

# THE VISITOR

Devoted to the Interests of Agricultural Education in Minnesota Schools

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## "No, Me Not Lost"

The other day a little two-year-old curly-headed St. Paul boy left his home yard and wandered off to explore for himself the mysteries of the wide, wide world. He was unaware of and unconcerned about the frantic search of his mother and her rapidly increasing army of helpers. The delivery boy for a local butcher happened across the lad and believing that he was on furlough without parental permission drove to the curb and addressed the little adventurer with the question, "Aren't you lost?"

"No, me not lost," was the quick and assuring reply of the young man who continued on his journey in quest for new experiences.

Although this activity of the boy is not a new nor an unusual occurrence, the reply, "No, me not lost" impressed the writer as worthy of consideration. The following possible explanations presented themselves for thoughtful analysis. Perhaps the boy:

1. Did not know what is meant by the term "lost."
2. Did not think he was lost.
3. Did not know that he was lost.
4. Did not want to admit that he was lost.
5. Did not care if he was lost.

It is a waste of time to go on speculating about the problems the answers to which we shall never know. Therefore let us go on to something else. But the lad's reply still rings in our ears as we turn our thoughts to the problems of teaching agriculture. What would the answer be if the question of the delivery boy would be directed to us? How many of us could answer the query with the assurance of the boy?

### How A Teacher May Be Lost

There are many ways in which a teacher or a community leader may be lost. For the purposes of this discussion, the term "lost" may be regarded as referring to conditions which interfere with or completely prevent the successful performance of certain activities considered appropriate in the particular work in which one is engaged. From this point of view a person might be lost in the minds of others but not in his own mind. For example, the "hero" of this story was lost in the mind of his mother but

in his own mind was "me not lost." The term "lost" is therefore a relative term conditioned by the degree to which one fails to recognize or to meet the standards that are set or should be set as satisfactory goals of achievement for any group of activities. To reiterate, teachers or other leaders may be considered lost when they do not know just where they are at with regard to the work they are doing or when they are fumbling around with activities not pertinent to the task at hand.

### What the Students Say

Students who are majoring in agricultural education were asked to give their idea as to how teachers might become lost in their work. A few of their statements are included in the hope that they may be of interest to teachers. Each of the following sections represents the contribution from one student. The reader should bear in mind the fact that these young men have just begun their professional study. A.M.F.

### Aims and Objectives

If a hunter raises his shotgun to his shoulder and fires before he gets his aim on that precious game, the buckshot usually spreads out into the open air and the energy of that shell is spent for naught. Similarly, that same error is very likely to happen to a teacher of agriculture who gets out into the school to teach without his aim set as to what he expects to accomplish in his work and the first thing he knows he finds himself lost in the wilderness and looking for a way out.

It is the duty of each agriculture teacher before he starts the school year to look ahead and see what his objectives are for teaching agriculture in the high school. He should be ready to defend his cause at any moment if the question arises as to what the objectives are for teaching agriculture. With our sights adjusted and our aims pointing in the right direction, we should, as agriculture teachers, strive to carry out and accomplish our objectives in our work.

### The Program of Work

A teacher of agriculture must have a clear understanding of the program of

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work before he can teach successfully. In the first place he must be familiar with the set-up for teaching agriculture—that is, the revised system of course work now used in the state of Minnesota. In order to fulfill the requirements of this set-up, the teacher must know *how* to teach, *what* to teach, and *how much* to teach each year in Agriculture I, II, and III. Hence, he must have a clear conception of the syllabi of subjects as outlined in the suggestive course of study bulletin. This includes not only classroom work, but farm practice work, part-time teaching, and evening school work. The teacher must also have knowledge of such extra-curricular organizations as the Future Farmers of America, 4-H clubs, scout organizations, and farmers' clubs. As a teacher of agriculture, it becomes his duty to lead in these and similar organizations. Consequently, it may clearly be seen that if a teacher goes into teaching without an adequate knowledge of his program of work, he may become lost in useless routine. Therefore, let us make it one of our aims to find ourselves with regard to the program of work before we begin teaching. A careful study of the Agriculture bulletin No. C6 will help to keep us from becoming lost.

