

THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interest of Agricultural Education in
Minnesota Schools

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PROGRAM

Agricultural Section of the M. E. A.
Room 317, Administration Building, University Farm

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1920

10 a.m.

Vitamines—R. A. Dutcher, Division of Agricultural Biochemistry, University Farm

Some Essentials in Teaching—A. V. Storm, Division of Agricultural Education, University Farm

Demonstration—Poultry Team—Team selected by T. A. Erickson, State Leader of Boys' and Girls' Club Work, University Farm

2 p.m.

Demonstration—Methods of Instruction in Agriculture—A. M. Field, Division of Agricultural Education, University Farm

Demonstration—Up-To-Date Beekeeping Methods—Francis Jager, Division of Bee Culture, University Farm

Roll Call—Three minute discussions of valuable experiences in classroom management or community work

MAKE HOME ATTRACTIVE

If farming is going to attract to itself the right kind of men and women, those whom Goldsmith describes as a "country's pride," it must not only be profitable but also pleasant. Many things contribute to the pleasure of life on the farm. For some society in general is responsible and for others the responsibility rests on the farmer himself and his family. In the latter class come the many pleasures (as well as profits) that arise from a well planned, well arranged, and well constructed set of farm buildings with the necessary accompaniment of attractive and convenient surrounding grounds.

Perhaps no one thing which the farmer and his family have within their own control can be made to contribute more to satisfaction with life in the country than this. Even though the investment in the farmstead be small, attractive appearance and convenient arrangement of grounds and buildings may become the silent influence which causes the family, particularly the children, to be happy and

contented in rural surroundings and neutralizes the desire to migrate to the city.

Few farmsteads seem to have been created with proper regard for the value of these features of farm life. Happily the number of convenient and attractive farmsteads is on the increase in Minnesota. Those interested in country life can do much to accelerate the rate of increase. Increased production and efficient marketing are fundamental and all must continue to assist in furthering them, but "making a living" on a farm must be supplemented by "enjoying life" in the country if rural society is not to suffer the fate presaged by Goldsmith in his couplet:

"A bold peasantry, their countries'
pride
When once destroyed can never be
supplied."

Up to the present time those concerned in cooperating with farmers and their families in the improvement of farming and farm life have not placed sufficient emphasis upon desirable farm buildings and grounds. Colleges

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of agriculture, county agents, and public school teachers of agriculture must prepare to furnish the necessary assistance to those who wish to establish farmsteads or to improve those already established as well as to develop among rural people in general a sentiment which will desire better buildings, grounds, and conveniences. Most colleges of agriculture offer courses which deal with this feature of farm management, part of it being included in the farm management courses and part in the courses in farm engineering and landscape gardening. Students expecting to teach agriculture in the high schools or to become county agents should perfect themselves in the contents of these courses. But this is not enough. Plans, blueprints, photographs, and suggestions are needed to give specific aid to the farmer who is about to lay out a farmstead, rearrange an old one, or construct a building. These should be kept on file in the office of the county agent and the high school teacher of agriculture for consultation by those interested. Each county agent and teacher of agriculture should build up a section of his library especially devoted to this subject, and should strive to place there all the good practical helps he can obtain. He should be particularly careful to see that the plans are adapted to his locality and especially that they are adapted to the open country. Many good things are equally adapted to city and to country life but there are certain features of buildings and grounds satisfactory to city or village conditions that are very inadvisable for rural surroundings. Farmers and their

families should be encouraged to use plans particularly adapted to country conditions.

The Division of Agricultural Engineering of the University Department of Agriculture at University Farm, has recently made a valuable addition to the available material in this field in their "Farm Building Plans". This consists of plans and blue prints of farm houses, barns, granaries, corn cribs, hog houses, implement sheds, potato warehouses, farmsteads, and several conveniences such as self-feeders, concrete forms, and racks.

