

# Merritt Wesley Harper

*October 24, 1877 — May 9, 1938*

We record with deepest regret the death of Professor Merritt Wesley Harper on May 9, 1938. Born on a farm in Grove City, Ohio, October 24, 1877, his entire life was spent in close relation to agriculture. He received a genuine and thorough fundamental training in farm life and farm economics under his father, James Harper, while living at home. Owing to his father's close association for many years with agricultural banking in Ohio, and his own early training in it, few men had a better knowledge of farm economic conditions and the value of land than Professor Harper. He put this knowledge to good use as a farmer in Ohio all his adult life, even while teaching in our College of Agriculture. Until his death he was successfully operating a 700-acre wheat and corn farm in Ohio.

He studied at the Ohio State University, where he was graduated in 1901, received the M.S. degree at the University of Illinois in 1902, taught for three years at the University of Missouri, and then was called to Cornell University as an assistant in Animal Husbandry. He was appointed instructor in 1906 and served as assistant professor from 1907 until 1912, when he received his professorship. He was a quiet, hard-working, clear-thinking man. He was always ready to fight for anything that he thought was right and he never hesitated to do the right thing without thought as to how it might affect him or his position. His friends and colleagues were in the habit of visiting him in his office to get his advice and comment on their problems and he will be greatly missed among them.

Professor Harper will be remembered longest as a careful writer. This is evidenced by his five books, *Manual of Farm Animals*, 1911, revised in 1924; *Practical Horse Training*, 1911; *Animal Husbandry for Schools*, 1913, revised in 1924; *Management and Breeding of Horses*, 1913; *Breeding Animals*, 1914. Through his animal husbandry books in the secondary schools, his influence has been excellent on thousands of young students in the nation. In addition to these books he has to his credit several bulletins on the feeding, training, and judging of horses. His work in the University was in the horse division of the department of Animal Husbandry, and he did considerable teaching in advanced animal genetics.

Among his former students Professor Harper is well remembered for his painstaking work and leadership in the Round-Up Club. This club was one of his main interests for many years.