

CHAPTER I

MOVEMENTS LEADING UP TO THE CREATION OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE, 1842-1901

The Extension Service of Iowa State College came into being officially when the first extension act was passed by the State Legislature in April, 1906. Since that time the Service has developed into a large and complex organization that reaches thousands of people daily and extends into every county of the state. It has written its history large during its twenty-seven years of official life.

Extension activities in Iowa had their real beginning, however, far back of the year 1906 at which time the work was officially organized as one of the three major functions of Iowa State College. Activities in adult education similar to present extension work came into existence in Iowa before the creation of the State College and even before the state was admitted into the Union. The present Extension Service is a logical outgrowth of many activities and events, extending over a long period of time, but all representing an attempt on the part of farmers and their wives to set up ways and means of providing themselves with up-to-date scientific information.

1. COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND FAIRS

In the eighteenth century much interest was awakened in improving agriculture in Europe and America. This was due largely to discoveries by scientists, especially chemists, which could be applied to the improvement of soils, plants, and animals. Societies were formed in which farmers and scientists worked together to improve agriculture. They held meetings to discuss important problems and they published and distributed reports of their proceedings. The first agricultural societies in the United States are said to have been formed at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Charleston, South Carolina, in 1785. George Washington and Benjamin Franklin were members of the Philadelphia society. (5, p. 71.)

Iowa was very young when her inhabitants first manifested an interest in improving agriculture. Twelve years after the first

settlers moved into the abandoned French settlement at Dubuque and four years before the Iowa Territory became a state, Van Buren County organized an agricultural society and held a county fair, October 12, 1842. There was a speech dealing with the needs of agriculture. Farmers exchanged experiences and ideas with other farmers and the ladies served dinner for all. (22, pp. 410-424.)

During the 50's the county-fair idea spread rapidly among the more populated counties of the state. In the year 1859, county agricultural societies held sixty county fairs and one district fair. Their objectives are variously stated: "To raise the standard of agriculture (stock especially);" "to improve agricultural mechanism;" "to stimulate pride and effort of farmers;" "to improve all industrial pursuits." One report (23, p. 262) states that "an effort was being made to establish an agricultural library."

A feature of these pioneer fairs was the women's exhibit. Articles of domestic manufacture were a part of each fair. Prizes were offered the women for products of the home including fancy needlework and hand paintings. One chronicler lamented that the agricultural exhibits of the men were inferior to the exhibits of the women.

Addresses by local society members or by outside persons always formed a part of the fair program. Often meetings were held in the evenings to discuss topics pertaining to agriculture. Quarterly meetings were held by some county agricultural societies to carry on such discussions throughout the year. In other counties mention is made of "farmers clubs" as being instrumental in carrying on the education of the farmer. (22, p. 390.)

Referring to the value of county fairs to the people of that early time, John R. Schaffer, Secretary of the Iowa State Agricultural Society, said (26, p. 42): "The facts show that people desire information and instruction and recreation, and are willing to pay a just price for them."

Thus it is evident that very early in the history of the state, farmers and their wives felt a need for training in agriculture and in the practices of the home. The county agricultural society and the county fair were first steps leading to the present Extension Service. They provided, in a simple way, adult education in agriculture and home economics.

2. THE IOWA STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY AND THE STATE FAIR

A logical outgrowth of the county agricultural societies was the Iowa State Agricultural Society. The State Agricultural Society at once became the spokesman of people interested in a state agricultural college, but its chief project was sponsoring the Iowa State Fair.

The Iowa State Agricultural Society was organized December 28, 1853, at Fairfield, Iowa, by representatives from the following five counties: Henry, Jefferson, Lee, Van Buren, and Wapello. To the Jefferson County Agricultural Society belongs the credit of initiating the enterprise. The directors of the newly formed state society voted to hold the first annual state fair at Fairfield in October, 1854. (25, p. 485.)

For the first 25 years of its existence, the Iowa State Fair was itinerant, moving from one county to another. This type was well suited to those times of inadequate transportation facilities and remote rural settlements. These pioneer fairs were primarily instructional and only incidentally recreational. In many ways they were more like a farmers' institute or a farm and home week than a modern state fair. Evening sessions held in a city hall or church were regular features. Farmers and agricultural experts exchanged ideas; they discussed best breeds of animals; varieties of grains, grasses, fruits, and vegetables; systems of rotation; uses of machinery; and marketing opportunities. (60, pp. 290-291.)

These fairs were usually opened by the president of the State Agricultural Society with a talk, generally of considerable length, reviewing existing economic and social conditions in the state. This talk was sometimes supplemented by formal addresses by visiting celebrities. The serious purpose of the spectators and their thirst for information were conclusively demonstrated by the patient and enthusiastic hearing which they gave to these lengthy talks. (60.)

In order to meet financial obligations the State Agricultural Society asked for and received state aid from the Fifth General Assembly which convened in December, 1854. The society published voluminous annual reports from 1853 until 1899. In 1900 it was superseded, and the most of its functions were taken over and enlarged upon, by the newly created State Department of Agriculture.

The state fair was permanently located at Des Moines in 1879 and has since that time taken on new character in keeping with the times. The physical equipment has increased greatly, the number and scope of attractions have multiplied, recreation and sporting events have become prominent features.

In his discussion of the pioneer period of the Iowa State Fairs, Dr. Ross pointed out their educational nature as follows (60, pp. 288-289): "In the pioneer years down to the seventies while the organization and activities of the annual exhibitions remained simple and primitive, the agricultural fair probably was relatively more influential than at any other time. . . . They were rudimentary colleges, experiment stations, and extension demonstrators. Rather incidentally, they also anticipated some of the recreational features that have been emphasized by the Grange and the Farm Bureau."

The Iowa State Agricultural Society and the Iowa State Fair represent another step leading to the development of the present Extension Service. The education of the adult farmer and his wife was organized on a state-wide basis and received tax money for its support.

