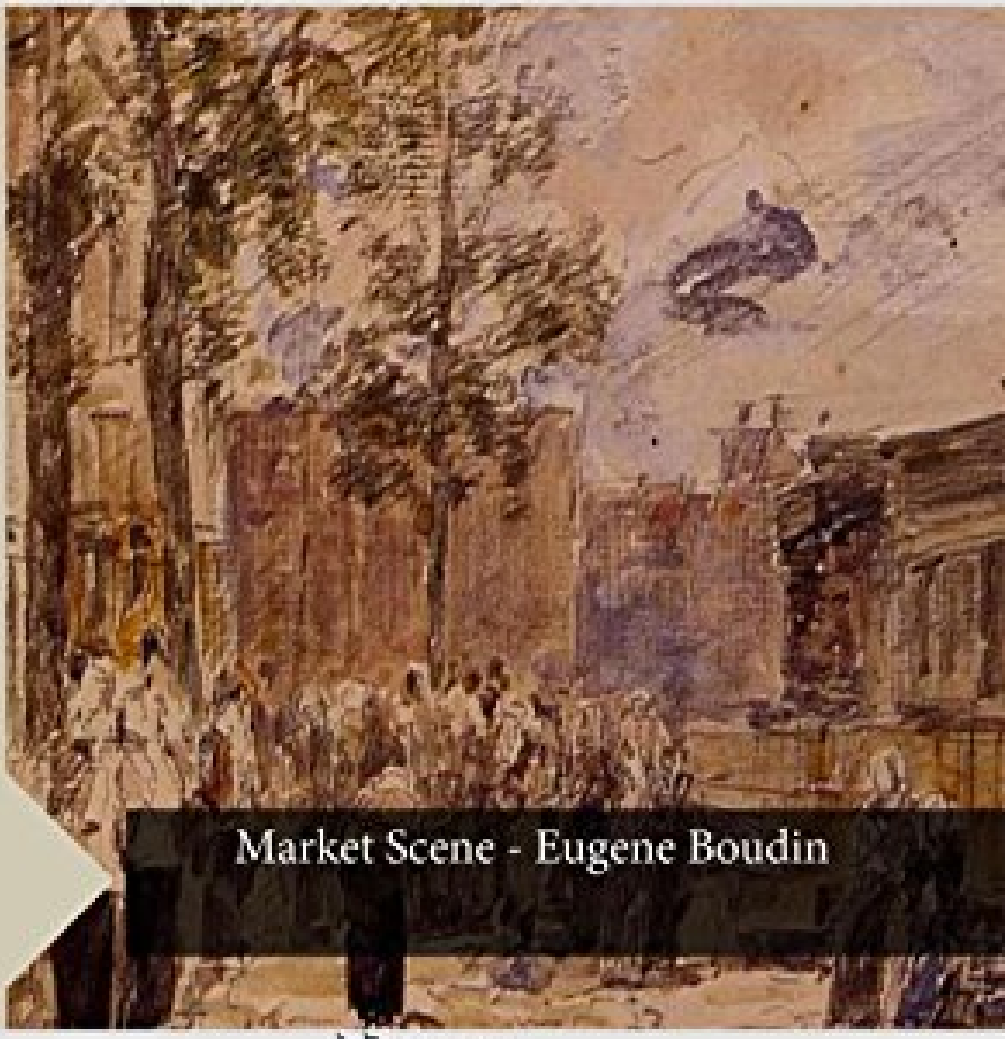
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Kenyon L. Butterfield

Chapters in Rural Progress



Market Scene - Eugene Boudin

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CHAPTERS IN RURAL PROGRESS ***

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TO MY FATHER
IRA HOWARD BUTTERFIELD

WHOSE CONSTANT CONCERN FOR RURAL WELFARE
AND LIFE-LONG SERVICE TO RURAL INTERESTS
HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE CHIEF
INCENTIVES TO THE STUDIES
LYING BEHIND THIS BOOK

PREFACE

This book does not offer a complete analysis of the rural problem; but attempts, in general, to present some of the more significant phases of that problem,

and, in particular, to describe some of the agencies at work in solving it. Several of the chapters were originally magazine articles, and, though all have been revised and in some cases entirely rewritten, they have the limitations of such articles. Other chapters consist of more formal addresses. Necessarily there will be found some lack of uniformity in style and in method of presentation, and occasional duplication of argument or statement.

For permission to use articles, in whole or in part, I have to thank the editors of the *Chautauquan*, *Arena*, *Forum*, *Review of Reviews*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *Michigan Alumnus*, *New England Farmer*, *Cornell Countryman*; also Professor L. R. Taft, superintendent of Farmers' Institutes in Michigan, and the officers of the American Civic Association. Two chapters comprise material heretofore unpublished.

CONTENTS

PREFACE.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER

I. The Study of Rural Life

II. The Problems of Progress

THE OUTLOOK

III. The Expansion of Farm Life
IV. The New Farmer
V. Culture from the Corn-Lot

AGENCIES OF PROGRESS

VI. Education for the Farmer
VII. Farmers' Institutes
VIII. The Hesperia Movement
IX. The Rural School and the Community
X. The Grange
XI. Opportunities for Farm Women
XII. The Country Church and Progress
XIII. A Summary of Recent Progress

FORWARD STEPS

XIV. The Social Side of the Farm Question
XV. The Needs of New England Agriculture
XVI. An Untilled Field in American Education
XVII. Federation for Rural Progress

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF RURAL LIFE

The American farm problem, particularly its sociological aspect, has not as yet had the attention that it deserves from students. Much less have the questions that concern rural social advancement found the popular mind; in truth, the general city public has not been deeply interested in the farmer.

But there seem to be recent indications that the sentiment is changing. The heated discussions in New England about Mr. Hartt's interesting clinic over a decadent hill-town, the suggestive fast-day proclamation of Governor Rollins of New Hampshire a few years ago, the marvelous development of agricultural education, the renewed study of the rural school, the widespread and growing delight in country life, have all aroused an interest in and presage a new attention to rural conditions. This is well. The sociologist can hardly afford to omit the

rural classes from the scope of his study, especially if he desires to investigate the practical phases of his subject. Moreover, no one with intelligent notions of affairs should be ignorant of the forces that control rural life.

In view of this apparent change in the attitude of people toward the farm problem, it may not be idle to suggest some possible errors that should be avoided when we are thinking of rural society. The student will doubtless approach his problem fortified against misconceptions—he probably has thoughtfully established his view-point. But the average person in the city is likely to call up the image of his ancestral home of a generation ago, if he were born in the country, or, if not, to draw upon his observations made on a summer vacation or on casual business trips into the interior. Or he takes his picture from *Shore Acres* and the *Old Homestead*. In any case it is not improbable that the image may be faulty and as a consequence his appreciation of present conditions wholly inadequate. Let us consider some of these possible sources of misconception.

In the first place it is not fair to compare country life as a whole with the best city conditions. This is often done. The observer usually has education, culture, leisure, the experience of travel, more or less wealth; his acquaintance is mostly with people of like attainments. When he fails to find a rural environment that corresponds in some degree to his own and that of his friends, he is quick to conclude that the country has nothing to offer him, that only the city ministers to the higher wants of man. He forgets that he is one of a thousand in the city, and does not represent average city life. He fails to

compare the average country conditions with the average city conditions, manifestly the only fair basis for comparison. Or he may err still more grievously. He may set opposite each other the worst country conditions and the better city conditions. He ought in all justice to balance country slum with city slum; and certainly so if he insists on trying to find palaces, great libraries, eloquent preachers, theaters, and rapid transit in each rural community. City life goes to extremes; country life, while varied, is more even. In the country there is little of large wealth, luxury, and ease; little also of extreme poverty, reeking crime, unutterable filth, moral sewage. Farmers are essentially a middle class and no comparison is fair that does not keep this fact ever in mind.

We sometimes hear the expression, "Country life is so barren—that to me is its most discouraging aspect." Much country life is truly barren; but much more of it is so only relatively and not essentially. We must admit that civilization is at least partially veneer; polish does wonders for the appearance of folks as well as of furniture. But while the beauty of "heart of oak" is enhanced by its "finish," its utility is not destroyed by a failure to polish it. Now, much of the so-called barrenness of country life is the oak minus the polish. We come to regard polish as essential; it is largely relative. And not only may we apply the wrong standard to the situation, but our eyes may deceive us. To the uninitiated a clod of dry earth is the most unpromising of objects—it is cousin to the stone, and the type of barrenness. But to the elect it is pregnant with the possibilities of seed-time and harvest, of a full fruitage, of abundance and content for man and beast. And there is many a farm home, plain to an extreme, devoid of the veneer, a home that to the man of the town seems lacking in all the

things that season life, but a home which virtue, intelligence, thrift, and courage transform into a garden of roses and a type of heaven. I do not justify neglect of the finer material things of life, nor plead for drab and homespun as passports to the courts of excellence; but I insist that the plainness, simple living, absence of luxury, lack of polish that may be met with in the country, do not necessarily accompany a condition barren of the essentials of the higher life.

Sometimes rural communities are ridiculed because of the trivial nature of their gossip, interests, and ambitions. There may be some justice in the criticism, though the situation is pathetic rather than humorous. But is the charge wholly just? In comparing country with town we are comparing two environments; necessarily, therefore, objects of gossip, interests, and ambitions differ therein. We expect that. It is no criticism to assert that fact. The test is not that of an existing difference, but of an essential quality. Is not Ben Bolt's new top buggy as legitimate a topic for discussion as is Arthur John Smythe's new automobile? Does not the price of wheat mean as much to the hard-working grower as to the broker who may never see a grain of it? May not the grove at Turtle Lake yield as keen enjoyment as do the continental forests? Is the ambition to own a fine farm more ignoble than the desire to own shares in a copper mine? It really does not matter so much what one gossips about or what one's delights are or what the carving of the rungs on ambition's ladder; the vital question is the effect of these things on character. Do they stunt or encourage the inner life? It must be admitted that country people do not always accept their environing opportunities for enjoying the higher life of mind and heart. But do

they differ in this respect from their cousins of the town?

We must remember, too, that this is a large country, and that a study of rural conditions in a certain community, township, county, state, or section may not give us the correct basis upon which to determine the agricultural status of the country.

Nor must we make the mistake of confusing conservatism and decadence. That the city will in many particulars always progress more rapidly than the country is inevitable. But speed is not the ultimate criterion of a full life. Again must we apply the test whether the gain is relative or essential. Telephones, free mail delivery, electric car lines, operas, great libraries, cathedrals—all come to the city first, some of them solely to the city. The country cannot hope to be other than inherently conservative as regards such institutions. But may there not be found such adaptations of or substitutes for these institutions as shall not only preserve the rural community from decadence, but, indeed, build it up into strength, beauty, and purity?

Comparative lack of identical resources need not mean poverty of attainment. Let us agree that relatively the country will lag behind the town. Is the country continually gaining in those things that are fundamentally important and that minister to its best life? is the kernal question.

Perhaps the most common error in studying rural conditions is the failure to distinguish the vital difference between the urban problem and the rural problem. *Sociologically the city problem is that of congestion; the rural problem is that of isolation.* The

social conditions of country and city are wholly different. Institutions that succeed in alleviating social disorders in the town may or may not succeed in the country—in any event they must be adapted to country needs. This applies to organizations, schools, libraries, social settlements. And the adaptation must be one not only of form but of spirit. In other words, the farm problem is a peculiar problem, demanding special study, a new point of view, and sometimes unique institutions.

Those accustomed to large cities make a pretty broad classification of "country." A town of five thousand people is to them "country." But it is not country. The problem of the village and the small town is not the rural problem, take it the nation over. The smaller the town, the more nearly it approaches to rural conditions, but its essential problem is not that of the farm.

And, finally, let no one suppose that philanthropy is the chief medicine for the social ill-health of the country. The intelligent student who possesses the true spirit of helpfulness may find in the rural problem ample scope for both his brain and his heart. But he will make a fundamental and irreparable error if he starts out with the notion that pity, charity, and direct gifts will win the day. You may flatter the American farmer; you cannot patronize him. He demands and needs, not philanthropy, but simple justice, equal opportunity, and better facilities for education. He is neither slave nor pauper.

To conclude: There is a farm problem, and it is worth solving. But it differs from the city problem. And if, as is to be hoped, the recently renewed interest in

this question is to be permanent, we trust that those who desire to make it a special study, as well as those whose interest in it is general and widely human, may from the start avoid the errors that are likely to obscure rural conditions when viewed through city eyes.

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEMS OF PROGRESS[1]

It is impossible to acquire a keen and permanent interest in the rural problem unless one first of all is cognizant of its significance. And lack of knowledge at this point may in part account for the fact already alluded to that in America the farm problem has not been adequately studied. So stupendous has been the development of our manufacturing industries, so marvelous the growth of our urban population, so pressing the questions raised by modern city life, that the social and economic interests of the American farmer have, as a rule, received minor consideration. We are impressed with the rise of cities like Chicago, forgetting for the moment that half of the American people still live under rural conditions. We are perplexed by the labor wars that are waged about us, for the time unmindful that one-third of the workers of this country make their living immediately from the soil. We are astounded, and perhaps alarmed, at the great centralization of capital, possibly not realizing that the capital invested in agriculture in

the United States nearly equals the combined capital invested in the manufacturing and railway industries. But if we pause to consider the scope and nature of the economic and social interests involved, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the farm problem is worthy of serious thought from students of our national welfare.

We are aware that agriculture does not hold the same relative rank among our industries that it did in former years, and that our city population has increased far more rapidly than has our rural population. We do not ignore the fact that urban industries are developing more rapidly than is agriculture, nor deny the seriousness of the actual depletion of rural population, and even of community decadence, in some portions of the Union. But these facts merely add to the importance of the farm question. And it should not be forgotten that there has been a large and constant growth both of our agricultural wealth and of our rural population. During the last half-century there was a gain of 500 per cent. in the value of farm property, while the non-urban population increased 250 per cent. Agriculture has been one of the chief elements of America's industrial greatness, it is still our dominant economic interest, and it will long remain at least a leading industry. The people of the farm have furnished a sturdy citizenship and have been the primary source of much of our best leadership in political, business, and professional life. For an indefinite future, a large proportion of the American people will continue to live in a rural environment.

WHAT IS THE FARM PROBLEM?

Current agricultural discussion would lead us to think that the farm problem is largely one of technique. The possibilities of the agricultural industry, in the light of applied science, emphasize the need of the farmer for more complete knowledge of soil and plant and animal, and for increased proficiency in utilizing this knowledge to secure greater production at less cost. This is a fundamental need. It lies at the basis of success in farming. But it is not the farm problem.

Business skill must be added, business methods enforced. The farmer must be not only a more skilful produce-grower, but also a keener produce-seller. But the moment we enter the realm of the market we step outside the individualistic aspect of the problem as embodied in the current doctrine of technical agricultural teaching, and are forced to consider the social aspect as emphasized, first of all, in the economic category of price. Here we find many factors—transportation cost, general market conditions at home and abroad, the status of other industries, and even legislative activities. The farm problem becomes an industrial question, not solely one of technical and business skill. Moreover, the problem is one of a successful industry as a whole, not merely the personal successes of even a respectable number of individual farmers. The farming class must progress as a unit.

But have we yet reached the heart of the question? Is the farm problem one of technique plus business skill, plus these broad economic considerations? Is it not perfectly possible that agriculture as an industry may remain in a fairly satisfactory condition, and yet the farming class fail to maintain its status in the general social order? Is it not, for instance, quite

within the bounds of probability to imagine a good degree of economic strength in the agricultural industry existing side by side with either a peasant régime or a landlord-and-tenant system? Yet would we expect from either system the same social fruitage that has been harvested from our American yeomanry?

We conclude, then, that *the farm problem consists in maintaining upon our farms a class of people who have succeeded in procuring for themselves the highest possible class status, not only in the industrial, but in the political and the social order—a relative status, moreover, that is measured by the demands of American ideals.* The farm problem thus connects itself with the whole question of democratic civilization. This is not mere platitude. For we cannot properly judge the significance and the relation of the different industrial activities of our farmers, and especially the value of the various social agencies for rural betterment, except by the standard of class status. It is here that we seem to find the only satisfactory philosophy of rural progress.

We would not for a moment discredit the fundamental importance of movements that have for their purpose the improved technical skill of our farmers, better business management of the farm, and wiser study and control of market conditions. Indeed, we would call attention to the fact that social institutions are absolutely necessary means of securing these essential factors of industrial success. In the solution of the farm problem we must deliberately invoke the influence of quickened means of communication, of co-operation among farmers, of various means of education, and possibly even of religious institutions, to stimulate and direct

industrial activity. What needs present emphasis is the fact that there is a definite, real, social end to be held in view as the goal of rural endeavor. The highest possible social status for the farming class is that end.

We may now, as briefly as possible, describe some of the difficulties that lie in the path of the farmers in their ambition to attain greater class efficiency and larger class influence, and some of the means at hand for minimizing the difficulties. A complete discussion of the farm problem should, of course, include thorough consideration of the technical, the business, and the economic questions implied by the struggle for industrial success; for industrial success is prerequisite to the achievement of the greatest social power of the farming class. But we shall consider only the social aspects of the problem.

RURAL ISOLATION

Perhaps the one great underlying social difficulty among American farmers is their comparatively isolated mode of life. The farmer's family is isolated from other families. A small city of perhaps twenty thousand population will contain from four hundred to six hundred families per square mile, whereas a typical agricultural community in a prosperous agricultural state will hardly average more than ten families per square mile. The farming class is isolated from other classes. Farmers, of course, mingle considerably in a business and political way with the men of their trading town and county seat; but, broadly speaking, farmers do not associate freely with people living under urban conditions and possessing other than the rural point of view. It

would be venturesome to suggest very definite generalizations with respect to the precise influence of these conditions, because, so far as the writer is aware, the psychology of isolation has not been worked out. But two or three conclusions seem to be admissible, and for that matter rather generally accepted.

The well-known conservatism of the farming class is doubtless largely due to class isolation. Habits, ideas, traditions, and ideals have long life in the rural community. Changes come slowly. There is a tendency to tread the well-worn paths. The farmer does not easily keep in touch with rapid modern development, unless the movements or methods directly affect him. Physical agencies which improve social conditions, such as electric lights, telephones, and pavements, come to the city first. The atmosphere of the country speaks peace and quiet. Nature's routine of sunshine and storm, of summer and winter, encourages routine and repetition in the man who works with her.

A complement of this rural conservatism, which at first thought seems a paradox, but which probably grows out of these same conditions of isolation, is the intense radicalism of a rural community when once it breaks away from its moorings. Many farmers are unduly suspicious of others' motives; yet the same people often succumb to the wiles of the charlatan, whether medical or political. Farmers are usually conservative in politics and intensely loyal to party; but the Populist movement indicates the tendency to extremes when the old allegiance is left behind. Old methods of farming may be found alongside ill-considered attempts to raise new crops or to utilize untried machines.

Other effects of rural isolation are seen in a class provincialism that is hard to eradicate, and in the development of minds less alert to seize business advantages and less far-sighted than are developed by the intense industrial life of the town. There is time to brood over wrongs, real and imaginary. Personal prejudices often grow to be rank and coarse-fibered. Neighborhood feuds are not uncommon and are often virulent. Leadership is made difficult and sometimes impossible. It is easy to fall into personal habits that may mark off the farmer from other classes of similar intelligence, and that bar him from his rightful social place.

It would, however, be distinctly unfair to the farm community if we did not emphasize some of the advantages that grow out of the rural mode of life. Farmers have time to think, and the typical American farmer is a man who has thought much and often deeply. A spirit of sturdy independence is generated, and freedom of will and of action is encouraged. Family life is nowhere so educative as in the country. The whole family co-operates for common ends, and in its individual members are bred the qualities of industry, patience, and perseverance. The manual work of the schools is but a makeshift for the old-fashioned training of the country-grown boy. Country life is an admirable preparation for the modern industrial and professional career.

Nevertheless, rural isolation is a real evil. Present-day living is so distinctively social, progress is so dependent upon social agencies, social development is so rapid, that if the farmer is to keep his status he must be fully in step with the rest of the army. He must secure the social view-point. The disadvantages of rural isolation are largely in the realm of the

social relations, its advantages mostly on the individual and moral side. Farm life makes a strong individual; it is a serious menace to the achievement of class power.

A cure for isolation sometimes suggested is the gathering of the farmers into villages. This remedy, however, is of doubtful value. In the first place, the scheme is not immediately practicable. About three and one-half billions of dollars are now invested in farm buildings, and it will require some motive more powerful than that inspired by academic logic to transfer, even gradually, this investment to village groups. Moreover, it is possible to dispute the desirability of the remedy. The farm village at best must be a mere hamlet. It can secure for the farmer very few of the urban advantages he may want, except that of permitting closer daily intercourse between families. And it is questionable if the petty society of such a village can compensate for the freedom and purity of rural family life now existing. It may even be asserted with some degree of positiveness that the small village, on the moral and intellectual sides, is distinctly inferior to the isolated farm home.

At the present time rural isolation in America is being overcome by the development of better means of communication among farmers who still live on their farms. So successful are these means of communication proving that we cannot avoid the conclusion that herein lies the remedy. Improved wagon roads, the rural free mail delivery, the farm telephone, trolley lines through country districts, are bringing about a positive revolution in country living. They are curing the evils of isolation, without in the slightest degree robbing the farm of its

manifest advantages for family life. The farmers are being welded into a more compact society. They are being nurtured to greater alertness of mind, to greater keenness of observation, and the foundations are being laid for vastly enlarged social activities. The problem now is to extend these advantages to every rural community—in itself a task of huge proportions. If this can be done and isolation can be reduced to a minimum, the solution of all the other rural social problems will become vastly easier.

FARMERS' ORGANIZATION

Organization is one of the pressing social problems that American farmers have to face. The importance of the question is intrinsic, because of the general social necessity for co-operation which characterizes modern life. Society is becoming consciously self-directive. The immediate phase of this growing self-direction lies in the attempts of various social groups to organize their powers for group advantage. And if, as seems probable, this group activity is to remain a dominant feature of social progress, even in a fairly coherent society, it is manifest that there will result more or less of competition among groups.

The farming class, if at all ambitious for group influence, can hardly avoid this tendency to organization. Farmers, indeed more than any other class, need to organize. Their isolation makes thorough organization especially imperative. And the argument for co-operation gains force from the fact that relatively the agricultural population is declining. In the old days farmers ruled because of mere mass. That is no longer possible. The naïve statement that "farmers must organize because other

classes are organizing" is really good social philosophy.

In the group competition just referred to there is a tendency for class interests to be put above general social welfare. This is a danger to be avoided in organization, not an argument against it. So the farmers' organization should be guarded, at this point, by adherence to the principle that organization must not only develop class power, but must be so directed as to permit the farmers to lend the full strength of their class to general social progress.

Organization thus becomes a test of class efficiency, and consequently a prerequisite for solving the farm problem. Can the farming class secure and maintain a fairly complete organization? Can it develop efficient leaders? Can it announce, in sound terms, its proposed group policy? Can it lend the group influence to genuine social progress? If so, the organization of farmers becomes a movement of pre-eminent importance.

Organization, moreover, is a powerful educational force. It arouses discussion of fundamental questions, diffuses knowledge, gives practice in public affairs, trains individuals in executive work, and, in fine, stimulates, as nothing else can, a class which is in special need of social incentive.

Organization is, however, difficult of accomplishment. While it would take us too far afield to discuss the history of farmers' organizations in America, we may briefly suggest some of the difficulties involved. For forty years the question has been a prominent one among the farmers, and these years have seen the rise and decline of several large

associations. There have been apparently two great factors contributing to the downfall of these organizations. The first was a misapprehension, on the part of the farmers, of the feasibility of organizing themselves as a political phalanx; the second, a sentimental belief in the possibilities of business co-operation among farmers, more especially in lines outside their vocation. There is no place for class politics in America. There are some things legislation cannot cure. There are serious limitations to co-operative endeavor. It took many hard experiences for our farmers to learn these truths. But back of all lie some inherent difficulties, as, for instance, the number of people involved, their isolation, sectional interests, ingrained habits of independent action, of individual initiative, of suspicion of others' motives. There is often lack of perspective, and unwillingness to invest in a procedure that does not promise immediate returns. The mere fact of failure has discredited the organization idea. There is lack of leadership; for the farm industry, while it often produces men of strong mind, keen perception, resolute will, does not, as a rule, develop executive capacity for large enterprises.

It is frequently asserted that farmers are the only class that has not organized. This is not strictly true. The difficulties enumerated are real difficulties and have seriously retarded farm organization. But if the progress made is not satisfactory, it is at least encouraging. On the purely business side, over five thousand co-operative societies among American farmers have been reported. In co-operative buying of supplies, co-operative selling of products, and co-operative insurance the volume of transactions reaches large figures. A host of societies of a purely educational nature exists among stock-breeders,

fruit-growers, dairymen. It is true that no one general organization of farmers, embracing a large proportion of the class, has as yet been perfected. The nearest approach to it is the Grange, which, contrary to a popular notion, is in a prosperous condition, with a really large influence upon the social, financial, educational, and legislative interests of the farming class. It has had a steady growth during the past ten years, and is a quiet but powerful factor in rural progress. The Grange is perhaps too conservative in its administrative policy. It has not at least succeeded in converting to its fold the farmers of the great Mississippi Valley. But it has workable machinery, it disavows partisan politics and selfish class interests, and it subordinates financial benefits, while emphasizing educational and broadly political advantages. It seems fair to interpret the principles of the Grange as wholly in line with the premise of this paper, that the farmers need to preserve their status, politically, industrially, and socially, and that organization is one of the fundamental methods they must use. The Grange, therefore, deserves to succeed, and indeed is succeeding.

