The State Teachers College of Colorado.

The Rural School Problem.

A Thesis Submitted in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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The great majority of humanity possess at birth a much more abundant stock of potentialities of learning and achievement than can be actualized because of the limits of human nature. The great aim of education is to develop the best combinations of these.

The great majority of young children have latent within them all the aptitudes needful for the development of healthy and well balanced lives. "The modern ideal of education recognizes two things: first the right of the child to the fullest development; and second, the duty of society to see that the child receives such training, whether the parent may wish to accord it to him or not."¹

Mr. McKeever further states that about ninety-nine per cent (99%) of our new-born infants are potentially good in an economic and moral sense. If these assertions be true and evidence seems to support them, the great majority of children have within their natures at life's beginning the possibilities of development into sound self-reliant man or woman-hood.

One by one the human instincts come into their functions at various times during the life of the growing child and these instincts should be watched

¹ McKeever, Wm. A., Farm Boys and Girls, p 251.
for and given the kind of training necessary for 
durable and useful results.

That education is good which enables a person 
to live within his environment, which gives a mind 
active and vigorous and which teaches him to desire 
constantly a wider and broader outlook. Education 
should literally lead the child out over the many 
and constantly broadening forms of invention, dis-
covery and experience; and interests should be 
developed which will remain broad and permanent.

"The human mind has certain innate tendencies 
which are the essential springs or motive powers of 
all thought and action, whether individual or collect-
ive, and are the base from which the character and 
will of individuals and of nations are gradually de-
veloped under the guidance of the intellectual fac-
ulties. -- These primary or innate tendencies -- 
are probably common to the men of every race and age."

Based on a broad general foundation of good 
general potentialities and common tendencies the 
problem of education becomes one of directing these 
traits to broader fields of pasture and groupinłę them into permanently useful combinations of learning 
and service.

The trait of wonder so common to all young life 
should be nourished and the imitative trait also

should be constantly used in starting the young along lines which will bring experience and lead to the formation of habits of observation and judgment.

Everywhere we find two great primal forces at work and these in proper balance produce desirable results.

"If centrifugal forces were not constrained by centripetal forces the very orbs of space would fly from their orbits and follow tangents, i.e., straight lines. If there had never been such restraint, they (the orbs) would never have been formed."¹

Mr. Ward further states that the products of these forces properly in balance, termed cosmic synergy i.e., organizations and created structures, suns, planets, are formed in all fields of phenomena. As in cosmic life, so also in chemic, biologic, and psychic life there is found a constant attempt at balance of these two primal and basic forces.

In country life the centripetal forces have for the past twenty years, tended to overbalance the centrifugal forces and an increasing narrowness of vision and life has resulted.

Oculists claim that too close confinement to books and occupations requiring close vision range has caused many people to become short-sighted. As one remedy, they urge frequent rests and change

¹ Ward, Lester F., Pure Sociology, p 172-173.
of vision to more distant objects. Many business institutions whose work is confining have instructed their employees to rest their eyes every few minutes by changing the vision to distant objects. Guards of insane asylums have testified that the inmates want and actually perform long-distance runs when gaining their freedom.

The principle seems to hold, whatever its application, that to obtain balanced human machines, and these, only, run smoothly and successfully, there must be a careful adjustment of these great universal forces. At present the need is adjustment in the direction of larger units of thought and action. President Winthrop of Boston has well said that travel is a splendid education. If to that be added human intercourse and exchange of ideas the splendid goal of cosmopolitanism may be reached.

The spiral idea of education, which is extolled by many educators and which is indeed the only course open to the great mass of the people in their earlier years, presupposes an ever increasing radius of action and expiscation of knowledge in the daily and weekly circuit.

Psychology teaches that practically all persons make this circuit in their thoughts weekly. The daily round of duties is a household phrase. And for all
but a favored few this "round" tends to grow narrower year by year.

As civilization advances the natural resources are seized and opportunities become scarce. Human growth is easier under conditions imposed by nature than under those established by man. There is a tendency in many quarters today to decry the exit of the prodigal son from his father's home. Was the change of location the cause of his downfall, or rather was it not found in the fact that he spent his substance in riotous living and with harlots? By the law of the time the home property was left to the first born and legally his right was to call for his share and depart. Had he possessed the true pioneer spirit a great opportunity awaited him in the new land. In the pioneer spirit which can lay aside the rewards of today and in self-reliance go out and subdue new fields for future generations there is something akin to the divine. His failure was in vision and purpose in self-restraint and control. Education means a drawing out, an actualizing an expression of the potential qualities wrapped up in man's nature. Perhaps the pioneer conditions or at least country conditions develop this drawing out of the physical potentialities best and thus lay the foundation for higher education.
The present Colorado State Superintendent of Public Schools, Mrs. Mary C. C. Bradford, in speaking to the Spring Session of Weld County Teachers in Greeley, March 25th, 1916, continually urged young teachers to seek the pioneer rural school where actual growth is most possible.

It is the realization of these facts and principles that makes the country school problem so vital. The bigger and more urgent the city problem becomes, the more necessary it will be to solve the rural problem, for the city must continue to draw much of its best blood and its best leadership from the country. The fully developed rural mind, the product of an open and animate environment is more resourceful, more confident, more inventive, more philosophical and more persevering than the urban mind. It is less troubled by momentary happenings. It is because of this type of farm-bred mind that our leaders have come largely from rural life. Mention may be made of such men as Washington, Clay, Grant, Lincoln besides many others of our best known men. There is a reason for this condition. The cities tear down the nervous organization of human beings at a fearful rate. Common observation holds that city conditions tend to tear down and wear out the stock in a few generations, and that country life is conducive to
repose and longevity. It is stated that dwellers in London fail to reproduce their stock after the third generation.¹ The distractions of city life tend toward dismemberment of family life.

The farm is an ideal place to build up the lives of growing young people for it contains all the crude materials for such work, but someone who is conscious of the many aspects of the problem should be in charge. Even if no such person is to be found the boys and girls will gain a greater per cent of useful knowledge than in the less favored places of the city for they are certain to discover and make use of the abundant material themselves. Perhaps it is the duty of the rural school more than any other single agency to assume this leadership and direct into useful and refined combinations this young life which forms so great a part of our present national resources.

¹ Gillette, John M., Constructive Rural Sociology, p 114.
Chapter I. 
Rural School Problem Stated.

The problem confronting the rural school is to educate and train country children for their environment rather than away from it. In the past education has had too much cityward trend. The brighter children have left farming communities where life was narrow and frugal for the larger opportunities offered by larger towns and cities. Courses of study have had too little real relation and connection with the life of the country. Teachers have come out from the city and have brought city ideals with them and these have engendered widespread dissatisfaction among the children of the country.