The house plans cover many kinds, from two-room settlers' cottages to the more pretentious two-story farm home of a dozen rooms adapted to the installation of all modern conveniences. Blue prints of not only the floor plans but also of one or more elevations and details are furnished when necessary. All the plans are carefully adapted to the use of the buildings as farm structures and not as city structures in those particulars wherein there should be differences. Whether building the first cabin home on a "cut-over 40" or erecting a mansion on a great stock farm wherein besides the usual residence rooms he has an office for business with the public, few men will fail to obtain valuable assistance from a thoughtful examination of these plans.

It is not expected that a farmer will always adopt any one plan in all its particulars; but it is hoped that he will study the merits of the plan proposed and then adapt it to his own conditions since each farmstead is a separate problem. Each farmer and his family ought to develop it by adapting the various plans and suggestions to their local conditions.

Not only should there be a copy in the office of every agricultural teacher and county agent for reference but it should be brought specifically to the attention of every farmer of the vicinity who contemplates building. It is not issued on a commercial basis but solely for the service it may perform in promoting better homes.

SALARIES AND SERVICE

A recent letter from a superintendent has the following comment on salaries and service of agricultural instructors:

"I am fully convinced that the agricultural men are not as devoted to the work of teaching as they should be. If they wish to take up other lines I have no objection but they are getting nowhere the way they are doing. It would be better to close every agricultural department except those which can pay large salaries unless more devoted men can be secured."

The state of Minnesota has a number of such devoted men, and their school boards have recognized their value by giving substantial increases in salary. Owing to a shortage of properly prepared men since the war, a number of men have slipped into agricultural education at large salaries and have thrown cold blankets upon this phase of education in their communities through failure to arouse the interest of boys and girls in farm problems.

The lazy, indifferent type of agricultural instructor will reveal himself more quickly, perhaps, than any other member of the teaching staff. He should see something to do, straightway set out to do it, and stay by it until it is satisfactorily finished. There is plenty of work to keep the most active man busy throughout the year. He must be more than a text-book teacher. The possibilities of using illustrative material, making field trips, setting up actual situations in the learning process are unlimited. He must be an organizer, developer, and booster of community affairs. He is expected to lead, not follow.

For this man of action and achievement, for this man of vision and leadership, the average school board will provide handsomely to retain his services. No field of teaching and community service has greater possibilities of public approval and financial reward than agricultural education.

A TIMELY BULLETIN

B. M. Gile, Supervisor of Agricultural Education for Minnesota, with the assistance of A. M. Field, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota, has prepared an excellent bulletin, "A Year's Work in Farm Crops and Soils for Minnesota" (Bulletin No. 1, Agricultural Series 1, 1920, Department of Education, St. Paul.) It consists of topical outlines, laboratory exercises, ap-

plied farm practice, and references for the various crops. Half-tone cuts are added to show types of equipment and lines of activity in agricultural departments. Instructors will find this publication very helpful and suggestive.

THE ENROLLMENT CAMPAIGN

The Visitor recently had the opportunity to accompany two agricultural instructors in their efforts to secure farm boys for their six months' classes. The following impressions were formed:

1. The instructor should be well grounded in the aims of education in general and especially in the aims of agricultural education.

2. This campaign work for pupils should not be left to the agricultural instructor alone. It calls for the hearty co-operation of the superintendent, principal of the high school, the whole faculty, the school board, commercial club, county agent, county superintendent of schools, in fact the whole community.

3. Every obstacle in the way of entering the school should be removed by the local school authorities for boys who enroll in agricultural classes. The continued prosperity of the village or city depends upon the education of the future generations of farmers. A broad, generous policy will be the most economical in the end.

4. The agricultural instructor is justified in advertising his wares. The average farmer must be convinced of the value of agricultural education by what he can see. Exhibits of home-project products, newspaper accounts of methods followed and results obtained in project work, talks and letters given by fathers and project workers to show benefits derived, contests organized among project and non-project workers, seem to be legitimate methods of attracting attention to the advantages afforded by the agricultural department.