3. IOWA STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

The county and state agricultural societies, through the media of their several fairs, had been rendering for years valuable educational services to the adult farmers and homemakers of the state. Some of the people, however, felt a need for specialized instruction in fruit growing, flower raising, gardening, and tree culture. Consequently (11, pp. 282-283):

"In May, 1866, Mark Miller, editor of the *Iowa Homestead*, issued a call in that weekly agricultural journal for a meeting of persons interested in fruit growing, forestry and gardening to meet at Iowa City on the 26th of June for the purpose of organizing a state association for the promotion of horticulture. Twenty-eight persons assembled at the time and organized the Iowa State Horticultural Society. . . . The object of the society was stated to be 'the promotion and encouragement of horticulture and arboriculture by collection and dissemination of correct information concerning the cultivation of such fruits, flowers and trees as are adapted to the soil and climate of Iowa.' "

Annual meetings and exhibitions of fruits, etc., have been held by the society ever since. Its transactions, published by the state, containing the experiences of the leading fruit growers and horticulturists of Iowa and other states, furnished valuable

information on these subjects. The General Assembly assisted with appropriations for expenses. Space in the State House was furnished for offices and for the association library.

The Iowa State Horticultural Society later expanded its sphere of influence and has now affiliated with it eight related societies as follows: (a) Iowa Beekeepers' Association; (b) Iowa Fruit Growers' Association (commercial); (c) Society of Iowa Florists (also commercial); (d) Iowa Nurserymen's Association (also commercial); (e) Iowa Peony and Iris Society; (f) Iowa Gladiolus Society; (g) Iowa Rose Society.

The Iowa State Horticultural Society was the forerunner of a number of tax-supported organizations of similar nature which came much later. Some of these are: Iowa State Dairy Association, Iowa Corn and Small Grain Growers' Association, Iowa Beef Producers' Association, and Iowa Draft Horse Producers' Association.

The formation of the Iowa State Horticultural Society is another indication of the interest which the pioneers of Iowa had in adult education and represents another attempt to set up an agency for supplying useful information.

4. AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

A few eastern universities, notably Columbia and Yale, were giving popular lectures to farmers from time to time on agriculture, agricultural chemistry, and soils, prior to 1850. (62, p. 28.)

The University of Iowa was not to be outdone by these older institutions, for in its *First Circular*, dated September 1, 1855, was a description of its work in agricultural chemistry as follows (52, p. 7):

"Department of Chemistry, under care of Professor Josiah D. Whitney, to embrace Analytical and Elementary Chemistry, both inorganic and organic, with its application to agriculture and the arts."

Likewise in the first catalogue of the University, dated 1856-57 (51, p. 42), the Department of Chemistry lists among its courses to be taught such subjects as "Imponderable Agents," "General Principles of Chemical Philosophy," and "Applications of Chemistry to Agriculture and the Arts." In the catalogue of 1864-65, agricultural chemistry is still announced as follows: "Third Term—Analysis of Soils and Manures, and Agricultural Chemistry."

The Medical Department of the Iowa University, then located at Keokuk, offered work in agricultural chemistry which was more of an extension nature. A local newspaper, *The Daily Gate City* (8), ran the following announcement in its issue dated December 25, 1855:

“IMPORTANT TO FARMERS

“We publish the following notice with pleasure, and suggest to the papers throughout the State to do likewise, as we do gratis for the benefit of our own subscribers. It is a matter of public interest every way, and the fee is so small as to afford no profit to the Institution.

“Agricultural Notice

“The Faculty of the ‘Medical Department of the Iowa University’ have made arrangements for a course of Lectures on Agricultural Chemistry by Wells R. Marsh, M. D., Prof. of Chemistry in the Institution. Desirous of making this branch of the State University as useful as possible, the Faculty are gratified in being able to present the advantages of this course to those who may be desirous of availing themselves of them. There is no department which can be more benefitted by the application of scientific analysis or systematic experience than that of Agriculture. The farmer who conducts his farm in accordance with the principles disclosed by Agricultural Chemistry, not only does so with less labor but also with largely increased benefits.

“We hope to see a large class of Agriculturists of the State in attendance upon these lectures, for we are assured they will be greatly benefitted. Dr. Marsh is a scientific chemist, and as the fees are but nominal and it is the season of the year when the farmer can best leave his home, we regard the proposition as quite a desideratum, and such as is seldom presented.

“Those in attendance upon these lectures will be permitted, should they desire it, to attend gratuitously any or all of the Medical Lectures during their stay.

“The course will consist of twenty lectures, one each day, commencing on Tuesday evening the 22d of January, 1856.

“The fee is \$3 for the whole course, which is only the ordinary matriculation fee.

“By order of the Faculty.

“J. C. Hughes, M. D., Dean.”

Dr. F. C. Ensign, who is an authority on the history of education in Iowa, has very aptly said, “I think that further research

might reveal the fact that there was expectation of the development of agriculture in connection with the University. This expectation, doubtless, continued and rose to white heat about the time of the passage of the Morrill Act, 1862, . . . then it was decided in this particular state to establish a college of agriculture separate from the University, and the later development is a part of well-known history."

5. ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF IOWA STATE COLLEGE

That the pioneers of Iowa were knowledge-hungry as well as land-hungry is evidenced by their constant endeavor to set up more adequate agencies for supplying themselves with the information which they felt they needed.

As early as 1848, only two years after Iowa became a state, the General Assembly "Memorialized Congress for the donation of the site and buildings of Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek County; together with two sections of land, for the establishment of an agricultural college." (29, p. 5.)

