

THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interests of Agricultural Education in Minnesota Schools

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ON THE JOB

This issue of *The Visitor* includes a number of contributions from men who are on the firing line in the interests of providing better educational opportunities for farm folks. The various statements indicate that the program for vocational education in agriculture is organized to serve the needs of young men who are preparing to enter upon the occupation of the farm as well as those who are already actively engaged in farming. The function of education in agriculture on a vocational basis is not merely to add another subject to the already crowded curriculum but to create a valuable service department designed to meet the educational needs of those who are preparing to engage in America's greatest industry—farming.

A. M.F.

VALUE OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The function of a department of vocational agriculture in secondary schools is specific and practical. It is a means of vocational guidance. In the Long Prairie schools enrollments are limited to students living on farms or having access to farm practice work. Large classes are not sought. Intensive training in specialized fields is essential for thoroughness. The vocation for which it prepares is better farming.

Learning is combined with practice. Instruction used in class is largely that of the problem method. In one class, for instance, the unit of study may be in the field of dairying. Present practices on home farms are discussed, readings are assigned, topics are given as reports by students and instructor. New or modified practices are discovered. Laboratory tests and experimentation are conducted. Changes in home practices are introduced gradually and carefully checked.

That the plan is succeeding is indicated by the fact that about seventy per cent of the boys elect to continue in this vocation while about thirteen per cent continue in advanced schooling. A negative value is also evidenced by the fact that some of the students gaining experience in the

department, definitely realize that their work and success does *not* lie in the field of agriculture.

The study is an elective for qualified high school students. One girl is enrolled for the course this year and she is an enthusiastic worker, the course being adapted to her particular needs. The organization of the class is very simple. The cost of the department to local district is considerably less than for other so-called special departments because of the generous state and federal aid which is available for the work.

The work is well motivated by its practical appeal and by the number of contests and demonstrations possible. It has been Long Prairie's good fortune to be represented on some winning team each year and for three consecutive years to be represented at the national shows where contestants have made good records each time.

The course is fully justified on the basis of an elective study alone. But that is only a part of its work. Supervised home projects is a means of rural community betterment. Farm problems are analyzed. A major project is undertaken with the approval and guidance of the instructor. The department has earned the hearty co-operation and indorsement of the farm owner. In dairying, milk production, feeding rations, stock judging, etc., may be undertaken. In a poultry unit, egg production, culling, raising, housing, care, disease, etc., are provided for. In grains, seed selecting, soil analysis, weeds, cultivation, etc., are given attention. These and numerous other projects maintain general interest in agriculture, create a researchful and critical attitude, and offer concrete solutions for farm problems, and suggest economic improvement. In an evening class for parents recently organized to keep parents informed as to activities being carried out, and to extend parallel instruction, thirty members joined the class at the start. Extreme departures from existing conditions are not encouraged. Equipment, methods and conditions generally are accepted "as is." The cause and reason for change is "sold" through the students and evening classes. This accomplished, modifications are gradually made experimentally. This beginning is ex-

In comparisons made in these trials, sweet clover hay of good quality was found to be equal to alfalfa as a rough-age for fattening lambs.

Method of Feeding

The self-feeder plan of feeding lambs was found satisfactory and successful but accompanied with some risk of loss by death and on the whole not quite so suitable a method of feeding as regular hand feeding of the grain twice per day, thus enabling the feeder to keep the lambs a trifle below a full feed of grain.

On the whole, all of the rations used have proven profitable in this lamb feeding enterprise though some have made very small profits while others have shown profits of five dollars per lamb. Complete reports of this work may be secured by writing the West Central School of Agriculture, Morris, Minnesota.

W. H. PETERS,
Chief, Division of Animal Husbandry.

ALCOHOL TORCH FOR SOLDERING FARM UTENSILS

We have tried out several makes of alcohol torches in an effort to find out if any one of them is suitable for doing such soldering repair work as farmers have occasion to do. Most of them have a flame that is too small for the work. We found one, however, that has sufficient flame to solder pails, milk cans and do other similar work. It is made by a firm that has made blow torches since 1876—Otto Bernz, Inc., Newark, N. J. The Bernz products are distributed by most hardware dealers. The name of the Bernz alcohol torch is "Always Reliable." The cost of the torch is \$2.00. The torch, a spool of wire solder and a pint of alcohol is all that is needed for doing the work. The solder may be had with either acid or wire core and costs about eighty-five cents a spool. The men who use the torch prefer to use it instead of the blow torch because the original cost is much less and no soldering irons are needed. The flame burns while the torch is held in any position and the heat can be directed on any point on the material to be soldered. Holes and seams solder quickly and the solder melts down smoothly.

L. M. ROEHL,
Cornell University.

A BETTER SEED PROGRAM

One of the activities of the vocational agriculture department at Adams, Minnesota, is to improve the small grain enter-

prise in this community. Much attention will be given to the growing and distributing of improved varieties of oats, corn, and barley.

This year eight of the vocational boys have seed corn plots on which they will raise pure bred Minnesota No. 13. It is their plan to pick seed, store, and test it during the fall and winter, and then offer it for sale the following spring. This last fall the vocational boys and their instructor have placed more than eighty bushels of good corn in proper drying places. Much of this will be offered for sale this spring, after it is tested and possibly treated.