"No rural population has yet been able permanently to maintain itself against the lure of the town or the city. Each civilization at one stage of its development comprises a large proportion of rural people. But the urban movement soon begins and continues until all are living in villages, towns and cities. Such has been the movement of population in all the older countries of high industrial development, as England, France and Germany. A similar movement is at present going on rapidly in the United States. The great social movement never comes by chance; it is always to be explained by deep-seated and adequate causes."
The causes lying back of the rapid growth of our cities at the expense of our rural districts are very far from simple. They involve a great complex of social, educational and economic forces. As the spirit of adventure and pioneering finds less to stimulate it, the gregarious impulse, the tendency to flock together for our work and our play, gains in ascendancy. Growing out of the greater intellectual opportunities and demands of modern times, the standard of education has greatly advanced. And under the incentive of present day economic success and luxury, comfortable circumstances and a moderate competence no longer satisfy our people. Hence they turn to the city, looking to find there the coveted social, educational or economic opportunities.\footnote{Betts, G. H., New Ideals in Rural Schools, Preface.}

The writer has given this rather long quotation in full because to him it seems the best single summary of the rural situation given by the many writers on the subject.

The great problem of the rural school is to study out and put into operation causes which will under irritant this cityward trend. Some light may be thrown on this subject by a study of some of the exceptional agricultural communities of this country. The most notable of these are the Mormons, Pennsylvania Germans, and Scotch-Presbyterians. These communities have
succeeded in establishing a high plane of living and have avoided both the extreme isolation of many rural places and the extreme dangers of city life.

The magnitude of the problem may be somewhat realized when it is stated that farmers form a very large part of the nation's population. Taken as a whole they form the largest distinct economic and social class in the country. There were in this country in 1900 over ten million farmers and farm laborers,—to be exact 10,381,765 country people. In 1910 by classification of population forty-four and nine tenths (44.9%) per cent of our population was rated as rural. In 1910 also, the value of farm lands was over twenty-eight billions of dollars (§28,384,821,000).¹

According to H. W. Foght in The American Rural School, one half our entire school population attend rural schools and approximately 95% of these never get beyond the district school. Another writer, Dr. Margaret E. Schallenberger of the California Committee of Elementary Education, states in an article entitled "Co-Operative Forces for Improvement of Rural School Conditions" in the Journal of Education, Boston, Aug. 20, 1914 that about sixty per cent (3/5) of our school population is made up of country children. These statements give us some

¹ Gillette, J. M., Constructive Rural Sociology, p 104.
idea of the size of the rural problem and its importance to our nation.

Conditions of rural life have changed much within the past forty years. The historical beginnings of our rural education were simple and suited to pioneer conditions. There were no large cities, the majority of the people were poor and were forced to put most of their energy into strictly economic problems. Homes were to be founded and subsistence gained from a new and rugged country; forests needed felling; land had to be cleared; lines of communication were few and markets were practically unknown. Under such adverse conditions of life the system of education was of necessity simple. Farm children picked up their education when not needed at actual farm work. Short terms at idle times and during winter months afforded but little chance for more than a small knowledge of even the most necessary studies such as writing, reading and arithmetic. That our early pioneers strove successfully against their economic conditions and established such a vital school system and so strong a church is evidence at once of a virile determination and of a clear insight into and practical use of the fundamental and foundational principles governing human living and social success.
The pioneer rural school house served the community as a common meeting ground. Its utility was high; here the children learned needful education, here the spelling matches and debating societies were conducted in the evenings, here came the people for social gatherings, for political rallies and for religious discussion.

Differentiation in architecture and specialization of employment among people had not then begun its influence in breaking up the unity of the people. Cities and urbanizing tendencies as we see them today in all their splendor and magnificence and mania for speed and ostentation were then unknown. Distances were great, conveniences were well nigh unknown, isolation was common but life was strong and the ideals were high. All this struggle developed in our pioneers a nerve, a persistence, a dogged determination which covered the plains and valleys with a teeming population and laid the foundation for the great wealth which has builded our cities with all their modern grandeur. Cities have outstripped the country in much that makes for life enjoyments. Today the agricultural community is economically and socially poor relatively speaking. It is not so rich in taxable wealth. The cities possess the wealth, luxury and leisure while the country works, denies and hopes. If
children are to be saved for country life the situation must be better balanced. Rural life must be made economically, socially and spiritually attractive to them. Too long have such conditions as shown by the accompanying picture obtained. Drudgery, long hours, isolation, small chores as a result of poor economic conditions and lack of proper ideals have driven hope and aspiration from too many country children.

The country is the natural source of supply for the nation, both in food and people. In order to make rural life attractive, the general wealth of the community must be increased and the farmers and their children must be trained to more modern methods of agriculture.

Relatively speaking rural life and rural institutions are not so efficient as they once were. In neither human nor material equipment does the rural school approximate the resources of the city school. Rural school buildings, curriculum and teaching force are below par today.

"Country life and institutions have been modified by far-reaching conditions—economic, social, political, legislative and administrative. They must be re-created by the use of the same large forces."¹

Improved and modern buildings have been found to help; a better teaching force has given more in

¹ Cubberley, E. P., The Improvement of Rural Schools, Introduction.
promise; reorganization has done much but the problem is still far from solved. Perhaps in our modern individualistic tendency and specialization in industry we have gone too far; perhaps there is a need of return to the combination held by every pioneer people,—a combination of individual resource and daring, love of mental contest and respect for Divine Authority now not commonly found in one and the same person. In our zeal we have dug ourselves so deep each one into our own particular and peculiar hole of industry or learning that we are become unbalanced, distorted, lopsided and know not each other. We must come out and get acquainted; we must mingle socially and learn once again that we are but infinitesimal members of a gigantic organism whose maker is the great Ruler of this Universe. Our workers are dulled, our leaders are too often idle visionaries,—a great change of occupations will do much to give us personal poise. The writer has heard this condition stated and desire expressed many, many times.
Chapter II.
Administration Units.

A general reading of literature now being published on the school situation discloses the need of new and more modern units of management. The country has been growing at such a rapid rate that all lines of work need a period of readjustment.

The weakness of the common schools in rural communities shows itself today in their failure to train the average child for service in the home environment. Part of the trouble is surely due to the fact of our using wornout methods and standards of management.

The district system is common throughout the greater portion of the United States. It originated in Massachusetts in 1789 and is the result of the Puritan genius for education. Its main feature may be described as an ungraded one-teacher school usually within walking distance of all the families it serves.

The people were poor and lived in isolated communities and had no need of cooperative action and no means of getting it if needed. People of a neighboring community united in a district and elected their school board and planned their school with reference to their own special needs and desires. Those in wealthy districts had better facilities than those in poorer places. There was an utter
lack of uniformity throughout the state which was noticed even then and some educators even at this early date condemned the system. However it must not be forgotten that this unit served its generation well. The people were poor and had to shift for themselves. The country was new and sparsely settled and local needs varied. Even today we are not able to do without the one-room school.

Betts contends that "the first and most fundamental step is to eliminate the little shacks of houses that dot our prairies every two miles along the country roads."

