THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN IN RELATIONSHIP TO MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM 1876 TO 1889

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
EUGENE DOUGLAS DAWSON
1974

This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN IN RELATIONSHIP TO MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM 1876 to 1889

presented by

Eugene Douglas Dawson

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Secondary Education and Curriculum

Major professor

Date July 26, 1974

O-7639

ABSTRACT

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN IN RELATIONSHIP TO MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM 1876 TO 1889

By

Eugene Douglas Dawson

Cooperative extension services have become an important part of the total program of Michigan State University. The concept of extension had its roots in land grant philosophy and began in Michigan in 1876 with the holding of farmers' institutes. These institutes were sponsored by the Michigan Agricultural College and the State Board of Agriculture which at that time was the governing board of the institution.

This study examines, in its historic setting, farmers' institutes from their inception in 1876 to 1889 when the nature of the movement changed. During this fourteen year period, the style and format of the institutes remained constant but beginning with 1890 obvious changes were introduced. For the sake of convenience, this time span has been labeled, "The Foundation Period."

Eugene Douglas Dawson

An examination of the general cultural milieu of the nineteenth century revealed trends and movements that were conducive to the incubation of farmers institutes. The developing democratic tradition with its reform impulse resulted in changes on the educational scene at all levels. This when related to a strong agrarian emphasis brought about the establishment of Michigan Agricultural College in 1855.

The growing problems of the college reached a crisis in 1875. The legislature was reluctant to allocate funds for the institution and much criticism from the farming community was directed towards the college. Some even questioned the value of having an Agricultural College. The college faculty sensing the need of opening the lines of communication with the farmers and of helping them, proposed to the State Board of Agriculture that a series of farmers' institutes be started in the State of Michigan. Building upon the experience of the Illinois State system of institutes, Michigan began holding farmers' institutes in January, 1876.

An analysis of these institutes revealed that in addition to topics on scientific agriculture, many farmers were also vitally interested in subjects of a social and cultural nature. This was the area where the mind of institute participants was revealed on such subjects as education, politics, finances, business, family life and

social status. This type of presentation revealed the motives and goals of much agrarian thinking in nineteenth century Michigan and showed the hopes and aspirations of many farmers as they sought to find their identity in a rapidly changing society. It gave a basic philosophy and approach to life upon which was raised the edifice of scientific agriculture.

The institute movement was a success in Michigan. A significant number of farmers responded and communication lines between them and the Agricultural College were established. Increased financial support from the legislature also became evident. The role and position of the farmer in Michigan was gradually elevated when compared with his earlier status and his social needs were, in part at least, met.

The inauguration of farmers' institutes in the state of Michigan was of importance and mutual benefit to both the farmer and the Agricultural College. It marked the beginning of extension work in Michigan in keeping with the service philosophy inherent in the land grant concept. From this small beginning has developed the present-day system of extension services found in Michigan.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN IN RELATIONSHIP TO MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FROM 1876 TO 1889

By

Eugene Douglas Dawson

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Secondary Education and Curriculum

1974

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are a number of people to whom I am indebted for their help and counsel in this study. First and foremost would be my academic advisor and committee chairman, Dr. J. Geoffrey Moore whose guidance has been invaluable throughout the various stages of development and writing. Mention should also be made of the other committee members, Doctors Carl H. Gross, Lawrence Borosage and Douglas T. Miller whose helpful suggestions have been incorporated within these pages.

Interviews with Dr. Madison Kuhn, the Graduate Chairman of the College of Arts and Letters, and Dr. William H. Coombs, the Director of the Michigan State University Historical Collections and Archives, provided direction in the selection of a dissertation topic. A note of appreciation is also in order for Dr. Coombs and his staff for their assistance in locating documents relating to the early period of Michigan Agricultural College.

I also wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the staff of the State of Michigan Library in Lansing. They directed me to their extensive microfilm holdings of local newspapers which provided helpful information for the period under consideration in this study.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Joan and children, Cheri, Brian and David for their patient understanding during the final, crucial months of research and writing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A milestone in the history of agricultural education in Michigan was the successful launching of an educational phenomenon known as "Farmers' Institutes." The institutes began in 1876 with the holding of six institutes in January of that year but a general decline took place after the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. The Act not only prohibited the use of funds provided thereunder for farmers' institutes, but also incited the college administrations to concentrate on the specific program prescribed by the Act which inevitably diverted interest and effort from the institutes.[1] The lack of enthusiasm by the state legislature to provide funds for institutes, a general demand that instruction for farmers be of a more thorough nature than that offered by regular farmers' institutes along with a restructuring of the college extension program, led to the demise of the farmers' institute movement in Michigan in 1918 when only $411.54 was budgeted for institutes.[2] In

---

[1]Lincoln D. Kelsey and Cannon C. Hearne, Cooperative Extension Work (Ithaca, New York: Comstock Publishing Co., 1949), p. 15.

[2]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1918, p. 28.

contrast, the annual budget ranged from $8,000 to $12,000 in the ten year period prior to 1918.

The number of institutes held each year, Legislative appropriations and format remained constant until 1890 when many changes took place which go beyond the scope of this investigation. This "Foundation Period" from 1876 to 1889 will be the period under consideration in this study.

Purpose and Rationale

The basic purpose of this study is to examine the reason why the institutes were established along with how they were run and then to analyze the contents of the papers read. The papers presented at the institutes revealed what was on the minds of the participants who probably represented a select and higher class of farmers.

There are a number of reasons for thinking that the papers represented the feelings of a somewhat elite type of farmer. In the report of the Committee appointed by president Theophilus C. Abbot to investigate the feasibility of holding a series of institutes, the expression "leading farmers" was used to describe those who would be asked to present papers at the proposed institutes.[1] Honorable C. D. Little, president of the institute held in Saginaw was reported by the local press as referring to "the more

---

[1] R. G. Baird, "General History, Including the Action of the College Faculty and the State Board of Agriculture Relating to the Institutes," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 73.

intelligent tillers of the soil." The editor of the Michigan Farmer commenting on the institutes held in Armada and Rochester said; "The audience for the most part was made up of farmers and their wives, sons and daughters, from these and surrounding towns and was an intelligent looking and appreciative . . . as ever assembled. . . ."[2]

The editor of the Owosso Weekly Press in reporting on the institute held in Owosso described it in glowing terms when he said:

> The Farmers' Institute held in this city last week, under the auspices of the State Board of Agriculture more than met the expectations of its projectors; it was a grand assemblage of the prosperous farming community of Shiawassee county and vicinity. No one who has lived in this county twenty years could fail to note the fine equipages and not only comfortably but richly clad persons of the farmers of today . . . and realize that Shiawassee county farmers have passed from the pioneer stage to the era of comfort and easy living--a point where as A. B. Clark expressed it at the banquet, they can take their 'day off' to go to the convention and not miss it.[3]

The economic success of at least some farmers was mentioned by J. J. Woodman, editor of the Grange Visitor when he noted:

> Here [at the institutes] we see men who have made farming a success . . . with . . . well filled pockets, living examples of the . . . profitable occupations of husbandry. . . . And there may be with us those who have not succeeded well in farming, yet not willing to give it up. . . .[4]

---

[1] Saginaw Daily Courier, January 29, 1878, p. 2.

[2] Michigan Farmer, January 18, 1876, p. 1.

[3] Owosso Weekly Press, February 8, 1888, p. 1.

[4] Grange Visitor, February 1878, p. 3.

Closely related to the references indicating wealth and prosperity were references to land owners and laborers. The Grange Visitor for October, 1877, carried an article on "Landlords and Tenants" where that problem was considered.[1] In addition to tenant farmers there were those who worked as hired hands for the more prosperous farmers. The Ionia Standard observed that:

> No farmer ever achieves great success by his own labor alone. The ability to make profitable use of the labor of others is quite as important for a farmer as for the manager of any other kind of business. . . . In most cases the labor of the owner of land is vastly more important in directing the labor of others than for what he himself can do. If a farmer finds this not to be the case it is pretty good evidence that he has mistaken his calling.[2]

A significant article appeared in the Michigan Farmer entitled, "Upper Story Farmers" where an unnamed author alluded to a better class of farmers who utilized the "upper story" of intellect.

> If one is disposed to look up and check off the upper story farmers in any given region, let them announce a Farmers' Institute . . . and they will come to the front at the first bugle call, and show their colors when the business begins. They are entirely at home in such an assemblage, and are never at a loss to give a reason for the faith that is in them. They know the ins and outs of every style of farming. . . . Farmers of the sit-still type are sometimes found at these gatherings. . . . These opinionated groundlings have a sovereign contempt for 'upper story' people and will always remain the antiquated farmers they now are.[3]

---

[1] Ibid., October, 1877, p. 3.

[2] Ionia Standard, December 23, 1880, p. 7.

[3] Michigan Farmer, January 15, 1884, p. 1.

In addition to the adjectives and financial references which implied the existence of some type of class structure within the Michigan farming community, the nature of the papers read at the institutes also supported the existence of a higher type of farmer. The essays read by the "leading farmers" suggested literary abilities and knowledge consonant with the concept of an elite farmer.

It was beyond the scope of this study to analyze the class structure of farmers in Michigan but it appeared that this existed and those who actively participated in farmers' institutes were from a higher class. This implied then that an analysis of the papers read at the institutes will represent the thinking of that class of farmer.

Even though the thoughts expressed at the farmers' institutes in Michigan may have represented only one segment of the farming population, nevertheless a consideration of those institutes and what was said is important. There are a number of reasons for suggesting that the institutes were important and therefore worth analyzing.

Roy V. Scott in tracing the history of agricultural extension work to 1914 said that, "Michigan's Agricultural College was the first land-grant school to develop a system of institutes in essentially the form that would continue into the twentieth century."[1] He then went on to observe

---

[1]Roy V. Scott, The Reluctant Farmer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), p. 71.

that, "by 1880 the concept of the institute as a teaching technique was established in New England and in Michigan, but elsewhere little had been done."[1] Michigan was a pioneer in the institute movement which had nationwide implications. Other states observed and then established their own institutes. William Beal of the Michigan Agricultural College said, "There are many in distant States who are better informed of what we are doing than most of the farmers in our State. . . ."[2]

The institute movement gradually spread across the nation overcoming farmer reluctance and inertia. Scott observed that:

> Farmers went through something of an educational ferment in which apathy and hostility to that which was new gradually dissipated. Without that development, in fact, it is doubtful that they would have turned to agricultural education in the twentieth century with the enthusiasm that they did.[3]

Farmers' institutes were the first form of extension work in Michigan. Beal noted that, "of all methods of extension teaching, I place the institute first as it gradually leads up to all other forms."[4] Extension services of

---

[1] Ibid., p. 72.

[2] Grange Visitor, September 1, 1878, p. 5.

[3] Scott, op. cit., p. 48.

[4] William J. Beal, History of the Michigan Agricultural College (Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915), p. 158.

all kinds, as they have evolved over the years, have played an important role in Michigan education.

Another reason for the importance of institutes in Michigan involved the very existence of the Agricultural College. After the newness of the college had won off, an increased spirit of apathy set in, which in many cases developed into overt criticism of the college, much of this coming from farmers themselves who saw no need for the school. Times were hard during the early 1870's and an economic depression swept over the country. With a shortage of funds, the State legislature was not overly generous in providing money for the college. It would be pointless speculation as to what would have happened to the Agricultural College if institutes had not been started, but at a bare minimum, the future and nature of the college would have been different. It is theoretically possible that it might not even have survived! President James Burrill Angell of the University of Michigan at the Semi-Centenial Celebration said:

> I think the chief agencies in winning favor for this and for all similar colleges have been farmers' institutes and the experiment stations. By papers and discussions in the institutes it has been made clear to the most conservative farmer that he has something to learn from others, and by the researches at the stations it has been demonstrated that experiments conducted according to the most approved scientific methods can reveal how to make the raising

> of crops or the culture of fruit or the breeding of animals more profitable.[1]

The institutes helped the farmer, both scientifically and socially. This was also indicative of the importance of the movement. There were papers on "scientific farming" which were of great profit to the farmer. Papers dealing with social and cultural matters were presented at each institute. These too were of benefit in raising the farmers' social status and helped him to find his identity in a changing society. Because the farmer was helped and appreciated it, he reciprocated and helped the college.

> The farmers' institutes, held under the auspices of the College, are highly appreciated by the farmers of the State and are doing much to make the institution more widely and better known. The College is indeed having a healthy and steady growth, and is well worth the support we give it.[2]

> The series of institutes aided or conducted by the president and professors are of great value to the farmers of the state. Perhaps through the influence of these, similar institutes are being held in various parts of the State under the auspices of the County Grange.[3]

Farmers' institutes were also important because they revealed the thinking of the participants. In addition

---

[1]James Burrill Angell, "For Michigan and Its University," Semi-Centennial of Michigan State Agricultural College, ed. by Thomas C. Blaisdell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908), p. 209.

[2]J. J. Woodman, Masters Annual Address, Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1880), p. 12.

[3]C. G. Luce, Masters Annual Address, Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1882), p. 11.

to papers and discussion on scientific agriculture, papers were read dealing with culture and the social sciences. This was where the mind of at least one class of farmers was revealed. What was troubling him about society and government? What was he trying to achieve for himself and his family? What were his thoughts on contemporary problems? Those questions were discussed in the institutes. The following chapters of this study will consider those matters. Eddy observed that; "in essence, all land-grant extension is essentially the same--concerned with the educational and cultural advancement of the people in their efforts to make a living and life."[1] More than farming techniques were offered in extension. There was an emphasis on values, attitudes and culture.

In an address given in 1904, Kenneth L. Butterfield, an early graduate of Michigan Agricultural College, indicated that the ultimate educational problem for farmers was social in nature. He acknowledged the need for greater technical skill on the part of the farmer but "the ultimate rural problem is to maintain the best possible status of the farming class."[2] He maintained that the class status

---

[1]Edward Danforth Eddy, Jr., Colleges For Our Land and Time (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 282.

[2]Kenneth L. Butterfield, "The Social Phase of Agricultural Education," The Spirit and Philosophy of Extension Work, ed. by R. K. Bliss (Washington: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1952), p. 76.

of the farmer ought to be elevated. "The American farmer will be satisfied with nothing less than the highest possible class efficiency and largest class influence, industrially, politically, socially."[1]

He felt that the Agricultural Colleges were doing good work in dealing with the technical aspects of agricultural education but "the industrial, the political, and the social factors are not given due consideration."[2] As part of his proposed remedy for this problem, Butterfield advocated a stronger emphasis on "Rural Sociology" and the extension services of the Agricultural College for those who could not come to college.

The successful launching of farmers' institutes in Michigan was a turning point in agricultural education, from the viewpoint of both the farmer and the agricultural college. An examination of this phenomena is therefore in order. This will involve a discussion of the mutual benefits to the farmer and the college along with an analysis of the contents of the institutes. Special attention will be directed towards the "social" type of paper rather than the "scientific agriculture" type of paper.

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 77.

Forerunners of Farmers' Institutes

There were a number of forerunners in America to the founding of farmers' institutes. The main organization was the agricultural society which although dating back to revolutionary war times did not become popular until the middle of the nineteenth century. Those societies were formed at the local, state and federal levels. The United States Agricultural Society was formed June 14, 1851 and "contributed to the rise of sentiment that would ultimately result in the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act. . . ."[1] "By 1852 there were about 300 active agricultural societies spread over 31 states and 5 territories and in 1860 there were well over 900."[2]

The agricultural societies were very active and sponsored numerous meetings for the farmers. Probably the most popular and beneficial was the agricultural fair. Scott observed that:

> Agricultural fairs according to most authorities, enjoyed their golden period between 1850 and 1870, with some variation depending on geography and other factors. During those decades few other agencies existed to instruct the farmer, and certainly the societies and their fairs were the only means by which large numbers of ordinary farmers might be contacted directly. During those years, also, the

---

[1] Scott, op. cit., p. 14.

[2] M. L. Wilson, "Abraham Lincoln and the Historical Background of the Department of Agriculture," The Spirit and Philosophy of Extension Work, ed. by R. K. Bliss (Washington: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1952), p. 20.

> fairs were more educational in nature, with less of the horse racing and carnival atmosphere that later would be the dismay of farmers. Indeed, exhibitions of livestock and new machinery, displays of home-grown produce, and more or less informative talks by a variety of speakers gave the fairs of those decades many of the characteristics of later-day farmers' institutes.[1]

Closely related to the growth of agricultural societies was the rise of agricultural journalism. While agricultural societies, fairs and farmers' meetings reached a considerable number of farmers, the great impact of agricultural periodicals must not be overlooked. Scott noted that in the century after 1810 about 3,600 farm periodicals appeared and although the casualty rate was high, by 1870 there was an average of 60 existing at any given time. In 1840 the number was only 30. In 1853, 33 papers reported a combined circulation of 234,000, mostly in the North.[2] Ross observed that the "rise of a permanent, class-appealing agricultural journalism"[3] during this period gave strong support to the cause of agricultural education.

Through the direct efforts of agricultural societies, agricultural fairs, local farmers' clubs and agricultural journalism, a climate of opinion began to develop which advocated some type of organized farmer education. Part

---

[1]Scott, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

[2]Ibid., pp. 18-20.

[3]Earle D. Ross, Democracy's College (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College Press, 1942), p. 27.

of this general feeling found formalized expression in the founding of Agricultural Colleges with Michigan being the first state to establish a four year college for the education of farmers. Another expression of this general desire for farmer education was the rise of the institute movement.

The Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture in 1852, after studying the problem of agricultural education, advocated the organization of farmers' institutes to be conducted "after the manner of teachers' institutes."[1] These early teachers' institutes provided in-service training opportunities for the professional upgrading of teachers and in many instances was the only teacher training ever received by the members of that profession. This movement made rapid progress so that by 1860 more than a dozen states, including Michigan, were holding regular teachers' institutes.

In 1853, President Edward Hitchcock, of Amherst College in Massachusetts, read a paper before the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture where he suggested the holding of farmers' institutes patterned after teachers' institutes. During the ensuing years in Massachusetts, similar proposals were set forth but nothing

---

[1]Alfred C. True, A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785-1923 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1928), p. 28.

of a concrete nature developed until December 1863 when a four-day series of meetings was held in Springfield. There were lectures and discussions on soil, farm crops and sheep husbandry. Louis Agassiz, the well-known Harvard scientist, along with other professional men participated in the meetings.[1] This was the first farmers' institute held in America.[2]

Other states holding institutes during the next few years were; Connecticut in 1867, Kansas in 1868, Missouri and New Hampshire in 1870, Iowa in 1872 and New Jersey in 1875. Of importance for this study were the institutes held in Illinois. During the winter of 1870, Illinois Industrial University conducted four-day sessions in three locations which marked the beginning of farmers' institutes in Illinois. John M. Gregory president of the university and promotor of those institutes was a former resident of Michigan where he had been Superintendent of Public Instruction. While in Michigan, Gregory had appointed Dr. Manley Miles as professor of Zoology and Animal Physiology at the Agricultural College. Gregory kept in contact

---

[1] True, op. cit., p. 29.

[2] In 1860 a four week course was held in New Haven, Connecticut with popular lectures addressed to farmers. This could be considered a combination of a school, convention and farmers' institute but in the normal usage of the term, Massachusetts had the honor of holding the first farmers' institute although it did not hold another for several years.

with Miles and invited him to participate in the Illinois institutes. Miles brought back to the faculty of the college, glowing reports of the institutes and thus were planted the seeds for farmers' institutes in Michigan.

Methodology

Detailed and lengthy annual reports of the institutes in Michigan were published each year by the secretary of the State Board of Agriculture except for 1881 and 1882 when a biennial report was issued. An examination of the annual reports revealed what the participants and leaders said upon a variety of subjects. Prior to this study, no analytical investigation of those reports has been made.

While the annual reports were primary in determining what was said at the institutes, a significant number of local newspapers and Michigan farm journals were available which gave parallel, although somewhat abbreviated accounts of the institutes. In addition, the Annual Proceedings of the Michigan State Grange gave insight into the official thinking of the Michigan Grange which was a vocal and significant movement in Michigan farm history. It might be expected that the official board of agriculture reports would present the institutes in a favorable light but these other sources which were independent in nature were under no such compulsion. These external sources were favorably impressed by the institutes and urged Michigan farmers to attend.

Criticism of a negative or derogatory nature was seldom found in the sources investigated. This is because the sources available to the writer probably represented a bias in favor of the institute movement which is reflected in the pages of this study. This bias, in part, was an outgrowth of the nature of those involved in the institutes. The participants along with the representatives from the local and farm press would seem to have been from a more progressive class of citizens. Apparently, any negative reactions which may have existed, came from another group and was more informal and non-literary in nature.

Overview

Chapter II examines the general cultural and historic setting which provided the background for the "new education." This new education found expression in Michigan in the Agricultural College established in 1855. Chapter III examines the reason for founding institutes in Michigan along with an outline of the events leading up to January 1876, when the first institutes were held. The following chapter describes the mechanics and *modus operandi* of institutes during "The Foundation Period" which covered the fourteen year period from 1876 to 1889. Chapter V examines the agrarian theme as found in farmers' institutes which provided a philosophical undergirding for the other subjects discussed. Chapters VI and VII consider

important recurring topics found in the institutes such as education, values, the home, politics and the role of women. The concluding chapter summarizes and analyzes the reasons for the success of the institute movement in Michigan.

CHAPTER II

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SETTING

Introduction

The new education grew up in a century of ferment and change. While not completely breaking with past tradition, the administrations of Andrew Jackson saw a renewed emphasis upon democracy and the common man. As the century progressed, a strong reform impulse developed which covered a number of areas, one of the most significant being the field of education. Under the leadership of educators like Horace Mann and Henry Bernard, the common school movement developed and subsequently spread across the nation.

This century also saw the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the nation. This in turn created problems for the traditional yeoman farmer. The rise of city life created markets for food which could not be supplied by usual farming techniques. Hence the growing demand for "scientific agriculture" to fill the vacuum. This demand for farming efficiency along with the social and cultural problems which the century produced, created a sense of inferiority and insecurity in the mind of the farmer.

At first, the farmer tried to ignore his relationship with the commercial world and stressed the agrarian myth of the yeoman farmer. This ideal emphasized the independent and self-reliant farmer. Farming was considered as a divine calling and was elevated to the mystical level of the sacrosanct. The ideal life was one lived close to nature and the soil. The farmer became the incarnation of the simple, honest, independent and healthy human being.

The farmer could only ignore the rising tide of industrialization and urbanization for so long and then he grudgingly had to admit that there were other forces in American society that had to be considered. His sons were leaving the farm and moving to the city. Industrialism and commercialism were being forced upon him. The world of business was encroaching upon the farmer and he had to come to terms with it.

> Between 1815 and 1860 the character of American agriculture was transformed. The independent yeoman, outside of exceptional or isolated areas almost disappeared before the relentless advance of commercial agriculture. The rise of native industry created a home market for agriculture, while at the same time demands arose abroad.[1]

The cash crop converted the yeoman farmer into a small entrepreneur. He ceased to be free of what the early agrarian writers had called the "corruptions of trade."

---

[1]Richard Hofstader, The Age of Reform from Bryan to FDR (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 38.

The farmer now grew over and above his own needs in order that he might sell the excess. This money was used to purchase goods at the country store or to reinvest in machinery or additional land. This shift from the self-sufficient to commercial farming was complete in Michigan about 1850.

The nineteenth century revealed a developing agrarian revolt as the farmer began to flex his muscles searching for identity and social status. No longer was he the forgotten man but he wanted to be considered as an important segment of American Society. He was searching for the "good things" of life and trying to "catch up" with the urban and industrial man. The farmer was demanding justice and equal opportunities. He wanted fair treatment and laws passed that would protect his rights. This would allow him to participate in the progress and advantages of American society.

The New Education

Two words which summed up the higher educational scene at mid-century were discontent and agitation. There was discontent with the status quo of classical education and agitation to come up with something that would meet the needs of contemporary society.

> Educational reform and extension were inevitable phases of the general movement. . . . In its broadest scope and truest aim this movement to apply the findings of the new sciences and the technique and

> organization of the new education to the changing business and social order marked the most socialized phase of the educational awakening. It was an effort to keep education in touch with the world of affairs, to give it reality and hence vitality. That the traditional instruction was wholly out of harmony with the needs and desires of mid-century America there was evidence on every hand.[1]

There was a general nationwide feeling among the masses that education must no longer be limited to the elite of society but must include farmers, artisians, mechanics and merchants. Not only must it include all classes but it should be practical and utilitarian in nature. Eugene Davenport, an early graduate of Michigan Agricultural College, put it rather bluntly when he said;

> We called it the 'New Education' in those early days as distinct from the traditional. In the narrowness of our enthusiasm we called it practical and useful, as distinct from the classical and useless. For of what good is it when a man can say 'I am hungry' in six or seven languages but cannot earn his own bread and butter.[2]

Rumblings of discontent and the "rural problem" were evident in Michigan from earliest times. The question of education and the farmers had its roots in the educational heritage of the early settlers. They were not illiterate but brought with them from the east a cultural and educational background that was a credit to the new territory.

