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EDITORIAL

BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB WORK

Boys' and Girls' club work has become a permanent feature of our educational system. The industrial contests organized about ten years ago have done a great deal to create interest in industrial education. The elements of agriculture, home economics, and manual training are now taught in nearly all of our best high schools and graded schools. The boys' and girls' club work has been found to be a splendid connecting link between the classroom work and the home. The club work interests the fathers and mothers in the school by using the simple home duties as important factors in the training of the children, while the boys are made to learn that their part of the home work is really worth while. The contest demands the actual doing of things under home conditions. It interests many in the individual importance of a home project.

It is a good thing for our young people to hear of things well done by some one else and to feel that by doing their work well they will help others. When a boy performs his task alone, he is likely to put forth his best efforts, if it is the result of awakened interest. This is one of the great principles of club work. There is a strong campaign on for cooperation along all lines and boys and girls like to organize. Wise parents and teachers can use this fact to good advantage in this work.

A boys' corn club may take the place of the gang. The girls' bread-making club will give the girls something to do in a useful way. Some of the boys' corn clubs of last year produced splendid results in getting the boys together. The agricultural men of Blue Earth County had four boys' corn clubs which are worthy to be models for other parts of the State. These clubs brought the boys together and gave them something to do during a large part of the year while they were growing their acres of corn. After the corn was harvested, they organized as a seed corn club and sold the seed corn as a club.

The high-school agricultural man has an unusually good opportunity for organizing club work in a community, through his short-course class, which usually consists of splendid young fellows representing a fairly large part of the community. Many of the men have organized the short-course classes as county boys' clubs, with the plan that each boy serve as a leader in his own neighborhood in organizing the local club. Some of the places where this plan has been tried with splendid results are Benson, Rush City, and St. Peter. Leadership is one of the big results of club work and this is an excellent way of getting it.

Contests Teach the Value of United Effort.

Contests also develop community pride and foster a spirit of loyalty by interesting many in local projects. The boys' corn club, organized to have each member grow an acre of the best corn, possibly develops the same spirit as the baseball club and in this way makes a community appreciate the value of work well done. Examples of this may be found in the different communities of the State where certain contests were very successful last year. The community around Excelsior, where the champion corn-grower of last year's contest showed his splendid results, is thoroughly wide-awake to what this work means and proud of what Lynn Harrison did. All the other boys in this county are anxious to do just as well.

The lesson on corn from the book is abstract; but this knowledge applied to the growing of the best acre of corn makes it real. It means a good deal for a boy to plan the work, prepare the ground, get good seed, and plant, cultivate, and harvest his crop. He is led to study corn from all available sources. He begins to realize the value of his school work in the subject and connects the home work with what his teachers are giving him. Several boys in the contest last year had the misfortune to have cows, hogs, or chickens destroy their corn, and realized as never before, what ownership means. One little girl, taking part in the poultry contest, had her finest chick taken by a

cruel hawk. She cried for a whole day as if her heart would break. Hawks had taken a great many chickens from her mother's flock every year without affecting the girl, but this was her flock and it meant a great deal to her.

The boys' and girls' club projects for Minnesota, for 1914, in which there is a state-wide interest, are the Boys' Acre Yield Corn-Growing Contest and the Girls' Bread-Making Contest. These contests are limited to boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 18 years. The corn contest is limited to boys. Every boy must plan, plant, cultivate, and harvest from one to four acres of corn. From the four acres, one is selected as the contest acre. He must also keep a record of all expenses. The yield of dry corn counts 60 per cent; the financial statement showing the economy of production, 20 per cent; and the story of "How I Grew My Acre of Corn," 20 per cent. State prizes amounting to \$800 will be awarded. The high-school agricultural men are in general taking hold of this contest enthusiastically. Murray and Yellow Medicine counties have added a pig-contest feature, while several other agriculturists have varied the contest in other ways to suit local needs.

In all this work, the local contest and exhibit are the most valuable part. It is a splendid plan to have a local exhibit, either as a separate school fair or as a part of the county fair, the boys and girls taking part in this club work.