Certainly we do not need schoolhouses every two miles each under its own separate management. The petty jealousies incident to such situations, the lack of enthusiasm due to isolation the unscientific handling of classes and the general utility of material forces should cause some degree of consolidation. Much as it is to be desired, however, all one-room schools cannot be abolished for many communities are yet sparsely settled.

Mr. A. C. Monahan of the U.S. Bureau of Education in his published report of the status of rural schools in thirty-two states for the year 1913, states that "the enrolment in the one-teacher schools is 37.6% of the total enrolment in all the public schools of the

1 Betts, G. H., New Ideas in Rural Schools, p 36.
country and 60.2% of the total enrolment in all rural schools.\textsuperscript{1} In 1882 Massachusetts took an advanced step in organizing schools in a larger unit known as the township unit.

The schools in each township were placed under a central board whose authority was uniform over the schools located in their territory. States in the Great Lake region notably Ohio also followed this plan. This system gave more uniform control over the district school more divided authority in school matters and consequently less local jealousy and dispute.

In many places it was found that small districts could unite into one larger unit to mutual advantage. This gave rise to what were termed union schools. In some places these proved advantageous; in others not so good.

Betts and Hall state that these schools were as a rule inferior to the average district school because of overcrowded conditions and intensified disadvantages.\textsuperscript{2} These schools did a great amount of good however in opening the way for newer methods and larger units of supervision. Much experimentation is always a sign of unrest and anticipates discovery of better things. Necessity was ever the mother of invention. When

\textsuperscript{1} Eggleston, J.W., and Bruere, R.W., The Work of the Rural School, p 196.
\textsuperscript{2} Betts and Hall, Better Rural Schools, p 229.
present systems no longer satisfy, people begin to cast about for new methods.

Such conditions necessitate much expenditure of energy and means and perhaps 99% of this is wasted but through it all there is a great expenditure of nervous energy in thought and this is in a high degree education.

The district unit had served in a pioneer and scattered community but lacked the unity necessary for a more united people. The township unit gave better service and overcame many abuses incident to the older system but it has proven too small. It gave rise to union schools and although these have in themselves proven unsuccessful nevertheless they have paved the way for consolidated schools and these are giving good satisfaction. These belong in a class of their own, they must be satisfactorily graded, must have modern buildings and equipment, and afford high school facilities. More will be said of them in the next chapter.

The township unit proved a step in the right direction but not a big enough one. It however opened the way for larger vision and more extensive cooperation and people saw that a still larger unit was needed. This has come in the county unit. This county unit system is now in operation in all the
southern states, in Ohio, Oregon, Utah and California. It has proven popular in the south because of race prejudice, the scattered population, scarcity of village life and the large agricultural areas.

In Augusta, Georgia, the County School Board controls both city and country schools. Augusta has ninetenths of the wealth and three-fourths of the population of the county and by this system the money used for school purposes is evenly distributed throughout the county. In other states however the County Board has control of schools in only the third class districts and works with the County Superintendent in administering to their needs.

This system makes for unity in taxation, grading and more efficiency in supervision. Responsibility is more evenly divided between local or district boards and the county board. "The central features of a good county plan of school administration are a county board of education, representing the people, with the county superintendent of schools as their executive officer."¹ There has been a great need of county unity in educational matters,—perhaps in time this may prove small and lead to state unity. For the present however it offers a means of solution of many troublesome problems.

¹ Cubberley, E.F., The Improvement of Rural Schools, pp 41-42.
The county board will be a great aid to the county superintendent and through it he can work more effectively for unity and harmony through his county. Under former conditions he has been obliged to do much small routine work and attend to matters of relatively small importance which the local boards could not handle. This board will be able to take much of this work off his hands and leave him free to attend to constructive problems and matters of administration.

Unity among the various county districts will bring greater efficiency in management, greater saving of material and time, a better teaching force and higher standards of scholarship.
Chapter III.

Housing of Rural School Children.

Almost three hundred years ago our pioneers in poverty and sacrifice planted together in the wilderness their rude log cabins and schoolhouses. These schools served well the social needs of the people and were constantly used for public meetings. They fitted their environment well and in them the simple education then possible to the struggling pioneers' children was given with more or less efficiency.

The type of building is familiar to everyone. Throughout the newer sections of the United States such buildings are still seen. The accompanying illustration gives an idea of the colonial type. It shows "America's Oldest School Building" and was erected in 1762. Such buildings housed from a dozen to fifty children, ranging through the eight grades and usually had but one teacher in charge. The longevity of the building pictured illustrates a point much overlooked today. Where are the buildings of the surrounding community which were standing when this was erected? Most if not all are gone and replaced by others much more costly and substantial. Will the average country school house of today so outlive its surrounding buildings?
How does the usual country school-house of today compare in size, workmanship, architectural design, value and durability with the surrounding buildings of its neighborhood? In travelling through a dozen or more states west of the Mississippi River in the past three years, the writer has seen many, many barns, to say nothing of residences, ware-houses, elevators and other commercial buildings which put the near-by schoolhouses to shame in these respects.

In the pioneer period this type of schoolhouse was a great deal better than the balance of the community buildings. All unconsciously it shows the value people then placed on learning and the practical way in which this was expressed.

People house their idols best. Has learning lost its charms and its value or have we, in our haste to become materially rich, merely forgotten to glorify it suitably? In the highest sense ideals and institutions are, of course, resident in the minds of a people and may be merely represented by mortar, stone and wood,—yet these are of little practical value and are unstable unless we give them actuality for the benefit of the coming generation.

School buildings in accord with present needs are wanted. In most places the day of the little red schoolhouse is past. Gillette gives this:
"The rural schoolhouses are inadequate. There should be a place that is fitted to be a social centre. At present there are few such suitable buildings in the country. The schoolhouses are small and ill suited for such purposes. They are poorly built, have little or no ventilation, and are often badly located. They also fail to afford rooms which the equipment and facilities for vocational training of boys and girls for the farm and home require."¹

Would it not be better to change the size of the district and make the township or county the unit, thus allowing buildings comparable to present needs? The smaller building has served its purpose well and has been the basis of a splendid civilization. To make and keep our school system respectably clothed, to say nothing of holding it up as an inspiration to our young people necessitates some such growth.

In our western states are located thirty-one Government Reclamation Units. Irrigation farming is the basis of their wealth. The unit of land is, in most cases, eighty acres per family. This gives eight families to the section and two hundred eighty-eight to the township. Allowing two children per family there would be in the neighborhood of five hundred children for a township school. On some of the Reclamation Units, notably in the south and

¹ Gillette, J.H., Constructive Rural Sociology, p 333.
south-west, where nature is generous with her summer climate, forty acres is the unit size. In such places the population would approximate a thousand children per township. Such a population permits an increase in size of buildings and an increased school force without compelling too great travel.