---

[1]Ross, op. cit., p. 27.

[2]Eugene Davenport, "The Spirit of the Land Grant College," The Spirit and Philosophy of Extension Work, ed. by R. K. Bliss (Washington: Graduate School, United States Department of Agriculture, 1952), p. 9.

> The time had come. The Erie Canal opened; thousands of New Englanders were literally on the starvation level because their rocky acres had failed them. They sold what they could, packed up what they could not, and left Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts by the thousands. Long wagon trains came overland through Canada and finally entered Detroit on a steam ferryboat from Windsor, opened in 1830. Deckloads of farmers, their families and their belongings jammed the early side-wheelers on Lake Erie, all bound for Detroit and thence for the interior. . . .
>
> These people brought with them not only exquisite Governor Winthrop chairs and desks, Copley portraits and Revere silver, but libraries, printing presses and textbooks. They carried to the wilds of Michigan the New England town system, with its public meetings and universal free franchise. They built churches and lay schoolhouses as fast as they built settlements.[1]

In 1837, the act chartering the University of Michigan provided specifically for instruction in practical farming and agriculture. There were some weak attempts to implement this aspect of the charter but nothing of a serious or permanent nature developed. The failure of the University to act on agricultural education plus the emphasis on a curriculum for the learned professions stirred many farmers to action.

Beal observed that; "as early as 1844 Jonathan Shearer ably advocated the more thorough education of farmers in the Michigan Farmer."[2] The Michigan State Agricultural Society was formed in 1849. One of its prime objectives was "to promote the improvement of agriculture

---

[1]Kent Segendorf, Michigan, The Story of the University (New York: H. T. Dutton and Company, 1948), p. 46.

[2]Beal, op. cit., p. 5.

and its kindred arts throughout the state of Michigan."[1] That was done through addresses at the meetings of county agricultural societies, county fairs and appeals to the legislature for funds for agricultural education. That society was the main organization promoting the cause of agricultural education in Michigan and was largely responsible for the ultimate establishment of the Agricultural College.

In 1849, E. H. Lothrop, speaker for the first state fair sponsored by the newly organized State Agricultural Society, chided the university for ignoring its original directive to teach agricultural education. He reminded the audience that the university was sending forth twenty or thirty each year into the professions but none into the science of agriculture.[2] When he spoke those words, Michigan agriculture was beginning to suffer and show indications of a decline.

> Wheat yields were declining and some leaders feared that Michigan farms might go the way of many in Vermont or Virginia unless their owners studied the science of soil fertility. Railroads were opened the beef and mutton markets of the East to the Michigan producer but to compete in them he must improve the quality of his cattle and sheep. The danger of rural depopulation also threatened. If Agriculture was not made more profitable then the magic of California

---

[1] Transactions of the State Agricultural Society for 1849 (Lansing: George W. Peck, State Printer, 1850), p. 1.

[2] Ibid., pp. 95-106.

> gold might lure many a young Michigan farmer to seek his fortune in the far west.[1]

The secretary of the newly formed Agricultural Society was John C. Holmes, a merchant, a member of the Detroit school board and nurseryman. He was also a tireless worker in his efforts to pursuade the legislature to look favorably on the establishment of an Agricultural College. He traveled extensively and on numerous occasions spoke on behalf of founding a college for the farmers. Once the college had legislative approval, his efforts then were directed to selecting the site for the school and the erection of the first buildings on the new campus.

Another key figure in gaining legislative approval for the new college was Joseph R. Williams, a merchant and miller from Constantine. His dedication to the task of persuading the legislature to grant approval for an Agricultural College was recognized by all who were concerned with the project. When it came time to select the president of the college, the State Board of Education chose him as the first president of the first Agricultural College in America.

Through speeches given at county fairs, articles written in papers and the persistent efforts of prominent men like E. H. Lothrop, Joseph R. Williams and John C.

---

[1]Madison Kuhn, The First Hundred Years (East Lansing: The Michigan State University Press, 1955), p. 2.

Holmes, the message slowly penetrated into the thinking of both farmers and legislators. An indication of this was seen in the constitutional convention of 1850 when the state constitution was revised which included a provision for agricultural education. "The legislature shall encourage the promotion of intellectual, scientific, and agricultural improvement, and shall as soon as practicable provide for the establishment of an agricultural school."[1]

The delay in establishing the new school resulted from public discussions and debate which took place as to the location of the school. There were those who adamantly maintained it should be associated with the State University in Ann Arbor. Others felt it should be a part of the State Normal School in Ypsilanti. A third viewpoint was expressed which said the new school should be completely separate from existing institutions and have its own campus. This debate which also took place within the State Agricultural Society was finally resolved in favor an an independent college. Once this decision was reached, John C. Holmes campaigned for this position. He distributed petitions supporting this position and by January 1855 scores of well-filled petitions reached the legislators. The bill finally passed the legislature and was signed into law February 12, 1855. Thus was born the first four-year Agricultural College in America. It was the embodiment

---

[1]Michigan Const., Art. 13, Sec. 11 (1850).

of the new education. "Michigan led the van in establishing a college for the higher education of farmers' sons. This was a new departure, a step in advance of the age. . . ."[1]

Following the passage of this bill, the land was selected, buildings were erected and the college opened its doors for students with a dedication service on May 13, 1857. In looking back upon this new venture, president T. C. Abbot said:

> When the Agricultural College was opened in May, 1857, it had its line of work to lay out, with but little guidance from the schools and colleges of the past. The work to be done by the old colleges was plain enough. A young man was to beat over again the way our fathers trod, and be ranked with educated men, or not to go in those paths and be ranked with the ignorant, ignoble mass. But what was this new college to do? . . .
>
> The Agricultural College was an anomaly amongst educational institutions. It could not be classified. It had departed from old methods, it was not of sufficient authority to inaugurate a new.[2]

The Morrill Act

With the launching of the "Michigan Experiment," this study must now move on to the next significant milestone in the history of the new education, the land grant movement

---

[1] Proceedings of the Second Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1876), p. 9.

[2] Theophilis C. Abbot, "The Agriculture College under the State Board of Agriculture," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, pp. 255-256.

which reached its culmination in the Morrill Act of 1862. The Michigan legislature when it revised the State Constitution in 1850 and included plans for an agricultural school, also called upon its representatives in Congress to work for a federal land grant to the state of 350,000 acres for support of agricultural education. Similar urgings emanated from other legislatures. In 1852 Massachusetts asked for a grant of public lands to aid a "national normal, agricultural college, which should be to the rural sciences what West Point Academy is to the military, for the purpose of educating teachers and professors for service in all states of the republic."[1] In the same year, New York passed a resolution asking Congress "to make grants of land to all the states for the purpose of education and for other useful public purposes."[2]

Illinois was another state which proposed the idea of federal land grants being made to the states for educational purposes. This crystalized into what became known as the Illinois Plan and revolved around the proposals of Jonathan Baldwin Turner, Professor of Horticulture at The Illinois Industrial University, This plan was set forth by Turner in an address on May 13, 1850 entitled, "A Plea

---

[1]Edmund James, The Origin of the Land Grant Act of 1862 (Urbana: University Press, 1910, p. 14.

[2]Ibid.

for a State University for the Industrial Classes."[1] This concept of a college for the people along with a federal land grant was reiterated during the following months and years at several farmers' conventions in the State of Illinois. The Illinois State legislature in February 1853 formally accepted this concept and urged Congress to move on behalf of land grants for the new education.[2]

The early 1850's saw a general groundswell for education for the industrial classes which included the farmer and the mechanic. This was coupled with federal grants of land to finance the project. When this subject was being considered by the United States Agricultural Society at its meetings in Washington in 1856 and 1857, Justin Morrill, who at that time was a congressman from Vermont, attended as a delegate from his home state. There can be no question that there he received some impetus for his later efforts on behalf of agricultural education. Morrill acknowledged that he had formed the idea of obtaining a land grant for the foundation of colleges "as early as 1856." He also acknowledged that he had been influenced by the existence of similar institutions in

---

[1]Jonathan B. Turner, "A Plea for a State University for the Industrial Classes," The History of American Education Through Readings, ed. by Carl H. Gross and Charles C. Chandler (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964), pp. 172-184.

[2]James, op. cit., p. 25.

Europe, but objected to their exclusive restriction to agriculture alone and, therefore, broadened the provisions for the application of land grants to include "all of the industrial classes."[1]

On December 14, 1857, Morrill introduced his bill for donating lands to the several states to provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts. After much struggle and debate, this bill was passed by both houses of Congress, only to be vetoed by president Buchanan in 1859. An attempt to override the veto failed and the cause was temporarily lost. Following the change of administration, resulting from the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1861, the friends of the movement recognized the favorable atmosphere and lost no time in resubmitting the bill to the Congress. This time the bill passed both houses and was signed into law by president Lincoln on July 2, 1862.

Historians disagree as to the parenthood of the Morrill Act. There was also a question as to the exact relationship between Justin Morrill and Jonathan B. Turner. Had the two met and was Morrill influenced by the thinking of Turner? This question was beyond the scope of this study but detailed arguments can be seen in James[2] who

---

[1]William B. Parker, The Life and Services of Justin Smith Morrill (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 277.

[2]James, op. cit., pp. 8-31.

supported the Turner thesis and Parker[1] who supported the Morrill authorship. Probably the most accurate view was that of Earle D. Ross who concluded that:

> No one individual, whether a versatile and zealous agitator or skilled and patient legislator, could have given the creative impulse. The long line of scientists and educational reformers from the modern intellectual and social awakening of the latter eighteenth century are the real fathers.[2]

The provisions of the act provided education for the industrial classes, especially those related to agriculture and mechanics. Those colleges were to be for the benefit of all people with the elimination of the spirit of elitism and professionalism as evidenced in the classical colleges. Because the nation was predominently agrarian at that period of history, it was understandable why the immediate emphasis and thrust was agricultural. The stress on mechanics and engineering subjects came later as the nation developed along those lines.

The land grant spirit involved a determination to set knowledge at work for the betterment of the common citizen who earned his living by the soil or the shop. There were three phases to the working out of this new educational philosophy. The first phase involved classroom teaching. The second phase emphasized research and

---

[1]Parker, op. cit., pp. 295-284.

[2]Earle D. Ross, "The Father of the Land-Grant College," Agricultural History, XII (April, 1938), p. 186.

experimentation while the third phase of the new education was service. If the purpose of the college was to aid all people, then the college had to go to them since most people could not come to the college. This led to the development of extensions services which have traditionally played a key role among land grant colleges. The results of research were to be taught in the classroom and then to be taken to the people outside the classroom. Liberty Hyde Bailey, a graduate of Michigan Agriculture College in 1882, succinctly summed it up when he said: "The colleges of agriculture have three proper lines of work; the regular or ordinary teaching; the discovery of truth, or research; the extending of their work to the people."[1]

Three significant acts of Congress underlined these three aspects of the new educational philosophy. Colleges were founded as the result of the Land-Grant Act of 1862; the Hatch Act of 1887 fostered research by funding the experimental stations and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 which gave financial undergirding to extension services. It is of interest to note however, that all three parts of the new philosophy existed in Michigan before the official acts of Congress were passed. The college was established before the Land-Grant Act was passed. Experimentation was

---

[1]Liberty Hyde Bailey, The Training of Farmers (New York: The Century Co., 1909), p. 228.

well underway before the Hatch Act was passed and Extension services began in 1876 with farmers' institutes.

The Role of Liberal Arts

The new education with its emphasis on methodology and curriculum did not completely reject the old curriculum for the new fields of science. The new education did not want to eliminate the liberal arts and the concept of the cultured gentleman. Turner in his pleas for the education of the industrial classes did not turn his back on the liberal arts but wanted these subjects along with those of a scientific nature, geared to the needs of the common man.[1]

> They need a similar system of liberal education for their own class, and adapted to their own class and adapted to their own pursuits; to create for them an Industrial Literature, adapted to their professional wants, to raise up for them teachers and lecturers for subordinate institutes and to elevate them, their pursuits, and their posterity to that relative position in human society for which God designed them.[2]

Congressman Morrill, in proposing the act that bears his name, did not want to exclude general and liberal subjects from the curriculum of the new colleges. This was included in the wording of the act itself. The purpose of the act was to teach "such branches of learning as are

---

[1] Turner, op. cit., pp. 172-184.

[2] James, op. cit., p. 69.

related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . without excluding other scientific and classical studies."[1]

The executive committee of the newly formed Michigan Agriculture Society at a meeting in December 1849 commissioned Bela Hubbard to draft a memorial to the Legislature proposing an Agricultural College. This memorial, which was presented to the Legislature in January of 1850, described not merely a trade school but a college offering an "enlightened liberal education." In addition to scientific subjects, courses on such liberal subjects as mathematics, literature and fine arts were suggested as those tended "to polish the mind and manners, refine the taste, and add greater lustre and dignity to life."[2]

When the bill was passed in 1855 establishing the college,

> . . . it was charged to teach an "English and Scientific Course." This was the common title of the non-classical course in institutions which had broken thus far with tradition; it normally included an introduction to various sciences and extensive study of English language and literature, mathematics, philosophy, geography, political economy, and history.[3]

Joseph R. Williams, the first president of the college believed in a union of the scientific and literary

---

[1]See Appendix A.

[2]Transactions of the State Agricultural Society for 1850 (Lansing: George W. Peck, State Printers, 1850), p. 53.

[3]Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

training. He advocated culture for the farmer and mechanic as well as for the clergyman, lawyer and doctor. He felt that a "study of the world around us . . . the study of our mother tongue and the many masterpieces of poetry and literature" would inculcate culture in the student.[1]

In 1858, a year after the dedication of the Agricultural College, T. C. Abbot joined the faculty as professor of English literature and "by his ability as a teacher, his genial temperament, and his cautious and yet strong method, made himself a power with students, faculty, and the board. He was a man of warm sympathies; quickly responsive to truth, justice, honor, right; conservative in temperament, but fearlessly progressive in thought."[2] His abilities were recognized when he was appointed president in 1862.

Abbot was trained in the classics and tried to maintain a balance between the liberal arts tradition and the new subjects. This balance was fairly well maintained in the curriculum of the agricultural college. The curriculum as established in 1870 is illustrative of this fact.[3]

---

[1] O. Clute, "The State Agricultural College," The History of Higher Education in Michigan, ed. by McLaughlin, Andrew (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1891), pp. 109-110.

[2] Ibid., p. 110.

[3] See Appendix F.

Abbot's love for, and ability in his chosen field of English literature was demonstrated by student reaction to him and those subjects.

> How Tennyson, and Milton, and greatest of all, Shakespeare, took on new life as he opened their treasures to our dazed appreciation. Lycidas became a gem which we have always treasured since he revealed its rare polish. Macbeth, Hamlet, King Lear, and the Merchant of Venice were all transformed as he brought out the rare beauties and the deeper philosophies of these great dramas. Rhetoric and logic and English literature took hard study; yet as he flooded these themes with light, they became fascinating to us, and we wished the recitation hour longer and the time for study not so short. To have known President Abbot as a teacher, and to have enjoyed his masterful lectures, presented with a splendid diction and rare finish, explain the fact that highest ideals in culture and life were at the very first a treasured part of the equipment of this institution. The cause of agricultural education owed a great debt to this College, and to no man more than to Dr. Abbot.[1]

Agricultural education did not eliminate liberal studies and the desire to inculcate culture. This was not in the thinking of Turner, Morrill and the founders of Michigan Agricultural College. While some farmers may have at times questioned the inclusion of those subjects in the curriculum, there was never a serious attempt to remove them from the course of study at Michigan Agricultural College.[2] The only subjects not offered from the classical tradition were Latin and Greek.

---

[1]Albert John Cook, "Members of the Early Faculty," Semi-Centennial Celebration of Michigan Agricultural College, ed. by Thomas C. Blaisdell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908), p. 72.

[2]The only exception to this was in 1860 when the State Board of Education reduced the program from four to

The new education and Michigan Agricultural College developed in a historical context of ferment and change. The old classical colleges had not adjusted to the realities of the nineteenth century which created a vacuum and set the stage for a new educational philosophy. In Michigan, this philosophy found concrete expression in the establishment of the Agricultural College. Because of problems which developed in the 1870's, the college in conjunction with the State Board of Agriculture began a series of farmers' institutes in January, 1876, which proved to be of great value to the college. The following chapter will chronicle the events leading up to that milestone in Michigan educational history.

---

two years by eliminating those subjects while retaining the technical studies, thus reducing the college to a two year technical institute. The furor over this resulted in a reorganization of the college under a State Board of Agriculture and the reinstitution of the four year curriculum in 1861.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES

Farmers' institutes in Michigan had their origin with the faculty of the Agricultural College in close association with the governing board of the institution, the State Board of Agriculture. What were the respective roles played by the faculty and the board in establishing institutes? What was their thinking and motives? What was it that caused them to propose such a plan as farmers' institutes? How did they go about putting their plan into operation? What were the major ideas suggested by the faculty and board? The answer to these questions will be considered in this chapter.

The origin of farmers' institutes in Michigan grew out of problems existing at the Agricultural College. The Agricultural College began with legislative approval in 1855 and opened its doors to students in 1857. It would now seem that the hopes and aspirations expressed by various farmer organizations, the State Agricultural Society and numerous individuals had been realized. The farmers' own

school for the practical scientific teaching of agriculture was now a reality. Things however began to decline after an auspicious beginning. The first president, J. C. Williams resigned after two years. The Civil War brought a decline in enrollment and peoples' interest was focused elsewhere. The State Board of Education, the original governing body of the college, revamped the curriculum into a two year program. Some raised the question as to whether the founding of the school had been a faux pas and should it not be quietly buried. Farmers for whom the school had been established did not jump to the defense of the school. In fact, they were the source of much criticism.

In spite of continued problems, the college survived. A new State Board of Agriculture was appointed as the governing board of the college and control of the college was now transferred from the State Board of Education to the more sympathetic State Board of Agriculture. One of the first actions of the board was to reinstate the four year curriculum. Theophilis C. Abbot was appointed president in 1862 and gave able leadership during the years of struggle. The Morrill Land-Grant Act which was considered in Chapter II was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The disposition of this land became a bone of contention for several years between the new Agricultural College and the older established University

of Michigan. On the one hand many felt the older, established university should receive the land grant and establish a department of agriculture with appropriate buildings to fulfill the terms of the land grant legislation. Others felt such a move would not be wise since the older, more prestigious departments of the university would ignore and push aside the new department of agriculture which would eventually become second class and perhaps even disappear. This school of thought advocated a separate school on a separate campus to maintain identity and give agriculture its rightful place in society. Debates and discussion on this question took place for years. The recipient of the proceeds from the public land was finally settled by the legislature in 1869 when the control of the sale of the land was given to the Agricultural College.[1]

This however, did not solve the financial problems of the college. It took years to sell this land and realize the accrued interest on the endowment. The money that was received could not be used for buildings and projected growth but simply for operating expenses. Consequently, when the college kept asking the legislature for funds for buildings, many people were disillusioned, feeling that the money could best be used elsewhere. After all,

---

[1]Kuhn, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

was not the college to be self-supporting with this large amount of federal money and its student labor system?

Another factor which contributed to this general negative attitude towards the college was the continued conservatism of many farmers. It was difficult to convince them of the need to train for so-called scientific farming. This attitude was very strong prior to the founding of the college and continued during the formative years. The Michigan Farmer in an editorial observed that, ". . . every change is looked upon with a good degree of suspicion by the farming community and a great prejudice exists against what is called, 'book farming.'"[1] Enough of this attitude was overcome by those who were more progressive to found the college in 1855, but it was still a force and contributed to problems facing the college which led up to the founding of farmers' institutes.

> The typical farmer, with frontier background or foreground, was governed by established tradition which gave tolerable guidance for operations within human control and reconciled him to a fatalistic acceptance of the inscrutable and unmodifiable manifestations of nature. Learning beyond the basic R's was regarded as superfluous and distracting. This indifference was reinforced more positively by popular disinclination to support new educational ventures, either by private contributions or taxation.[2]

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, Sept. 1853, p. 262.

[2] Ross, op. cit., p. 18.

The "book-farming" stigma, the exaggerated expectation of the potential of the college, the early difficulties of land improvement, the relative costliness of the enterprise, the disappointing effect of the institution on its graduates which apparently influenced them into pursuits other than farm operation, and a general lack of direct benefits accruing to the farmers from the college were a few of the basic causes recognized as contributing toward this negative attitude.[1]

Probably the key reason for concern on the part of the faculty and Board of Agriculture was the continued reluctance on the part of the state legislature to provide an adequate budget for the college. This was especially crucial and disheartening because many of the legislators were farmers. "It is a cause of mortification that the most determined opposition to the College and every department of its work, came from some of the members of the legislature who are farmers."[2] "Anomalous as the fact may seem, the most persistent and strenuous opposers of the

---

[1]For a detailed summary of the college's recognized deficiencies, see The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture for 1896, pp. 57-70. Also: in 1868 the Secretary of the Michigan State Agricultural Society criticized the college by saying that "not more than one out of four . . . who graduate embark an agricultural pursuits" and concluded "thus it has . . . failed to accomplish what its founders intended" and declared that "a radical change should at once be entered upon." The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture for 1868, p. 365.

[2]Grange Visitor, August 1, 1879, p. 4.

Agricultural College in the last legislature were members who are farmers."[1] Beal observed that this problem and the means of its amelioration were frequent subjects of discussion at faculty meetings.[2] The most apparent solution was to seek political support through service to, and contact with farmers for whom the college had been established. If the institution could make itself popular and well received by the farmers, its legislative support would seem relatively assured.

The average farmer was not aware of the true meaning and purpose of the Agricultural College. The faculty had not communicated with the farmer and the farmer saw no need of initiating dialogue with the college. The impetus to break the impasse had to come from the college. The so-called "Ivory Tower" approach had to go and the lines of communication had to be opened up. The college had to go to the people and meet their needs. This was the spirit of the new education. Education was to be practical and utilitarian and as far as the Agricultural College was concerned, it was directed to the farmer. The professors felt they had to show to the farmers that they were their friends and what was being done on campus could be of great help to them.

---

[1] Ibid., December 15, 1879, p. 2.

[2] Beal, op. cit., p. 158.

> Whatever may be the cause, we think the fact is sufficiently evident that there is a want of sympathy between the farmers and the Agricultural College. By reason of this want of sympathy the farmers are deprived of much of the good which they may secure from the Agricultural College, and which they have a right to demand; and the College is crippled in its work for the same reason. We believe that this want of sympathy and lack of interest are because the farmers, as a class know but little of the real working of the College, and that if the Board and Faculty could be brought into more intimate association with farmers in all parts of the State, these evils might be removed. If the College is not doing such work as ought to command the confidence of intelligent farmers in all parts of our State, then our system should be altered so as to meet the just demands of the farmers; if we are doing such work, we may still fail of our duty if we fail to make this fact known. There is something wrong when the College, after 16 years of continuous work is still denounced and decried in some of the most flourishing agricultural sections of our State.[1]

The "how" of communicating with the farmer and achieving his favorable support became a vital and crucial subject of discussion among members of the faculty. A short course or winter lecture course at the college was suggested but according to Glidden was probably vetoed because of its "virtual failure" in other agricultural colleges due to the seeming impracticality of inviting farmers to travel relatively long distances to the college in the winter.[2] Rather than expect the farmer to come to the college, it was proposed that the college go to the farmer. The recently developed idea of farmers' institutes which were being

---

[1] Ibid., p. 73.

[2] Hon. A. C. Glidden, "Farmers' Institutes," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1892, p. 441.

experimented with in Kansas, Illinois and Iowa, appeared to provide the pattern.

It was the experience of Dr. Manley Miles which planted the seed idea for farmers' institutes in Michigan. He was a physician who joined the college faculty in 1860. During the next few years he taught zoology, animal physiology, geology and entomology. In 1863, he was appointed superintendent of the college farm. His emphasis was practical and he urged his students to examine farming practices in the light of modern science. Dr. Miles was a close friend and associate of John M. Gregory, ex-Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction and then President of Illinois Industrial University, where the latter's program of farmers' institutes had been particularly successful. Miles, who had participated in the Illinois program during the long winter vacation at the Agricultural College in Michigan was an ardent believer in the institute idea and advocated its trial in Michigan. Because Miles accepted a position with the Illinois Industrial University in 1875, he was not involved in the plans leading up to the founding of institutes in Michigan.

