked add a half pint of rich white sauce, season with lemon juice, salt and pepper, adding a bit of spinach juice for coloring.

Nellie Maxwell

Tidy Profit in Poultry Raising

Best Records in Illinois Show Average Gain of $2.45 on Each Hen.

Chickens may be a side line on some farms, but 234 Illinois farmers who co-operated last year with the extension service of the college of agriculture, University of Illinois, in keeping records on their flocks realized total profits of $43,778.01 from their poultry raising, according to a summary of their records prepared by John Vandervort, poultry extension specialist.

Receipts and Expenses.

The total labor income which the farmers realized from their poultry amounted to $66,538.54. Cash receipts from eggs alone amounted to $86,154.79, while the sale of market poultry brought in cash receipts totalling $42,778.78. The total cash receipts from all sources amounted to $148,598.97. The bill for chicken feed on the 234 record farms amounted to $73,276.20. There were 39,126 chickens kept on the 234 record farms, while 4,164,568 eggs were laid. This was 347,047 dozen eggs, 11,568 cases or a little more than 28 carloads of eggs of 400 cases each.

The object of the flock record project, under which the records were kept, is to point out success-promoting practices in farm poultry raising. In this connection the summary of the records brings out some striking contrasts between the best one-third of the records and the poorest one-third. In the case of egg production per hen, for instance, the average for that third of the records which were best was 118 eggs a hen, while the average for the poorest one-third was 100 eggs a hen, or one and one-half dozens a year less. With eggs at 30 cents a dozen, the average income from the hens in the poorest one-third of the records, therefore, would average 45 cents less a year than that from the hens in the best one-third of the records, Vandervort pointed out.

Culled Flocks Best.

Farmers who turned in the best one-third of the records culled out 53 per cent of their hens while those who turned in the poorest records culled only 40 per cent. Only 11 per cent of the hens died on the farms making up the best one-third, while 14 per cent died on the poorest one-third. Perhaps the most striking difference between the best one-third and the poorest one-third of the records was in point of profits from each hen. Farms from which the best records came realized an average profit of $2.45 on each hen, while that one-third of the farms which had the poorest records realized an average profit of six-tenths of one cent on each hen. The best one-third showed meat receipts of $1.68 a hen in contrast to 88 cents from the poorest one-third, while the feed cost per hen on the best farm records was $2.01 as compared to $1.99 on the poorest one-third. In other words, it cost the farmers who had the poorest records about the same for feed as it did those who had the best records, Vandervort said. Farmers who turned in that one-third of the records which were best realized an average of $1.41 return for each hour of their labor, while those who turned in the poorest records got only 25 cents for each hour they devoted to their poultry flock.

Close culling did its full share toward boosting the profits of the farmers who turned in the best one-third of the records, Vandervort believes. These best flocks paid a profit of $2.45 a hen, while the poorest flocks paid less than one cent a hen. In the best flocks, 53 per cent of the original number of chickens were culled out and disposed of during the year; while in the poorest flocks only 40 per cent of the birds were culled.

Fall Plowing Favored

In some cases fall plowing in the orchard can be recommended. It tends to favor washing, of course, and from that standpoint the advisability of fall plowing should be considered carefully. It is also claimed by some that trees in fall-plowed orchards are more likely to suffer winter-killing. There is some question as to the real truth about this point, but if the soil is worked down a little with the disk and harrow probably it will not freeze any deeper than it would if not plowed.

Mistake of Hog Producers

A common mistake among producers is that of heavily feeding or slopping their hogs just before taking them to market. This not only makes it mighty uncomfortable for the hog to have to exert himself after a heavy fill when he is accustomed to lying down in the shade for a snooze after his meal. It is likely to make him sick, and also reduces his already too-small lung capacity. The full stomach naturally pushes forward.

Feed for Young Calf

Until the calf is about one month of age it should be fed sparingly about four to six pounds a day. The milk can be fed morning and evening. Some persons prefer feeding young calves three or four times a day, but this is not necessary unless the calf is a weakling. By the time the calf is a month old the milk can be increased gradually, so that by the time it is six weeks old it can be receiving ten to fifteen pounds a day.

Turkey Is Dainty Eater

Turkeys are naturally dainty eaters. Not only as to quantity, but also as to quality. The turkey's food must be clean, or it sickens and dies. Clean food and live meat is the lure free range holds for turkeys. It is not proved that they won't live and thrive in confinement, but the flocks of turkeys that have thrived, though fenced in comparatively small quarters, have been given free range conditions as to fresh air, cleanliness and food.