The field of agricultural organization is an extensive one. But if the farm problem is to be solved satisfactorily, the American farmers must first secure reasonably complete organization.

RURAL EDUCATION

It is hardly necessary to assert that the education of that portion of the American people who live upon the land involves a question of the greatest significance. The subject naturally divides itself into two phases, one of which may be designated as rural

education proper, the other as agricultural education. Rural education has to do with the education of people, more especially of the young, who live under rural conditions; agricultural education aims to prepare men and women for the specific vocation of agriculture. The rural school typifies the first; the agricultural school, the second. Rural education is but a section of the general school question; agricultural education is a branch of technical training. These two phases of the education of the farm population meet at many points, they must work in harmony, and together they form a distinct educational problem.

The serious difficulties in the rural school question are perhaps three: first, to secure a modern school, in efficiency somewhat comparable to the town school, without unduly increasing the school tax; second, so to enrich the curriculum and so to expand the functions of the school that the school shall become a vital and coherent part of the community life, on the one hand translating the rural environment into terms of character and mental efficiency, and on the other hand serving perfectly as a stepping-stone to the city schools and to urban careers; third, to provide adequate high-school facilities in the rural community.

The centralization of district schools and the transportation of pupils will probably prove to be more nearly a solution of all these difficulties than will any other one scheme. The plan permits the payment of higher wages for teachers and ought to secure better instruction; it permits the employment of special teachers, as for nature-study or agriculture; it increases the efficiency of superintendence; it costs but little, if any, more than the district system; it

leaves the school amid rural surroundings, while introducing into the schoolroom itself a larger volume, so to speak, of world-atmosphere; it contains possibilities for community service; it can easily be expanded into a high school of reputable grade.

There are two dangers, both somewhat grave, likely to arise from an urgent campaign for centralization. Even if the movement makes as great progress as could reasonably be expected, for a generation to come a large share, if not a major portion, of rural pupils will still be taught in the small, isolated, district school; there is danger that this district school may be neglected. Moreover, increased school machinery always invites undue reliance upon machine-like methods. Centralization permits, but does not guarantee, greater efficiency. A system like this one must be vitalized by constant and close touch with the life and needs and aspirations of the rural community itself.

Wherever centralization is not adopted, the consolidation of two or three schools—a modified form of centralization—may prove helpful. Where the district school still persists, there are one or two imperative requirements. Teachers must have considerably higher wages and longer tenure. There must be more efficient supervision. The state must assist in supporting the school, although only in part. The small schools must be correlated with some form of high school. The last point is of great importance because of the comparative absence in country communities of opportunity near at hand for *good* high-school training.

Agricultural education is distinctively technical, not in the restricted sense of mere technique, or even of

applied science, but in the sense that it must be frankly vocational. It has to do with the preparation of men and women for the business of farming and for life in the rural community.

Agricultural education should begin in the primary school. In this school the point of view, however, should be broadly pedagogical rather than immediately vocational. Fortunately, the wise teaching of nature-study, the training of pupils to know and to love nature, the constant illustrations from the rural environment, the continual appeal to personal observation and experience, absolute loyalty to the farm point of view, are not only sound pedagogy, but form the best possible background for future vocational study. Whether we call this early work "nature-study" or call it "agriculture" matters less than that the fundamental principle be recognized. It must first of all *educate*. The greatest difficulty in introducing such work into the primary school is to secure properly equipped teachers.

Perhaps the most stupendous undertaking in agricultural education is the adequate development of secondary education in agriculture. The overwhelming majority of young people who secure any agricultural schooling whatever must get it in institutions that academically are of secondary grade. This is a huge task. If developed to supply existing needs, it will call for an enormous expenditure of money and for the most careful planning. From the teaching view-point it is a difficult problem. Modern agriculture is based upon the sciences; it will not do, therefore, to establish schools in the mere art of farming. But these agricultural high schools must deal with pupils who are comparatively immature, and who almost invariably have had no preparation

in science. Nor should the courses at these schools be ultra-technical. They are to prepare men and women for life on the farm—men and women who are to lead in rural development, and who must get some inkling at least of the real farm question and its solution. The agricultural school, therefore, presents a problem of great difficulty.

A perennial question in agricultural education is: What is the function of the agricultural college? We have not time to trace the history of these colleges, nor to elaborate the various views relative to their mission. But let us for a moment discuss their proper function in the light of the proposition that the preservation of the farmers' status is the real farm problem; for the college can be justified only as it finds its place among the social agencies helpful in the solution of the farm question.

In so far as the agricultural college, through its experiment station or otherwise, is an organ of research, it should carry its investigations into the economic and sociological fields, as well as pursue experiments in soil fertility and animal nutrition.

In the teaching of students, the agricultural college will continue the important work of training men for agricultural research, agricultural teaching, and expert supervision of various agricultural enterprises. But the college should put renewed emphasis upon its ability to send well-trained men to the farms, there to live their lives, there to find their careers, and there to lead in the movements for rural progress. A decade ago it was not easy to find colleges which believed that this could be done, and some agricultural educators have even disavowed such a purpose as a proper object of the colleges. But

the strongest agricultural colleges today have pride in just such a purpose. And why not? We not only need men thus trained as leaders in every rural community, but, if the farming business cannot be made to offer a career to a reasonable number of college-trained men, it is a sure sign that only by the most herculean efforts can the farmers maintain their status as a class. If agriculture must be turned over wholly to the untrained and to the half-trained, if it cannot satisfy the ambition of strong, well-educated men and women, its future, from the social point of view, is indeed gloomy.

The present-day course of study in the agricultural college does not, however, fully meet this demand for rural leadership. The farm problem has been regarded as a technical question, and a technical training has been offered the student. The agricultural college, therefore, needs "socializing." Agricultural economics and rural sociology should occupy a large place in the curriculum. The men who go from the college to the farm should appreciate the significance of the agricultural question, and should be trained to organize their forces for genuine rural progress. The college should, as far as possible, become the leader in the whole movement for solving the farm problem.

The farm home has not come in for its share of attention in existing schemes of agricultural education. The kitchen and the dining-room have as much to gain from science as have the dairy and the orchard. The inspiration of vocational knowledge must be the possession of her who is the entrepreneur of the family, the home-maker. The agricultural colleges through their departments of domestic science—better, of "home-making"—should

inaugurate a comprehensive movement for carrying to the farm home a larger measure of the advantages which modern science is showering upon humanity.

The agricultural college must also lead in a more adequate development of extension teaching. Magnificent work has already been done through farmers' institutes, reading courses, co-operative experiments, demonstrations, and correspondence. But the field is so immense, the number of people involved so enormous, the difficulties of reaching them so many, that it offers a genuine problem, and one of peculiar significance, not only because of the generally recognized need of adult education, but also because of the isolation of the farmers.

It should be said that in no line of rural betterment has so much progress been made in America as in agricultural education. Merely to describe the work that is being done through nature-study and agriculture in the public schools, through agricultural schools, through our magnificent agricultural colleges, through farmers' institutes, and especially through the experiment stations and the federal Department of Agriculture in agricultural research and in the distribution of the best agricultural information—merely to inventory these movements properly would take the time available for this discussion. What has been said relative to agricultural education is less in way of criticism of existing methods than in way of suggestion as to fundamental needs.

THE ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS PROBLEM

Wide generalizations as to the exact moral situation in the rural community are impossible. Conditions

have not been adequately studied. It is probably safe to say that the country environment is extremely favorable for pure family life, for temperance, and for bodily and mental health. To picture the country a paradise is, however, mere silliness. There are in the country, as elsewhere, evidences of vulgarity in language, of coarseness in thought, of social impurity, of dishonesty in business. There is room in the country for all the ethical teaching that can be given.

Nor is it easy to discuss the country church question. Conditions vary in different parts of the Union, and no careful study has been made of the problem. As a general proposition, it may be said that there are too many churches in the country, and that these are illy supported. Consequently, they have in many cases inferior ministers. Sectarianism is probably more divisive than in the city, not only because of the natural conservatism of the people and a natural disinclination to change their views, but because sectarian quarrels are perhaps more easily fomented and less easily harmonized than anywhere else. Moreover, in the city a person can usually find a denomination to his liking. In the country, even with the present overchurched condition, this is difficult.

The ideal solution of the country church problem is to have in each rural community one strong church adequately supported, properly equipped, ministered to by an able man—a church which leads in community service. The path to the realization of such an ideal is rough and thorny. Church federation, however, promises large results in this direction and should be especially encouraged.

Whatever outward form the solution of the country

church question may take, there seem to be several general principles involved in a satisfactory attempt to meet the issue. In the first place, the country church offers a problem by itself, socially considered. Methods successful in the city may not succeed in the country. The country church question must then be studied thoroughly and on the ground.

Again, the same principle of financial aid to be utilized in the case of the schools must be invoked here. The wealth of the whole church must contribute to the support of the church everywhere. The strong must help the weak. The city must help the country. But this aid must be given by co-operation, not by condescension. The demand cannot be met by home missionary effort nor by church-building contributions; the principle goes far deeper than that. Some device must be secured which binds together the whole church, along denominational lines if must be, for a full development of church work in every community in the land.

Furthermore, there is supreme necessity for adding dignity to the country parish. Too often at present the rural parish is regarded either as a convenient laboratory for the clerical novice, or as an asylum for the decrepit or inefficient. The country parish must be a parish for our ablest and strongest. The ministry of the most Christlike must be to the hill-towns of Galilee as well as to Jerusalem.

There is still another truth that the country church cannot afford to ignore. The rural church question is peculiarly interwoven with the industrial and social problems of the farm. A declining agriculture cannot foster a growing church. An active church can render especially strong service to a farm community, in its

influence upon the religious life, the home life, the educational life, the social life, and even upon the industrial life. Nowhere else are these various phases of society's activities so fully members one of another as in the country. The country church should co-operate with other rural social agencies. This means that the country pastor should assume a certain leadership in movements for rural progress. He is splendidly fitted, by the nature of his work and by his position in the community, to co-operate with earnest farmers for the social and economic, as well as the moral and spiritual, upbuilding of the farm community. But he must know the farm problem. Here is an opportunity for theological seminaries: let them make rural sociology a required subject. And, better, here is a magnificent field of labor for the right kind of young men. The country pastorate may thus prove to be, as it ought to be, a place of honor and rare privilege. In any event, the country church, to render its proper service, not alone must minister to the individual soul, but must throw itself into the struggle for rural betterment, must help solve the farm problem.

FEDERATION OF FORCES

The suggestion that the country church should ally itself with other agencies of rural progress may be carried a step farther. Rural social forces should be federated. The object of such federation is to emphasize the real nature of the farm problem, to interest many people in its solution, and to secure the co-operation of the various rural social agencies, each of which has its sphere, but also its limitations. The method of federation is to bring together, for conference and for active work, farmers—especially

representatives of farmers' organizations, agricultural educators, rural school-teachers and supervisors, country clergymen, country editors; in fact, all who have a genuine interest in the farm problem. Thus will come clearer views of the questions at issue, broader plans for reform, greater incentive to action, and more rapid progress.

CONCLUSION

In this brief analysis of the social problems of American farmers it has been possible merely to outline those aspects of the subject that seem to be fundamental. It is hoped that the importance of each problem has been duly emphasized, that the wisest methods of progress have been indicated, and that the relation of the various social agencies to the main question has been clearly brought out. Let us leave the subject by emphasizing once more the character of the ultimate farm problem. This problem may be stated more concretely, if not more accurately, than was done at the opening of the paper, by saying that the ideal of rural betterment is to preserve upon our farms the typical American farmer. The American farmer has been essentially a middle-class man. It is this type we must maintain. Agriculture must be made to yield returns in wealth, in opportunity, in contentment, in social position, sufficient to attract and to hold to it a class of intelligent, educated American citizens. This is an end vital to the preservation of American democratic ideals. It is a result that will not achieve itself; social agencies must be invoked for its accomplishment. It demands the intelligent and earnest co-operation of all who love the soil and who seek America's permanent welfare.

FOOTNOTE:

[1] The material for this chapter is taken from an address entitled "Social Problems of American Farmers," which was read before the Congress of Arts and Science, section of The Rural Community, at St. Louis, September, 1904.

THE OUTLOOK

CHAPTER III

THE EXPANSION OF FARM LIFE

Narrowness is perhaps the charge most often brought against American farm life. To a certain extent this charge may be just, though the comparisons that usually lead up to the conclusion do not always discriminate. It must be remembered that there are degrees of desirability in farm life, and that at the least there are multitudes of rural communities where bright flowers still bloom, where the shade is refreshing, and the waters are sweet. But, granting for the time that in the main rural life is less pleasant, less rich, less expansive than city life, we shall urge that this era of restriction is rapidly drawing to a close. There are forces at work that are molding rural life by new standards, and the old régime is passing. We shall soon be able to say of the country that "old things have passed away; all things have become new."

This statement may seem too optimistic to some who can marshal an array of facts to prove that bigotry, narrowness, and the whole family of ills begotten by isolation still thrive in the country. It is true that our picture is not all of rose tints. But what of that? If it were not true there would be no farm problem; the country would have to convert the town. The fact remains that rural life is undergoing a rapid expansion. Materially, socially, and intellectually, the farmer is broadening. Old prejudices are fading. The plowman is no longer content to keep his eye forever on the furrow. The revival has been in slow progress for some time and has not yet reached its zenith; indeed, the movement is but well under way. For while the new day came long ago to some rural communities and they are basking in a noonday sun,

yet in far too many localities the faintest gray of dawn is all that rouses hope.

The fundamental change that is taking place is the gradual adoption of the new agriculture. "Book-farmin'" is still decried, and many "perfessers" have a rocky road to travel in their attempts to guide the masses through the labyrinth of scientific knowledge that has been constructed during the last decade or two. This difficulty has not been wholly the farmer's fault—the scientist would often have been more persuasive had his wings been clipped. But there is a decided "getting together" nowadays—the farmer and the man of science have at last found common ground. And while the pendulum of agricultural prosperity shall always swing to and fro, there are, to change the figure, reasons for believing that an increasing number of farmers have rooted the tree of permanent success.

To enumerate some of these reasons: (1) Thousands of farmers are farming on a scientific basis. They use the results of soil and fertilizer analysis; they cultivate, not to kill weeds so much as to conserve moisture; horticulturists spray their trees according to formulas laid down by experimenters; dairymen use the "Babcock test" for determining the fat content of milk; stock-feeders utilize the scientists' feeding rations. (2) The number of specialists among farmers is increasing. This is a sign of progress surely. More and more farmers are coming to push a single line of work. (3) New methods are being rapidly adopted. Fifteen years ago hardly a fruit-grower sprayed for insect and fungus pests; today it is rare to find one who does not. The co-operative creamery has not only revolutionized the character of the butter product made by the factory system, but it has set

the pace for thousands of private dairymen who are now making first-class dairy butter. (4) In general the whole idea of *intensive* farming is gaining ground.

This specialization, or intensification, of agriculture makes a new demand, upon those who pursue it, in the way of mental and business training. This training is being furnished by a multitude of agencies, and the younger generation of farmers is taking proper advantage of the opportunities thus offered. What are some of these regular agencies? (1) An alert farm press, containing contributions from both successful farmers and scientific workers. (2) Farmers' institutes, which are traveling schools of technical instruction for farmers. (3) The bulletins issued by the government experiment stations located in every state, and by the federal Department of Agriculture. (4) Special winter courses (of from two to twelve weeks), offered at nearly all the agricultural colleges of the country, for instruction in practical agriculture. (5) Regular college courses in agriculture at these same colleges. (6) Extension instruction by lectures and correspondence. (7) A growing book literature of technical agriculture. (8) More encouraging than all else is the spirit of inquiry that prevails among farmers the country over—the recognition that there is a basis of science in agriculture. No stronger pleas for the advancement of agricultural education can be found than those that have recently been formulated by farmers themselves.

If this regeneration of farm life were wholly material it would be worth noting; for it promises a prosperity built on foundations sufficiently strong to withstand ordinary storms. Yet this is but a chapter of the story. Not only are our American farmers making a study of

their business, bringing to it the resources of advancing knowledge and good mental training, and hence deriving from it the strong, alert mental character that comes to all business men who pursue equally intelligent methods, but the farmers are by no means neglecting their duty to broaden along general intellectual lines. Farmers have always been interested in politics; there is no reason to think that their interest is declining. The Grange and other organizations keep their attention on current problems. Traveling libraries, school libraries, and Grange libraries are giving new opportunities for general reading, and the farmer's family is not slow to accept the chance. Low prices for magazines and family papers bring to these periodicals an increasing list from the rural offices. Rural free mail delivery promises, among many other results of vast importance, to enlarge the circulation of daily papers among farmers not less than tenfold.

The really great lesson that farmers are rapidly learning is to work together. They have been the last class to organize, and jealousy, distrust, and isolation have made such organizations as they have had comparatively ineffective. But gradually they are learning to compromise, to work in harmony, to sink merely personal views, to trust their own leaders, to keep troth in financially co-operative projects. There will be no Farmers' Party organized; but the higher politics is gaining among farmers, and more and more independent voting may be expected from the rural precincts. Farmers are learning to pool such of their interests as can be furthered by legislation.

It is also true that the whole aspect of social life in the country is undergoing a profound evolutionary movement. Farmers are meeting one another more

frequently than they used to. They have more picnics and holidays. They travel more. They go sight-seeing. They take advantage of excursions. Their social life is more mobile than formerly. Farmers have more comforts and luxuries than ever before. They dress better than they did. More of them ride in carriages than formerly. They buy neater and better furniture. The newer houses are prettier and more comfortable than their predecessors. Bicycles and cameras are not uncommon in the rural home. Rural telephone exchanges are relatively a new thing, but the near future will see the telephone a part of the ordinary furniture of the rural household; while electric car lines promise to be the final link in the chain of advantages that is rapidly transforming rural life—robbing it of its isolation, giving it balance and poise, softening its hard outlines, and in general achieving its thorough regeneration.

This sketch is no fancy tale. The movement described is genuine and powerful. The busy city world may not note the signs of progress. Well-minded philanthropists may feel that the rural districts are in special need of their services. Even to the watchers on the walls there is much of discouragement in the advancement that *isn't* being made. Yet it needs no prophet's eye to see that a vast change for the better in rural life and conditions is now in progress.

No student of these conditions expects or desires that the evolution shall be Acadian in its results. It is to be hoped indeed that country sweets shall not lose their delights; that the farmer himself may find in his surroundings spiritual and mental ambrosia. But what is wanted, and what is rapidly coming, is the breaking down of those barriers which have so long differentiated country from urban life; the extinction

of that social ostracism which has been the farmer's fate; the obliteration of that line which for many a youth has marked the bounds of opportunity: in fact, the creation of a rural society whose advantages, rewards, prerogatives, chances for service, means of culture, and pleasures are representative of the best and sanest life that the accumulated wisdom of the ages can prescribe for mankind.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW FARMER

All farmers may be divided into three classes. There is the "old" farmer, there is the "new" farmer, and there is the "mossback." The old farmer represents the ancient régime. The new farmer is the modern business agriculturist. The mossback is a mediaeval survival. The old farmer was in his day a new farmer; he was "up with the times," as the times then were. The new farmer is merely the worthy son of a noble sire; he is the modern embodiment of the old farmer's progressiveness. The mossback is the man who tries to use the old methods under the new conditions; he is not "up" with the present times, but "back" with the old times. Though he lives and moves in the present, he really has his being in the past.

The old farmer is the man who conquered the American continent. His axe struck the crown from the monarchs of the wood, and the fertile farms of

Ohio are the kingdom he created. He broke the sod of the rich prairies, and the tasseling cornfields of Iowa tell the story of his deeds. He hitched his plow to the sun, and his westward lengthening furrows fill the world's granary.

The new farmer has his largest conquests yet to make. But he has put his faith in the strong arm of science; he has at his hand the commercial mechanism of a world of business. He believes he will win because he is in league with the ongoing forces of our civilization.

The mossback cannot win, because he prefers a flintlock to a Mauser. He has his eyes upon the ground, and uses snails instead of stars for horses.

The old farmer was a pioneer, and he had all the courage, enterprise, and resourcefulness of the pioneer. He was virile, above all things else. He owned and controlled everything in sight. He was a state-builder. Half a century ago, in the Middle West, the strong men and the influential families were largely farmers. Even professional men owned and managed farms, frequently living upon them. The smell of the soil sweetened musty law books, deodorized the doctor's den, and floated as incense above the church altars.

The new farmer lives in a day when the nation is not purely an agricultural nation, but is also a manufacturing and a trading nation. He belongs no longer to the dominant class, so far as commercial and social and political influence are concerned. But none of these things move him. For he realizes that out of this seeming decline of agriculture grow his best opportunities. He discards pioneer methods because pioneering is not now an effective art.

The mossback sees perhaps clearly enough these changes, but he does not understand their meaning, nor does he know how to meet them. He is dazzled by the romantic halo of the good old times, dumfounded by the electric energy of the present, discouraged and distracted by the pressure of forces that crush his hopes and stifle his strength.

Economically, the old farmer was not a business man, but a barterer. The rule of barter still survives in the country grocery where butter and eggs are traded for sugar and salt. The old farmer was industrially self-sufficient. He did not farm on a commercial basis. He raised apples for eating and for cider, not for market—there was no apple market. He had very little ready money, he bought and sold few products. He traded. Even his grain, which afterward became the farmer's great cash crop, was raised in small quantities and ground at the nearest mill—not for export, but for a return migration to the family flour-barrel.

The new farmer has always existed—because he is the old farmer growing. He has kept pace with our industrial evolution. When the régime of barter passed away, he ceased to barter. When the world's market became a fact, he raised wheat for the world's market. As agriculture became a business, he became a business man. As agricultural science began to contribute to the art of farming, he studied applied science. As industrial education developed, he founded and patronized institutions for agricultural education. As alertness and enterprise began to be indispensable in commercial activity, he grew alert and enterprising.

The mossback is the man who has either misread the

signs of the times, or who has not possessed the speed demanded in the two-minute class. He is the old farmer gone to seed. He tries to fit the old methods to the new régime.

But it is not sufficient to picture the new farmer. You must explain him. What is it that makes the new farmer? Who is he? What are his tools? In the first place, you cannot explain the new farmer unless you know the old farmer. You cannot have the new farmer unless you also have the mossback. The new farmer is a comparative person, as it were. You have to define him in terms of the mossback. The contrast is not between the old farmer and the new, for that is merely a question of relative conditions in different epochs of time. The contrast is between the new farmer and the mossback, for that is a question of men and of their relative efficiency as members of the industrial order. Then, of course, you must observe the individual traits that characterize the new farmer, such as keenness, business instinct, readiness to adopt new methods, and, in fact, all the qualities that make a man a success today in any calling. For the new farmer, in respect to his personal qualities, is not a sport, a phenomenon. He does not stand out as a distinct and peculiar specimen. He is a successful American citizen who grows corn instead of making steel rails.

But you have not yet explained the new farmer. These personal traits do not explain him. It may be possible to explain an individual and his success by calling attention to his characteristics, and yet you cannot completely analyze him and his career unless you understand the conditions under which he works —the industrial and social environment. Much less can you explain a class of people by describing their

personal characteristics. You must reach out into the great current of life that is about them, and discern the direction and power of that current.

Now, the conditions that tend to make the new farmer possible may be grouped in an old-fashioned way under two heads. In the old scientific phrases the two forces that make the new farmer are the "struggle for life" and "environment," or, to use other words, competition and opportunity.

Competition has pressed severely upon the farmer, competition at home and competition from other countries. At one time the heart of the wheat-growing industry of this country was near Rochester, N. Y., in the Genesee Valley; but the canal and the railway soon made possible the occupation of the great granary of the west. A multitude of ambitious young men soon took possession of that granary, and the flour-mills were moved from Rochester to Minneapolis. This is an old story, but the same forces are still at work. There has been developed a world-market. The sheep of the Australian bush have become competitors of the flocks that feed upon the green Vermont mountains and the Ohio hills. The plains of Argentina grow wheat for London. Russia, Siberia, and India pour a constant stream of golden grain into the industrial centers of Western Europe, and the price of American wheat is fixed in London. These forces have produced still another kind of competition; namely, specialization among farmers. Localities particularly adapted to special crops are becoming centers where skill and intelligence bring the industry to its height. The truck-farming of the South Atlantic region, the fruit growing of western Michigan, the butter factories of Wisconsin and Minnesota, have crowded almost to suffocation the

small market-gardener of the northern town, the man with a dozen peach trees, and the farmer who keeps two cows and trades the surplus butter for calico. These things have absolutely forced progress upon the farmer. It is indeed a "struggle for life." Out of it comes the "survival of the fittest," and the fittest is the new farmer.

But along with competition has come opportunity. Indeed, out of these very facts that have made competition so strenuous spring the most marvelous opportunities for the progressive farmer. Specialization brings out the best that there is in the locality and the man. It gives a chance to apply science to farming. Our transportation system permits the peach growers of Grand Rapids to place their crops at a profit in the markets of Buffalo and Pittsburg; the rich orchards and vineyards of Southern California find their chief outlet in the cities of the manufacturing Northeast—three thousand miles away. During the forty years, from 1860, the exports of wheat from this country increased from four million bushels annually to one hundred and forty million bushels; of corn, from three and one-third million bushels to one hundred and seventy-five million bushels; of beef products, from twenty million pounds to three hundred and seventy million pounds; of pork products, from ninety-eight million pounds to seventeen hundred million pounds. And not only do the grain and stock farmers find this outlet for their surplus products, but we are beginning to ship abroad high-grade fruit and first-class dairy products in considerable quantities. Low rates of freight, modern methods of refrigeration, express freight trains, fast freight steamers—the whole machinery of the commercial and financial world are at the service of the new

farmer. Science, also, has found a world of work in ministering to the needs of agriculture, and in a hundred different ways the new farmer finds helps that have sprung up from the broadcast sowing of the hand of science.

