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in Minnesota High Schools

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STAFF

A. V. STORM
D. D. MAYNE
W. H. BENDER
W. F. LUSK
G. F. HOWARD
T. A. ERICKSON
GEORGINA L. LOMMEN

FARMERS' CLUBS, A PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

There is probably nothing new to be said about farmer's clubs in Minnesota. The movement is well known and recognized as immensely important throughout the State. There are between 800 and 1,000 of these clubs at present, and new ones are being organized daily. In the last year 700 or 800 of these clubs have been organized, and reports from all sides indicate that the movement is a live one and that the clubs are really doing things. A movement that interests 80,000 people in a single state is a movement of importance. There is only one institution in Minnesota that reaches larger numbers of people than the Farmers' Clubs and that is the rural school.

Agricultural high school men who have been in the State for a year or more realize the importance of these clubs to their extension work, and have been the most active agents in their organizations.

What the Movement Means

The farmers' club movement has been encouraged by the Agricultural Extension Division, University of Minnesota, because it is a movement of the people themselves. The club is their own institution. It is what they make it. It capitalizes the enthusiasm, the knowledge, the combined powers of the people in the community. It encourages social intercourse. It gives them more confidence in one another. It encourages study of the problems of the farms and homes and of the community, such as schools, roads, and cooperative business organizations; and provides an open forum for the public discussion of anything of interest to the community and an opportunity for action by all the people. The farmers' club is to the community just what the evening gathering about the fireplace is to the family. It strengthens the ties of friendship; it brings about a more thorough understanding of the trials and worries and burdens of all, and consequently a greater tolerance for one another's shortcomings; it paves the way for community activities that have before been left undone; in short, it capitalizes the latent forces of the community, and sets them working for the good of all.

How Clubs are Started

A farmers' club is usually started because some one person or several persons feel that a club will be a good thing in the community. After talking it over among the neighbors, a meeting is called. The enthusiasm, at first very slight, grows with the crowd, and an organization is formed. Leadership usually falls on a few people, but they are the ones who in the long run get most out of it. There is no formality about a farmer's club. People simply get together, decide they can work better together than separately, adopt a simple constitution and by-laws (see Extension Bulletin No. 46), elect officers, and are then ready for work. Usually no membership fee, or only a very small one, is charged, because very little money is needed. All members of the family, men, women, and children, become members. The membership usually varies from 5 or 6 to 40 or 50 families. The general average is about 20 families, or 100 people.

Time and Place of Meetings

Meetings are usually held once a month, sometimes twice a month. Monthly meetings, as a rule, suffice. A large percentage of the clubs meet every month throughout the year. These, usually, are the most successful. Others meet once a month for eight or nine months, but hold no meetings in the busiest part of the summer. Most clubs have a summer picnic.

A great majority of the clubs meet in the evening. This seems to be the time they can most easily get together.

The place of meeting is usually either the schoolhouse or the home of one of the members. There are advantages in both places, but we believe the most successful clubs are those that have their meetings at the members' homes. This makes the meetings more informal, and one is a little more likely to attend a meeting at a neighbor's house than one at a schoolhouse.

Then, it is a good thing for a farmer to know that a wide-awake group of his neighbors is going to come to his place. It encourages him or spurs him on to pick up and put things in order at least once a year.

Programs

There is a chance for good work in preparing programs. Everyone must feel that he cannot expect much out of a movement that he puts nothing into, and should take some part in the program and in the discussion. Each program should provide something for everyone. There should be singing for all, also a reading or something of the sort for amusement. Then, of course, local farm and home problems should have a place. Outside speakers, such as lawyers, doctors, teachers, bankers, merchants, should be invited for occasional meetings. Life is broader than just country life affairs and everyone is interested in things outside his own field of work. It is desirable that some topic be chosen for study for a few months or a year, and a little time given on each program to this topic.

What Farmers' Clubs Do

A farmers' club may do three things for a community. (1) It may improve the social life of the community; (2) it acts as an educational institution; (3) it paves the way for cooperative business organizations and encourages their organization. Any one of these things is of enough importance to warrant the organization of a club. It is natural for people to enjoy the society of other people, and it is only through association with others that people make any marked development. The regular meetings of the farmers' club induce people to get out and know their neighbors, to get an outside view of their own affairs, and by getting acquainted with their neighbors and other people, they usually think more of them.

