

the greatest possible help and kindness, and brought away the warmest feeling of admiration and friendship. The start was made on the west coast first made known to the world by Cook and Kotzebue, Beechey, Collinson and Bedford Pim, and here it was possible to find some habitation, usually an underground igloo, on every night but one of the journey. Storms were encountered, but there were commonly fair winds and there were no special hardships, traveling being far more rapid than is usual in the interior. At Point Barrow a halt of two weeks gave opportunity for the study of the largest Eskimo village in Alaska. In spite of the advancing season the difficulties increased with the resumption of travel, March being the month in which the severest weather is to be expected here. Throughout the 250 miles to Flaxman Island the party saw only one human being and were housed only twice. "It is," says the writer, "the barrenest, most desolate, most forsaken coast I have ever seen in my life: flat as this paper on which I write, the frozen land merging indistinguishably into the frozen sea; nothing but a stick of driftwood here and there, half buried in the indented snow, gives evidence of the shore." The fortnight's travel along this stretch was a constant struggle against a bitter northeast wind with the thermometer  $20^{\circ}$  to  $30^{\circ}$  below zero Fahrenheit, and at night, warmed only by the "primus" oil cooking stove, the air within their little snow house was as low as from  $48^{\circ}$  to  $51^{\circ}$  below zero. The almost ceaseless wind was a torment, and the faces of all were continually frozen. There are Eskimo on the rivers away from the coast, but it was impossible to visit them. East of Point Barrow all the dog-feed had to be hauled on the sledge, and—for the first time since the archdeacon had driven dogs—they occasionally went hungry when there was no driftwood to cook with. The heaviest task however came on the journey inland to Fort Yukon. Beyond the mountains the winter's snow lay unbroken, and for eight days a trail down the Collen River had to be beaten ahead of the dogs. At the confluence of the Collen with the Porcupine Stefánsson and his party were met with, es-

corted on the way to Fort Yukon by Dr. Burke, of the hospital there. Stefánsson had lain ill all the winter at Herschel Island, and would never have recovered had he not finally resolved to be hauled 400 miles to the nearest doctor.

#### A PROPOSED BRITISH INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL ART

WE learn from the *London Times* that the British Board of Trade in conjunction with the Board of Education and with the advice of representative members of the Royal Society of Arts, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the Art Workers' Guild, the Design and Industries Association, and various persons and organizations connected with manufacture and commerce, have framed a scheme for the establishment of a British Institute of Industrial Art, with the object of raising and maintaining the standard of design and workmanship of works and industrial art produced by British designers, craftsmen and manufacturers, and of stimulating the demand for such works as reach a high standard of excellence.

The institute will be incorporated under the joint auspices of the Board of Trade as the department dealing with industry and the Board of Education as the authority controlling the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the methods by which it is proposed to achieve its objects include:

- (a) A permanent exhibition in London of modern British works selected as reaching a high standard of artistic craftsmanship and manufacture.
- (b) A selling agency attached to this exhibition.
- (c) A purchase fund for securing for the state selected works of outstanding merit exhibited at the institute.
- (d) The establishment of machinery for bringing designers and art workers into closer touch with manufacturers, distributors and others.
- (e) The organization of provincial and traveling exhibition of a similar character, either directly or in cooperation with other organizations.

It is not at present intended that the exhibition of the institute shall be actually opened

until after the war, but all preparatory steps are being taken so as to avoid delay when peace has been restored. There is reason to hope that within a short period of years the institute may become self-supporting (except, of course, as regards the cost of purchasing for the nation selected works of outstanding merit). But it is necessary to provide for an adequate guarantee fund to ensure the stability of the scheme, at least during its initial stages, and thus to enable a high standard to be rigorously maintained without regard to immediate financial necessities. The Board of Trade confidently hope that such a guarantee fund will be forthcoming.

#### AGRICULTURE AND THE GOVERNMENT<sup>1</sup>

IN the field of agriculture we have agencies and instrumentalities, fortunately, such as no other government in the world can show. The Department of Agriculture is undoubtedly the greatest practical and scientific agricultural organization in the world. Its total annual budget of \$46,000,000 has been increased during the last four years more than 72 per cent. It has a staff of 18,000, including a large number of highly trained experts, and alongside of it stand the unique land grant colleges, which are without example elsewhere, and the 69 state and federal experiment stations. These colleges and experiment stations have a total endowment of plant and equipment of \$172,000,000 and an income of more than \$35,000,000 with 10,271 teachers, a resident student body of 125,000, and a vast additional number receiving instructions at their homes. Country agents, joint officers of the Department of Agriculture and of the college, are everywhere cooperating with the farmers and assisting them. The number of extension workers under the Smith-Lever Act under the recent emergency legislation has grown to 5,500 men and women working regularly in the various communities and taking to the farmer the latest scientific and practical information. Alongside these great public agencies stand the very effective voluntary organizations among the farmers themselves which are more

and more learning the best methods of co-operation and the best methods of putting to practical use the assistance derived from governmental sources. The banking legislation of the last two or three years has given the farmers access to the great lendable capital of the country, and it has become the duty of both of the men in charge of the Federal Reserve Banking System and of the Farm Loan Banking System to see to it that the farmers obtain the credit, both short term and long term, to which they are entitled not only, but which it is imperatively necessary should be extended to them if the present tasks of the country are to be adequately performed. Both by direct purchase of nitrates and by the establishment of plants to produce nitrates, the government is doing its utmost to assist in the problem of fertilization. The Department of Agriculture and other agencies are actively assisting the farmers to locate, safeguard and secure at cost an adequate supply of sound seed. The Department has \$2,500,000 available for this purpose now and has asked the Congress for \$6,000,000 more.

#### USE OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>2</sup>

MORE extensive use of the metric system in the trade and commerce of the United States is recommended in a resolution adopted by the United States section of the International High Commission, of which Secretary McAdoo is chairman.

The commission has regarded this subject as of particular importance in the United States. It is, of course, unnecessary for the United States section to recommend to the Latin-American sections of the commission anything in connection with the metric system, which is exclusively in use throughout Latin America. One of the main obstacles to documentary uniformity as between the United States and Latin America is to be found in the fact that the United States does not make the use of the metric system obligatory, and consequently its consular documents have to

<sup>1</sup> From President Wilson's Message to Farmers' Conference at Urbana, Ill., January 31, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Publication authorized by the Treasury Department.