

THE VISITOR

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RURAL RECREATION

Professor G. A. Lundquist, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Minnesota, writes the following interesting and inspiring article especially for readers of *The Visitor*.

Recreation, as a factor in stimulating morale, has been demonstrated beyond any question of doubt during the late war. It, undoubtedly, would have the same effect, if we were to introduce a similar method of control in any center or any community, where large numbers of people congregate, and have no trained leadership. This fact is manifested everywhere—that, when people assemble at picnics, socials, and other get-togethers, they are at a loss to know what to do. It is, therefore, perfectly clear that there is need of rural recreation, that there are numerous agencies which may be enlisted, and that a program under expert leadership should be inaugurated in rural districts.

It is becoming customary among American cities to employ specially trained men and women in playground and recreational work. The isolation, loneliness, and absence of play and recreational opportunities in country districts have driven many energetic and socially minded young men and women from the country. The desire for comradeship among these country folks should be directed and stimulated, in order that country life may become enriched and satisfied. The need of direction in play as well as in recreation among rural folks is too evident to be questioned. Recreation and play in the great American army were instrumental in creating and maintaining that wonderful power we have become accustomed to call morale. The United States needs morale in every country district, "for peace hath many victories battle never knew." To keep tenancy from increasing, to enrich the content, aim, and method of rural education, to put life into the rural church, to create a belief that farming is a real man's job, to improve roads, to obtain better marketing facilities, to encourage scientific farming, to bring about better health and sanitation, to secure better home conveniences—all these require the capacity of a full-sized man of vision, of

foresight, and of sound judgment. Improving the country will be a less serious task if adequate recreational activities and opportunities for play be under the direction of trained leadership.

Where can be found in the open country that sort of leadership needed to help the country people help themselves? There are a number of agencies that ought to cooperate, but, so far, it is no one's concern whether they do or not. **It will be a great help to the community, when some directing agent, legally constituted, will have the power to co-ordinate these forces.** The minister, the county superintendent, the county agent, the superintendent of the village school, the agricultural teacher, the boys' and girls' club work leaders, the boys' and girls' scout leaders, the city superintendent, with his corps of teachers, and interested and public-spirited citizens, can accomplish a great deal, provided their efforts are concentrated and consecrated. Much splendid energy is wasted. In many instances these groups are so small, when meeting separately, that no inspiration or enthusiasm can be aroused. If, however, a number of the existing agencies cooperate, and unite sporadic, single-handed efforts, hit-and-miss affairs, which so often negative the most sincere projects, a result of monumental proportions might be achieved. Then community service will rise above individual and selfish interests, and all the people, irrespective of group, will be greatly benefited. The moral, the spiritual, the educational, and recreational life will become socialized. The rural regions will banish isolation. Cooperation, the slogan of the new day, will triumph. Life will lengthen, joy will deepen, the community spirit will conquer, in the long and tedious struggle for a better life in the villages and in the open country. Here the content, aim, and method of recreation must equal that which the best urban centers enjoy. Then our country will not be divided. Then the recreation of one group will equal that of the other. America, "the hope of humanity", will bear the torch emblazoning the path of equal recreational opportunities for all the people,

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all the time, everywhere, within her jurisdiction.

When we have attained this cooperative spirit, a program of sane, sensible, and human compass must be inaugurated under expert direction. The character of this program or of these programs must primarily meet the needs of each community. There is no such thing as **the rural program, the rural need, the rural problem.** There are programs, needs, and problems in rural communities. Hence we must first get acquainted with the field of service, and determine upon the scope, the function, and the method of approach. Interested persons in any community will readily offer the desired information as to whether organizations perform the functions for which they are intended. In this way the needs will be known, whether they be moral, social, religious, educational, political, economic, or recreational. Having obtained these facts, a checking up with the ideals of the group will follow along biological, psychological, and social lines under scientific direction. Then the program will follow, and it will meet the requirements of the community, provided the leadership is competent to meet the demands which society places upon the social engineer.