A farmers' club helps educationally by making general the best information that each individual in the community has. It also encourages study, prepare for the part expected of him. Through the farmers' club outside information is often brought to the community by means of lecture courses or other meetings arranged by the club, in which people from the outside take part.

When people get thoroughly acquainted and are in the habit of dealing with each other and of studying propositions as they come up, they are ready to undertake cooperatively some business enterprise, such as the production of uniform products, the marketing of those products, or the purchase of supplies. Most of the farmers' clubs in the State have developed until they have taken up some of these cooperative movements; and because they have become thoroughly acquainted and in the habit of studying before making a move, these cooperative movements are usually successful.

What Farmers' Clubs Prevent

A farmers' club provides a means for taking up and carefully studying any proposition that is of interest to the whole community. If there had been farmers' clubs in the country 15 or 20 years ago many creameries that have been organized by promoters for the purpose of selling creamery machinery would not have been organized, or at least the organization would have been deferred until the community was ready for a creamery. Many stallions have been sold in the State for \$2,000 or \$3,000 that were worth only from \$500 to \$1,000. Had the matter been taken up in a farmers' club, this fraud could not have been perpetrated on the community.

Young people need, and will have entertainment. If this is not to be had in the community, they will go elsewhere. Good, wholesome entertainment provided in the community will often prevent young people from going to neighboring towns and villages, and getting into some of the questionable amusements there.

State-Wide Movement

The farmers' club movement in Minnesota is now State-wide. The Agricultural Extension Division is attempting to find some means of tying these organizations together. A pin or a button has been adopted which is an attractive little thing that any farmers' club member will be pleased to wear at any time or in any place. The words on the button are: "Minnesota Farmers' Club, Education and Progress". It is hoped that a large percentage of the 80,000 members of farmers' clubs in the State will wear these buttons; and there is little doubt but that when one is away from home and can meet other people whom he readily recognizes as belonging to an organization similar to his own, he will feel much more at home and will make many valuable acquaintances. These buttons can be had from the Agri-

cultural Extension Division, University Farm, St. Paul, at ten cents each.

Cash prizes are being offered for the best farmers' club songs submitted to the Agricultural Extension Division by April 1, 1915. It is hoped in this way to get some good live songs that will help to liven up the farmers' club meetings, and at the same time will represent the real sentiment for education and progress back of the movement.

The Extension Division is just now publishing a circular giving a suggestive program for farmers' clubs for the year 1915.

Farmers' Clubs and Extension Work.

The High school man or county agent who attempts to do extension work in agriculture or home economics without farmer's clubs is certainly working under a very heavy handicap. One can hardly appreciate the latent force in the community until he sees the enthusiasm and interest of the people aroused through some local organization; and what one man can do in an unorganized community compared with what may be done in one that is well organized, can better be appreciated when he realizes that in an unorganized community there is little done that he does not actually do himself, while in an organized community there are two, ten, or a dozen or more people to help.

Agricultural Extension Bulletin No. 46 gives full information regarding the organization and operation of Farmers' Clubs. The Agricultural Extension Division is ready at any time to give any assistance possible to high school men or others desiring to organize clubs, or to work with clubs that are already organized.

THE FARMERS' CLUB

We believe in the farmers' club because it develops people. It tends to bring out the best there is in a community, and to get people ready to act concertedly for their own best interests. It takes the work of the unscrupulous promoter unprofitable and aids any movement that is for the real interests of the community. It makes any new movement undertaken the work of all of the people rather than something to be forced on them by someone from the outside. A farmers' club is needed in every community.

VIRUS RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN REMOVED

Under date of December 1, a letter was sent out from the Division of Agricultural Education calling the attention of agricultural instructors to limitations in the use of hog cholera serum and virus because of possible contamination with the foot and mouth disease.

