

THE FAIRS.

Forty five years ago, a group of citizens in Gallup New Mexico conceived the idea of having a Fair once a year for the benefit of the several Indian Tribes who lived in the general area. This developed into the Gallup Inter-tribal Ceremonial which during the course of the past twenty ^{five} years has developed into a renowned affair. The original idea of an Arts and Crafts exhibit where the Indians could sell their work ~~xxi~~ now has grown into an outstanding exhibition with Indians from many tribes competing for ~~many~~ ^{a variety of} prizes. In the last few years Indians are coming from all over the United States, British Columbia, and Mexico to take part in one way or another in the Ceremonial.

In addition to the Arts & Crafts Exhibits, there are many other forms of competition and entertainment. The authorities finding that some dances by the Southwest Indians were on the verge of disappearing, offered special prizes for the revival of these dances. These are given at the Fair Grounds before the capacity filled grand stand, ^{and onlookers from every possible vantage point} during both afternoon and evening performances. There are athletic competitions of many sorts, and something of interest going on during the full four days of the Ceremonial. There is always a grand opening at the Fair Grounds in which the Navaho play a most important part, for the Navaho are the horsemen of the Southwestern tribes. They lead the Grand march at the opening of the festivities and enter into many of the events.

Another aspect of this great affair is the social gathering of the many tribes. Here they exchange knowledge and thought with each other, and the Gallup Ceremonial has done much to weld the Indian Peoples of all tribes together. These Four days in late August are filled with color, with action, with gaiety and social intercourse. To the white spectators, this is doubtless one of the most interesting and colorful affairs in the United States and it can be a photographer's

field day, filled with action, and moments of ^{human} ~~great~~ interest.

In 192 the Agricultural Agent, ^{Shelton}, commenced a Fair, like any county fair for the benefit of the Navaho People in the Shiprock area. This, of-course, is an all Navaho event, held usually in early October. The original purpose was for the display of agricultural produce with prizes for the top ranking exhibits. This is also an educational fair, for the many farmers learn here how to improve their produce, and live stock.

Then there are other events too, home economic exhibits with canned fruits and vegetables and and other exhibits from the women's world. There are many horse events in the small arena, for the Navaho ^{have} become ~~an~~ eager participants in all rodeo events. Though they are natural sheep men, they are also superb horsemen, and during the past twenty years have become excelent rodeo performers. I recall watching a ^{bull roping contest} ~~hog tying event~~ in the 1950's where the best time was over ^{sixty seconds} ~~a minutes~~. At a recent Fair I saw a boy win this event with a time of eleven seconds. The Navaho like all Indian Peoples are great showmen, and these affairs are of great importance to them.

In 1938, not long after the establishment of the Navaho Government at Window Rock, the Tribe decided that they would mount a Tribal Fair. Fair Grounds were laid out at Window Rock and the first few years, established this event. During World War ~~II~~ it was suspended, to be resumed in 194 . Since then it has grown in scope and activity and is now the big event on the reservation. Modeled somewhat after the Gallup Ceremonial, there is always a fine craft exhibit, ^{with} ~~with~~ agricultural and livestock exhibits ^{added, from all parts of the} ~~covering the whole reservation,~~ and many grand stand events. The beautiful new Community Building

is opened up to house all sorts of educational and commercial exhibits of interest to the Navaho. This building has many unique features. It can be partitioned off into class rooms, it can be made into an arena for boxing bouts, ^{or for basket ball games} it can be made into a concert hall. When it was dedicated a few years ago, the great Spanish Dancers gave the opening performance to the great delight of the first audience. Since then there have been many outstanding events in this fine building, Jose Iturbi played to a Navaho audience, there have been many other concerts, some of the great jazz bands have played here, and a growing list of important cultural affairs now take place every year.

In the last few years the Tribe has sponsored a small Museum, containing many items of interest to visitors both Navaho and Anglo, and recently a small children's zoo has been added ^{certainly} ~~with all~~ the wild life pertaining ^{to} to the reservation.

These events at Gallup, the Fourth of July Fair at Flagstaff, the two Navaho Fairs, ^{or} all widely attended by hundreds of Navaho people as well as many visitors both Indian and white. ^{Here} ~~They~~ are the opportunities for the People to get to-gether, to see relatives who live far away, to discuss politics, and work of all kinds. For a people who live so far apart as most Navaho do, the Fairs have become the great times ^{recreation and} ~~for recreation~~ visiting. ~~Many Navaho living far from the reservation come home for one or more of the fairs, for here they meet their old friends and make many new ones.~~