Hogs Utilize By-Products

Hogs utilize the animal by-products of the farm which would otherwise be wasted, such as milk and dairy waste, garbage, and the meat from animals lost on the farm. Moreover, they consume profitably garden waste, the non-marketable grains, and the feeds made from the by-products of animal slaughter. Hogs multiply more rapidly than any other farm animal, and may be prepared for market more quickly than any other animal.

BOOKLET DESCRIBES BEST USES FOR SALT FOR VARIOUS ANIMALS

With Adequate Supply Cattle Develop Better.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Why and how salt should be used for grazing animals is told in a new publication, "The Use of Salt in Range Management," just issued by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The authors, W. R. Chapline and M. W. Talbot of the forest service have brought together the results of experimental work, careful observations, and studies of existing practices in the salting of live stock on western ranges.

"With an adequate quantity of salt," they say, "grazing animals develop better than they would otherwise, are more contented, and are more easily handled. Also, proper quantity and distribution of salt on the range go a long way toward controlling the grazing of live stock and obtaining satisfactory use and maintenance of the forage."

In addition to describing the results of actual experiments, the booklet gives many details regarding the proper salt allowances, kinds and grades of salt to use, kind and construction of salt containers, and the principles of adequate range salting methods for cattle, horses, sheep and goats. The use of proper salting in the control, distribution and range management of cattle is given special attention.

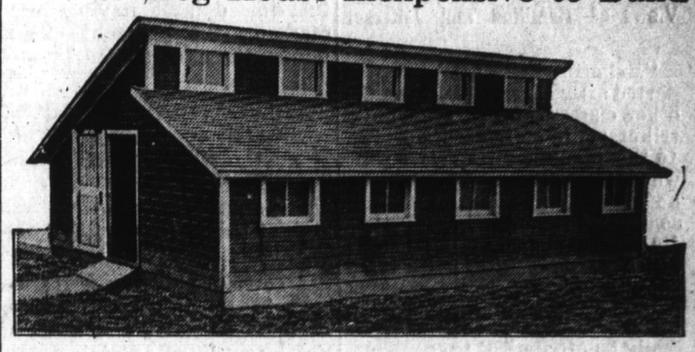
The circular, numbered 379-D, is now available free, as long as the supply lasts, upon application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or upon application to any district office of the forest service.

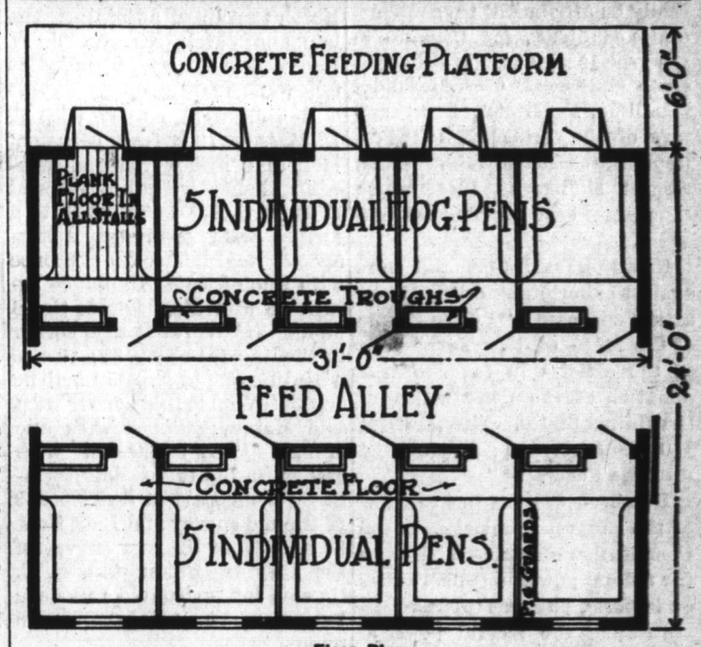
Following the exhaustion of the free supply the pamphlet can be purchased from the superintendent of public documents, Washington, D. C, for 10 cents a copy.

Kafir for Dairy Feed

A very slight advantage was found in ground corn as compared with ground kafir during tests conducted at the Kansas Agricultural college. However, the advantage in producing milk and butterfat was very small. One was practically as good as the other in maintaining body weights. A basal ration of alfalfa hay and sorgo silage was used. In addition the cows received a grain ration consisting of four parts of the grain to be compared, two parts of wheat bran and one part of linseed oil meal.