But perhaps even more remarkable opportunities come to the new farmer in those social agencies that tend to remove the isolation of the country; that assist in educating the farmer broadly; that give farmers as a class more influence in legislature and congress, and that, in fine, make rural life more worth the living. The new farmer cannot be explained until one is somewhat familiar with the character of these rural social agencies. They have already been enumerated and classified in a previous chapter; they will be more fully described in subsequent chapters.

It must not be supposed that every successful farmer is necessarily a supporter of all of these social agencies. He may be a prosperous farmer just because he is good at the art of farming, or because he is a keen business man. But more and more he is coming to see that these things are opportunities that he cannot afford to disregard. Indeed, some of these institutions are largely the creation of the new farmer himself. He is using them as tools to fashion a better rural social structure.

But they also fashion him. They serve to explain him, in great part. Competition inspires the farmer to his best efforts. The opportunity offered by these new and growing advantages gives him the implements wherewith to make his rightful niche in the social and industrial system.

It would be erroneous to suppose that the new

farmer is a *rara avis*. He is not. The spirit pervading the ranks of farmers is rapidly changing. We have been in a state of transition in agriculture. But the farther shore has been reached and the bridge is possible. The army of rural advancement is being recruited with great rapidity. The advance guard is more than a body of scouts, it is an effective brigade.

I want also to make a plea for the mossback. He must not be condemned utterly. Remember that competition among farmers has been intense; that rural environment breeds conservatism. Remember also that the farmer cannot change his methods as rapidly as can some other business men. Remember, too, that there is comparatively small chance for speculation in agriculture; that large aggregates of capital cannot be collected for farming, and consequently, that the approved means for securing immense wealth, great industrial advancement, and huge enterprises are nearly absent in agriculture. Remember that the voices calling from the city deplete the country of many good farmers as well as of many poor ones. Moreover, there are many men on farms who perhaps don't care for farming, but who for some reason cannot get away. On the farm a man need not starve; he can make a livelihood. Doubtless this simple fact is responsible for a multitude of mossbacks. They can live without strenuous endeavor. Possibly a good many of us are strenuous because we are pushed into it. So I have a good deal of sympathy for the mossback, and a mild sort of scorn for some of his critics, who probably could not do any better than he is doing if they essayed the gentle art of agriculture. I also have sympathy for the mossback particularly because he is the man that needs attention. The new farmer takes the initiative. He patronizes these opportunities that

we have been talking about. But the mossback, because he is discouraged, or because he is ignorant, or perhaps merely because he is conservative, takes little interest in these things. About one farmer in ten belongs to some sort of farmers' association. Thousands of farmers do not take an agricultural paper, and perhaps millions of them have not read an agricultural book. Right here comes in another fact. Every "new" farmer when full grown competes with every mossback. The educated farmer makes it still harder for the ignorant farmer to progress.

The future of the American farmer is one of the most pregnant social problems with which we have to deal. There is indeed an issue involved in the success of the new farmer that is still more fundamental than any yet mentioned. The old farmer had a social standing that made him essentially a middle-class man. He was a landholder, he was independent, he was successful. He was the typical American citizen. The old farmer was father to the best blood of America. His sons and his sons' sons have answered to the roll call of our country's warriors, statesmen, writers, captains of industry.

Can the new farmer maintain the same relative social status? And if he can, is he to be an aristocrat, a landlord, a captain of industry, and to bear rule over the mossback? And is the tribe of mossbacks destined to increase and become a caste of permanent tenants or peasants? Is the future American farmer to be the typical new farmer of the present, or are we traveling toward a social condition in which the tillers of the soil will be underlings? Is there coming a time when the "man with the hoe" will be the true picture of the American farmer, with a low standard of living, without ideals, without a chance for progress?

We must eliminate the mossback. It is to be done largely by education and by co-operation. There must be a campaign for rural progress. There must be a union of the country school teacher, of the agricultural college professor, of the rural pastor, of the country editor, with the farmers themselves, for the production of an increased crop of new farmers. Anything that makes farm life more worth living, anything that banishes rural isolation, anything that dignifies the business of farming and makes it more prosperous, anything that broadens the farmer's horizon, anything that gives him a greater grasp of the rural movement, anything that makes him a better citizen, a better business man, or a better *man*, means the passing of the mossback.

CHAPTER V

CULTURE FROM THE CORN LOT[2]

The question of questions that the college student asks himself is, What am I going to be? The surface query is, What am I going to *do*? But in his heart of hearts he ponders the deeper questions: What may I become in real intellectual and moral worth? How large a man, measured by the divine standards, will it be possible for me to grow into?

These are the great questions because growth is the great end of life. That is what we are here for, to grow. To develop all our talents, all our possibilities,

to increase our native powers of body, mind, and soul—this is life. It is important that we have a vocation. We must do something, and do it well. But the real end is not in working at a profession but in developing our abilities. Our symmetrical growth is the measure of our success as human beings.

As the student looks out over the ocean of life and scans the horizon for signs of the wise course for him to take, he should decide whether the particular mode of life that now appeals to him will yield the greatest possible measure of growth. He must consult his tastes, his talents, his opportunities, his training. And the test question is, Will this line of work yield me the growth, the culture, I desire?

But what are the elements that yield culture to an individual? Using culture in a very broad sense as a synonym for growth, we may say that the things contributing most to the culture of the average person are his work, his leisure, and his service to others. We may now try to answer the question we started with, as it presents itself to many a student in the agricultural colleges of our country. Will agriculture as a business, will the farm life and environment, contribute to the growth which I desire for myself? Can I extract culture from the corn lot?

Let us first see if the work or vocation of farming gives culture. My answer would be that there is scarcely an occupation to be named that requires broader knowledge, more accurate observation, or the exercise of better judgment than does modern farming. The farmer deals with the application of many sciences. He must be an alert business man. He requires executive talent of no mean order. The study of his occupation in its wider phases leads him into

direct contact with political economy, social movements, and problems of government. The questions confronting him as a farmer relate themselves to the leading realms of human knowledge and experience. I speak of course of the progressive farmer, who makes the best use of his opportunities. He can hardly hope to become immensely wealthy, but he can maintain that modest standard of living that usually is the lot of our most useful and cultured people and that ministers as a rule most fully to the ideal family life. The truly modern farmer cannot help growing.

There is much hard work on the farm. Yet on the whole there is fully as much leisure as in most other occupations. There is time to read, and books are today so easily accessible that living in the country is no bar to the bookshelf. Better than time to read is time to think. The farmer has always been a man who pondered things in his heart. He has had a chance to meditate. No culture is sound except it has been bought by much thinking; all else is veneer. Farm life gives in good measure this time to think. But it is in nature that the farmer finds or may find his most fertile field for culture. Here he is at home. Here he may revel if he will. Here he may find the sources of mind-liberation and of soul-emancipation. He may be the envy of everyone who dwells in the city because he lives so near to nature's heart. Bird and flower, sky and tree, rock and running brook speak to him a various language. He may read God's classics, listen to the music of divine harmonies, and roam the picture galleries of the Eternal. So too in his dealings with his kind, he lives close to men and women who are frank, virile, direct, clean, independent. The culture coming from such associations is above price. One learns to pierce all

shams, to honor essential manhood, to keep pure the fountains of sympathy, ambition, and love. Thus on the farm one may find full opportunity for that second means of culture, leisure.

Another powerful agency for cultivating the human soul is service. Indeed, service is the dynamic of life. To be of use is the ambition that best stimulates real growth. Culture is the end of life, the spirit of service the motive power. So it is of this I would speak perhaps most fully, not only because it is a vital means of culture, but because it is also peculiarly the privilege and duty of the college man and the college woman. For let it be said that if any college student secures a diploma of any degree without having been seized upon by a high ambition to be of some use in the work of helping humanity forward, then have that person's years of study been in vain, and his teaching also vain. The college man comes not to be ministered unto but to minister. He has been poorly taught if he leaves college with no thought but for his material success. He must have had a vision of service, his lips touched with a coal from the altar of social usefulness, and his heart cultivated to respond to the call for any need he can supply, "Here am I, send me."

I think it may safely be said that there is no field which offers better chance for leadership to the average college man or woman than does the farm. Take, for instance, politics. The majority of our states are agricultural states. The majority of our counties are agricultural counties. The agricultural vote is the determining factor in a large proportion of our elections. It follows inevitably that honest, strong farmers with the talent for leadership and the ability to handle themselves in competition with other

political leaders have a marvelously fine chance for useful service.

So is it in educational questions. Nowhere may the citizen come into closer contact with the educational problems of the day than through service on the rural school board. If he brings to this position trained intelligence, some acquaintance with educational questions, and a desire to keep in touch with the advancement of the times, he can do for his community a service that can hardly be imagined.

Take another field—that of organization for farmers, constituting a problem of great significance. As yet this class of people is relatively unorganized, but the movement is growing and the need of well-trained leadership is vital. I cannot speak too strongly of the chance here offered for active, intelligent, masterful men and women in being of use as leaders and officials in the Grange and other farmers' organizations.

So with the church question. One of the reasons for the slow progress of the country church is the conservatism in the pews as well as in the pulpit. The ardent member of the Young Men's Christian Association in college may feel that, in the country, there will be no outlet for his ambition to be of religious use to his fellow-men. This is a mistake. The work of the Young Men's Christian Association itself in the country districts is just beginning, and promises large growth. Wider service in the church, a community federation or union of different churches, the work of young people's societies and of the Sunday schools—all these afford abundant opportunity for the man or the woman qualified and willing.

There are other lines of usefulness. Although I have stated that on the farm the opportunities for personal culture are great, it must be confessed that these opportunities are not fully utilized by the average farmer's family. Here then is a very wide field, especially for the farmer's wife. For if she is a cultivated college woman, she can through the woman's club, the Grange, the school, the nature-study club, the traveling library, and in scores of ways exercise an influence for good on the community that may have far greater results than would come from her efforts if expended in the average city. The farm home too has latent capacities that are yet to be developed. It ought to be the ideal home and, in many cases, it is. But there are not enough of such ideal homes in the country. No college woman with a desire to do her full service in the world ought for an instant to despise the chance for service as it exists on the farm.

All of these opportunities so briefly suggested might be enlarged upon almost indefinitely, but the mere mention of them emphasizes the call for this service and this leadership. Nowhere are leaders more needed than in the country. The country has been robbed of many of its strongest and best. The city and perhaps the nation are gainers: but the country has suffered. From one point of view, the future of our farming communities depends upon the quality of leadership that we are to find there during the next generation.

So we come back to our question, Can the farm be made to yield to the man or woman, residing upon it and making a living from it, that measure of growth and all-round development that the ambitious person

wishes to attain? And our answer is, Yes. In its work, its leisure, its field for service, it may minister to sound culture. If you love the life and work of the farm, do not hesitate to choose that occupation for fear of becoming narrow or stunted. You can live there the full, free life. You can grow to your full stature there. You can get culture from the corn lot.

FOOTNOTE:

[2] Addressed to students in an agricultural college.

THE AGENCIES OF PROGRESS

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION FOR THE FARMER

The two generations living subsequent to the year 1875 are to be witnesses of an era in American history that will be known as the age of industrial education. These years are to be the boundaries of a period when the general principle that every individual shall be properly trained for his or her occupation in life is to receive its practical application. Future generations will doubtless extend marvelously the limits to which the principle can be pushed in its ministrations to human endeavor, but we are in the time when the principle is first to receive general acceptation and is to be regarded as a fundamentally necessary fact of human progress.

We are already "witnesses of the light." Even within the memory of young men has it come to pass that the old wine skins of the old educational institutions have been filled with the new wine of science and of knowledge and training applied to the industries and businesses of life.

Agriculture has perhaps been slow to feel the current of the new wine as it flows from the wine press of fast-growing industrial and social need. But the least hopeful of us can, I am sure, already see signs of a vast awakening. The farm, as well as the pulpit, the bar, the schoolroom, the shop, the counting-room, is breathing in the new idea that knowledge and training can be made of use to every man.

This awakening is due not merely to the desire of

agriculturists to be in fashion, nor to the efforts of agricultural pedagogues, but to a real need. It is common knowledge that in America we have not farmed, but have mined the soil. We have "skimmed the cream" of fertility, and passed on to conquer new areas of virgin soil. This pioneer farming has required hard work, enterprise, courage, and all the noble traits of character that have made our American pioneers famous and that have within a century subdued a wilderness to civilization. But the farmer of today faces a new situation. The fertile lands are fairly well occupied. The old lands are depleted. These old lands must be handled skilfully if they are to produce profitably. They must be used because there is little else to use, and because they are near the best markets. Meantime, scientists have been studying the deep things of nature, and have been learning the laws that govern soil, plant, and animal. Thus we have the farmer's need met by the theorist's discoveries. The farmer, to avail himself of these discoveries must know their meaning and be able to apply the general principle to the specific case. This means agricultural education.

Then again, the consumption of high-class products increases at least as rapidly as does our wealth. The demand comes not alone from the rich, but from the middle classes of our cities. Skilled artisans are large consumers of choice meats, fruits, and vegetables. To grow these high-grade products means skill, and skill means training, and training in the large sense means education.

The need for agricultural education, is, then, a real and vital one. It is pressed upon us by economic and social conditions. It is in line with the movement of the age.

In discussing agricultural education, we must not forget that the farmer is also a citizen and a man. He should be an intelligent citizen, and should therefore study questions of government. As a man, he should be the equal of other men of his same social rank. He therefore needs a good general education. He is more than mere farmer. While as farmer he must connect his business with its environment and out of his surroundings gain sound culture; while he should know nature, not only as its master, but as its friend; he should also be in sympathy with all that makes modern civilization worth while. And even as mere farmer, he finds himself face to face with grave social problems. He must not only produce but he must sell, and his selling powers are governed by conditions of the market, by transportation facilities and practices, and are affected by the laws of the land. Hence he must be a student of these problems and must know the broad phases of agriculture and its relations to other industries.

No intelligent man doubts the need of agricultural education. Let us, then, say a word about the kind of education demanded. This question is settled very largely by the discussion we have just had about the need of this education. First of all, this education will give a fair mastery of the principles that govern proper soil management and plant and animal growth. This is fundamental. The farmer is dealing with natural laws, and he must know in them their applications. He cannot be blind to their dominance. They insist on recognition. They are jealous masters and good servants. Nature serves only the man who obeys her. To obey he must know. The truth shall make him free. How to secure larger crops of better products at less cost and still maintain soil fertility, is the first demand of modern agriculture, and its

solution depends in large measure upon education.

But education does not stop here. The farmer is also a seller as well as a producer. He is a business man. He is manager of an industry. He is an investor of capital. So the question will arise, Can he get any help from education in the handling of the business phases of his farm? He certainly can. You cannot teach a man business in the sense of supplying him with good sense, business judgment, ability to handle men, and so on. But you can study the general conditions that govern the business of agriculture, and you can report the results of your researches to the practical farmer; and he, if he is willing, may learn much that will be helpful to him in deciding the many difficult questions that confront him as a business man. Farm administration in its largest sense will, then, be a most important phase of agricultural education.

It is quite possible for the individual farmer to succeed admirably if he is equipped with a sound training in the principles of production and in farm management. But there are still larger questions that farmers as a class must meet if agriculture is to have its full success and if the farmer himself is to occupy the social position he ought to have. Agriculture is an industry among industries. Farmers are a class among classes. As an industry, agriculture has relations to other industries. It is subject to economic laws. It involves something more than growing and selling. The nature of the market, railroad rates, effects of the tariff and of taxation, are questions vital to agriculture. So with the farmers socially considered. Their opportunities for social life, their school facilities, their church privileges, their associations and organizations—all these are

important matters. So agricultural education will not fail to call attention to these larger questions.

The well-educated farmer will, then, be trained in three lines of thought—first, that which deals with the growth of products; second, that which deals with the selling of products; and third, that which deals with agriculture as an industry and farmers as a class of people.

We may next discuss as briefly as possible the methods by which agricultural education may be advanced. We may not consider all of them, but rather attend only to some of those agencies that seem of peculiar interest just at this time.

There is one underlying requisite of successful agricultural education that is all-important. It is faith in agriculture. Any man to succeed grandly must have absolute faith in his business. So the farmer must believe in agriculture. Agriculture cannot attain its highest rank unless the men engaged in it believe in it most profoundly. They must believe that a man can make money in farming. They must love the farm life and surroundings. They must believe that the best days of agriculture are ahead of us, not behind us. They must believe that men can find in agriculture a chance to use brains and to develop talents and to utilize education. Agricultural education rests on this faith. Give us a state filled with such farmers and we can guarantee a strong system of agricultural education. But the seeds of education cannot grow in a soil barren of the richness of sentiment for and confidence in the farm. Our agricultural colleges have been criticized because they have graduated so few farmers. But the fault is not all with the colleges. The farmers also are

to blame. They have not had faith enough in the farm to advise young men to go to college to prepare for farming. They admit the value of education for the law, for building railroads, but not for farming. This must be changed, is being changed. The last ten years have seen a revolution in this respect, and the result is a mighty increase in agricultural educational interest.

One powerful means of agricultural education is the farmers' organization or association. All our dairy, horticultural, poultry, and live-stock associations are great educators. So of an organization like the Grange, its chief work is education. It brings mind in contact with mind; it gives chance for discussion and interchange of ideas; it trains in power of expression; it teaches the virtue of co-operation. Farmers blunder when they fail to encourage organization. Sometimes, out of foolish notions of independence, they neglect to unite their forces. They are utterly blind to their best interests when they do so. They should encourage organization if for no other reason than for the splendid educational advantages that flow from it.

However, our chief interest is, perhaps, in those institutions that are formed purposely and especially for agricultural education and which are usually supported out of public funds. There are three great fields of endeavor in which these institutions are working. The first step is to know—to know the truth. So in agriculture we must know. Know what? Know how nature works. So the man of science studies the soil and finds out what plant-food it contains, how the water acts in it, what heat and air do, and the inter-relation of all these elements. He studies the plant and its habits and tries to discover

how it grows and how it can be improved for man's use. He studies the animal and endeavors to learn what are the best foods for it and what laws govern its adaptation to human food. He studies climate and tries to find out what plants and animals are most appropriate to different locations. He studies injurious insects and diseases and devises remedies for them. He discovers, experiments. So we have research as the first term in agricultural education. The institutions of research are our experiment stations and United States Department of Agriculture. Their work may be likened to the plowing of the field. They strive to know how nature works, and how man can make use of her laws in the growing of plant and animal.

The next thing is to teach. The farmer too must know. Knowledge confined to the scientist has little practical use. It is the farmer who can use it. Moreover, new teachers must be trained, new experimenters equipped, and leaders in every direction prepared. So we have agricultural colleges and schools. If experiment is to be likened to plowing, the work of the schools may be compared to sowing and cultivating.

Agricultural colleges have been in existence in America almost fifty years. Their careers have been both inspiring and disappointing. They have had to train their own teachers, create a body of knowledge, break down the bars of educational prejudice. This work has taken time. The results justify the time and effort. For today agricultural education is becoming organized, the subjects of study are well planned, and competent men are teaching and experimenting. The disappointment is twofold. They have not graduated as many farmers as they should have. This

is due not wholly to wrong notions in the colleges. It is, as suggested before, partly due to the lack of faith in agriculture on the part of the farmers themselves. But the colleges are in part to blame. Many of them have not been in close touch with the farmers. They have often been out of sympathy with the interests of the farmers. They have too frequently been servile imitators of the traditions of the older colleges, instead of striking out boldly on a line of original and helpful work for agriculture. Today, however, we see a rapid change going on in most of our agricultural colleges. They are seeking to help solve the farmers' difficulties. They are training young men for farm life. The farmers are responding to this new interest and are beginning to have great confidence in the colleges.

It is sometimes said that most farmers who get an agricultural education cannot be trained in the colleges. Doubtless this is true. Probably a very small proportion even of educated farmers can or will graduate from a full course in an agricultural college. Many will do so. There is no reason why a large proportion of the graduates of our college courses in agriculture may not go to the farm. I have no sympathy with the idea that those courses are too elaborate for those young men who want to farm. It must be recognized, however, that even if our agricultural colleges shall graduate hundreds and thousands every year who return to the farm, it still leaves the great majority of farmers untouched in an educational way unless other means are devised. But there are other means at hand.

We have first the agricultural school. The typical agricultural high school gives a course of two or three years, offering work of high-school grade in

mathematics and English, with about half the time devoted to teaching in agriculture. Many young men want to get an insight into the principles of modern agriculture, but cannot afford time or money for college work. This course fits their need. A splendid school of this design has been in successful operation in Minnesota for more than a dozen years, and has nearly five hundred students. In Wisconsin there are two county schools of agriculture for a similar purpose. Other schools could be named.

The agricultural colleges also offer shorter courses of college grade, perhaps of two years. These are very practical and useful courses. Not only that, but nearly all the colleges give special winter courses of from ten days to fourteen weeks. These are patronized by thousands of young men. So in many ways are the colleges meeting the need. We all agree that it is desirable for a young man to take a full college course, even in agriculture. But it is better to have a half-loaf than no bread. Yes, better to have a *slice* than no bread. The colleges furnish the whole loaf, the half-loaf, and the slice. And young men are nourished by all.

One reason why agricultural education has not made more rapid progress is because the children of the country schools have been taught in such a manner as to lead them to think that there is no chance for brains in farming. Both their home influence and their school atmosphere have, in most cases perhaps, been working against their choice of agriculture as a vocation. It therefore becomes important that these children shall be so taught that they can see the opportunity in farming. They must, moreover, be so trained that they will be nature students; for the farmer above all men must be a nature student. So

we see the need of introducing into our rural schools nature-study for the young pupils and elementary agriculture for the older ones. This is being successfully accomplished in many cases, and is arousing the greatest interest and meeting with gratifying success. We shall within ten years have a new generation of young men and women ready for college who have had their eyes opened as never before to the beauties of nature and to the fascination there is in the farmer's task of using nature for his own advantage.

But when we have increased the attendance at our agricultural colleges tenfold; when we have hundreds of agricultural schools teaching thousands of our youth the fundamentals of agriculture; when each rural school in our broad land is instilling into the minds of children the nearness and beauty of nature and is teaching the young eyes to see and the young ears to hear what God hath wrought in his many works of land and sea and sky, in soil, and plant, and living animal—even when that happy day shall dawn will we find multitudes of men and women on our farms still untouched by agricultural education. These people must be reached. The mere fact that their school days are forever behind them is no reason why they shall not receive somewhat of the inspiration and guidance that flow from the schools. So we have an imperative demand for the extension of agricultural teaching out from the schools to the farm community. The school thus not only sheds its light upon those who are within its gates, but sets out on the beautiful errand of carrying this same light into every farm home in the land. This work is being done today by thousands of farmers' institutes, by demonstrations in spraying and in many other similar lines, by home-study courses and

correspondence courses, by co-operative experiments, by the distribution of leaflets and bulletins, by lectures at farmers' gatherings, by traveling schools of dairying. These methods and others like them are being invoked for the purpose of bringing to the farmers in their homes and neighborhoods some of the benefits that the colleges and schools bestow upon their pupils.

We have seen something of the need of agricultural education, of the kind of education required, and of the means used to secure it. Does not this discussion at least show the supreme importance of the question? Will not the farmers rally themselves to and league themselves with the men who are trying to forward the best interests of the farm? Shall we not all work together for the betterment both of the farm and of the farmer?

CHAPTER VII

FARMERS' INSTITUTES

A decade and a half ago, there was a vigorous campaign for the establishment of university extension throughout the United States. Generally speaking the campaign was a losing one—with but a few successes amid general failure. But many years before this agitation, there was begun a work among farmers, which in form and spirit was university extension, and which has constantly developed until

it is today one of the most potent among the forces making for rural progress. This work has been done chiefly by what are now universally known as farmers' institutes.

The typical farmers' institute is a meeting usually lasting two days, held for the purpose of discussing subjects that relate to the interests of farmers, more particularly those of a practical character. As a rule, the speakers to whom set topics are assigned are composed of two classes: the first class is made up of experts, either professors or experimenters in agricultural colleges and similar institutions, or practical farmers who have made such a study of, and such a conspicuous success in, some branch of agriculture that they may well be called experts; the second class comprises farmers living in the locality in which the institute is held. The experts are expected to understand general principles or methods, and the local speakers the conditions peculiar to the neighborhood.

The meeting usually begins in the forenoon and ends with the afternoon session of the second day—five sessions being held. As a rule, not over two or three separate topics are treated in any one session, and in a well-planned institute topics of a like character are grouped together, so that there may be a fruit session, a dairy session, etc. Each topic is commonly introduced by a talk or paper of twenty to forty minutes' length. This is followed by a general discussion in which those in the audience are invited to ask questions of the speaker relevant to the topic under consideration, or to express opinions and give experiences of their own.

This is a rough outline of the average farmers'

institute, but of course there are many variations. There are one-day meetings and there are three-day meetings, and in recent years the one-day meetings have grown in favor; in some states local speakers take little part; in some institutes a question-box is a very prominent feature, in others it is omitted altogether; in some cases the evening programme is made up of educational topics, or of home topics, or is even arranged largely for amusement; in other instances the evening session is omitted. In most institutes women are recognized through programme topics of special interest to them.

It is not important to trace the early history of the farmers' institute movement, and indeed it is not very easy to say precisely when and where the modern institute originated. Farmers' meetings of various sorts were held early in the century. As far back as 1853 the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture recommended that farmers' institutes be made an established means of agricultural education. By 1871 Illinois and Iowa held meetings called farmers' institutes, itinerant in character, and designed to call together both experts and farmers, but neither state kept up the work systematically. Both Vermont and New Hampshire have held institutes annually since 1871, though they did not bear that name in the early years. Michigan has a unique record, having held regularly, since 1876, annual farmers' institutes, "so known and designated," which always have contained practically the essential features of the present-day institute. The Michigan legislature passed a law in 1861 providing for "lectures to others than students of the Agricultural College," and has made biennial appropriations for institutes since 1877. Ohio, in 1881, extended the institute idea to include every

county in the state.

