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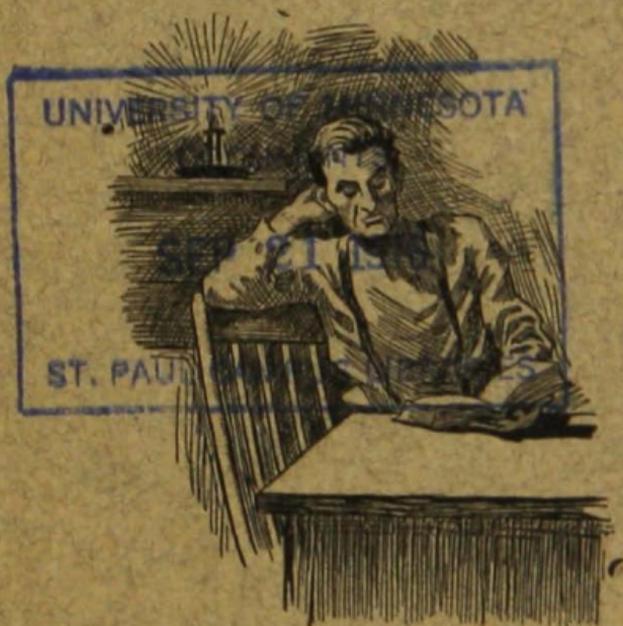
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THAT BOY ON THE FARM BUT NOT IN SCHOOL

A suggestion for *boys* and young people
who are ambitious for a real success in life.



UNIVERSITY FARM

Published by the University of Minnesota, Department
of Agriculture, Extension Division, A. D. Wilson,
director, and distributed in furtherance of the purposes
of the cooperative agricultural extension work provided
for in the Act of Congress of May 8, 1914.

“Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute what you think you can do or can do,—begin it.”

The University of Minnesota
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION DIVISION

THAT BOY ON THE FARM BUT NOT IN SCHOOL

An editorial printed in Levang's Weekly,
Lanesboro, Minnesota, October 25, 1917

by

WILLIAM S. SYLVESTER
Associate Editor

TO THE READER:

If this booklet contains no message for you, do not throw it away but in person or by mail hand it on to some youth to whom it may serve as a guide to opportunity.

FARM BOYS, ATTENTION!

Success is within the reach of *every boy* who will take time to read and then make use of what he reads.

Many men who have succeeded in life have obtained their education from books read not in school but at home.

The boy who can not go to school need not be without an education. Books are to be had by all. The boy who will read this booklet and make use of its suggestions will have taken a long step toward success. He will have put himself in line for additional reading, which, if persisted in, will give him the kind of an education that other boys get by going to school; for the purpose of the booklet is to get the boy who can not go to school but who wishes to have an education in touch with agencies that can place the kinds of books he needs at his disposal.

The suggestion is also made that boys in a neighborhood, similarly situated as to school opportunities, form home study clubs for the reading of suggested books and the discussion of them at regularly appointed meetings.

Men and women in schools or in other positions of leadership should give aid to individual boys or to groups of boys who wish to read and study at home. Such persons should address the Agricultural

Extension Division, University Farm, St. Paul, or Levang's Weekly, Lanesboro, which has volunteered to aid in the encouragement of home study by farm boys or girls.

The boy who wishes to begin profitable reading should fill out the blank enclosed and send it either to the Agricultural Extension Division, University Farm, St. Paul, or to Levang's Weekly, Lanesboro, Minnesota. Do it now. Make it a step toward prosperity and usefulness!

If several boys wish to form a club for self-help—a Farm Boys' Progress Club—a copy of the booklet will be sent to each on receipt of their names and addresses, and then each may send in a blank properly filled out.

THAT BOY ON THE FARM BUT NOT IN SCHOOL

The younger brother had gone away to enter the Academy of a neighboring college. He was seventeen. His next older brother, a bright fellow with a fine open countenance and a winning disposition, stayed at home on the farm to help his father with the work. He was needed there. This boy was nineteen. His high forehead and the clean cut, manly features bespoke intelligence worth developing. His life was clean, which meant that he would have no moral handicaps to drag him down, and besides his mind would be keen and alert. His parents were excellent people

and their home was an ideal country home. So much for the youth who suggested this article.