The State Agricultural Society became the spokesman of the people interested in such a college.¹ Governor James W. Grimes in his inaugural address of December 9, 1854, gave expression to the growing sentiment in favor of a state school of applied science. The people of the state were also interested. Many petitions and memorials were presented to the legislature urging the establishment of a school where information regarding farming pursuits could be obtained. (29, p. 5.)

a. Legislation Providing for the College

A response to the demand for an agricultural college was reflected in the Sixth Iowa General Assembly, 1856, in the form of a bill to create such an institution. The bill was prepared by Representative R. A. Richardson, of Fayette County, but it met with little support. Two years later Representatives Richardson, Benjamin F. Gue, and Ed. Wright revised the bill and sponsored it through hostile committees and much opposition to a successful passage. (6, pp. 401-403.)

Gue was chosen to speak for the bill. His winning argument was "that all classes should receive equal privileges from the law-making power . . ." and that the state should appropriate

¹The president of the Iowa Agricultural Society was ex-officio a member of the first Board of Trustees of the College.

money to provide for the higher education of the industrial classes the same as it had done for the learned professions. A threat to call for a record vote and to carry the issue to the people of the state, seems to have had a marked influence in reversing the stand taken by powerful committees against the proposal. (6, p. 403.)

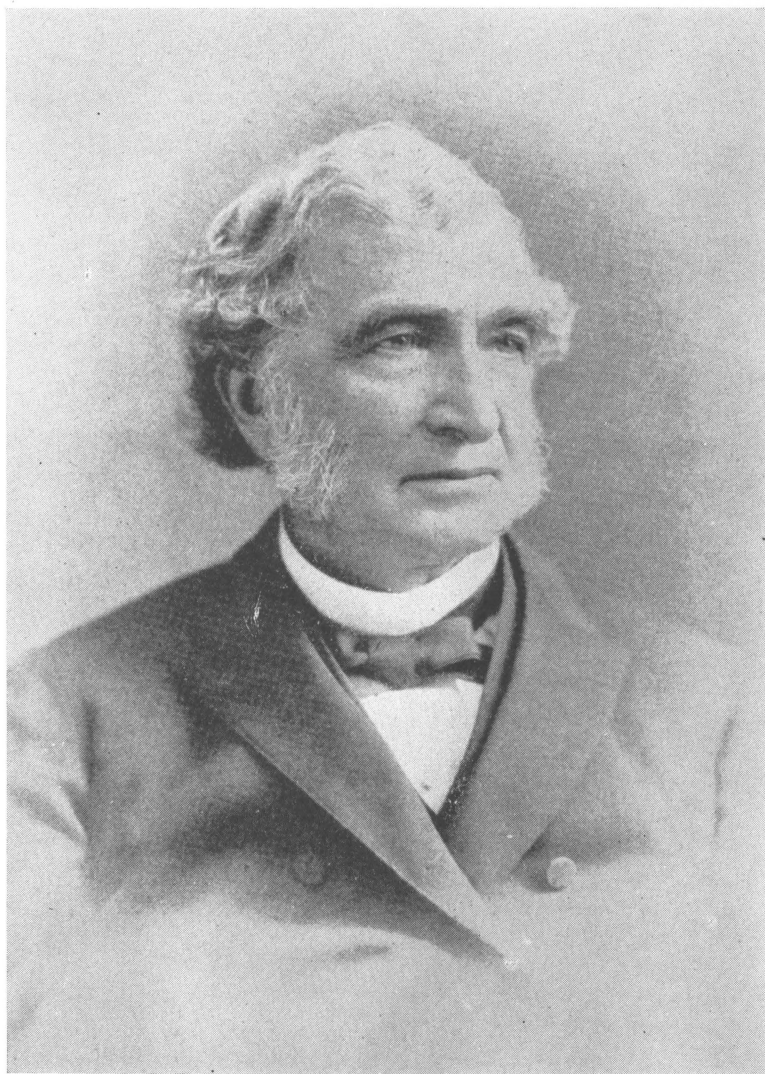
This bill, which provided for a "State Agricultural College and Farm," became a law March 22, 1858, when it was signed by Governor Lowe. It carried an appropriation of \$10,000 and provided for a Board of Trustees of eleven members, one for each judicial district. The board was organized on January 10, 1859, with Jessie Bowen as chairman pro tempore.

Iowa was one of the pioneer states (Michigan was the first) in establishing an agricultural college, and it should be noted that she made provisions for such an institution four years before the Federal Land-Grant College Act was passed by Congress in 1862. It is likely, however, that the debates by Congress on the initial Land-Grant College bill in 1857, and the prospect of a grant of land, had some influence on Iowa's early action.