More important than the origin of the farmers' institute movement is the present status. Practically every state and territory in the Union carries on institutes under some form or other. In somewhat more than half the states, the authorities of the land-grant colleges have charge of the work. In the other states, the board of agriculture or the department of agriculture has control.

In 1905-6 there were held 3,500 institutes, in 45 states and territories, with a total reported attendance of 1,300,000 people, at a cost of nearly $350,000. The work is largely supported by the state treasuries, some of the states showing a most generous spirit. The annual state appropriations for the work in leading institute states are as follows: Pennsylvania, $20,500; New York, $20,000; Minnesota, $18,000; Illinois, $17,150; Ohio, $16,747; Wisconsin, $12,000; Indiana, $10,000. In these states practically every county has annually from one to five institutes.

Institutes in no two states are managed in the same way, but the system has fitted itself to local notions and perhaps to local needs. A rough division may be made—those states which have some form of central control and those which do not have. Even among states having a central management are found all degrees of centralization; Wisconsin and Ohio may be taken as the extremes. In Wisconsin the director of institutes, who is an employee of the university, has practically complete charge of the institutes. He assigns the places where the meetings are to be held, basing his decision upon the location of former institutes in the various counties, upon the eagerness

which the neighborhoods seem to manifest toward securing the institute, etc. He arranges the programme for each meeting, suiting the topics and speakers to local needs, prepares advertising materials, and sets the dates of the meeting. A local correspondent looks after a proper hall for meeting, distributes the advertising posters, and bears a certain responsibility for the success of the institute. Meetings are arranged in series, and a corps of two or three lecturers is sent by the director upon a week's tour. One of these lecturers is called a conductor. He usually presides over the institute and keeps the discussions in proper channels. Practice makes him an expert. The state lecturers do most of the talking. Local speakers do not bear any large share in the programme. Questions are freely asked, however.

Ohio has an institute society in each county, and this society largely controls its own institutes. The secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, who has charge of the system, assigns dates and speakers to each institute. After that everything is in the hands of the local society, which chooses the topics to be presented by the state speakers, advertises the meeting, and the society president acts as presiding officer. Local speakers usually occupy half the time.

It does not seem as if either of these plans in its entirety were ideal—the one an extreme of centralized control, the other an extreme of local management. Yet in practice both plans work well. No states in the Union have better institutes nor better results from institute work than Wisconsin and Ohio. Skill, intelligence, and tact count for more than particular institutions.

New York may be said to follow the Wisconsin plan. Minnesota goes even a step farther; instead of holding several series of institutes simultaneously in different parts of the state, attended by different "crews," the whole corps of state speakers attends every institute. No set programmes are arranged. Everything depends upon local conditions. This system is expensive, but under present guidance very effective. Michigan, Indiana, and Pennsylvania have adopted systems which are a mean between the plan of centralization and the plan of localization. Illinois has a plan admirably designed to encourage local interest, while providing for central management.

Few other states have carried institute work so far as the states already named, and in some cases there seems to be a prejudice against a well-centralized and fully-developed system—a feeling that each locality may be self-sufficing in institute work. But this attitude is wearing away, for experience serves to demonstrate fully the value of system. The danger of centralization is bureaucracy; but in institute work, if the management fails to provide for local needs, and to furnish acceptable speakers, vigorous protests soon correct the aberration.

It has been stated that in America we have no educational *system*—that spontaneity is the dominant feature of American education. This is certainly true of farmers' institutes. So it has transpired that numerous special features have come in to use in various states—features of value and interest. It may be worth while to suggest some of the more characteristic of these features, without attempting an exact category.

Formerly the only way in which women were

recognized at the institutes was by home and social topics on the programme, though women have always attended the meetings freely. Some years ago Minnesota and Wisconsin added women speakers to their list of state speakers, and in the case of Wisconsin, at least, held a separate session for women, simultaneously with one or two sessions of the regular institute, with demonstration lectures in cooking as the chief features. Michigan holds "women's sections" in connection with institutes, but general topics are taken up. In Ontario separate women's institutes have been organized. In Illinois a State Association of Domestic Science has grown out of the institutes. Thus institute work has broadened to the advantage of farm women.

At many institutes there are exhibits of farm and domestic products—a sort of midwinter fair. Oftentimes the merchants of the town in which the institute is held offer premiums as an inducement to the farmers.

In Wisconsin an educational feature of much value takes the form of stock-judging—usually at the regular autumn fairs. The judges give their reasons for their decisions, thus emphasizing the qualities that go to make up a perfect or desirable animal.

In several states there is held an annual state institute called a "round-up," "closing institute," or the like. It is intended to be a largely attended and representative state convention of agriculturists, for the purpose of discussing topics of general interest to men and women from the farms. These meetings are frequently very large and enthusiastic gatherings.

The county institute society is a part of the organization in some instances very well developed.

It gives permanency to the work and arouses local interest and pride.

The development of men and women into suitable state speakers is an interesting phase. As a rule the most acceptable speakers are men who have made a success in some branch of farming, and who also have cultivated the gift of clear and simple expression. Not a few of these men become adepts in public speaking and achieve a reputation outside of their own states. In several states there is held a "normal institute"—an autumn meeting lasting a week or two weeks, and bringing together, usually at the state college of agriculture, the men who are to give the lectures at the institutes of the winter to follow. The object of the gathering is to bring the lecturers into close contact with the latest things in agricultural science, and to train them for more effective work.

A few years ago the United States Department of Agriculture employed an experienced institute director to give all his time to the study and promotion of farmers' institutes. This incident is suggestive of the important place which institutes have secured in the work for better farming.

The results of a generation of institute work are not easy to summarize. It is safe to make a broad generalization by asserting that this form of agricultural education has contributed in a remarkable degree to better farming. The best methods of farming have been advocated from the institute platform. Agricultural college professors, and agricultural experimenters have talked of the relations of science to practical farming. The farmers have come to depend upon the institute as a means

for gaining up-to-date information.

And if institutes have informed, they have also done what is still better—they have inspired. They have gone into many a dormant farm community and awakened the whole neighborhood to a quicker life. They have started discussions, set men thinking, brought in a breath of fresh air. They have given to many a farmer an opportunity for self-development as a ready speaker.

Other educational agencies, such as the agricultural colleges and experiment stations, have profited by institutes. No one thing has done more than the institutes to popularize agricultural education, to stir up interest in the colleges, to make the farmers feel in touch with the scientists.

Farmers' institutes are a phase of university extension, and it is as a part of the extension movement that they are bound to increase in value and importance. Reading-courses and correspondence-courses are growing factors in this extension movement, but the power of the spoken word is guarantee that the farmers' institute cannot be superseded in fact. And it is worth noting again, that while university extension has not been the success in this country which its friends of a decade ago fondly prophesied for it, its humbler cousin—agricultural college extension—has been a conspicuous success, and is acquiring a constantly increasing power among the educational agencies that are trying to deal with the farm problem.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HESPERIA MOVEMENT

The gulf between parent and teacher is too common a phenomenon to need exposition. The existence of the chasm is probably due more to carelessness, to the pressure of time, or to indolence than to any more serious delinquencies; yet all will admit the disastrous effects that flow from the fact that there is not the close intellectual and spiritual sympathy that there should be between the school and the home. It needs no argument to demonstrate the value of any movement that has for its purpose the bridging of the gulf. But it is an omen of encouragement to find that there are forces at work designed to bring teacher and school patron into a closer working harmony. A statement of the history and methods of some of these agencies may therefore well have a place in a discussion of rural progress. For the movements to be described are essentially rural-school movements. Of first interest is an attempt which has been made in the state of Michigan to bridge the gulf—to create a common standing-ground for both teacher and parent—and on that basis to carry on an educational campaign that it is hoped will result in the many desirable conditions which, a priori, might be expected from such a union. At present the movement is confined practically to the rural schools. It consists in the organization of a county Teachers and Patrons' Association, with a membership of teachers and school patrons, properly officered. Its chief method of work is to hold one or more meetings a year, usually in the country or in small villages, and the programme is designed to cover educational questions in such a way as to be of

interest and profit to both teachers and farmers.

This movement was indigenous to Michigan—its founders worked out the scheme on their own initiative, and to this day its promoters have never drawn upon any resources outside the state for suggestion or plan. But if the friends of rural education elsewhere shall be attracted by this method of solving one of the vexed phases of their problem, I hope that they will describe it as "the Hesperia movement." For the movement originated in Hesperia, was developed there, and its entire success in Hesperia was the reason for its further adoption. Hesperia deserves any renown that may chance to come from the widespread organization of Teachers and Patrons' Associations.

And where is Hesperia? It lies about forty miles north and west of Grand Rapids—a mere dot of a town, a small country village at least twelve or fifteen miles from any railroad. It is on the extreme eastern side of Oceana County, surrounded by fertile farming lands, which have been populated by a class of people who may be taken as a type of progressive, successful, intelligent American farmers. Many of them are of Scotch origin. Partly because of their native energy, partly, perhaps, because their isolation made it necessary to develop their own institutions, these people believe in and support good schools, the Grange, and many progressive movements.

For several years there had existed in Oceana County the usual county teachers' association. But, because Hesperia was so far from the center of the county, and because it was not easily accessible, the teachers who taught schools in the vicinity could rarely

secure a meeting of the association at Hesperia; and in turn they found it difficult to attend the meetings held in the western part of the county. A few years ago it chanced that this group of teachers was composed of especially bright, energetic, and original young men and women. They determined to have an association of their own. It occurred to someone that it would add strength to their organization if the farmers were asked to meet with them. The idea seemed to "take," and the meetings became quite popular. This was during the winter of 1885-86. Special credit for this early venture belongs to Mr. E. L. Brooks, still of Hesperia and an ex-president of the present association, and to Dr. C. N. Sowers, of Benton Harbor, Mich., who was one of the teachers during the winter named, and who was elected secretary of the Board of School Examiners in 1887. Mr. Brooks writes:

> The programmes were so arranged that the participants in discussions and in the reading of papers were about equally divided between teachers and patrons. An active interest was awakened from the start. For one thing, it furnished a needed social gathering during the winter for the farmers. The meetings were held on Saturdays, and the schoolhouse favored was usually well filled. The meetings were not held at any one schoolhouse, but were made to circulate among the different schools. These gatherings were so successful that similar societies were organized in other

portions of the country.

In 1892, Mr. D. E. McClure, who has since (1896-1900) been deputy superintendent of public instruction of Michigan, was elected county-school commissioner of Oceana County. Mr. McClure is a man of great enthusiasm and made a most successful commissioner. He conceived the idea that this union of teachers and patrons could be made of the greatest value, in stimulating both teachers and farmers to renewed interest in the real welfare of the children as well as a means of securing needed reforms. His first effort was to prepare a list of books suitable for pupils in all grades of the rural schools. He also prepared a rural lecture-course, as well as a plan for securing libraries for the schools. All these propositions were adopted by a union meeting of teachers and farmers. His next step was to unite the interests of eastern Oceana County and western Newaygo County (Newaygo lying directly east of Oceana), and in 1893 there was organized the "Oceana and Newaygo Counties Joint Grangers and Teachers' Association," the word "Granger" being inserted because of the activity of the Grange in support of the movement. Mr. McClure has pardonable pride in this effort of his, and his own words will best describe the development of the movement:

> This association meets Thursday night and continues in session until Saturday night. Some of the best speakers in America have addressed the association. Dr. Arnold Tompkins, in speaking before the association, said it was a wonderful

association and the only one of its character in the United States.

What was my ideal in organizing such associations?

1. To unite the farmers who pay the taxes that support the schools, the home-makers, the teachers, the pupils, into a co-operative work for better rural-school education.

2. To give wholesome entertainment in the rural districts, which from necessity are more or less isolated.

3. To create a taste for good American literature in home and school, and higher ideals of citizenship.

4. Summed up in all, to make the rural schools character-builders, to rid the districts of surroundings which destroy character, such as unkept school yards, foul, nasty outhouses, poor, unfit teachers. These reforms, you understand, come only through a healthy educational sentiment which is aroused by a sympathetic co-operation of farm, home, and school.

What results have I been able to discover growing out of this work? Ideals grow so slowly that one cannot measure much progress in a few years. We are slaves to

> conditions, no matter how hard, and we suffer them to exist rather than arouse ourselves and shake them off. The immediate results are better schools, yards, out-buildings, schoolrooms, teachers, literature for rural people to read.
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> Many a father and mother whose lives have been broken upon the wheel of labor have heard some of America's orators, have read some of the world's best books, because of this movement, and their lives have been made happier, more influential, more hopeful.
>
> Thousands of people have been inspired, made better, at the Hesperia meetings.

In western Michigan the annual gathering at Hesperia is known far and wide as "the big meeting." The following extract from the Michigan *Moderator-Topics* indicates in the editor's breezy way the impression the meeting for 1906 made upon an observer:

> Hesperia scores another success. Riding over the fourteen miles from the railroad to Hesperia with Governor Warner and D. E. McClure, we tried to make the latter believe that the crowd would not be forthcoming on that first night of the fourteenth annual "big meeting." It was zero weather and mighty

> breezy. For such a movement to succeed two years is creditable, to hold out for five is wonderful, to last ten is marvelous, but to grow bigger and better for fourteen years is a little short of miraculous. McClure is recognized as the father of the movement and his faith didn't waver a hair's breadth. And sure enough there was the crowd—standing room only, to hear the governor and see the great cartoonist J. T. McCutcheon of the *Chicago Tribune*. For three evenings and two days the big hall is crowded with patrons, pupils and teachers from the towns and country round. During the fourteen years that these meetings have been held, the country community has heard some of the world's greatest speakers. The plan has been adopted by other counties in Michigan and other states both east and west. Its possibilities are well-nigh unlimited and its power for good is immeasurable. Everyone connected with it may well feel proud of the success attending the now famous "Hesperia Movement."

In 1897, Kent County, Michigan (of which Grand Rapids is the county seat), organized a Teachers and Patrons' Association that is worth a brief description, although in more recent years its work has been performed by other agencies. It nevertheless serves as a good example of a well-organized association

designed to unite the school and home interests of rural communities. It was for several years signally successful in arousing interest in all parts of the county. Besides, it made a departure from the Oceana-Newaygo plan which must be considered advantageous for most counties. The Hesperia meeting is an annual affair, with big crowds and abundant enthusiasm. The Kent County association was itinerant. The membership included teachers, school officers, farmers generally, and even pupils. An attempt was made to hold monthly meetings during the school year, but for various reasons only five or six meetings a year were held. The meetings usually occurred in some Grange hall, the Grange furnishing entertainment for the guests. There were usually three sessions—Friday evening and Saturday forenoon and afternoon. The average attendance was nearly five hundred, about one-tenth being teachers; many teachers as well as farmers went considerable distances to attend.

The Kent County association did not collect any fees from its members, the Teachers' Institute fund of the county being sufficient to provide for the cost of lectures at the association meetings. Permission for this use of the fund was obtained from the state superintendent of public instruction. Some counties have a membership fee; at Hesperia, the fee is 50 cents, and a membership ticket entitles its holder to a reserved seat at all sessions. The Kent County association also suggested a reading-course for its members.

The success of the work in Kent County was due primarily to the fact that the educators and the farmers and their leaders are in especially close sympathy. And right there is the vital element of

success in this work. The initiative must be taken by the educators, but the plan must be thoroughly democratic, and teacher and farmer must be equally recognized in all particulars. The results of the work in Kent County were thus summarized by the commissioner of schools of the county:

> To teachers, the series of meetings is a series of mid-year institutes. Every argument in favor of institutes applies with all its force to these associations. To farmers they afford a near-by lecture course, accessible to all members of the family, and of as high grade as those maintained in the larger villages. To the schools, the value is in the general sentiment and interest awakened. The final vote on any proposed school improvement is taken at the annual school meeting, and the prevailing sentiment in the neighborhood has everything to do with this vote. And not only this, but the general interest of patrons may help and cheer both teacher and pupils throughout the year. On the other hand, indifference and neglect may freeze the life out of the most promising school. There is no estimating the value to the schools in this respect.

The Kent County association had a very simple constitution. It is appended here for the benefit of any who may desire to begin this beneficent work of endeavoring to draw more closely together rural schools and country homes.

Article I.—Name

This association shall be known as "The Kent County Teachers and Patrons' Association."

Article II.—Membership

Any person may become a member of this association by assenting to this constitution and paying the required membership fee.

Article III.—Objects

The object of this association shall be the promotion of better educational facilities in all ways and the encouragement of social and intellectual culture among its members.

Article IV.—Meetings

At least five meetings of the association shall be held each year, during the months of October, November, January, February, and March, the dates and places of meetings to be determined and announced by the executive committee. Special meetings may be called at the election of the executive committee.

Article V.—Officers

Section 1. The officers of the association shall be a president, a

vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and an executive committee composed of five members to be appointed by the president.

SEC. 2. The election of officers shall occur at the regular meeting of the association in the month of October.

SEC. 3. The duties of each officer shall be such as parliamentary usage assigns, respectively, according to Cushing's Manual.

SEC. 4. It shall be the duty of the executive committee to arrange a schedule of meetings and to provide suitable lecturers and instructors for the same on or before the first day of September of each year. It shall be the further duty of this committee to devise means to defray the expenses incurred for lecturers and instructors. All meetings shall be public, and no charge for admission shall be made, except by order of the executive committee.

ARTICLE VI.—COURSE OF READING

SECTION 1. The executive committee may also recommend a course of reading to be pursued by members, and it shall be their duty to make such other recommendations from time to time as shall have for their object the more effective carrying

> out of the purposes of the association.

Whether the Oceana County plan of a set annual meeting or the Kent County plan of numerous itinerant meetings is the better one depends much on the situation. It is not improbable that itinerant meetings, with an annual "round-up" meeting of the popular type as the great event of the school year, would be very satisfactory.

Other counties in the state have taken up the Hesperia idea. In some cases associations similar to the Kent County association have been developed. More recently the work has frequently been carried on by the county commissioner of schools directly. "Institutes on wheels" have become a factor in the campaign for better rural schools. One commissioner writes:

> My aim has been to bring into very close relationship teachers, patrons, and pupils. This is done, in part, in the following manner: I engage, for a week's work at a time, some educator of state or national reputation to ride with me on my visitation of schools. Through the day, schools are visited, pupils' work inspected, and in the evening, a rally is held in the locality visited in that day. A circuit is made during the week, and Friday evening and the Saturday following a general round-up is held. The results of this work have been far reaching. Teachers, patrons, and pupils are brought into

close relationship and a higher standard of education is developed.

The form of organization matters little. The essential idea of the "Hesperia movement" was to bring together the teacher and the school patron on a common platform, to a common meeting-place, to discuss subjects of common interest. This idea must be vitalized in the rural community before that progress in rural-school matters which we desire shall become a fact.

It is only fair to say that administrators of rural-school systems in several states are attempting in one way or another, and have done so for some years, to bring together teachers and school patrons. In Iowa there are mothers' clubs organized for the express purpose of promoting the best interests of the schools. In many of the communities the county superintendent organizes excursions, and holds school contests which are largely attended by patrons of the schools.

Ohio has what is known as the "Ohio School Improvement Federation." Its objects are: (1) to create a wholesome educational sentiment in the citizenship of the state; (2) to remove the school from partisan politics; (3) to make teaching a profession, protected and justly compensated. County associations of the federation are being organized and the effort is being made to reach the patrons of the schools and to create the right public sentiment. In many of the teachers' institutes there is one session devoted entirely to subjects that are of special interest to the school-board members and to the patrons of the schools. Educational rallies are held in many of the townships, at which effort is

made to get together all the citizens and have an exhibit of school work.

In Minnesota, a law was passed recently to the effect that school officers within a county may attend one educational convention a year upon call of the county superintendent. They receive therefor, three dollars for one day's services and five cents mileage each way for attendance. Already a number of very successful conventions have been held, wherein all school districts in the counties have been represented.

The county institutes in Pennsylvania are largely attended by the public and are designed to reach patrons as well as teachers.

In Kansas, county superintendents have organized school-patrons' associations and school-board associations, both of which definitely purpose to bring together the school and the home and the officers of the school into one body and to co-operate with individuals for the purpose of bettering the school conditions.

Doubtless other states are carrying on similar methods.

An interesting movement wholly independent of the Hesperia plan has recently been put into operation under the leadership of Principal Myron T. Scudder of the State Normal School, New Paltz, N. Y. He has organized a series of country-school conferences. They grew out of a recognized need, but were an evolution rather than a definite scheme. The school commissioner, the teachers, and the Grange people of the community have joined in making up the conference. An attempt is also made to interest the

pupils. At one conference there was organized an athletic league for the benefit of the boys of the country school. The practical phases of nature-study and manual training are treated on the programme, and at least one session is made a parents' meeting. There is no organization whatever.

Dr. A. E. Winship, of the *Journal of Education*, Boston, had the following editorial in the issue of June 21, 1906:

> It is now fourteen years since D. E. McClure spoke into being the Hesperia movement, which is a great union of educational and farmer forces, in a midwinter Chautauqua, as it were. Twelve miles from the railroad, in the slight village of Hesperia, a one-street village, one side of the street being in one county and the other side in another, for three days and evenings in midwinter each year, in a ramshackle building, eight hundred people from all parts of the two counties sit in reserved seats, for which they pay a good price, and listen to one or two notable speakers and a number of local functionaries. One-half of the time is devoted to education and the other to farm interests.
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> It is a great idea, well worked out, and after fourteen years it maintains its lustiness, but I confess to disappointment that the idea has not

> spread more extensively. It is so useful there, and the idea is so suggestive, that it should have been well-nigh universal, and yet despite occasional bluffs at it, I know of no serious effort to adopt it elsewhere, unless the midwinter meeting at Shelby, in one of these two counties, can be considered a spread of the idea. This child of the Hesperia movement, in one of the two counties, and only twenty miles away, had this year many more in attendance than have ever been at Hesperia.

This work of uniting more closely the interests, sympathies, and intelligence of the teachers and patrons of the rural school has had a test in Michigan of sufficient length to prove that it is a practicable scheme. No one questions the desirability of the ends it is prepared to compass, and experience in Michigan shows not only that where the educators have sufficient enterprise, tact, enthusiasm, and persistence the necessary organizations can be perfected, but that substantial results follow. For the sake of better rural schools, then, it is sincerely to be hoped that the "Hesperia movement" may find expression in numerous teachers and patrons' associations in at least the great agricultural states.

CHAPTER IX

THE RURAL SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

Among the great phenomena of our time is the growth of the school idea—the realization of the part that the school plays in our civilization and in the training of our youth for life. Our New England fathers started the school in order that their children might learn to read the Scriptures, and thus that they might get right ideas of their religious duty. Even after this aim was outgrown, our schools for generations did little more than to teach the use of the mere tools of knowledge; to read, to write, and to cipher were the great gains of the schoolroom. Even geography and grammar were rather late arrivals. Then came the idea that the school should train children for citizenship, and it was argued that the chief reason why schools should be supported at public expense was in order that good citizens should be trained there. History and civil government were put into the course in obedience to this theory. Another step was taken when physiology was added, because it was an acknowledgment that the schools should do something to train youth in the individual art of living. Still another step was taken when manual training and domestic science were brought into our city schools, because these studies emphasize the fact that the schools must do something to train workers. And finally we have at present the idea gaining a strong foothold that the schools must train the child to fill its place in the world of men; to see all the relations of life; to be fitted to live in human society. This idea really

embraces all of the other ideas. It implies that the schools shall not only teach each individual the elements of knowledge, that they shall train for citizenship, that they shall train men in the art of living, that they shall aid in preparing for an occupation, but that they shall do *all* of these things, and do them not merely for the good of the individual, but for the good of society as a whole.

And not only is there a feeling that the pupil in school can be brought into closer touch with the life of the community, but that the school as an institution can be made more useful to the community as a whole. This double thought has been expressed in the phrase, "Make the school a social center," and practically it is being slowly worked out in numerous city schools. How far can this idea be developed in the country school?

The purpose of this chapter is not to deal in the theory of the subject, nor to argue particularly for this view of the function of the school, but rather to try to show some methods by which the rural school and the farm community actually can be brought into closer relations. In this way we may perhaps indicate that there is a better chance for co-operation between the rural school and the farm community than we have been accustomed to believe, and that this closer relation is worth striving for. Five methods will be suggested by which the rural school can become a social center. Some of these have already been tried in rural communities, some of them have been tried in cities, and some of them have not been tried at all.

1. The first means of making the rural school a social center is through the course of study. It is here that

the introduction of nature-study into our rural schools would be especially helpful. This nature-study when properly followed approves itself both to educators and to farmers. It is a pedagogical principle recognized by every modern teacher that in education it is necessary to consider the environment of the child, so that the school may not be to him "a thing remote and foreign." The value of nature-study is recognized not only in thus making possible an intelligent study of the country child's environment, but in teaching a love of nature, in giving habits of correct observation, and in preparing for the more fruitful study of science in later years. Our best farmers are also coming to see that nature-study in the rural schools is a necessity, because it will tend to give a knowledge of the laws that govern agriculture, because it will teach the children to love the country, because it will show the possibilities of living an intellectual life upon the farm. Nature-study, therefore, will have a very direct influence in bringing the child into close touch with the whole life of the farm community.

