If one man in selecting his crops and seeds for the same, and scientifically farming his land, can grow better crops than those of his neighbor, they are therefore special crops and they will always pay.

Tobacco, while it need not have been so, has done more to ruin southern Wisconsin than any other one thing. Tobacco growers rake and scrape all the fertility from their farms and put in on the same small section of the farm year after year. This can have but one result, and that is, that nine-tenths of every tobacco farm is well nigh exhausted of its fertility. I believe that if every man will look at the matter from all sides, he will say with me, that if people here are going to continue to grow tobacco as they have in the past, and thus rob the rest of their land for the sake of the tobacco, it will be far better for the state if they had never grown a single plant. It is the same with sugar beets. You must not put everything into the one, but pay a goodly attention to the ninety and nine or you will have the round hundred lost.

Every man here today should go away with the determination that he will do all that is possible to help overcome this awful state of affairs that exists in the way of robbing the soil. You not only owe it to yourselves, but also to those that follow you. It is a crime to civilization to rob the soil from whence comes most all the wealth of the world.

Get your farms into shape to grow special crops, and then grow them. Again let me say, return to your homes, ordain and establish a system whereby special crops may be grown by yourselves and your posterity.

WORK OF A BOYS’ EXPERIMENT CLUB.


Members of the Experiment Association, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am glad to have the honor of being with you this evening and saying a few words to you. I was glad to be here this
afternoon and hear your discussions and know something of the work of your Experiment Association. You have been growing some since I was here in 1901. As I walked over your experiment farm then, this building was not visible. Surely you have grown, and I congratulate you. I notice in the paper that you have five hundred and twenty-nine students in the College. Again, I congratulate you.

We have been growing a little also in Illinois. There was a time when if we wanted a boy to make better butter or make cheese, or learn to be a better farmer, we had to send him out of the state to Madison, Wisconsin. We do not have to say that any more.

We have a one hundred thousand dollar agricultural building, with a state appropriation of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year for the Experiment Station, and with our new eighty-thousand dollar building for the farmer girl, we do not have to go out of Illinois to learn how to be better farmers and housekeepers, and so you can congratulate us. Not very many years ago the Illinois farmer boy thought that an agricultural education was not the true kind of education and so would not attend any agricultural college, but, now we have nearly four hundred students in the Illinois College of Agriculture and we congratulate ourselves. There is another side to look at. There are only four hundred boys learning to become better farmers at the college so let us think of the thousands and thousands of young men on the farms in Illinois who do not know much about the Agricultural College and Experiment Station. I know some farmers say what is the use of putting a five thousand dollar education on a fifty cent boy, but I fear many farmers are putting a fifty cent education on a five thousand dollar boy. I am pleading for the country child. The country boy should receive what President Roosevelt would call "a square deal" as far as educational opportunities are concerned.

I spent nearly two months at the St. Louis Fair in 1904 trying to learn something about two things. First: What is being done in the United States with reference to higher education for the American farmer, and those of you who were at the
Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Association.

Palace of Education and saw the exhibits of the United States Experiment Station and various State Experiment Stations may have a faint idea of what is being done in the way of higher education for the American farmer. Ten million dollars is expended for the higher education of the American farmer. I tried to find out a second thing, viz., what is being done in the United States in the way of better elementary education for the farmers' boys and girls, what is being done to improve the country schools all over the United States? Ninety per cent of the country children get their own education as far as books are concerned in the country schools. I walked over to the Palace of Agriculture and I think over the nine miles of aisles and saw the products from the farm. To me the most significant thing was a little collection down in the corner of the Illinois exhibit that I do not suppose one person out of every five thousand ever stopped to look at, and that was the result of seven years of breeding and developing high bred corn at the Illinois Experiment Station. If every farmer in the United States could raise one bushel more per acre it would mean an increase of twenty-five million dollars, annually. Doctor Hopkins down at Champaign and also the Corn Breeders' Association of Illinois are demonstrating that this can be done and that one bushel to five bushels more to the acre of high bred corn of higher per cent of protein and more oil can be produced. What is being done over the United States to improve the country schools? In my county I have one hundred and six one-room country schools and in these one hundred and six country schools there are fifty-three of them that have fifteen or fewer pupils enrolled, with classes ranging from nineteen to thirty daily, and many classes having only one pupil each. I am getting reports from these schools to find out how many boys are in the school over fourteen years of age. Is it necessary or desirable for our boys to go to the city to be educated?

I sympathize with the country boy for I was a country boy myself in the corn belt of Illinois, where we seem to have almost inexhaustible soil. People are changing their minds about that now and our state legislature made an appropriation of twenty-five thousand dollars for a soil survey of Illinois.
To bring the boys, and through the boys, the fathers in touch with developments in agriculture, I organized what is known as the "Boys' Experiment Club." The club was organized February 22, 1902, nearly three years ago. On February 21st, 22d, and 23rd, 1902, the Illinois Farmers' Institute round-up was held at Rockford and I thought there should be some way to get the boys of the county to thinking along the line of better education and scientific possibilities of the new agriculture. Many do not believe in agricultural colleges and if we could get hold of those people through their boys, we could change their attitude towards agriculture. I think you all agree with me that there is a new agriculture and so I want to get our boys in touch with it. I thought at this Institute if there is a way that we could get the boys together and work for a common purpose, it would mean much for their future work.