In the months prior to January, 1876, Dr. Robert C. Kedzie played a key role by being on committees and serving as spokesman for the new venture. Kedzie in later years said that:

> The farmers' institutes which were inaugurated in 1875 mainly through my efforts [italics mine] have been continued up to the present time. They have accomplished so much good, have given such an impetus to everything pertaining to agriculture and been so instrumental in bringing into harmonious action all classes who are interested in the greatest and noblest of human avocations that it is no wonder they have spread into neighboring states. The interest thus awakened in all that pertains to agriculture will spread and deepen as the years flow on.[1]

Conditions gradually worsened and became more critical. The legislature of 1875 was cool and indifferent to the budgetary welfare of the college and even the house committee on the Agriculture College seemed "little inclined to discuss the wants and needs of the college."[2] President Abbot returning from a meeting with this committee expressed a great deal of discouragement to the college faculty. Following this pessimistic report, Kedzie pursued the idea of going out to the farmers. It appeared that there was some opposition to this plan from at least one leading member of the faculty. Kedzie, in commenting on this situation said:

> The scheme of going among the people by appointment to hold public meetings in which the farmers were invited to take an active part in the discussion of farm matters of immediate interest in their locality, while the professors would present the scientific side of the subject and thus make friends by creating a community of interest, was urged . . . time after time, but without results. In answer to the argument

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1882, p. 89.

[2] R. C. Kedzie, "Twenty-five Years of Institutes," Farmers' Institutes, 1900-1901, p. 176.

> that this was the best way to make friends for the college, a leading member of the faculty replied, 'We don't need to; we have now all the friends we can use.' [Kedzie's reply]: Perhaps we have all we can use, but when a large portion of the farmers in our best agricultural counties are unfriendly, and many of the legislators from such districts vote against the college, I think we do not have all the friends we need.[1]

At a faculty meeting on May 7, 1875, Kedzie introduced a resolution that a committee of three be appointed by the president to draw up a scheme for a series of farmers' institutes.

> Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed by the President to draw up a scheme for a series of Farmers' Institutes to be held in different parts of the State during the next winter, including in the exercises of such institutes, lectures and essays by members of the faculty; that the several members of the State Board of Agriculture and leading farmers residing in the vicinity of the place of holding such institutes be respectfully and earnestly requested to participate in the exercises by lectures, essays, and discussions. Resolved, that said committee be instructed to confer with the State Board of Agriculture at its next meeting, to make all necessary arrangements for inaugurating and carrying out such a series of Farmers' Institutes.[2]

President Abbot responded by appointing a committee consisting of Professors R. C. Kedzie, W. J. Beal and R. D. Carpenter with R. C. Kedzie as chairman. This committee presented its report to the State Board of Agriculture on June 1, 1875. The report emphasized the public relations

---

[1] Ibid.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 73.

problems of the college and stressed the failure to communicate the worth of the college's program to the farmer. The remedy involved a change of attitude on the part of the college and a reaching out to the farmer with the proposed institutes. The board, after hearing this report, appointed another committee made up of both board and Faculty members. Their responsibility was to make arrangements for the successful implementation of the suggestions included in the report of the faculty committee. This new committee made its report to the board on August 24, 1875.[1]

It is significant that at this August meeting a petition was presented from members of the Armada Agricultural Society and another from the Rochester Grange, each requesting the holding of an institute in their area. Apparently advanced plans as to what the board was planning had reached these organizations. The two requests were subsequently granted. This initial response to incomplete and unpublized plans must have been gratifying to members of the board. The grass roots were beginning to stir.

Dr. Kedzie was requested to write an article giving the general plan and purpose of the institutes which was to be published in several of the leading newspapers of the state. The purpose of the article was to further publicize and make the proposed institutes official as

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 73-78.

far as the general public was concerned. It gives in brief, pointed fashion the philosophy of the institutes and principles governing their operation.[1]

It is evident from an examination of the committee reports and the published proposal of Dr. Kedzie, that much time and effort went into the planning of farmers' institutes in Michigan. It was not done on the spur of the moment and presented in a disorganized fashion. The idea was sound, the mood of many farmers was ready and the planning was adequate. This was demonstrated by the acceptance of the institute idea by many leading farmers and the fact that there were very few changes in the manner of operation of institutes over the years.

It is significant to note the role of the Agricultural College in farmers' institutes as outlined in the published proposal of Dr. Kedzie. The college had a very low profile and was not mentioned until the second half of the report. The initiator of institutes as far as this report was concerned was the State Board of Agricluture and not the college. The first reference to the college was in response to the question, "Who will take part?" The answer given was, "leading farmers . . . will give lectures. . . . The members of the Board will also take part in the proceedings, and the members of the College Faculty

---

[1] Ibid.

will take part if so desired."[1] Nowhere in the report was the impression given that the college was initiating and pushing a program. The role of the college was deliberately placed in the background. The wisdom of this approach was evident in the light of the poor image the college had in the eyes of many farmers. The college and faculty were placed at the disposal of the board and the farmers. Related to this was the concept of service as expressed in the purpose of the institutes. The expressed rationale for initiating institutes revolved around the concept of service. Institutes were to serve the farmer and were for the good of the state.

Not only were the institutes to provide a service to the farmer, but the hope was expressed that the farmers could contribute to the college. "One object to be secured is to bring the farmers, the Board, and the Faculty of the Agricultural College in closer relations to each other, in hope of mutual benefit of the broad and extensive experience of the farmer, and that the farmer may perhaps derive hints from the teacher, to be put in practice on the farm."[2]

The language of the report was diplomatic with every attempt being made to put the farmer into a receptive frame of mind and make him feel important. The Agricultural

---

[1] Ibid., p. 75.

[2] Ibid., p. 76.

College was not stressed and presented as the panacea for all the ailments of the farmer. In fact, the stress was on the college as the one needing to learn and to become the servant of the farmer.

Another selling point for the institutes was the stress on local orientation. Those planning the institutes believed that they should be held in the farming communities and not at the college. Other states had little success in holding institutes at the Agricultural College or some other institution. The committee recognized this and took the institutes to the farmer rather than bringing the farmer to a central location. The plan was to hold six institutes a year in various locations throughout the state. Each location was to be in an area of agricultural interest and manifested by a local desire to have an institute. This local interest was to be expressed in a concrete manner through a formal request of a local Farmers' Club, Grange Society or a similar organization.

In addition, the local sponsoring organization was involved in the planning and implementation of the program. A local committee was to be appointed to work with a member of the State Board of Agriculture or a faculty member in planning the program. Leading farmers in the vicinity of the institutes were invited to give lectures, read essays and take part in the discussions.

This principle of the farmer as the center of attention was further reinforced by the time of the year when institutes were scheduled. They were held after the fall and early winter work was finished and before the spring work began. The farmers had free time and in spite of storms and inclement weather, they came in good numbers as the Annual Reports of the Board of Agriculture revealed.[1] Ross in commenting on the nationwide phenomena of farmers' institutes observed that, "Experience demonstrated that the more local initiative and responsibility were taken for the institutes, the greater the likelihood of success. . . ."[2] This concept was built into the original plans for farmers' institutes in Michigan and undoubtedly was a major factor in their success.

It is significant to note that one item mentioned early in the public announcement concerned the length of the meeting. The institutes were designed to be "short, spicy, wide-awake meetings."[3] The planners did not want

---

[1]The following are representative statements taken from the Annual Reports of the State Board of Agriculture:

"The townhall in which the sessions were held was crowded, and in the evening many were unable to obtain seats." Report for 1875, p. 136.

"Attendance was large . . . the court house being crowded." Report for 1878, p. 326.

"600 persons in the audience." Report for 1886, p. 3.

"well-filled from first to last." Report for 1887, p. 274.

[2]Ross, op. cit., p. 166.

[3]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 75.

them to be long and drawn out, testing the patience and endurance of those who attended. It was evident to the board that institutes of this nature would be far more appealing than the lengthy, protracted meetings. Their wisdom at this point was vindicated during the ensuing years.

The invitation to attend the institutes was broad which again was a mark of wisdom on the part of the Board of Agriculture. No restrictions were placed on those who could attend. It was open to "everyone who tills the soil or is interested in agriculture. Farmers and their wives and families are especially invited; also all who honor or would benefit the noblest of all industries."[1]

There are a number of elements to notice in this invitation issued by the board. The inclusion of the agrarian theme of farming as the "noblest of all industries" fitted into the prevailing farmer mood of that day. Agrarianism as a prominent theme in the institutes will be discussed in Chapter V. It is especially interesting to note that not only were farmers invited but also their wives and families. This was important as it had a bearing on the family and social aspects of the institutes. The family was regarded as a unit and had solidarity. The institute was for the family which, as a whole, was involved

---

[1] Ibid.

in the business of farming. The social aspects of the institutes could be considered as one of the most important features of the institutes. The opportunity to get away from the isolation of the farm and to meet and talk with other people constituted a strong appeal to the farmer. Men could talk with men, women with women, about mutual interests and problems. This will be considered at greater length in Chapter VIII. The board acted wisely in inviting the whole family to attend farmers' institutes.

An important aspect of the public announcement of the institute program was the indication that a complete report of the addresses, essays and discussions would be published in the Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture. It was felt that the results of agricultural experiments and the views of leading farmers in different parts of the state should be preserved in permanent form. This decision of the board was implemented and each year a record of the institutes was published. Over half of each report of several hundred pages was devoted to institutes. This further publicized the institutes and preserved much valuable material for those who were unable to attend. Even though only six institutes were held each year in the foundation period of institutes, the practical benefits to the farmers seemingly were multiplied because of those published reports.

These reports were distributed across the state and in addition to being a source of information to the farmers, they became a vehicle of publicity. Institutes were publicized and placed in the public eye. The Agricultural College was also publicized and promoted in these reports. This decision of the board was of inestimable value and contributed a great deal to the success of the institutes as well as the progress of the college.

In this chapter, the immediate events leading up to the foundation of farmers' institutes in Michigan have been considered. The movement developed out of a need at the Agricultural College; funds were low and there was a lack of growth. There were frequent criticisms of the college and the farmers were apathetic to what was supposed to be their school. Out of this grew the informal faculty discussions which crystalized into the faculty resolution on institutes, the faculty committee report to the board and then the public announcement from the board. The next chapter will examine the nature of the foundation period of farmers' institutes in the state of Michigan.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDATION PERIOD OF FARMERS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN (1876-1889)

The previous chapter dealt with the roles of the faculty and State Board of Agriculture in establishing farmers' institutes in Michigan. This involved a consideration of "why and when" institutes developed in Michigan. The purpose of this chapter is to go beyond the "why and when" of institutes to a consideration of the "how" of institutes. How were they conducted and what were the programs like?

In regard to the time factor of the proposed institutes, the board wisely chose the winter as the time to hold them. Normally institutes were held toward the end of January and the first of February each year. The board reasoned this was the off season as far as farmers were concerned and the time of the long winter vacation as far as the college was concerned. This meant that both the farmers and faculty would be available to attend the institutes.

The official announcement of farmers' institutes limited the number to six each year. They were to be

spread out geographically with attempts made to have two in the southern, two in the eastern and two in the western parts of the state.[1] During the planning stages, before the official announcement, there was some discussion and thought that more than six institutes should be held each year but the position of Dr. Kedzie prevailed and the number was set at six during this foundation period. He felt that if more than six or eight institutes were held, the work would be overdone and farmers would lose interest. He felt a few well-done institutes would be more effective than many done poorly.[2] The number of institutes remained at six per year with the exception of 1888 and 1889, when eight and seven were held respectively.

As far as the expenses were concerned, it was a joint effort shared by the board and the local community. The local farmers' organization sponsoring the institute provided the meeting place and appropriate publicity. The major portion of the expenses were paid for by the State Board of Agriculture from appropriations received from the state legislature. The legislature appropriated $600.00 for institutes at their bi-annual sessions which meant that each institute received $50.00. Most of this was used for the travel and hotel expenses of visiting speakers.

---

[1] Ibid., p. 76.

[2] Beal, op. cit., p. 158.

Each institute lasted two days. The normal procedure was to open with an evening session and end with an evening session the following day. However, there were many deviations from this pattern over the years. In some cases the institutes began with an afternoon session and concluded the following afternoon. A few began in the morning and closed the following afternoon. The exact time of beginning and ending was left to the discretion of the local committee and circumstances peculiar to the community where the institute was held.

Normally, there would be two or three speakers at each institute session. Some would read from prepared manuscripts while others would speak from notes. On a few occasions there were more than three speakers and occasionally there would be only one speaker. This was especially true when the speaker was a special guest or the speaker had a lengthy paper to present. The local committee took those factors into consideration when planning the institute program.

Although papers comprised the heart of the institute program, there were a number of other significant features that must be considered. It was the general practice to have questions and a discussion at each session relating to the papers read. One technique which was frequently used was the "Question Box." This was a box placed in a convenient location where anyone present could

place a question which would be answered later by the college representative or some knowledgeable farmer. Part of the publicity for the institutes involved an open invitation for the farmers to come with their questions to be placed in the question box. The discussion which resulted seemed to be welcomed by those present. The Cassapolis Vigilant in reporting on a local institute held in 1888 reported good discussion times were held on numerous subjects. One of the questions from the question box was, "What can we afford to pay our help by the year?" The general consensus was from $10.00 to $18.00 a month depending on other considerations given to the hired hand. This topic and the discussion would suggest the existence of at least some type of class structure within the farming community. Additional discussion at that institute on such subjects as taxes, tariffs and railroads apparently became quite animated and "the remarks became so personal that the chair had to call the speakers to order."[1]

It is interesting to note that almost invariable each institute session began with prayer by a local clergyman. It appeared that a religious influence permeated the society of that day and was reflected in the institute programs. The clergy attended and showed an interest in the institutes. They participated in the discussion.

---

[1]Cassapolis Vigilant, March 8, 1888, p. 4.

Probably many of the farmers were members of their congregations. A further discussion of the religious character of the institutes will be found in Chapter VII. Music was another feature found in the institutes. Each institute had several special musical numbers rendered by either soloists, duets, quartets, choirs or bands. The evidence revealed a strong appreciation for those musical numbers. Humor was not lacking at the institutes. There were references to anecdotes, poems and brief speeches of a lighter nature which served to amuse the audience and provided a leavening influence to some of the serious papers which were read. Another feature of the institute was the introductory and concluding remarks given by the person who presided at the different sessions. This generally included words of welcome and an appreciation for all who had a part in the program. The report of the resolutions committee was usually the last item on the institute program. Those resolutions were formal notes of appreciation to the participants, the Agricultural College and the local community. There were also many resolutions urging the legislature to act on behalf of the farmers and the college.[1]

Another common feature of the institutes was the display of farm produce such as grain, vegetables and

---

[1]See Appendix E for a representative program.

fruit. This perhaps was a normal development since agricultural fairs featured products from the farm, equipment and livestock. Although displays were not mentioned in the early plans for the institutes, this was not incompatible with the spirit and intent of the institutes. It was perfectly natural for the local committees to have included displays in their planning and for the farmers to have brought items to be included in the displays. This feature of the institutes was of special significance in view of the season of the year which was not conducive to bringing items from home to display. Closely related to this theme was the repeated emphasis on the meeting hall being well decorated for the occasion.

The location of the institute generally involved a local hall such as the Town Hall or the Grange Hall. However, there were a few references to opera houses, court houses and churches having been used as the place of meeting. There were no recorded problems associated with the selection and use of the facilities for the institutes.

Some of the meeting places had kitchen and dining facilities. There were many references to meals, especially the noon lunch, being served on the premises. Some of the local women would prepare the meal while the institute session was being held elsewhere in the building. This of course introduced a social, fellowship dimension to the institutes which was very important and undoubtedly

contributed to the success of the institute movement in Michigan. Overnight accommodations and hospitality were frequently mentioned in the institute reports. Passing remarks on this subject were made by the various speakers and it became formalized in the report of the resolutions committees. Part of the pre-institute publicity for many institutes mentioned overnight accommodations. The Michigan Farmer in announcing the institute to be held in Climax said:

> Considerable enthusiasm is manifested by the inhabitants of Climax and vicinity . . . and a good meeting is anticipated. The people of Climax will entertain all who attend the Institute from a distance.[1]

> The citizens of Big Rapids will provide free entertainment for all who attend the Institute from a distance and those who wish entertainment will please report to the committee as soon as Saturday, January 10th, or upon their first arrival at the Hall.[2]

One aspect of the formal plans for farmers' institutes in Michigan involved the appointment of local committees. Those committees were to be made up of area men involved in some way in agriculture. They were normally appointed by members of a local farm organization. Farmer organizations, such as farmers' clubs or the Grange, were fairly numerous in this period, although some were not too well organized. As has been mentioned in the previous

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, January 22, 1878, p. 4.

[2] Big Rapids Current, January 29, 1880, p. 4.

chapter, requests for farmers' institutes had to come from a local farm organization.

Once appointed, this committee had the task of setting up and organizing the machinery for the local institute. This included the selection of a suitable building, the program, publicity, hospitality and finances. This committee was invested with a great deal of responsibility and in large measure the success or failure of an institute depended on the manner in which the local committee carried out its mandate. In the great majority of cases, the committees performed their tasks well, as was alluded to by the institute speakers. On rare occasions, the Board Reports suggested that poor attendance could be attributed to inclement weather or inadequate planning and promotion on the part of the local committee. This was definitely the exception rather than the rule, however. Probably a significant reason why the institutes succeeded in Michigan involved the principle of local initiative as demonstrated by the work of the local planning committee.

The Agricultural College was involved also in the institutes on both the planning and program levels. Each year the State Board of Agriculture appointed a faculty member to represent them on the local committee. The faculty could not attend every meeting of the local committees, but they did keep in touch by correspondence and would make a personal visit or two to meet with the local committees.

The role of the faculty was not to direct or control the committees but to act as resource persons. They would answer questions, make suggestions and communicate board policy but the burden of work and responsibility lay with the local committee.

The board assigned the faculty to the various institutes with each faculty member normally being present at two of them, but there were occasions when they attended more than two institutes. The faculty also furnished a list of lecture topics with the local committee deciding on the exact lecture to be given. In addition to faculty members attending the institutes, the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture and the president of the college attended most of the institutes each season.

One of the characteristics of the foundation period of farmers' institutes was the similarity of format.[1] The various features which made up the format of this period remained constant from 1876 to 1889. In 1890, radical changes were made, which in conjunction with changing emphases, brought to a close the foundation period of farmers' institutes. Beginning in 1890, the number of institutes held each year increased so that by 1896 seventy institutes were being held. This sudden increase in the number of institutes was reflected in the financial report of the State Board of

---

[1]See Appendix E for a representative program.

Agriculture[2] and necessitated the appointment by the legislature of Kenyon L. Butterfield as Superintendent of Institutes. The details of the changes that took place in the 1890's were beyond the scope of this study. It is simply noted that great changes took place and the institute system of that decade progressed considerably beyond the characteristics of the institutes held in the foundation period.

Another feature, indicative of a change from the usual pattern of the foundation period, was the gradual disengagement of the college faculty from the institutes. During the foundation period, part of their responsibilities as faculty included participation in the institute movement. Now there was a change. There were several reasons for this gradual decline in involvement. The rapid growth in the number of institutes in the new period, from simply a mechanical point of view, would limit the number of institutes faculty members could attend. This does not mean they were no longer interested in, and did not attend institutes, but proportionately their attendance at institutes declined. Instead, other speakers related to the farming enterprise were used at the institutes. Faculty members had other speaking engagements before various farming groups which also took time and limited their availability in terms of institutes. The growth of the college in the area of curriculum and students also placed a premium on their time. It was

---

[2]See Appendix D for a financial summary.

felt that the college could not be neglected. The establishment of the agricultural station, following the passage of the Hatch Act in 1887, was another factor affecting the participation of the college faculty in institutes. They were required to contribute to the experimental station program, both in experiments and written reports, which took time formerly devoted to the institute movement.

Another phenomena gradually manifesting itself towards the close of the foundation period, was the decline in the number of social and cultural types of papers presented at the institutes. The emphasis now became even stronger on the technical, scientific type of paper. In the foundation period, approximately twenty percent of the papers read dealt with social concepts. Now there appeared to be a decline in that type of paper and in some institutes disappeared altogether. The papers tended to be the technical "how to do it" type instead of those dealing with concepts and ideas. Probably one reason for this was the fact that farmers were slowly beginning to find their identity, catching up with society and their voices were being heard. This does not mean that all their goals and aspirations had been achieved or that there were no more agrarian problems. On the contrary, the crash of 1892 and the Populist movement of that decade indicated serious problems. It was a matter of comparison and degree. Things were better for many Michigan farmers at the close

of the foundation period of institutes than they were at the beginning. They could sense that progress was being made. The repeated call for education for farmers was slowly being heard. Schools had improved on all levels. The Agricultural College, which was their school, had been growing. The call for legislation which would recognize, protect and help the farmer was slowly being heeded. The Hatch Act and the founding of the Experimental Station was a significant milestone in response to the many papers read at the institutes. The Second Morrill Act of 1890 provided additional federal funds for the Agricultural College. The Bureau of Agriculture was replaced and made a cabinet position in 1889 in response to nationwide farmer pressure. Compared to their earlier status, things were looking better for many farmers. This partially accounted for the shift in the type of paper read. But compared to other professions and branches of society, their problems were not over as subsequent years and events revealed.

An additional manifestation of the change in the institute movement in Michigan can be seen in the formal reports of the State Board of Agriculture. From 1876 to 1880, the papers given at each institute were printed in the text of the Board Reports with the account of each successive institute. The only attempt made at grouping papers was to include the papers read by the faculty at more than one institute at the end of the section of the

Board Reports dealing with the institutes. A combined report which necessitated abbreviation and the elimination of some papers was issued for 1881 and 1882. During the following years, the papers were grouped by subject, rather than included in the report of each separate institute. During that period a major portion of the Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture was devoted to the institute movement.

The mid 1880's however, revealed a gradual trend in the decline of the number of pages devoted to institutes while there was an increase in other reports and articles. Papers read at other agricultural gatherings both on the state and national levels were included. Correspondence on agricultural topics were printed in the reports. Each college department contributed "bulletins" on timely agricultural subjects which were especially written for the annual report. Those so-called "bulletins" were at times printed separately in addition to their being included in the Annual Report. Those "bulletins" became more extensive and detailed with the passing of time as compared with the papers formerly read at the institutes. At this point, a new level of sophistication was seen in the printed material being sent to the farmer. Formerly, the farmer was limited to material printed in the Annual Report, but now he had this report, plus an increasing number of individual bulletins distributed by the experimental station,

few of which were included in the Annual Report. This trend would suggest the gradual decline of the institutes as an educational tool such as they had been during the early years. The slow development of the agricultural station with its periodic bulletins as a new type of extension service can now be seen.

These changes seemed to be indicative of the fact that farmers' institutes had fulfilled their original purpose of awakening farmer interest in the college and carrying education to the farmer. The college was growing and more farmers were being educated. The fulfillment of the land grant concept of reaching out to the people which began with the institute movement was now being realized through the experimental station and its reports.

This chapter has presented a dual theme. Considered first were the mechanics and format of operating the institutes between 1876 and 1889. Then attention was focused on the changes which became evident in the 1890's. The format and method of operation remained constant for fourteen years but beginning in 1890, a new period of institutes emerged. The contrasts and changes in this new period were distinct when compared with the foundation period and were beyond the scope of this present discussion. The next chapter will consider agrarianism as a recurrent theme in farmers' institutes during the foundation period.

CHAPTER V

AGRARIANISM AS A RECURRENT THEME IN FARMERS' INSTITUTES

The theme of agrarianism was one which played an important role in farmers' institutes. The steady, relentless growth of the cities and industry created frustrations, anxieties and tensions for the farmers. The papers and discussions in the Michigan institutes, revealed the concerns of many farmers. The youth were leaving the farm and moving to the city, which was a symbol of moral decay and weakness. When most farmers considered business and industry, it was generally in terms of oppressive monopolies, especially railroad interests that charged exorbitant freight rates to move farm products to market and then to bring fertilizer and implements to them. Politically, the farmers who attended the institutes expressed the feeling that they were being neglected by the politicians who were more concerned with the interests of big business than they were the farming community. Socially, many farmers felt inferior and were thus seeking ways to elevate their status in society. Those and other problems were articulated at the institutes.

Paralleling this, the institutes revealed a continuous emphasis on the various elements which went to make up the agrarian tradition. It was presented as a basic philosophy of life and because of this underlying assumption, the farmers present were urged to act in specific areas. This chapter, will discuss the various aspects of the agrarian theme as revealed in the institutes with the following two chapters analyzing specific courses of action urged by the institute speakers.

