

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

urged "interposition" as opposed to what he regards as the "intervention" now actually going on through our attempts to interfere in Mexico's domestic affairs. His recommendation was stated thus:

With the solemn declaration that we do not want to war upon the Mexican nation or people; that it is not our purpose to acquire territory, upset their laws, or overturn their Constitution, and an invitation to the masses of the Mexican people to co-operate with us, we should immediately direct the use of the land and naval forces of this Government for the protection of our citizens and other foreigners in Mexico wherever found, and lend their assistance to the restoration of order and to the maintenance of peace, and the placing of the administrative function in the hands of capable and patriotic citizens of Mexico, to be left with them, to the end that, under their own laws and customs, without interference from ourselves or others, elections may be held and those elected allowed to administer their own Government.

No doubt President Wilson would call this both intervention and war, and the people are with the President in hoping that armed action may be avoided. Recognition of Huerta is repugnant to the Administration and, we believe, to the best American public opinion, and it would in any case not protect our citizens in the immense territory controlled by Villa. Moreover, the question is not merely how to protect Americans for the next few weeks or months, but how to aid Mexico to become a responsible country in which life and property will be permanently safe. Is there a way to this?

The answer, in our judgment, lies in the direction of making the Mexican question not one for Mexico alone, nor for the United States alone, but instead one for the combined wisdom and action of the four great self-governing American republics, the United States, Argentina, Chile, and Brazil. Mexico is not and never has been such a republic; it should be helped to become one; and because its problem is of intense importance to the countries named, they should, and we believe in the end will, take it up jointly. Mexico could but yield to such united representations and urging, backed as they would be by the ultimate possibility of overwhelming force, and accompanied as they would be by a mutual disavowal of aggrandizement or spoliation.

This plan, which has become known as the "A B C Doctrine," was long ago suggested

by Mr. Charles H. Sherrill, formerly American Minister to Argentina, and has been repeatedly spoken of with approval by The Outlook. Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. John Barrett, and Rear-Admiral Chester are among the supporters of the idea. It has been advocated by several influential newspapers and notably by the New York "Tribune" and "Sun," has been proposed on the floor of Congress, and is gaining adherents constantly. Its wisdom has never been successfully questioned, if it has been questioned at all; whether it is practical or not, must, like all great international undertakings, be put to the proof. Generally what is wise is practical, and this need be no exception to the rule. The strong, sane, sober American powers have common interests of more than one kind; the sooner they begin to act in unison for the common good, the better.

## MR. GEORGE AND THE FREEVILLE REPUBLIC

In its issue of December 27 The Outlook reported the outcome of the first of two investigations into the affairs of the George Junior Republic. This investigation, it will be remembered, was made by the State Board of Charities. The findings of this Board dealt with two general subjects—the principles upon which the Republic was founded, and the moral character of Mr. George, the creator of the Republic. In its discussion of this report The Outlook treated only the first of these topics, and advised its readers to withhold judgment as to the merits of all charges and complaints until the findings of the second committee appointed by the Trustees of the Republic were made public. The State Board, as The Outlook has already reported, came to the conclusion that the George Junior Republic might profitably continue to exist if Mr. George were removed from the Republic, and then the Republic removed from what remained. It showed an utter lack of comprehension of the underlying principles of Mr. George's remarkable institution, and an equal lack of knowledge as to the demonstrated results of Mr. George's drastic and courageous system of education. Perhaps before proceeding to a discussion of the findings of the second committee and the action of the Trustees of the George Junior Republic and of the