But it is not so much a matter of introducing new studies—the old studies can be taught in such a way as to make them seem vital and human. Take, for instance, geography. It used to be approached from the standpoint of the solar system. It now begins with the schoolhouse and the pupils' homes, and works outward from the things that the child sees and knows to the things that it must imagine. History, writing, reading, the sciences, and even other subjects can be taught so as to connect them vitally and definitely with the life of the farm community. To quote Colonel Parker, who suggests the valuable results of such a method of teaching:

> It would make a strong, binding union of the home and the school, the farm methods and the school methods. It would bring the farm into the school and project the school into the farm. It would give parent and teacher one motive in the carrying out of which both could heartily join. The parent would appreciate and judge fairly the work of the school, the teacher would honor, dignify and elevate the work of the farm.

The study of the landscape of the near-by country, the study of the streams, the study of the soils, studies that have to do with the location of homes, of villages, the study of the weather, of the common plants, of domestic animals—all of these things will give the child a better start in education, a better comprehension of the life he is to live, a better idea of the business of farming, a better notion about the importance of agriculture, and will tend to fit him better for future life either on the farm or anywhere else, than could any amount of the old-fashioned book knowledge. Is it not a strange fact that so many farmers will decry book knowledge when applied to the business of farming, and at the same time set so much store by the book learning that is given in the common arithmetic, the old-fashioned reader, and the dry grammar of the typical school? Of course anyone pleading for this sort of study in the rural schools must make it clear that the ordinary accomplishments of reading, writing, and ciphering are not to be neglected. As a matter of fact, pupils under this method can be just as well trained in these

branches as under the old plan. The point to be emphasized, however, is that a course of study constructed on this theory will tend to bring the school and the community closer together, will make the school of more use to the community, will give the community more interest in the school, while at the same time it will better prepare pupils to do their work in life.

2. A second way of making the rural school a social center is through the social activities of the pupils. This means that the pupils as a body can co-operate for certain purposes, and that this co-operation will not only secure some good results of an immediate character, results that can be seen and appreciated by everyone, but that it will teach the spirit of co-operation—and there is hardly anything more needed today in rural life than this spirit of co-operation. The schools can perform no better service than in training young people to work together for common ends. In this work such things as special day programmes, as for Arbor Day, Washington's Birthday, Pioneer Day; the holding of various school exhibitions; the preparation of exhibits for county fairs, and similar endeavors, are useful and are being carried out in many of our rural schools. But the best example of this work is a plan that is being used in the state of Maine, and is performed through the agency of what is called a School Improvement League. The purposes of the league are: (1) to improve school grounds and buildings; (2) to furnish suitable reading-matter for pupils and people; (3) to provide works of art for schoolrooms. There are three forms of the league, the local leagues organized in each school; the town leagues, whose membership consists of the officers of the local leagues; and a state league, whose members are delegates from the

town leagues and members of the local leagues who hold school diplomas. Any pupil, teacher, school officer, or any other citizen may join the league on payment of the dues. The minimum dues are one cent a month for each pupil, for other members not less than ten cents a term. But these dues may be made larger by vote of the league. Each town league sends a delegate to the meeting of the state league. Each league has the usual number of officers elected for one term. These leagues were first organized in 1898 and they have already accomplished much. They have induced school committees to name various rural schools for distinguished American citizens, as Washington, Lincoln, and so forth. They give exhibitions and entertainments for the purpose of raising funds. Sometimes they use these funds to buy books for the schoolroom. The books are then loaned to the members of the league; at the end of the term this set of books is exchanged for another set of books from another school in the same township. In this way, at a slight expense, each school may have the use of a large number of books every year. The same thing is done with pictures and works of art, these being purchased and exchanged in the same way. Through the efforts of the league schoolhouses have been improved, inside and out, and the school grounds improved. It is not so much the doing of new things that has been attempted by this league. The important item is that the school has been *organized* for these definite purposes, and the work is carried on systematically from year to year. It needs no argument to show the value of this sort of co-operation to the pupil, to the teacher, to the school, to the parents, and ultimately to the community as a whole.

3. A third method is through co-operation between

the home and the school, between the teacher and pupils on one side, and parents and taxpayers on the other side. Parents sometimes complain that the average school is a sort of mill, or machine, into which their children are placed and turned out just so fast, and in just such condition. But if this is the case, it is partly the fault of the parents who do not keep in close enough touch with the work of the school. It is not that parents are not interested in their children, but it is rather that they look at the school as something separate from the ordinary affairs of life. Now, nothing can be more necessary than that this notion should be done away with. There must be the closest co-operation between the home and school. How can this co-operation be brought about? Frequently parents are urged to visit the schools. This is all right and proper, but it is not enough. There must be a closer relation than this. The teacher must know more about the home life of her pupils, and the parents must know far more about the whole purpose and spirit, as well as the method, of the school. A great deal of good has been done by the joint meeting of teachers and school officers. It is a very wise device, and should be kept up. But altogether the most promising development along this line is the so-called "Hesperia movement," described in another chapter. These meetings of school patrons and teachers take up the work of the school in a way that will interest both teachers and farmers. They bring the teachers and farmers into closer touch socially and intellectually. They disperse fogs of misunderstanding. They inspire to closer co-operation. They create mutual sympathy. They are sure to result in bringing the teacher into closer touch with community life and with the social problems of the farm. And they are almost equally

sure to arouse the interest of the entire community, not only in the school as an institution and in the possibilities of the work it may do, but also in the work of that teacher who is for the time being serving a particular rural school.

4. A fourth method is by making the schoolhouse a meeting-place for the community, more especially for the intellectual and aesthetic activities of the community. A good example of this kind of work is the John Spry School of Chicago. In connection with this school there is a lecture course each winter; there is a musical society that meets every Tuesday evening; there is a men's club that meets every two weeks to discuss municipal problems and the improvement of home conditions; there is a woman's club to study for general improvement and social service; there is a mothers' council meeting every two weeks; there is a literary and dramatic society, meeting every week, composed of members of high-school age, and studying Shakespeare particularly; there is a dressmaking and aid society meeting two evenings a week, to study the cutting of patterns, garment-making, etc.; a food-study and cooking club, also meeting two evenings a week; an inventive and mechanical club, meeting two evenings a week, and tending to develop the inventive and mechanical genius of a group of young men; an art club; and a boy's club, with music, games, reading-lessons, reading of books and magazines, intended for boys of fourteen or fifteen years of age. These things are all under the direction of the school, they are free, they are designed to educate. It will not be feasible for the rural school to carry out such a programme as this, but do we realize how large are the possibilities of this idea of making the rural school a community

center? No doubt one of the advantages of the centralized rural school will be to give a central meeting-place for the township, and to encourage work of the character that has been described. Of course, the Grange and farmers' clubs are doing much along these lines, but is it not possible for the district school also to do some useful work of this character? Singing-schools and debating clubs were quite a common thing in the rural schools forty years ago, and there are many rural schools today that are doing work of this very kind. Is there any reason, for example, why the country schoolhouse should not offer an evening school during a portion of the winter, where the older pupils who have left the regular work of the school can carry on studies, especially in agriculture and domestic science? There is need for this sort of thing, and if our agricultural colleges, and the departments of public instruction, and the local school supervisors, and the country teachers, and the farmers themselves, could come a little closer together on these questions the thing could be done!

5. Fifth and last, as a method for making the school a social center, is the suggestion that the teacher herself shall become something of a leader in the farm community. The teacher ought to be not only a teacher of the pupils, but in some sense a teacher of the community. Is there not need that someone should take the lead in inspiring everyone in the community to read better books, to buy better pictures, to take more interest in the things that make for culture and progress? There are special difficulties in a country community. The rural teacher is usually a transient; she secures a city school as soon as she can; she is often poorly paid; she is sometimes inexperienced; frequently the labor

of the school absorbs all her time and energy. Unfortunately these things are so, but they ought not to be so. And we shall never have the ideal rural school until we have conditions favorable to the kind of work just described. The country teacher ought to understand the country community, ought to have some knowledge of the problems that the farmers have to face, ought to have some appreciation of the peculiar conditions of farm life. Every teacher should have some knowledge of rural sociology. The normal schools should make this subject a required subject in the course, especially for country teachers. Teachers' institutes and reading-circles should in some way provide this sort of thing. This is one of the most important means of bringing the rural school into closer touch with the farm community. Ten years ago Henry Sabin, of Iowa, one of the keenest students of the rural-school problem, in speaking of the supervision of country schools, said:

> The supervisor of rural schools should be acquainted with the material resources of his district. He should know not only what constitutes good farming, but the prevailing industry of the region should be so familiar to him that he can converse intelligently with the inhabitants, and convince them that he knows something besides books. The object is not alone to gain influence over them, but to bring the school into touch with the home life of the community about. It is not to invite the farmer to the school, but to take the school to the farm, and to

> show the pupils that here before their eyes are the foundations upon which have been built the great natural sciences.

The programme needed to unite rural school and farm community is then, first, to enrich the course of study by adding nature-study and agriculture, and about these co-ordinating the conventional school subjects; second, to encourage the co-operation of the pupils, especially for the improvement of the school and its surroundings; third, to bring together for discussion and acquaintance the teachers and the patrons of the school; fourth, so far as possible to make the schoolhouse a meeting-place for the community, for young people as well as for older people, where music, art, social culture, literature, study of farming, and in fact, anything that has to do with rural education, may be fostered; and fifth, to expect the teacher to have a knowledge of the industrial and general social conditions of agriculture, especially those of the community in which her lot is cast.

CHAPTER X

THE GRANGE

The difficulty of uniting the farmers of America for any form of co-operative endeavor long ago became proverbial. The business of farming encouraged

individualism; comparative isolation bred independence; and restricted means of communication made union physically difficult, even among those who might be disposed to unite. It was not strange, therefore, that the agricultural masses developed a state of mind unfavorable for organization—that they became suspicious of one another, jealous of leadership, unwilling to keep the pledges of union, and unable to sink personal views and prejudices.

It must not be supposed, however, that the farmers themselves have failed to realize the situation, or that no genuinely progressive steps have been taken to remedy it. During the last four decades at least, the strongest men that the rural classes have produced have labored with their fellows, both in season and out of season, for union of effort; and their efforts have been by no means in vain. It is true that some of the attempts at co-operation have been ill-judged, even fantastic. It is true that much of the machinery of organization failed to work and can be found on the social junk-pile, in company with other discarded implements not wholly rural in origin. But it is also true that great progress has been made; that the spirit of co-operation is rapidly emerging as a factor in rural social life; and that the weapons of rural organization have a temper all the better, perhaps, because they were fashioned on the anvil of defeat.

Among all these efforts to unite the farming classes, by far the most characteristic and the most successful is the Grange. The truth of this statement will immediately be questioned by those whose memory recalls the early rush to the Grange, "Granger legislation," and similar phenomena, as well as by

those whose impressions have been gleaned from reading the periodicals of the late seventies, when the Grange tide had begun to ebb. Indeed, it seems to be the popular impression that the Grange is not at present a force of consequence, that long ago it became a cripple, if not a corpse. Only a few years ago, an intelligent magazine writer, in discussing the subject of farmers' organizations, made the statement, "The Grange is dead." But the assertion was not true. The popular impression must be revised. The Grange has accomplished more for agriculture than has any other farm organization. Not only is it at the present time active, but it has more real influence than it has ever had before; and it is more nearly a *national* farmers' organization than any other in existence today.

The Grange is also the oldest of the general organizations for farmers. Though the notion of organizing the farmers was undoubtedly broached early in the history of the country, the germ idea that actually grew into the Grange is about forty years old, and should be credited to Mr. O. H. Kelley, a Boston young man who settled on a Minnesota farm in 1849. He wrote considerably for the agricultural press; and this experience helped to bring him to the conclusion that the great need of agriculture was the education of the agriculturist. He soon came to feel that existing agencies for this purpose—farm papers and fairs—were insufficient. In 1866, as agent for the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Kelley made a tour of the South, with the view of gaining a knowledge of the agricultural and mineral resources of that section. On this tour he became impressed with the fact that politicians would never restore peace to the country; that if it came at all, it would have to come through fraternity. As his thought ripened he

broached to friends the idea of a "secret society of agriculturists, as an element to restore kindly feelings among the people."

Thus the Grange was born of two needs, one fundamental and the other immediate. The fundamental need of agriculture was that farmers should be better educated for their business; and the immediate need was that of cultivating the spirit of brotherhood between the North and the South. The latter need no longer exists; but the fundamental need still remains and is sufficient excuse for the Grange's existence today. Mr. Kelley interested six other men in the new idea; and in December, 1867, these "seven founders of the order" organized the National Grange of Patrons of Husbandry. Mr. Kelley is the only one of these seven men now living.

Thus was begun a movement for organization that had resulted by 1873 in the formation of over 20,000 Granges in 28 states, comprising not less than 750,000 members; and in that year the National Grange, as a representative body, was officially organized. For four or five years this unexampled prosperity continued; then the reports show a feeling of weakness creeping in. In fact, the order as a whole steadily declined in numbers and prestige during the whole of the decade following 1880. The losses were most serious, however, in the South and West; for in New England and the Middle States it retained its vitality, and, indeed, grew steadily.

During the last fifteen years there has been a widespread revival of interest in the organization and the outlook is exceedingly promising. During the decade following 1890 the membership increased not less than 75 per cent. During the last few years the

rate of gain has been even greater. The following table gives the official records in the five leading Grange states:

	1900		1905	
	Grange	Members	Grange	Members
New York	550	43,000	582	66,500
Maine	275	29,000	387	49,000
Michigan	420	25,000	731	45,000
Pennsylvania	526	20,000	560	34,000
New Hampshire	260	24,000	263	28,000

These states lead, but the order is also active and strong in Vermont, Connecticut, Ohio, Massachusetts. Thirty states pay dues to the National Grange treasury, and twenty-six were represented by delegates at the last National Grange. Since 1905 there has been substantial growth in most of these twenty-six states, both in numbers of Granges and in membership.

The official title of the Grange is "Patrons of Husbandry," of the members, "Patrons," and of the various divisions, "Granges." The "subordinate Grange," or local lodge, is the Grange unit. Its area of jurisdiction has, nominally, a diameter of about five miles; more roughly, "a Grange to a township" is the

working ideal among the organizers. The membership consists of men and women, and of young people over fourteen years of age, who may apply and by vote be accepted. Constitutionally, those whose interests are not immediately with agriculture are ineligible to membership; and care is also exercised that only those who are of good repute shall be recommended. The presiding officer of each Grange is the "master;" while among the twelve other officers the "lecturer" is the most important, and virtually acts as programme committee, with charge of the educational work of the body. Meetings are held weekly or fortnightly. Each regular meeting has first its business session, and then its "lecturer's hour," or literary session, usually with an intervening recess for social greetings, etc. The programmes are prepared by the lecturer, and consist of general discussions, essays, talks, debates, readings, recitations, and music; an attempt being made to suit the tastes and talents of all members, young and old. Many Granges have built and own their halls, which are usually equipped with kitchen and dining-room, in addition to audience rooms; for periodical "feasts" are as regular a feature of the association as are the initiations of new members.

The Granges of a county or other given district often organize themselves into a "Pomona Grange." The "State Grange" is a delegate body, meeting annually; delegates being chosen by the subordinate and Pomona Granges. The "National Grange" is composed of the masters of State Granges and their wives, and is also an annual gathering. The National Grange is the legislative body of the order, and has full authority in all matters of doctrine and practice. But to State Granges is left the determination of policy and administration for the states. The State Granges,

in turn, legislate for the subordinate Granges, while also passing down to them ample local powers. The machinery is thus strongly centralized, and subordinate Granges are absolutely dependent units of a great whole. Yet the principle of home rule pervades the organization; and local associations are responsible for their own methods and the results of their work, though their officers usually work in harmony with the State and National Granges.

Perhaps the clearest conception of what the order originally meant to do can be gained from a few quotations from the Declaration of Purposes of the National Grange, which was promulgated over thirty years ago, and is still in force:

> We shall endeavor to advance our cause by laboring to accomplish the following objects:
>
> To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves. To enhance the comfort and attractions of our homes and to strengthen our attachments to our pursuits. To foster mutual understanding and co-operation. To maintain inviolate our laws, and to emulate each other in labor, to hasten the good time coming. To reduce our expenses, both individual and corporate. To buy less and produce more, in order to make our farms self-sustaining. To diversify our crops and crop no more than we can cultivate. To condense the weight of our exports, selling less in

the bushel and more on hoof and in fleece; less in lint and more in warp and woof. To systematize our work, and calculate intelligently on probabilities. To discountenance the credit system, the mortgage system, the fashion system, and every other system tending to prodigality and bankruptcy.

We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require. We shall avoid litigation, as much as possible, by arbitration in the Grange. We shall constantly strive to secure entire harmony, good will, vital brotherhood, among ourselves, and to make our order perpetual. We shall earnestly endeavor to suppress personal, local, sectional, and national prejudices, all unhealthy rivalry, all selfish ambition. Faithful adherence to these principles will insure our mental, moral, social, and material advancement.

For our business interests we desire to bring producers and consumers, farmers and manufacturers, into the most direct and friendly relations possible. Hence we must dispense with a surplus of middle-men, not

that we are unfriendly to them, but we do not need them. Their surplus and their exactions diminish our profits.

We wage no aggressive warfare against any other interests whatever. On the contrary, all our acts and all our efforts, so far as business is concerned, are not only for the benefit of the producer and consumer, but also for all other interests that tend to bring these two parties into speedy and economical contact. Hence we hold that transportation companies of every kind are necessary to our success, that their interests are intimately connected with our interests.

We are opposed to such spirit and management of any corporation or enterprise as tends to oppress the people, and rob them of their just profits. We are not enemies to capital, but we oppose the tyranny of monopolies. We long to see the antagonism between capital and labor removed by common consent, and by an enlightened statesmanship worthy of the nineteenth century. We are opposed to excessive salaries, high rates of interest, and exorbitant per-cent. profits in trade.

We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves and for

our children, by all just means within our power. We especially advocate for our agricultural and industrial colleges that practical agriculture, domestic science, and all the arts which adorn the home be taught in their courses of study.

We emphatically and sincerely assert the oft-repeated truth taught in our organic law, that the Grange—national, state, or subordinate—is not a political or party organization. No Grange, if true to its obligations, can discuss political or religious questions, or call political conventions, or nominate candidates, or even discuss their merits at its meetings.

We always bear in mind that no one, by becoming a Patron of Husbandry, gives up that inalienable right and duty which belongs to every American citizen, to take a proper interest in the politics of his country. On the contrary, it is his duty to do all he can in his own party to put down bribery, corruption, and trickery; to see that none but competent, faithful, and honest men, who will unflinchingly stand by our industrial interests, are nominated for all positions of trust; and to have carried out the principle which should characterize every Patron, that the office should seek the man,

and not the man the office.

To enumerate the achievements of the Grange would be to recall the progress of agriculture during the past third of a century. It has been a motor force in many helpful movements, and in many ways has organized and incorporated the best thought of the most intelligent farmers, about means for rural advancement. It has been an integral part of, and a most potent factor in, the expansion of American farm life.

The greatest achievement of the order is that it has taught the farmers of America the value of co-operation and the power of organized effort. The lesson has not been fully learned, it is true; but the success of the institution testifies that it is possible for farmers to work in harmony. It is worth observing that this result has been achieved on conservative lines. It is comparatively easy to organize on radical lines; easy to generate enthusiasm by promising some great reform; easy to inflame self-interest by picturing millennial conditions, especially when the pocket is touched. But quite different is it to arouse and sustain interest in a large popular organization whose object is education, whose watchword is self-culture. Of course, it would be but a half-truth to assert that the order places all its emphasis on the sober problems of education. Agitation has had its place; the hope of better things for the farmer, to be achieved through legislation and business co-operation, has been an inspiration to activity; but the noteworthy fact remains that it has secured a fair degree of organization and co-operation among farmers chiefly by appeals to their larger and nobler interests.

That the association has vastly improved the social opportunities of farmers is a trite saying among old observers of its work. It forces isolation out of the saddle. The regular meetings of the local bodies rapidly and surely develop the social instinct among the members. Pomona Granges bring together members from all parts of the county and make them acquainted with one another. The State Grange draws its membership from every corner of the state; and as its personnel changes each year, thousands are in the course of a few years given the wider outlook, the more extended acquaintance, and the broader view that participation in such a gathering affords. Special social features add their influence.

As an educator on public questions the Grange has done a noble work. At nearly every meeting in this country, some topic of public concern is brought up by essay, talk, general discussion, or formal debate. The views of the "village Hampdens" may not always be economically scientific or scholarly. But it might surprise many people to see how well read the members are and how clearly they can express their ideas. Their discussions are not seldom informative, and that they make public opinion in rural communities is beyond cavil. The persistent advocacy of specific reforms has directed the thought of the members toward the larger issues that so often rise above the haze of partisan politics.

The order has prepared the soil for adequate agricultural education. While the agricultural colleges formerly had many enemies among the farmers, and received scornful opprobrium from those whom they were endeavoring to help, almost without exception the Granges have praised the

colleges, welcomed their work, and urged farmers to educate their sons at these institutions. Farmers' institutes, the agricultural experiment stations, and the federal Department of Agriculture have been equally welcomed by the Grange sentiment. The Grange has always taught the need of better rural education. It has also tended to develop its members, so that they may not only appreciate education, but that they may be themselves living examples of the value of such education. Farmers' institute lecturers frequently say, "You can always tell when you reach a community where a Grange exists." In that meeting will be found men who have read and thought on farm and public themes, men who are not only ready in discussion, apt in statement, and eager to question, but men acquainted with parliamentary law, who know how such assemblages should be conducted, and who can preside with dignity and grace.

The order has undoubtedly aided materially in obliterating sectionalism. That achievement was one of its avowed objects. There is no question but it assisted in cementing North and South; and that it has brought East and West into closer sympathy is equally true. Other farm organizations have found their incentive in the order. These it has never frowned on, though believing and always hoping that it might attract the majority of farmers to its own ranks, and by this unity become a more powerful factor in securing the rights and developing the opportunities of the rural classes of America. It has always discountenanced the credit system; and that cash payments by farmers to merchants are far more common than a quarter-century ago may be fairly credited, in part at least, to its influence.

To describe the many specific legislative achievements which the Granges of the nation and of the several states have accomplished would be tedious. Merely to enumerate a few of them must suffice here. A convenient summary is made from an official circular recently issued by the National Grange. The order has had a large influence in securing the following: The separation of certain agricultural colleges from universities which were receiving the land-grant funds, but were not, in the opinion of the farmers, duly contributing to agricultural education; the confining of the appropriations under the second Morrill act of 1890 strictly to instruction in agriculture and mechanical arts; the Hatch Act of 1887, establishing an experiment station in each state and territory; making the head of the Department of Agriculture a cabinet official; the agitation resulting in the famous Iowa court decision, that railroad franchises are subject to the power that created them; the establishment of the Inter-State Commerce Commission; tax reform in many states; laws favoring pure food and dairy products; preventing extension of patents on sewing machines; the establishment of rural free mail delivery.

The methods of work are many and varied. In addition to the regular literary and social programmes previously mentioned, socials are held at the homes of members, entertainments of various kinds occur at the Grange hall, and in many ways the association becomes the center of the social and intellectual interest of the community. It is debating society, club, lecture course, parliamentary society, theater, and circulating library. In fact, it lends itself to almost any function that will instruct, entertain, benefit, or assist its members financially, morally,

intellectually, or socially. Of course, not every Grange is awake to its opportunities; but as a rule, where a live one exists it is the acknowledged leader in social movements.

It is not uncommon for Granges to hold fairs for the exhibition of agricultural and domestic products. The State Fair of New Hampshire has been largely managed by the Grange. In many cases Granges as organizations will exhibit at the ordinary county or district fair. Picnics and field meetings are coming to be very popular in some states. They are held during the summer season, at a time when work is least pressing, and are usually attended by speakers of prominence in the order. Many subordinate Granges give public lecture courses during the winter, securing speakers on general themes. They also arrange for entertainments of a popular character.

The order also participates in activities that are not strictly Grange work. For instance, in Michigan, the State Grange for several years carried on a "Fresh-Air Work," by which over 1,000 working-girls, children, and hard-working mothers with babies, from the larger cities, were given a two-weeks' vacation in country homes. The philanthropic agencies of the cities arranged for transportation and secured the beneficiaries, while the Grange obtained the places for them. Granges are always active in the organization of farmers' institutes, agricultural fairs, etc. In Michigan they have assisted in the organization of associations which are designed to bring together both teachers and parents for discussion of rural-school problems.

On two important matters the Grange has been misunderstood, not only by the public, but more

unfortunately, sometimes by its own members. In his *Division and Reunion*, President Woodrow Wilson speaks of it under the sub-title of "New Parties." Professor Alexander Johnston, in his *American Politics* was more discriminating, for he said of it: "In its nature it is not political." But he also said: "Its object is co-operation among farmers, in purchasing and in other business interests." The first conception of the character of the order is wholly misleading; the second is inadequate.

The Grange is not a party. It never was a party. During the "Granger legislation" period, many members doubtless misconceived the true function of the Grange, and abused the power organization gave them, while the popular mind credited the association with many notions for which it was not responsible. It has never organized itself as a farmers' party. The National Grange has endeavored to keep strictly aloof from partisan politics. It is possible that in some states the influence of the organization was, in the early days, used for partisan purposes; but the penalty was fully paid in the disruption of the order in those states. The Grange today regards partisanship as poisonous to its life, and does not allow it on its shelves.

This is not to say that the Grange makes no appeal to legislation. It is possible that in some cases it places too much faith in law as a means of emancipation from economic bondage; but, in the main, its legislative point of view is sane and conservative. It believes that such ills as are due to bad or imperfect legislation can be, at least partly, relieved by good or more perfect legislation. Nor does it limit its interest to measures that concern the farmer alone. It is

unalterably opposed to class legislation, and aims to keep its own skirts clear—to avoid even the suspicion of offence in this particular.