5. The agricultural instructor must be aggressive, positive, persistent, enthusiastic, in his methods of enrolling pupils.

6. An agricultural instructor should be given every inducement to work in the community for at least five years. As he becomes acquainted and makes his influence felt among young people on the farms, he should be able to increase the enrollment of his classes. In other words, he must gain the confidence of the farmers. His reputation should grow as an efficiency expert in farming.

FROM THE FIELD

S. E. Robinson, of Alexandria, led a canning team to the State Fair for the first time in the history of the school. Altho the team did not win a high place in the contest, Mr. Robinson expects to arouse much enthusiasm in canning next year. He has placed the team's exhibit in one of the local banks.

Louis Kelehan, of Tracy, writes the following very interesting account of this season's project work:

"In regard to our project work at Tracy, I am very well pleased with the work, altho there is always much room for improvement. Two of the boys took for their projects purebred Duroc Jersey sows. One had a litter of eleven. The average weight at the time of the county fair was 140 pounds. Both of these boys showed at the county fair and were well pleased with the results. Records were well kept and very good stories were written at the time of the fair. Two of the boys chose bees for their summer projects. They have kept excellent records of their work. One has sold honey, showing a small financial gain for his efforts. I believe that both of these boys will continue with bees as they are interested and hard workers. Without question our big projects are the 'purebred calves'. We have a club of seventeen boys and girls who went out last spring and bought their calves, ranging in price from \$125 to \$275. Our local banks loaned the money to the boys and girls in spite of the money shortage. Then the Tri-County Farm Improvement Association, to help the good work along, gave \$300 to be used as prize money only. The contest will close with a calf show December 30, after which the calves will be sold at public auction. Some of the breeders around here are putting in enough to make a purebred sale of sixty. This will be held at the same time as our Corn, Grain, and Poultry Show, making a very big week for Tracy, December 27 to 31. The calves will be scored according to conformation, economic gain, show ring records, and story. There is no question that this is the biggest project work ever undertaken in this community, and with the splendid cooperation given by the banks and the Tri-County Association, we surely enjoy working early and late. If we can get calves next year there are good prospects for a very large calf club."

L. G. Klefaas, of Bloomington, has the following notice in the Bloomington Community Service:

"Everyone who has occasion to pass through Bloomington must admire our beautiful school building—that splendid tribute to the progressiveness of this community. But complete and satisfying to the eye as it is in itself, yet there is something lacking, something monotonous about its surroundings. What our school needs is an array of trees and shrubberies to give it a pleasing background. This is an appeal to each and all of you who are interested in beautifying the school grounds. Have you a Cedar tree, a bit of shrubbery or a hardy bulb that you can donate? If so, please let me know so that I can make arrangements this fall for its proper transplanting in the spring. Contributions of bulbs and ferns for the greenhouse will also be greatly appreciated."

EXCHANGES

"Much must be known about some topics which will not be suggested by the manipulation. Feeds and feeding is such a topic. It is well to take a list of all the topics bearing on poultry, using a book or any arbitrary list, and check those which every boy must know in order to do the work on a poultry plant intelligently. By another mark check the topics which a good manager of poultry should know and finally indicate the things of interest for a capable boy with ample time. All boys must cover the first set, most boys should get most of the second, and some may be led to devour the third."—Mass. Agr. Educ. Teaching Staff Letter No. 13.

"Construct the plan or outline of the course from the practical end first and do not be too ready to concede that the logical subject matter sequence is valid and psychological. It is usually more natural to inquire "Why"? after having some experience and we usually learn principles better when there is an impelling motive for learning them. "What is well to understand" we easily put first when it usually should come last. In planning our course as well as in teaching, the best sequence is (1) "What must be done?" (2) "What must be known?" and (3) "What is it well to know?" and if our time is limited or the boy is very slow, the last question may need to be omitted in most of his study."—Mass. Agr. Educ. Teaching Staff Letter No. 13.