The bread-making contest is limited to girls. The teachers of home economics in the high schools can do a good deal by encouraging their girls to take part in this contest. In the bread-making contest, the girls are encouraged to take part in the home work by being required to bake bread at home at least six times, and to report on this work, which counts 30 points on the final score. Individual as well as club prizes are given to encourage individual efforts, and at the same time to teach the girls the value of working together. Each club meets for a special demonstration under the direction of the teacher or some other leader, who reports on the club efforts. Each club is required to report its organization and the names of members and officers, which makes them feel that they are working together. This will encourage community spirit and develop an interest in the activities of the young people on the part of the parents. Each girl makes her best loaf of bread as a final exhibit to be sent to the University to be judged, and also gives a short account of her club work in the contest, taking as her subject, "How I Learned to Make My Loaf of Bread." Many of the home-economics teachers have already organized clubs among the members of their classes, feeling that this contest makes a point in their teaching, especially on the subject of bread, and helps connect the school work with the home work. The contestants are divided into two classes—one for girls in high, graded, and consolidated schools having a special teacher in home economics, and the other for girls from schools having no special teacher in this subject.

Many of the agricultural men are taking up different lines of contest work. Bemidji, Rush City, Koochiching County, and others have reported splendid plans for poultry contests. The poultry work is one of the best lines of club work for the younger boys and girls, and can be made to mean a good deal for a community. At a very small cost, settings of pure-bred eggs will be distributed in this way and thus a great many people will become interested in getting pure-bred poultry. In several places, the contestants are required to keep poultry records and special prizes are given along this line. Park Rapids and Cloquet are doing excellent work in a home-garden contest, in which children are encouraged to have a share in the home garden. Good seed is given, or sold at a small cost. Next fall the children will exhibit at a local fair for which business men have raised the premium fund. Potato contests have been organized in Cook, Koochiching, Beltrami, Pennington, and Yellow Medicine Counties. Girls' tomato-growing contests have been organized in several places, as special work for the girls.

Nearly every county fair premium list has a department for the boys and girls of the community. This is a very good feature of the club work and should be supported by the special teachers of the high schools. In the club work, prizes are necessary in order to create an interest, but we are gradually getting away from the idea that the premium is the most important part. An effort should be made to make the boys and girls feel that the prize is but a small part of

the value of the contest. Cash prizes are not the best form to be given. Prizes of pure-bred live stock, machinery, short courses, trips, agricultural books, and other things of this kind are preferable. Jackson County reports offering a pure-bred Holstein calf as first prize in their corn contest. Their other prizes are pure-bred live stock, and machinery, with small cash prizes. In order to make club work successful, we should attempt to keep in close touch with the boys and girls who enter these contests. There should be a great deal of "follow-up" work. A circular letter or personal visit now and then will mean a great deal for a boy who is taking part in the contests.

O. H. Benson of the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., has general supervision of the boys' and girls' club work in the northern states and a great many valuable bulletins on different club projects may be secured by addressing him. The Agricultural Extension Division of the University of Minnesota also has a number of circulars and bulletins on contest work.—T. A. Erickson.

HIGH-SCHOOL CORN- AND STOCK-JUDGING CONTEST

The Visitor is indebted to P. E. Miller of the West Central School of Agriculture for the following account of a contest held at Morris:

"The West Central School of Agriculture of the University of Minnesota conducted the Second Annual Minnesota High-School Corn- and Stock-Judging Contest on March 12 and 13. Seven western Minnesota high schools were represented—those of Canby, Benson, Wheaton, Beardsley, Herman, Alexandria, and Villard. A team of three represented each school and the two days' competition was for a silver trophy cup offered by the West Central School of Agriculture. The cup must be won two years out of three by the same school before it becomes the permanent property of the school. The school which won the cup.

"The first day of the contest was devoted to corn-judging. Eight classes of white and yellow dent corn were judged and the reasons for placing were given orally before E. C. Davis of the College of Agriculture who served as judge for the corn work. The second day of the contest was devoted to the judging of live stock. In this division K. F. Warner of the College of Agriculture served as judge. A total of 1,500 points was the possible score, 600 being on corn and 900 on live stock.