Under date of December 21, the Division has been notified that the special restrictions upon the distribution and use of virus produced within the State has been removed, and that it may again be distributed and used as before, in accordance with Chapter 30, Laws of 1913, and the regulations of the State Live Stock Sanitary Board.

Attention is further directed to the fact that county agents and agricultural instructors in the high schools should not attempt or encourage importation of serum or virus produced outside of the State subsequent to October 1, 1914. This is on account of possible contamination with foot and mouth disease virus.

CORRESPONDENCE

The College of Agriculture of the University of Minnesota is preparing a large number of men to teach agriculture in the high schools of the State and is endeavoring to make its instruction very practical and especially applicable to Minnesota conditions. As one means to this end, agricultural teachers and superintendents of schools, when visiting University Farm, have been called upon to address prospective teachers in class and in their Agricultural Education Club, which meets on the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month. When agricultural teachers and superintendents of agricultural high schools come to the Twin Cities, it would be esteemed a great favor if they would send word to the college before their arrival, so that arrangements could be made for them to meet the students in Agricultural Education. There will be mutual advantage and great benefit to the cause of agricultural education in the State from such meetings.

BOYS AND GIRLS TO VISIT CITIES

The fifth annual Boys' and Girls' Week will be held at the School of Agriculture, University Farm, St. Paul, April 5-10, 1915. The Week will be the fifth of its kind for Minnesota boys and girls. The first, held four years ago, had an enrollment of 108. For the following years the enrollment was 308, 330 and 360 respectively, and it is hoped that this year the number will be greater than ever.

The Week will open Monday afternoon, April 5, with registration and a short general assembly at 4 o'clock. The mornings will be devoted to class study and practice, and the afternoons to excursions. The boys will take class work in cattle, hogs, horses, stock-judging, corn, gardening and poultry. The girls will devote their attention to sewing and bread-making along the lines of the contest work in the State, and any other subject which may be deemed beneficial and practical. The afternoons will be devoted to excursions to points of interest in and near the Twin Cities, such as the State Capitol, the new State Prison at Stillwater, Pillsbury A flour mill, the Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis Public Library, Minnehaha Falls, Soldiers' Home, and the South St. Paul Stock Yards. The evenings will be given over to special entertainments in the Assembly Hall.

The cost of the week's course will be \$2.00 for board and room and about \$1.00 for street car fare for the various excursions. The additional cost for each student will be the railway fare from his home town to St. Paul and Minneapolis and return. Students will be met at the depots by competent guides if desired.

Superintendents of high schools, instructors in Agriculture, county agents, county superintendents, are urged to call the attention of their pupils to this Week. With strong cooperation on the part of these people with the agricultural Extension Division of the University of Minnesota, the coming Week will be the most successful yet. It is the deepest interest in better farming, corn growing tests and industrial work, are those who have attended one of these Weeks. They come home with a new vision of better things and inspiration to attempt something different.

In case schools have opened for the spring term, it is suggested that superintendents and teachers excuse pupils for the week and give them credit for their time while attending the Boys' and Girls' Week. County superintendents and others are urged to offer the Boys' and Girls' Week as a prize in spelling contests or debates, and as premiums at fairs and industrial contests.

Any one desiring further information may address Agricultural Extension Division, University Farm, St. Paul, Minnesota.

ITEM

The Visitor is indebted to A. D. Wilson, Director of the Extension Division of the College of Agriculture for the discussion of the farmers' club movement appearing in this issue.

NEWS

A. J. Lashbrook, who has been agricultural instructor at Fergus Falls for a year, has resigned to accept a position in the United States Government Extension Service. He will be engaged in dairy extension work in connection with the State College of Agriculture at Pullman, Washington. He is succeeded by Mr. Croy, who was last year at Medford.

R. A. Humphrey and Superintendent E. R. Forney of the Chatfield schools held eleven alfalfa meetings at outlying rural schoolhouses in November. Mr. Humphrey has lectured on alfalfa growing at each of these meetings, illustrating his lecture with lantern slides and charts. Nearly four hundred people were reached by these meetings. Earlier in the fall a corn and colt show, of which Mr. Humphrey is secretary, was held. Prizes aggregating \$168 were offered. Guy S. Ellis, agricultural instructor in the Stewartville high school, was in charge of the contests at the show in which about thirty boys were entered.