#### Careful Planning Saves Time for the Teacher

The habit of carefully planning each unit of work so that it can be executed smoothly and at the same time fit perfectly into the place it is to take in the program of teaching is a priceless attribute of the teacher of agriculture. When each day's work in the classroom is planned in advance and all necessary materials provided before hand, there need be no delay while the teacher searches for materials or paws over unorganized notes. What thoughts go through the minds of the students when

their teacher stops in the middle of a demonstration or discussion to find some material he has carelessly forgotten to bring into the classroom? It is a safe bet that the thoughts of the student immediately go into many channels irrelevant to the subject being considered in class. The teacher has to go to the extra trouble of "rounding up" the thoughts of his class from various places and get them back on the subject again. Then, too, the students get the idea that the teacher "doesn't know his stuff." Consequently, their respect for him is lessened. Would it not be easier and more profitable to spend a few minutes planning the work beforehand than to spend several times the amount of time correcting mistakes which could have been avoided?

#### Details

Details are small portions or mere sub-divisions of the whole. Individual bricks are details of a large building. It requires a definite number of bricks to erect a certain structure. Thirty-two quarts of a liquid are required to fill an eight-gallon can. These are details and they very plainly are essential. Without each brick, the building would not be complete. Lacking one quart of the liquid, the eight-gallon can would not be quite full.

The program of the agriculture instructor is likened to the building. Many thousand details are required to build it properly and every detail is necessary to its full completion. However, a teacher must not permit himself to become lost in a maze of details. To do so causes gross neglect of major activities. Rather he should plan the broader points of his program with extreme care and enlist his students as co-workers to help work out details. The students should be allowed to use their own initiative in selecting and planning details.

#### Adult Leadership

Adult leadership—what are its possibilities? Teachers of agriculture have many opportunities to participate in the adult leadership of the communities where they are located. Not all, however, are availing themselves of making their program stronger and more worthwhile by effective adult leadership. Some are lost when it comes to this phase of their work.

The teacher when visiting the boys at their home farms will become personally acquainted with the parents. In discussing and planning the long time program of work, the teacher becomes a

leader in shaping the future plans of the farm. By gaining the co-operation and confidence of the parents and by using tact and good judgment in his suggestions upon improved farm practices, the teacher exerts worthwhile leadership to the adults as well as to the boys.

A good opportunity for adult leadership is in the evening schools. These schools should not be social gatherings, or mere demonstrations by the instructor in some method of improved agriculture, but should be real schools where the farmers study their own problems. The leadership here is in directing the farmers to analyze, discuss, and study their problems and to have them put their findings into practice.

### Vocational Counselling

If a person were going on a long automobile journey, he would try out his car and equipment before leaving and study maps and guidebooks before and during the trip. A vocational career is like such a journey. Vocational counselling is a plan for helping people in their progress through the working world—to aid them to achieve successful careers for themselves and to co-operate with society in creating a better economic world.

As teachers and future teachers of vocational agriculture in Minnesota high schools, we must prepare ourselves to give serious consideration to the boys who, if we give them a chance, will come to us for counsel and guidance relative to choosing their life's work. These boys are at the fork of the road and need help. Let us be prepared to give it to them. Start today to collect references and notations of books and material pertaining to agricultural occupations.

Do not tell the student what he should do. Help him to find out what there is to do. Suggest possible vocations, keeping in mind his ability and special characteristics that you have observed. Be tactful, let him decide. Be a counsellor, not a jury.

### Outside Activities

Opportunities for participation in outside activities are legion. It is typical of the experience of every teacher of agriculture to be urged to join and participate in several worthwhile social and economic school and community activities. The question which naturally arises involves a choice of organization, since it is evident a teacher of agriculture has only a limited amount of time to give to outside activities.

The problem presents itself as one of

judgment, singleness of purpose, and time budgeting. The far-seeing teacher is not lost in the maze of organizations, but moves steadily on selecting some, rejecting others, and applying himself to service to his students, his school, and his community.

It is easy, perhaps, to become lost due to an unwise selection of activities and an unbalanced time budget because there is no hard and fast law applicable. It remains, therefore, for each teacher to set his course with the end in view of enriching not only his own life but that of every individual with whom he comes in contact.

### Push, Not Pull

The teacher of agriculture may easily become lost through his relationship to the superintendent and school board of his school.

Teachers like others are advised by many to work for a "pull" with their superiors. To follow this advice may lead the teacher into trouble, as log-rolling methods are not new and the superintendent may see through the insincerity which a wire-pulling scheme makes necessary.

