

THE VISITOR

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The Visitor is pleased to reproduce excerpts from a talk by Forrest W. Wiley, Superintendent of Schools, Wayzata High School, Wayzata, Minnesota. This talk was given before the Agriculture Section of the Minnesota

Vocational Association at its annual meeting in October 1955 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Visitor regrets that limitation of space has necessitated some editing. Our apologies to Mr. Wiley!

The Agricultural Teacher's Relations and Compensations as Compared to Other Instructors

BY FORREST W. WILEY

The number one feature in a good agriculture department is good men. There is no substitute. You may have less than the best equipment, facilities and materials, and still have a good department.

One of my pet peeves is the many popular speakers in the education fields who fill our teachers full of the old baloney that you can't do anything because you are underpaid, overworked, and lack the facilities.

Last summer it was my privilege to listen to a very charming young teacher telling of her success in teaching reading. After a wonderful talk, she asked for questions from her audience. Some old gal, who had never had an inspiration in her life, I am sure, asked question number one: "When do you find time to sleep?"

That is the trouble with too many of us; we are wondering when we can find time to sleep! My experience with vo-ag teachers has been that they were willing to accept a challenge and have not worried about sleep.

The agriculture teacher has a unique position. He is one of the few teachers who has a real opportunity to follow the approved method of teaching:

1. Acquaint the pupils with the problem.
2. Demonstrate the problem to the pupils.
3. Have the pupils perform the operation.
4. Derive tangible and immediate conclusions.

He also, because of his unique position, has some real responsibilities.

In a modern school there are three indispensable factors: Academic, vocational, and social. Which is the most important? I can answer you, if you can tell me which is the most important leg of a three legged milk stool. To some of you this may be a change in concept of a school, but not a change in philosophy.

In my estimation a high school is to prepare an individual for life, which includes vocational proficiency and social adjustment with his fellow men. The academic phase of the school is just plain common sense—that of teaching everyone to do whatever he is doing to the best of his ability.

In many cases it is academic standing that causes discord between the ag. man and other teachers. At least this is the area that is used as a battleground. Many factors enter into the picture, but it is the loss of time because of work and the low scholastic academic standing of a few boys that present the problem. In my estimation this is not the real problem, but the one that only appears "legitimate." It is the other "gripes" that I wish to discuss.

Scheduling can assist in solving the scholastic achievement problem to a degree, as Mr. Paulson and Mr. Ross solved it in Albert Lea.

What are the gripes and what causes them? First, I should list the cause as Jealousy. "Jealousy among the teachers"—Jealousy caused by the seemingly small

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class load, the "few" classes, the several apparently "free" periods, the failure of the vocational teacher to carry an "adequate" share of the co-curricular load, and a host of other imaginary factors. Perhaps the most obvious to other teachers is an *apparent* salary differential.

My experience as an administrator has indicated that I have been partially to blame, since I did not list the real activities of the ag man. Blank periods appearing on his schedule should have been listed as home visitations. I should have made known to the faculty that Agriculture is a type of education that demands more personal supervision and parental cooperation. The many FFA activities of the high school boys certainly add up to favorable comparison with the hours spent by any other teacher. However, no teacher except the ag man is aware of them.

As professional educators, you should be more willing to go a little further along the path of understanding the problems of other teachers. You should try to see to it that other teachers are informed of your duties. Some very successful ag teachers insist that the administration list all of their duties.

This and a little understanding (public relations) on the part of the vocational teacher will do much to eliminate petty Jealousy.

If at all possible, the ag teacher should do his share of ticket taking and party chaperoning on a school-wide basis. Many times, because of his broad agricultural and community responsibilities, his interests center on his own problems. He should be very careful not to drag his ag problems into every school discussion, but to

be done with them. In reality, most petty gripes are due to a teacher's inability to face reality. He tries to justify his behavior. When you take your boys out of an English class or a social science class to attend a John Deere show or some other non-essential activity, you might as well admit you couldn't say "no." After you have attended you might as well forget it as to try to justify it to the rest of the faculty.

If the other teachers resent the ag teachers, what is your attitude? Sometimes in life people have to be a door mat; sometimes a pedestal. Sometimes you are important; the next moment you are a nobody. Life shifts back and forth. You have to learn to accept your role.

