

BOARD OF TRADE AND ITS RELATION TO AGRICULTURE

Address By Superintendent Blair at United Boards of Trade Meeting.

It has been said that prosperous country districts means prosperous villages, towns and cities. This being the case the Board of Trade in our various towns should be as interested in assisting in the development of the country as they are of the towns. It seems desirable that the business men of our towns should give more consideration to rural problems than they do.

It is quite natural for a man living in a town to consider those things which have to do with the town only. It is well however that we should place ourselves in the position of the man in the country, for by doing this we may see how we can assist in the development of our towns.

In the first place the man in the country is not making the gross returns on his investment that the business or manufacturing men of the towns do. True the expenses of management on the farm is not as great as is the town business and it is well that it is not, for did our country people live at the same rate of expense of our town people there would not be a margin of profit on the best managed farm. To make my point clear the gross income per year from our farms is \$15.00 for every \$100.00 invested whereas our manufacturing industries have a gross return of \$93.00 for every \$100.00 invested. The business man of our towns have probably about \$50.00 gross return from every \$100.00 invested. Now is it a wonder that the boy leaves the farm for the town where the opportunity for gross returns on the investment is so much greater.

Is it a wonder that the country man who has just as good business sense as the average town man when driving into town, meeting many well dressed ladies and young men, inwardly grumbles, that his boy, his wife and he himself has to work all day long 365 days in the year to make enough to dress even presentably and to get the necessary supplies for his home. He feels he is not receiving a square deal. He feels that there is something wrong some place.

Now I am prepared to admit that in many cases there is lack of organization and best directed effort on some farms, but no class of people are making the sacrifices at the present time that the farmers are, and no class of people work as hard for the cash they get and enjoy less luxuries than the farmer.

Now do you business men think you enjoy the confidence of the farmer. I will tell you frankly that in many cases you do not, and because that is so is not entirely your fault. It is a fact that the more one works and thinks by himself the less confidence he has in his neighbor. The successful farmer is very much to himself for he must spend the greater part of his time on the farm. You can gain the confidence of the country people by having confidence in them. The sharp practice so very often manifest in country deals has grown out of what the farmer has considered a sharp deal practiced by some town business man on him and he is trying to "get back." There is a decided lack of confidence in each other. What is the remedy? First that our town people should show a willingness to go half way in requiring less profits on their transactions. Second, gradually do away with the credit system which will enable you to give every man a square deal. Third, encourage co-operation in lessening the cost of selling and in some cases buying. It is a wrong idea held by some business men that farmers should not co-operate. The more the town business man kicks against this principle the poorer will the town become. There is no justice in the idea that sev-

eral men should get what the farmer should have from his toil. The sooner we realize the justice in the claim that the farmer should have every last dollar in the produce he is growing the sooner will our towns become prosperous. Give the farmer a square deal and you will gain his confidence. If you oblige him for a personal gain you will not retain his confidence.

As already stated the farmers occupation naturally develops an individualism. This should be corrected, co-operation in selling is the first step but this does not go far enough. Co-operation in the development of community interests is of just as vast importance. The building up of social intercourse, and class spirit should be encouraged. This enables effective organization for country development. The town can help in showing the way to a good clean useful citizenship.

The town therefore is supposed to lead the way. Are our towns doing this? Towns like individuals are hard to regulate, but the community of individuals can be regulated, just as a household community is regulated; by a desire on the part of all in the household to do what is best for the whole rather than for the individual. The point is, develop the towns for the people as a community rather than for individuals in the town. This spirit then will reflect to the rural districts and you will inspire confidence.

The whole idea of organization in our rural districts is to bring about true appreciation of what one man in that district owes to another. That is we should in all our efforts in country development consider the interests of the country as a whole rather than the individual. Unfortunately too many of our country people consider their own rather than the community interests and this as already pointed out is likely to happen as a result of their environment.