Education, to keep pace with industrial development needs better accommodations. The accompanying illustration of a school on the Salt River Project in Arizona, often seen by the writer, is a fine illustration of the progressive spirit of education. People in pioneer days sent their children through all kinds of weather, in any sort of wagon or on foot and endured many hardships and privations of food and clothing in so doing, to schools of the old standard and type, because this represented their ideal and was in truth an advance over the prevailing conditions.

Unless education can continue to hold up some such relative ideal today, it will lose its drawing power. Compulsive education is better than none but the inspirational type is far superior. Life tends to become more sordid and narrow as population increases and civilization advances. Increasing wants compel closer confinement for their satisfaction. Where in early days the family went to the hills for lumber, poles and posts, and to the distant town or county seat for taxes and provisions the present conditions permit no such travel. The barn-raising, the corn
husking bee, the sugaring-off, the social times
and dances have given way before the changing con-
ditions. In order to regain the good things lately
lost the rural school machinery must be changed.
In place of the small one-room, lonesome schoolhouses
every two or three miles, larger buildings a greater
distance apart are needed. The change will cause the
loss of nothing worth while and much may be gained.

"The rural school has suffered in the past be-
cause of its poor equipment. A better house and a
larger and more beautiful playground are absolutely
essential to many forms of improvement. The school-
house should be an object lesson in architecture,
decoration, lighting, heating, ventilation, water-
supply, sewage disposal and fitness for the purpose
it is to serve. The school grounds should be large
enough for good landscape work, for ample playground,
for an agricultural laboratory and for a home for
the head teacher."  \(^1\)

G. W. Fiske gives as an example of the best and
most modern rural school,—and many other writers
agree with him,—the "John Swaney School" near McNabb
in Putnam County, Illinois. A description of it may
not be out of place for it comes very close to the
ideal for today. It is two miles from the town.
According to the report given at the National Education

\(^1\) Aley, Rob't. J., Pres. Uni. of Maine,
The Rural School and Cooperation, Journal
of Education, Nov. 5, 1914.
Association at Cleveland this "affords the best illustration of public sentiment, private liberality and wise organization combined that the committee was able to find in any consolidated district in the United States". 1 The building stands near the north side of a beautiful campus of twenty-four (24) acres of timber pasture. This was donated by John Swane. The schoolhouse is a brick building containing four recitation rooms besides a large auditorium used for lectures, concerts and basket ball, two laboratories, two library and office rooms, girls' play room, cloak room and a well-equipped basement room for manual training. It has apparatus for teaching cooking and sewing; it is equipped with steam heat, running water by air-pressure system and a gasoline gas generator. The campus has grounds ample for agricultural work, football and baseball, fields, tennis courts and the home of the five resident teachers.

Other situations would doubtless require modifications of this building and equipment. Some favor the cottage system of buildings which gives several smaller buildings in an artistic cluster rather than one large building. They contend the fire risk is less, the picture more artistic and also that students get required exercise in an outdoor stroll between class periods and recite the better for it. Both systems are good and serve present needs.

1 Piske, G.W., The Challenge of the Country, p 162.
The change in rural buildings has been slow for many reasons. Parents do not see the need of better school accommodations and conservatism is well rooted and thrifty in country communities. Consolidated schools, with their transports and teacherages like all other innovations have had to win their way slowly and prove their superiority on a cash basis. This period of incubation has been slow but it is now past and more rapid changes may be expected.
Chapter IV.
Curriculum.

The excuse for schools is lack of knowledge. This lack arises from two sources,—unequal opportunities and initiative of the people. Both come from the fallibility of human life. Progress among a people depends upon the number of opportunities, seen, seized and turned into satisfactions of high order.

There are some people in whom initiative is so strong that it persists in spite of drawbacks, discouragements and almost total lack of chances. However these are rare and usually show, if traced back far enough a nerve developed by obstacles overcome because of rewards promised. For most young people however there exists a reasonable balance between initiative shown, opportunity offered and reward gained.

Education should develop the cube of life, give it length, breadth and height. People are well educated who handle well the economic situations in which they find themselves and "pay their own way", who develop political or social ability and thus determine somewhat the direction of the way taken and who learn to see and recognize forces beyond their own control. This is an age of specialists many fulfil one of these conditions or possibly
two fairly well but lack stability because the third is missing. The triangle of life is good but the cube of life is the ideal goal.

No one has yet formulated a definite program of study which will unfailingly give this result. There is sharp division and strong contention between adherents of cultural and vocational courses of study. Cultural studies beget impractical visionaries while vocational courses produce bigoted drudges. In common terms this means all play and no work makes Jack a wilful boy while all work and no play makes him a dull boy. Reasonable combination of the two will produce a more balanced nature. Education brings wants and should also produce the ability to satisfy them. Children need training both as producers and consumers and the more thoroughly these ideas are continually coordinated throughout the school life the better will be the chance for their mutual use in after life.

As a nation we need to develop in our children a broad general foundation of knowledge which will be useful in the solution of the common problems incident to all life, among which are classed those relating to health, expression and locomotion. Ability reasonably to interpret life as it passes us daily gives a sound basis for individual and collective action.
Whether born in the city or in the country children first learn to notice the life about them and it is of prime importance that these first observations be made on objects of large meaning. The one great life common to people everywhere, imperishable and unchangeable yet ever endless in its variations and never monotonous is that of nature. It has been a source of delight, wonder, study and adoration to children and older people of all ages, climes and conditions.

Nature study is coming to occupy a larger place in primary programs and gives a broad firm foundation on which to correlate the traditional "3 R's" concerning which so much has been heard and written. Children should be educated from the standpoint of two environments for whether they live in city or country they cannot escape nature and its varied forms of expression. Later years and economic status may influence special lines but a common foundation insures politic unity. As children grow older, problems incident to their peculiar environment interest them more and should be given more attention by the schools with a view to their reasonable direction and correct relative solution. Certain problems arise fundamentally from urban life while others are incident chiefly to rural life. These
differentiations need noting and upon such knowledge the teacher may properly base instruction.

In our early life as a nation much stress was placed upon problems relating to war, commerce, manufacturing and invention. Of land there was an abundance, production of crops was a simple matter, lumber was present in quantities beyond use, animals for food and work were easily found, in short agriculture and its problems took care of itself. As a nation we needed to develop in other lines to make use of the easily obtained resources of a favish nature. Because of this and most properly so our text-books have been filled with political discussion and commercial activities. Recently we have become strongly aware of our changed economic situation. In a few short years we have occupied our territory. Its area is fixed while our population increases. For this reason we should focus special attention on agricultural problems. As a nation we depend on our land for life. These broad acres are our basis for further development. Upon their use, upon the service they give, upon the utilities they give, must we depend more and more in the future. For this reason has our government given so much for agricultural colleges of which there are possibly fifty under our flag. Because of these considerations
we are placing more and more importance on the study of agriculture and all its related problems in our schools. "Over three millions of dollars are now spent annually by the national and state governments to support experiment station work on agriculture."¹

Agricultural work while comparatively recent in the schools of our country has been carried on in those of other countries for many years. In school work this has taken the form of school gardens. France has featured them since 1879 while Prussia introduced them in 1819. From these school gardens dates Denmark's revival and rise in agriculture. The Macdonald movement put Canada to the front. They began in this country in 1891; at Dayton, Ohio, school gardens were established in 1903 and it was noted that boys taking gardening made 30% more progress than others in their studies.²

A new emphasis is being placed on education. It is being more thoroughly correlated with the facts and conditions of modern life. In the country it is not difficult for there is a common basis of work and interest. The opening with nature study and school gardens has shown the value of a closer relation to the practical subjects of everyday life.

