

German Agricultural Investigators

MISS OMAHA, being a western girl and full of spirit, is partial to "good fellows." She is too well bred to tolerate spurs in the front parlor or cigarettes on the veranda steps, but a certain degree of familiarity in her men callers is much to her liking and the sooner they "get acquainted" the sooner she feels that the occasion is really what it should be. She likes them to be alive, to call her by her first name, to show an interest in what is being done about the place, and to ask questions that indicate a desire to learn rather than a desire to make conversation. Romantic Ronald makes her weary, very weary. Angelic Arthur reminds her of petticoats and curls. Dignified Daniel creates a certain degree of embarrassed restraint. Chappie Chahlie disgusts her. But Strenuous Sammy and Sunny Jim—ah, there's the pair that gladdens her heart every time she sights them. When they appear she knows there will be "doings" and Miss Omaha delights in "doings" above all things else. She is no invalid and she doesn't want to be.

And how does all this bear on the visit of the forty-four eminent Germans who came to call on her the other day? It bears very directly and very pointedly. For, with no disrespect for the gentlemen, their rank or their prominence, it may be said that the whole group was made up of Strenuous Sammies and Sunny Jimmies—or, more properly, perhaps, Willing Wilhelmes and Frownless Fritzes!

They had life and ginger and good health and good looks and get-up, and an eagerness to be shown that made the process of showing a positive delight instead of the drag that it sometimes is. They were out to see things and they didn't have to have a second invitation to look closely. They were ready for anything worth while, and they didn't care whether that thing was in the garret or down cellar. Neither did they care who else was looking. While maintaining a certain gentlemanly dignity, they "mixed" in a manner most democratic, and they "jollied" in a manner most Americanatic. They made themselves at home, took what was offered, toasted the giver—and went away leaving Miss Omaha regretting that they cannot drop in every week or two.

Be it understood, however, that Miss Omaha claims no monopoly nor prides herself on having given the visitors the only good time they have had. She realizes that they have been having nothing but good times since they stepped from the steamer Pretoria at Hoboken pier May 1 and were taken in hand by the Arion society of the city of Dutch founding. The Arion society had arranged a grand reception. The visitors, due April 27, were late, and the reception was held without the received being present, but that didn't affect the warmth of their welcome when they did come, and, so long as they remained in New York, New York left the key to the wine cellar hanging on an outside nail and the corkscrew lying in plain view.

From New York they started on a tour that is to occupy two months and take them 10,480 miles on twenty-three different lines of railroad—to say nothing of the several hundred miles they will cover in carriages and on the soles of their feet. Their first stop was at the Walker Jordan dairy farms at Plainsboro, N. J., where, because of the magnitude of the establishment and the scientific methods employed, they made observations that they considered of much benefit.

From Plainsboro they went to the national capital, where they were taken in tow by Secretary James Wilson of the Agricultural department and led about from one branch to another for nearly a full day, finding their recreation afterward in a visit at Mount Vernon and in viewing Washington from an observation car. It was there, too, that Mr. John I. Schulte, assistant chief of the experimental division of the Agricultural department, joined them as Uncle Sam's representative, to be with them when they visited his old training ground, the Iowa Agricultural college at Ames.

At Martinsburg, W. Va., they inspected large orchards and at Lexington, Ky., they made the closer acquaintance of the American racer and the blue grass on which he pastures. There, too, they began acquiring knowledge of the Shorthorn, in which they were particularly interested because of its contribution to the German platter. First impressions were very pleasing and the acquaintance then formed appears to bid fair to ripen into an admiring friendship.

At St. Louis they saw the exposition site, and were entertained in a way that would have made anyone but a German see three or four exposition sites. At Kansas City they explored the stock yards and several of the packing plants.