Calling

The farmer considered his vocation a "calling." Almost invariable when references were made in the institutes to farming as an occupation it was in terms of a "call." This "call" was something special, different, and had a tendency to be considered on a higher level than the other occupations of life. Representative A. B. Copley of the Michigan State Legislature, in an opening address at the Decatur institute on January 13, 1876 referred to the farmers as engaging in a "God-given calling."[1] This concept of the calling as being of divine origin was amplified by Franklin Freeman, who was a local farmer, in an address on "Experiment Stations" given in 1884.

---

[1]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 139.

> It [farming] had its origin with the creation of the earth; there is none more exalted; God made it honorable, and it is our duty to sustain it as such. It is man's natural sphere. The great Creator designed man to till the soil and consummated his plan by placing him in the garden of Eden. The greatest and best of men in all ages have been encouragers and promoters of the art, and have never deemed it derogatory to their dignity to assist in the labors of the field.[1]

Articles in the Grange Visitor frequently alluded to the business of farming in terms of a Divine call, and therefore elevated it to a higher level than other occupations. On one occasion the editor in speaking of the exalted position of farming said it was "the first, most noble of all occupations, it is the only one of Divine origin."[2]

Agriculture was regarded as the highest and noblest of all the professions. It was the intent of the creator that agriculture be the principle pursuit of all men. It was to this great calling that speaker after speaker at the institutes challenged those present.

There was no evidence in the institutes that this concept of the "call" was ever questioned. It was an assumption which provided a base for speakers to build upon as they urged farmers and society to act in various areas. Because of this elevated calling of the farmer, there ought to be experimental stations which would further

---

[1]Franklin Freeman, "Experiment Stations," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1884, p. 256.

[2]Grange Visitor, May 15, 1879, p. 1.

his calling. After years of agitation at both the local and national levels, this became a reality with the passage of the Hatch Act in 1887. If the farmer stood as one favored by God, then the education of the farmer should be improved. Over the years this took place at all levels. The growth of the Agricultural College would be but one example. The state and federal governments were urged to pass legislation which would benefit the farmer in terms of Regulatory Laws relating to monopolies, patents and food products. Progress also was made in those areas.

Mission

A close corollary of this concept of calling was that of mission. The farmer who was engaged in a divine calling had a mission to fulfill. It was easy for the farmer to lose sight of his calling and mission. Because of the hard work, long hours and declining status in society, many farmers became fatalistic, resigning themselves to the inevitable decline of farming. That is why in nearly every institute there were exhortations addressed to the farmer to awaken and exert himself. Too long had he been downtrodden and looked down upon. His status and role in society must be recognized. The proposition was set forth that the material wealth of the nation and the world lay hidden in the earth. It was the task of the farmer to bring it forth and present it in useful forms

to his fellow man. It was the job of the farmer to feed and clothe the earth's population. In order to do this, the farmer needed to have every advantage that skill, science and learning could bestow. The relationship between the stress on "scientific agriculture" and the nature and role of the farmer in society can be seen.

> When we as farmers shall have a more just appreciation of the importance of our calling,--the amount of work that is expected at our hands; that we have the earth to subdue and human family to support, we shall then see the necessity and importance of calling every auxiliary to our assistance whether it be science, labor, practical experience, the mechanic arts, or all combined.[1]

The mission of the farmer involved producing food for society. Every up-to-date tool and technique should be used to achieve this goal. The challenge was not only defined in terms of the physical well-being of society but also in terms of moral well-being. The farmer was admonished in the institutes to consider himself responsible for the standards of the society in which he lived. The moral virtues of thrift, hard work, honesty and right living were extolled and contrasted with the tendency towards the various vices of the city. The farmer was urged to set the example for a decadent urban society. It was assumed that city living represented a decline in morals

---

[1]Burke Spencer, "The Application of Knowledge," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 239.

and virtue with the farmer called to demonstrate a higher way which might have a positive influence on those who lived in the cities. This was one reason for the continued discussion on the problem of how to keep the youth on the farm. The moral upright farm boy would soon be degraded by repeated exposure to city influences. The success of the farmer was the success of society. If farming declined, society would also decline. This helped to explain the zealous exhortations by many speakers. The farmer must not lose sight of his call and mission. He was the only one who could save society.

An interesting variation on this theme which sounds paradoxical was expressed by George Pray, a wealthy influencial farmer, who was a keen supporter of the institutes and the Agricultural College. On the one hand, the farmer was urged to avoid the contamination of the city, while on the other hand, he was reminded that he had to provide the business and professional men for the city.

> . . . society demands business men and will continue to do so to the end of time, and anyone who has watched closely the course of events must have observed that the tendency of city life is to cause young men reared and educated in cities to degenerate in mind and body and to become worthless as business men. It is seldom that the sons of even very talented business men ever become eminent. Hence the ranks of the professions and of all business pursuits have to be recruited from young men in the country, from farmers' sons, who with strong minds, in healthy and vigorous bodies, do not find it difficult to far outstrip their effeminate city cousins, although they may have had far superior

> advantages so far as education and culture as well as money and influence are concerned. . . .[1]

Presumably a man after reaching adulthood in the country could move to the city and make a contribution to society without succumbing to the evils of society. His sons, however, by virtue of being reared in the city would fall prey to a decadent urban society. This paradox was never resolved by the author.

Nature

A romantic glorification of nature was also related to the agrarian theme. The farmer in his daily toil as the husbandman was in constant communion with nature. In his closeness to nature, he saw nature's God. There was virtue in getting back to nature and a recognition of this as God's creation. It was easy for the farmer in the midst of hard work and long hours to forget this aspect of his calling, hence the many exhortations to see above the beyond the drudgery of the farm.

In a pragmatic way, nature was also linked to a healthy body. The hard work out-of-doors resulted in exercise and the breathing of fresh air which was good for physical health. The exercise and fresh air along with the good food produced on the farm would contribute immensely

---

[1] Grange Visitor, January 1, 1880, p. 2.

to a sound body. At times, the robust body of the well adjusted farmer was contrasted with that of the weaker city dweller.

> The farm furnishes the best physical specimens of health and endurance. The farm requires the use of the entire muscular system, and not the use of one set of muscles only, as in trades and towns. The work is mostly in the open air, and food the purest and freshest.[1]

If the foregoing were true, which was assumed by institute speakers, then everything possible must be done to further the farmers' calling. Farming must be upgraded and dignified. Honest physical labor was not inherently something to be avoided as many supposedly did when they fled to the cities for an easier life. At this point it is interesting to observe the paradox facing the farmer when on the one hand the work ethic was stressed, while on the other hand the reception and use of labor saving machinery was promoted. The farmer was admonished to use all means to further his cause and upgrade his calling. Education and all the latest tools and techniques were to be utilized. Many farmers at the institutes accepted the aid offered by the representatives of the Agricultural College who spoke on practical subjects that would be of help in farming. Their fear of "book learning" gradually dissipated over the years when "scientific agriculture"

---

[1] Ibid., February 15, 1886, p. 1.

began to produce pragmatic results. Many farmers began to realize that the Agricultural College so many of them had ignored over the years was their friend and not their foe. As this happened, the college began slowly to move out of doldrums into the mainstream of farmer interest. Here was something the progressive farmer could use and rely on to further his calling and mission.

Nationalism

Institute speakers frequently related agrarianism and nationalism. It was felt that farming was the original occupation of men and the parent of commerce and manufacturing. In terms of America, agricultural products were the basis of the prosperity of the nation. If America could maintain a strong farming community, it would be a strong nation. If farming declined, the nation would decline.

Farmers as a whole were nationalistic and gloried in their great American heritage. In order to keep the nation strong and enable it to fulfill its divine destiny, the rural economy must be kept healthy. What was true on the national level was also true on the state level. For Michigan to remain a great state and even become greater, farming must have its proper place.

> Those nations who are most largely engaged in agriculture, and foster and protect it, and use every means in their power to stimulate production and to disseminate a knowledge of the proper modes of culture are the most prosperous, most prominent, and most populous, and reach the highest state of

> civilization and culture. History teaches us that those nations which cherished agriculture prospered, but when neglected, degeneracy began.[1]
>
> We think we are not unwarranted in saying that none of them [occupations] are of so great importance, or lie so nearly at the foundation of national wealth and greatness, as does the tilling of the soil.[2]
>
> The prosperity of a country depends to a large extent upon the abundance of land directly open to agricultural pursuits; and the same may be said of a nation's stability. The greater strides forward made by the husbandman, the greater the wealth and advancement. The decadence of this oldest and most honorable pursuit presages general decay.[3]

Agrarianism also was considered to be foundational for success in the other professions and areas of life. It was felt that agriculture was as important as all other industries combined and the foundation of every endeavor. This view proposed the concept that the current prosperity of the nation was the result of the abundance of agricultural production. No country could make substantial progress in civilization, arts and sciences that failed to foster agriculture. The prosperity of the nation rested upon the success of the farmer more than upon any other class or profession.

Closely related to this was the often repeated demands that the farming community ought to be granted

---

[1] Freeman, op. cit., p. 256.

[2] J. Webster Childs, The opening address at the Ypsalinti Institute, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 235.

[3] Flint Daily News, January 22, 1889, p. 2.

special governmental protection. This was partly the basis for repeated pleas for the legislature to pass legislation that would help the farmer. If agriculture was a calling uniquely productive and important to society, then it had a claim to the special concern and protection of government. This will be considered further in Chapter VII.

One of the problems expressed the first year of the institutes involved the need for publicity and promotion. Hon. J. Webster Childs, a farmer and state legislator, in the opening address at the Rochester institute, described agriculture as a major contributing factor in making America a great and wealthy nation. He then candidly said, ". . . The portion of the public press devoted to this interest [farming] has been very limited, and those papers that have attempted to maintain the character of agricultural journals have, as a class, been rather poorly sustained."[1] The institutes gave evidence of a concern for good publicity and promotion. If the agrarian theme was true, which was assumed by the farming community, then it ought to be communicated in every way possible.

Problems

There was an underlying twofold problem facing the farmer when he adopted the philosophy of agrarianism as

---

[1]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 179.

outlined in this chapter. This problem while not expressed in overt terms, nevertheless existed and subtle traces of it can be detected in the institutes.

In the first place, if farming was a "calling" with metaphysical implications how can this be related to the growing trend to consider farming as a business. Farming as a business involved a more earthly, pragmatic viewpoint which had a tendency to take away from the more elevated view of farming as a calling. One of the problems frequently expressed in the institutes was how to be a good manager on a farm, employing proper business techniques in order to keep up with the economic stream of society. After all, did not the farmer have just as much right to enjoy "the good things of life" as did the urban dweller? By viewing farming as a business, and acting accordingly, he would be able to participate in the benefits of production. The two strands, "calling" and "business" existed side by side in the institutes with little or no attempt made to reconcile them.

One allusion to this problem was expressed in terms of self-fulfillment. Instead of considering farming as a way of making money, the farmer should consider it as a means of self-achievement and realization. A job well done would provide a sense of satisfaction which would transcend monetary values. The farmer was to consider farming as a contribution he could make to society in fulfilling the

agrarian myth rather than what he would financially gain from it. There was a higher way with higher values apart from finances.

> But this culture of the mind in science, taste and general reading should be based on a higher consideration than that of mere moneyed profit. It should be sought for its own sake and the pleasures which it brings to his home. The farmer should have taste to appreciate and enjoy the beautiful in nature and in art. Taste to adorn his home, and his lawns with shrubbery, flowers, and works of art, taste to admire the ripening fruits and the living groups of animals which he has reared.[1]

It was also evident from a consideration of the institutes that some farmers had a nostalgia for the past. Alongside of references to monetary problems related to farming as a business, there were allusions to the past and the "good old days." It was as though this was a form of escapism to avoid the harsh realities of the present.

> The more farming as a self-sufficient way of life was abandoned for farming as a business, the more merit men found in what was being left behind. And the more rapidly the farmers' sons moved into the towns, the more nostalgic the whole culture became about its rural past.[2]

The other problem facing the thinking farmer, even though subconsciously and unclearly defined, was that of how to relate the concept of "calling" to the cold, hard facts of life which told him that in nearly every area,

---

[1]Hon. W. Divine, The opening address at the Greenville Institute, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 155.

[2]Hofstadter, op. cit., p. 24.

he was inferior and behind. If he was a farmer by divine call why would God allow him to be in this condition.

References abound in the institutes to the fact that the lot of the farmer had been gradually deteriorating over the years. Financially, the farmer felt the other professions and segments of society were better off than he was. Intellectually, he did not have the advantages of education and on the average he had not achieved the grade level of others. Culturally and socially the farmer felt isolated and inferior. Politically, he recognized that, although he made up about fifty percent of the population, he had little influence in political matters.

The answer to those problems seemed to be found in the hundreds of admonitions at the institutes for the farmer to exert himself, get an education, get involved in the various areas of life and demonstrate the validity of his calling. God helps those who help themselves. Many farmers, with their conservative nature, had almost become fatalistic in their outlook and attitude. Challenges were issued to overcome this and improve the lot of the farmer. The oratory at times resembled the Horatio Alger, "rags to riches" theme.

> And boys remember that the truly successful man in the sight of God and the world is not the man of high position; not the man who can boast of his millions, but he is the truly successful man who has made the most of his opportunities; who has improved the advantage within his reach. In this enlightened age, in

> this land of freedom and education, a person may, by application and earnest effort, rise from a humble position to one of greatness. The pages of American history are dotted by the names of men who are examples: Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Horace Greeley, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, Ulysses Grant and James Garfield. With these men's lives before us to encourage, may we, farmers' boys, by inflinching courage, undaunted perseverence, combined with earnestness, excell in whatever occupation we may engage.[1]

There were two implications growing out of the stress on the agrarian theme in the institutes. If agrarianism was desirable and the farmer needed to elevate himself and promote farming, then one way to do this was through his support of the Agricultural College and scientific agriculture. There were numberless references and admonitions urging the farmer to support his school. Closely related to this were the admonitions to join together in farmers' organizations, agricultural societies and the Grange. Progress would come by presenting a unified front to the state and the nation.

The theme of agrarianism provided a strong undergirding for the institute movement. There were references to this philosophical basis in every institute. It was upon this foundation that the speakers built as they challenged their listeners to consider the subject of education which shall be discussed in the following chapter.

---

[1]Frank Aldrich, "Farmers' Sons and their Education," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881, p. 174.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION AS A RECURRENT THEME IN FARMERS' INSTITUTES

Probably the most important and prominent theme found in the foundation period of the institutes was that of education. Nearly every institute had complete papers devoted to some aspect of education and papers on other subjects often had allusions to education. Professor Albert J. Cook who had been involved in farmers' institutes for many years in Michigan and had a good knowledge of their plan and purpose, gave a lecture on; "The Ideal Farmers' Institute--How to Hold it in Your Neighborhood." This lecture was first published in the "Rural New Yorker" October 4, 1890 and then printed in the Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture for 1890. Among instructions given, Professor Cook said:

> It is usually wise to secure one paper at each institute upon our common schools, or upon education. This should be prepared by some competent person of the county. If the institute can arouse the farmers to the importance of education and the need of better schools, and more interest in those we have, it will have done no better work.[1]

---

[1]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1890, p. 486.

It can be seen from the thoughts of Professor Cook, the high value which was placed on education and the feeling that it must be stressed in the institutes. The question can now be raised as to what the farmers who attended the institutes were thinking and saying about education. What were some of the educational challenges presented to the farmers?

Philosophy of Education

As stated before, many farmers were not interested in "book farming" which they regarded as impractical and unnecessary to their calling. All that needed to be known about farming could be learned by actually working on the farm. Anything beyond the bare rudiments of education taught in the rural school was superfluous.

This attitude gradually began to dissipate over the years as was reflected in the institutes. Many farmers now began to see education in more pragmatic and utilitarian terms as preparation for life, rather than classical and ivory tower, elitist education. R. G. Baird, for many years secretary of the State Board of Agriculture whose job it was to visit all institutes, expressed the old philosophy in these words:

> During a long period of human history education was not regarded as having any direct or even remote relation to the world of work. For any of the varied occupations in which the great mass of mankind must necessarily be engaged, in order to supply the

> necessities and comforts of the life that now is, no preparation or fitness was given by the education of the schools. It is not only true that the education of the past did not aim at anything of this sort, but it is also true that the end and design of the old education was in the very opposite direction. A man was not educated to labor but he was educated not to labor. In all the habits of his life and the processes of his thought, the educated man was as far as possible removed from sympathy with what we term industrial pursuits. It would have been regarded as a degration for the philosopher to leave his speculations and his dreams to mingle long enough with the drudgery of labor even to make it less a drudgery.[1]

Things were beginning slowly to change. The introduction of the natural sciences into the curriculum, plus the practical emphasis in society gradually brought to the forefront what was called the new education, which was both practical and popular in emphasis. The old curriculum for the select few was slowly being pushed aside, although not completely eliminated.

The papers presented at the institutes, whether specifically devoted to education or simply containing allusions to the educational process, made it clear that what was taught to farmers' sons ought to be of a practical nature. This practicality involved a study of natural science in its application to farming along with other subjects that would enable the farmer to function as a good citizen and business man. The latter emphasis of citizenship and business acumen permitted the retention of at

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 249.

least some liberal arts courses in the curriculum at all educational levels.

> In this preeminently utilitarian age the Platonic idea that learning should be cultivated for its own sake without being crippled by the slightest reference to any practical or utilitarian results is dying out, and no education is held in very high repute which cannot be applied to some good and useful purpose.[1]

> The time is coming when no farmer ignorant of the laws of nature, as revealed by modern science can expect to succeed. The farmer of the future will have to know something of chemistry, of botany, of natural philosophy and of kindred branches of science, of the laws of trade and commerce and of political economy. . . . You want a school system which will prepare your sons for a practical farmers life, giving them a well-balanced and practical mind, versed in all the rules and laws of ordinary business transactions, sufficiently informed to guard them against all swindlers and impostors, liberal enough to take up with all real improvements, and sufficiently acquainted with public affairs to perform aright their duties as American citizens.[2]

The educational philosophy of Michigan Agricultural College as reflected in the papers presented at farmers' institutes involved four interrelated areas. In the first place, the college must have classrooms and laboratories for the study of the natural sciences. It also was felt that the teaching should not be exclusively technical in nature but should include courses in the liberal arts tradition. This would round off and give balance to the

---

[1]George Pray, "The Education of the Farmer," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1880, p. 127.

[2]C. F. Field, "Education," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1880, p. 102.

curriculum. The third aspect of education at the Agricultural College related to the college farm. This would be a model farm where the student would learn by doing. The ideals and principles taught in the classroom could be put into practice under the watchful eye of the faculty. The final aspect of educational philosophy was the emphasis on mechanics. This involved workshops and the use of machinery.[1]

An examination of the curriculum at the Agricultural College revealed an interesting mixture of the classical with the practical. There were courses dealing with English, literature, grammar, logic and philosophy. The subjects missing from the curriculum at the Agricultural College were Greek, Latin and Hebrew, the languages which helped to make up the classical curriculum. It is of interest to observe that T. C. Abbot who was president during the formative years from 1862 to 1885, was trained in the classics and was a pioneer in establishing a curriculum for the first Agricultural College in the nation. The faculty were, for the most part, trained in classical colleges and were trying to establish a new type of education without previous examples or experience. While many farmers questioned the validity of the so-called

---

[1]R. G. Baird, "Education in Relation to Agriculture and Other Industries," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 250.

classical and academic subjects being taught in "their school," those who gave papers at the institutes maintained the worthiness of this procedure and defended the practice of the Agricultural College.

An important corollary of this new education and curriculum involved the recipients of this education. The new education which was democratic in nature was for the common man so that he could adequately live and function in a democratic society. As far as institute speakers were concerned, this broadening of educational opportunity was related to farmers. They urged their listeners to upgrade the rural, common school for the benefit of their children. They were challenged to support the Agricultural College as it would enable their sons to learn the principles of scientific agriculture which presumably would be applied to the business of farming.

This stress on education for the farming community was echoed in the thinking of two significant farm organizations in Michigan; the State Agricultural Society and the State Grange. The Grange Visitor in reporting the annual meeting of the State Agricultural Society, spoke approvingly of the following resolution which had been adopted:

> Resolved, That in the opinion of the State Agricultural Society, the end and aims of this society, of the Agricultural College, and the State Grange

> are the same,--that of education and elevating the farming class.[1]

There seemed to be a general consensus among institute participants that moral and ethical values ought to be tied in with the educational process at all levels. Hon. William L. Webber, a state legislator, speaking on "Industrial Education" at the Grayling institute in 1887 said:

> A long time ago the idea became prevalent that there must be no secretarianism taught in schools. The idea in practise has gone beyond what was intended. It has gone so far that it has even left all good morals out of our system of education. Now, there are certain principles of human conduct that underlie every man's actions, principles which all good men agree are right, principles that may be safely taught, even though it may not be purely intellectual education. Go through our schools, listen to the addresses delivered at the gatherings of our educators during educational conventions, and you hear little spoken of except pure intellectual development. Knowledge is power, but the devil has a great deal of knowledge. If you give a proper direction to that intellectual development you have thereby benefited those who are intellectually developed and by benefiting the individual you have benefited everybody with whom that individual comes in contact through life but if you give a person intellectual development without giving it a proper direction he is just as likely, perhaps, to go wrong as to go right, and that is one of the troubles of the times. I say our common schools are defective in that they fail to teach good morals as much as they should.[2]

The problem of morals and values was also found at the Agricultural College. R. J. Corvell in an article

---

[1] Grange Visitor, July 15, 1879, p. 4.

[2] William L. Webber, "Industrial Education," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887, p. 342.

entitled "Morality in Our State Institutions," alluded to an unnamed speaker and said:

> At the Agricultural College on Sunday morning the speaker observed with astonishment a load of boys with cigars in their mouths and a keg of beer in their wagon starting from the campus to spend the holy day in idleness and revelry at a lakeside resort.[1]

The new president of the Agricultural College, Edwin Willits during his inaugural address observed that:

> It is for us of the administration to assure the people of the State, that so far as in us lies we will preserve this institution free from the contamination of vice, and will send out from our halls the young men committed to our charge not only uninjured by their associations here, but better fitted to become good, loyal Christian citizens.[2]

One reason stressed in the institutes for the education of the farmer was that it would raise his social status to a higher level. It was assumed that the educated man had a higher social standing in society and in order for a farmer to experience social status and climb the social ladder, he must therefore be educated. It was also felt that with increased education for the farmer, the nation would have increased prosperity. What was good for the farmer was good for the nation.

Many farmers believed that increased education and social status meant more power and control in the affairs

---

[1] Grange Visitor, September 15, 1886, p. 42.

[2] Edwin Willits, "Inagural Address," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 33.

of society. Institute speakers were fond of referring to the relatively small number of lawyers and business men who controlled the destiny of the nation simply because of their superior education which brought them to their position of authority. ". . . today lawyers, bankers, railroad men and business men who are educated and intelligent . . . monopolize the management and control of the affairs of nations. . . ."[1]

The challenge to farmers was obvious. Get more education if you want to better your position and exert an influence commensurate with your numbers. Lawyers, doctors and other professional men have risen to the top because of their superior education. The farmers who complained about lawyers, politicians, monopolies, taxation, tariffs, prices, patent laws and many other things were now admonished to get more education which ultimately would raise their status and solve many of these problems. To achieve an equal footing in social and political affairs, they must be equally cultivated, intelligent and thus they would be qualified to meet men of other callings without a feeling of inferiority.

> . . . we have not done all we might to improve ourselves and to enable farmers to take and hold that position in society to which they are rightly entitled. . . . Education, mental culture and social

---

[1]Pray, op. cit., p. 122.

> intercourse for yourselves and especially your children are what you need to prepare you to act well your part.[1]

The Agricultural College

One of the problems faced by the college was the conservatism and lack of interest on the part of many farmers in the Agricultural College. Part of the rationale for beginning farmers' institutes in Michigan was the desire by the faculty and board to overcome this lack of interest. It was felt that institutes would help achieve this goal.

During the first part of the nineteenth century, a significant number of farmers felt that education was unnecessary and sometimes incompatible with good farming. They held to the old ways and thought that education beyond the primary school level was a waste of time. Any farm boy who graduated from college was expected to enter one of the learned professions and for him to take his education and culture back to the farm was an indication of mental weakness.