Now, this ought to be interesting; so let me hold your attention while I endeavor to drive this editorial straight to the bull's-eye within the target. If possible, I hope to score a hit and receive your coveted approbation. I feel certain that the problem of which I will tell you concerns us all, provided you are one of those interested in boosting the neglected country youth who has already lost out or is likely to lose out in his education.

We conversed together, this farmer youth and I. In a nutshell, it was like this: "Did you finish the eighth grade at the country school?" I inquired. "No, I did not quite finish," he answered; and I detected a deepening flush under the deep red-blooded tan of his cheeks. I did not ask him whether he was going back to the little country school this winter to finish, for I guessed he was not.

He was almost a man grown, this strong muscular youth, and already doing a man's work on his father's farm. But how about his education? Was it to stop? Was he to lose interest in good books and study before he had really learned to use his mind? It was impossible for his self-sacrificing father and mother to send both their boys away to the college academy, besides on a farm so large he was needed to help with the work. Now, here was a situation worth someone's earnest thought, for this farm

boy's problem is the problem of many others in every township.

Every rural district finds a score or more of boys, older boys, big boys, coming into their majority, and their education stopped before or shortly after the common school eighth grade. I am not unmindful that the country girl is frequently in the same class and I would speak for her interests as well as for the farm boy out of school. But the country boys who lose out in a high school or academic education greatly outnumber their sisters. In the cities, night schools with evening classes are maintained by the boards of education and by the Young Men's Christian Association. The city boy who has to quit school and go to work to earn his living and help the folks with the home problem, has many chances to study and improve his mind by attending these evening classes. The country boy does not see his problem. Something should be done to make him see it. Are there those who care enough to see that a way is opened?

Why, you might ask, does he not go back to the country school and at least finish the eighth grade? Would you in his case? Anyone who asks this question does not fully understand the feelings of youth.

While we sat in the comfortable sitting room of that farm house, I studied this boy who needed but the kindly suggestion, a plan for self-help from someone who could sense his need and offer in part the solution for his problem.

As I sat thinking the matter over, I pictured to myself the typical frame country schoolhouse, which in its day has been a great institution—the little boys and girls tramping along the country roads from homes a mile or two distant, lunch boxes or pails in hand with perhaps a few school books swinging from a strap or in a knit bag that hung at their side, little boys and girls mostly, and only a few older ones, the lads and lassies of the school district.

I pictured the typical country school teacher, usually a slip of a girl just out of a neighboring village high school, ambitious of course, and willing surely, but tackling the task of teaching an ungraded country school. But why go on with word pictures? You can see them. You know the conditions. The point I want to make is, that this over-grown boy, this strapping country youth, would be out of harmony with this little frame school building and its children's classes. He has spent the years of his growing boyhood there, he has listened to the monotonous hum of primer classes, spelling simple words or laboriously reading out loud the pages of the primer readers. I can see such a youth sitting with his long awkward legs stretched under the seat, usually too small, and trying to be absorbed in a textbook, while he waits impatiently for the young lady teacher to get A1 and B2, and fourth grade arithmetic, and fifth and sixth grade spelling out of the way, until finally she comes to that big boy or two to hear their recitations. The truth

is, the big country boy has outgrown the country school.

Will this type of a farmer boy go back to the country school? No, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, no. I am not thinking of country boys whose good fortune or privilege it is to attend the town or village high school, or those more favored in a locality where there is an up-to-date, splendid consolidated graded school—I am thinking of the boys like the one who started me on this, the boys who are required to stay at home to help with the farm work, the big boys in their teens who have lost out in their education and are not thinking about it, and unfortunately, some of them, not caring. Scores of such boys can be found in every township.