"The ranking of the teams was as follows:

Villard	1,211.2 points
Herman	1,148 "
Alexandria	1,105.7 "
Canby	1,089.7 "
Wheaton	1,068.7 "
Beardsley	1,031.5 "
Benson	913.2 "

"Thursday evening the visiting teams were entertained by the School of Agriculture with a program appropriate to the occasion. The Agricultural School acted in the capacity of host for the visiting schools and furnished all judging material and accommodations for the visitors.

"Keen interest was manifested in the judging and it was the consensus of opinion among the judges that very excellent work was done by practically all contestants, showing good training and careful work.

"The following agricultural instructors coached and accompanied their teams: B. Ostrolenk, Canby; E. S. Miles, Villard; H. L. Popenoe, Alexandria; W. J. Rupert, Wheaton; C. H. Schopmeyer, Beardsley; A. Z. Arehart, Benson; W. E. Watson, Herman.

"The contest of last year was also a decided success. Inter-collegiate contests of this kind have been held for several years, but their introduction into the secondary schools is an innovation. While these two contests have really been experiments, they have terminated so successfully and such splendid work has been done that their future is now assured and each year will see an annual High-School Corn- and Stock-Judging Contest at the West Central School of Agriculture, at Morris.

"Commenting on the contest, several instructors remarked that their pupils had received much valuable training in working for the team and all were anxious for a bigger contest next year."

THE TRAVELER

B. M. Gile, who is in charge of the agriculture in the Bemidji high school, is organizing poultry clubs among the grade pupils in the city and in the

adjacent rural schools. The local fair board has offered forty-four prizes for chickens raised by pupils between the ages of ten and eighteen years. Mr. Gile is also planning to hold a poultry show in the school gymnasium in December. To assist the pupils who do not have facilities at their homes for hatching eggs the school board has offered to furnish three incubators which will be kept under the control of the school. The eggs will be hatched free of charge. The children are entering into the work with a great deal of enthusiasm.

CORRESPONDENCE

A recent letter from Claude Wentzel, agricultural instructor at Ada, states that he believes in having most of the gardening work done at the homes of the pupils instead of making extensive use of the school plot for this purpose. The following is quoted from a recent letter and may give those interested some idea of how the work is handled:

"A trip was made to the home of each pupil early in the spring and a location picked out for the plot. The plans were considered with the parents. Each boy carefully laid out a plot of ground twenty-two feet square, with a path around it. I find that this is large enough for the ordinary garden vegetables.

"When the crops were being planted I visited each plot twice a week. Later on in the season when the crops were all planted visits were made only once a week. I tried at first to meet the boys on Saturdays at their plots, but found that they usually had other work on hand for that time and it was pretty hard to meet them. I divided them into two divisions, one living on one side of town and the other on the opposite side. I met one division on Monday night between seven and eight o'clock and the other division at the same hour on Tuesday night. I found that after boys had their plots at their homes and I could meet each one for about ten minutes to talk over the matter and make observations. While I had only a small number of gardens I feel that the work was quite satisfactory. A small prize was offered for the best garden and I think the boys worked for it earnestly.

"I think this home garden work is much more practical than to have the school gardens all in one place. The parents of each boy got something out of the work. Some of the families had never attempted to raise a garden. It makes an object lesson right at home and spreads the work all over the town so that every one can see it."

ELIMINATING THE GOPHER.

The latter part of April and the first week in May is the best time to get rid of the gophers in and around the field that is to be planted to corn this year. Poisoned corn is good bait. By laying the first bait about the middle of April; the second near the end of the month, and a third during the first week in May, the gophers should be pretty well eliminated by corn-planting time. The poisoned corn may be prepared as follows: In a quart of hot water dissolve one-fourth of the amount of strychnine contained in a one-eighth ounce bottle. After the strychnine is dissolved and the water is cool, as much corn may be put in as the solution will cover. If less corn than that is needed, put in about what will go around. Leave the corn in the solution twenty-four hours, then remove it, saving the solution that was not taken up by the corn for use a little later.

