

Boys' and Girls' Clubs.—A condition not peculiar to America is that many of the boys and girls on the farm have very little interest in the farm-work, and the desire to get away to the towns is being overcome by making the youngsters partners in some line of work, giving them the income from certain crops, fields, or stock. The boys' and girls' club and contest work is the result, and in all contests the parents are urged to give the boys and girls a part of the crop or stock raised, even if a prize is not won. Indian corn and Kaffir corn (or millet) is the chief crop for the boys. In one country the boys were required to plant an acre of corn, do all the work on it, keep a record of the work done and the returns from the crop, and to write a report. Prizes were given for the following points: Yield per acre, 30; profit, 30; exhibit of a part of the crop, 20; history and report, 20. A uniform scale of prices for labour, rent, &c., was charged.

In pig contests prizes were offered to boys who secured the most weight from a single litter of pigs at the least cost per pound, the conditions, of course, being uniform.

In garden contests for girls, each competitor plants, say, a tenth of an acre, planning the garden and doing all the work. The principal crop is tomatoes, which are canned. Butter contests are also promoted for boys and girls.

The Province of British Columbia has a Soil and Crop Instructor, who is at the head of the boys' and girls' field-crop competitions. If the competition is for potatoes he issues a bulletin, a booklet of sixteen or twenty pages, with an introductory letter addressed personally to the boys and girls, and thereafter the most complete details for the selection of the plot, the variety, and the seed, preparation, cutting the seed-potato, the rate of seeding, planting, fertilizing, spraying, and so on. The conditions of each contest are as clearly set out, together with the method of scoring, and the rules. After the contest is over the competitors' points are published in another bulletin, which, in addition to setting out the rules for the next contest, will very likely contain a good many points about the mistakes made by competitors in previous contests.

The Community Egg Circle.—It is estimated that the annual production of poultry and eggs in the United States is in excess of £120,000,000, but there is a total loss of nearly 8 per cent. of the eggs marketed, due to improper handling between the farm and the market. The remedies are kept constantly before egg-producers in a series of bulletins, but it has been found that more can be accomplished in these essentials by uniting several producers in an association. One very successful egg company has a large incubator-house, with a capacity for twelve thousand eggs, where early chicks are produced for the members at a low cost. This is done in order to obtain early-maturing pullets, thus securing eggs during the autumn, when they are usually scarce. The company also has a receiving-room for eggs, where they are candled, sorted to weight (about 24 oz. to the dozen), packed in cartons, and shipped on contract orders. Their eggs are guaranteed to be according to grade. Twice a year dividends are paid to each member in proportion to the number of eggs marketed through the company and the time of year they were brought in, a higher dividend being paid per dozen for eggs brought in during the autumn and winter. A regular trade is established with discriminating consumers, the best class of hotels and restaurants, and with grocers, the reputation thus established enabling the association to fix its price above the regular market quotations. Egg circles, which are being taken up rapidly in the United States, may be formed by any number of producers, the aim being in the end to secure enough eggs to warrant a central station, with a manager to inspect, grade, and market the whole product. Marketing through the local creamery has also been successfully tried. The average constitution provides for a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and two trustees, the five to form a board of managers, the secretary-treasurer performing the duties of manager. It is usual to insist that eggs should be gathered daily and kept in a cold place, that no eggs older than seven days shall be delivered to the collector, that members may deliver eggs only from their own hens, and that all eggs must be delivered to the circle. Eggs that do not average 24 oz. to the dozen are paid for by weight on that basis. The whole plan is very simple, and is being put before producers by frequent bulletins from Washington.

Women's Institute.

"For home and country" is the motto of the women's institutes of Canada. Their object is the study of home economics, child-welfare, the prevention of disease, the improvement of local and social conditions, and the encouragement of agricultural and other local and home industries for women. The State connection with the institute is definite and valuable. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture is Superintendent of Institutes, and with the Minister sits on an Advisory Board with four women chosen from different parts of the province, one of them being chairman. The Board advises the Department on the work of institutes and, in particular, the work of women in agriculture, at the same time seeing that the departmental policy is carried out. Besides supplying lecturers for meetings of the institutes, the Department provides all stationery, posters, and other matter.

The Province of Ontario alone has 843 branches of the Women's Institute, with a membership of nearly 25,000, which represents as many homes. The outbreak of war has turned the attention of women to Red Cross and other patriotic work, but nevertheless the women's institutes are increasing at a rapid rate. The annual membership fee is 1s., and every branch institute with a paid-up membership of fifteen receives a grant of, roughly, 12s. 6d., in addition to which the district institute, which undertakes organizing and advertising work, receives a fixed grant of £2, and a further grant of 12s. 6d. for each branch in the district. In addition to these grants other amounts are usually forthcoming from local bodies, in addition to receipts from entertainments, and so on. To every member the Department of Agriculture posts copies of all bulletins and of other Government publications that may have a bearing on the work of the institute.