This boy in my story was typical of this large group, representing in the state and nation thousands of youths who in a decade will be the young farmers. They will also in a decade in many instances be the young husbands and fathers who will be forced to tackle their problems without the necessary education to make them efficient or progressive. What then can be done for the farmer youth who is unable to get away to school during fall or winter? That is the question.

Like many others this farmer boy's lot is to stay at home and help father. During the fall there is much that he can do, the daily chores, milking, feeding, barn work, care of stock, hauling, plowing, building, and repairing; no end of work. But surely

he has his evenings, and some time for reading and a little study. Oh those long winter evenings! What an opportunity for the boy on a farm! Away from the allurements and digressions of the average town which so many times spoil a boy for reading, for study, for investigation, for mental and moral development.

To the ambitious youth a way will be provided. "Find a way or make it" will be his motto. He will improve his long winter evenings. He will snatch a few minutes just before or just after each meal to cover a few pages of textbook or wholesome reading. On stormy days, which come frequently during winter months, when driven indoors, he will be able to spend a few hours with his books. *He will do this provided he has the books.*

Did you get that? Did I hit the bull's-eye within the target that time? I have been leading up to this. Let me repeat it. He will do this provided he has the books and, of course, the inclination along with the books. Now, here is the problem I confronted: An exceptionally bright country boy, clean in his life, a good home, honest, unselfish parents—but no specified books for reading or study. No home study for "self-help" and "self-education" suggested or laid out for him.

And then I made my simple suggestion to this farmer boy. "Why not get hold of some good textbook such as is used in the freshman year of a high school or academic course at college? What is to prevent *you*

from having in *your* possession the same book that your more fortunate brother takes to the classroom away at school? Why can't *you* read a few pages each day, or during spare time cover a chapter or more? Talk over your reading with your father. He will be oftentimes as good as a professor. He has had practical experience but may lack the technical and scientific putting of things. Your questions will sharpen his mind. He will go to school with you—the school in your home."

The eyes of my young farmer lad brightened. He listened eagerly while I went on. "In a few weeks, in the course of a month or two, the book will be finished or nearly so. Then you can secure another textbook. You have the best classroom on earth, the farm with barns and fields, woods and orchards in which to put your daily readings and studies into practice. Father and older brother, and perhaps your big sister, can study with you. Mother, too, will be interested and may take an important part in the plan.

"If you can secure a book on agriculture and farm betterment, do so at once. In addition, outline a course of reading. One, two, possibly three books, either history, literature, civil government, or travel. A volume of biography, the life of some great and good man, will stimulate your ambitions and enrich your mind."

I had my audience. The boy was captured and his father too. I had not noticed him, he was listening from the adjoining

room. He entered and questioned eagerly, for his heart was in his utterances, "Tell me, tell me," he repeated with emphasis, "just what books to get for him and I will buy the books. That's the trouble," he said, "I do not know just what books to get for him."

I agreed to send him a book or two as a starter, and since then I have been thinking the matter over. This idea came to me, not altogether new perhaps, but a good idea neglected: Why not organize or promote a Farm Boys' Progress Club, for home study and reading? A simple course of study could be outlined and a few good textbooks, not too technical, could be chosen. The books could be sold at cost to any boy or girl wishing to join the club. The time to push the work of the club would be during the fall and winter months, culminating the work in the early spring.

The extension department of the state agricultural college is willing to offer valuable bulletins and any assistance it can give. The local superintendent of town or village high school with his corps of teachers will, I am sure, gladly assist where it is possible to do so.

In talking the matter over with Superintendent E. C. Ingvalson of the Lanesboro high school, he expressed his warm approval of any plans that might be made to help the boy out of school.

He brought to this office two textbooks on agriculture. They appear to be excellent volumes and books that every

farmer boy should have in his library.

One was "Elementary Agriculture" by Prof. James S. Grim of the Keystone State Normal school at Kutztown, Pa. The other textbook was "The Essentials of Agriculture" by President Henry Jackson Waters of the Kansas State Agricultural college. He said he would be glad to outline a course for home reading and study for any boy out of school.

If a number of names of country boys in this part of southeastern Minnesota could be sent in along with a short letter expressing an interest in the plan, it might be possible to start the ball rolling.