A better method is to develop push. Push on to new heights of efficiency and achievement. This method is without peer. It is in the long run indisputable in its superiority. Push is definitely associated with the leader. Pull is not always so associated. Push is the safe, the one hundred per cent method and it leaves the teacher a clear track for sincere, satisfactory, man to man association with his superior in rank.

### How Do We Rate?

Do we know our subject, are we interested in our work, neat in appearance, healthy, endowed with initiative, high ideals, good attitudes, and above the average in mentality? Then, according to the judgment of fourteen prospective teachers in Dr. Field's class we have the more important attributes of a successful teacher. These virtues together with others such as dependability, tactfulness, good judgment, ambition, honesty, and energy received the highest number of votes from a student prepared check list of forty qualities of merit. Frequently, teachers become lost in a maze of mis-directed activities because of weakness in certain personality traits such as the ones just mentioned.

The relative importance of the various qualities as indicated by the student poll is presented in the following summary:

Quality of Merit	Number of Votes
1. Knowledge of subject matter ..	14
2. Good health .....	13
3. Initiative .....	12
4. High mental ability .....	11
5. Neat appearance .....	10
6. Interest in work .....	9
7. Good attitudes .....	8
8. Dependability .....	7
9. High ideals .....	6
10. Tactfulness .....	6
11. Ambition .....	6
12. Energy .....	5
13. Honesty .....	5
14. Good judgment .....	5
15. Sense of humor .....	4
16. Patience .....	4
17. Orderliness .....	4

Three votes were given each of the following:

Co-operative spirit, desire for self-improvement, good citizenship, broad-mindedness, confidence, perseverance, adaptability, resourcefulness, and good grammarian. Two votes were accorded religious interest, ability in exposition, friendliness, special talents, and respect-inspiring.

The following qualities received one vote each: Impartiality, imagination, optimism, altruism, punctuality, sincerity, and sympathy. As suggested by the vote of one student a large number of these individual traits could be placed under personality.

#### Lack of Leadership

Some teachers seem to lack the ability of starting activities and completing them on time. We find these people in all kinds of occupations. For an example, there are a few farmers who always seem to be late in starting their programs of work. They are late with seeding and late with harvesting; consequently there may be a loss in quantity and quality of products. This makes a poor impression upon the public. The same is true with some teachers; there is a loss in quantity and quality of work, and poor impressions are made which will likely contribute to their failures as teachers. A good leader should be prompt in starting activities and successful in guiding his followers through them. Certainly the late farmer and the late teacher are poor leaders. Altho we are active and steady workers, we are not successful unless our activities are completed. This requires accurate and skillful planning of programs. We want a teacher who is on the job on time, one who has energy enough to snap into action, one who knows his program of work and where and how his time should be spent.

## UNIVERSITY TRAINING NATIONAL SERVICE

The work of agriculturists and forestry graduates in the governmental service receives special attention in "University Training for the National Service," just published by the University of Minnesota Press. The book is a record of the addresses delivered by university and government officials at a conference held on the university campus. It outlines many career opportunities for college graduates in the federal ranks, also dealing with such matters as salary scales, entrance examinations, and specific training required for many positions. Minnesota agriculturists whose addresses are included are Dr. E. M. Freeman, Dean, College of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics, and Dr. Henry Schmitz, Chief, Division of Forestry.

## HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE 1932-33

For the school year 1932-33 there are seventy-seven schools where departments of vocational agriculture are maintained as an integral part of the school offerings. St. Louis County is perhaps the banner county this year with eight schools offering instruction in agriculture on a vocational basis. Leo Knuti is employed as county supervisor of agricultural education and is building an unusually effective program of instruction and practice among the agriculture students who are enrolled in the all-day, part-time, and evening schools. Felix Nylund is employed on full time as director for the part-time and evening school work that is provided for those who do not find it possible to attend any full time schools. Arthur Lampe, county superintendent of schools, for St. Louis County, is to be congratulated on the splendid work he is doing in providing educational opportunities for those who are making farming their life occupation.

#### New Departments of Agriculture

A department of agriculture has been established for the school year 1932-33 in each of the following schools:

Freeborn—C. L. Larrabee  
 French River—Roy Nelson  
 Toivola—Wilho Martin  
 Pelican Rapids—Donald Peet

We not only have an increase in the number of departments but also a decided increase in the total enrolment, which is this year 2,657. This represents an increase of 14.6% over 1931 and an increase of 50% over 1930