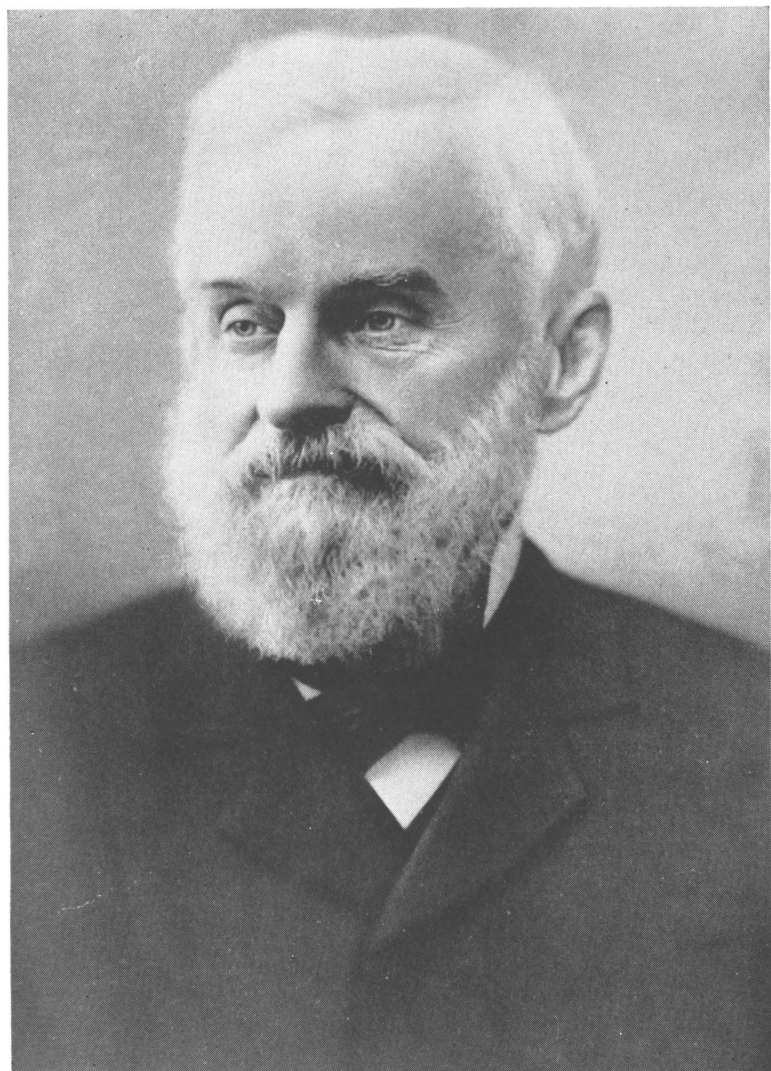
The Iowa General Assembly of 1860 was not disposed to promote the cause of the College owing to the fact that "the state was heavily in debt, and the whole country was suffering from great financial embarrassment." The passage of the Federal Land-Grant College Act, July 2, 1862, gave agricultural education in Iowa a brighter prospect. This act, through adjustments with the federal government, gave the College 204,000 acres of land.

The Iowa legislature of 1862 was the first in the United States to accept the provisions of the Federal Land-Grant Act, but it was too busy with the Civil War to give much attention to organizing and developing the College or to other matters that could wait. The legislature of 1864 voted \$20,000 for building purposes; the legislature of 1866 appropriated \$91,000; and the legislature of 1868 appropriated \$47,750. A system of leasing its land, "which had been worked out with remarkable results, enabled the College to realize an annual income of \$30,000 for maintenance and support from the very beginning." (29, pp. 7-8.)

The Iowa Agricultural College and Farm was first opened for students on October 21, 1868. About 68 or 70 men and women enrolled during this fall term. A committee of the board had decided the previous May to admit women by a vote of 4 to 3. On March 17, 1869, the college building was dedicated, and the



JUSTIN S. MORRILL
United States Senator from Vermont, 1866 to 1898



ADONIJAH S. WELCH
President 1868-1883

Honorable A. S. Welch was formally inaugurated as the first president. Dr. Welch became president in May, 1868, after he had served a term as United States Senator from Florida. He had been graduated from the University of Michigan and had served as president of the Michigan State Normal School at Ypsilanti for fourteen years.

As defined by the Federal Land-Grant College Act of 1862 (70, p. 503) the leading object of the new college "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 of life."

The Iowa organic act provided for the teaching of agriculture as the principal branch, but eighteen fields were mentioned in which the College might engage. These were natural philosophy, chemistry, botany, horticulture, fruit growing, forestry, animal and vegetable anatomy, geology, mineralogy, meteorology, entomology, zoölogy, veterinary anatomy, plain mensuration, levelling, surveying, bookkeeping, "and such mechanic arts as are directly connected with agriculture. Also such other studies as the trustees may from time to time prescribe not inconsistent with the purposes of this act." (17, pp. 173-178.)

b. Home Economics in the College

While home economics was not mentioned in the Iowa organic act, leeway for its introduction was provided in both the Iowa Act and the Federal Land-Grant College Act. Consequently a type of training was given in home economics from the beginning. The "Ladies Course," offered in 1871, listed "Domestic Economy" as one of the subjects which women might take. (54, pp. 5-11.)

The president of the Board of Trustees, Benjamin F. Gue, in an address at the formal opening of the College on March 17, 1869, commended domestic economy as follows (27, p. 12):

"In this the *People's College*, dedicated to the encouragement and promotion of industry, we must aim to make labor attractive, not only to the boys who are seeking knowledge in their department, but to the girls, who can never become accomplished and thoroughly educated women, without a knowledge of the art of housekeeping, and the best methods of conducting every household occupation with system, intelligence, and womanly grace.

The most alarming feature of our present system of educating our girls is the almost total disregard of those branches known as useful and practical that will prepare them for the proper discharge of the best and noblest duties of rational and intelligent women."

In his inaugural address, President A. S. Welch also commended domestic economy for women. He said, in part (27, pp. 38-40): "Among her increased facilities for scientific instruction, should stand prominent the study of domestic economy. Such special preparation, added to general culture, will dignify these duties, render their performance easier and more systematic, and leave time for healthful recreation and rest."

The Iowa and the Kansas state agricultural colleges were pioneers in home economics education. Other land-grant institutions followed their lead but followed slowly. True describes the situation as follows (64, p. 268):