Nature study, school gardens, agriculture, manual training and home economics may well form a

² do pp 164-165.
basis of school study and connect the country life with that of the rural schools. The ordinary school studies need not be dropped but should be studied from this angle.

Betts and Hall give the following studies based on this foundation:

**Nature Study,**

- Geography, Physiology, Economic Geography,
- Language Study, Grammar, Composition.

**Agriculture,**

- Elementary Science, Hygiene, Physiology,
- Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Physics.
- Reading, Literature.
- Numbers, Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra.
- History, Economics, Civics.

**Home Economics,**

- Fine Arts, Painting, Drawing, Music.¹

Such a course would, with competent teachers give rural children an education broad enough and at the same time thoroughly correlated with country life.

The new consolidated schools will give the children of the country a high school course in addition to the usual eight grades of study. The following four years course has been found satisfactory in the "John Swaney School":

¹ Betts and Hall, Better Rural Schools, Chap. IV.
First Year.—

   English I       Physical Geography
   Algebra         Agronomy I or Latin
   Physiology      Horticulture or Latin
   Household Science or Manual Training.

Second Year.—

   English II      Ancient History
   Algebra         Botany
   Geometry        Zoology
   Music           Drawing
   Animal Husbandry or Household Science.

Third Year.—

   English III     English History
   Chemistry       Animal Husbandry
   Agronomy II or Latin or Household Science.

Fourth Year.—

   English IV.     American History
   Physics         Arithmetic
   Bookkeeping     Civics
   Agronomy III or Household Science.¹

   Such a program has a distinctly modern and utilitarian tone and yet with its four-year course in English it shows evidence of older standards.

The writer would make more of the course of Agriculture by giving a more uniform division into its five main branches Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry

Products, Rural Engineering, and Farm Management and Marketing or Rural Economics as it is sometimes termed. History also would be given throughout the four years. Because so many children never go to college and comparatively few to high school the writer favors giving these two studies a prominent place in the latter part of the grammar grades. The main divisions may be given allowing the pupils somewhat more than the usual freedom in making their choice. There is a tendency on the part of older people to belittle the powers and judgment of adolescent youth. At this period they are impatient of restraint and the niceties of construction and unless given their head somewhat lose interest and drop out. The writer has abundant faith in the good instincts of youth and would let them build their intellectual frame with the same vigor that nature builds their physical and let the rounding out come much later in life.
Chapter V.

Rural Teachers.

Today the average country teacher is the Ishmaelite of the profession, going hither and thither in search of a haven of rest. Not prepared for her isolated task, unsupervised in her trials and tribulations, too inexperienced to get a first class town or city position and comfortable quarters she wanders here and yon until matrimony usually overtakes and saves her from bitterness and failure. A trainer of youth, she is given poorer chances, poorer equipment, poorer training, worse supervision and less reward than many a person whose work is upon material of less value.

Who does not know the average type of country school teacher as she comes for her first term? Barely out of school and home, hardly out of her 'teens, what chance has she to direct aright the boisterous children she meets at the term's beginning. Small wonder she gets homesick and longs for the day of departure long before it comes. Yet much has been done by such teachers. Very often the mistakes and discouragements have formed a basis for human companionship that has in its turn given an incentive for learning which has triumphed over poverty and denial and led to scholarship of no mean order. Could the
beginner have had at critical turns, a little kindlier attention, a little better direction and encouragement much more of lasting good might have been accomplished.

Pioneering is no child's play whether it be on the farm or in the school and needs strong hearts and hard heads and nerves of steel. Far be it from the writer to criticise unkindly or to belittle the efforts of country teachers; he has seen and helped solve many of their problems or at least offered words of encouragement; for he firmly believes in their mission and thoroughly admires their grit.

Conditions are changing and with the isolated little schoolhouse this type of teacher should give place to one with better training and more modern methods. The teacher is the life of the school and often of the entire community. The children depend on her for their social as well as educational life. Many problems other than those of books will be brought her for solution. Zeal and enthusiasm should be fortified by broad and intelligent preparation on rural life conditions. At present many normal schools and colleges are giving special courses with reference to rural work.

Many schools have in the past trained away from country life and not for it. Teachers to be efficient
in rural communities need to know rural situations and problems from the farmers' viewpoint; they need collective knowledge of country life and some measure of actual experience outside city streets. When the rural community can get for the training of its children a corps of teachers who think in terms common to them, and who really enjoy country life, then, and not until then can we expect a great measure of success in training for agricultural situations.

The problem today is to approximate this as far as possible and select those best fitted by experience and qualifications and work for the realization of the ideal. Many elements of this problem need discussion, much thought by the people must be given and greater intelligence must be shown in adjustment to present needs and conditions.

Better units of school organization will give more efficient supervision. The country teacher needs more than a yearly or even monthly visit from the superintendent. Distance and isolation must be overcome. Intelligent cooperation will come with the coming of the larger county unit of schools. Good roads will do much to render absences less frequent.

Wherever consolidation is possible the situation is much more favorable. The larger buildings and
better equipment are a source of inspiration in themselves, the larger number of children makes possible an enthusiasm not found in small groups, rivalry and games become a genuine pleasure, graded classes give an opportunity not to be realized in the one-room school with its forty ten-minute recitations, the companionship of other teachers, all these give the teachers opportunity to see the results of their work.

"Work is not drudgery or unpleasant when it is accompanied by conditions that arouse the interest, improve the zeal, inspire the enthusiasm and train the power of realization."\(^1\)

However much we might wish for a complete consolidation of schools yet we must realize that the one-room school is a necessity in many places for many years. Teachers must be found and trained who can successfully handle these schools. Upon such is placed the real burden of rural teaching. These may not gain the inspiration incident to consolidated schools and good country homes, and pleasant professional association may not be theirs, but there are ways of giving them material aid and at the same time getting better service for the community.

"The statistician tells us that the average salary of the teachers of the nation in the common

\(^1\) Seerley, Homer H., The Country School, p 188.
schools is less than $100 a year and in the rural school districts less than $300. In urban communities it ranges from $500 or $600 to $1800 or $2000 or more. The annual compensation of rural teachers is less than that of street laborers in cities, less than that of bricklayers, plasterers, carpenters, painters, and brakemen, and the Superintendent of Alabama reports that in that state it is less than the average earnings of convicts.  