It may be asked, How does the order manage to advocate public measures without becoming involved in partisan squabbles? Simply by ceasing to discuss a question the moment it becomes a party football. For instance: the monetary policy of the government was warmly discussed until the conventions of 1896 made it clear that it was to be a party issue. Again: the Grange has consistently urged the construction and ownership of the Interoceanic Canal by the United States government; but it was silent on the larger question of "imperialism," not because the question was not of importance, but because it became a subject of party controversy. This neutral policy as to party questions imposes certain limitations on the influence of the organization; but experience has demonstrated that this, more than any other thing, is responsible for the fact that the Grange still lives and thrives.

The other misconception lies in the sentence quoted from Professor Johnston, that the Grange has for its object "co-operation among farmers in purchasing and in other business interests;" the implication being that business was the chief function. It is generally admitted that in the early days thousands joined the order "for what there was in it;" believing that the organization furnished a means for abolishing the middlemen, and putting ready money into the pockets of the farmers. When these sordid souls were disillusioned, their enthusiasm went down to the zero of activity. They misunderstood, or interpreted too radically, a well-defined, conservative, legitimate purpose of the Grange to co-

operate on business lines. The order did believe that farmers could do without the surplus of middlemen; it did purpose to aid the farmer financially, though this purpose was not its main function. In the earlier period Grange stores were organized. A few of these are in successful operation today, but the policy as a whole has been abandoned.

Another plan, discussed over thirty years ago, has during the past decade come to assume practical importance as a method of co-operation on business lines. The plan, in brief, is that various State Granges contract with manufacturing and jobbing houses to furnish members of the order with goods at practically wholesale rates. Goods are ordered by the subordinate Granges, under seal of the order; are purchased on a cash basis; and are shipped to the purchasing agent of the Grange, and by him distributed to the individual buyers. Such materials as binder twine, salt, harness, Paris green, all kinds of farm implements, vehicles, sewing-machines, and fruit trees are purchased advantageously. Even staple groceries, etc., are sometimes bought in this way. Members often save enough in single purchases to pay all their expenses for the Grange. There is no capital invested; there are no debts imposed upon himself by the purchaser; and there has not been extreme difficulty in securing favorable contracts. The plan seems destined to continued enlargement and usefulness as a legitimate phase of business co-operation. Michigan Granges purchased not less than $350,000 worth of goods during 1905, under such a plan. The estimate for Maine is over half a million dollars.

In several states the organization successfully conducts mutual fire insurance companies; active

membership in the Grange being an essential requisite for membership in the insurance company. Wherever these companies have become well established, it is asserted that they maintain a lower rate of assessment than even the popular "farmers' mutuals." In New York there are twenty-three Grange companies, with policies aggregating $85,000,000, the average cost for the year 1905 being $1.96 per thousand. Single companies claim to have secured even better rates. This insurance not only pays individuals, but it attracts and holds members. In New Hampshire a fairly successful Grange life insurance company exists.

In co-operative selling, the order has so far accomplished very little, except locally and among individuals or Granges. There is a supreme difficulty in the way of successful transfers among patrons themselves, as members desiring to buy wish the very lowest prices; those desiring to sell, the very highest prices. Arbitration under such circumstances is not easy. The fundamental obstacle to members selling together on the general market is that, in most cases, all members do not have the same things to sell. A co-operative creamery, for instance, is organized on the basis of a *product*—butter; the Grange is organized on the basis of *manhood*—and each man may have his crop or stock specialty. This difficulty, though grave, is not, perhaps, insuperable, and will tend to disappear as membership enlarges. But it is only fair to state that, so far, the Grange has not been able to devise any successful plan for co-operative selling, applicable on a large scale.

There are two or three features that deserve further mention. One is the position of the family in the Grange. It is stated that the Grange was the first

secret organization to place woman on a plane of perfect equality with man. In every association each female member has a vote. Woman has four special offices assigned to her sex, and is eligible to any office in the gift of the order. The majority of subordinate lecturers are women; many subordinate and even Pomona masters are women; Michigan's state lecturer is a woman who is revolutionizing the educational work of the order in that state; while Minnesota had for some years a competent and earnest woman as state master. Every delegate to every State Grange is a dual delegate—man and wife. The state master and his wife are delegates to the National Grange. Women serve on all committees in these gatherings, and a woman's voice is frequently heard in debates. And not only the wife, but, as previously stated, the children above fourteen years of age may attain full membership. A large proportion of every healthy Grange consists of young people, who have their share in the active work. Thus it will be seen that the order conserves the family life. It is doubtful if any other social institution in rural communities, not excepting the church, so completely interests the entire family.

The organization is also a conservator of morals. While sectarian discussions are as foreign to its purposes as is partisan politics, and while it does not even pretend to take the place of the church, it is built on a truly religious foundation. Its ritual is permeated, in word and in sentiment, by the religious spirit. Every meeting opens and closes with prayer. Moral character is constantly eulogized and glorified in Grange esoteric literature. The membership comes almost exclusively from that large class of farmers who are moral, high-minded, God-fearing men and women.

The Grange has been opposed, both by farmers and by others, because secrecy is not a desirable attribute; but the experience of forty years and the uniform testimony of all leaders in the work declare that this was a wise provision. No influential member has, so far as it is known, proposed that the order should be dismantled of its secret features. The ritualistic work is not burdensome. Occasionally the processes of initiation may take time that ought to be allotted to educational work; but, if the initiation is properly conducted, it has of itself a high educational value.

The financial status of the Grange itself is worth noting. The fees for joining are merely nominal, while the dues are only ten cents a month per member. These fees and dues support the subordinate Granges, the State Grange, and the National Grange. There are no high-salaried officials in the order, and few salaried positions of any kind. The National Grange today has nearly $100,000 in its treasury, and several State Granges have substantial reserves. This policy is pursued, not for the love of hoarding, but because it is believed that it tends to the permanency and solidarity of the order.

The Grange is a live institution; it has within itself the capacity for satisfying a great need in rural society; and it is destined to growth and larger and more permanent usefulness. It is based on correct principles: organization, co-operation, education. It is neither a political party nor a business agency. It is progressively conservative—or conservatively progressive. It is neither ultra-radical nor forever in the rut. Its chief work is on cultural lines. It includes the entire family. It is now growing, and there is every reason for thinking that this growth is of a permanent character.

The Grange is ambitious to take its place beside the school and the church, as one of a trinity of forces that shall mold the life of the farmer on the broadest possible basis—material, intellectual, social, and ethical. Is there any good reason why this ambition is not worthy, or why its goal should not be won?

CHAPTER XI

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARM WOMEN

While rural life is often supposed to be fatally deficient in facilities for growth because of its isolation, the women living on our farms are thought to be the especial victims of this lack of social opportunity. No doubt there is much of truth in the popular opinion. Modern city life unquestionably

tends to enliven, to sharpen, to put a razor-edge on capacity. Naturally the women as well as the men of the city are thus stimulated. An instance of the opportunities constantly presented to the city women is the rapid multiplication of women's clubs, which, especially in smaller towns, are absolutely revolutionizing the life of womankind. But have not the women of the country some resources of a similar character? Can they not in some way break the bonds of isolation? Are there not for them some of the blessings that come from a highly organized society? Are there not, in the country also, opportunities for the co-operation of mind and heart for common service? I think all these questions can be answered in the affirmative. It is at least worth while to endeavor to describe several means by which the woman of the farm can keep pace with her urban sister, and under conditions not so discouraging as many may suppose.

Probably no movement has had such a profound significance for the farm women of America as has the Grange movement. We have already discussed the general aspects of Grange work. It must be remembered that the farmer's wife is practically equal with her husband in Grange law and practice. She votes, she may hold office, even the higher executive offices. A delegate to the State Grange is always two—a man and his wife if he has one. The wife serves on committees and votes as she pleases. This equality extends throughout the order. The woman bears her share of work; she reads papers; she directs the social phases of the Grange; she talks on farm topics if she wants to; she debates school affairs; she visits neighboring Granges. All this means education, and education of a very valuable sort, the effects of which permeate so thoroughly those

communities where the Grange has long been established that one hardly realizes the work that has been accomplished. For it is not at all an exaggeration to assert that a positive revolution often comes about from the planting of a Grange in a neighborhood where no such organization has ever existed. It finds most of the women diffident, many of them with restricted views, few of them with the instinct for social service developed beyond the needs of friendly neighbors. In the Grange these women find new acquaintances, learn the power of concerted action, meet the responsibility of office, get to their feet for a few words—unheard-of courage! Such speech is usually brief and perhaps not ready, but it is likely to be cogent, because it is born of experience and "stops when through." County and perhaps State Granges add their experiences. And so on through the years these shy, reserved, possibly narrow, lives come to flower. And the Grange has furnished the dynamic. Strong leaders among farm women have been developed by the opportunities the Grange has afforded them. And thousands of other women in all parts of the country have by this same means grown out of their narrowness, "discovered themselves," and become comparatively cultured, well read, able to take a woman's place in this day of woman's power as a public factor. It is safe to say that the Grange has been the greatest single influence in America with respect to the development of the women of the farm.

Another factor in the life of farm women which has arisen in more recent years is the farmers' institute. The audiences in some cases are largely of men, but as a rule the attendance of women averages one-third to one-half. Until very recent years the women

joined with the men in all sessions of the institute, and their presence was recognized by appropriate subjects on the programme, frequently presented by women themselves. Several years ago Minnesota and Wisconsin initiated separate meetings for women, held simultaneously with the main meeting, for purposes of instruction in domestic science. Michigan, a little later, developed the "women's section" of the farmers' institute. This is held one afternoon of the usual two-day session of the institute in a hall separate from the general meeting, and only women attend. Two topics are presented for discussion, one by a woman sent by the state, the other by a woman from the town or a neighboring farm. Topics concerning child-training, making housework easier, home life on the farm, and even themes relating to the problems that center about the sex question, are thoroughly discussed. Women take part much more freely than they do in the general sessions of the institute. Across the border, in Ontario, the women have formed separate institutes, as they have also in Indiana.

All this means a new opportunity for the farm woman. The Grange is an organization, and its members gain all the development that comes from engaging in the work required to maintain a semi-literary and social organization. The institute, on the other hand, is an event, and there cluster about it all the inspiration and suggestion that can come from any notable convention for which one will sacrifice not a little in order to attend. Institute work for women is in its beginnings.

So far we have found that existing institutions for women in rural districts bring together merely the women of the farm. In the women's section of the

institutes half the audience is usually from the town. This meeting occurs, however, but once a year, and the social effect of the commingling of city and farm women can prove only suggestive of the desirability of further opportunity for similar gatherings. At a Michigan institute some years ago this desire fructified, and the product was a "Town and Country Club." This club secured a majority of its membership, of some ninety, from among women residing on farms. Its meetings are bi-weekly. It is to be hoped that this sort of club may be organized in large numbers. It represents another step in the emancipation of the farm woman, because it brings her into contact with her city sister—and contact that is immediate, vital, inspiring, continuous, and mutually helpful. It may be thought unnecessary to form a new set of clubs for the purpose indicated, but the fact seems to be that the ordinary women's club even in small towns has failed to reach the woman who makes her home upon the farm.

Another feature of this idea of the Town and Country Club is the "rest room" for farmers' wives. In a number of cases where this has been tried, the women of the village or town provide a room as near the shopping center of the town as possible, where the country women can find a place to rest, to lunch, and to leave their children. These rooms are fitted up in a neat but inexpensive manner with the necessary conveniences, and are entirely free to those for whom they were intended. If these rooms are well managed, they offer not only a very practical form of assistance to the women of the farm, but they may be the means of developing a form of co-operation between the women of the village and the farm, and eventually leading to some permanent scheme of mutual work. Possibilities of this sort of thing are

easily recognized.

In the realms of higher education the girl who is to stay upon the farm has not been wholly neglected. In Kansas, Iowa, Connecticut, Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan, at least, and in connection with the agricultural colleges of those states, courses for women (including domestic science) have been provided. They are well patronized by girls from the farm. Many of these girls do not marry farmers; many of them do. And their college training having thus been secured in an atmosphere more or less agricultural, they must inevitably take rank among their sisters of the farm as leaders in demonstrating what farm life for women may be.

Nor should it be forgotten that the tremendous movement of recent years which has so multiplied standard reading-matter, both periodicals and books, has reached the farm. A census of country post-offices will reveal the fact that the standard magazines go regularly to thousands of farm homes. Agricultural papers, religious papers, and even dailies find multitudes of intelligent readers among farmers.

With the advent of better highways, electric car lines, rural free delivery, and the rural telephone, each of which is looming on the horizon as an important feature of American farm life; with the Grange or similar organization in every school district; with the development of courses for women at all our colleges of agriculture, and the logical complement of such courses in the form of college extension—farmers' institutes, reading-courses, traveling libraries, lecture and correspondence courses—we shall find farm life taking on a new

dress, and perhaps farmers' wives may come to enjoy the envy of those women who are unfortunate enough not to have married farmers.

CHAPTER XII

THE COUNTRY CHURCH AND PROGRESS

The only way to an understanding of the relation of the church to rural progress is through an appreciation of the place which the church as a social institution may have among other social institutions affecting rural life. Moreover, to know the value of these institutions one must first know the rural social needs. May we not then, even at the risk of repetition, take a brief survey of these needs and institutions, in order that we may more clearly attain the proper point of view?

At the outset let us be sure that we have sympathy with the countryman as such. It is often argued that the rural question, or any phase of it, as for instance the question of the rural church, is important because the country supplies the best blood to the city—and a roll-call of the famous country-born is read to prove the point. This may be all true. But it is only a partial view, for it places the emphasis upon the leaving of the farm, whereas the emphasis should be placed upon the farm and those who stay there. We may praise the country because it furnishes brain and brawn for the world's work; we may argue for

country life because it possesses a good environment in which to rear a family; we may demand a school system that shall give the country child as good a chance as the city child has. In all this we do well. But we do not yet stand face to face with the rural problem.

For the rural problem is the problem of those who farm. It is the problem of the man behind the plow. It is he that is the center of interest. His business, his success, his manhood, his family, his environment, his education, his future—these constitute the problem of the farm. Half our people make their living from the brown soil. In virtue, in intelligence, in real worth, this half compare favorably with the other half who saw wood, and shovel sand, and pull throttles, and prepare briefs, and write sermons. The business of agriculture provides directly for the material welfare of nearly forty millions of our people. It supports gigantic railway systems, fills the hulls of immense ships, furnishes raw material for thousands of industries. This rural hemisphere of American economic and social life is surely worthy the thought of the captain of industry, of the statesman, of the economist, of the educator, of the preacher. We may also, without danger of being put to confusion, assume that the tiller of the soil is in essential character very much like other people. Farmer nature is usually a fair specimen of human nature. Nevertheless the environment of the farmer is a peculiar one. Individually as well as socially he is comparatively isolated. He meets but little social friction. The class to which he belongs is largely a segregated class, physically and socially.

All these things give to the rural social problem a distinctive character and give rise to the great social

needs of the farmer. What are these needs? I name three: (1) *Completer organization.* Farmers do not co-operate easily. They never had to co-operate largely under the old régime, for pioneer farming placed a premium on individualism. The present century however, with its emphasis upon organization and co-operation, calls the farmer to the task with the warning cry that unless he does organize he is in danger of losing his present industrial, political, and social status. (2) *Better education.* The rural schools may not be so deficient as to deserve all the scorn heaped upon them by educational reformers; but it is little enough to say that they can be vastly improved. They are not keeping up with city schools. The country is especially lacking in good high-school privileges. Of technical training too, in spite of forty years of agricultural colleges, the country is sadly in need. Neither in primary grades, in high schools, in special schools, is there an adequate amount of study of the principles of agriculture—principles which an age of science demands must be mastered if the independent farmer is to be a success. (3) *Quicker communication.* Isolation has been the bugbear of farm life. It must be overcome partly by physical means. There must be a closer touch between individuals of the class, and between farmers and the dwellers in the town and city.

These social needs are in some degree met by the farmers' organizations, by the rural and agricultural schools, and by the development of new means of communication. There is a host of minor agencies. In other chapters I have tried to show how these various institutions are endeavoring to meet these rural needs. So important are these factors of rural life that we may now raise the question, What should be the relation of the rural church to these needs and

to the agencies designed to meet them? In dealing with this phase of the subject, we may best speak of the church most frequently in terms of the pastor, for reasons that may appear as we go on.

There are three things the country pastor may do in order to bring his church into vital contact with these great sociological movements. Of course he *may* ignore them, but that is church suicide. (1) He may recognize them. This means first of all to understand them, to appreciate their influence. There is a law of the division of labor that applies to institutions as well as to individuals. This law helps us to understand how such institutions as the Grange and farmers' institutes are doing a work that the church cannot do. They are doing a work that needs doing. They are serving human need. No pastor can afford to ignore them, much less in sneer at them as unclean; he may well apply the lesson of Peter's vision, and accept them as ministers of the kingdom. (2) He may encourage and stimulate them. The rural pastor may throw himself into the van of those who strive for better farming, for a quicker social life, for more adequate educational facilities. He can well take up the rôle of promoter—a promoter of righteousness and peace through so-called secular means. Thus shall he perform the highest function of the prophet—to spiritualize and glorify the common. But the rural pastor can go even farther. (3) He may co-operate with them. He may thus assist in uniting with the church all of those other agencies that make for rural progress, and thus secure a "federation," if not "of the world," at least of all the forces that are helping to solve the farm problem; and he may thus found a "parliament," if not "of man," at least of all who believe that the rural question is worth solving and that no one movement is sufficient to solve it.

We come now to the most practical part of our subject, which is, how the proposed relation between church and other rural social forces may be secured. There are four suggestions along this line.

1. Sociological study by the rural pastor. This is fundamental. In general it means a fairly comprehensive study of sociological principles, some study of sociological problems, and some practice in sociological investigation. As it relates to the rural pastor, it means also a knowledge of rural sociology. It implies a grasp of the principles and significance of modern agricultural science, an understanding of the history, status, and needs of rural and agricultural education, an appreciation of and sympathy for the co-operative movements among farmers. Does one say, this is asking too much of the burdened country pastor with his meager salary and widespread parish? Let me ask if the pastor has any other road to power except *to know*? Moreover, the task is not so formidable as first appears. The pastor is supposed to be a trained student, and since he needs to know these things only in broad lines, the acquiring of them need not compel the midnight oil. I would, however, urge that every pastor have a course in general sociology, either in college or in seminary, and if he has the slightest intimation that his lines will be cast in country places, that he add a course in rural sociology. Inasmuch as the latter course is at present offered in few academic institutions in the United States, it might well be urged that brief courses in rural sociology be offered at the many summer schools.

But sociological study by the pastor means more than knowledge of the general principles of sociology and of the problems of rural sociology; it means a minute

and comprehensive sociological study of his particular parish. This in its simplest form consists of a religious canvass such as is frequently made both in country and city. But even this is not enough. It should at once be supplemented by a very careful and indeed a continuous sociological canvass, in which details about the whole business and life of the farm shall be collected and at last assimilated into the vital structure of the pastor's knowledge of his problem.

2. The second suggestion looks toward the establishment of a social-service church, or an institutional church, or again, as one has phrased it, a "country church industrial." There seems to be a growing feeling that the country church may become not only the distinctively religious center of the neighborhood, but also the social, the intellectual, and the aesthetic center. No doubt there is untold power in such an idea. No doubt the country church has a peculiarly rich and inviting field for community service. It would be gratifying if every country pastor would study the possibilities of this idea and endeavor to make an experiment with it. I have, however, a supplemental suggestion, at this point. It is not possible to make of every rural church an institutional church. The church is notably a conservative institution. The rural church is in this respect "to the manner born." Rural church members are likely to be ultra-conservative, especially as to means and methods. Even if this were not true, we might well lament any attempt to establish a social-service church that endeavored to make the church the sole motive power in rural regeneration, that failed to recognize, to encourage, and to co-operate with the other social forces which we have mentioned. But if every country pastor cannot have a

social-service church, is it not possible that every country church shall have a social-service pastor? There are some things the church cannot *do*; there is nothing it may not through its pastor *inspire*. There are some uses to which the country church cannot be put; there are no uses to which the country pastor may not be put—as country pastors know by experience. The pastor ought to be an authority on social salvation as well as on personal salvation. He ought to be guide, philosopher, and friend in community affairs as well as in personal affairs. Is he not indeed the logical candidate for general social leadership in the rural community? He is educated, he is trained to think, he is supposed to have broad grasp of the meaning of affairs, he usually possesses many of the qualities of leadership. He is *relatively* a fixture. He is less transient than the teacher. He is the only man in the community whose tastes are sociological and who is at the same time a paid man —all this aside from the question of the munificence of his stipend. Let us then have the social-service rural church if we can; but let us have the social-service rural pastor at all hazards, as the first term in the formula for solving the sociological problem of the country church.

3. Co-operation among rural churches. The manifest lack of co-operation among churches seems to many laymen to result in a tremendous waster of power. Of course it is a very hard problem. But is it insoluble? It would seem not. One would think that the plan of union suggested by Dr. Strong in *The New Era* is wholly practicable. But the burden of the suggestion at this point is this: Cannot the churches unite sufficiently for a thorough religious and sociological canvass? If they cannot federate on a theological platform, can they not unite on a statistical platform?

If they cannot unite for religious work, can they not join hands long enough to secure a more intelligent basis for their separate work? It seems to me that this sort of union is worth while, and that it is something in which there could be full union, in which "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free."

4. The pastor may aid if not lead in the federation of rural social forces. The idea involved is substantially this: Given a farmers' organization that ministers chiefly to industrial and economic ends, though incidentally to moral and educational ones; a school system that feeds chiefly the accepted educational needs, though acting perhaps as a moving force in industrial and social betterment; a church which is chiefly a religious institution, but which touches the life of the community at many other points—given these things and the obvious next step is co-operation among them all, in order that a well-balanced kind of social progress may result. This form of federation means the attempt to solve the farm problem at all points. It suggests that the army of rural progress shall march with the wings abreast the center. It means that the farmer, the editor, the educator, the preacher—all, shall see the work that needs doing, in all its fulness, and, seeing, shall resolve to push ahead side by side.

To sum up: The rural problem is a neglected but exceedingly important question. Out of the peculiar environment of the farmer grow his peculiar social needs, namely, better organization, fuller and richer education, quicker communication. To meet these supreme needs we find a growing and already powerful coterie of farmers' organizations, somewhat heterogeneous but rapidly developing plans of

agricultural education, and a marvelous evolution of the means of transportation for body, voice, and missive. These needs and these agencies are selected as the conspicuous and vital element in the sociological problem that confronts the rural pastor. What shall be his attitude toward them? He *may* ignore them; but we assume that he will seek to work with them and to use them for the greater glory of God. He must then recognize them, encourage them, and co-operate with them. To do this successfully he must first be a student of sociology; he can then well afford to meditate upon the possibilities of making his church in some measure a social-service church or at least of making of himself a social-service pastor; he can work for church union at least on sociological lines; and finally he can do his best to secure an active federation of all the forces involved in the rural problem.

CHAPTER XIII

A SUMMARY OF RECENT PROGRESS

In some respects the most notable recent advance in rural matters consists in the improved means of communication in rural districts. The country is relatively isolated, and it is this isolation in its extreme forms that is the bane of country living. Undue conservatism, lack of conformity to progressive views, undue prominence of class feeling, and a tendency to be less alert are things that grow

out of this isolation; but better means of communication decrease these difficulties, and the last few years have seen a remarkable advance in this respect. For instance, the rural free mail delivery system is only ten years old, and yet today there are more than twenty-five thousand routes of this character in the United States serving possibly twenty million people with daily mail, a great proportion of whom before had very irregular mail service. Results are patent and marked. Time is saved in going for mail; market reports come daily; farmers are more prompt in their business dealings; roads are kept in better shape; there is an increased circulation of papers and magazines. Thus the farmer is in closer touch with affairs and much more alert to business opportunities, to political activities, and to social movements. The circulation of daily papers in country districts has increased at a marvelous rate. The amount of letter-writing has increased. Rural delivery of mail arouses the spirit of "being in the world." Its results have been almost revolutionary.

So, too, the rural telephone. Recent investigation in the states of Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana showed that out of 200,000 subscribers to the independent telephone companies of those states about one-sixth were in farm homes. A few years ago, hardly a telephone could be found in a farmer's family. This business is constantly increasing. The established telephone companies are pushing their work into the country districts, small local exchanges are being formed, and soon the farmers, in the North at least, will be almost as well served by the telephone as are people of the smaller cities.

Interurban electric railways are being built very rapidly and their advantage to the farmer is obvious.

It is doubtful if their effect has been quite so far-reaching as some have suggested. At present they very largely parallel existing steam railways, and while they give better freight and passenger service and assist materially in diminishing rural isolation in the areas which they traverse, their influence does not extend very far from the line itself, and they reach relatively small areas of the country. However, their value to the farmer is very large, and, as they increase in number and in efficiency of service, they will become a powerful factor in rural progress.

The good-roads movement is beginning to take on large proportions. It is, however, a complicated question. To make first-class roads is a costly business, and while a few such roads are of great value in a general social way, they do not quite make general country conditions ideal. To accomplish this, every road in the country should be a good road the year through, and this is an ideal very difficult of realization. However, in general, the roads are improving and as rapidly as the wealth of the country will permit the road system of the United States will be developed. Of course, good roads are a prime requisite for rural betterment.

In general, it may be said that during the past decade the improvement of means of communication in rural districts has gone forward at a marvelously rapid pace. Nor is it exaggerating to say that the movements named are re-creating farm life.