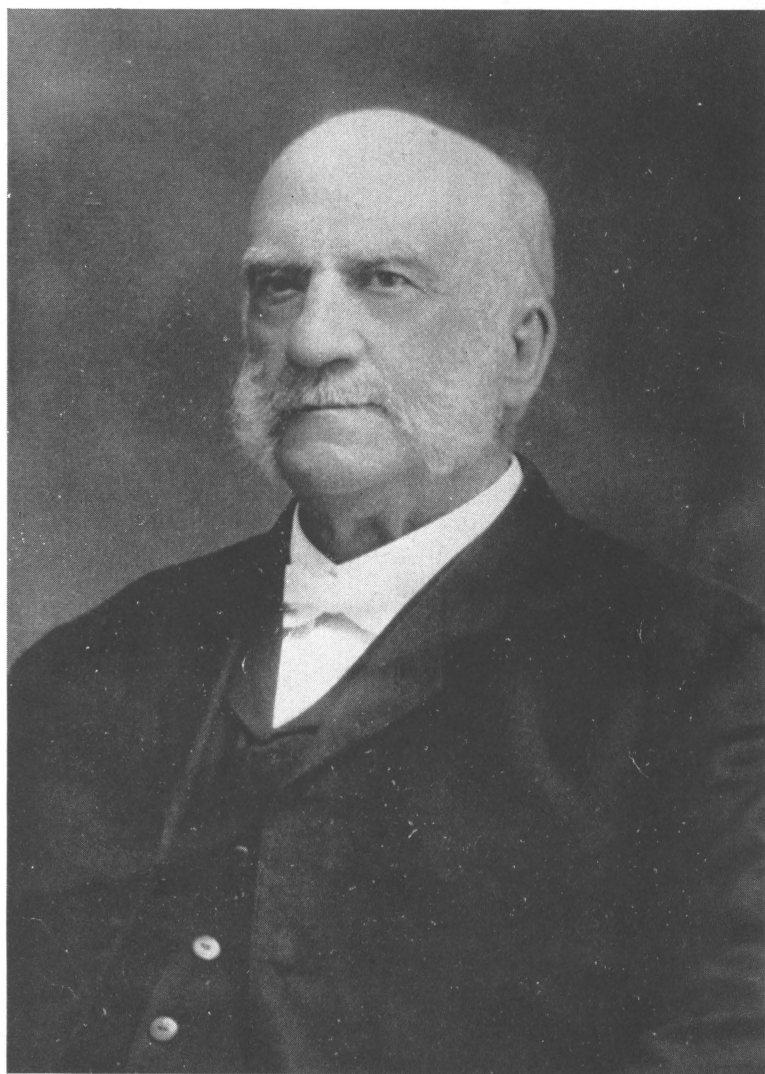
"In 1890 only four land-grant colleges had departments of home economics, namely, those in Kansas, Iowa, Oregon, and South Dakota. In the next 15 years such departments were organized in 18 of the land-grant colleges for white students. With the exception of the institutions in Connecticut and Tennessee these colleges were in North Central and Western States."

c. The Agricultural Experiment Station Created

One of the serious difficulties which the new College encountered was a lack of scientific material of instruction in the field of agriculture. The records show that the College very early attempted to overcome this difficulty by conducting experimental work. Dr. S. A. Knapp, who was elected to the chair of agriculture in 1880 and who was later the second president of the College, was the leader in developing the experimental work. A fund of \$1,000 was early made available for an experimental creamery and the General Assembly in 1882 appropriated \$1,500 annually "For experimentation in agriculture and horticulture." (18, p. 77.)

After the federal act providing for agricultural experiment stations, the Hatch Act², was passed by Congress, in 1887; experimental work took rank with instruction as one of the prin-

²There is documentary evidence which shows that Dr. S. A. Knapp was the original author of the federal act providing for experiment stations passed by Congress in 1887. He wrote it in the "Farm House" at Ames, Iowa, in January, 1883.



SEAMAN A. KNAPP
President 1883-1885

cial functions of the College. The purpose of this act was (71) "to aid in acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture, and to promote scientific investigation and experiment respecting the principles and applications of agricultural science. . . ."

From the foregoing declaration of the purpose of the Hatch Act, it is clear that the "diffusion among the people" clause implied extension activities. A knowledge of Dr. Knapp's interest in extension tends to strengthen this conviction. The act did not directly add much to the actual development of extension work in Iowa, but indirectly it made a contribution. One of the most valid arguments for the Extension Service some years later was that the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station had discovered and collected so much valuable information that some agency should be set up by the College to get this information to the people who would profit by it most.

d. Extension and the Organic Acts of the College

Many students hold that the idea of extension is found in the intent of all the organic acts of the College. This intent was pointed out in the foregoing discussion of the Hatch Act.

Relative to the first Land-Grant College Act passed by Congress in 1862, the Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities makes this statement (69, p. 438): "The ideal of direct practical service to the industrial classes, but especially to rural people, was from the beginning prominent in the minds of the leaders of the land-grant college movement and dominant in the consciousness of the people and legislators who supported these institutions. Such service through resident college instruction was never very successful."

The records indicate that the friends of the Iowa organic act of 1858 which provided for the establishment of the College, intended that the College should assume some responsibility for the extension of information to the people of the state. The two excerpts from this act given herewith, indicate this intent.

"An Act to provide for the establishment of a State Agricultural College and Farm with a Board of Trustees which shall be connected with the entire Agricultural Interests of the State of Iowa." (17, p. 173.)

"He [the Secretary of the Board of Trustees] shall encourage the formation of agricultural societies throughout the State, and

purchase, receive and distribute such rare and valuable seeds, plants, shrubbery and trees, as may be in his power to procure from the general government and other sources, as may be adapted to our climate and soils. He shall also encourage the importation of improved breeds of horses, asses, cattle, sheep, hogs and other live stock, the invention and improvement of labor saving implements of husbandry and diffuse information in relation to the same; and the manufacture of woollen and cotton yarns and cloths, and domestic industry in weaving, spinning, knitting, sewing, and such other household arts as are calculated to promote the general thrift, wealth and resources of the State." (17, p. 177.)

The secretary of the board of trustees had his office in Des Moines; otherwise he would have deserved the distinction of being the first director of the Extension Service.

The farmers who had worked for an Agricultural College and Farm "which shall be connected with the entire agricultural interests of the state" were not satisfied with having the College confine its efforts to resident teaching and to experimental work. They demanded that they receive information of most use to them. This demand led eventually to the official creation of the Extension Service in 1906, but before this service was officially established as the third major function of the College, the College did much extension work through the medium of fairs, farmers' institutes, lectures before miscellaneous organizations, and correspondence.