Some of the boys plan to use commercial fertilizer as the additional cost seems to bring profitable returns in this locality. Others in the classes are planning to secure new seed for oat and barley plots. Four of the boys have decided to take this enterprise and have made arrangements to carry out their plans.

Last fall an excellent showing was made at the local fair by those interested in grain. Over thirty farmers exhibited samples of corn and more than twenty showed oats and barley.

H. BEANE,
Teacher of Agriculture.
Adams, Minnesota.

THE VISITOR PROUD

The Visitor takes a modest pride in the recognition which has come to several of its present and former staff members in connection with the new publication now in its second year, *Agricultural Education*. Though this live young journal is not published in the State of Minnesota, a surprising number of persons who have assisted in developing agricultural education in Minnesota hold important positions on the magazine staff.

The January issue contains the announcement that a new department, that of Methods, has been established in the journal, and that Dr. Albert M. Field, Associate Professor of Agricultural Education in the University of Minnesota, has been invited to take charge of this department. The journal speaks in very high terms of Dr. Field's capability in methodology all of which finds approval in the minds of those who know him. Dr. Field has been a prominent member of the faculty of Agricultural Education in the University since February, 1918. During this time, he has been in charge of the Methods and Practice Teaching courses and has developed, through his

special study of this field of education, a thorough knowledge of both the theory and practice of methods of teaching agriculture.

Reared on a farm, graduated from high school, from normal school, and from a college of agriculture and with special graduate study in colleges of education at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Minnesota, and Cornell University, having taught in a rural school, been principal of a state graded school, superintendent of city schools, teacher of agriculture in high schools, and for the last twelve years, member of the faculty of Agricultural Education in the University of Minnesota, his training and experience both in agriculture and in education give him a preparation equalled by few men engaged in agricultural education in the United States at this time. We predict great usefulness and popularity for Dr. Field's department in the journal of *Agricultural Education*.

The February number of the magazine states that beginning with the April issue, now in preparation, Dr. Sherman Dickinson of the University of Missouri will become editor of the magazine, succeeding Professor H. M. Hamlin of Ames, who now becomes associate editor.

Dr. Dickinson was on the editorial staff of *The Visitor* while he was an instructor in the department of Agricultural Education of the University of Minnesota and working toward his Doctor's degree in this institution. He had previously graduated from Ames, been a teacher of agriculture at Grand Rapids, Minnesota, in Central High School, Minneapolis, in the University of Minnesota High School, and Professor and Head of the Department of Agricultural Education and also Principal of the School of Agriculture of the University of Idaho. Since severing his connection with the University of Minnesota faculty he has been Professor and Head of the department of Agricultural Education of the University of Missouri, a position he continues to occupy. As editor-in-chief of *Agricultural Education*, we predict his policies will be marked by the same energy and sound judgment which have brought to him the recognition generally accorded him by men in the field of agricultural education.

Professor F. E. Armstrong, now of the University of Hawaii, was a member of *The Visitor* staff during the time he was on the faculty of Agricultural Education of the University of Minnesota. He came to us from Clemson College from which he had graduated in agricul-

tural education and, after obtaining his Master's degree in Agricultural Education from Minnesota, became Professor of Agricultural Education and Principal of the School of Agriculture of the University of Idaho, from which he was called to his present position in the Hawaiian Islands. Professor Armstrong is a member of the editing-managing board of *Agricultural Education* in which capacity he represents the Hawaiian Islands.

In the March, 1929, issue of *Agricultural Education* Dr. F. W. Lathrop, then a member of the faculty of the University of Minnesota Department of Agricultural Education and likewise of the staff of *The Visitor*, was announced as the reviewing editor of the journal *Agricultural Education* since which time he has furnished reviews of the literature in this field.

After graduating from Yale University, later taking his Master's and his Doctor's degrees from Cornell University and teaching agriculture in New York State, Dr. Lathrop was a member of *The Visitor* staff from the time he came to the faculty of Agricultural Education of the University of Minnesota in September, 1921. He remained until September, 1929, when he resigned from the University to take charge of the research work for the Federal Board of Vocational Education at Washington. As long time readers of *The Visitor* well know, Dr. Lathrop has been a steady, consistent and helpful contributor to *The Visitor* during all of these years and during several of the years was largely responsible for seeing that *The Visitor* was issued from month to month. Dr. Lathrop's native characteristics as well as his training and experience make him an exceptionally valuable member of the *Agricultural Education* staff as he always has been of *The Visitor* staff.

H. M. Hamlin, editor of *Agricultural Education* since its beginning, W. F. Stewart, a member of the editing-managing board, and F. E. Moore, consulting editor, have been in previous years teachers of agriculture in the public schools of Minnesota, where all of them made records indicative of their present prominence. It is a source of great satisfaction to *The Visitor* to see the progress that has been made by all of these men and we believe we are justified in expressing our pride in their former relationships to *The Visitor* and to agricultural education in Minnesota.

A. V. S.