The high school at McIntosh is publishing the High School Bulletin, a newspaper, to promote the interests of the three-months winter short course. In addition to describing the requirements, purposes, plans, and subject matter of the short course, the paper sets forth the normal training, the domestic science, the manual training, and the extension work, as carried on in the different industrial departments of the high school. The paper carries several advertisements of local business concerns.

P. R. Little, agricultural instructor in the high school at St. Louis Park, on Tuesday, December 1, brought his class in horticulture to the meeting of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society. The boys viewed the various exhibits, attended the meetings, and returned home in the afternoon. Mr. Little addressed the Agricultural Education Club in the evening.

The manual training class of the Mountain Lake high school has presented the school with a set of mechanical drawing tables, which were built as a part of the class work. Each pupil in the farm crops class is expected to carry out an ear-to-row test on the home farm. The agricultural instructor has obtained the use of a moving picture machine for educational purposes by cooperating with its owner.

Farmers' Week Short Courses will be held as follows:

Slayton, January 5-9.
Adrian, Morristown, Truman, January 12-16.
Heron Lake, Waseca, Madelia, January 19-23.
Windom, Byron, Lake Crystal, January 26-30.
Minneota, Le Sueur, Winnebago, February 2-6.
Canby, Hutchinson, Albert Lea, February 9-13.
Willmar, Hawley, Lyle, February 16-20.
Renville, Halstad, Lanesboro, February 23-27.
Wheaton, East Grand Forks, Hastings, March 2-6.
Herman, Warren, Mora, March 9-13.
Villard, Hallock, Sandstone, March 16-20.
Brooten, Akeley, Moose Lake, March 23-27.
Pine River, March 30 to April 3.

The Elk River high school held its annual industrial exhibit and contest on November 20 and 21. In connection with the exhibit a spelling contest between the eighth grades of the Monticello and Elk River schools was limited to words selected from a list of 500 agricultural terms. The oral part was an old-fashioned spelling-down contest. Elk River won both contests.

Ralph Sunderlin, of Red Oak, Iowa, graduate of the Iowa State College of Agriculture, has succeeded Ralph Loomis in the department of agriculture of the Bird Island High School. Mr. Loomis was obliged to give up the work on account of his health.

The Chatfield high school owns a collection of 148 lantern slides covering the subjects of Animal Husbandry, Poultry Husbandry, Farm Buildings, Field Crops, Horticulture and Insects and Plant Diseases. R. A. Humphrey, of the agricultural department, has corresponded with other agricultural instructors with a view to exchanging slides.

The instructor in Agriculture at Jordan, assisted by the superintendent of schools, has been assisting the farmers in the combat against hog cholera since early in August. The demands for treatment were so great that local veterinarians were unable to meet it. Mr. Macy, the agricultural instructor, has given all his available time to the work and has treated about forty herds, using 50,000 cubic centimeters of serum. One result of the work was a well attended meeting at the Jordan school house on December 12, at which a swine breeders' association was organized. One of the main objects of the association is to organize the fight against cholera next spring and summer.

INDUSTRIAL LITERATURE

Workshop Note Book, by George G. Greene, Manual Arts Press, Peoria, Ill., Price 25 cents.

This book is a combined text and note book, containing in a condensed form a few facts to be presented to a beginning class in wood-working. It was written to meet a need in the classes in the Lane Technical High School in Chicago.

Bulletin No. 27, 1914, Whole Number 601, of the United States Bureau of Education, on Agricultural Teaching, will be found of value and interest by Agricultural Teachers. It contains the papers presented at the fourth annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Teaching. Of especial interest to High School teachers of Agriculture, are a paper on "Home Project Work vs. Laboratory and School Garden Plot Work for High School Students," by C. G. Selvig; "Courses for preparing Agricultural Teachers," by A. V. Storm. "The Scope and Purpose of Agriculture in Secondary Schools," by H. M. Loomis; "The Use of Land in Agricultural Teaching," a Report by R. W. Stimson,