This newspaper will be glad to encourage such a movement. It will offer its news columns and will create a department so that every week or month the members of the home reading and study club could follow suggestions made by such able leaders as Superintendent Ingvalson, and others, who will volunteer services. Other newspapers and school men in neighboring towns will, I am sure, be glad to do likewise. Perhaps we can get hundreds of boys in Fillmore and neighboring counties to take up the work for this winter. This would make a good slogan: "Self-help and Self-effort for Education."

A simple membership blank could be prepared. No dues would be necessary.

If enough boys in a rural neighborhood will sign up to order a textbook and agree to follow a course of reading, a group club can be organized, and this will be an added

stimulus to the good work. Perhaps a leader can be appointed and the group meet together at stated times.

As the winter season comes to a close, the "self-help and self-effort boys" should gather at a church or schoolhouse or the hospitable home of one of the members, for a social evening with a program covering the line of work followed by the club. This could be followed with a supper, or call it a banquet if you please, to celebrate the completion of the home study and reading course.

It's worth thinking about, but it's worth doing more than merely thinking about; it's worth starting.

So it's up to you, readers of this paper, to express yourselves on the question. One boy at least is going to do some definite reading and will study at least one textbook this winter. This book will deal with his present life and work, enlarging and enriching his mind and making his life more interesting to himself and to others.

If you as parents or adult readers believe in the BOY OUT OF SCHOOL bettering himself and forming habits of reading and of studying worth-while books, let's encourage him to make a start in this direction. If we can boost the farm boy who is out of school, we will help him to develop his intellectual life and make of him a power, a man for his own and the community's good.

The University of Minnesota
Department of Agriculture
University Farm, St. Paul
Office of Publications October 27, 1917
Mr. Ola Levang,
Lanesboro, Minnesota.

Dear Sir:

I have been reading with enthusiasm the front page editorial in your issue of Thursday, and I am passing it on to A. D. Wilson, director of agricultural extension in the University of Minnesota. It seems to me you have a great idea. Some constructive work of the kind you have suggested, in your community, ought to spread to other parts of the state, though this may take time and effort. This office looks after the distribution of bulletins, and you may draw on us without cost for bulletin supplies. Now and then the extension division could probably send you a special speaker to supplement the work of the boys—and the girls—with their bulletins or books. I suggest, also, that you get in touch with the state library commission, State Capitol, St. Paul. This commission can send you traveling libraries containing just the kind of books you need.

Count on us here to do anything in our power to help so good a movement.

Very sincerely yours,
W. P. Kirkwood,
Editor

BOOKS WORTH READING

Agricultural Engineering

Anderson. Electricity for the farm. Macmillan, 1915. \$1.25.

Potter. Farm motors. McGraw, 1913. \$1.50.

Hobbs & Elliott. The gasoline automobile. McGraw. \$2.

Seaton. Concrete construction for rural communities. McGraw. \$2.

Agronomy and Farm Management

Boss. Farm management. Lyons & Carnahan, 1914. 90 cents. (Textbook, Elementary).

Wilson & Warburton. Field crops. Webb, 1912. \$1.50.

(Best general book. Good for Minnesota).

Bees

Phillips. Beekeeping. Macmillan, 1915. \$2.

Breeds and Judging

Gay. Breeds of live-stock. Macmillan. 1916. \$1.75.

Plumb. Types and breeds of farm animals. Ginn, 1906. \$2.

Dairying

Eckles & Warren. Dairy farming. Macmillan, 1916. \$1.10. (Textbook. Elementary).

Diseases

Craig. Common diseases of farm animals. Lippincott, 1915. \$1.50.

United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Industry. Special report on diseases of cattle. Revision of 1916. Special report on diseases of the horse. Revision of 1916.

(These can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., at \$1 each. They may possibly be obtained free from your Congressman.)

Feeds and Feeding

Henry & Morrison. Feeds and feeding. Abridged. Henry-Morrison Co., Madison, Wis., 1917. \$1.75.