Because of this attitude and a conservative bent of mind, some farmers learned slowly that cultivated brains must be used in successfully cultivating the soil. The logic of events forced the more intelligent farmers to ask for improved methods of agriculture. Advancements in

---

[1] Grange Visitor, October 1876, p. 1.

other professions; the elevation of the style of living for other people; the gradually exhaustion of the soil with the resultant diminishing of crop yields, all combined to start the receptive farmer thinking about better farming methods. The spirit of inquiry was awakened and those who were more realistic and progressive in outlook, asked why the farmer could not have a special school of training similar to the other professions. This eventually led to the founding of the Agricultural College which was discussed in Chapter II.

In Chapter III, the reason for founding farmers' institutes in Michigan was discussed. There were those who criticized the college at that time and the criticism probably continued even after the establishment of the institutes. However, as far as the papers read and participants in the institutes were concerned, there appeared to be a healthy, positive attitude manifested towards the college and its representatives. There seemed to be an attitude of expectancy on the part of those who attended the institutes. They recognized their need and looked to the college for help. Faculty members spoke from their studies and experiences, gearing their papers to the practical level in an attempt to help the farmer. While some papers read both by faculty and local farmers were perhaps too theoretical and not very helpful, the majority dealt with specific agricultural problems which were of concern to the farmer and which could be applied to down-to-earth farming. The

success of the institutes and acceptance of them by a significant number of farmers was indicative that they were gradually moving in the direction of adopting "scientific agriculture" and the work being done by the college.

Not every farmer attended the institutes. It appears that those who did stay home and those who still clung to the old philosophy of farming were gradually influenced by those who did attend and practiced what they had heard and read. The pragmatic success of scientific agriculture over a period of years slowly forced many of the more hesitant farmers to try the new ideas. As the older generation of farmers declined, the newer generation was more inclined to accept the new way of doing things.

The relationship between those who expressed themselves at farmers' institutes and the Agricultural College appeared very good. They appreciated the papers and suggestions coming from the faculty and the faculty members were always desirous of being of practical help to the farmer. The good will generated by the institutes for the college and its program was of inestimable value. Many farmers began to talk about the Agricultural College as "their" school with a program of education for the farmer which would help in his noble "calling."

> Having just returned home from attending the farmers' Institutes at Armada and Rochester, I thought it might be interesting to your readers to know something of how they were conducted, the interest which was taken in them by the farmers of these and

> surrounding localities, and the measure of success by which they were attended. . . .[1]
>
> There is in attendance a large number of farmers from some distance, and all seem eager to grasp this opportunity of shaking hands with the Agricultural College and talking over the subjects of mutual interest.[2]
>
> This closed the exercises of the Institute which for attendance and valuable information imparted has never before been equaled in this section of the State.[3]

Criticisms of the college expressed by institute participants were generally positive and constructive in nature. Flaws and shortcomings were usually described in terms of "needs." The "needs" of the college could be met if the legislature would appropriate more funds. This topic of the relationship of the farmers to the legislature will be discussed in the following chapter. Where those who expressed themselves did see needs and problems, they took a positive approach of "what can we do?" The answer lay in petitions and overtures to the legislature. The correct action on the part of the legislature would rectify the situation. The attitude was, this is "our" college. We pay taxes and make up over half the population of the state, therefore, the legislature must act on behalf of us and our college.

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, January 18, 1876, p. 1.

[2] Detroit Free Press, January 13, 1876, p. 3.

[3] Grand Rapids Eagle, January 30, 1884, p. 2.

A concern of some farmers which bordered on negative criticism revolved around the question of how many of the graduates went into farming. This was the closest to derogatory criticism that one can find in the institute reports.

The college was keenly aware of this criticism. Faculty members periodically defended the college on this point in the institutes. President Abbot in the Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture in 1876, said of the 120 living graduates of the college, 42 were farmers, 7 were fruit growers and 11 were teachers in agricultural schools. He then went on to indicate that this was as large a percentage of graduates as law schools in the west send into the practice of law. He also reported that 13 out of 17 in the senior graduating class planned to go into some form of agriculture.[1] Another set of statistics given by President Abbot in 1879 showed that of 156 graduates, 55 went into farming, 7 into fruit culture, 3 into beekeeping, 11 were giving instruction in agriculture, the occupation of 11 were unknown and 4 had died. This meant that over 50 percent of the graduates were involved in some way in agriculture. He then indicated that this was a good

---

[1]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 70.

percentage when other kinds of colleges send less than 2 percent of their graduates into agriculture.[1]

The line of reasoning used to defend the college involved the principle of comparison. By comparing the percentage of graduates of the Agricultural College going into farming with those from other types of colleges going into farming, it was evident the Agricultural College had the better percentage. Another mode of comparison was to compare the percentage of students going into the various professions. The college was criticized for the supposedly small number of students going into agriculture, but this same argument could be applied to all the professions.

> It shall be too much to demand that all graduates shall be farmers. Not all graduates from our law schools follow law. The graduates of our medical schools do not all of them practice medicine, nor all theological students preach. So it is not necessary to round the argument to demand that all graduates shall be farmers.[2]

Comparisons were also made between the Agricultural College and the university at Ann Arbor in terms of the occupations of the graduates of the respective institutions. In his report of 1883, the Superintendent of Public Instruction revealed that 1 of every 150 graduates from the

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1878, p. 39.

[2] Samuel Johnson, "What is the Province of the Agricultural College," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 260.

university went into farming whereas about fifty percent of Agricultural College graduates went into farming.[1]

W. J. Beal wrote an article for the Grange Visitor entitled, "Graduates of the Agricultural College--Do They Go to Farming? An Answer from each Member of the Last Class." Beal, apparently aware of this criticism, sent a questionnaire to the thirty graduates of the class of 1878. There were twenty-six replies. Eleven said they were planning on going into farming. Three said they were not going into farming, while one was undecided. It is significant to note that eleven said they wanted to go into farming, but did not have money to buy a farm. Some of this group thought they would take jobs unrelated to farming because of the higher wages, hoping to save enough to purchase a farm at a later time. It was probably this latter number that made up most of the percentage of those not going into farming and indirectly reflected upon the economic situation of that day.[2]

These statistics and comparisons were quoted and used over the years to show the farmers that the college was doing a good job and deserved the support of the farming community. While the farmers could idealistically hope that every graduate might go into farming, realistically they

---

[1]Quoted by Professor Samuel Johnson, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1886, p. 49.

[2]Grange Visitor, December 16, 1878, p. 1.

had to realize this would never happen. They had to accept the Agricultural College as it was, support and promote it and believe that it would grow and improve. This they proceeded to do as was revealed in the institutes.

The Common School

In addition to the interest in the Agricultural College as revealed by the participants in the institutes, many institute papers were read on the rural, common school. Allusions to the common school also abound in papers not specifically addressing themselves to the question of education. It was not difficult to see why there was such an interest in the rural, district school. These schools provided the "raw" material for the Agricultural College, which was made up mainly of farmers' sons. Because of this and the growing concern for "scientific agriculture," it was natural to expect the farmers' institutes to reflect a concern for the rural school.

What were the problems and concerns of the institute speakers in reference to these schools? What were their hopes and aspirations? What were the challenges presented to the farmer in relationship to the country school? The challenge to upgrade education and use it as a means for the advancement of the farmer was evident in the institutes. This was well summarized by one of the institute speakers in 1886 when he said:

> Let me call your attention to what my observation has led me to believe, is a pressing and growing need in many, indeed I fear, in most agricultural districts. I refer to the need of giving more attention, of taking more constant, personal, intelligent interest in the common schools. . . .[1]

There were a number of areas of concern presented to the farmers with a challenge to produce reforms in those areas. One involved the facilities. The school house itself should be clean and attractive. Drab, unattractive and inferior buildings do not contribute to the educational process. Even from the early days of the institutes, the challenge was given to the farmers to produce an attractive environment in which the educational process could take place. Professor Henry R. Pattengill at the Lake Odessa institute in February 1889, urged the farmers to consider a "good schoolhouse" in terms of adequate light and ventilation.[2] Not only should school buildings be neat and attractive, but the grounds outside ought to be landscaped and made appealing to the eye along with adequate playground space.

The Michigan Farmer commenting on this address said:

> After a song by the choir Prof. Pattengill was introduced and he proceeded with a very interesting and profitable lecture on "Three Factors of a Good

---

[1] Samuel Johnson, "The Needs of Agriculture," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1886, p. 48.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1889, p. 503.

> School." [Facilities, Teachers, and Patrons] It is only necessary to say in connection with this that the lecture ought to be delivered in every school district in the State. It is brim full of good solid advice to pupils, patrons and teachers, and the Professor delivers it in a very interesting manner. With a discussion on this subject, the evening session closed at the late hour of 10:30.[1]

Another area of concern was equipment. The question was raised as to how a teacher could teach geography without maps and a globe, items which are taken for granted today, but a century ago were sparse items in the rural school house. There should be blackboards placed on a level so that even the smallest child could use them. There should be dictionaries and an adequate school library. The efficiency of the teaching process was greatly hampered because of the deficiencies in those areas. One speaker observed; "You cannot expect the pupils will make much progress without maps and globes, anymore than you can expect to carry on your farms without plows and drags, reapers and mowers."[2]

A repeated area of interest expressed at farmers' institutes involved teachers. In order to have good schools and education, there must, in addition to good facilities and equipment, be good teachers. Teachers who were too young or had inadequate training could not be expected to adequately fulfill their role. The salary of teachers ought

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, March 2, 1889, p. 1.

[2] Field, op. cit., p. 103.

to be adequate. Because of human nature and traditional farmer conservatism, the prevailing tendency was to hire the cheapest teachers possible. The more advanced thinkers proposed the idea that you get what you pay for and to hire the cheapest teachers was generally the poorest kind of economy. A corollary of this was teacher turnover. Often a school board would change teachers just to get one at a lower salary. This frequent change in teachers was not conducive to good education. In extreme cases there would be a new teacher every term or two. This disrupted the continuity of education.

The foregoing educational themes were repeated often in papers read at the institutes. There were other ideas expressed periodically, some of which were advanced for that day. One idea expressed in varying ways can be related to the principle of uniformity. There should be uniformity in the text books used. Up to this point, the school system simply grew without any external guidelines as to what text books ought to be used. This very often meant that there came a change of texts with a change of teachers. With frequent teacher turnover, the problem was self evident. The Michigan State Grange at its annual meeting in 1887 passed a resolution advocating the uniform use of text books across the state.[1]

---

[1] Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich. 1888), p. 54.

The need for uniformity was also called for in the area of a graded course of study, at least on the township level to say nothing of the state level. It was felt by educational progressives that there should be a graded and uniform course of study through the first eight grades. This would give a thorough knowledge of the basic subjects including reading, writing, spelling, geography, grammar, arithmetic and history. Such a course of study in the rural, common school would do away with the necessity of sending children to the town school where such uniformity was more apt to be found. It was also felt that the school year should be lengthened and the terms should correspond to those of the city or town schools.

Another idea endorsed was that of the Township District System. This concept involved the consolidation of some schools and placing them under one board. Instead of the proliferation of small inefficient schools under the control of a local, rural community, there would be fewer, but larger schools covering a larger geographical area. The board would be made up of representatives from the old, smaller districts. H. R. Pattengill supported this concept as he proposed it at institutes in 1889. He even suggested in reply to a question raised by President Willits regarding increased distances children would have to walk to school, that if necessary children should be

carried to school at public expense.[1] It was also felt that such a system should be under the jurisdiction of a superintendent of schools who would devote fulltime to overseeing these schools.

Other ideas expressed were those of compulsory attendance, free text books and free clothing provided for children whose parents could not or would not clothe their children. Taxation should be the means used to finance schools although details were not given. The wealthy who would be inclined to send their children to more prestigious schools should be interested in the common school and its support.

Although most of the discussion centered around the elementary school, there were a number of references to the high school. Some speakers felt a good rural elementary education would provide the foundation necessary to attend the town high school. This would mean, for many, living away from home and boarding in town. There did not seem to be much objection to this provided the local rural school provided an adequate foundation. Others suggested a regional, central high school for each township which might involve a transportation problem but which would avoid sending a student to a town or city high school away from home. This school should be part of the common

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1889, p. 504.

school system and supported out of the school fund. It was evident that most papers and discussions on education were concerned with the upgrading of the elementary school and thoughts on high school education were secondary.

A well organized and efficiently operated rural school would provide a good education for the children, satisfying their natural longing for knowledge. It would make the farm seem more attractive and help eliminate ideas about leaving the farm. Farmers were urged to consider these matters and act accordingly. The future welfare of the farmer was directly linked with the improvement of the educational system.

The Michigan Farmer observed that:

> Our common schools are the boast and pride of every American citizen. . . . Let education be turned, especially in the common schools, towards making farmers out of farmers' children. Teach them that an educated farmer is as much a success as an educated lawyer, and entitled to the same consideration, both socially and politically.[1]

Adult Continuing Education

Another facet of education discussed at institutes was adult continuing education. Institute speakers were not only interested in education for farmers' children, but they were interested in education for the farmers who were past the age of attending school. It was readily

---

[1]Michigan Farmer, January 29, 1884, p. 1.

acknowledged that there were many successful farmers whose school days had been few, but who nevertheless were considered educated. That education came in a variety of ways. One was literary. Many farmers kept abreast of current events as reported in the newspapers. There was also an emphasis on good books and reading. "Good books and good literature are within the reach of everyone, and it depends upon ourselves whether we are benefited by them or not. It depends more upon what we are, than where we are, whether we receive or retain."[1] References were made to the Chautauqua Literary Circle as an organization helping the farmer broaden and deepen his interests in the great works of the past and modern science. The Grange was another rural organization oriented towards farmer interests which stressed the value of books. Each Grange chapter was challenged to establish a library and encourage the farmers to use it.[2]

Another way the farmers could receive education was through reading the Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture which was published for this purpose. Honorable J. Webster Childs, a legislator and supporter of the institutes, in an opening address given at the Ypsilanti farmers'

---

[1]Mrs. J. J. Sumner, "Domestic Farm Life," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 6.

[2]William J. Beal, "A Library for the Grange," Grange Visitor, December 1, 1878, p. 6.

institute in January, 1877, referred to the printed reports of the institutes of 1876 as being eagerly sought after and read by many hundreds of farmers who did not have the privilege of attending the meetings. He also alluded to other institutes being held in different parts of the state which had not been appointed by the Board of Agriculture.[1] The fact that the papers read in the institutes were printed in the Annual Report of the Board of Agriculture was mentioned periodically in the institutes and farmers were challenged to obtain those reports for their libraries. It was felt that the increase of labor-saving devices for the farmer would free him from at least some of the drudgery of farming, thus giving him extra time that could be used for reading and self improvement. He could make up, at least in part, for the lack of opportunities in the past by improving those of the present.

Another area stressed in the institutes, which would help educate the farmer long after his formal schooling was past, was his social contacts with other people.

> There is another kind of education of scarcely less importance, which cannot be gleaned from books nor obtained from the schools, and which farmers from their isolated lives, are very apt to neglect to their great detriment. It is the knowledge gained by daily and intimate contact with our fellow men, and is of much greater importance than farmers are apt to think. It is this which distinguishes the urban and accomplished gentleman from the uncouth, awkward and rude

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 235.

> rustic. . . . This kind of knowledge pays not only in this way, but an intimate association with our fellow men has a tendency to sharpen and stimulate the intellect. . . . Farmers as a class are too apt to settle down to a conviction that their place is on the farm and that they should seldom get very far from it. The consequence of this is that they are liable to become rather cramped in their ideas of the world about them and to settle down to the conviction that what they do not already know is not worth knowing at all, and hence continue on in their old routine way of doing things because their fathers did so before them, and to become careless of the great improvement going on about them. This isolation is fossilizing in its influence. . . ."[1]

This mixing and socializing process was to be accomplished by farmers getting together at farmers' clubs, grange meetings, county fairs, community gatherings and farmers' institutes. One reason the farmers institutes were so successful was the social element. As social creatures, farmers enjoyed meeting with other farmers and "talking shop." Whether they realized it or not, this was an educational process.

> An institute is certainly one of the most efficient agencies in furthering the cause of practical education among the farming people of our land. It stimulates thought, encourages investigation, calls forth freedom of discussion, and sets in motion educational forces that will not cease their working when this institute shall adjourn. These thoughts, which are brought out in your discussions, will go to the villages and homes, the granges and social gatherings all over our county, and there stimulate to further investigation, thought, and discussion, and thus prove a veritable county agricultural college in our midst.[2]

---

[1] Pray, op. cit., p. 122.

[2] E. R. Willard, "Practical Education," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1878, p. 287.

The Reason for the Educational Emphasis in Institutes

In conclusion, the question can rightly be raised as to why there was such a stress placed on education in farmers' institutes. The answer is twofold. There was the principle of nationalism and the principle of elevation. Education was first of all good for the country. Speakers continually stressed that the American school system was a great institution in the greatest nation on earth. It was felt that the framers of the Constitution assumed that general intelligence and enlightenment was the only safe support of the type of government they were setting up. In keeping with this, the question of how to rear a nation of thinkers had been ever prominent before the public mind. The answer lay through the medium of schools. Education and a good school system would promote the growth and well-being of the nation. The school was looked upon as a socializing force which would contribute to the assimilation and Americanization of "foreigners" who settled in America. The Michigan Farmer in commenting on the greatness of the American school system said: ". . . in them, children of foreign parentage become practically Americans, with American instincts and predilections."[1]

Robert G. Baird, Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, in an article entitled "Education in Relation

---

[1]Michigan Farmer, January 29, 1884, p. 1.

to Agriculture and Other Industries,"[1] advocated the concept that more education meant greater productivity and thus the nation would prosper and become greater. To support this relationship between education and nationalism, Baird referred to Horace Mann, who as secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, corresponded extensively with prominent business men connected with the leading industries of the day in regard to the productive value of educated labor as compared with that of ignorant labor. According to Mann, the results validated the thesis that there was a high degree of superiority on the part of educated labor not only individually, but in the results of the industrial process.

Recent scholarship does not completely support the thesis of Mann, whose ideas have been effectively challenged by Michael B. Katz, who said:

> In Lawrence the contradiction at the heart of the social thought of Massachusetts educators was clearly exposed. Education failed to create the country in the city; with the best educational system that could be devised Lawrence still developed the universal diseases of urban life. The early history of Lawrence also suggest that education was not the driving force in industrial development. The labor power that built and manned the great mills and factories was not the loving hand of the artist-laborer but, for the most part, the untutored efforts of uneducated Irish immigrants and their children. Contrary to Mann and Boutwell's arguments and surveys

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885, p. 252.

> stressing the productivity of educated labor, Lawrence combined industrial greatness with mass ignorance.[1]

In addition to education symbolizing the greatness of the nation, education elevated the farmer to a higher social level. It enabled him to meet his fellow citizens of the town and city on an equal footing. It also provided economic advantages which would help him to share "the good things of life" with those from other professions. He could also buy labor saving machines and thus have more time for cultural pursuits.

The Grange Visitor in commenting on this said: "It is the grange that educates, exalts, refines, and enables, both man and woman, in every phase and department of their life and being; intellectually, socially, morally and physically."[2] "In many respects the Grange and the College is [sic] engaged in the same noble work, that of educating and elevating the farmer. In no respect is there any conflicting in the work of the two organizations."[3]

Education, although one of the main themes found in farmers' institutes was not the only subject considered. There were other topics and problems discussed. While

---

[1]Michael B. Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 93.

[2]Grange Visitor, September 1875, p. 6.

[3]Ibid., March 15, 1879, p. 2.

perhaps not being as important to the farmer as education, nevertheless those other areas were important and will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII

RECURRENT THEMES IN FARMERS' INSTITUTES

The theme of education, although predominate, was not the only one of a social nature to be found in farmers' institutes. This chapter will consider the more important recurring themes found in the institutes.

Values

An underlying theme which cut across all institutes and papers read was that of moral and spiritual values. No papers were read which specifically dealt with that subject but it was assumed by the speakers that those present believed in basic moral and spiritual values. For those presenting papers on education, they felt that ethical principles ought to be manifested in the classroom. Papers dealing with relationships between farmers assumed honesty and fairness would be practiced by all concerned. In discussing problems relating to the business world and the legislature, the speakers deplored unethical practices which adversely affected the farmer.

Concern was expressed for the farm youth who had migrated from the farm to the city lest they fall prey to

the evils inherent in city life which included laziness, idleness, dishonesty, moral degeneracy and drunkenness.

There seemed to be a correlation between ethics and religion. The papers read both by the local speakers and those from the Agricultural College abound in Biblical quotations and allusions. Many speakers were probably expressing the common speech of the day while others took a more personal interest in the source and meaning of the quotation.

While most of the institutes were held in public buildings, a few institutes met in churches. An examination of the program revealed that nearly every institute session opened with prayer by a local clergyman and on a few occasions they either prepared and read papers or read papers prepared by others. The relationship between religion and ethics appeared to be part of the general cultural setting of that day.[1]

The Home

The emphasis on morals and values was very frequently defined in terms of the home. The home environment provided an educational setting for the inculcation of moral virtues. The emphasis was generally on the more indirect approach rather than a direct verbal approach. A structured

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, May 9, 1876, p. 151.

environment at home along given moral lines, would provide for and result in good morals.

R. G. Baird, Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, in an address given the first year the institutes were held said:

> Public places of amusement are generally fraught with danger in consequence of their bad associations, and we think one of the best safeguards we can throw around our children will be found in such a recognition of their joyous instincts as will lead us to provide liberally for the gratification of those instincts at home, where we can control the selection of their company and prevent unreasonable hours.[1]

The repeated emphasis on the home involved some specific propositions which if carried out would be invaluable in training the children. One proposal, found practically every year, related to the buildings and grounds. Make them appealing and attractive. This assumed that growing children had a developing sense of beauty and an appreciation of aesthetic values. This was especially significant when the barriers of isolation were being broken down. Children would be exposed to other people and their homes, which would result in comparisons being made. Every farmer's home should be a place of beauty. While the average farmer could not afford costly houses or elegant furniture, yet it was still possible to beautify the home. Sagging steps and neglected verandas should be put in a good

---

[1] R. G. Baird, "Farmers' Homes," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 381.

state of repair. Flowers, shrubs and trees could be planted. A well-trimmed lawn would be appealing to the eye. Tasteful interior decorations would also be helpful. The house and it's yard should not be considered an adjunct to the barnyard. Fences should be erected, if necessary, to restrain the animals. It was the feeling on the part of institute speakers, that a pleasant, attractive home would make a positive impression on the children which would bear fruit in later life.

Institute speakers emphasized that the dignity and virtue of labor should be taught in the home. Labor was considered virtuous and the only proper avenue to success. The farmers present were urged to impress upon the minds of their children that their calling was a good and honorable one. They were to demonstrate this by their love for farming and the zeal and skill they showed in its management. A positive attitude would be of great value while a negative attitude would simply add to the other forces seeking to draw children away from the farm.

In addition to the physical surroundings and example of the farmer himself, speakers stressed that a pleasant and agreeable home life would also contribute to the moral growth of the children. Life inside the home should involve harmless home amusements, such as music and proper games. Good reading material such as books of high quality and well-edited newspapers would help provide an adequate

environment for moral instruction. An extension of this principle involved literary and social entertainments in the neighborhood.

Related to the home influence was the challenge presented to those at the institutes to upgrade the rural, common school and not to be in a hurry to send their children away from home to another school. It was felt that the home and its environment was doing a better job of education than could be obtained elsewhere. Improve the schools at home rather than patronize schools away from home. It was felt by institute speakers that if a child demonstrated the capability of attaining a higher degree of knowledge than could be supplied on the local level, then that child should be sent to an institution where the same lessons of industry and frugality taught at home would be continued and reinforced, where bodily strength and health would be preserved and where the youth would receive a practical education which would be useful in later life.

The home was to be a happy place. An unhappy home which children endured until they were old enough to leave, was not conducive to the inculcation of good morals. All of the factors mentioned, if faithfully practiced would be of great value in contributing to a happy home life.

In addition to providing an environment where moral virtues could develop, it was felt that the proper home setting would help solve the problem of how to keep

the young people on the farm. This was one of the pressing problems facing the nineteenth century farmer. This problem was mentioned hundreds of times in the institutes. The stress on the home environment was understandable even from a practical and pragmatic viewpoint. It would keep the farm youth from leaving the farm when they grew up.

Politics

Politics was one of the recurrent subjects of interest found in the institutes. This was interwoven into topics dealing with every aspect of farming and the subjects considered thus far. Specific papers on this general topic were scarce but from references and allusions in the papers read, there was no question as to the concerns expressed on political subjects. This area was on the farmers' minds and increased over the years.