Then on Tuesday, the 12th, they reached Iowa's great school at Ames and began one of the most practical parts of their investigation. Prof. Curtiss personally conducted them on a drive over the experimental plots in the forenoon, and in the afternoon they roamed where each individual fancy led, some to the stables, some to the pastures, and many



COMMITTEE FROM THE SOUTH OMAHA LIVE STOCK EXCHANGE WHICH WELCOMED THE GERMANS AT MISSOURI VALLEY.—Photo by a Staff Artist.

to the hog yards. The Germans breed Yorkshires almost exclusively, believing that the meat of a white hog is more palatable than that of a black. Because of this, the college people were called upon to answer questions covering the whole life and treatment and advantages of each of the several breeds on the farm. The sheep and horses also received careful inspection. Samples of all the farm machinery had been drawn up in line and these were of special interest to the foreigners, there being some of the implements whose purposes were unknown to them. These had to be operated to make their working more comprehensive.

After a drill by the college cadets the visitors were banqueted at the institution, and addressed by a number of prominent Iowans. The party was unanimous in its admiration of the college and sent Secretary Wilson a most complimentary telegram.

The minuteness and thoroughness of the inquiry there was due in large measure to the fact that Germany has no institution conducted along such lines, and in all probability the school will be one of the topics most elaborately reported on when the visitors have returned to their homes. That this will be beneficial to the school and the state is not to be doubted. Four of the visitors are traveling on commissions of Emperor William to investigate American agricultural and stock raising methods for him, and the other forty are interested in agriculture in Germany and have come along at their own expense, though by invitation of their emperor. All are members of the German Agricultural society, an association of land owners numbering 17,000, scattered over many provinces of the German empire. The character of this organization is much more largely educational than are those of the United States. Each year a fair or exposition is held in some of the German provinces so that from time to time each profits from its lessons. The society each year sends a delegation from its membership to investigate the crops, conditions and methods of some foreign country. An annual bulletin or year book gives the results or conclusions of their investigation. All the trips are made purely in the capacity of private citizens, each gentleman, except the emperor's commissioners, bearing his own expense and each contributing a personal expression to the publication above referred to.

From Ames the visitors went to Odebolt, Ia., there to visit the Brookmont farm. The Agricultural department had selected this place for them because it is there that there is now in progress a series of co-operative experiments in feeding and field work, under the direction of the Experiment station of the Agricultural college. These experiments which now seem destined to be chronicled in a German book, circulating widely through the German empire,

were begun a year ago with the intention of being continued five years. In the feeding experiment the farm furnishes the animals, feed and labor and builds the yards, sheds and water tanks according to plans furnished by the Experiment station. The station determines the different lines of feeding to be followed, divides the cattle into suitable lots and details a representative to take control of the work. At the completion of the experiment the data obtained is to be arranged by the station for publication and the cattle returned to the control of the farm. Similarly, the data secured in experimenting in field work will be compiled and published.

It quite dumfounded the kaiser's men to learn that the farm includes 7,300 acres, divided into subfarms of 320 acres each. They were intensely interested, not only in the character of the 500 steers and 400 hogs now fattening, but in the methods of production, the objects of the tests now being made, the feeds used and in every other point about which there might appear some mystery. The three tests now in progress have to do with acclimatization, light and heavy rationing, and supplementary feeding, and about these the Germans asked so many questions that A. E. Cook, the head of the ranch, had to call three managers to his assistance in order to keep up with the fusillade. Later Mrs. Cook distinguished herself by serving a genuine American farm dinner in a mammoth granary—in which arduous task she had the assistance of the Ladies' Aid society.

From Odebolt the Germans went directly to South Omaha, there to be entertained most royally by the packers and others personally interested in showing the perfection of American industrial methods, under the leadership of Manager W. J. C. Kenyon and other officials of the Stock Yards company. Prominent citizens of South Omaha and of Omaha spread a bit of oratorical dressing on the meats and viands served in the Exchange building, and a careful inspection of the packing plants was made by divisions of the visiting delegation.

Coming over to Omaha late in the afternoon the visitors were first shown through the W. R. Bennett store, then through the Bee building and then through the city hall, at which latter place they received civic recognition by Mayor Moores.