If all of the gophers are not killed off before the corn is planted, then corn soaked twenty-four hours in the strychnine solution mentioned above may be planted thicker than usual in a few of the outside rows. In a recent trial at University Farm, corn soaked in a strychnine solution for twenty-four hours germinated just as well as corn that was soaked in pure water for the same length of time, or as corn that was not treated at all. If the gophers are not out of the way by corn-planting time, this method should be given a trial. It will help you get a better stand of corn, which means a higher yield. The planter will have to be regulated so as to give the desired drop of the soaked corn. Strychnine is a deadly poison and should be handled with the greatest care. Keep the strychnine solution and the corn while it is soaking, and afterwards, out of reach of children and all domestic animals.—A. C. Army.

COMING EVENTS

SUMMER SCHOOL COURSES.

The regular annual summer session of the College of Agriculture will occur at University Farm, June 15 to July 24, 1914.

Opportunity will be given at this time for regular college work in agriculture and home economics. Seventeen different courses in agriculture and ten in home economics will be offered at that time for college credit.

The college class work will start promptly on June 15, registration being completed on Friday and Saturday, June 12 and 13.

Up to the limit of the accommodations, board and room can be had at the College of Agriculture by applying in advance to J. M. Drew, Registrar.

In addition to the regular college work there will be special lectures by Dr. Eugene Davenport, Dean of the College of Agriculture, University of Illinois, during the week beginning June 29; a similar course by Dr. P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education of the United States, during the week beginning July 13, and an additional course by different men of national reputation who will be present at the National Education Association during the week beginning July 6.

The high-school agricultural instructors of Minnesota will also have a special convention during the week beginning July 20. During this time they will discuss their work and take some additional class-room work in subjects peculiar to Minnesota conditions. These classes will be taught by the members of the college faculty.

During the same week, from July 20 to 25, the home economics teachers of the high schools of the State will also have a convention, the plan of which will be about the same, that is, part of each day will be devoted to special class-room work taught by the home economics teachers of the college and a part devoted to conferences upon the work as they find it. It is expected that many thousands of colleges and normal schools, also many teachers of secondary schools, principals of schools, and regular college students, will take advantage of this opportunity as they have done during former summers.

Those who are interested should write to Professor A. V. Storm, Director of the Summer Session, for further and more complete information.

NEWS

R. V. Brown, assistant in the agricultural department of the high school at Albert Lea, has resigned to enter commercial work. He is succeeded by C. L. Yule from the Wisconsin College of Agriculture.

J. S. Klinka of Little Falls has been elected to a position as county agent in Wisconsin. He will leave his present position August 1.

The Minnesota Association of High School Agricultural Instructors held its fourth annual meeting at the College of Agriculture, March 27 and 28. The sessions were devoted to the discussion of problems connected with extension and class-room work. Seventy-seven of the one hundred thirty-six instructors were in attendance. The officers elected for the ensuing year are: President, A. M. Field, Northfield; vice-president, A. J. Olson, Waseca; secretary, W. J. Corwin, Grand Rapids; Treasurer, W. E. Hedgcock, Albert Lea.

W. W. Schmitt, agricultural instructor at Bagley, is in the hospital at Bemidji with inflammatory rheumatism. R. M. Day, a graduate of Ames, is in charge of the work at Bagley during Mr. Schmitt's absence.

C. L. McNelly, who has been in charge of the agriculture in the Willmar high school for several years, has resigned. He will begin farming at the end of the school year. H. L. Popenoe, of Alexandria, will go to Willmar.

NOTICES OF INDUSTRIAL LITERATURE

The Folk High Schools of Denmark, by L. L. Friend. Issued by the United States Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C. Free. A description of the organization, courses of study and work of the folk high schools. The author makes the following statement in his introduction: "My own feeling after visiting Denmark and making a serious study of the folk high schools and their methods is that they have some very practical suggestions to offer us for the improvement of rural education in this country."