Such statistics show a bad economic situation and also show a condition which may be remedied effectively by minimum salary laws if the following report is generally applicable. The salary is the attraction that brings 46% of the women teachers to the normal schools while the balance gave as reasons, a desire for this as a stepping stone to better places while only 4% gave "the liking of books and study" as their reason!

If competent teachers are to be secured reasonable remuneration must be given else many will turn to other professions while those who remain will tend to become more and more missionary in spirit. Their vision will reach ahead and will overlook material things of more or less passing moment. Perhaps this is a great aid, for a nation so materially minded as is America today has need of far sighted leaders.

"In the development of the country school discouragements will come and seemingly insurmountable obstacles will block the way. It is no time, then to become despondent or cynical. Go out under the stars and breathe the resolve in prayer to be true to right ideals. The reward is to the one who remains steadfast to the end. -- I plead for the spiritualization of country life. Education must do this."

Perhaps it is too much to expect of rural teachers that they be able to carry to their schools details and current knowledge of scientific agriculture but they may know something of the general rural situation and they should have the higher vision fixed beyond all power of material welfare to vitiate or lower and they should have the patience to hold this ideal constantly before the minds of the children.

 Perhaps the worst service which a teacher can render a child is to undermine its faith in the unseen and the divine. -- A child whose attention is never turned from nature up to nature's God receives only a partial education."

The duty of the teacher is to open the minds of the children to the great forces of life about them. In this work both the microscope and the telescope have great truths to tell. Forces governing the

2 Schaeffer, N.C., The Religious Education Ass'n., The Bible in Practical Life, p 330.
macrocosm have as much value for the teacher as those concerning the microcosm.

Perhaps under the stress of our present day material prosperity too much importance has been given differentiation and satisfaction of relatively minor wants and it may be the duty of present teachers more than we now realize, to restore our proper perspective and lead us beyond merely physical and mental pleasures to ranges of moral and spiritual vision which will be of permanent value to the race.

"The Pestalozzis and Froebels of history have invariably entered upon the work (of teaching) with prayerful hearts, in full realization of their own unworthiness. Let none of us do less. No young person should venture to teach who is not satisfied of his own fitness for the calling."

Such persons are needed everywhere through country districts, for there especially must much foundational work be done which is vitally needed for future growth of structure.

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Chapter VI.

Rural Sociology.

Sociology is essentially long range business. It seeks to find the great underlying principles and foundations upon which human society is built and by what ideals it is held together. As studied today it becomes the connecting link between what is usually meant by the term education on one hand and philosophy and religion on the other. Traces of all enter its subject material and it does not hesitate in reaching into any of these fields for possible material for its analysis.

Its first great duty when used in a definite field is to make a general survey of the situation, determining the essential factors of the whole as nearly as possible and their actual relation. Having done this it uses whatever agencies are available in making the people acquainted with the existing conditions and in studying out and suggesting possible remedies. Its presence and need presages a condition of society which unless checked threatens dangerous separation of society into fragmentary units. It is the signal fire on the observation peak calling society to rendezvous for discussion of common danger. Like Apaches of old we are prone to separate into small bands each pursuing their own game and easily
become separated by walls of ignorance and doubt and distrust as they were by the broken lands of their native mountains. Like them we are intensely democratic and own no common superior.

Especially is this true of our rural population. Education is the game we have pursued and its utility depends upon the social wants it can be made to satisfy. Of late some doubts have been raised as to its practical efficiency. The connection between schools and life has been partially severed and it is the duty of sociology to cure this lesion. This study has been of immense benefit to country life by focusing the attention of the nation on this the most neglected aspect of our national life.

Rural life has been found to divide quite distinctively into four periods each with its own peculiarities of people, conditions of work and institutions. The first period was that of the pioneer who lived a law unto himself. Of this type Warren H. Wilson has written this: He placed his cabin without regard to social experience. Self-preservation was his life struggle and personal salvation his aspiration in prayer. He was silent, self-reliant and resourceful. His emotional tension was very characteristic. ¹

With his passing came the period of the land farmer who was essentially a home builder. Perhaps

this period more nearly represents the ideal in our rural life than any other. The small groups gave a normal social life. At this time we have the historic little red schoolhouse so famous in sentiment and story. The social life of this period had two characteristics absent from that of the present.\(^1\)
The essential operations of farm life brought people together while periodical work alternated with seasons of rest. These factors allowed a sound wholesome life. Transportation and machinery had not yet appeared to demand community action and commercialized farming. With their advent came the period of exploitation of natural resources and the period of the exploiter. Everything was measured by the dollar, home ties and affections were loosened and home and social life fled to the cities. In all intents and purposes the exploiter was a replica of the frontiersman. This restless period soon brought that of the husbandman who rounds out the periodical types of essentially all farming communities. His advent is recent and his problems are those of today. His chief characteristic is his almost religious care of his land. To him its problems are paramount, he is essentially materially minded. Production is a science with him and social values are below par.

\(^1\) MacDougall, J., Rural Life in Canada.
The essential problems connected with this period of agriculture are those concerning the woman and children. Wherever the core of a business is economic as is the case with present day agriculture the weaker human beings are apt to be overworked and underfed. Many a prosperous farmer has modern barns and running water for his stock while his wife works on in the old kitchen and carries water from the well. Many a boy has left the farm because of the drudgery of farm life and many a girl has sought social recreation in the city. Seemingly the farmer has overlooked or forgotten the object of his scientific management or else has not yet stopped to solve completely his problem. The dollar has been too often his measure of success.

The main object of management should be to secure maximum prosperity for the employer and also the employee, and this means not dividends alone but the development of every branch of the business to its highest state of excellence so that the prosperity may be permanent.\(^1\) Women and children are certainly part of the permanency of country life.

Henry Wallace of Iowa in his paper, Wallace's Farmer, gave this: "Today they have been saying that the mother is the hardest worked member of the family,—that the farmer, in his anxiety to get more

\(^1\) Taylor, P.W., The Principles of Scientific Management, Chap. II.
land, works himself too hard and his wife also, and the boys and girls so hard that the boys get disgusted and leave the farm and the girls marry town fellows and go to town." 1

Material things should be valued only as they contribute to the happiness and health of the family. The country is growing richer and richer in material products but steadily poorer in social and spiritual values. People have acquired a distorted idea of values. For what do we have this material wealth if not to better human life and make it finer?

"Degeneration abounds where the tension of life is extreme. -- -- Crimes of all kinds are less frequent in prosperous agricultural communities and in thriving towns of moderate size, where the relation of income to the standard of living is such that the life struggle is not severe." 2

Many boys and girls growing up in the country are being cheated out of their natural inheritance of good health, happy play, and the joy of social intercourse, because farm products are regarded as an end rather than a means to the higher development of the rural family. The small things of life are crowding out the higher, petty jealousies are deadening effort. We know each other too well, -- and humanity at close range is dull. Our units of thought

1 McKeever, Wm. A., Farm Boys and Girls, p 44.
2 Giddings, Principles of Sociology, p 348.
and action need enlarging. Our vision is too narrow; we are getting short-sighted. A combination of rural school, social center and rural church on a scale that will be a source of pleasure, interest and inspiration is needed today.