Light, Fresh Air, Shelter, Features of Hog House Inexpensive to Build





Floor Plan.

By WILLIAM A. RADFORD

Mr. William A. Radford will answer questions and give advice FREE OF COST on all problems pertaining to the subject of building work on the farm, for the readers of this paper. On account of his wide experience as editor, author and manufacturer, he is, without doubt, the highest authority on the subject. Address all inquiries to William A. Radford, No. 1827 Prairie avenue, Chicago, Ill., and only inclose two-cent stamp for reply.

If hog raising is to be made profitable, proper housing is an extremely important factor and no one can afford to neglect it. It is very often neglected, however, and the owner wonders why he does not seem to be able to make a success and profit with his hogs. If he would just realize the value of putting a little extra money and effort into providing the right sort of housing, his troubles would be over. Nor is a large amount of effort and expense required to provide the essentials.

There are just three points to be taken care of in providing a good hog house. These are, protection, light and ventilation. The hog house must give complete protection against severe weather and must be dry even in the wettest weather. In addition it is essential to provide for ample light and ventilation without drafts in order to have a healthy stock.

There are a number of types of hog houses all of which are good and which may be adapted to the varying conditions in different parts of the country. The house illustrated is one of the most popular, a saw-tooth roof, and it is simple in construction and inexpensive to build. As shown in the plan it is a small house, with only ten pens, but the size may be increased to provide any capacity desired by merely extending the length of the building.

The construction is entirely frame and when properly built will protect the occupants even in severe weather. The floor is of concrete and the pens have plank flooring over the concrete which assures warm, dry quarters at all times. To the rear is a concrete feeding platform where the stock may be fed in a clean sanitary manner, and in front of each pen there is a concrete trough for the same purpose.

Doors at each end of this house give ready access and should prove sufficient, even though the house is built of a considerably larger size. If very large, so that the two doors are insufficient, it would probably be advisable to build two units.

As shown here both light and ventilation are secured through the windows. The lower tier of windows is so placed in this type of house that it directs the sunlight into the pens at one side while the upper tier throws the light into the pens on the far side. In this way, if the house is properly placed in regard to the points of the compass, there will always be a maximum amount of sunshine inside.

For larger houses a ventilating system other than the windows should be provided to insure the carrying off of foul odors and a constant, ample supply of fresh clean air.

When built for ten hogs, as shown, the over-all dimensions of this house are only 31 feet by 24 feet, with a six-foot feeding platform. For a large number of pens the long dimension only need be increased and will be in proportion to the number of additional pens, each pair of facing pens requiring about six feet.

Extra Closet at Back Door Very Convenient

The necessity for ample closet space in the home can never be underestimated. An extra closet near the back entrance is a great convenience, as is a broom closet.

The one for wraps is especially convenient for the everyday wraps of children. It should be fitted with hooks and a coat bar placed low so the children may hang up their own wraps. A shelf may be provided above for hats and other things, and one below may be arranged for overshoes and rubbers. Toys and outdoor playthings, such as skates, balls, bats and the like may also be kept in this closet.

The room or cleaning closet need not occupy much wall space, as three feet wide and eighteen inches deep is large enough. It should be at least six feet in height to allow long-handle brooms and mops to be hung with perfect ease. This height will also allow for a shelf above on which may be kept the cleaning preparations.

The mops and brooms may be suspended from hooks fastened to the under side of the shelf, and the dust-pan, brushes and so forth, hung on hooks on the back wall.

Tenant Has No Right to Make Repairs on Flat

Very often a tenant will assume to make repairs without authority from the owner or his agents and deduct the cost from the rent. This he cannot do and maintain his action.

The courts have ruled that a lease being an instrument under seal, the agreements and intentions of the parties become merged in the instrument itself, and any evidence as to understanding and intention to aid its construction cannot be used to vary the terms of the lease itself.

Where the lease contains a specific agreement between the parties as to certain repairs to be made by the lessor it would be binding upon the landlord, but under no other condition.

New Red Cedar Mixture Keeps Closets Moth Free

Aromatic red cedar has been mixed into a patented composition with plaster especially for clothes closets, to repel moths and other insects. The preparation may be applied over a surface already plastered and needs only mixing with clean water to make it ready for use. No stain or paint should be used over it as it will reduce the strength of the cedar odor. The plaster is said to produce a smooth finish, which besides being as effective against moths as a cedar chest, is practically proof against dust.