

rule purely for the benefit of the people ruled.

#### FARMERS' WEEK IN OHIO

It is extraordinary that geographical boundaries—arbitrary lines dividing our united country into sections for the convenience of government—should also mark off and isolate types of humanity and develop so many specific problems as is the case. As one travels west there are points where certain difficulties slough off and drop out of the train window, as it were, and what seem like totally unrelated problems spring up abruptly, attaching themselves to one's every thought and deed.

By the time one is well into the heart of Ohio the economic and social difficulties of farm life appear the most pressing questions which our Nation has to meet. Ohio seethes with boys and girls, men and women, struggling toward knowledge—knowledge of their own profession!

The Ohio College of Agriculture, a department of the Ohio State University, has just held (February 2 to 6) its second annual Farmers' Week or Short Course. Lectures were given by experts, seven hours daily, upon the raising of crops and the perfecting of farm homes.

The registration for this course, exclusive of the regular students of the College, was seven hundred and seventy, and was drawn from four States. Men had literally left their plows in the fields to catch their trains, because they believed that it would pay them to come; boys had been sent by their Young Men's Christian Association centers; women from sixteen years of age to over sixty listened with fervor to two-hour talks on the preparation of vegetables, the quartering of animals and the cooking of cuts, the remodeling of clothes, the equipment and beautifying of their homes. The longing—the passion—for knowledge of their own life-work was written upon seven hundred and seventy faces.

These men and women, boys and girls, understand that a new epoch has risen for the farm; that we can no longer mine our soil, but must cultivate it; that we can no longer live in the isolation of vast expanses, but must grow our crops more intensively, forcing out of each acre all that labor and market conditions warrant and rendering to it again its original fertility. They understand that the farmer must learn not only to grow crops, but to market them—he

must become a business man. The average income of the American farmer is less than a thousand dollars a year, and our system of rural credits is not sufficiently complete to finance his business; therefore he must learn to co-operate with his neighbors in order to find the nearest market and the cheapest producing and shipping facilities. He must also co-operate with his wife, who is coming to be recognized as a producer. Even if affection and self-respect do not compel it, economy makes it advisable that her time and strength should be conserved by the installation of running water, the purchase of a separator, a washing-machine, and many other labor-saving devices.

These things are understood, but the methods of their accomplishment are yet to be mastered. The Middle West offers the spectacle of the ancient profession of farming seeking a larger outlet for its energies—a new birth into usefulness. The splendor of youth and of sunrise is in the effort, and the future of our civilization lies in its success.

#### A CIRCULATING LIBRARY THAT CIRCULATES

Mr. Josiah H. Benton, the efficient President of the Boston Public Library and one of the leaders of the bar of that city, in a recently published pamphlet on "The Workings of the Boston Public Library" brings out clearly the manifold services which such an institution may render. A generation ago a library was a kind of mausoleum where books in dead languages were stored for scholars and where meager facilities were extended to general readers. Mr. Benton's definition of the purposes of a free public library discloses a different ideal and is a good description of the basis on which the public libraries of the country are now working: "The primary purpose of a free public library supported by taxation is to give the use of good books and other educational library material to persons who might not otherwise enjoy such use." Such a library also should "afford opportunity for study and research by scholars and students."

The Boston Public Library renders both services. During the past year it has been daily supplying with books 30 branches and reading-rooms, 62 engine-houses, 36 institutions, and 139 public and parochial schools. The branches thus fed become themselves reservoirs for further distribution; they are sending out about 44,000 volumes annually;

and thus the central library, so to speak, percolates knowledge throughout the entire city. It distributes not only books, but photographs and pictures of many kinds which are of great service in the work of the schools. About forty thousand pictures from the branch collections are annually lent to reading-rooms, schools, and study clubs; and the central library sends out more than 2,500 portfolios of pictures to schools. Not only are books carried to the people of the city, but people who come to the library are rendered every possible assistance in the selection of topics and books. They find there a group of experts whose chief business it is to furnish information.

#### SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

The inquiries made at the library in regard to topics and books are full of human interest. They show over what a wide area the minds of children and their elders are at work. Many of the inquiries indicate that even in Boston knowledge is not yet universal.

Questions have been received in regard to the authorship of "Kenilworth," of "Tom Brown at Rugby," of "The Birds' Christmas Carol," and of "Tom Sawyer." The library was requested to furnish Shakespeare's "Taming of the Crew," "Casero's Essays on Senility and Friendship," which may be regarded as a free translation of Cicero's "Essays on Old Age and Friendship," and, perhaps most surprising of all, "Mark Antony's Meditations." The unconscious humor of this confusion of two men as far apart as the poles would have made even the serious Emperor smile. The library was also asked to furnish the "picture of an apricot for a grocer's label," "a medical book for a young man studying to be an undertaker," a book on "veal," and one on the "etiquette of mourning." The interest in psychology is indicated by the request for books on the "effect of colors on human conduct" and "the education of the nervous system," while such requests as those for information about the "identification of a religious order from the dress of a doll," "the habitat of the razor fish," and "sanctification" reveal a truly catholic breadth of intellectual interest. It is to be hoped that the inquirer who asked, "Who predicted the greatness of New York City?" received a satisfactory answer.

In one of the branch reading-rooms during three days 1,075 volumes of American his-

tory were asked for, 305 volumes on social science, 237 on natural science, and 243 on the useful and mechanical arts.

The Outlook has many times referred to the work of Mr. Dana, of the Newark Public Library; that library and the Boston Public Library strikingly illustrate the immense educational power of a great collection of books if it is skillfully directed to public uses and so organized as to bring all its resources within the reach of the public.

#### THE ANARCHY IN MEXICO: IS THERE A WAY OUT?

In the United States Senate last week Senator Fall, of New Mexico, read a list of sixty-three murders and outrages committed against American citizens in Mexico during the last three years. Some allowance should be made for the varying degrees of criminality involved and the fact that some of the crimes took place before the fall of Madero. Yet the list, both in its extent and in the horror of its details, vividly impressed the country with the need of some action to make such murders and outrages of our fellow-citizens in a neighboring country impossible.

Equally impressive is the humiliating position in which we stand to-day as regards the most recent charges of murder in Mexico—Vergara, killed by Federals; Bauch, said to have been killed at Villa's orders; and Benton, the Englishman, killed by Villa's orders, if not by Villa himself. In all these cases the United States has sought for information, and has been repelled with vague promises of future inquiry by Mexican commissions. We simply do not know to-day how these three deaths occurred; we are barred from finding out, and if reparation is due nothing seems further away or less probable than its exaction. The uneasiness on our side of the border is increasing also; Governor Colquitt, of Texas, while he did not, as at first supposed, authorize the recent recovery by force of Vergara's body, is urgent in asking that crimes across the border against Texan citizens be stopped. In every direction the situation seems worse rather than better, while the probability is small that the fight between Federals and Constitutionalists will soon be closed, and equally small that Huerta will withdraw from his dictatorship.

What, then, can be done? Senator Fall