

Mine Are Little Things

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We are prone to admire a city with a big population, a university with a large student body, an industry having an enormous production and making much profit. We are also impressed with a man with a million-dollar income, but did we ever stop to think that this world is made up of little objects called atoms. More and more scientists are turning from the telescope to the microscope to learn how the world is made. Little things well done are the secret of all worthy achievement. Nothing in all nature is more beautiful than a brilliantly colored sunset. Its beauty is caused by a very small thing called particles of dust. The light of the sun coming through countless particles of dust in the atmosphere close to the earth. Little things are hinges on which turn the doors of destiny; so let us learn to cultivate and watch them. Little things are nothing new for we remember as far back as Soloman's time they fenced the vineyards against the large foxes, but it was the small foxes that got in and ate the buds from the vines and henceforth there was no fruit.

The first question is why have any kind of labor saving devices with thousands of people out of work? They are forcing us to do it. With the price of labor soaring higher day by day--fuel and nearly all commodities that go to make up our production going up, and the price of our products coming down. Our only hope to stay in business is to cut down on our largest cost -- labor.

How are we going to do this?

We must keep our minds open and our power of thinking alert at all times. We must "remember that we build with our hands only what our mind has looked ahead to see."

Do you have time to do any of your watering? I know we all do not have automatic water systems, so sometime try to do some of your watering. Here you can do some real thinking. Here you can teach yourself one of the greatest assets you can have; to be a close and keen observer. Some of our greatest discoveries have been found by people who have developed this art. Here we can also find more first-hand information than any other way I know of. You see the condition of every plant. You can study and see the growing condition of various localities of the building and what crops would be best suited to them. We cannot find out this information with our feet propped upon a desk somewhere.

Then we must keep an open mind for those who know it all are not the people who succeed. Let all our employees know this, so when they have an idea they will bring it up for discussion. We must keep in mind that when we are doing our job perfectly, we must look for ways and means to improve it or someone else will.

There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world and that is an idea "whose time has come." Ideas are giants that release materials putting both capital and labor to work.

A small idea one of our girls had last spring was that we had the heads from lettuce crates stacked up where we had used the sides to make flats. These make an excellent pallet to set four tom-thumb flats on to be placed on the shelf.

Aluminum Surplus

After returning home one day from viewing a million pounds of war surplus aluminum of all kinds, we began to study how we could use some of this cheap material (as was then) in greenhouse construction, sterilization, etc. We bought two hundred and fifty feet of two inch tubing about a sixteenth of an inch in thickness. This we have been using for three seasons, and as you can see, it is almost like new. The cost was not much more than down spout to start with. We swedged one end open like down spout connection by placing a piece of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch pipe in the vise and hammering around and around the aluminum tubing until they would fit together. Then we drilled our holes by staggering them one foot apart on the bottom with a $3/32$ " drill. We painted a red streak down the top so we could tell when the holes were downward, thus making the insertion in the bed much faster. Phosphoric acid does not affect aluminum as it does iron or tin, therefore, your holes in the aluminum tubing do not stop up. This makes aluminum tubing about the best material available for steam sterilization. It is light weight and almost everlasting if you take care in putting it into the soil and taking it out.

In using aluminum around the greenhouse we must keep in mind that aluminum in the presence of chlorides and heavy metal salts, such as iron, copper, and nickel, will deteriorate very rapidly. Aluminum alloys of magnesium, silicon, and magnesium types have a higher corrosion resistance than the copper containing alloys. The new non-corrosive type that the bar caps are made of is 361 and is the best one to weld. I think aluminum will be used more and more in greenhouse construction.

We have made a lot of our supports for our stringing up out of aluminum as this one. It is made of $3/4$ " x $3/4$ " x $1/8$ " angle. The whole frame only weighs a little over two pounds--costing about \$1.50 to make. They are light but yet strong and one secret is to be known -- asphalt the ends that go down in the soil because in some soils aluminum will deteriorate very rapidly.

Protect Hose

To keep yourself from getting real mad and losing your temper as you pull your hose around the end of your beds an old piece of pipe driven in the ground at each corner will let your hose pull around easily.

To increase your growing area, it is very easy to construct a growing pan to be placed on the shelf. We use these to sub-irrigate any plants placed in them. If you grow any of your carnations in flats, you will find these very handy, as all of you have experienced how hard it is to keep your flats watered. Then if you have a blooming crop below, you lose too many blooms by the water pouring down upon them. We also use them to sub-irrigate all of our seed flats of petunias, begonias, snaps, etc. Flat sheets of galvanized tin come in lengths eight feet long and eighteen to thirty-six inches wide. A sheet thirty inches by eight feet costs about \$2.00 and you can make them without any trouble.

White Walls Increase Light

We had a concrete wall three feet high on the north side of one of our houses which had ground beds in it. The bed next to this wall never seemed to get enough light. So one day we painted this wall white and you would be surprised how much light was reflected. The bed is now producing a good crop. Lots of our space could be helped by a little paint.

We have three houses with concrete ground beds fourteen inches high. We experienced a severe drying out on the south side of each bed in the summertime. We would have to water this side almost twice as much as the other side. We painted the side with asphalt base aluminum paint. The asphalt sealed the concrete, cutting down the evaporation of water and the aluminum reflected the heat, thus making the plants grow more evenly across the whole bed. The cost is very small.

Motor Oil the Benches

If you still have some wooden beds in mind, here is a good cheap way to make them last much longer. We treated the bottom side of our boards with old used car oil, also dipped the legs and the sills in same. Over our sills we put a piece of asphalt roofing paper. Then we nailed our boards with the oiled side down. After the bench was completed, we asphalted the inside with hot asphalt, but a newer material by the name of Kendex, put out by the Lord and Burnham Company, is much better. The Kendex or asphalt seals the boards against water and all fertilizers and the used car oil preserves the bottom, the legs and the sills. We have beds built eight years ago out of oak lumber that we still use and are good..

Carnation Rings

If any of you use wire rings around your carnation plants, here is how to make them. Take a round piece of material the size of the ring you may desire; we use a piece of tree limb; drive a ten penny nail in the sides of it just opposite each other about four inches from the end and cut the head off the nail. Then, round the end off where the nails are driven in so the wire will slide off easier. Fasten the limb or round piece down on the work bench or put in a vise. Then cut your wire the desired length and put around the limb all the way and half way back and turn over the nails - thus the ring is formed.

Correct Ventilators

If you have any ventilators that are good but are bowed up and do not fit down good at the bottom, you can remedy them by bolting a piece of angle across the bottom of them.

In my feeble and humble way, if I have said or shown anything that would be of any help to any of you, I want to assure you that I have done it with gratitude and love of my heart, not for any gain of wealth or fame for in this world of greed and hatred; I would like to see all of us working with more love in our hearts one for another. I would rather you would remember me as the one from Tennessee who lives in a house by the side of the road and wants to be a friend of man, and life is measured not by accumulation but by outlay; not by how much saved, but how wisely expended; not by distance traveled, but by the road taken.

The objective is the main thing. Get it clear, straight, right and stick to it.

We must learn to live in the present and dream of the future.