This interest was first of all manifested in terms of the needs of the Agricultural College. The college was sustained by funds appropriated by the legislature. The land grant funds took years to build up to any sizeable amount after the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862 and once the funds did start coming in, the status quo was barely sustained. More money was needed from the legislature to expand the college in reference to buildings and additional programs. In the opening address given at the Bangor institute in 1881, the chairman, Honorable David

Woodman, raised the question: "Our legislature is again in session. Will it once more turn a deaf ear to the demands of the farmers? Will it refuse to appropriate the necessary funds for the support of our Agricultural College?"[1] During the same year, Mr. Perry Mayo of Marshall said: "We think we have a right to demand that its [Agricultural College] usefulness be not crippled for the want of needed appropriations."[2]

Each farmers' institute closed with the reading of a list of resolutions of which the following was representative:

> Resolved, that in our opinion the interests of Agriculture have been greatly promoted by the holding of Farmers' Institutes; and in view of the valuable aid given to this great leading industry of our State by the Faculty of our Agricultural College, we trust that our Representatives in the State Legislature will give their influence and vote in favor of such an appropriation to that College as will meet its reasonable wants and enable it to do its grand work with the utmost efficiency.[3]

The concern for appropriations by the legislature for the college increased over the years. Once the interest in the college by leading farmers developed, then interest in the financing of the college manifested itself. This turned their eyes to the legislature who controlled the

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1882, p. 139.

[2] Ibid., p. 202.

[3] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881, p. 161.

funds. On more than one occasion, the farmers were reminded that they made up about half the voting population of the State. If this were true, then by writing to members of the legislature and exerting pressure, they ought to expect a favorable response. In the past, the needs of the farmer and his college had been ignored but now they ought to act in unison in approaching the legislature. The theory was that since farmers were in the majority, if they united they could make or unmake the lawmakers.

The Michigan State Grange, through its paper the Grange Visitor and at its annual meetings, was very vocal in expressing its displeasure with the lack of adequate funds provided by the legislature for the Agricultural College. This was frequently related to the Grange demands that a womans' program be initiated at the college which was contingent upon adequate funding. The membership was then challenged to send petitions to the legislature.[1] The Grange Visitor approvingly reported a resolution passed by the State Agricultural Society at its annual meeting which said:

> Resolved, That the State Agricultural Society express a feeling of regret that the last Legislature denied the College the appropriations asked for by the board.[2]

---

[1] Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1883), pp. 12, 80.

[2] Grange Visitor, July 15, 1879, p. 4.

The address to the legislature of the retiring governor, Josiah W. Begole, delivered January 15, 1885, specifically challenged the legislators to provide more funds for the college.

> The progress and aims of this institution will warrant liberal appropriations at your hands. My personal acquaintance with the board of trustees and their views and methods, warrant . . . assuring you that such appropriations will be well and economically used.[1]

The farmers were not only admonished to join together to exert influence on the state legislators for the well-being of the Agricultural College and thus the farmer, but they were challenged to think of this on the national level. H. D. Pessell in his opening words of welcome at the Hudsonville institute in 1886 alluded to this pressure when he said farmers "are making their influences felt in our legislative halls as evidenced by the introduction of a bill establishing a Bureau of Agriculture, making the head thereof a cabinet officer."[2] The Grange Visitor also mentioned the activity of the Grange in support of this bill.

> For ten years or more National and State Granges at their annual sessions have, by resolutions or otherwise, expressed the belief that the importance of agriculture demanded a cabinet officer with the title of Secretary of Agriculture. This belief has been the

---

[1] Monroe Democrat, January 15, 1885, p. 2.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1886, p. 12.

> well-considered opinion of farmers all over the country, and has been forced upon the attention of Congressmen at every session of that body by petitions, resolutions and personal letters.[1]

Many farmers were concerned about corruption in the political arena. It was the general feeling of institute participants that many legislators only showed an interest in farmers at election time when they wanted their money and their votes. Once the election process was over, the farmer was left in a state of limbo by unconcerned and indifferent legislators. It was felt that these officials now catered to the monopolies and business interests who would richly reward them for this interest. The farmers gradually began to feel left out of the main stream of society and questioned the ethics of the legislators whom they felt were largely responsible for their plight. Speakers in the institutes challenged the farmers to join together and exert their power. They were the sleeping giant with no relationship between their numbers and their potential influence.

> You hold the ballot; you can elect those men to represent you who will work in your interest. In this age and under our present system of Government, all evils can be corrected by the ballot. The future of this country is in the hands of the farmers.[2]

---

[1] Grange Visitor, February 15, 1886, p. 4.

[2] W. S. Tennant, Opening Address at the East Saginaw Institute, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1886, p. 19.

The farmers were encouraged to take an active part in politics rather than to vote, if indeed they did vote, and then forget about politics until the next election year. It was firmly believed by those who spoke on this theme that the farmer had the potential ability to shape politics and the shaping of politics would have a great influence on the success of farm undertakings.

Although the point was not repeatedly stressed, there were those who even looked forward to the day when from the farms able men would be forthcoming to fill the executive and legislative halls with honor and ability. It was felt that the noble farmer with high ideals commensurate with his calling, would fill the moral vacuum existing because of corrupt legislators. In order to accomplish this, the farmer needed to be educated. This was one reason why the strong stress on education at all levels was found in the institutes.

Papers read at the institutes alluded to additional specific problems confronting the farmer which related to politics. Farmers then, as people today, were concerned about taxes. They felt that their taxes were too high for the benefits received in comparison with what non-farmers paid. It was believed that large business corporations received special tax privileges because of their size and ability to influence the legislators to vote in their favor. As a result of this maneuvering, the farmer had to make up

for this loss of revenue by paying increased taxes. The farmers were distressed over the fact that they had to pay taxes on all of their property even though half of it was mortgaged while the capitalist who held the mortgage deducted his debts from his credits when listing his taxable property.

The question of monopolies was of vital interest to the farmer. The outstanding monopoly mentioned repeatedly in the institutes was that of railroads. The reason for this interest was obvious since many farmers maintained that railroads controlled freight rates and farmers were dependent on the railroads to get their products to market and to bring machinery and fertilizer to them. It was felt that the railroad barons, who did not have to worry about competition, were a law unto themselves setting rates capriciously without any concern for the welfare of the farmer. It was charged that railroad corporations absorbed the bulk of the farm profits which should have gone to the farmers. Railroads took advantage of politics to gain their ends, influencing the lawmakers to pass favorable legislation.

In this period of influence and development, few if any legislative restrictions were placed on the railroads. The unorganized farmer was caught in the middle and with justification complained of the squeeze. He needed to get his farm products to distant markets which

cost him money since he was forced to pay what he felt were excessive freight rates. In addition to this, he had to pay directly or indirectly the transportation costs of the machinery and fertilizer which he needed on the farm. This created a sense of frustration especially when he felt powerless to rectify the situation.

Horace Greeley in speaking of railroad management in 1871 said:

> A dozen or so railroad magnates, summoned by message, meet from time to time in one of our large cities; next morning the telegraph wires will have flashed across the land their decision that every bushel of grain going to market, every bale of goods passing inland, shall henceforth pay from twenty to thirty percent more freight than has hitherto been paid. In fact, this bevy of railroad kings has arbitrarily reduced the value of every farm, of every quarter section, of every bushel of grain in the great west. If they owned the whole country and all who live in it, they could not lord over us more tyrannically.[1]

While most of the institute speakers felt the railroads were monopolistic and oppressive to the farmer, there was some indication that the feeling was less than unanimous and some spoke in favor of the railroads.[2]

---

[1]Quoted by J. G. Noble, "What Constitutes a Successful Farmer," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1880, p. 214.

[2]W. O. Hughart, "Relations of Railroads to Farmers," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1884, pp. 176-178.

The Michigan Farmer also carried articles favoring the railroads.[1]

The answer to this problem as presented in the institutes was twofold. In the first place, the farmer needed more education and then in the second place, building on this foundation, he could unite and launch out into the political arena. The political interest of the farmer had to go beyond the state level to the federal level since interstate commerce came under federal jurisdiction. In essence, the farmers were told that they made the Congressmen and the Congressmen made the laws respecting railroads. If you do not like the favoritism shown by Congress to railroad monopolies, then elect members to Congress who are concerned with the rights of farmers.

Related to politics was the question of tariffs. Although not much was said about this subject in the institutes compared with other topics, there were a few progressive farmers who were concerned about this problem. Occasionally this came up in the papers read, indicating the beginnings of concern. Why should native American agriculture suffer from foreign imports when legislators with a sympathetic ear to the farm vote could provide money to help the farmer and erect appropriate protective tariffs. The answer lay in having adequate farm

---

[1]Michigan Farmer, January 2, 1876, p. 4. and September 26, 1878, p. 7.

representation in Congress. Farmers must unite and demand their rights through the medium of the ballot box and not be submissive to the domination of unsympathetic politicians.

The problem of patent laws created numerous difficulties for many Michigan farmers. In an article entitled, "Farmers and Politics," The Grange Visitor said:

> . . . the farmers of Michigan have seen Congress for years chaffering over patent laws that in their operation have proved instruments of oppression and robbery and these laws have been neither amended nor repealed.[1]

By the middle of the nineteenth century there were many unscrupulous individuals who would file a patent on a given item and then claim the farmer was infringing on the patent even though it had been in use by the farmer before the patent date. Another variation involved an innocent farmer purchasing an item for farm use from a manufacturer who may have infringed upon a patent. The farmer was then liable for prosecution for violating the law rather than the manufacturer who should have been indicted. Many farmers in Michigan capitulated to this pressure and over the years thousands of dollars were paid to these people. They were organized, had lawyers, went to court and often used bullying tactics to squeeze money out of the farmer.

There were many references in the institutes to these unjust patent laws. One of the specific areas of

---

[1]Grange Visitor, August 1, 1886, p. 4.

concern was the "Lee Patent" which covered a certain type of farm gate. Obviously gates were in common use on the farm and many farmers were accused of violating that patent even though many of them had never heard of the Lee Patent. The Grange Visitor referring to an article in the Detroit Post and Tribune said:

> An illustrated article by Prof. R. C. Carpenter of the State Agricultural College, published in the Detroit Post and Tribune of Nov. 21st, shows conclusively that [sic] the Lee gate patent of October 25th, 1865, covers, and shows also that the common slide gate commonly used on our Michigan farms is not an infrigement on the Lee patent.[1]

The Grange was probably the main farmers' organization fighting this evil and in Michigan maintained a "Defense Fund" to fight patent laws and those unjustly accused.[2] It took time, money and litigation but slowly over a period of years the farmers were vindicated.

There were several other specific problems which had legislative and political implications. The problem of the correct labeling of consumer goods was alluded to frequently in the institutes, especially in reference to butter substitutes such as oleomargarine and butterine. Those items were being sold as butter at a cheaper price. The unsuspecting city dweller thinking he was buying butter was getting a substitute, or at most a mixture

---

[1] Ibid., December 1, 1878, p. 5.

[2] Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1888), p. 25.

of butter and a substitute. Some people realized this, but accepted it because of the cheaper price.

Because of these butter substitutes which were flooding the market, many farmers expressed their concerns in the institutes. A declining butter market would obviously affect their pocketbooks. Papers were read extolling the virtues of pure butter both in taste and its positive effects upon the body. Papers on how to make good butter and keep it fresh were also read, since one approach to the problem was to make such a good product, the consumer would taste the difference and buy it even if it cost a few more cents a pound.

The farmers at the institutes were concerned about the responsibility of the legislature towards the problem since they had the power to enact laws regulating the sale of these substitutes. Legislators were urged to pass laws requiring substitute butter makers to accurately label their products rather than to allow them to continue the practice of mislabeling, which confused the unsuspecting consumer. Some even felt the whole butter industry was in danger unless some kind of legislative action was taken.

Another area of concern in which Dr. R. C. Kedzie was directly involved was the question of lightning rods. In the institutes of 1876, he read a paper exposing lightning rod salesmen who advertised and sold lightning rods to the farmers of Michigan at great financial profit

to themselves. Dr. Kedzie exposed the fraudulent advertising and indicated how a farmer for a small sum could make his own lightning rods. The outgrowth of these lectures was a great deal of scientific discussion with correspondence lasting for months between Dr. Kedzie and those who disagreed with him. He was eventually vindicated and laws were passed regulating the sale of lightning rods in Michigan.

Dr. Kedzie also lectured at institutes and before the state legislature on the dangers of kerosene and lowering the "flash test." The suppliers of kerosene would add paraffin which was not as highly refined and contained a higher percentage of wax. This lowered the flash test and the efficiency of the product. With too much paraffin, the product became dangerous and resulted in explosions and fires. The legislature was urged to pass laws regulating kerosene for the protection of the consumer.

Dr. Kedzie was involved with the analysis of various kinds of wheat, showing the relative nutritional values of each kind. This was especially significant when he analyzed and defended Clawson wheat grown in Michigan, which the milling companies had arbitrarily classified as second class wheat to the detriment of the Michigan farmer. With his scientific analysis in defense of Clawson wheat, he vindicated the Michigan variety which was reinstated to public favor.

The Michigan Farmer in commenting on the contributions of Dr. Kedzie said:

> In fact he has arranged, devised and brought out a new, original, and more perfect method of testing the value of the flour of wheat than any that has before been known, and of such an easy application that any miller or flour dealer, any farmer or wheat grower, any baker or pastry cook, can determine at any time the value of any barrel or parcel of flour as a bread-maker. This is something but not all. There are other services which he has performed for the farmer, the value of which can hardly be estimated by the dollars and cents; but which alone are amply sufficient to repay in the benefits conferred upon the wheat growing interest, all that the legislature has appropriated for the support of the Agricultural College since its commencement in 1857.[1]

Because many of the farmers who attended the institutes fought business monopolies, high taxes and other injustices, one must not jump to the conclusion they wanted to overthrow the American system of government. In fact, the opposite was true with a strong emphasis upon "law and order."

The farmers at the institutes were opposed to the conflicts between capital and labor which resulted in riots and strikes. C. J. Luce, the Worthy Master of the Michigan State Grange, said: "We long to see the antagonism between capital and labor removed by common consent and by an enlightened statesmanship worthy of the nineteenth century.[2]

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, February 5, 1878, p. 4.

[2] Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1886), p. 10.

> If the money expended and time lost in carrying on fruitless strikes had been employed in establishing co-operative enterprises, the benefit to the working men would have been much greater and much more permanent. "Strikes" proceed on the assumption that the employer is always responsible for the unequal distribution of the profits of labor and can in every case rectify it.[1]

Many who presented papers at the institutes felt that much of the labor unrest came from European immigrants who had "socialistic ideas."

> They would take away all rights in property. They would destroy the family relation. They would abolish the laws of inheritance of property. They would, in fact, make earth chaos. They may at times control for a brief period in our large cities, and property and life may be jeopardized, but the stability and permanence of our Government is made secure by the farmers and the honest laboring men, who believe that ownership of property should be protected. The future of our country is safe while the farmers are in the majority.[2]

> The communistic element in America threatens to become, or has become a formidable foe to the land owner. . . . Their object is . . . to ignore all property rights, and destroy the foundation of society. They demand an equal distribution of all property particularly landed property, which causes the movement to be of vital importance to agriculturalists. . . . Should the communists gain the ascendency, the movement would be controlled, not be its philosophic followers, but by the recreant, the scum of society, which would form by far the largest majority of the so-called reformers.[3]

Women

One of the interesting themes found in the institutes involved women. From the very beginning of institutes,

---

[1] Grange Visitor, February, 1877, p. 7.

[2] W. S. Tennant, op. cit., p. 20.

[3] Grange Visitor, Aug. 15, 1878, p. 7.

there were women speakers and over the years, each institute would average two or three female speakers. Subjects assigned to them were more domestic and cultural in nature with a few papers being read on scientific agriculture, such as egg raising and butter making. There were even some speakers, of both sexes, who advocated wives raising chickens, selling butter or some similar endeavor to raise personal money to be used as they wished, apart from the general income and expenses of the farm.

The fact there were women speakers; that women attended institutes along with their husbands and further that the subjugation of women was not found in the institutes, indicated that at least a measure of freedom and respect had been obtained by women in the rural community. This was however, within the generally accepted traditional and domestic roles of women.

The role of the woman in the home was discussed by both men and women. It was believed that the woman was to provide a touch of charm, finesse and social culture in the home. The husband working in the fields expected his wife to fulfill this role, providing a good home environment for the family unit. Essays along this line tended to romanticize and idealize women.

> She is the affectionate and effective teacher of mankind, giving the first and best lessons in religion, in truth and in courage, ever laboring for the elevation

> of the human race, ever being man's best friend and comforter on earth, she gives light and gladness to our labor.[1]

Paralleling this more romantic, traditional view of women, was a more realistic and pragmatic view found in many papers read. An essay read by a local housewife, Mrs. Barwise, at the Rochester Institute in 1876 stressed this latter point of view. While admitting the necessity of home duties, she also urged women to be competent in the area of ordinary business. She felt a wife should be able to draw a note, write a contract, preside at meetings and function as a secretary at meetings. To do these things would make her a more efficient wife and mother.[2]

In regards to voting privileges, some speakers looked forward to the day when women would have the right to vote and saw nothing wrong in working towards that end. There were other speakers who indicated that the wives could use their influence on their husbands, encouraging them to vote for a given candidate. The specific point emphasized in terms of voting influence revolved around the question of temperance. The wives were to urge their husbands to vote for those who believed in total abstinance and farmers rights.

---

[1]Colonel Grosvenor, An address of welcome, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1884, p. 98.

[2]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 188.

The Agricultural College was originally founded for men, but it was not long before the relationship of women to the college became a problem. This was reflected in the institutes, as speaker after speaker urged the college to accept women. Part of the total picture in raising the status of the farmer and keeping the boys on the farm involved the education of the farmers' daughters. The problem was not whether the women should be trained, since there was general agreement on this point, but the problem was one of curriculum and facilities. The curriculum at the Agricultural College was geared to men and there was no dormitory space for women. Women were first admitted early in the history of the college and took selective courses which were applicable to them. However, it was not until the mid 1890's that a unified curriculum geared to the wants and needs of the female student came into being. At that time dormitory facilities were also erected. Women students who did attend the college in the early years had to commute from their nearby homes, or board with faculty members who lived on campus, or with families who lived within traveling distance.[1]

These two problems existed for years and were reflected annually in the institutes as speakers advocated women students and resolutions were passed urging the

---

[1]Beal, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

legislature to appropriate sufficient funds to provide a female course of study and dormitory space. The resolutions committee brought in the following resolution at the close of the St. John's institute in January of 1878:

> Resolved, That the public sentiment of this county demands the admission of female students to the privileges of the Agricultural College of this state, and in compliance with this sentiment, we earnestly urge the legislature and the State Board of Agriculture to make the necessary provision for their admission.[1]

The Grange was very vocal in advocating a program of studies at the Agricultural College for women which included sufficient funds from the legislature to erect a dormitory.

> Your committee is also of opinion that the time has arrived when we should demand that our [sic] daughters of farmers should enjoy the privileges of the College equally with their sons. It is true that they are nominally admitted now, but no accommodation has been provided for them by way of dormitories, or course of study suited to their specific wants.[2]

The concern for women however, was generally assumed to be within the framework of her traditional role in the home as wife, mother and homemaker. In the light of this it is significant to call attention to the prophetic note sounded by a single lady, Miss Miller, at an institute in Lansing in 1877. The emphasis of her paper was ahead of its time and took a later generation to bring to fruition.

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1877, p. 199.

[2] Proceedings of the Eighth Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1881), p. 37.

Her paper on "Farm Life," had as its theme the elevation and freedom of women.

> If one dare step out of the narrow track in which her foremothers have walked for generations, she is instantly dubbed as "strong minded," which, spoken by masculine lips, means everything that is indelicate and unwomanly, and which, with its present significance, is a term of reproach. When mothers cease to teach their daughters that marriage is the chief end and aim of their existence when society can receive a woman out of her teens without a slurring manner, as though she were in some way disgraced by living an independent life, then will women not only be equal, but perhaps excel her brother in mental attainments. Teach her that she as well as he has a noble work to do in this life, then the close of her school days will find her fitted to commence some vocation in earnest rather than to sit down and idly wait for the coming man. Examples of smart and talented women are not lacking to show us that women can become both capable and intellectual if she chooses.[1]

Holding the Youth on the Farm

One of the crucial problems facing the farmer in this period was the exodus from the farm to the city of the young people. This was reflected in the institutes with papers and discussion on how to keep the young people on the farm. This problem was related also to the question of the percentage of college graduates going into farming or related fields, which has already been discussed. Many positive suggestions were made as to how to keep the young people on the farm. One which was repeated in various ways, with a number of manifestations, was to provide a

---

[1]Miss Miller, "Farm Life," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 337.

good home environment so the youth would feel as though the farm was where they ought to be. From their early youth up, the farmers were admonished to make things attractive for them. The home should be well kept both inside and out. If at all possible, a boy should have his own room and he should be allowed to decorate it as he desired. The home should be a happy place with a spirit of love manifested by each one in it. The young people should be made to feel important and wanted. They should be allowed to participate in decisions and allowed to develop an attitude of sharing in farm operations. Obviously, management decisions and sharing would be something that would gradually increase over the years as the child grew and matured.

Institute speakers stressed that parents should avoid negative attitudes and making adverse comments on farming before their children. If children continuously heard the negative aspects of farming, then it could be expected that they would pick up this attitude and leave the farm at their earliest opportunity. A repeated emphasis by the parents on hard work, poor monetary returns, lack of advancement and social status would deter all but the most dedicated children from going into farming.

Speakers also indicated that the home environment should inculcate in the children, the various elements that constituted the agrarian myth. The virtues of nature,

the yeoman farmer, nationalism and kindred themes must be presented to the children. Hopefully, this would encourage many to remain on the farm.

> The difficulty about keeping the boys on the farm is largely a thing of the past, and had its origin in the humdrum methods and general lack of progress, that regarded improvements as innovations and hard unintellectual work as the only thing that could succeed, and made intellectual growth an impossibility, and sneered at "eddication" as something quite unnecessary if not a positive hindrance to the farmer.
>
> How speedily all this has been changing during the lifetime of the present generation. What a wave of intellectual quickening has rolled in upon the entire agricultural community until today the sun shines on no more intelligent class of workers than the farmers of America. They have begun to realize that agriculture has its best rewards not for physical force but for science and good sense.[1]

Related to the use of scientific methods and labor saving devices was the increase in leisure time. This time could profitably be used in taking children to fairs and social gatherings or engaging in some type of recreational activity. It could also be used in pursuing hobbies and other items of interest to the young people. It was significant to note that by general consensus, the best paper read at the Fremont institute in 1887 was authored by a woman and entitled, "How to Amuse the Young People of the Farms" in which she discussed the problems of keeping the young people on the farm.

---

[1]R. G. Baird, "The Agricultural College," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1883, p. 183.

> Evidently, we must improve upon the conditions of farm life, making it pleasant and profitable, if we expect the young to be satisfied with it.
>
> The desire on the part of the children to leave the farm is not the result of viciousness, it is not because the young are unwilling to labor, or are less enduring than their parents, but because they dimly see the great possibility in life, and having outgrown the old ways, they are looking for something better. They are seeking a higher standard of intelligence, a nobler manhood and womanhood, and it will be impossible to make them happy and contented unless we widen the possibilities of rural life.[1]

She then proceeded to stress the need for good books in the home and good schools in every township. Farm life should be made pleasant, intellectual and worth living. In addition to labor, there should be times of rest, recreation and amusement. It was a dishonor to the dignity of man to make him a beast of burden.

> We are not social enough, but I think we are improving. Boating and hunting, picnics and excursions, festivals and fairs, commence now with mosquitoes and end with frost. Let the young people take them in, they are harmless, and remember that what interests the children, should not be beneath the notice of parents.[2]

The Grange

An underlying subject that kept coming to the surface in the institutes, although no papers were specifically devoted to it, was that of the Grange. Speakers from the

---

[1] Mrs. Martha W. Scott, The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887, p. 476.

[2] Ibid., p. 477.

college, the community and special guest speakers all mentioned the Grange as a positive influence for the welfare of the farmer. Many speakers referred to the Grange as supporting legislation favoring the farmers in Michigan. The Grange fought monopolies, patent laws, taxation and other matters of interest to the farmers. It advocated education, libraries and the elevation of the social status of farmers and supported the Agricultural College and farmers' institutes.

In his annual address before the State Grange, J. J. Woodman, the Worthy Master said:

> I need make no apology for referring to the State Agricultural College. Whatever tends to promote the welfare of farmers cannot be without interest to the Grange. We are thankful for the Farmers' Institutes, which the College has inaugurated and carried on the past three winters, for they have served to show the citizens of this state that the work of the professors, their investigations and lectures, have been in the direct line of agriculture. We are informed that the reports containing the papers and discussions of the Institutes are widely read by farmers, and the number printed is inadequate to the demand. Intelligent farmers who have taken pains to become acquainted with the institution, generally admit its usefulness . . . we can all rejoice in the prosperity of the College and help it to a larger success.[1]

The weight of evidence suggested a harmonious relationship between the Grange, the Agricultural College and farmers' institutes during the period under consideration. The first indication of any possible difficulty was seen

---

[1] Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Session of the Michigan State Grange (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1879), pp. 11-12.

in a letter written to the Michigan Farmer which implied that the reason the Michigan State Grange rejected a resolution to expand the institutes was jealousy.