We have a beagle pup in our home that has evidently replaced me as the idol of my young sons. The other night I missed the pup. He was not in his bed, and because of his piddling nature, I thought it best to locate him. I went upstairs to see if by chance he had accompanied the boys to bed. As I leaned over the bed, one of the boys half awakened, put his arms around my neck, and gave me a good squeeze. I felt quite pleased about it. I could have written a poem right then about my little son, but then he woke up and saw me. "Shucks," he said, "I thought you were the dog."

You must have a healthy attitude toward other teachers, regardless of their opinions—whether they reciprocate or not. As we go along in life, it's easy to see the flaws in others. If you look at people at close range, it's quite different from seeing them at a distance. Be friendly and cooperative with other teachers.

Your attitudes will, in a large measure, determine the attitudes of other teachers toward you and your department.

This year marks the 25th year of activity for the FFA in Minnesota. Did you and your chapter celebrate the anniversary with an all-school assembly? Did your school newspaper carry an article? Have you as an instructor done your best in carrying out the public relations part of your program?

One of my very pet peeves has been that we have been afraid to bring our program out into the open. We have tried

to reserve it for a small group of farm boys and their parents. We have encouraged an inferiority feeling within our group.

I enjoyed the article published in your magazine, "The Visitor," by Paul Woodring on "Are Consolidated Schools Short-changing the Country Child?"

I am afraid that he has overlooked one thing—that thing is the needs of farm children. He has made the false assumption that farm children are different, and I am afraid that too many of you have collaborated in his conclusions. (Ed. Note: The children "no"; their environment, "yes.") Our methods of carrying out the programs may differ, but our goals should be the same.

Children, whether urban or farm, should have the same opportunities. Your FFA initiation, contests, and activities should be given equal space with the Quill & Scroll, Honor Society, District Declamatory or any other school activity. They should be a part of your schools' program, and it's your responsibility as a teacher to put them there.

Where is your curiosity? If we do not experiment, will we continue to progress? Should you only encourage standard practice or should you attempt to have your pupils discover new and perhaps better paths?

A helper of Thomas Edison complained that he had performed a certain experiment a thousand times with no results, to which Mr. Edison replied, "Not quite, we know now a thousand things that will not work."

A few teachers get the "contest-winning concept." They are perfectly satisfied to obtain a goal as set forth in a contest. In many cases the goal may satisfy the experts, but they don't even know the individual or what he has gained. It is sad, but true that the public and the administration often measure the instructor's value by the number of contests his pupils might win.

The third concept I should label the "personal likes." In this the teacher is usually to blame. He very often is an expert in some field and as a result seems to think everyone else should be interested in that subject. While many good

educational values come from skill and enthusiasm, it is, nonetheless, only a fragment of the whole possible outcome.

The third responsibility of the ag man in a rural area is to be the front line public relations officer for the public school. A few well chosen words may make a friend for you and your school and a better understanding of the problems of your fellow teachers. Some day the favor may be returned.

I think of the many good instructors with whom I have had the privilege of working and I find that they all have had a common philosophy. I can best illustrate it by telling you of Ole Johnson.

Ole was a traveling man in a small community and usually was enticed to do a little gossiping on his calls; however, Ole had one area in which he drew the line. When anyone asked Ole what he thought about so-and-so, he always hesitated and said, "When I begin to find fault, I begin with Ole Johnson, and I never get any further."

The last thing I have on my list might be best stated in the form of a question: "Do you believe it can be done?"

It is very tempting to be pessimistic and say, "It can't be done." We can say that neither the pupils, public nor teachers desire a change.

On the other hand, you can try to figure out what you can do to give all pupils an equal opportunity and therefore make your school better. There are many different approaches. The important thing is to not lose faith, to believe we can improve our school each year.

Some years ago, a girl in our school attempted to sing a solo. In the solo were several high notes, and as she reached for the notes, she failed and flattered miserably. She became flustered and left the stage. Her teacher, who was also her accompanist, keep playing on the piano. The girl turned and looked back; her eyes met those of the teacher. She returned to the stage, started over and finished her solo. In my estimation this was a real teacher—a teacher worth many times what he was receiving. Had the teacher lost faith a very promising young singer might have been ruined or a personality impaired.

You have a tremendous opportunity to influence the lives of the community and pupils. Your contribution can be greater than that of any other individual in the school system. Only through your efforts can our schools adequately serve both rural and urban youth.

The good will you can create by selling your community on your school will more than justify any illusion of salary differential that might exist in the eyes of other teachers.