Teachers must remember that underneath all educational problems lie moral qualities upon which depend the utility of our schools. "In the first place, intellectual achievements, or their results, can only be utilized where there is a sane and wholesome morality as a basis. In the second place, the results of the intellectual achievement of one race or of one man may be borrowed freely by the rest of the world, provided the rest of the world have the moral qualities which will enable them to profit by so doing; whereas moral qualities cannot be borrowed from one race by another. -- One nation can easily borrow farm machinery and modern methods of agriculture, but it cannot borrow the moral qualities which will enable it to profit by them. Saying nothing of mental alertness and willingness to learn, which might be classed as mental rather than moral, it could not borrow that patient spirit of toil, nor that sturdy self-reliance, nor that stern and unrelenting sense of duty, nor that forethought which sacrifices present enjoyment to future profit, nor
that spirit of mutual helpfulness all of which are essential to any effective moral work. Again, a nation cannot easily borrow a sane and sober reason, a willingness to trust to its own care in preparing the soil rather than to the blessing of the priest upon the fields; nor can it borrow a general spirit of enterprise which ventures out upon plans and projects which approve themselves to the reason. And finally, it cannot borrow that love for the soil, and the great out-doors, and the growing crops, and the domestic animals, which marks every successful rural people. These things have to be developed on the soil, to be bred into the bone and fiber of the people, and they are the first requisites of good farming. After them comes scientific knowledge. In the development of such moral qualities as these the church has been, and may become again, the most effective agency.¹

The means of affecting the socialization of rural communities may be found by making the schools social centers for the people. Most of our American farmers possess many of the moral elements necessary to success but in some lines they are weak. Cooperation is a new force in American rural life. From pioneer times comes the inheritance of individualism and personal self-reliance. "Farmers have not yet

learned how to work together effectively. - There is a lack of good "team work". The very individualism of the man makes him either suspicious of other men or undesirous of working with them.\textsuperscript{1}

Many of these traits may best be secured by group play and work in the schools. Older persons find habits of a lifetime hard to change. It is because of these well known psychological facts that it is so necessary for the rural school to enter into the country community life and so direct and shape it as to give the future generation a more rounded and balanced foundation for the complicated problems of modern agricultural life and business success.

\textsuperscript{1} Bailey, L.H., The Training of Farmers, p 69.
Chapter VII.

The Rural Church.

The relation of the rural church to the rural school and community is a somewhat difficult problem to handle successfully. Many new factors complicate the situation and must be considered before an understandable basis of action may be secured.

The religious views of our fathers no longer satisfy people. Personal salvation beyond the grave might have been the main religious ideal of the pioneer but the modern church must place its emphasis on practical and present social service if it expects to attract. Faith must be shown by works if it is to gain a hearing today.

The modern church is so completely divided into various sects, each of whom is shouting its own special brand, that it is unable to put up a solid front against the enticements of this world. Economic problems are so pressing, their rewards so alluring, that problems of the future life are not given a thought. One generation is prone to forget the sacrifices of the previous generation and to claim all the honor for it successes.

Among our early pioneers the main conception of religion as we understand it today was unknown. They thought of it as a salvation after death rather than
an aid for present living. Perhaps their bodily loneliness caused the same loneliness of soul. No doubt their idea was imperfect but is it any more so than that of many people today? There are those who would make of the church a merely social unit for the pursuit of present intellectual and ethical pleasure without any reference to the future life.

To the writer the church should stand for both, it should prepare for the future life and make the present living a time of training by the practice of all the many little things which make for better living and happier lives. The Golden Rule gives a reasonable balance between terror and ecstasy, poverty and affluence, miserly hoarding and reckless extravagance, wanton debauchery and Puritanical strictness and all the other extremes to which fallen human nature seems heir. The giving up or postponement of present wants for future gains is considered good business and an indication of reasonable foresight and good moral judgment and is a common trait among successful peoples whether rural or urban. Carry this proposition to such an extreme that faith in an Almighty and Ever-Present Creator is substituted for astute reasoning and intelligent foresight and quietly go ahead day by day in modest self-respect and mutual cooperation and forbearance and there is
developed the highest value known to mortals, namely the religious and worshipful life.

Whether it pays or not as this world terms success is not the problem to be considered by the person attempting such a life; his problem is that of the enlisted soldier,—personal care and obedience to orders and daily service. As a matter of fact such living does usually pay in so base a term as mere dollars to say nothing of health, peace of mind and reward of well rendered services.

"In spite of the emphasis of the church upon spirituality, or because of its emphasis upon a sane and wholesome kind of spirituality, men have usually become better farmers under its influence. For, along with certain formalities of belief and conduct, there has generally been for one reason or another, considerable emphasis upon the plain economic virtues of industry, sobriety, thrift, forethought, and mutual helpfulness. Whenever there has been a pure and elevated type of Christianity, there Christians have exhibited these virtues in somewhat greater degree than non-Christians. This simply means that they have wasted less of their energy in vice, dissipation, brawling, or in riotous living, than their non-Christian neighbors."¹

¹ Carver, T.N., Principles of Rural Economy, pp 349-6.
The constant vitalizing effect of personal contact with the Maker of this great universe of at least two hundred thousand revolving suns has a consistently tonic effect which outweighs all other considerations and gives purpose to the seemingly insignificant trifles of every day life. Only those who have actually experienced this personal relation in either command or entreaty know the tremendous power of faith over reason and realize that religion is no vain beating of the air but rather an actual leading force in determining human action. Persons who do realize this soon become missionaries and cease to measure service in terms of economic values. To them life is full, it is an opportunity for doing good, the little affairs and duties take on a meaning that unknowing people can neither comprehend nor appreciate.

Our lives are made up for the most part of innumerable and often vexatious little problems which seem endless and devoid of all meaning. One day follows another in endless succession and the mightiest intellects of the world have never been able to fathom life's inconsistencies nor see hope beyond the tangle. There is a touch either of defiance or sadness to all human reasoning and it is by faith alone that steady reasoning and it is by faith alone that steady progress can be made.
J. M. Somerndike speaks of the unmeasured values and the explosive power of the Gospel and Sunday School work. Many people who are quietly doing good each day never think to mention it; within them is the constantly growing desire to be of service.¹

It is the province of the church to inspire to action rather than patiently to study out the scientific methods of procedure. In this way it can cooperate with the school and community. The church in its religious teaching should lay more stress on the unities of the people. Industrial and economic as well as spiritual likenesses and unities should be constantly held before the people. Churches should realize more than at present the great moral benefits coming from sports and should encourage them whenever possible.

There is a reasonable ground of union and balance between the economic, moral and spiritual wants of the people and each should be given a chance to develop. No one should be allowed to take time belonging to either of the others.