> . . . but have we not reason to believe that the real cause was jealousy on the part of some of the leaders, fearing that if these institutes were held quite generally in the State, attention would be drawn for the time being from the Grange? And so it was whispered that it would not do to ask for State aid, and so popularize these farmers' institutes.[1]

While this may have been the motive for rejecting the resolution presented at the annual meeting of the State Grange, it was stoutly denied by Grange officials in further issues of the Michigan Farmer.[2] The further investigation of this possible problem was outside the scope of this study but in terms of the foundation period of farmers' institutes the relationship appeared to be good and each supported the other.

Experimental Stations

There were references and allusions to the need for an experimental farm from the very beginning of the institutes. Although that term was not used, the concept existed in the thinking of those attending the institutes. They also felt it should be related to the Agricultural College. Part of its function was to engage in experimental studies which would be of practical help to the farmer.

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, January 5, 1889, p. 4.

[2] Ibid., January 12, 1889, p. 4.

The committee on resolutions at the close of the Traverse City institute in 1877 brought in a resolution thanking the Agricultural College professors for their participation and then proposed the following resolution:

> Resolved, That in our opinion a liberal appropriation should be made by the state for the support of a permanent experimental department in horticulture and agriculture, to be attached to the Agricultural College.[1]

Agitation and resolutions increased over the years for some type of an experimental farm or station. At first funding was to be provided by the state, but then the emphasis shifted to federal funding. During the years just prior to the passage of the Hatch Act in 1887, there were many references to federal funds for a State Experimental Station. President Edwin Willits of the Agricultural College was actively involved in lobbying for the passage of the Hatch Act and made several trips to Washington on its behalf before the bill was finally passed. His interest in this act and consequent activities were mentioned in the State Board of Agricultural reports of those years.

The farmer had many problems and much on his mind during the last half of the nineteenth century. The holding of farmers' institutes gave him an opportunity to vent his feelings and air his concerns. This chapter along with the

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 234.

preceeding one, has been concerned with showing what those problems were along with the proposed solutions as set forth in farmers' institutes.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Summary

The previous chapters have considered the rise and development of farmers' institutes in Michigan in relationship to Michigan Agricultural College from 1876 to 1889. The institute movement was a milestone in the history of agricultural education in Michigan and contributed both to the growth of the college and the advancement of the farming profession in Michigan.

An analysis of this phenomenon revealed that it was related to the new education which made its appearance during the middle of the nineteenth century. The main thrust of this type of education was to get away from the old classical curriculum for the elite and provide utilitarian training for the farmer and the mechanic. The emphasis shifted from a study of Latin and Greek to that of the new sciences and their practical application for the benefit of the common man.

The Agricultural College of Michigan became a pioneer in the new education. Its efforts, along with other schools and individuals, to provide education for

the farmer and apply the new sciences to agriculture came to the attention of Justin Morrill, United States Congressman from Vermont who advocated federal support for this type of education. The outgrowth of this was the passage of the Land Grant Act in 1862.

This new philosophy of education included experimentation, research, classroom instruction and finally taking the classroom to the man who could not come to the classroom. This third aspect of the land grant philosophy was lacking at Michigan Agricultural College. Because of various other priorities, the principle of extending the walls of the college beyond East Lansing did not materialize until the establishment of farmers' institutes in 1876.

Michigan Agricultural College faced a crisis just prior to the founding of institutes which was greater than any the college had previously experienced. During the early 1870's the country underwent an economic recession which had implications for the college. The state legislature was not favorably disposed to provide adequate funding for the adolescent college. Also, poor relations and communications existed between the college and the farming community. These factors spelled crisis.

The immediate stimulus for institutes in Michigan was the financial need of the college. It was felt that perhaps if the college went to the farmer in the form of

institutes, the farmer would favorably respond and urge the legislature to provide additional funds for the college.

Following a consideration of the historic background of the institute movement and the specific details leading up to the founding of farmers' institutes in Michigan, this study then analyzed the institutes. There were basically two types of papers read at the institutes. The first was scientific in nature as the speakers sought to apply the findings of the new sciences to the agricultural problems of the farmer. The second was of a liberal nature and related more to the social sciences. While the papers on scientific agriculture were more numerous, those in the social science area in the long run were perhaps more valuable. These were the papers that expressed the feelings and thoughts of the institute participants. They showed many farmers' concerns for social status and economic well-being as these farmers pursued their search for identity in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Those attending the institutes were very much concerned with the subject of education. The nature of the common rural school was an area for discussion at nearly every institute. How to improve the school facilities and upgrade the curriculum and instruction were common topics. It seemed as though they felt education was the key to a better lot in life; that it would enable their children to upgrade their status in life and to climb the social ladder.

There were also papers and discussions relating to the Agricultural College. The college was presented generally as belonging to the farmer and thus to be viewed as "his school" in contrast to the State University which belonged to the professional class of people. Since the Agricultural College belonged to him, he was obliged to support it. This in turn accounted for the many references and resolutions directed to the state legislature requesting adequate funding for the Agricultural College.

Institute papers urged the passage of laws, both on the state and federal levels, which would protect and benefit the farmer. Since the farmers made up the majority of the voters, it was felt the legislators were obligated to fulfill the wishes of the electorate. Two areas of specific concern were monopolies and patent laws.

There was also a strong emphasis on moral and spiritual values in the institutes. The farmer was troubled by the decadence of the city, where his sons often settled. How to keep the boys on the farm and maintain high ethical standards were problems frequently discussed. Closely allied with this was the subject of the home and family which became the theme of many papers.

The Success of the Institute Movement

An analysis of the goals of the institutes revealed that they were basically fulfilled. This would seem to indicate the soundness and success of the institute movement

in Michigan. It was hoped by the proponents of the institutes that this would open up the lines of communication and break down the barriers that apparently existed between the college and many farmers. The Secretary of the Board of Agriculture observed that:

> Among the many good things from the holding of Farmers' Institutes, not the least has been the opportunities which have thus been afforded for the farmers and the professors of the Agricultural College to come together and make each others' acquaintance. Much of the indifference and opposition on the part of farmers which the college has had to struggle against in the past is attributed to the lack of knowledge in regard to what the institution has all along been aiming to do in the interest of agriculture. The farmers have no more devoted friends than the professors of the Agricultural College; they are doing a work which is year by year raising the occupation of farming nearer the height which it is ultimately destined to occupy; and that work has only to be known to be appreciated.[1]

Closely related to the goal of open communication lines and, hopefully a result of this goal, was the desire to stimulate interest in the Agricultural College. Many farmers had been indifferent and hostile to the school. How could this be changed? It was felt the institute movement would accomplish this objective. Gradually the climate in this respect began to improve as a significant number of farmers began to take an interest in the college and looked on it as "our school."

Governor John Bagley in his concluding message as governor said:

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1877, p. 112.

> I am satisfied that the college is in better condition, and doing better work than ever before. It is not only educating the students under its roof but the president and faculty through a system of Farmers' Institutes, held throughout the State are enlisting the good will and sympathy of the people.[1]

Beal, who was one of the members of the original faculty committee and later historian of the college, observed years later that this change took place.[2] K. L. Butterfield who was the first superintendent of institutes in Michigan made the same observation when he said:

> The marked change of attitude towards the college, on the part of the masses of the farmers of Michigan, is a phenomenon so recent that I myself can testify to it. And I am ready to claim for our institutes a very large share in bringing about this change of feeling. The Institutes have brought the college down to the people where they could see its work; they have enabled college professor and practical farmer to face each other on a common platform.[3]

Glidden in commenting on the correlation between the goals of institutes and the fulfillment of these goals observe that:

> The immediate purpose for which Farmers' Institutes were organized in the State, that of bringing college and farm into closer relationship, has been grandly achieved. Leading farmers, those who mold the sentiment of their communities are now in hearty sympathy with agricultural education, and are firm friends of the college.[4]

---

[1] Lansing Republican, January 5, 1877, p. 1.

[2] Beal, op. cit., p. 163.

[3] K. L. Butterfield, "Twenty-Five Years of Institutes," Michigan State Farmers' Institutes, 1901, p. 185.

[4] A. C. Glidden, "Farmers' Institutes," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1892, p. 444.

R. C. Kedzie in an article on institutes written twenty years after their founding said: "The Institutes were a complete success. The meetings were crowded, the farmers full of interest, and the cordial invitation 'come again' showed that the college had done well in this new departure."[1]

Another goal of the institutes was to take the college and scientific agriculture to the farmer. This was probably an indirect and secondary goal, but nevertheless it did exist. It was hoped that in establishing institutes, the college faculty could be of service to the farmer, as well as the farmer being of help to the college.

From the very beginning of the institutes, it was evident many farmers were appreciative of the help received from the Agricultural College. At the close of the first institute held in Allegan, the following resolution was adopted:

> Resolved, That we tender our thanks to Professors Fairchild, Kedzie and Cook and Mr. R. C. Carpenter of the State Agricultural College . . . for the Valuable assistance they have rendered in the successful conduct of this meeting.[2]

The institutes were appreciated by most of the farmers who attended and they readily recognized the value

---

[1] R. C. Kedzie, "The Farmers' Institutes of Michigan," Michigan State Farmers' Institutes, 1896, p. 9.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 121.

of their contacts with the Agricultural College faculty. New ideas were generated and old ideas that had lain dormant were revived. E. R. Williams, in the opening address of the institute in Ionia, reminded the audience that:

> These Farmers' Institutes have been held under the management and control of the State Board of Agriculture since 1875, in various parts of the State, and it is believed to have resulted in great good to the communities in which they have been disseminated, and earnest inquiry aroused, that have gone far to demonstrate theory and establish facts.[1]

K. L. Butterfield in 1901 looking back over a quarter century of institutes observed that:

> . . . It [Institutes] has left in its train a body of practical knowledge and suggestion which has been worth far more than it cost to give it. . . . No one can compute, for he knows isolated cases only, how many thousands have taken away from Institutes practical hints that have saved them all it cost them to attend the institutes, or how many thousands more who did not even attend the institutes have profited by the added knowledge of those who did attend.[2]

In addition to the fulfillment of its goals, the success of the institute movement can be seen in terms of numbers. A reiteration of Kedzie's criteria at this point is significant. Professor Kedzie, when he first presented the plan to the Board of Agriculture, was asked by a board member: "What would you call a success in this new effort?" He answered, "If fifty good farmers will attend the Institute, take part in its exercises, identify themselves with

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881, p. 110.

[2] Butterfield, op. cit., p. 185.

is so fully that they will say at its close, 'We have had a good and helpful meeting and hope to have another next year,' I would call it a success."[1]

It appeared that the various elements of this criteria were fulfilled in the ensuing years. The institute at Allegan, the first year was attended by a "large and deeply interested audience."[2] The institute at Armada held at the same time was also well received.

> The attendance was large--extra seats were placed in the aisles and every available corner of the house. At all the sessions many of the farmers took a lively interest in the discussions and at its close all who had been in attendance expressed themselves as highly pleased with the Institute and its results.[3]

The institutes held at Allegan and Armada were the first two farmers' institutes held in the State of Michigan. Glowing reports came from these first two institutes and were generally representative of institutes held all through the years. The institute held in Hudsonville in 1886 was "filled to overflowing." There were "600 persons in the audience" at the Rochester institute held the same year.[4]

---

[1]R. C. Kedzie, "The Origin of Michigan Institutes," Farmers' Institutes, 1901, p. 179.

[2]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 78.

[3]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 136.

[4]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1886, pp. 1, 3.

> The Shiawassee County Farmers' Institute at Bancroft, March 8th, and 9th was a grand success. About 500 people were in attendance during each session, and universal interest and enthusiasm prevailed.[1]

Prior to the holding of an institute in Leslie, the following item appeared in the local newspaper:

> The number of applications for institutes is usually much beyond the number held, and any town may consider itself very fortunate in getting an institute. Wherever held, they have resulted in doing much good; and in nearly all cases they have been well attended, the number often reaching 600 to 1,000 people.[2]

> The Farmers' Institute which began its session at the opera house in this city last Thursday evening, continuing through Friday, was a grand success, if an observer without agricultural experience is any judge.[3]

Another indication that the institute movement was a success can be seen in the proliferation of local institutes. Because the institutes sponsored by the State Board of Agriculture and the Agricultural College proved to be of such value, the local farmers in many places decided to have another one the following year under local or county auspices. This started following the first year of institutes as indicated in the report of the resolutions committee at the close of the Allegan institute.

> Whereas, it is our opinion that the exercises of this institute have been conducive to the advancement of the interests of agriculture and horticulture among us, therefore be it

---

[1] Michigan Farmer, March 23, 1889, p. 1.

[2] Leslie Local, December 30, 1881, p. 1.

[3] Big Rapids Current, January 22, 1880, p. 3.

> Resolved, That we unite in requesting the Allegan county agricultural society to hold, at least once, in each year, an institute similar to this, and we hereby pledge our support to such an enterprise.[1]

R. C. Kedzie said in 1887: "In almost every place where a Farmers' Institute has been held, a local Institute has been formed and similar meetings have been sustained year by year in such communities."[2]

Ira H. Butterfield, Jr. in a letter to the editor of the Michigan Farmer for February 22, 1881 commented on the value of Farmers' Institutes and observed that, "in most counties where they have been held, the people of that locality are making them an annual institution. . . ."

I. H. Butterfield's son, K. L. Butterfield said:

> Doubtless individual members of the college faculty attended numerous Institutes held under local auspices, but no records of these visits exists. We know too that many local Institutes were held without state speakers. Indeed the college authorities encouraged such independent Institutes; but there are not data that show how many such meetings were held. In 1895, we found not less than twenty-two counties having some sort of Institute organizations.[3]

Although the State Board of Agriculture sponsored only six institutes each year during the foundation period with the exception of 1888 and 1889, when eight and seven

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 121.

[2] R. C. Kedzie, "Report of the Chemical Department," The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887, p. 35.

[3] Butterfield, op. cit., p. 183.

were held, these basic institutes spawned scores and perhaps hundreds of local meetings over the years. This proliferation of local institutes was indicative of the soundness and success of farmers' institutes in the state of Michigan. In fact, the movement grew so rapidly that in 1895 K. L. Butterfield was appointed Superintendent of institutes with an appropriation of $5,000.00 per year at his disposal. This was a marked increase over the original $300.00 per year allotment during the earlier years.[1]

Reasons For The Success of Institutes

There are a number of reasons for the apparent success of farmers' institutes in Michigan. The Michigan institutes had a good foundation. This was discussed in detail in Chapter III with an analysis of the philosophy of institutes. This philosophy was summarized by R. C. Kedzie in 1896.

> In some European countries university professors were sent to lecture to the farmers on the sciences relating to agriculture but the farmers took no part except as listeners. In a few states in our country the agricultural college invited the farmers to come to the college to listen to lectures on scientific subjects; but "the mountain did not come to Mahomet" to any large extent. A system of Farmers' Institutes which went to the farmer, securing from him an equal share in the papers and discussions, so that the farmer could say 'our Institute,' and not 'your meeting,' where the science of the college could strike hands with experience on the farm--such a

---

[1]Beal, op. cit., p. 159.

> system of Farmers' Institutes, permanently maintained, was started by the Michigan Agricultural College.[1]

This was the heart of the philosophy which provided a good foundation for the institutes. There were other features but this was basic. Institutes were directed towards the farm population and were not held in a community unless there was a request from a local farmers' organization. The basic philosophy does not mean, however that the State Board of Agriculture abdicated its position and role in planning and carrying out the institute program. The board and faculty were actively involved in planning and coordination but, yet, in such a way that the farmers did not feel as though they were puppets being controlled and manipulated by a capricious Board of Agriculture. L. H. Bailey, a graduate of the Agricultural College, observed that: "These Institutes will fail of their greatest usefulness unless they cooperate fully with local organizations."[2]

The institutes got off to a good start with good programs, a large attendance and much enthusiasm. Nothing succeeds like success, which was demonstrated over the years as the original momentum established during the

---

[1] R. C. Kedzie, "The Farmers Institutes of Michigan," Michigan State Farmers Institutes, 1896, p. 7.

[2] L. H. Bailey, The State and the Farmer (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1908, p. 171.

first year of institutes increased and picked up year after year.

Another reason for the success of farmers' institutes in Michigan was that each year the institute reports were published. This principle of published reports was stressed by R. C. Kedzie in the public announcement of the institutes in September, 1875.

> One very important object to be secured is to gather up and preserve in permanent form the results of agricultural experience and the views of leading farmers in different parts of the state. For this purpose a shorthand reporter will attend the Institute to make a complete report of all addresses, essays and discussions, to be printed in the annual report of the State Board of Agriculture.[1]

Honorable David Woodman in the opening address given at the Bangor institute commented on the value of the institute reports and said:

> A complete report of each institute, including lectures, essays, and discussions, has been published in the annual report of the State Board of Agriculture; these reports are valuable and should be found in the library of every enterprising farmer; they are replete with useful information, imparted through the lectures of the professors of our college and the experiences of practical farmers. The results of these institutes have been very beneficial. . . .[2]

These reports were read and were profitable to many farmers in the various parts of the state. It would be impossible for every interested farmer to attend an

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 76.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881, p. 137.

institute because of the limited number of institutes and the distance, but he nevertheless could profit and vicariously experience the stimulation of the sessions by reading the reports. Honorable J. Webster Childs in his opening address at the Ypsilanti Institute mentioned the eagerness with which hundreds of farmers read the Annual Reports.[1]

The college faculty generally made a good impression on the minds of those who attended the institutes. This was another reason for the success of the institutes. The farmers involved in the institutes readily acknowledged the help received from the faculty representatives and expressed their appreciation for this help. This general feeling was summed up by General B. D. Pritchard in his concluding remarks at the Allegan institute.

> The farmers are thankful for the new light they received, and were agreeably surprised to find the Agricultural college professors not a set of "starched up" book-worms, but quite unpretending and very practical men, their hands without kid gloves, and their minds well stored with the knowledge necessary for their position. Much more favorable views will henceforth be entertained of our state school of agriculture. . . .[2]

The reports year after year had similar expressions of appreciation for the presentations of the faculty members. It appeared that their knowledge, humility and

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 235.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1875, p. 121.

desire to aid the farmers had made an impact on the minds of those who took the time to attend the institutes.

The institutes were held during the long winter vacation when normally the faculty members would have extra time with their families and for the preparation of new lectures. At one institute, Secretary R. C. Baird of the Board of Agriculture rose to reply to the concluding statement of appreciation of the local moderator and said that although the program involved a vast amount of labor to the professors, "really depriving them of any vacation," it was a labor that was given heartily, and not grudgingly, in the interests of agriculture. The reward came from recognition that their efforts to elevate the farmers' occupation to "the position that it must ultimately occupy" were appreciated.[1] President Abbot in his annual report to the State Board of Agriculture said that "the advantages to the institution of these meetings with the farmers are so great that the faculty would not have given them up. . . ."[2]

The apparent wholesome relationship that existed between the faculty attending the institutes and the farmers helped to break down the barriers, opened up communications between the Agricultural College and the farmers and was

---

[1] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1876, p. 327.

[2] The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1878, p. 46.

one of the significant factors contributing to the success of farmers' institutes in Michigan.

The institute movement in Michigan also helped to meet the social needs of the farmer. L. H. Bailey observed that: "The countryman needs more social life."[1] The farmer's life had a tendency to be one of loneliness and isolation. Work was hard and long. The opportunities to "enjoy life" and meet with fellow farmers were rare. The beginning of institutes in Michigan helped to provide an outlet for this social instinct and was another reason for their success. It was of interest to observe that the concluding resolutions for the institute held in St. Johns made mention of this social factor.

> Resolved, That we cordially endorse the system of "Farmers' Institutes," as exampled by the one now closing, deeming them of high importance and value in helping the progress of our State in the development of its agricultural interests, improving the character and intelligence of our citizens devoted to this occupation, and being of very great social interest [italics mine] to those communities who are so fortunate as to be favored with a Farmers' Institute.[2]

A survey of the institute programs revealed that there was more on the program than papers on farming.[3] Entertainment, which was scarce for the farmer, was provided by means of musical selections, the reading of poetry

---

[1]Bailey, op. cit., p. 64.

[2]The Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1877, p. 199.

[3]See Appendix E.

and humorous recitations. These items would be interspersed throughout the program and most sessions began with some type of a musical number.

Related to the ideas of fellowship and enjoyment was that of inspiration which appeared to be a key element in the institute movement. Many farmers learned from the institutes but they were also inspired by the institutes. K. L. Butterfield observed that;

> I am inclined to believe that the greater value of institutes lies in inspiration rather than in information. . . . It is a common observation that a strong institute stirs and awakens a whole community. And I conceive this to be one of the chief functions and best results of institute work.[1]

Suggested Topics For Future Investigation

In this study, the main thrust has been the rise and development of farmers' institutes in Michigan from 1876 to 1889 and their relationship to the Michigan Agricultural College. In addition, this investigation has revealed other topics which could be explored. This would include a study of farmers' institutes from 1890 to their demise. Since the college established a new course of study, the growth and development of curriculum would be a profitable topic of investigation. Another subject would be the contributions of Michigan Agricultural College to similar colleges in other sections of the nation. It

---

[1]Butterfield, op. cit., p. 185.

was evident that other states drew on the experience and graduates of Michigan Agricultural College in setting up their own institutions for agricultural education. Some well-known graduates of the Agricultural College who found their way to other colleges of agriculture were Kenyon L. Butterfield, Eugene Davenport and Liberty Hyde Bailey. A biographical study of some of the key figures during this period of time would also be helpful. This would include such men as Theophilis C. Abbot, Robert C. Kedzie and William J. Beal. The history and influence of the Grange in Michigan would also bear further investigation. These are possible areas of further research that would make a valuable contribution to the story of higher education in the State of Michigan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE FIRST MORRILL ACT

APPENDIX A

Federal Legislation Concerning Land-Grant Colleges

Act of 1862 Donating Lands for Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts

FIRST MORRILL ACT

AN ACT Donating public lands to the several States and Territories which may provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there be granted to the several States, for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, an amount of public land, to be apportioned to each State a quantity equal to thirty thousand acres for each Senator and Representative in Congress to which the States are respectively entitled by the apportionment under the census of eighteen hundred and sixty; Provided, That no mineral lands shall be selected or purchased; under the provisions of this act.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That the land aforesaid, after being surveyed shall be apportioned the several States in sections or subdivisions of sections, not less than one-quarter of a section; and whenever there are public lands in a State subject to sale at private entry at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, the quantity to which said State shall be entitled shall be selected from such lands within the limits of such State, and the Secretary of the Interior is hereby directed to issue to each of the States in which there is not the quantity of public lands subject to sale at private entry at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre to which said State may be entitled under the provisions of this act land scrip to the amount in acres for the deficiency of its distributive share; said scrip to be sold by said States and the proceeds thereof applied to the uses and purposes prescribed in this act and for no other use or purpose whatsoever: Provided, That in no case shall any State to which land scrip may thus be issued be allowed to locate the same within the limits of any other State or of any Territory of the United States, but their assignees may thus locate said land scrip upon any of the unappropriated lands of the United States subject to sale at private entry at one dollar and twenty-five cents, or less, per acre; And provided further, That not more than one million acres shall be located by such assignees in any

one of the States: And provided further, That no such location shall be made before one year from the passage of this act.

SEC. 3. And be it further enacted, That all the expenses of management, superintendence, and taxes from date of selection of said lands, previous to their sales, and all expenses incurred in the management and disbursement of the moneys which may be received therefrom, shall be paid by the States to which they may belong, out of the treasury of said States, so that the entire proceeds of the sale of said lands shall be applied without any diminution whatever to the purposes hereinafter mentioned.

SEC. 4 (original). And be it further enacted, That all moneys derived from the sale of the lands aforesaid by the States to which the lands are apportioned, and from the sales of land scrip hereinbefore provided for, shall be invested in stocks of the United States or of the States, or some other safe stocks, yielding not less than five per centum upon the par value of said stocks; and that the moneys so invested shall constitute a perpetual fund, the capital of which shall remain forever undiminished (except so far as may be provided in section five of this act), and the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated by each State which may take and claim the benefit of this act, to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.