6. FARMERS' INSTITUTES

The first farmers' institute held in America seems to have been under the auspices of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture at Springfield, in 1863. The Kansas Agricultural College, in 1868, seems to have been the first state college of agriculture to hold a farmers' institute at the college. Iowa State College was the first agricultural college to take the institute to the farmers. This first institute was initiated by President Welch and held at Cedar Falls in December, 1870. (21, 65, 66.) Professor I. P. Roberts, for thirty years professor and dean of agriculture at Cornell University, has said (29, p. 14), "President Welch organized and conducted the first farmers' institutes in the United States."

All writers seem to agree that the credit for starting the farmers' institutes in Iowa goes to A. S. Welch, first president

of Iowa State College. The beginning of these early extension activities cannot be told better than they were told by President Welch in his reports. In a report to the trustees in December, 1870, he said (30, pp. 478-479):

“Many of the trustees will remember that last fall an urgent demand was made outside the institution for a winter session. Such a session, however, was for reasons well known to you found to be impracticable. It is now thought to promise better results to the farmers, that farmers’ institutes somewhat similar in method to the teachers’ institutes, should be held by a few of the older members of the faculty in different sections of the State. We propose that each institute shall last five days, and that its program shall consist of lectures for day and evening sessions, on stock breeding and management, fruit culture, farm accounts, and kindred topics. The first farmers’ institute is already appointed in Cedar Falls, to open on the 20th instant [December, 1870]; the second is to commence on January 3, at Council Bluffs, in response to an earnest invitation from the farmers of that county; and the third will be held in Muscatine, by desire of its citizens; time not fixed. A fourth may be held in Boonesboro or Ames. Now it is desirable that this new experiment should be tried without much expense to the farmers in attendance, and if the trustees should see fit to appropriate a moderate sum for traveling expenses it would, I have no doubt, be wisely expended. Professor Jones, Professor Matthews, and myself will conduct the exercises.”

A committee to which the president’s report was referred stated that:

“In regard to the farmers’ institutes, without hesitation we entirely coincide with the president’s plans, and believe that great good will result therefrom, and most earnestly desire that a sufficient amount may be appropriated to defray the necessary expenses thereof.”

The program of the first farmers’ institute in Iowa which was held at Cedar Falls in December, 1870, was described at length in a current number of the *Homestead and Western Farm Journal*. Extracts from this story are given herewith. (21.)

“At 2 o’clock p. m. on Wednesday the subject of Farm Stock was taken up by invitation by Dr. Sprague of Des Moines. A diagram was placed on the blackboard showing the view of a section through the shoulder of a common cow as also that of the well formed thoroughbred. It was also explained that the greater width across the shoulders of the thoroughbred furnished a

basis for the production of a much larger amount of meat than was yielded by the common cow, . . .”

On Thursday at 10 a. m. the “institute opened with prayer and music after which the discussion on stock breeding was opened by President Welch. He thought it still an unsettled question as to the raising of the Durham stock in Iowa. He stated that men should learn to analyze stock; fix in their minds the valuable points so as to breed for beef by selecting those having these properties as also those having the properties requisite for th production of milk, etc. . . .

“Professor Mathews followed with an interesting lecture upon fruit culture, ridiculing the various foolish remedies which had been recommended at different times for the destruction of vermin in fruit trees, and showing how people allow themselves to be humbugged by purchasing plants and trees of which they know nothing, simply because they are highly recommended. . . .

“A list of hardy varieties was asked for. Professor Mathews recommended the following: Russian, Astrachan, Borovischky, Duchess of Oldenburg, Fameuse, Ben Davis, Bell Flower, Perry Russet. For summer use, Williams Flavor. . . .”

On Thursday afternoon the institute reopened. “Prof. Jones then occupied half an hour on ‘Farm Accounts’, which was very interesting.

“Reverend Z. Cook then delivered his address, on the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry. He seized upon the power of combinations, showing how farmers should combine to protect themselves. He wanted such literature circulated as will foster the idea that labor is truly honorable. . . .

“Mr. Knowles gave an interesting talk on disease of cattle, the cause of many diseases and showed how they could be cured. He was listened to with marked attention. . . .

“Professor Welch closed the exercise of the afternoon by addressing the institute upon thoroughbred cattle. Showing how the good qualities are bred and bad parts bred out. He considers the Durham stock exceedingly useful for improving our common stock. Pres. Welch does not consider that prairie grass is profitable for feeding the Durham. They require timothy. . . .”

In the Fourth Biennial Report of Iowa State College, President Welch indicated the initial success, and described the plan of conducting farmers’ institutes in Iowa. He wrote:

“The experiment of holding farmers’ institutes in different localities in the state, for the purpose of giving familiar lectures on prominent topics in agriculture, was tried last winter, with

very gratifying results. Institutes lasting three days were held at Cedar Falls, Council Bluffs, Washington, and Muscatine, at each of which points we found an enthusiastic gathering of farmers. The attendance at Washington numbered over two hundred and fifty, and the institute at Muscatine has become a permanent organization, meeting, as I am informed, once a month.

“Many requests have come in from various localities for farmers’ institutes this winter. My correspondence on the subject is quite large, and I have already arranged for four, viz.: one at Nevada, beginning on the 19th instant, one at Wilton on the first Wednesday of January, one at Vinton, opening on the second Tuesday of February, and another at Manchester or Delaware Centre, Delaware County, opening on the last Wednesday of January. Three more are to be disposed of, for which there are numerous applications. Those desirous of securing one of these for their county, forward to me a request to that effect, signed by not less than fifty farmers who pledge their personal attendance and the payment of such traveling expenses as we cannot avoid making.”