The social engineer will need tact, self-confidence, vision, enthusiasm, originality, aggressiveness, persistency, and patience. He must be practical, constructive, heroic, and critical. He must possess knowledge and power and must meet his problem in a spirit of consecration and self-abnegation. Possessing many or all of these qualities, he knows

most people are "standpatters," and, therefore, it is the part of wisdom to move slowly, to begin where he finds things, with a profound and a sacred regard for existing agencies. He will avoid over-organization, duplication, and too many committee meetings. There will be new organizations only when the old will not and can not do the needed work. He will know how to select his assistants, so as not to jump into the nest of followers who seek selfish and personal advancement. His foundation for social policies must not be built on the quicksand of community factions, the death-bed of all social work. He understands that the perennial social duties of teaching, preaching, and tending to one's business affairs are as essential to the progress of the people with whom he labors as are his occasional duties of reforming the community which has called him to this high and noble position of exalted leadership. This leadership must be trained for the morrow. Mankind stands on the golden threshold of a new century among the most confounding and perplexing problems which ever confronted an age. The muse of history is recording our deeds upon her tablets. These deeds must not be written in blood, but she will dip her pen in the clear blue, and print on the golden covers of the future history of these United States that we divined the need, we enlisted every agency, and we inspired our young men and women to enter upon a new sphere of social service among rural folks.

G. A. LUNDQUIST

Progressive Bankers

K. A. Norsen, agriculture teacher at Alexandria, has the hearty coöperation of the local bank in his swine project work. The bank agrees to loan the boys on individual notes sufficient amounts of money to purchase purebred sows. The Visitor was interested in talking with these boys, who appeared intensely interested in their agricultural work and manifested a knowledge of swine and poultry husbandry that would do credit to expert husbandmen. It would be well for many more bankers to see the possibilities of developing intelligent farmers and future bank depositors from successful project workers through such progressive spirit as noted above.

FIELD TRIPS

With the coming of spring there will be renewed interest on the part of both teacher and students in outdoor life, and naturally they will want to get out and study in a concrete way the many problems involved in agricultural work. Too frequently these field trips do not have a definite purpose nor are they carefully planned, and consequently the results are of little value to the students and often end in a riot.

The field trips should be regarded as a definite laboratory exercise and should be used only as a necessary part of the teaching work. This means that the teacher must first make careful preparation for the exercise by going over the ground and outlining the work to be done by the student. The students should know just what is to be accomplished. To do this it is desirable for the teacher to prepare an outline of what is to be done and then go over the outline carefully with the students so that each one has a thorough appreciation of what is to be learned from the trip. The student should be cautioned against letting extraneous interests interfere with the particular study for which the exercise is designed. It is needless to say that the results of the field study should be as thoroughly summarized and discussed in class as any other laboratory exercise.

Presented herewith is a plan of definite field work as conducted by one of the teachers of agriculture in the state. May it serve as an inspiration to others to put more thought and effort into the field trips this spring.

"The following outline was handed to each one of my students just before making an inspection of a dairy barn. Although barns had been discussed in class, many of these students were not familiar, in a practical way at least, with dairy barn requirements as to construction, ventilation, lighting, equipment and management. It was necessary that they should have some idea of what to look for.

"The class was instructed to read the outline carefully and to keep the points in mind as the inspection proceeded. I did not want them to keep the paper before them, for they would be likely to come away with a lot of disconnected facts, rather than with a unified idea of a dairy barn.

"I have found that this outlining of a field trip helps the student to get more out of the work than he does without definite directions. In addition to this, I always follow up, with-

in a day or two, and instigate a discussion of the trip during a class period. The most important features of the trip may then be summarized and emphasized."