SEC. 4 (as amended Mar. 3, 1883). That all moneys derived from the sale of lands aforesaid by the States to which lands are apportioned, and from the sales of land scrip hereinbefore provided for, shall be invested in stocks of the United States or of the States, or some other safe stocks; or the same may be invested by the States having no State stocks in any other manner after the legislatures of such States shall have assented thereto and engaged that such funds shall yield not less than five per centum upon the amount so invested and that the principal thereof shall forever remain unimpaired: Provided, That the moneys so invested or loaned shall constitute a perpetual fund the capital of which shall remain forever undiminished (except so far as may be provided in section five of this act) and the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated, by

each State which may take and claim the benefit of this act, to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.

SEC. 5. And be it further enacted, That the grant of land and land scrip hereby authorized shall be made on the following conditions, to which, as well as to the provisions hereinbefore contained, the previous assent of the several States shall be signified by legislative acts:

First. If any portion of the fund invested, as provided by the foregoing section, or any portion of the interest thereon, shall, by any action or contingency, be dismissed or lost, it shall be replaced by the State to which it belongs, so that the capital of the fund shall remain forever undiminished; and the annual interest shall be regularly applied without diminution to the purposes mentioned in the fourth section of this act, except that a sum, not exceeding ten per centum upon the amount received by any State under the provisions of this act, may be expended for the purchase of lands for sites or experimental farms whenever authorized by the respective legislatures and States.

Second. No portion of said fund, nor the interest thereon, shall be applied directly or indirectly, under any pretense whatever, to the purchase, erection, preservation, or repair of any building or buildings.

Third. Any State which may take and claim the benefit of the provisions of this act shall provide, within five years, at least not less than one college, as described in the fourth section of this act, or the grant to such State shall cease; and said State shall be bound to pay the United States the amount received of any lands previously sold and that the title to purchasers under the State shall be valid.

Fourth. An annual report shall be made regarding the progress of each college, recording any improvements and experiments made, with their cost and results, and such other matters, including State industrial and economical statistics, as may be supposed useful, one copy of which shall be transmitted by mail free, by each, to all the other colleges which may be endowed under the provisions

of this act, and also one copy of the Secretary of the Interior.

Fifth. When lands shall be selected from those which have been raised to double the minimum price, in consequence of railroad grants, they shall be computed to the States at the maximum price and the number of acres proportionately diminished.

Sixth. No State while in a condition of rebellion or insurrection against the Government of the United States shall be entitled to the benefit of this act.

Seventh. No State shall be entitled to the benefits of this act unless it shall express its acceptance thereof by its legislature within two years from the date of its approval by the President.

SEC. 6. And be it further enacted, That land scrip issued under the provisions of this act shall not be subject to location until after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three.

SEC. 7. And be it further enacted, That the land officers shall receive the same fees for locating land scrip issued under the provisions of this act as is now allowed for the location of military bounty land warrants under existing laws: Provided, That their maximum compensation shall not be thereby increased.

SEC. 8. And be it further enacted, That the governors of the several States to which scrip shall be issued under this act shall be required to report annually to Congress all sales made of such scrip until the whole shall be disposed of, the amount received for the same, and what appropriation has been made of the proceeds.

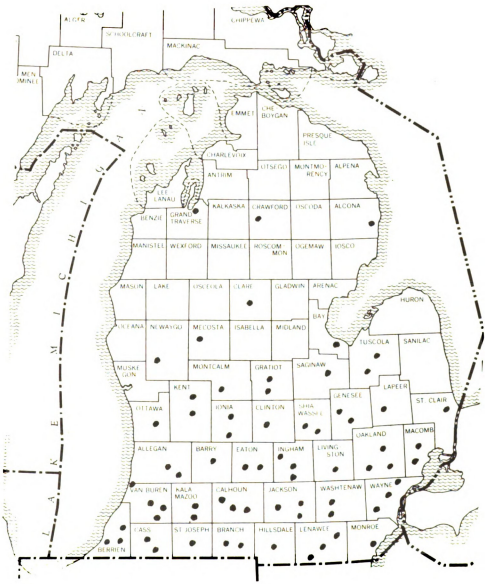
Approved, July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. L. 503).

APPENDIX B

COUNTY OUTLINE MAP OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX B

COUNTY OUTLINE MAP OF MICHIGAN



APPENDIX C

FARMERS' INSTITUTES HELD IN MICHIGAN

APPENDIX C

FARMERS' INSTITUTES HELD IN MICHIGAN

NOTE.—These dates are correct so far as can be discovered. In some cases the printed records are incomplete. We shall be obliged for the correction of any errors.

Date.	Place.	County.
1876.		
Jan. 11-12	Armada	Macomb.
13-14	Rochester	Oakland.
11-12	Allegan	Allegan.
13-14	Decatur	Van Buren.
18-19	Adrian	Lenawee.
20-21	Coldwater	Branch.
1877.		
Jan. 16-17	Greenville	Montcalm.
17-18	Traverse City	G'd Traverse.
23-24	Ypsilanti	Washtenaw.
25-26	Hillsdale	Hillsdale.
29-30	Owosso	Shiawassee.
31-Feb. 1	Lansing	Ingham.
1878.		
Jan. 14 15	Marshall	Calhoun.
17-18	Paw Paw	Van Buren.
21-22	Tecumseh	Lenawee.
24-25	St. Johns	Clinton.
28-29	Saginaw	Saginaw.
31-Feb. 1	Climax	Kalamazoo.
1879.		
Jan. 13-14	Charlotte	Eaton.
16-17	Flint	Genesee.
20-21	Howell	Livingston.
23-24	Centreville	St. Joseph.
28-29	Dowagiac	Cass.
Feb. 4-5	Bay City	Bay.
1880.		
Jan. 13-14	Rockford	Kent.
15-16	Big Rapids	Mecosta.
19-20	Manchester	Washtenaw.
22-23	Romeo	Macomb.
26-27	Buchanan	Berrien.
28-29	Mason	Ingham.
1881.		
Jan. 11-12	Ionia	Ionia.
13-14	Bangor	Van Buren.
18-19	Hudson	Lenawee.
20-21	Battle Creek	Calhoun.
Feb. 1-2	Oxford	Oakland.
3-4	Vassar	Tuscola.
1882.		
Jan. 17-18	Cassopolis	Cass.
19-20	Leslie	Ingham.
24-25	Berlin	Ottawa.
26-27	Greenville	Montcalm.
30-31	Lapeer	Lapeer.
Feb. 2-3	Macon	Lenawee.
1883.		
Jan. 9-10	Hastings	Barry.
16-17	Armada	Macomb.
18-19	Farmington	Oakland.
23-24	Jeddo	St. Clair.
25-26	Trent	Muskegon.
Feb. 7-8	Galesburg	Kalamazoo.
1884.		
Jan. 15-16	Berrien Centre	Berrien.
17-18	Otsego	Allegan.
22-23	Chelsea	Washtenaw.
24-25	Eaton Rapids	Eaton.
28-29	Grand Rapids	Kent.
30-31	Caro	Tuscola.
1885.		
Jan. 12-13	Plymouth	Wayne.
15-16	Flushing	Genesee.
19-20	Albion	Calhoun.
20-21	Paw Paw	Van Buren.
21-22	Manchester	Washtenaw.
22-23	Monroe	Monroe.
1886.		
Feb. 2-3	Hudsonville	Ottawa.
4-5	Rochester	Oakland.
9-10	St. Louis	Gratiot.
11-12	East Saginaw	Saginaw.
15-16	Grass Lake	Jackson.
17-18	Quincy	Branch.
1887.		
Jan. 31-Feb. 1	Grayling	Crawford.
Feb. 3-4	Fremont	Newaygo.
7-8	Hanover	Jackson.
10-11	Three Oaks	Berrien.
14-15	Bancroft	Shiawassee.
16-17	Charlotte	Eaton.
1888.		
Jan. 24-26	South Haven	Van Buren.
26-27	Grand Rapids	Kent.
31-Feb. 1	Owosso	Shiawassee.
Feb. 2-3	Ithaca	Gratiot.
8-9	Harrisville	Alcona.
13-14	Cassopolis	Cass.
14-16	Adrian	Lenawee.
16-17	Tecumseh	Lenawee.
1889.		
Jan. 29-31	Flint	Genesee.
31-Feb. 1	Grayling	Crawford.
Feb. 7-8	Big Rapids	Mecosta.
11-12	Lake Odessa	Ionia.
14-15	Brooklyn	Jackson.
18-19	Centreville	St. Joseph.
20-21	Albion	Calhoun.

APPENDIX D

LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS TO THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

APPENDIX D

LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS TO THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

TABLE No. 16.—*Detailed Statement of Legislative Appropriations to the State Agricultural College.*

Object.	Total.	1891.	1889.	1887.	1885.	1883.	1881.	1879.	1877.	1875.	1873.	1871.	1855-69.
Buildings—													
		Botanical Lab'y ..... $10,000 Heating Apparatus..... 1,950 Greenhouse 4,500	Agricultural Lab'y..... $8,000 Sundry..... 1,800	Howard Terrace..... $10,000 Abbot Hall..... 10,000 Horticultural Lab'y..... 5,000 Mechanical Lab'y ..... 3,000 Bridge, etc. 2,100	Mechanical Lab'y..... $7,800 Veterinary Lab'y..... 5,400 Armory ..... 5,000 One dwelling..... 4,000	Boiler House ..... $5,000 One dwelling..... 3,000	Library..... $25,000 Chemical Lab'y add..... 6,000 Barns 2,775	Botanical Lab'y ..... $6,000 One dwelling 3,000	Wells Hall..... $25,000	Bridge..... $800	Greenhouse ..... $8,000 Three dwellings..... 18,000	Chemical Lab'y $10,000	Williams Hall, 1869.... $30,000
General account	$221,125 00	$16,450 00	$9,800 00	$30,100 00	$22,200 00	$8,000 00	$33,775 00	$9,000 00	$25,000 00	$800 00	$26,000 00	$10,000 00	$30,000 00
Repairs	466,074 10	7,800 00	5,000 00	1,400 00	3,147 00	16,770 00	14,484 00	9,948 80	12,300 00	15,276 00	34,796 00	40,000 00	322,490 50
Library	29,028 60	2,000 00	3,000 00	3,000 00	3,300 00	6,720 00	1,576 00	1,290 00	3,691 60	5,500 00	3,764 00		
Farm	23,055 00	2,100 00	3,000 00	2,515 00	4,810 00	3,125 00	3,000 00	2,000 00	1,110 00	1,000 00	1,440 00		
Garden	26,175 64	570 00	800 00	1,250 00	432 00	3,389 00	4,175 00	4,016 61	2,400 00	1,670 00			
	11,841 00		500 00			1,342 00	3,230 00	2,810 00	947 00	720 00			
Greenhouse	2,765 00	530 00	600 00	340 00	1,295 00								
Botany	5,331 00	500 00	1,100 00	800 00	800 00	2,231 00							
Chemistry	13,055 00	500 00	1,500 00	2,000 00	2,500 00	1,000 00	3,000 00	1,000 00	1,380 00	1,075 00			
Zoology	10,071 00	700 00	1,500 00	1,500 00	1,500 00	1,945 00	1,000 00	800 00	440 00	646 00			
Veterinary	2,586 00	100 00	200 00	200 00	2,086 00								
Mathematics	3,500 00	200 00	475 00	600 00	450 00	700 00	2,020 00	1,020 00	125 00				
Mechanical	15,900 00	1,500 00	3,200 00	4,000 00	5,200 00	1,000 00	300 00						
Steam and water	20,432 00	2,045 00	2,920 00	7,500 00	1,400 00	4,267 00				2,700 00			
Institutes	5,800 00	1,500 00	900 00	1,800 00	600 00	600 00	600 00	600 00	500 00				
Student Labor	32,000 00	8,000 00	8,000 00	8,000 00	8,000 00								
Weather Service	16,935 50		8,350 00	8,585 50									
Sundry	5,960 00	1,400 00	500 00	2,100 00				600 00	600 00	300 00			
Total	$924,896 74	$45,895 00	$48,145 00	$74,792 50	$57,720 00	$51,089 00	$67,164 00	$33,080 24	$48,673 60	$29,787 00	$66,000 00	$50,000 00	$352,490 50

APPENDIX E

REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTE PROGRAM

APPENDIX E

REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTE PROGRAM

BIG RAPIDS INSTITUTE.

BIG RAPIDS INSTITUTE.

PROGRAM.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7 P. M.

Music.....Arranged by Mrs. H. M. Trussell.
Prayer.....Rev. Henry M. Johnson.
Opening Address.....Hon. J. T. Escott.
Response by Hon. Edwin Willits, President of the State Agricultural College.
Good Literature in the Common School and at Home, Prof. E. J. McEwan, Agricultural College.
Music.
A Letter to the Young People.....Mrs. Anna G. Pease.
The Codling Moth and the Plum Curculio, Prof. A. J. Cook, Agricultural College.

FRIDAY, 9 A. M.

Music.....Forest Grange Choir.
Prayer.....Rev. J. W. Miller.
Stump Land Farms.....Hon. Wm. Ladner.
Discussion Opened by Dr. W. J. Beal, Agricultural College.
Forestry.....Dr. W. J. Beal.
Music.
Green Manures.....Joseph Smith.
Silos.....Prof. A. J. Cook, Agricultural College.

1:30 P. M.

Music.....Arranged by L. L. Blair.
Country Roads.....Prof. R. C. Carpenter, Agricultural College.
The Farmer's Account Book.....W. L. Martin.
Woodwork in the College Shops.....H. Campbell, Agricultural College.
Ten minute papers on Profitable farming for this County:
1st. Crops.....W. C. Philleo.
Discussion opened by.....G. W. Warren.
2nd. Cultivation.....Fred Ladner.
Discussion opened by.....John Martin.
3rd. Implements.....W. J. Sloss.
Music.
Advantages Enjoyed by the Farmer's Wife.....Mrs. Joseph Smith.
Discussion opened by.....Mrs. Bennett.

7 P. M.

Music, arranged by.....Messrs. Dawson and Webster.
Health Hints.....Dr. F. J. Groner.
Discussion, opened by Prof. A. J. Cook.
Ten minute papers on The Best Breeds of Stock for this County:
1st. Farm Teams.....Col. N. H. Vincent.
Discussion opened by.....E. P. Shankwiler.
2nd. Cattle.....John R. Snyder.
Discussion opened by.....C. F. Richardson.
3rd. Hogs.....John Dalziel.
Discussion opened by.....A. Vangilder.
Music.
The Farmer, his Cousins and his Friends.....President Willits.
Reports of Committees.
Music.
Discussions limited to five minutes.

APPENDIX F

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION AT THE COLLEGE FOR 1870

APPENDIX F

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION IN 1870

Freshman Year

First Term	Second Term
Algebra	Trigonometry
Geometry	Surveying
History	Practical Agriculture
Bookkeeping	Geology

Sophomore Year

English Literature	Entomology
Botany	Analytical Chemistry
Elementary Chemistry	Botany
	Horticulture

Junior Year

Physics	Physics
Agricultural Chemistry	Meteorology
Inductive Logic	Rhetoric
	Animal Physiology

Senior Year

Zoology	Landscape Gardening
Practical Agriculture	Civil Engineering
Metal Philosophy	Moral Philosophy
Astronomy	Political Economy
French	French

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Books

Beal, W. J. History of the Michigan Agricultural College. Lansing: Agricultural College, 1915.

Blaisdell, Thomas C., ed. Semi-Centennial Celebration of Michigan State Agricultural College. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908.

Bliss, R. K., ed. The Spirit and Philosophy of Extension Work. Washington: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1952.

Grob, Gerald N., and Beck, Robert N., ed. American Ideas. New York: The Free Press, 1963.

Gross, Carl H., and Chandler, Charles C., ed. The History of American Education Through Readings. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964.

Hofstadter, Richard, ed. Great Issues in American History. New York: Vintage Books, 1958.

_____, and Smith, Wilson. American Higher Education: A Documentary History. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Jefferson, Thomas. Notes on the State of Virginia. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

McLaughlin, Andrew C., ed. The History of Higher Education in Michigan. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891.

Articles and Periodicals

Abbot, Theophilus C. Agricultural Education. An address given before the House of Representatives March 4, 1875.

Abbot, Theophilus C. "The Michigan Agricultural College." Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections. Vol. VI, 1883.

Davenport, Eugene. The Spirit of Land-Grant Institutions. Address delivered at the Forty-fifth Annual Convention of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Chicago, November 16, 1931.

James, Edmund J. "The Origin of the Land Grant Act of 1862 and Some Accounts of its Author, Jonathan B. Turner." University Studies. Vol. IV, No. I, Urbana: University Press, 1910.

Turner, Jonathan B. "A Plan for An Industrial University for the State of Illinois." Proceedings of the Society for the Promotion of Agricultural Science, 1907, XXVIII.

Reports, Proceedings and Transactions

Michigan. State Agricultural Society. Transactions. 1849-1859.

Michigan. State Board of Agriculture. The Annual Report of the Secretary. 1861-1880, 1883-1920.

Michigan. State Board of Agriculture. The Biennial Report of the Secretary. 1881-1882.

Michigan. Superintendent of Public Instruction. Annual Reports. 1858-1859.

The Michigan State Grange. Proceedings of the Annual Sessions of the Michigan State Grange. Published annually, 1874-1889.

Government Publications

Michigan. Constitution (1850).

Michigan. Legislature. Joint Documents of the Legislature of the State of Michigan. Lansing: R. W. Ingals, State Printers, 1850-52, 1854, 1856, 1858-60, 1875-80.

Michigan. Legislature. Journal of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Michigan, 1850. Lansing: R. W. Ingals, State Printers, 1850.

Michigan Manual. Lansing: Hosmer & Kerr, Printer to the State, 1861.

U.S. Constitution.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Remarks of Honorable Justin S. Morrill of Vermont on the Bill Granting Lands for Agricultural Colleges. 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1858. Congressional Record XXV, Part 3, 1694.

Local and Farm Papers

Adrian Daily Times and Expositor. Published daily, January 3-31, 1876.

Allegan Journal. Published weekly, November 20, 1875--January 29, 1876.

Bay City Observer. Published weekly, January 2--February 27, 1879.

Big Rapids Current. Published weekly, January 1-29, 1880.

Cassopolis Vigilant. Published weekly, December 29, 1881--January 26, 1882, January 5--March 8, 1888.

Detroit Free Press. Published daily, December 12, 1875--January 30, 1876.

Flint Daily News. Published daily, January 21-31, 1889.

Grand Rapids Eagle. Published daily, January 25-31, 1884.

Grange Visitor. Published semi-monthly at Schoolcraft, Michigan, 1875-1890.

Greenville Independent. Published weekly, January 4-25, 1877.

Ionia Standard. Published weekly, December 23, 1880--January 27, 1881.

Lansing Republican. Published semi-weekly, January 2--February 6, 1877.

Leslie Local. Published weekly, December 30, 1881--February 3, 1882.

Michigan Farmer. Published weekly at Detroit, Michigan, 1875-1890.

Monroe Democrat. Published weekly, January 1--February 5, 1885.

Owosso Weekly Press. Published weekly, January 3--February 7, 1877.

Saginaw Daily Courier. Published daily, January 3-31, 1878.

Other Sources

Abbot, Theophilis C. Diary. n.d. I volume, 1855-1885.

Michigan. State Board of Agriculture. Minutes of Meetings. 1862-1890.

Michigan State Farmers' Institutes. A compilation of Institute Bulletins. Published annually for years 1894-1915. Agricultural College.

Michigan State University. Faculty Meetings (Academic Senate). Records, 1857-1890.

Secondary Sources

Adams, James Truslow. "The March of Democracy." Vol. I. The Rise of the Union. New York: Scribner's, 1932.

_____. "The March of Democracy." Vol. II. A Half Century of Expansion. New York: Scribner's, 1932.

_____. "The March of Democracy." Vol. III. Civil War and Aftermath. New York: Scribner's, 1932.

Bailey, L. H. The State and the Farmer. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1908.

_____. The Training of Farmers. New York: The Century Co., 1909.

_____. Annals of Horticulture. New York: Rural Publishing Co., 1891.

Bailyn, Bernard. Education in the Forming of American Society. University of North Carolina Press, 1960.

Brunner, Edmund, and Yang, E. Hsin Pao. Rural American and the Extension Service. New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 1949.

Butts, R. Freeman. The College Charts its Course. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939.

Callahan, Raymond E. An Introduction to Education in American Society. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960.

Chase Lew Allen. Rural Michigan. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1922.

Commager, Henry Steele, ed. The Era of Reform, 1830-1860. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1960.

Cremin, Lawrence. The Transformation of the School. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

Curti, Merle. The Social Ideas of American Educators. New York: Scribner's, 1935.

_____. The Growth of American Thought. New York: Harper, 1951.

Davis, David Brion, ed. Ante-Bellum Reform. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

Drake, William E. The American School in Transition. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955.

Dunbar, Willis. The Michigan Record in Higher Education. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963.

Eddy, Edward Danforth, Jr. Colleges for Our Land and Time. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.

Eklund, Lowell R. "A Century of Service: An Historical Analysis of the Service Function of a State University." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1956.

Fine, Benjamin. Democratic Education. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1945.

Gardner, John W. Self-Renewal, The Individual and the Innovative Society. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965.

Gras, Norman. A History of Agriculture in Europe and America. New York: F. S. Croft & Company, 1940.

Higham, John, ed. The Reconstruction of American History. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962.

Hofstadter, Richard, and Hardy, C. DeWitt. The Development and Scope of Higher Education. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952.

Hofstadter, Richard. The Age of Reform from Bryan to FDR. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960.

Horton, Rod W., and Edwards, Herbert W. Backgrounds of American Literary Thought. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967.

James, George Francis, ed. Handbook of University Extension. Philadelphia: American Society for the Extension of University Teaching, 1893.

Jameson, J. Franklin. The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926.

Katz, Michael B. The Irony of Early School Reform. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Kelsey, Lincoln D., and Hearne, Cannon C. Cooperative Extension Work. Ithaca, New York: Comstock Publishing Co., 1949.

Knight, Edgar W. Education in the United States. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1951.

Kuhn, Madison. Michigan State the First Hundred Years. East Lansing: MSU Press, 1955.

Locke, Louis G; Gibson, William M.; and Arms, George, ed. Toward Liberal Education. New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1957.

Lord, Russell. The Agrarian Revival: A Study of Agricultural Extension. New York: American Association for Adult Education in the United States, 1939.

Mark, Leo. The Machine in the Garden. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Meyer, Adolphe E. An Educational History of the American People. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967.

Meyers, Marvin. The Jacksonian Persuasion. Stanford: University Press, 1957.

Miller, Douglas T. The Birth of Modern America. New York: Pegasus, 1970.

Miller, William. A New History of the United States. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1962.

Morgan, Edmund, S. The Birth of the Republic 1763-89. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956.

Nevins, Allan. The Origins of the Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities: A Brief Account of the Morrill Act of 1862 and its Results. Washington, D.C.: Civil War Centennial Commission, 1962.

_____, and Steele, Henry Commager. A Short History of the United States. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966.

Nock, Albert Jay. Jefferson. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1926.

Nye, Russel Blaine. The Cultural Life of the New Nation. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960.

Parker, William Belmont. The Life & Services of Justin Smith Morrill. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

Potter, Robert E. The Stream of American Education. New York: American Book Company, 1967.

Reisner, Edward H. Nationalism and Education Since 1789: A Social & Political History of Modern Education. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1922.

Rippa, Alexander. Education in a Free Society: An American History. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1967.

Rogers, Walter P. Andrew D. White and the Modern University. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1942.

Ross, Earle D. Democracy's College. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College Press, 1942.

_____. "The Father of the Land-Grant College." Agricultural History, XII (April, 1938), pp. 151-186.

Rudolph, Frederick. The American College and University. New York: Vintage Books, 1962.

Sagendorf, Kent. Michigan, The Story of the University. New York: H. T. Dutton & Company, 1948.

Scott, Roy V. The Reluctant Farmer. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970.

Smith, Clarence Beaman, and Wilson, Meredith Chester. The Agricultural Extension System of the United States. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1930.

Smith, Henry Nash. Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth. New York: Vintage Books, 1950.

Strout, Cushing, ed. Intellectual History in America. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968.

Tocquville, Alexis de. Democracy in America. Edited and Abridged by Richard D. Heffner. New York: A Mentor Book, 1956.

True, Alfred Charles. A History of Agricultural Experimentation and Research in the United States 1607-1925. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937.

_____. A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785-1923. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928.

_____. A History of Agricultural Education in the U.S. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1929.

Trump, Fred. The Grange in Michigan. Grand Rapids: By the Author, 1963.

Ward, John William. Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.

Welter, Rush. Popular Education & Democratic Thought in America. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.