At the beginning of the institute work in Iowa and for a number of years thereafter, the expenses were borne by local contributions. In 1890-91 the College and State Agricultural Society appropriated a small sum to pay the expenses of the professors and other competent lecturers at the institutes. (13, p. 37.)

A bill passed the state legislature in 1901 which provided for the holding of county institutes and it appropriated \$50 to each county for this purpose. The bill stated (20, p. 38) that the object of such institutes should be “the dissemination of practical and scientific knowledge pertaining to agriculture in all its various branches.”

“This act was amended by the General Assembly in 1902 by increasing the appropriation for each county institute to \$75 per annum and providing that each county institute should be entitled to representation at the sessions of the State Board of Agriculture.” (13, p. 38.) This appropriation still stands today (1932) and is administered by the State Department of Agriculture.

While the farmers’ institutes were held for the purpose of providing instruction in subjects pertaining to agriculture, the needs of the farm women were not ignored. It is true that few institutes in Iowa held separate sessions for women. The women, however, generally attended the sessions, one or more of which

were devoted to household problems. Frequently experts in home economics were secured to give talks, and to judge baked goods, articles of sewing and other domestic products, as in county agricultural fairs. (12, p. 13.)

Mrs. Welch, the first head of the home economics work at the College, lectured to housewives throughout the state. In a report made in 1883 (29, pp. 14 and 23) she called attention to a series of lectures on domestic science given in Des Moines to a class of sixty. This class in Des Moines is considered to be very significant in the development of home economics extension work in Iowa and throughout the country.

The farmers' institutes have been of great value to agricultural and rural life. Their weaknesses are that usually but one is held in any county in any one year and there is no provision for following up the work. They are said to have been the natural forerunner of county agents. (62, p. 30.)

7. THE GRANGE

Even before special training in subjects pertaining to agriculture (through the institutes) was available for Iowa farmers, they themselves had set up an organization for their mutual self-improvement.

The first of these organizations was the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the Grange, which came into existence at Washington, D. C., in 1867. To Oliver Hudson Kelley, a clerk in the agricultural bureau, goes the credit for originating the idea of the Grange and keeping it alive during its first three years.

Being a Mason, Kelley got the idea that a similar secret order, adapted to farm life and atmosphere, might serve to bind farmers together for social intercourse and intellectual advancement. The purpose of the Grange was declared to be "the advancement of agriculture," but Kelley expected that this advancement would come primarily through educational efforts. (55, p. 11.) The phenomenal growth of this order in the early 70's was largely due, however, to economic and political causes.

Correspondence between Kelley and A. Failor, of Newton, Iowa, resulted in the formation of a Grange at Newton, May 2, 1868. This was the first Grange in Iowa and one of the first in the United States located in a rural community. In 1869, the second Iowa Grange was organized at Pottsville (Postville?) and soon after, the third at Waukon. The Waukon Grange was said to have held more meetings in 1875 than any other Grange in the United States. (7, pp. 46-47.)

During the year 1871, the order flourished with much vigor in the states of the North Central division and especially in Iowa, where a state Grange was organized on January 12. Dudley W. Adams of the Waukon Grange, and later master of the National Grange, was elected master of the new Iowa State Grange. (7, p. 50.)

The growth of the Grange in Iowa is indicated by the number of local Granges listed herewith (7): On May 19, 1873, there were 1,507 local Granges; on August 2, 1873, there were 1,763; on October 18, 1873, there were 1,818; on March 1, 1874, there were 1,918; on September 1, 1874, there were 1,999; on January 1, 1875, there were 1,891; on October 1, 1875, there were 1,164; and on July 1, 1876, there were 1,018.

The seventh annual convention of the National Grange was held at St. Louis in February, 1874, and this meeting marks the peak of the movement. The "Declaration of Purposes of the National Grange" adopted at that time is said to rank as one of the greatest platforms for agricultural progress that has ever been written. It is still the platform of the National Grange and its principles have been incorporated into the platforms of all subsequent farm organizations. Outstanding principles of this "Declaration of Purposes" were (2, pp. 69-73):

"United by the strong and faithful tie of Agriculture, we mutually resolve to labor for the good of our Order, our country and mankind.

"We heartily indorse the motto, 'In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.'

"We shall endeavor to advance our cause by laboring to accomplish the following objects:

"To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves. To enhance the comforts and attractions of our homes, and strengthen our attachments to our pursuits. To foster mutual understanding and co-operation. To maintain inviolate our laws, and to emulate each other in labor, to hasten the good time coming. . . .

"We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection, and advancement, as occasion may require. . . .

"For our business interests, we desire to bring producers and consumers, farmers and manufacturers, into the most direct and friendly relations possible. . . .

"We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves,

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

"No Grange, if true to its obligations, can discuss political or religious questions, nor call political conventions, nor nominate candidates, nor even discuss their merits in its meetings. . . .

"Ours being peculiarly a farmers' institution, we cannot admit all to our ranks."

That the Grange was interested in spiritual things as well as in material things is shown in an address by Dudley W. Adams, of Iowa, while he was master of the National Grange. A single selection from his talk will suffice (57, p. 517) :

"I tell you, my brother tillers of the soil, there is something in this world worth living for besides hard work. We have heard enough of this professional blarney. Toil is not in itself necessarily glorious. To toil like a slave, raise fat steers, cultivate broad acres, pile up treasures of bonds and lands and herds, and at the same time bow and starve the godlike form, harden the hands, dwarf the immortal mind, and alienate the children from the homestead, is a damning disgrace to any man, and should stamp him as worse than a brute."