During this same period, there has been an almost equally wonderful advance in the means of agricultural education. Just twenty years ago the experiment-station system of this country was established. It took ten years for the stations to

organize their work and to gain the confidence of the farmers. At present however, they are looked upon with great favor by the farming class and are doing a magnificent work. Their function is that of research chiefly, although they attempt some control service, such as inspection of fertilizers, stock foods, etc. In research they aim both to study the more intricate scientific questions that relate to agriculture and to carry on experiments that are of more obvious and more immediate practical application to existing conditions in the various states. There is one of these stations in each state and territory, besides a number of stations supported by state funds. The Department of Agriculture at Washington has also developed during the last ten years until it is performing very large service for agriculture. Its annual expenditures aggregate eight or ten million dollars, and it has in its employment hundreds of experts carrying on laboratory and field research, scouring the world for plants and seeds that may be of economic value, and assisting to control plant and animal diseases. It is also distributing a vast amount of practical information, put in readable form and adapted to the average farmer. Its work of seeking to extend the markets of our agricultural products is one of its notable successes.

Agricultural schools have been talked about for a century, and during the early part of the last century several were started. The first permanent agricultural college was opened in 1857, in Michigan. The Morrill Act of 1862 gave rise to a system of such colleges and today there will be found one in every state and territory, besides several for the colored people of the South. Up to 1890, these colleges had been not wholly satisfactory and the farming class was not patronizing very fully their agricultural

courses. The fault belonged both to the college and to the farmers. The farmers were skeptical of the value of agricultural education, and the colleges were often out of sympathy with the real needs of the farmers, and in fact found it difficult to break away from the pedagogical ideals of the old educational régime. Since 1890, however, there has been a complete change of sentiment in this respect, particularly in the Middle West. There the "land-grant" colleges, whether separate colleges or whether organized as colleges of state universities, are securing magnificent buildings for agriculture, are offering fully equipped courses, and are enrolling as students some of the best men in college, whom they are educating not only for agricultural teachers and experimenters but also for practical farmers. Of course, there are many grave problems connected with this subject, many farmers who do not yet respond to the call for educated agriculturists, and some colleges that do not yet appreciate their opportunity. But the change for the better has been so marked that all agricultural educators are extremely optimistic.

One of the most difficult and most important phases of agricultural education is that of a secondary grade. The great proportion of educated farmers will probably be trained for their business in secondary schools. This problem is being approached from many standpoints. The University of Minnesota established, some fourteen years ago, a school of agriculture, which now enrols several hundred pupils of both sexes. Wisconsin is trying the experiment of two county schools of agriculture. Occasionally the public high school will be found offering a course in agriculture. Several states are experimenting in one or more of these lines, and during the next few years

we shall see a large development of this phase of agricultural education.

One of the most interesting movements in agricultural education has been an attempt to introduce nature-study and even the elements of agriculture into the country schools. Cornell University has taken the lead in advocating "nature-study" purely, for the schools; and the University of Missouri has perhaps been the leader in advocating that the work be made even more definite and practical, and that the country pupils shall be taught, during their early years even, "the elements of agriculture." Both plans are being worked out with a fair degree of success, and many other states are carrying out the work in some form or other. Of course the idea is not a new one, but its present practical application is a timely one, and it will not be long before this branch of agricultural education will become a prominent factor in rural betterment.

A most suggestive phase of agricultural education is college extension work. University extension has had a rather meteoric career in this country, in so far as it has been connected with educational institutions; although the extension idea is spreading rapidly and is being worked out through home study and correspondence courses of all sorts. But I think there is scarcely any field in which the real college extension idea is today being more successfully applied than in agriculture. The work started with farmers' institutes, which were instituted about twenty-five years ago and which have been adopted in practically all the states of the Union. It has broadened within ten years, until now it is carried on not only by farmers' institutes, but through home-

correspondence courses, the introduction of millions of pamphlets into farm homes, demonstrations in spraying, butter-making, soil testing, milk testing, and so on.

Ontario presents a good illustration of how a new agriculture can be created, in a dozen years, by co-operating methods of agricultural education. Her provincial department of agriculture, her experiment station, her agricultural college, her various forms of extension work, and her various societies of agriculturists have all worked together with an unusual degree of harmony for the deliberate purpose of inducing Canadian agriculturists to produce the things that will bring the most profit. The results have been most astonishing and most gratifying.

The recent progress in the organization of farmers has been less marked than has been the development of rural communication and agricultural education. Organization is a prime requisite for farmers. They feel this truth themselves. For the last forty years, many attempts—some large, some small, some successful, some great failures—have been made to this end. The problem is an extremely difficult one. Business co-operation among farmers is especially difficult and, while co-operation has developed quite largely—so much so that the Department of Agriculture was able to report, a year ago, a list of five thousand co-operative societies of various kinds among farmers—still it cannot be said that the farmers are co-operating industrially in a relatively large way. They have, however, a multitude of associations and societies. They have also the Grange, which is the most successful of all the general organizations of farmers in the country.

Contrary to public belief, the Grange is not defunct, but has been growing at a very rapid pace during the last few years and has a large influence especially in the East and Middle West. It has practically no existence in the far West and in the South. It has a national organization, however, representing some twenty-six states. Its influence in Congress is said to be marked. The local Granges are doing a very large work, socially, educationally, and sometimes financially. The Grange seems to understand itself now. Its ideals have been worked out pretty carefully, and its future growth is quite certain.

We have suggested that the significant rural social movements of the past few years have been the improvement of rural communication, the wonderful development of agricultural education, and the fairly satisfactory development of organization among farmers. It seems also apparent that there is a fourth line of development that might be mentioned as being significant, and it may be expressed in a somewhat general statement that the interest in agricultural questions has increased in a very marked way. There is undoubtedly a new emphasis upon country life generally. The people of the cities have been going to the country more than ever before. A walk, the length of Beacon Street in Boston, at any time from the middle of June to late autumn, convinces one that the majority of the people are somewhere in the country. All over the North, city people are making country homes for at least a portion of the year. There is also a growing interest in the farm and farm problems among the general public. Just now the country schools are attracting special attention from the educators—so much so that the late President Harper stated, not long ago, that the rural-school question is the coming question

in education. Even the country church is being made a subject of discussion in religious circles. It is conceded that agriculture presents "problems." And while the throbbing, busy, intense life of the city brings perplexing questions to our civilization, our people are coming to realize that the agricultural population and the agricultural industry are still tremendous factors in our national life and success, and that both social and industrial conditions in the country are such that there also are grave questions to be settled.

In view of the facts which have been given, I think if one were asked to give a direct answer to the question, Is the farmer keeping up? one could reply, Yes. In some sections of the country, the farmers have not responded to these forward movements. The countryman is naturally conservative. Not only that, but there are some serious questions that he has to meet in his business and in his life. He finds it extremely and increasingly difficult to get adequate labor. He has not been able to take sufficient advantage of the power of co-operation. The industrial and social development of the city has lured away his children. And yet one cannot help feeling that these really remarkable advances of the past decade are prophetic of a steady improvement in rural conditions, of a larger development of rural life, of a greater prosperity for agriculture.

With regard to the future, it seems to me that, on the social side, the progress of the next few years is to be along the lines, indicated above, which have characterized the past ten or a dozen years. Still further improved means of communication will tend to banish isolation and its drawbacks. Realization of the benefits of organization and ability to co-operate

will vastly strengthen class power. The means of agricultural education will be developed very rapidly, with the ideal in mind of being able to furnish some sort of agricultural training for every individual who lives upon the farm. The country question, as a whole, will attract increasing attention. Gradually it will be seen that the rural problem is one of the greatest interest to all our citizens. The spirit of co-operation will grow until not only the farmers themselves unite for their own class interests but the various social agencies—industrial, religious, educational—ministering to rural betterment will find themselves also co-operating. Thus, it seems to me, the outlook for the future is full of hope. A genuine forward movement for rural betterment has had its beginning, is now gathering volume, and will soon attain very large proportions.

FORWARD STEPS

CHAPTER XIV

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF THE FARM QUESTION

There is a proverb in Grange circles which expresses also the fundamental aim of all agricultural education—"The farmer is of more consequence than the farm and should be first improved." The first term in all agricultural prosperity is the man behind the plow. Improved agriculture is a matter of fertile brain rather than of fertile field. Mind culture must precede soil culture.

But if the improved man is the first term in improved agriculture, if he is the effective cause of rural progress, he is also the last term and the choice product of genuine agricultural advancement. We may paraphrase the sordid, "raise more corn to feed more hogs to buy more land to raise more corn, etc.," into the divine, "train better farmers to make better farming to grow better farmers, etc." We want trained men that we may have an advancing agricultural art, that we may make every agricultural acre render its maximum. The improved acre, however, must yield not only corn but civilization, not only potatoes but culture, not only wheat but effective manhood.

But we may carry the point a step farther. The individual farmer is the starting-point and the end of agriculture, it is true. But the lone farmer is an anomaly, either as a cause or as a product, as the lone man is everywhere. As an effective cause we must have co-operating individuals, and as an end we desire an improved community and a higher-grade *class* of farmers.

The farm question then is a social question. Valuable as are the contributions of science to the problems of soil and plant and animal, the ultimate contribution comes from the development of improved men. So the real end is not merely to utilize each acre to its utmost, nor to provide cheap food for the people who do not farm, nor yet to render agriculture industrially strong. The gravest and most far-reaching consideration is the social and patriotic one of endeavoring to develop and maintain an agricultural class which represents the very best type of American manhood and womanhood, to make the farm home the ideal home, to bring agriculture to such a state that the business will always attract the keen and the strong who at the same time care more for home and children and state and freedom than for millions. In other words, the maintenance of the typical American farmer—the man who is essentially middle class, who is intelligent, who keeps a good standard of living, educates his children, serves his country, owns his medium-sized farm, and who at death leaves a modest estate—the maintenance of the typical American farmer is the real agricultural problem.

If this analysis is a correct one, it will vitally affect our plans for agricultural training. The student will be taught not only soil physics, but social

psychology. He will learn not only the action of bacteria in milk fermentation, but the underlying causes of the social ferment among the farmers of the last thirty years. He will concern himself with the value of farmers' organizations as well as with the co-operating influences of high-bred corn and high-bred steers. The function and organization of the rural school will be as serious a problem to him as the building and management of the co-operative creamery. The country church and its career will interest him fully as much as does the latest successful device for tying milch cows in the stable. He will want to get at the kernel of the political questions that confront agriculture just as fully and thoroughly as he wishes to master the formulae for commercial fertilizers. No man will have acquired an adequate agricultural education who has not been trained in rural social science, and who does not recognize the bearing of this wide field of thought upon the business of farming as well as upon American destiny.

Research, too, will be touched with the social idea. The men who study conditions existing in rural communities which have to do with the real life of the people—the effects of their environment, the tendencies of their habits and customs—will need as thorough preparation for their work, and the result of their efforts will be as useful as that of the men who labor in field and laboratory.

But the most profound consequence of recognizing the social side of the farm question will be the new atmosphere created at the agricultural colleges. These institutions are fast gaining leadership in all the technical questions of agriculture—leadership gladly granted by progressive farmers whenever the

institution is managed with intelligence and in the spirit of genuine sympathy with farming. But these colleges must minister to the *whole farmer*. They must help the farmer solve all his problems, whether these problems are scientific, or economic, or social, or political. And let it be said in all earnestness that in our rapidly shifting industrial order, the farmer's interest in the political, social, and economic problems of his calling is fully as great as it is in those purely scientific and technical. And rightly so. A prime steer is a triumph. But it will not of itself keep the farmer free. The 50-bushels-of-wheat acre is a grand business proposition provided the general industrial conditions favor the grower as well as the consumer. When our agricultural colleges enter into the fullest sympathy with all the rural problems, when the farm home and the rural school and the country church and the farmer's civic rights and duties and all the relations of his business to other industries—when these questions are "in the air" of our agricultural colleges, then and then alone will these colleges fulfil their true mission of being *all things to all farmers*.

CHAPTER XV

THE NEEDS OF NEW ENGLAND AGRICULTURE

One might name a score of important activities that should be encouraged in order to better New

England agriculture. But the two fundamental needs are (1) adaptation and (2) co-operation.

By adaptation is meant such development of agriculture as shall more fully utilize existing physical and commercial conditions. The West has for seventy-five years pressed hard upon New England farming. But along with this western competition has come a new opportunity for the eastern farmer. New England farmers as a whole have not quickly enough responded to this new opportunity. Many of their troubles may be traced to the failure to adapt themselves to the new conditions. The men in New England who have met the new opportunity are succeeding.

What does this adaptation consist in? It means, first, the adaptation of the New England farmer to his markets. In most parts of the country the type of farming is perhaps more dependent upon physical conditions of soil and climate than upon the immediate market. In New England the reverse is now true, and the type of New England farming must be adapted, absolutely and completely, to the demands of its market. New England farmers have the most superb markets in the country. Of the six million people in New England, approximately 75 per cent. live in the cities and villages. There are, in New England, thirty cities having a population of twenty-five thousand or more. The great majority of these cities are manufacturing cities peopled by the best class of consumers in the world—the American skilled artisan. They constitute a nearby market that demands fresh products which cannot be transported across a continent. New England is also especially favored in its nearness to the European market. The New England farmer then must adapt his crops, his

methods, and his style of farming to his peculiar market.

In the second place, this adaptation must be one of soil, just as anywhere else, only the problem here becomes more complicated because of the varied character of the farming lands. How to make the valleys and the hills, the rocky ridges and the sand plains of New England yield their largest possibilities in agriculture is a problem of the greatest scientific and industrial interest, and it is the problem that New England agriculture has to face. In this connection comes also the need of special varieties adapted not only to the market but to the soil and climate.

This principle of adaptation is the industrial key to future agricultural development in New England. But to achieve this adaptation, to make the key work, there is needed the force of social organization. The farmer must be reached before the farm can be improved. The man who treads the furrow is a greater factor than nitrogen or potash. How is this man to be reached, inspired, instructed? Largely by some form of organization. The second and greater need therefore is co-operation.

Co-operation means faith in agriculture—a faith too seldom found in the Israel of New England's yeomanry. Co-operation means ideals—ideals of rural possibilities too seldom dreamed of in the philosophy of the Yankee farmer. Co-operation means power—power that cannot be acquired by the lone man, not even by the resolute individualism so dominant in New England character.

There are three forms of co-operation, all of which are desirable and even essential if the most rapid

agricultural progress in New England is to be secured —co-operation among individuals, among organizations, among states.

The farmers of New England must work together. The Grange is stronger in New England than in any other portion of the country of similar area—yet not one farmer in ten belongs to the Grange. We need not dwell on this point, for it is a truth constantly preached through the Grange and through other means. Let me suggest two ideas relative to co-operation which have not received so much attention.

Each organization has its peculiar work. The school is to train the young, the agricultural college to prepare the youth, the farmers' institute to instruct and inspire the middle-aged and mature. The experiment station seeks to discover the means by which nature and man may better work together. The producers' unions endeavor to secure a fair price for their goods. The Grange enlarges the views of its members and brings the power which comes from working together, buying together, meeting together, talking together, acting together. Boards of agriculture control conditions of health and disease among animals and plants. The country fair educates and interests. The church crowns all in its ministrations of spiritual vision, moral uplift, and insistence upon character as the supreme end of life.

But no institution can do the work of the others. They are members one of another. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee. All these things make for rural progress. None can be spared. The Grange cannot take the place of the church. The institute cannot supplant the Grange. The college

course cannot reach the adult farmer. The experiment station cannot instruct the young. The church cannot secure reforms in taxation.

These agencies may however co-operate. Indeed the most rapid and most secure rural progress, the broadest and soundest agricultural growth, can not take place unless there be this form of co-operation. There will come added interest, increased efficiency, larger views, greater ambitions in our agricultural development, if, in each state, all of these forces work together.

We may therefore welcome most cordially the proposed plan of federating the various agricultural societies of each state into one grand committee organized for the purpose of forwarding all the agricultural interests of that state. Let there be, moreover, a "League for Rural Progress," in each state or, at least, an annual conference on rural progress, in each state, in which the representatives of the farmers' societies, of the schools, of the churches, and indeed all other people who have the slightest interest in rural advancement may meet to discuss plans and methods which shall better agriculture and the farmer.

But this is not enough. There ought to be co-operation among these various social institutions without respect to state lines. The farm problem in New England is one problem, although differing in details, it is true, in different states. Co-operation should not stop with the federating of the organizations of a state. There is no reason, for instance, why the agricultural colleges and experiment stations of New England should not co-operate. It is not practicable to prevent all

duplication of work. I do suggest the desirability and the feasibility of genuine co-operation.

Why should not those in charge of the rural schools of all New England meet together and discuss the difficulties and achievements as they exist in different states? Why not have a "New England Society for Agricultural Education," in which all organizations and all individuals who are interested in any phase of this subject may meet for discussing New England problems? Could not boards of agriculture co-operate to some extent, especially in farmers' institute work with general plans and ideas? Certainly conferences between these boards ought to yield most valuable results. Is the idea of a genuine New England fair a mere dream?

Cannot the Granges of New England profitably co-operate more fully? It is true that there is considerable intervisitation, and yet the rank and file of members in one state know comparatively little of the progress and methods of the Grange in an adjoining state; this knowledge is confined to a few leaders. Would it not be worth while to attempt an occasional New England assemblage of Grange members, a representative gathering for discussing Grange work and for enthusing the Grange people of New England with the possibilities of still further Grange development?

The idea of New England as a unit of interest in church matters is already exemplified by the appointment of a New England secretary of the federation of churches. It is not too much to expect that, in the near future, all the means for church federation in New England shall work together, because it is evident that co-operation and unity are

demanded by the nature of the field.

And finally, is it idle to think that there might be a New England League for Rural Progress or, at least, a New England Conference on Rural Progress, which shall bring from every corner of New England representatives of the agricultural colleges, of the Granges, of the country church, of the rural school, of the country press, and all other individuals who believe in the possibilities of New England agriculture, and in the efficiency of the fullest and freest co-operation?

There are several powerful reasons why an attempt to better New England agriculture will be greatly aided by co-operation that includes every inch of New England soil from Boston harbor to the Berkshires, and from Mt. Katahdin to Point Judith.

(1) The importance of New England agriculture. In the appended table is attempted a comparison between New England as a unit, the state of Michigan representing an average agricultural state, and the state of Iowa representing the foremost agricultural state. The figures, taken from the Census of 1900, are given in round numbers. Such a table is not conclusive as to agricultural conditions. But it is very suggestive as to the importance of New England agriculture both industrially and socially. It will be seen that, with an area only a little larger than Michigan, New England compares in every respect favorably with that average state and, in some respects, excels it, while it excels both Michigan and Iowa by 65 per cent. in gross value of product per acre of improved land.

(2) Agricultural conditions all over New England are quite similar. Speaking broadly, the soil and climate

of one state are the soil and climate of another. The people are of the same stock, the same views, the same habits, the same traditions. The demand of the market is fairly uniform for different sections. The New England city is the New Englander's special possession as a market. Farm labor conditions are much the same. In fact, there is hardly a portion of our country, of the same area, which in all these respects yields itself more completely to the idea of unity.

(3) The hopefulness of the farm problem. Nearly four millions of city people live in New England. They must be fed. The nearness of the market means high-class products. This means intensive agriculture. Intensive agriculture means education and intelligence. The cities are growing. Their power of consumption is steadily and rapidly increasing.

(4) The unusual social equipment. It must be remembered that in an area but little larger than Iowa, which has one agricultural college and one agricultural experiment station and no Granges to speak of, New England has, in comparison, six agricultural colleges, six experiment stations, six boards of agriculture, over a thousand Granges, and numerous agricultural societies. The means of agricultural education in New England are more numerous and may be more efficient than in any other portion of this country of similar area. Moreover, the cities are now in a position to help solve the problem in New England. They have leaders. There are in them men with leisure and talent who are interested in this problem and who are willing to help solve it.

(5) The sentimental side. A campaign for rural

progress, with New England as the unit, ought to arouse the pride and enthusiasm of all the sons and daughters of New England who still have the privilege of living within her borders, as well as the interest and sympathy of all her grandsons who, though living under western skies, still cherish in their hearts the deepest affection for their Fatherland. Shall not the idea of uniting all the forces of agricultural betterment that exist in New England be a stimulus to every farmer in the six states, and, indeed, attract the sympathy and practical aid of every lover of New England soil?

Adaptation, co-operation: these are the primary needs of New England agriculture; an adaptation of the farmer and his farm to existing conditions, a co-operation that unites individual farmers into various associated efforts, that federates the work and influence of the different social agencies within the state, and that ultimately secures the unity of all New England in a great movement for rural advancement.

New England Michigan Iowa

Total land	62,000	57,500	55,500
area—	192,000	203,000	229,000
square	20,500,000	17,500,000	34,600,000
miles	8,135,000	11,800,000	29,900,000
Number of	$640,000,000	$690,000,000	$1,835,000,000
farms	$170,000,000	$147,000,000	$365,000,000
Acreage in	290,000	312,000	372,000
farms	1,500,000	1,200,000	1,260,000
Acres of	$20	$12	$12
improved	1,200	725	
land	120,000	45,000	
Value of farms			
Value of farm products			
Persons engaged in agriculture			
Rural population			
Value of products per acre of improved land			
Number of Granges			
Number of Grange members			

CHAPTER XVI

AN UNTILLED FIELD IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

Agricultural education in this country has thus far been an attempt to apply a knowledge of the laws of the so-called "natural" sciences to the practical operations of the farm. Comparatively little attention has been paid to the application of the principles of the "social" sciences to the life of the farmer. All this is partly explained by the fact that the natural sciences were fairly well developed when the needs of the farmer called the scientist to work with and for the man behind the plow, when a vanishing soil fertility summoned the chemist to the service of the grain grower, when the improvement of breeds of stock and races of plants began to appeal to the biologist. Moreover, these practical applications of the physical and biological sciences are, and always will be, a fundamental necessity in the agricultural question.

But in the farm problem we cannot afford to ignore the economic and sociological phases. While it may be true that the practical success of the individual farmer depends largely upon his business sense and his technical education, it is folly to hope that the success of agriculture as an industry and the influence of farmers as a class can be based solely upon the ability of each farmer to raise a big crop and to sell it to advantage. General intelligence, appreciation of the trend of economic and social

forces, capacity to co-operate, ability to voice his needs and his rights, are just as vital acquirements for the farmer as knowing how to make two blades of grass grow where but one grew before. It finally comes to this, that the American farmer is obliged to study the questions that confront him as a member of the industrial order and as a factor in the social and political life of the nation, with as much zeal and understanding as he is expected to show in the study of those natural laws governing the soil and the crops and the animals that he owns.

In this connection it is significant to note that farmers themselves are already quite as interested in the social problems of their particular calling and in the general economic and political questions of the day, as they are in science applied to their business of tilling the soil. Not necessarily that they minimize the latter, but they seem instinctively to recognize that social forces may work them ill or work them good according to the direction and power of those forces. This statement is illustrated by the fact that the aims, purposes, labors, and discussions of the great farmers' organizations like the Grange are social in character, having to do with questions that are political, economic, sociological.

When, however, we turn to those public educational agencies that are intended to assist in the solution of the farm problem, we discover that they are giving slight attention to the social side of the question. An examination of the catalogues of the agricultural colleges, whether separate institutions or colleges of state universities, reveals the fact that, beyond elementary work in economics, in civics, and occasionally in sociology, little opportunity is given students to study the farm question from its social

standpoint. With a few exceptions, these institutions offer no courses whatever in rural social problems, and even in these exceptional cases the work offered is hardly commensurate with the importance of the subject. Nearly all our other colleges and universities are subject to the same comment. The average student of problems in economics and sociology and education gains on conception whatever of the importance and character of the rural phases of our industrial and social life.

It may be urged in explanation of this state of affairs that the liberal study of the social sciences in our colleges and universities and especially any large attention to the practical problems of economics and sociology, is a comparatively recent thing. This is true and is a good excuse. But it does not offer a reason why the social phases of agriculture should be longer neglected. The purpose of this article is less to criticize than to describe a situation and to urge the timeliness of the large development, in the near future, of rural social science.

At the outset the queries may arise, What is meant by rural social science? and, What is there to be investigated and taught under such a head? The answer to the first query has already been intimated. Rural social science is the application of the principles of the social sciences, especially of economics and sociology, to the problems that confront the American farmer. As a reply to the second query there are appended at the end of this chapter outlines of possible courses in agricultural economics and rural sociology, which were prepared by the writer for the exhibit in "rural economy" at the St. Louis exposition. There are also subjects that have a political bearing, such as local government in

the country, and primary reform in rural communities, which perhaps ought not to be omitted. So, too, various phases of home life and of art might be touched upon. The subjects suggested and others like them could be conveniently grouped into from two to a dozen courses, as circumstances might require.

