

Antiquities," an area of over eight hundred thousand acres, lying within the Grand Cañon National Forest, was established as the Grand Cañon National Monument. President Roosevelt's proclamation declared that it was not intended thereby to prevent the use of lands for forest purposes, but that, while both Reservations should be effective on the land withdrawn, the National Monument would be the dominant Reservation. President Roosevelt issued later proclamations dividing the Grand Cañon Reservation into two parts, without, however, affecting the Grand Cañon National Monument. The portion of the National Forest north of the Colorado River was erected into the Kaibab National Forest, and that south of the river into the Coconino National Forest. The Scenic and Historic Preservation Society requests that the Grand Cañon National Monument shall be enlarged. At present only about half of the Grand Cañon and the Marble Cañon are within the National Monument; in particular, half of the Grand Cañon to the west is left without protection from vandalism. Hence the Society sensibly recommends that the present Reservation be extended westward to include all of the Cañon. The recommendation has been heartily endorsed by President Taft.

The characters are admirably represented, and the dialogue is entertaining and witty. Rebecca is a fountain of youth, impulsive, spontaneous, unconscious. The old stage-driver belongs to a type of which Americans are never tired—the kindly, homespun, humorous countryman who hides a great deal of affection and helpfulness under the guise of humor. The maiden aunts are true to the life, and the children frolic and giggle precisely as they are doing to-day in a hundred New England villages. The attraction of the play is easy to explain. There are two backgrounds in the memory or imagination of Americans—the background of New England and of Virginia. From the Atlantic to the Pacific there are a host of people to whom the New England scenery and the farm life never fail to appeal. All Americans enjoy a real picture of farm life, no matter whether they ever had any relation with the farm or not. "Rebecca" touches another source of unfailing interest: it is a drama of childhood. It is a thousand miles away from the sex play and the problem play; the morning air is on it, and one comes away from it refreshed and invigorated. There is no trace of the pedagogue in it; but there are very few sermons more effective than this unpretentious, spontaneous play of childhood, with its fresh and captivating humor.

A CHARMING PLAY It is an evidence of the vitality of those two charming stories of a girlhood in Maine by Kate Douglas Wiggin, "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" and "New Chronicles of Rebecca," that they could be successfully dramatized; for there is, in the nature of things, no plot in either story. The charm in both books lies in the atmosphere, the development of character, the New England background, the deftly mingled humor and sentiment. Both are beguiling pictures of New England country life. The play, which is drawing large audiences at the Republic Theater in New York, lacks the element of plot; but the incidents or episodes are so related to one another in the unfolding of a childhood full of purity and fun and intelligence that they supply the absence of plot.

DECLINE IN RURAL POPULATION The census figures for Missouri, announced recently, show a marked falling off in the rural population of the State. The State, as a whole, showed a gain of approximately 187,000, or six per cent, over the figures of 1900. But in the two largest cities, St. Louis and Kansas City, the gain was 197,000. So there was a net decrease of 10,000 in the population of the State outside these cities. Missouri has been a prosperous agricultural State in the last decade, and the Director of the Census, Dr. E. Dana Durand, expresses the belief that conditions there are typical of those of other agricultural States of the Middle West. Several explanations have been offered for this decline. Undoubtedly cheap land in the Southwest has attracted thousands

of families from the older States. Land has steadily advanced in value, and the farmer who would have expected his sons to settle on adjacent farms a generation ago is apt now to advise them to go into the newer country of Oklahoma and Texas, where farm land is much cheaper. The enormous increase in population made by these two States in the last decade has been due chiefly to immigration from the Middle West. The older States have emptied their surplus population into them. The constant improvement in farm machinery probably has had some effect. The farmer can get on now with fewer hands than was possible formerly, so the "hired" men have drifted away to some extent from the rural districts. But more far-reaching than this has been the general drift to the cities of the farm population, due partly to the desire for larger opportunities to make money, partly to dissatisfaction with the hardships and loneliness of farm life and a desire for the lights, the theaters, and the attractions of the city. A letter sent out by the Department of Agriculture a year ago asked the question, "What changes would make farm life more attractive for women?" Three hundred and fifty of the six hundred replies received said, "Water in the house." Others spoke of the desirability of gas. People no longer are satisfied with conditions that once they accepted as a matter of course. The absence of conveniences is noticed much more than a few years ago. The result has been to drive the young people to the cities. The Kansas City "Star" reports one country lawyer who said that he had written perhaps a hundred letters in the last ten years to a friend connected with the Kansas City street railway company recommending young men for employment as motormen and conductors. He had invariably advised them not to go to the city, but his counsel was unavailing. The lure was too strong. Another exceedingly important factor, which will be possible of analysis only after fuller census figures are available, is the decline in the size of families. In one important agricultural county, for instance, a staff correspondent of the "Star" found that the school population had fallen

from 7,800 in 1890 to 6,400 this last year. In 1890 the school-children constituted thirty-one per cent of the population. This year they are twenty-six per cent. The number of marriage licenses issued each year in this county has fallen off since the early eighties. This correspondent found a general expression of opinion that the number of large families was much smaller than fifteen or twenty years ago. If the Missouri statistics are typical of other States, as seems likely, the census is going to furnish much interesting material for sociological investigation.



THE SALOTTO OF NAPLES

The word *salotto* signifies drawing-room, or *salon*. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the word, as used for a meeting-place, signified especially a center of literary and social culture. As used in Italy to-day it means this and more. It conveys something of what we mean when we say "home." As used in the University of Naples, in particular, it has been applied to the outgrowth of a Bible class of six young men, started eight years ago, not in Naples but in Rome. The young men studied the Bible, but they also studied Italian social problems as they affect students in their university life. There were lacks in their university life. There was a lack of friendly intercourse between students and professors. There was an absence of dormitories and fraternities. There were false views regarding the dignity of labor. There was a lack of physical education and of sports. Especially in Naples there was an almost Oriental exclusion of women, rendering impossible a wholesome social relation between young men and young women. Finally, there was a widespread atheism. In the University of Naples, comprising six thousand students, nine out of every ten men are atheists. The atrophy of the religious conscience was also accompanied by political apathy. Confronting these conditions is the work started by an American woman, Miss Leavitt. She began it in Rome. Her means were simple, but she rented a room, provided good literature in different languages, secured good story-tellers and speakers, organized