The educational program of the Grange, and the methods employed for development, are described in an early history of the order (57, p. 470) :

"The material interests of the farmer are not the only ones which receive the fostering care of the Order. His intellectual improvement is also aimed at. The Grange teaches its members that education and intellectual culture are necessary to the farmer as well as to other men. It impresses upon him the duty of encouraging the growth and prosperity of the public schools, and reminds him that money saved at the cost of his children's education is saved at too high a price. It encourages the farmer to purchase and read good and useful books, and the best periodicals of the day. At its meetings discussions are encouraged which serve to keep its members informed upon the leading questions of the time, and to accustom them to express their views in an intelligent manner. In one respect the Grange may be considered as an educational club, with the very positive and definite object of achieving the intellectual improvement of its members."

In the Grange it was the duty of the lecturer, one of the local officers, to prepare a program for each meeting. The prepara-

tion of papers, debates, or discussions for these programs stimulated the members to consult periodicals and to familiarize themselves with books, and with tracts, folders, and leaflets of an educational nature, which were distributed by the National Grange.

"The executive committee of the Iowa State Grange in 1874 prepared a series of questions for discussion in each of the local granges. These included, as main questions; the desirability of coöperation in business, the benefits secured by the order of Patrons of Husbandry, and the control of transportation companies by law; with subdivisions of each question." (7, p. 286.)

The meteoric rise in membership of the Grange in the early 70's was followed by an equally sudden drop in the latter part of the decade, which all but obliterated the order. After this decline, however, the resumption of the original principle of the Grange—agricultural improvement by means of education—has resulted in a slow but steady growth, and today the position of the National Grange is stronger than it has been for many years.

The causes of the decline of the Grange have received the attention of students of farm organizations. W. A. Anderson summarizes these causes very well as follows (1, pp. 48-49):

"First, its business failures due to incompetent management caused the enthusiasm of its members to subside since it did not continue its great savings.

"Second, overestimation of benefits to be derived through legislation, which proved unwise, discredited the order.

"Third, its rapid growth and lack of leadership made impossible the proper assimilation and guidance of such a large number of Granges and members.

"Fourth, inner strife and jealousy created distrust and dissatisfaction between the various Granges and between them and the National Grange.

"Fifth, the Granges were corrupted by politicians and others, who were 'interested in agriculture as the hawk is interested in the sparrow.' "

8. THE FARMERS' ALLIANCE

Following the decline of the Grange, various other farmers' organizations made their appearance. The advantages accruing from organization and coöperation were too worth-while to be foresworn, even in the face of seeming defeat.

Among the organizations which followed on the heels of the Grange, and which embodied many of its principles, was the

Farmers' Alliance. This order, which claimed a large membership in Iowa in the 80's, emphasized social and political activities, and, to a certain extent, coöperative enterprises. A prominent objective of the organization, however, was educational, for we read (14, p. 129) :

"These various activities [social, etc.] met a real and obvious social need, but they lent themselves also to more strictly educational purposes. . . . The Alliance leaders made it a point to disseminate as widely as possible scientific agricultural information. There, as elsewhere, visiting officers and lecturers urged upon the farmers the necessity of crop rotation; they pointed out the wisdom of careful seed selection; they set forth the merits of newly devised agricultural machines; they deplored the lack of crop diversification; and they scolded the farmers roundly for their generally bad business methods.

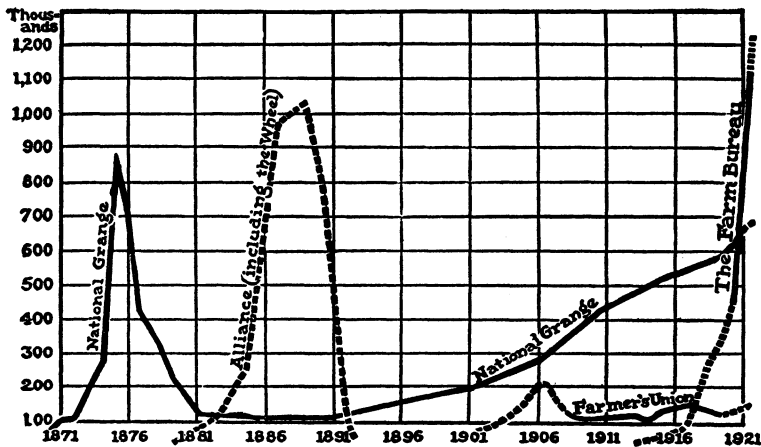
"Ordinarily every local organization had an officer known as the 'lecturer' whose duty it was to suggest subjects for discussion and to take the lead in expounding them. Spurred into action by the efforts of the lecturer and the attractiveness of the subjects, Alliance members learned to express themselves in public. They learned also to seek ammunition for their speeches and debates in books and papers that they might otherwise never have read. Their horizons widened; the variety of the topics they discussed increased. Local study groups were organized which, by 'taking up the questions that were agitating the minds of the people and discussing them in earnest manner,' so aroused the interest of the participants that the meetings often lasted far into the night."

Later the Alliance became very active in politics, joining with other farmers' organizations and the Knights of Labor. In 1890 and 1892, the political campaign of this group centered around the proposition of free-coinage of silver and the issuance of "greenback currency." It merged to a large degree into the Populist party. Friction and dissension then arose so that when this party met defeat in the election of 1892, the organizations which were connected with it suffered severely. Shortly thereafter they faded out of existence. (47.)

The Grange and the Alliance resembled each other in many ways. They both grew rapidly and they both declined rapidly. Each of them was prominent for about ten years—the Grange in the 70's and the Alliance in the 80's. They both gave education a large place in their objectives but later turned their attention to commercial and political activities. Their commercial

and political activities seem to have been important factors in bringing about their downfall.

9. THE RISE AND DECLINE OF IMPORTANT FARM ORGANIZATIONS' NATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS (55, p. 35)



From *The Farm Bureau Movement*, by O. M. Kile, courtesy the Macmillan Company.

Solid lines indicate official records of paid-up memberships. Actual active membership is usually somewhat larger. Dotted lines indicate that no official records are available, but represent best information as to membership trends.