The writer while in charge of a tribe of Mojave-Apache Indians in Arizona during the year 1915 had the opportunity and put into practice a fairly rigid organization of these wants and had the opportunity of studying the effects somewhat closely.

¹ Somerndike, J.M., By-Products of the Rural Sunday School, Chap. I & II.
Economic wants were urged for five and a half days each week, moral wants, games, etc. were held during the remaining half of the sixth day and the seventh was held for church and social wants.

The response was remarkably hearty once the Indians became convinced of the sincerity of the methods and showed ready signs of enjoyment, balance and improvement.

Humanity is the great thing after all,—the revival of good things is no small task. The teacher and pastor should cooperate in the many forms of social service and lend each other aid whenever possible. "Life is not alone of the body, nor of the body and mind, but of the body, mind and spirit. Education cannot stop with the material things of life, nor with the scholarship and learning that the worlds of intellectuality have produced, nor with the humanitarian theories and philosophics of civilization as its final and complete aim is spirituality of personal character."¹

Nor must the church leaders forget that economic wants do concern people and rightly so for the larger part of the time and that the two forces, economic and spiritual must work together in harmony to perfect the complete life.

Argument as to which precedes is useless and purposeless; both are of vital importance and should be considered accordingly.

The church may become a social center if it can secure wide-awake, inspirational, intelligent leadership and free itself from petty doctrines and divisions. The call is one of practical service which makes for better communities.
Conclusion.

In the preceding chapters an attempt has been made to survey and discuss the main problems facing the rural school of today. Some discussion of the general problems of education was given first to correlate the work of urban and rural life. Whether living in cities or in the country children find many problems in common and a common base is easily found to coordinate action.

This was followed by a general statement of the rural school problem. The historical beginnings of the situation were touched upon to give a reasonable background for trend of thought and the magnitude of the problem was shown to arouse interest in what is probably the largest single study before our nation today. The country is isolated and dumb before the life and on-rush of urban civilization and its problems usually pass unnoticed, for lack of a crier to call them out and command for them the notice they deserve.

For many years emphasis was properly placed upon questions of commercial and manufacturing concern for these were the shortcomings of the national life. The school and with it the church were relatively ahead of the people and could afford to await the development of the balance of the economic life.
During the past forty years a marked change has taken place, accelerated by the newly built railroads and opening commerce and wise legislation. Great streams of westward migration had filled the middle and western states. Labor-saving machinery had been invented and the United States sprang to the front rank of producing nations. The cattle and grain of the middle and western plains were giving a wealth which made possible luxuries unheard of in earlier days. People turned to these with all the eagerness of children freed from long hours of toil or study. Nor can one censure them. The struggle against nature had been a severe and protracted one, the hardships suffered and the privations endured had made life a burden at times and when such a general and sweeping relief came some such sweeping reaction was sure to follow. The advantages accruing from money outweighed those of education and children turned from the old school standards and the church also lost its authority in the general longing for luxury, leisure and games.

The old standards were slowly passing and with them the old systems. New and better ideals were arising in their place and these demand new systems of learning and a new attitude towards books and life. Cooperation is now the watchword in all departments.
of national and private life. Social service is the
goal of school and church. "Useless is the wealth
wrung from the soil unless the welfare of the soil
worker be maintained. Valueless are the material
elements of human life unless the human spirit be
enlarged. But vanity and vexation of heart are our
farm labors and plans unless the spirit of service
and brotherhood is to dominate." ¹ The burdens of the
rural people have come from their isolation, the long
hours of work and chores and drudgery, poor roads,
poor markets and ignorance of natural laws. "The farm-
er's work is in the presence of the elemental forces
of nature. These forces are beyond his power to make
or to unmake. He cannot change the rain or the sun-
shine or the storm or drought." ²

"Western people have learned to work with some
of these forces, however, especially in the matter
of irrigation. They have learned to manage and use
many of the smaller forces and are beginning to study
the larger ones in the hope of finding their modes
of action and application with a view to making them
serve the economic needs of today. The 'seven year
cycle' is an expression which is coming into use
among students of agricultural problems. Many are
beginning to search for the laws governing the action
of these larger forces. Accurate statistics concerning

¹ Butterfield, Kenyon L., The Country Church and
the Rural Problem, p 135.
² Bailey, L.H., The Training of Farmers, p 72.
temperature, moisture, prevailing winds and profitable crops if taken and kept through a long period of years until a fair average can be struck will be of great value in determining these laws. The writer believes that this is one of the two fundamental present day problems of strictly scientific agriculture.

The second is that of farm economics which includes farm management and crop marketing. Farming today is a commercialized business and as such is entitled to the same scientific management which obtains in large factories. Its operations must be balanced and well kept; loss of all kinds must be eliminated. The soil is essentially a factory for the production of edible goods and should be treated accordingly.

Commercial competition and business combinations demand the same action from farmers if they would compete successfully in the world markets. The farmers must meet and cooperate and organize in placing their products on the market. Cooperative dairy associations in Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota have made this industry a paying investment while apple growers unions in Oregon and Washington and citrus fruits associations in the south and southwest have often been a means of wealth saving. But as yet the surface is hardly scratched; only a mere beginning has been made.
The hope of the farmer is in the rural schools which will study these problems and place them before the coming generation. The individualism of the past interferes with the farmers of today. This can be overcome in the future by better training of the children and improved conditions of life in the country. The problem is national in scope for agriculture is still the main business of our people. The school system in the country needs more money, better buildings and equipment, better supervision and better organization before it can hope to handle these problems successfully. To demonstrate better methods it must be enabled to take and hold a position somewhat in advance of local ideals while the new ideas are being discussed and the new experiments shown.

These schools should also enter more thoroughly into the social life of the community. Their problem is social as well as economic. Country people need to gather often and talk and get acquainted. At best the life is more or less isolated and difficult. Games, picnic dinners, dances and many other forms of amusement make life more attractive. However much we may value education we must not make it an end of itself.

"The hope of the future is not in scientific specialists. A specialty once chosen, all interest
in general science and the progress of truth ceases. The hope is in the general educated public, who, having no specialties to absorb and narrow them, are interested in all science and truth. ¹

Lowell stated it well when he said this: "I had rather the college should turn out one of Aristotle's four-square men, capable of holding his own in whatever field he may be cast, than a score of lopsided ones developed abnormally in one direction". ² Such an education gives a large aspect to the rural school problem. The level must be high and the vision broad. To develop the economic, social, and spiritual life of the largest single class of people in our nation today is a task worthy the best efforts of our teachers, social leaders and pastors. Minor differences must be dropped and all must unite on the platform of social service and betterment. Like Oberlin of France and Grundtuig of Denmark they should know that intelligent toil, happy environments, social justice and spiritual life are bound together and act and react constantly upon each other in developing a fine type of rural civilization.

² Century Dictionary, p 3519.
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