What classes of people may be expected to welcome and profit by instruction of this character? (1) The farmers themselves. Assuming that our agricultural colleges are designed, among other functions, to train men and women to become influential farmers, no argument is necessary to show how studies in rural social science may help qualify these students for genuine leadership of their class of toilers. On the other hand, it may be remarked that no subjects will better lend themselves to college extension work than those named above. Lectures and lecture courses for granges, farmers' clubs, farmers' institutes, etc., on such themes would arouse the greatest interest. Correspondence and home study courses along these lines would be fully as popular as those treating of soils and crops. (2) Agricultural educators. The soil physicist or the agricultural chemist will not be a less valuable specialist in his own line, and he certainly will be a more useful member of the faculty of an agricultural college, if he has an appreciative knowledge of the farmer's social and economic status. This is even more true of men called to administer agricultural education in any of its phases. (3) Rural school administrators and the more progressive rural teachers. The country school can never become truly a social and intellectual center of the community until the rural educators understand the social environment of the farmer. (4)Country clergymen. The vision of a social-service

church in the country will remain but a dream unless, added to the possession of a heart for such work, the clergyman knows the farm problem sufficiently to appreciate the broader phases of the industrial and social life of his people. (5) Editors of farm papers, and of the so-called "country" papers. Probably the editors of the better class of agricultural papers are less in need of instruction such as that suggested than is almost anyone else. Yet the same arguments that now lead many young men aspiring to this class of journalism to regard a course in scientific agriculture as a vestibule to their work may well be used in urging a study of rural social science, especially at a time when social and economic problems are pressing upon the farmer. As for the country papers, the work of purveying local gossip and stirring the party kettle too often obscures the tremendous possibilities for a high-class service to the rural community which such papers may render. No men, in the agricultural states at least, have more real influence in their community than the trained, clean, manly, country editors—and there is a multitude of such men. If as a class they possessed also a wider appreciation of the farmer's industrial difficulties and needs, hardly anyone could give better service to the solution of the farm problem than could they. (6) Everybody else! That is to say, the agricultural question is big enough and important enough to be understood by educated people. The farmers are half our people. Farming is our largest single industrial interest. The capital invested in agriculture is four-fifths the capital invested in manufacturing and railway transportation combined. Whether an individual has a special interest in business, in economics, in education, or in religious institutions, he ought to know the place of the farm

and the farmer in that question. No one can have a full appreciation of the social and industrial life of the American people who is ignorant of the agricultural status.

The natural place to begin work in rural social science is the agricultural college. Future farmers and teachers of farmers are supposed to be there. The subjects embraced are as important in solving the farm problem as are biology, physics, or chemistry. No skilled farmer or leader of farmers should be without some reasonably correct notions of the principles that determine the position of agriculture in the industrial world. A brief study of the elements of political economy, of sociology, of civics, is not enough; no more than the study of the elements of botany, of chemistry and of zoölogy is enough. The specific problems of the farmer that are economic need elucidation alongside the study of soils and crops, of plant-and stock-breeding. And these economic topics should be thoroughly treated by men trained in social science, and not incidentally by men whose chief interest is technical agriculture.

The normal schools may well discuss the propriety of adding one or two courses which bear on the social and economic situation of the rural classes. While these schools do not now send out many teachers into rural schools, they may do so under the system of centralized schools; and in any event they furnish rural school administrators, as well as instructors of rural teachers. There seems to be a growing sentiment which demands of the school and of the teacher a closer touch with life as it is actually lived. How can rural teachers learn to appreciate the social function of the rural school, except they be taught?

Nor is there any reason why the theological seminaries, or at least the institutions that prepare the men who become country clergymen, should not cover some of the subjects suggested. If the ambition of some people to see the country church a social and intellectual center is to be realized, the minister must know the rural problem broadly. The same arguments that impel the city pastor to become somewhat familiar with the economic, social, and civic questions of the day hold with equal force when applied to the necessary preparation for the rural ministry.

The universities may be called upon to train teachers and investigators in rural social science for service in agricultural colleges, normal schools, and theological seminaries. Moreover, there is no good reason why any college or university graduate should not know more than he does about the farm problem. There can be little doubt that the interest in the farm question is very rapidly growing, and that the universities will be but meeting a demand if they begin very soon to offer courses in rural social science.

The arguments for rural social science rest, let us observe, not only upon its direct aid to the farmers themselves, but upon its value as a basis for that intelligent social service which preacher, teacher, and editor may render the farming class. It is an essential underlying condition for the successful federation of rural social forces. Indeed it should in some degree be a part of the equipment of every educated person.

It may not be out of place to add, in conclusion, that instruction in rural social problems should be placed

in the hands of men who are thoroughly trained in social science as well as accurate, experienced, and sympathetic observers of rural conditions. It would be mischievous indeed if in the desire to be progressive any educational institution should offer courses in rural social science which gave superficial or erroneous ideas about the scientific principles involved, or which encouraged in any degree whatever the notion that the farmer's business and welfare are not vitally and forever bound up with the business and welfare of all other classes.

OUTLINE FOR A BRIEF COURSE IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

I. Characteristics of the Agricultural Industry.
Dependence upon nature.
Capital and labor as applied to agriculture.
The laws of rent and of decreasing returns in agriculture.
Relation of agriculture to other industries and to the welfare of mankind.

II. History of the Agricultural Industry.
In ancient times.
Status in Europe prior to the eighteenth century.
The struggle to maintain its standing after the advent of commerce and manufacture.
In the United States.
The pioneer stage.
Development of commercial agriculture.
The new farming.

III. Present Status of the Farming Industry.
The world's food supply.
Agricultural resources of the United States.
Geographical factors.
Soils, climate, fertility, natural enemies, etc.
Statistics of farms, farm wealth, production, etc.
Leading sub-industries, cereals, stock, etc.
Distribution of production.

IV. The Agricultural Market.
Description of the market—local, domestic, foreign.
Mechanism of the market.
Banks and local exchange facilities.
Middlemen.
Boards of trade.
Prices of agricultural products.
Movements of prices.
Agricultural competition.
Depressions of agriculture.
Influence of "options."
Transportation of agricultural products.
Primary transportation—wagon roads and trolley lines.
Railroad and water transportation.
Facilities.
Rates.
Discriminations.
Delivery methods.
Incidents of the transportation system—elevators, etc.
Imperfect distribution of agricultural products.
Development of the market.
Increase of consumption of products—manufacture of farm products as a factor.
The factor of choicer products.
The factor of better distribution of products.

The local market as a factor.
The foreign market as a factor.

V. Business Co-operation in Agriculture.
Historical sketch.
Present status.
Production.
Marketing.
Buying.
Miscellaneous business co-operation.
Difficulties and tendencies.

VI. Agriculture and Legislation.
Land laws and land policies of the United States.
Agriculture and the tariff.
Taxation and agriculture.
Food and dairy laws.
Government aid to agriculture.

VII. General Problems.
Agricultural labor.
Machinery and agriculture.
Interest rates, indebtedness, etc.
Tenant farming.
Large vs. small farming.
Business methods.
Immigration and agriculture.

OUTLINE FOR A BRIEF COURSE IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

1. Definitions.
2. Relation of the sociological to the economic, the technical, and the scientific phases of agriculture.

Part I

THE RURAL SOCIAL STATUS

Chapter I

Movements of the Farm Population

1. Statistical survey.
2. The movement to the West.
History, causes.
3. The movement to the cities.
a) Growth of cities.
b) Depletion of rural population in certain localities.
4. Causes of the movement to the cities.
a) Industrial, social, and psychological causes.
5. Results of the movements of the farm population.
a) Results both good and bad.
b) Résumé of industrial and social results.

Chapter II

Social Condition of the Rural Population

Nativity; color; illiteracy; families; health; temperance; crime; morality; pauperism; defectives; insanity; etc.

Chapter III

The Social Psychology of Rural Life

1. Isolation and its results.
2. The farm home and its environment.
3. Traits of family life.
4. Traits of individual life.

Chapter IV

The Social Aspect of Current Agricultural Questions

1. Tenant farming.
2. Large vs. small farms.
3. Farm labor.
4. Irregular incomes.
5. Farm machinery.
6. Specialization in farming.
7. Immigration.

Part II

SOCIAL FACTORS IN RURAL PROGRESS

Chapter I

Means of Communication in Rural Districts

1. Importance and status of rural communication.
2. The new movements for better rural communication.
a) Highways.
b) Rural free mail delivery.
c) Rural telephone.
d) Interurban electric railways.

Chapter II

Farmers' Organizations

1. Value of.
2. Difficulties in organizing.
3. Forms that organizations may take.
4. History and work of farmers' organizations in the United States.
5. General deductions from study of farmers' organizations.

Chapter III

Rural Education

1. Distinction between rural and agricultural education.
2. The country school.
a) Its importance, organization, maintenance, instruction, and supervision.
b) The rural school as a social center.
c) The township unit, the consolidated school, the centralized school.
3. High-school privileges for rural pupils.
4. The rural library.
5. Other agencies for rural education.

Chapter IV

Means of Agricultural Education

1. Historical.
2. Research in agriculture.
3. Agricultural instruction to resident students.
a) Higher education in agriculture.
b) Secondary education in agriculture.
c) Primary education in agriculture.
4. Extension teaching in agriculture.
5. Miscellaneous agencies for agricultural education.
a) Farmers' societies.
b) The farm press.
c) The county paper.
d) Industrial departments of steam railways.

Chapter V

The Rural Church

1. Present status.
2. Difficulties in country church work.

3. The awakening in the rural church.
4. The institutional rural church.
5. The Y. M. C. A. in the country.
6. The rural Sunday school.
7. The rural social settlement.

CHAPTER VI

The Social Ideal for Agriculture

1. The importance of social agencies.
2. The preservation of the "American farmer" essential.
3. Relation of this ideal to our American civilization.
4. The federation or co-operation of rural social agencies.

CHAPTER XVII

FEDERATION FOR RURAL PROGRESS

It is almost trite to assert the need of the "socialization"—to use a much-worked phrase—of the country. It is possible that this need is not greater than in the cities, but it is different. Among no class of people is individualism so rampant as among farmers. For more than a century the American farmer led the freest possible social life. His independence was his glory. But, when the day of co-operation dawned, he found himself out of tune with the movement, was disinclined to join the ranks of organized effort, and he prefers even yet his personal

and local independence to the truer freedom which can be secured only through co-operative endeavor. Moreover, the social aspect of the rural problem is important not merely because the farmer is slow to co-operate. The farm problem is to be met by the activities of social institutions.

We may say (assuming the home life, of course) that the church, the school, and the farmers' organization are the great rural social institutions. They are the forces now most efficient, and the ones that promise to abide. This classification may appear to be a mere truism, when we suggest that under the church should be placed all those movements that have a distinctively religious motive, under the school all those agencies that are primarily educational in design, and under farmers' organizations those associations whose chief function is to settle questions which concern the farmer as a business man and a citizen. But the classification answers fairly well. It includes practically every device that has been suggested for rural betterment.

There are two interesting facts about these rural institutions: (1) None of them is doing a tithe of what it ought to be doing to help solve the farm problem. The church is apparently just about holding its own, though that is doubted by some observers. Rural schools are not, as a rule, keeping pace with the demands being made upon them; comparatively few students in the whole country are studying scientific agriculture. Not one farmer in twenty belongs to a strong farmers' organization. (2) All these institutions are awakening to the situation. Progress during the last decade has been especially gratifying. Co-operative efforts among farmers are more cautious, but more successful. The Grange has nearly doubled

its membership since 1890; and it, as well as other farm organizations, has more real power than ever before. The rural-school question is one of the liveliest topics today among farmers as well as educators. Opportunities for agricultural education have had a marvelous development within a decade. Discussion about rural church federation, the rural institutional church, rural social settlements, and even experiments in these lines are becoming noticeably frequent. The Young Men's Christian Association has, its officers think, found the way to reach the country young man.

The institutions which we have just discussed, together with the improvement that comes from such physical agencies as assist quicker communication (good wagon roads, telephones, rural mail delivery, electric roads), constitute the social forces that are to be depended upon in rural betterment. None can be spared or ignored. The function of each must be understood and its importance recognized. To imagine that substantial progress can result from the emphasis of any one agency to the exclusion of any other is a mistake. To assert this is not to quarrel with the statement we frequently hear nowadays that "the *church* should be the social and intellectual center of the neighborhood;" or that "the *school* should be the social and intellectual center of the neighborhood;" or that "the *Grange* should be the social and intellectual center of the neighborhood." It is fortunate that these statements have been made. They show an appreciation of a function of these agencies that has been neglected. The first item in rural social progress is that the country preacher, the rural teacher, the country doctor, the country editor, the agricultural editor, the agricultural college professor, and especially the farmer himself, shall see

the social need of the farm community. But to assert, for instance, that the church shall be *the* social center of that community may lead to a partial and even to a fanatical view of things. I would not restrain in the slightest the enthusiasm of any pastor who wants to make his church occupy a central position in community life, nor of the teacher who wants to bring her school into relation with all the economic and social life of the farm, nor of the leader of the farmers' organization who sees the good that may be done through the social and intellectual training which his organization can give. But if there is danger that the preacher in the pursuit of this ideal, shall ignore the social function of the school and of the farmers' organization, or that the teacher, or the farmer, or anybody else who is interested, shall fail to see that there is a logical division of labor among rural social forces, and that it is only the intelligent and efficient and harmonious co-operation of all these forces that will insure the best progress, then to such I appeal with all the power at my command to recognize not only the breadth of the whole movement, but to appreciate the limitations of their own special interests. There are things that the church cannot do and should not attempt to do. There are things the school cannot do and should not attempt to do. Accepting our conventional division of social agencies, we may say that efficient rural progress stands upon a tripod of forces, and that balance can be maintained only when each is used in its proper measure.

We reach now the heart of the topic, which is how these various social forces may be brought into co-operation—a co-operation that is intelligent and real. I would suggest, first of all, the encouragement of all efforts along this line that are already under way. For

instance, there are scattered all over this country individual pastors who are seeking to make their churches the social and intellectual beacon-lights of the community. There are other individuals who are endeavoring to apply the social-settlement idea to the needs of the country. There are associations which attempt to bring together the teachers and the school patrons for mutual discussion of educational topics. In numerous instances the farmers' organizations include in their membership the country pastor, the district school teacher and perhaps the country doctor. In these and doubtless in other ways the idea we are dealing with is being promulgated, and up to a certain point this fact of promiscuous initiative is entirely satisfactory and desirable. So long as the work is done it makes little difference who does it. Every attempt to bring any of these agencies into closer touch with the farm community is to be welcomed most heartily. But beyond a certain limit this promiscuous work must be unsatisfactory. The efforts and interests of any one social agency are bound to be partial. Indeed the more effective such an agency is, the more partial it is likely to be. Intensity is gained at the expense of breadth. The need for federation exists in the desirability of securing both the intensity and the breadth.

The precise method of securing this federation of effort is not easy to foresee. It can be determined only by trial. It must be worked out in harmony with varying conditions. Some very general plans at once suggest themselves: (1) Let the agricultural college in each state take the lead in the movement, acting not so much as an organization as a clearing-house and a go-between. Let it direct conferences on the subject, and seek to bring all who are interested in rural

affairs into touch and sympathy. (2) Have a "League for Rural Progress," made up of representatives from the churches, the agricultural colleges, the departments of public instruction, the farm press, various farmers' organizations, etc. (3) Enlarge the "Hesperia movement," which now seeks to secure co-operation between school and farmers' organization, by including in it the church.

It may be of interest to note that this idea of a federation of rural social forces is getting a foothold and has indeed already crystallized into organization. A brief description of what has actually been done will therefore not be out of place.

So far as the writer is aware, the first meeting based on the definite idea of co-operation between school, church, and Grange was held at Morris, Connecticut, in the summer of 1901 and was organized by Rev. F. A. Holden, then pastor at Morris. This meeting was a very successful local affair, held in connection with "Old Home Week" celebration.

Probably the first attempt to hold a similar meeting on a large scale was the conference at the Agricultural College, Michigan, in February, 1902. It was a joint meeting of the Michigan Political Science Association and the Agricultural College and farmers' institutes. The practical initiative was taken by the Political Science Association under the leadership of its secretary, Professor Henry C. Adams, who had the cordial co-operation of President Snyder of the Agricultural College and Professor C. D. Smith, then superintendent of farmers' institutes. It was a notable gathering, and its promoters were rejoiced to see the splendid attendance of farmers particularly; teachers and clergymen did not attend as freely as might have

been expected. The programme was a strong one and included men of national reputation and topics covering a wide range of interests.

The addresses were published in the *Michigan Farmers' Institute Bulletin* for 1901-02, and were also gathered into a publication of the Michigan Political Science Association under the title *Social Problems of the Farmer*.

The state of Rhode Island has organized on a permanent basis. In 1904 there was held in Kingston, at the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, a "Conference on Rural Progress." It was a one-day meeting, well attended by representative farmers, clergymen, and educators. A committee was appointed to discuss further procedure, and the next year there was held in the halls of Brown University a two-days' conference. The programme included addresses on: The Grange, The Country Church, School Gardens, and several phases of practical agriculture. Among the speakers were the assistant secretary of agriculture, Hon. N. J. Bachelder, now Master of the National Grange, and Dr. Josiah Strong.

In the spring of 1906 there was organized "The Rhode Island League for Rural Progress," which was constituted through representation from the following organizations: State Board of Agriculture; Rhode Island College of Agriculture; State Federation of Churches; State Grange; State Association of School Superintendents; State League of Improvement Societies; Washington County Agricultural Society; Newport Agricultural Society; Rhode Island Horticultural Society; Newport Horticultural Society; Rhode Island Poultry

Association; Florists and Gardeners' Club; Kingston Improvement Association.

This league held the Third Annual Conference on Rural Progress, April 10 and 11, 1906, the first day's session being at Brown University, Providence, and the second day's at East Greenwich. Its fourth meeting was held in Newport in March, 1907. In Rhode Island the idea lying back of this conference has certainly approved itself to all who are interested in rural matters.

The following is the constitution of the league:

CONSTITUTION

Rhode Island League for Rural Progress

I. NAME.—The name of this body shall be the "Rhode Island League for Rural Progress."

II. OBJECT.—The object of the League shall be to secure the co-operation of the various individuals, organizations, and agencies which are working for any phase of rural advancement in this state.

III. MEMBERSHIP.—Any organization interested in rural advancement, which may desire to co-operate with the work of the League, may be represented in the League.

Any individual in the state interested in rural progress may become a member of the League upon the

payment of one dollar annual fee.

IV. OFFICERS.—The administrative work of the League shall be conducted by a council, to be composed of one delegate from each organization represented in the League, to serve until superseded. The council at the time of each annual conference shall choose from among its members a president, a vice-president, and a secretary-treasurer, and these officers shall act as an executive committee.

V. MEETINGS.—The meetings of the League shall be held at the call of the executive committee. There shall, however, be at least one annual Conference on rural progress held under the auspices of the League.

VI. FINANCES.—The funds necessary to forward the work of the League may come from three sources:

a) Contributions made by organizations belonging to the League and represented on the council, such contributions to be voluntary and in such amount as the respective organizations may designate. The council may, however, make up a schedule of desired contributions from the various organizations and present it to the different organizations.

b) Membership fees from individual members, $1.00 per year from each member.

c) Private subscriptions.

Probably the first successful attempt to organize a permanent league for rural progress was accomplished in 1904 through the efforts of Rev. G. T. Nesmith, of Hebron, Ill. It was called "The McHenry County Federation," and has held three annual meetings and seems to be on a solid basis. Mr. Nesmith has endeavored to keep the purpose of the league on a high plane by endeavoring to state clearly the object of the federation, which is, "that the people of McHenry County might have life, and have it more abundantly, and this life was not to be a narrow life. It was the largest aggregate and highest symmetry of the sixfold ends of individual and community action, viz., health, wealth, knowledge, sociability, beauty, and righteousness." He also endeavored to make it clear that "the federation does not seek to supplant the other forces. It rather seeks to be a clearing-house of the ideas of all the federated organizations; to be a mount of vision from which each may look and get a complete vision of life; to be a fraternal bond which shall link all together in common ties of sympathy, fellowship, and co-operation."

The results thus far obtained are perhaps best described by quoting the words of Mr. G. W. Conn, Jr., superintendent of schools of McHenry County:

> There is one noticeable omission in the constitution—a provision for the proper financing of the federation.

This is partially explained by the fact that the federation has largely centered about the county Teachers' Association and the county Farmers' Institute, organizations that are supported in a financial way by the county and the state appropriations. These appropriations, in addition to some voluntary gifts, have been sufficient to meet the necessary expenses of the meetings.

I think that I am safe in saying that the interest and also the attendance has probably increased 100 per cent. at each session. Each year has also seen a much larger percentage of our local men and women helping out on the programme. It is a little early in its history to expect much evidence of material results, but I believe that results are already putting in an appearance, especially from the esthetic standpoint. Without doubt more trees have been planted about the country homes and along the country roadsides of this county than in any two preceding years. In a great many places roads have been cleaned. Refuse and weeds have been removed and burned. Landscape gardening on a simple scale is putting in an appearance in places where it was little expected. The naming of farms is another feature that is rapidly growing. Boys'

country clubs are being formed and this year, for the first time, three of these clubs met with the federation, had a banquet, and formed a county organization.

Of course not all of these movements are rightfully to be attributed to the direct influence of the county federation. The public schools of the county have been largely instrumental in stirring the public conscience to a livelier appreciation of the beautiful. The regular observance of Arbor and Bird Days in our schools has done much toward initiating this movement. However, the federation has been the great factor in uniting otherwise independent organizations into one large machine for stirring the social consciousness and molding public sentiment. It has proved to be an efficient association in at least three ways, in co-ordinating our efforts, harmonizing our methods, and broadening the field of operation.

The constitution of this league is given herewith in full:

1. NAME.—The name of this organization shall be, The McHenry County Federation of Rural Forces.

2. OBJECT.—The object of the Federation is to gain a higher

symmetry and a larger aggregate of health, wealth, knowledge, sociability, beauty, and righteousness to the citizens of McHenry County.

3. ELEMENTS OF THE FEDERATION.—The Federation shall consist of the following organizations: The Farmers' Institute, Teachers' Association, Domestic Science Association, Pastors' Association, Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Young Men's Christian Association.

4. MEMBERSHIP.—Any county organization may become a member of the federation by recommendation of the Executive Committee.

5. OFFICERS.—The officers of the Federation shall consist of a president, as many vice-presidents as there are component organizations, a secretary-treasurer, and an Executive Committee.

6. COMMITTEES.—The Executive Committee shall be composed of the president, the secretary-treasurer, and the presidents of the component organizations.

There shall be an Auditing Committee and a Committee on

Resolutions, each consisting of three members and to be appointed by the president.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of two members from each of the component organizations and they shall be appointed by the president.

7. DUTIES.—The Executive Committee shall select the date and fix the place of every meeting. They shall also prepare the programme.

The presidents of the component organizations shall be *ex-officio* vice-presidents of the Federation.

8. AUDITING.—All bills shall be paid by the treasurer after the same have been countersigned by the Auditing Committee.

9. TERM OF OFFICE.—The terms of all officers shall be one year or until their successors are elected.

10. HOW ELECTED.—All officers shall be elected by ballot.

The Massachusetts Conference for Town and Village Betterment has dealt with some phases of the federation idea. Its object is "to contribute to the formation of a strong, definite, and united purpose among the forces working for the improvement of civic and social conditions in Massachusetts, by bringing together all town and village improvement societies, citizen's associations, civic clubs, and other

organizations interested in this purpose."

The Massachusetts Agricultural College, in celebrating the fortieth anniversary of its opening to students, October 2, 1907, held a four days' conference on rural progress. The programme covered nearly the whole field of rural development and was made possible by the co-operation of the State Board of Agriculture, the State Grange, the Massachusetts Civic League, the Connecticut Valley Congregational Club, the State Committee of the Y. M. C. A., the Western Massachusetts Library Club, and the Head-Masters' Club of the Connecticut Valley. No permanent organization was formed, but the general idea of federation of rural social forces was fully emphasized and thoroughly appreciated.

An attempt was made in the spring of 1907 to bring together the various elements of rural progress in all the New England states. Under the initiative of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture there was held in March, 1907, a New England Conference on Rural Progress. This meeting was held very largely for the purpose of discovering the sentiment among the leaders of New England agriculture with respect to the desirability and practicability of federating on so large a scale. In addition to the main meeting, the presidents of the agricultural colleges of New England were called together in a special section, and the same was true of the directors of the New England experiment stations, the masters of the various state granges, the secretaries of the various state boards of agriculture, and the leaders in the New England Federation of Churches.

The idea of federation was clearly approved by the delegates present, and a temporary organization was

effected. It was voted to hold a similar conference in Boston in the spring of 1908.

It is probably true that the first and most important step in bringing about a federation of rural social forces is to educate all concerned to the *desirability* of such a federation—to sow the seeds of the idea. So far as machinery is concerned it may not be necessary to form any new organization. Indeed, what is chiefly necessary is a sort of *clearing-house* for an exchange of ideas and plans among all who are at work on any phase of the rural social problem. There is need of a central bureau that shall emphasize the necessity of a study of agricultural economics and rural sociology, and press the value of co-operation in the work of social progress in the country. There is need that somewhere "tab" shall be kept on the whole rural social movement. We need a directing force to assure a comprehensive view and study of the whole rural problem. It is important that some investigations should be carried on that are not likely to be taken up by some other agency. It would be desirable to have a certain amount of publication, and in various other ways to carry on a campaign of education. Above all, it would be desirable to initiate local, state, and national conferences pervaded by the spirit and purpose of securing the hearty co-operation of all rural social forces, of all the organizations that have any rural connection whatever, and of all individuals who have the slightest genuine interest in any phase of the farm problem.

Such a bureau should keep in constant touch with, secure the confidence of, and supply appropriate literature to, country teachers, preachers, editors, doctors, and business men, and, more than all, to

intelligent and progressive farmers. And let me add at this point, that it must be fully understood that the work contemplated cannot possibly achieve large success unless it is done *with* the farmers, rather than *for* the farmers. The problem is far from that of doing a missionary work for a down-trodden and ignorant class. It is a much less heroic, a much more commonplace task. It is simply carrying the idea of co-operation of individuals a step farther, and endeavoring to secure the co-operation of interests that have precisely the same goal, although traveling upon different roads. The prime purpose of the movement is to bring the specialist into close touch with the more general phases of the problem, to secure breadth and wholeness, to assure well-balanced effort.

[NOTE.—A paper with the title of this chapter was read before the American Civic Association in 1901, at Minneapolis. A portion of the paper is retained here. The history of the development of the idea of federation is brought down to the present time.]

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