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HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

The rising value of headwork on American farms opens up a bigger market in the country for the wares of the high school. The hand-farmer, the man with the hoe, is being gradually replaced by the machine-farmer and the great muscles of the landworker are slowly getting smaller, while the higher brain centers of the farm-engineer are coming into use. High schools that first perceive this change in country life and adapt their methods to the new country community will first enter into the benefits of this opening intellectual market.

The fact is evident that human culture is the base of agriculture. The so-called pure-bred pig, cow, and ear of corn, fashioned mysteriously under the guiding principles of agriculture art, are the commonplace symbols today of the intricate technical science of agriculture. And this indispensable science is rising to such heights of technicality that it requires for its comprehension and appreciation a high order of trained intelligence. In fact, it is becoming every day more evident that it takes a thoroughbred human to appreciate the fine points in a thoroughbred hog; and the really serious problem face this: How can the pure-bred ing scientific agriculture seems to hog be sure of having a high-bred master and owner?

The fear of the hoe-farmer has been that if he educated his boy, he would run the risk of losing the boy from the farm to the city. The fear of the machine-farmer may very well be that if he fails to educate his boy, he runs the risk that the boy will not comprehend the modern science and art of agriculture. This rural dilemma in which the farmers of a community are living and struggling is the real problem of our time. The high school situated at the very heart of the larger community, especially if directed by community statesmen, is probably the most potent factor in resolving this dilemma of the rural and cultural center of the farmer so as both to educate the farm boy and to hand him back to the farm as a permanent rural citizen.

The high school is the intellectual and cultural center of the larger community, which includes the nearby farm population. The high school teachers in an agricultural section who seductively paint the glories of urban life to the youth intrusted to their care and counsel play traitor to the larger community. For the trading center to deplete the farms around a high school town and rob them of intellectual human energy is as unethical as for a farmer to rob his soil of life-producing elements. For a city school board to permit its high school teachers to stigmatize the industry of farming or to wheedle its strong young men and maidens, living comfortably on farms, into other occupations under a system of false glamor, is to pursue a policy of community destruction. Nothing short of a long-time policy on the part of the school board and city or village officials to build up their country trade area and land foundation, is worthy the name of community sense and loyalty. A broad, constructive, cultural policy, therefore, which reckons on developing all the cultural resources of the larger community, is the normal policy of a high school fully conscious of its rural relations.

The machine-farmer will not accept a standard of cultural inferiority for his children. Already he is looking the banker square in the eye and talking to him as an equal. Already the dealer in fine cattle is a traveler, visiting our cities, and returning to his own acres to enrich his home with comfort, music, art, and some of the diversions of leisure. This means that the farmer's boy and girl are to be satisfied with nothing less than the best educational facilities for permanent life on the farm. Agriculture science will be required, of course; but the broader culture of the time will not be omitted. Belief in the capacity of the rural brain for full development will persuade the high school to give the prospective farmer the best of its intellectual goods.

The new farmer is going to prepare for local self-government on a new scale and the high school as the first great agent in this departure. Accepting no inferiority, he is going to prepare his boys and girls to fight their battles with their brains. Why should the farmer not be able to put his thoughts into parliamentary form? Why should he not be able to discuss boldly and gracefully all the questions that relate to the land and rural society? The high school will give the warning in thought and expression which will enable

the farmer to represent his own interests, not only on the county board but also in the state and national legislature.

The farm woman of the new era is going to know textiles, furniture, foods, chemicals, machines. She is going to use knowledge to combat the mercantile craft and under-handed dealing. Her daughter is going to learn, not only by the long process of experience, but by the short-cuts of domestic science how to protect herself and her future home without accepting the stigma of inferiority, without being left simply to complain and ask for justice. Here is where the community high school is going to reinforce the arm of the ruralite, whether man or woman. The monopoly of knowledge and the monopoly of social instruments are no

longer going to be the birthright of the city man. Therefore, the farmer is coming into his own through a new process of rural democracy.

Looking ahead with an eye to future changes in agriculture, we cannot but feel pity for the poor deluded boy or girl who wills not to graduate from high school. Failure to equip himself for the "life race" will inevitably mean failure to come out a "real" winner—a winner, not only financially, but physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. Beware, youth! Beware!

OLIVER F. KILHAM,
 Director, Agricultural Dept.,
 Newberg High School.

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