Fruit Growing

Sears. Productive Orcharding. Lippincott, 1914. \$1.50.

Kains. Principles and practice of pruning. Orange Judd. \$1.75.

Green. Popular fruit growing. 4th ed. Webb, 1910. \$1.

Card. Bush fruits. Revised edition. Macmillan, 1917. \$1.75.

Bailey. Principles of fruit growing. 20th ed. Macmillan. \$1.75.

Horses

Gay. Productive horse husbandry. 2d ed. Lippincott. \$1.50.

Law

Koos. Farmers' law. Minn. ed. Webb Pub. Co. 1913. 50 cents.

Plant Diseases and Pests

Herrick. Insects of economic importance. Carpenter & Co. Ithaca, N.Y. 1915. \$1.

Sanderson. Insect pests of farm, garden and orchard. Wiley, 1912. \$3.

Slingerland & Crosby. Manual of fruit insects. Macmillan, 1914. \$2.

Poultry

Robinson. Principles and practice of poultry culture. Ginn, 1912. \$3.

Sheep and Swine

Day. Productive swine husbandry. 2d ed. Lippincott. \$1.50.

Kleinheinz. Sheep management. 3d ed. 1916. \$1.50.

(Published by the author, Madison, Wis.)

Soils and Fertilizers

Lyon, Fippin & Buckman. Soils, their properties and management. Macmillan, 1916. \$1.90. (Best general treatise).

Lyon. Soils and Fertilizers. Macmillan, 1917. \$1.10 (Textbook. Good brief treatise.)

Vegetable Gardening

Lloyd. Productive vegetable growing. Lippincott, 1914. \$1.50.

Watts. Vegetable gardening. Judd, 1912. \$1.75.

Corbett. Garden farming. Ginn, 1913. \$2.

(The three books are of about equal merit. One should be sufficient for the home library).

Miscellaneous

Adams. Harper's electricity book for boys. Harper. \$1.75.

- Brooks, Noah. Boy emigrants. Scribner.
\$1.25.
- Cheyney. Scott Burton, forester. Apple-
ton. \$1.35.
- Churchill. The crisis. Grosset. 75 cents.
- Clemens. Tom Sawyer. Harper. \$1.75.
- Cooper. Last of the Mohicans. Boy
scout edition. Grosset. 60 cents.
- Custer. Boots and saddles. Harper. \$1.50.
- Dickens. Tale of two cities. Estes. \$1.50.
- Doyle. Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.
Burt. 75 cents.
- Duncan. Dr. Grenfell's parish. Revell. \$1.
- Eastman. Indian boyhood. Doubleday.
\$1.60.
- Eggleston. Hoosier school-boy. Scribner.
60 cents.
- Evans. A sailor's log. Appleton. \$2.
- Gordon. Glengarry school days. Revell.
\$1.25.
- Gulliver. Daniel Boone. Macmillan. 50
cents.
- Hale. Man without a country. Macmillan.
25 cents.
- Kipling. Captains courageous. Century.
\$1.50.
- Lang. True story book. Longmans. 85
cents.
- Lange. On the trail of the Sioux. Loth-
rop. \$1.
Silver island of the Chippewa. Loth-
rop. \$1.
- Meadowcroft. Boy's life of Edison.
Harper. \$1.25.
- Moore. Life of Abraham Lincoln. Hough-
ton. 60 cents.

- Ollivant. Bob, son of battle. Burt. 75 cents.
- Parkman. Oregon trail. Little. \$1.
- Robinson. My fourteen months at the front. Little. \$1.
- Roosevelt & Lodge. Hero tales from American history. Century. \$1.50.
- Scott. Ivanhoe; abr. by H. P. Williams. Appleton. \$1.50.
- Seton. Wild animals I have known. Scribner. \$1.75.
- Stevenson. Kidnapped and Treasure Island. Boy scout eds. Grosset. Each 60 cents.
- White. Blazed trail. Boy scout ed. Grosset. 60 cents.

The heights by great men reached
and kept

Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions
slept,

Were toiling upward in the night.

—*Longfellow.*

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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