In closing, I should like to say that I too agree with your M.V.A. president, Thomas Raine, in his October message, as written in the M.V.A. Viewpoints, when he says, "It has been said that people who understand their field thoroughly attend conventions not to hear something they didn't know, but to be reminded to do something about what they already know."

May my message prove a challenge.

Ag. Education Students Receive Advanced Degrees From University of Minnesota

The Visitor presents below a list of men receiving advanced degrees since 1946 under the advisership of staff members in Agricultural Education. If any of our readers were left off this list, please let the Visitor know about it so your name may be added.

| Degree | Name | Year Received |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Ph.D. | Stevens, Glenn Z. | 1952 |
| Ph.D. | Bjoraker, Walter T. | 1952 |
| Ph.D. | Swanson, Gordon I. | 1954 |
| Ph.D. | Baker, Jasper N. | 1954 |
| Ph.D. | Donahoo, Alvin W. | 1954 |
| Ph.D. | Pearson, Arvid N. | 1955 |
| Ph.D. | Sundet, Stanley A. | 1955 |
| M.S. | Freeman, John W. | 1946 |
| M.S. | Anderson, Benjamin S. | 1948 |
| M.S. | Bjoraker, Walter T. | 1948 |
| M.S. | Kortesmaki, Waino J. | 1948 |
| M.S. | Scott, Glenn A. | 1948 |
| M.S. | McKay, Gerald R. | 1949 |
| M.S. | Haugh, Francis J. | 1949 |
| M.S. | Frey, William A. | 1949 |
| M.S. | Hubbard, Reuben | 1949 |
| M.S. | Swanson, Gordon I. | 1949 |
| M.S. | Teske, Philip R. | 1950 |
| M.A. | Kemen, Joseph M. | 1950 |
| M.S. | Tschetter, Jacob H. | 1950 |
| M.A. | Williams, Pernan E. | 1951 |
| M.A. | Smith, Wendell E. | 1951 |
| M.A. | Pearson, Arvid N. | 1951 |

| Degree | Name | Year Received |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------|
| M.A. | Korpi, Milton L. | 1952 |
| M.A. | Raine, Joseph V. | 1952 |
| M.A. | Ven Meter, Godfrey P. | 1952 |
| M.S. | Bandong, Cesario | 1952 |
| M.S. | Habito, Celestino P. | 1952 |
| M.A. | Sandager, Lee D. | 1952 |
| M.S. | Tamura, Shin | 1952 |
| M.S. | Ziebarth, Carl A. | 1952 |
| M.S. | Greene, Tyrone C. | 1952 |
| M.S. | Turner, Deane A. | 1952 |
| M.S. | Terry, Alfred W. | 1952 |
| M.A. | Ahlfors, Raymond A. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Aune, Henrik J. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Granger, Lauren B. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Hanson, Robert A. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Sarrazin, Julio R. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Dowling, Clarence W. | 1953 |
| M.A. | Sahlstrom, Stanley D. | 1953 |
| M.A. | Nelson, Donald M. | 1953 |
| M.S. | Matalamaki, William | 1953 |
| M.S. | Palmer, Ernest A. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Hatle, Noel C. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Madison, Eldon H. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Rice, William J. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Solstad, Arnold K. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Brickel, William | 1954 |
| M.S. | Buscaglia, Silvio A. | 1954 |
| M.S. | Tajima, Shigeo | 1955 |
| M.S. | Smith, Ralph E. | 1955 |
| M.S. | Steeves, Jack W. | 1955 |
| M.S. | Ross, Lowell | 1955 |
| M.S. | Cullen, Michael T. | 1955 |

Dr. Peterson in Japan

Dr. Milo J. Peterson, Head of the Department of Agricultural Education, University of Minnesota, sailed from San Francisco for Japan on December 14. Dr. Peterson accepted a Fulbright Research Grant with headquarters at Chiba University to lecture and conduct research in twelve Japanese universities. His visit to Japan will be marked by renewing old acquaintances. Since 1952, 13 Japanese university and college teachers and administrators, including three deans and one president, have studied in the Agricultural Education Department. Two students, Shin Tamura and Shigeo Tajima, completed work for the M.S. degree majoring in Agricultural Education. These 13 representatives have developed teacher education programs in their respective institutions since their return to Japan. Dr. Peterson's work as a consultant will enable them to improve their training of professional agricultural workers.

Dr. Peterson was accompanied by his wife and four children. The family will return to St. Paul in July.