Things to See at the Dairy Barn

1. Outside of barn—building materials, type of roof, form of barn, roofing material, ventilators.
2. Outside silos—size, material, placement.
3. Main cow barn—light, ventilation, cleanliness.
Floor—material, workmanship.
Walls—material.
Stanchions — make, material, strength, practicability, adjustments.
Feed Troughs—make, convenience, material.
Watering devices—make, operation, faults.
Litter and feed carriers—make, track, durability, convenience.
Manure gutter — depth, width, drainage.
4. Bull pens—size, floor, feeding, watering, light, etc.
5. Calf pens—size, feeding arrangements, light, etc.
6. Feed rooms—bins, grinders, scales, kinds of feed.
7. Silos—material, kinds of silage, condition of silage (odor, taste, etc.)
8. Milk room—weighing of milk, recording, sampling, cooling, utensils, etc.
9. Cows—size, breeds, cleanliness, mammary development, records,

SECTIONAL CONFERENCES

In a recent issue of *The Visitor* we gave a rather detailed account of the Sectional Agricultural Teachers' Conference held at Sauk Center. Two similar meetings have been held at Fairmont and Owatonna. The program and results of these were very similar to the one held at Sauk Center, and we will not take the space to review them there. What Mr. Gile had in mind in holding these meetings was to give special attention to the particular problems confronting the men teaching in the various sections of the state. The response and enthusiasm from the teachers was very gratifying and a great deal of good should come from the group discussions at the meetings.

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

The following, quoted from a letter from F. L. Crowe, agriculture instructor at New Richland, is interesting and we pass it on as a suggestion to others teaching Vocational Agriculture.

"Some time ago you wrote me for some news items for The Visitor and it has occurred to me that some information concerning the night school I have been conducting here at New Richland would be of interest.

"I organized this night class November 1 and we have met regularly twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday evenings. Eighteen students registered with an average attendance of about a dozen. With the exception of the clergyman, all are farmers or farm boys. The youngest student is eighteen years old and the oldest over fifty. In some cases fathers come with their sons and seem to take as much interest. We have been taking up the subject of animal husbandry and have already secured many practical results. These results have probably been more noticeable in the poultry work because the poultry industry has been more neglected in this community than the other branches of animal husbandry. Most of the class have culled out their flocks, ventilated their poultry houses, put in dry-mash hoppers, ordered meat scraps, and are now for the first time feeding a balanced ration, and most of them are planning to get into better stock. We have already ordered over 2,000 hatching eggs of a high producing strain. We have also drawn plans for the erection in the spring of seven model poultry houses, something that does not at present exist in this community.

"Community breeding is another proposition we have been pushing in our night school as well as in our day classes, and as a result the majority of the students have agreed to breed only the White Wyandotte. Through the farm clubs we secured many more converts and it begins to look as though as a result of this work it will not be long before most of the farms in this community will be breeding the White Wyandotte, and using better stock and much better methods. I believe, moreover, that this work will tend to stimulate better methods with other branches of livestock.

"Altogether I am very much pleased with the results so far secured from the night school. Especially would I recommend this community breeding idea to every Smith-Hughes man as a splendid thing to push in his com-

munity. I find that after you get people interested in the community idea it is but a step to better stock and better methods. The community idea is what the good salesman would call a splendid leader. I expect to see the work started in this evening class grow until it means much to this community."

EXCHANGES

"A man may be an excellent farmer, he may know the art and science and the business of farming, he may believe in it and like it, but if his wife does not, he might just as well go into something else."—California News Letter.

How to Judge an Agricultural Teacher

1. Is his personality such as inspires the admiration, respect, and attention of his pupils?

2. Is his instruction reliable and practical in its application to local problems?

3. Does he get educational results? Is his object the development of the individual pupils, or is it the projection of words from an active tongue to closed ears? Are the pupils gaining active and correct habits of study, observation, and reasoning?

4. Is his instruction properly balanced as regards the "how" and the "why"? Or is he training "rule of thumb" workers?

5. Is his instruction limited to the development of industrial efficiency, or does it also include training for active and effective citizenship.

6. Is he identified with several of the community's forward movements in government, education, agriculture, good roads, church, lodge, recreation, etc.?

7. Is he free and generous with time and effort, in serving the school and community, or does he allow selfish interest in other activities to compete with his salaried position?

8. Is he loyal to his superiors and associates, or does he seek self-promotion by the employment of destructive methods?

9. Does he promote the "get-together" spirit at all times?

10. What has he done and what is he doing toward professional improvement? Is he progressive?

Homer Derr,
State Director Vocational Education
for Nevada.