And then—to the brewery! Gottlieb Storz had early extended an invitation to visit his great plant on Sherman avenue and it was while there that the local German-Americans had their best visit with the late comers from the Fatherland. After a lunch, for which the brew flowed most freely, a spigot was driven in the oratory vat, also, and the merriest of merry toasts were given, the dearest of dear old German songs sung and the pleasantest of German pleasantries exchanged. The visitors were to have left at 5:30, but it was 11:50 before

they quit this most hospitable city for Ames and Kearney to view Nebraska's alfalfa fields and orchards, its beet sugar plants and its dozen other interesting evidences of versatile productiveness.

The emperor of Germany draws approximately \$4,000,000 per year—and spends it all. But those who know, affirm that he spends it wisely and prudently for the betterment of his empire. He is anxious that his people should be at a disadvantage with no other people and that they should have the benefit of what others have found out by experimenting. Very rapidly this spirit is spreading. He has influenced the trend of thought in Germany quite as effectively as has President Roosevelt, in many respects William's counterpart, influenced the trend of thought, or rather of action and ambition, in this country. The agriculturalists undertook the trip to America with not only their monarch's approval, but with his cordial encouragement, for he saw another opportunity for a better understanding in Germany of a nation conceded to have eclipsed all others in the rapidity of its advancement in material and industrial undertakings. Germany has something to teach, but it has also something to learn, and its emperor is willing that what is to be learned shall be learned by frank inquiry of a reliable source.

The visitors made the trip a business proposition and carried cameras, note books and keen eyes. But they carried, also, hearts most responsive to friendly overtures and there was no laugh in which they did not join. Those who traveled with them on the train or rode about with them in the carriages found them extremely companionable, even when their language was not intelligible and no interpreter near.

For the German-Americans serving on the Omaha committee of escort the visit was an occasion long to remain in mind as one of the pleasantest in the city's history. The visitors were from so many parts of the empire that those Omahans who were born within the empire's borders could scarcely fail to find someone in the deputation who was from the same place, or who, perhaps, had a friend who was a friend of the entertainer. The free exchange of remarks on personal matters began almost before the visitors were off the cars here and grew freer still before the day was ended. The mustache that is the kaiser's hides the same sort of lip, after all, as does the mustache that has been given a permanently American twist or twist or droop.

But it isn't fair to speak of mustaches as the adornment of all who came. The most conspicuous man in the party had none at all. This was the Austrian count who made such a decided impression on susceptible young women because he was stalwart, if not handsome, and who made an almost equally decided impression on men because he was jovial. He was immensely tall, but when, upon leaving the Schlitz cafe, he saw a sign carrier on stilts that exalted his head to a point nearly even with second story windows, the count promptly marched out into the street and shook hands with the acrobat as one who had distanced him in gaining height. It was so remarkable a pair that several hundred people looking on cheered bravely and the count's own friends hurried a photographer to the scene that it might be pictured and so preserved as a souvenir of the trip.

Omaha and South Omaha are left no souvenirs, but are left a very pleasant memory of the visit and the sweet satisfaction of having so successfully entertained the visitors that the latter were free to repeatedly remark that never since they landed in New York had they been better cared for and never shown so good a time. For this success no small credit must be accorded the German committee in charge. Its members abandoned business for the day and simply placed themselves at the command of the guests. As hosts, there was practically nothing they would not do and evening found them quite exhausted by the strenuous activity of the long day.

The strenuously active day, by the way, concluded with an incident that made strenuously grow still more strenuous. The Union Pacific had set aside two cars for the use of the Germans on their trip to Kearney at 5:30. At that hour a train coupled onto those two cars and hauled them to the destination as per original plans. But meantime the major portion of the delegation had elected to stay in Omaha until the train pulled out at 11:50. The consequence was that a half dozen stragglers who had quit the crowd during the afternoon and gone on the cars to rest were the only occupants of the two special coaches that left at the earlier hour mentioned. The local committee, learning of this, had to hustle about while their visitors were attending a play at a theater, and persuade the railroad company to provide more accommodations on the later train. There was a deal of talking and telegraphing for a while, but the railroad's advertising department, determined not to be the only one to mar the pleasure of the day, bowed its acquiescence and the farewell of the visitors was as merry as any other part of their memorable call in Omaha.