

BOYS AND GIRLS INSTITUTE

By W. C. Palmer, Agricultural Editor
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The Boys' and Girls' Institute is a meeting of the winners in the school children's county corn, potato, butter, bread and sewing contests in the North Dakota Agricultural College.

These contests are conducted by the county superintendents. The corn contests, for instance, are managed as follows: The county superintendent finds out how many of the boys and girls attending school want to grow corn. This number is reported to the Agricultural College Extension Division. The director, Mr. Randlett, sends the county superintendent enough seed corn to furnish each one from six to seven hundred kernels. In some counties as high as one thousand have entered the corn contest.

In the fall a county contest is held. Prizes are offered for corn, potatoes, bread, butter and needle work. These prizes include from one to ten trips to the Boys' and Girls' Institute and in many cases cash prizes and merchandise are also offered. These winners come to the Agricultural College for a week's course in Agriculture and Home Economics. One hundred and eight came this year.

The following lessons were given for both boys and girls: Dairying, Small Fruit, Poultry, Horses, Corn, How Motion Pictures are Made. The following for boys only: Crop Rotation, Milk Production, Types of Cattle and Farm Devices. The following for girls only: The Value of Home Economics Education, Bread Making, Good Health, Domestic Art, and Sanitation. The lessons were made simply and comprehensive—a good deal of demonstra-

tion material was used so that is accomplished in the space of a week.

The lectures and laboratory work was given in the forenoons. The afternoons were devoted to games and recreation; the boys used the armory for indoor baseball, etc., while the girls used the gymnasium in Ceres Hall. In the evening entertainments were given. One was to represent what a country school can do in getting up an entertainment. The band, the play, the recitations were all given by boys and girls from the country.

Another entertainment was to illustrate what a church entertainment could be made. The program included moving pictures, games and a social hour.

Some of the boys and girls had never been on a train before. It proved to be quite an event to all of them. The trip gives them a much different idea of farming and home making. Meeting the experts in the various departments, getting small glimpses into the big realm of agriculture and home making impresses on them that farming and home making are important lines of work—work that demands the best brain, brawn and training—work that is of the highest importance, fundamental to society and progress. Civilization will be in proportion as the farmers are intelligently trained for this most important work.

These boys and girls are leaders in North Dakota agriculture. They have introduced corn onto the North Dakota farms. The farmers believed that corn would not grow, but the boy and girl are willing to try. They were supplied with seed corn and directions. They planted the corn and attended it. It grew, and yes, matured, and that clear up to the Canadian boundary. The seed sent out by the Agricultural College was carefully selected as to its adaptability to the various localities. In 1912, thirteen thousand

were enrolled in the industrial contests; in 1911, eleven thousand; in 1910 ten thousand; in 1909 eight thousand. Of this number about 85 per cent were in the corn contests. These corn patches, while small, demonstrated that corn could be grown, and more than that it furnished seed. In some cases several bushels were saved. The next year the corn patch grew to a corn field. The corn patch not only demonstrated that corn could be grown but the wheat that grew on the corn patch the next year was usually outstandingly better than that on wheat land, thus demonstrating the value of corn as a rotation crop.

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A farmers' institute will be held at Binford on the 4th and 5th of February, at which time speakers of prominence will be in attendance. As a farmers' institute is a matter of instruction to those engaged in farming it is hoped that a large number of the grain growers of this section will be in attendance at the institute to be held at Binford on the dates mentioned. We feel sure that those who attend will be profited.