The first step for efficiency in taking up industrial pursuits is to learn how to do the work it is planned to do in the quickest most economical and efficient manner. The great reason why the manufacturer has to pay large wages to his help is owing to this fact. Therefore, why should a country boy, without any training in his work beyond what he has been able to pick up without any great development of reasoning power and by simply following in the line of least resistance, expect to receive for his labors the same as an efficient workman.

Training into ability to do is at the foundation of our prosperity as a town or country. This training can be brought about only by agitation through community meetings, the press and other similar means.

Economy in the use of food products is absolutely necessary yet are our town even abreast of the times in placing within reach of the rising generation information as to the true values of various food products and their preparation for consumption. Why should our town boys and girls be trained in domestic science and not our country girls. I hear some one say domestic science is no good and is only an additional tax. To that one let me say that there is enough provision misapplied in our towns, through our people not having a proper conception of the science, to pay for a thorough domestic science course in rural as well as the town schools. Let me ask the people of even this town, are you training your girls into ability to do what will make of them wives of useful citizens?

Is the country boy getting the training he should get? Have you any responsibility in seeing that he does get it? As already pointed out in very many cases little support is given to the agitation to better conditions in rural districts in the matter of education related to agriculture. You cannot afford as members of a Board of Trade to let an opportunity to push along agricultural education go

by without your assistance. Probably in the towns like in the country one half our people do not see any value in an Experimental Farm, except that it spreads so much money out amongst our people. That this view is held is a fact and the one who holds this view is a living proof of the need of agitation to remedy the prevalent notion that we have done all we should to advance agricultural education in rural districts. The one who makes a study of agricultural problems is the most benefited by such institutions, the one who thinks he knows within himself all that is to be known will not benefit so much.

Active participation in an agitation to meet the needs of the farmer can usually best be done through the press. This can be followed by every man having a good word to say in favor of anything that tends to organize or advance community interests. We may assist by helping to organize so that agricultural lectures be given in the community on well defined subjects.

To illustrate, a movement is on foot to encourage sheep raising in our counties. In place of keeping 8000 sheep in this county, about two to each farm, we should have at least double that number. The Board of Trade is willing to assist in securing a competent man to lecture on sheep husbandry provided the man in country districts can see their way clear to co-operate to the extent of working up a sufficient number of interested individuals to make a meeting in that section worth while. If as is the case with some individuals there is a general feeling that this agitation is for the betterment of the Towns rather than the rural community you can quite readily see that the effort will not amount to much, but if the individuals of a rural community consider their interests they will become interested. True there are many farms not suitable for sheep raising, but the man in such a position should endeavor to encourage the men who has suitable surroundings and thereby develop community interest rather than individual interest.

Now it can be said that this work quite properly devolves upon agricultural societies, and such is the case. The Board of Trade should co-operate with the Agricultural Organization in the counties and give them such assistance as may be desirable.

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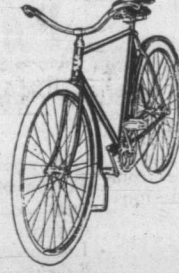
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Expectoration.

It is not very pleasant—yet oftentimes very necessary—to call attention to the bad habit (in which so many people indulge) of expectorating on the floors of public buildings, offices, factories, sidewalks, etc. In this enlightened age it should be almost unnecessary to point out that such actions endanger the public health. Moreover, the habit is disgusting and unsightly. It is a bad example to the younger generation: you will often see small boys imitating such habits of older men—with the air of accomplishing some manly art. Of course, there are times when expectoration is very necessary. But why not attend such functions in a decent manner, having respect for the welfare and sensitiveness of other people?

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Kaiser's Motor Car Destroyed By a Shell.

London, April 12—The German Emperor is at Potsdam, recovering from nervous shock as the result of the explosion of a shell at Verdun which destroyed the imperial motor car and killed several officers, says a Rome despatch to the Daily Telegraph, quoting Swiss reports. Emperor William was unhurt, the despatch adds.

PARLIAMENT TO ADJOURN WEDNESDAY

Ottawa, April 11—As indicated a few days ago parliament will not prorogue before Easter, and it will probably be the end of it before the business of the session has been completed. The House will adjourn next Wednesday until the following Tuesday for Easter.

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