I had the boys meet me in my office, February 22, 1902, and thirty-seven boys and a few fathers were present. Since then the membership has increased from thirty to four hundred and fifty boys who range from nine to twenty years of age. I talk to the teachers and farmers, write articles for newspapers, and thus arouse a greater interest. We have not reached that stage where we have a constitution and by-laws. I have the names and addresses of all the boys in my office and send a duplicate list to the Illinois Agricultural College and Experiment Station. Bulletins and reports of the Experiment Station, and the different literature that I have goes to those boys, and so we have four hundred and fifty boys, who are being interested in the new agriculture.

During the season of 1902 we did experimental work in the way of sugar beets. The Illinois legislature appropriated several thousand dollars to carry on experiments to see whether sugar beets could be grown in Illinois with success or not. Several boys grew good beets in 1902. They made their own observations, kept account of what they raised and what they fed to the stock.

This work puts the boys in touch with the Agricultural College, and gives them higher ideals of the farm.
Now, I want to read you just one boy’s report on his sugar beets, to show you his method.

REPORT OF A MEMBER OF THE EXPERIMENT CLUB WITH REFERENCE TO SUGAR BEETS.

"My plot of ground was twenty-eight feet wide and twenty rods long, making forty-five square rods of land. There were twenty-six rows of beets planted seventeen and one-half inches apart. The total expense of raising them was as follows:

April 23, plowing ............................................. $ 40
April 24, twice harrowing .................................. 25
May 10, cultivated with seeder ............................... 25
May 10, harrowing ............................................. 25
May 27, disking ................................................. 15
May 27, harrowing ............................................. 25
May 27, twice planking, planker weighed 600 lbs. .......... 25
May 27, planting, three hours, at 15 cents per hour ........ 45
June 4, hoeing and straightening plants, 4 hrs. at 15 cents... 60
June 10, raking, three hours, at 15 cents per hour ........... 45
June 28, hoeing with wheel hoe ................................ 50
July 7, thinning out, 20 hours at 15 cents ..................... 3 00
July 9, hoeing by hand, 12 hours at 15 cents .................. 1 80
July 19, hoeing with wheel hoe, three hours at 15 cents ....... 45
July 28, hoeing with wheel hoe, three hours at 15 cents ...... 45
August 9, hoeing with wheel hoe, three hours at 15 cents .... 45
Sept. 13, weeding, three hours at 15 cents .................... 45
Nov. 10, harvesting, forty hours, 15 cents .................... 6 00
Nov. 10, team work ............................................ 1 50
Rent of land at $5.00 per acre ................................ 1 50

Total cost planting, cultivating and harvesting ............ $19 75

The yield of the plot was 12,500 pounds, deducting 1,500 pounds for dirt, leaves 11,000 pounds of beets. Number of tons, 51½; number of bushels (60 pounds), 185. Actual cost of production per ton was $3.58; cost per bushel, 10 cents. Chemical analysis showed 18 per cent sugar, with a purity coefficient of 86.7 per cent."
REPORT OF EDOM BLACK OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS, EXPERIMENT CLUB.

Our work for the last two years has been experimenting with high bred corn. I do not want to go into detail here to tell you members of this association about the breeding and development of corn in Illinois. Suffice it to say that the State Farmers’ Institute of Illinois in order to encourage our boys gave each boy 500 grains of high bred corn, if he would write for it and send four cents in stamps to pay postage.

There had been selected a high bred leaming corn that was grown by the Corn Breeders’ Association in Galesburg. Climatic conditions were favorable and the corn matured fairly well. Each boy was requested to keep records, note preparation of the seed bed, tasseling, select ten ears of the best, and make an exhibit of the same for prizes offered by the Winnebago County Farmers’ Institute. We had our last meeting January 10, 11, and 12, 1905. The farmers of the county raised one hundred and fifty dollars in cash for prizes. The boy who took first prize of fifteen dollars in gold was a lad twelve years old.

I urged the boys to write letters to me about their corn. Here is a typical letter from a boy for year 1903:

My corn was planted on a piece of land which was part black loam and part blue clay. The land had been used for corn the year before, but was well manured by using one load for the piece of ground the corn was planted on. It was plowed six inches deep on the 7th day of May and dragged with a two section drag until all the lumps were broken. It was marked off with a cultivator and then it was planted 2 kernels in a hill.

I planted 300 kernels in the middle square and the rest on the south and west. My corn was planted on the 9th of May. There were 2 stalks in every hill, excepting two which did not come up. There were 357 ears, and very few stalks without ears. The total weight was 352 pounds at time of gathering. I gathered it the 22d of November.
The cost of raising it was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postage on corn seed</td>
<td>$ 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plowing of ground, one hour</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragging of ground, 15 minutes</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking of ground, 15 minutes</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting of ground, 30 minutes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoeing, 30 minutes, May 23th</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoeing, 30 minutes, June 28th</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plowing, 30 minutes, June 24th</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeding and hoeing, July 17th</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoeing, July 24th</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total cost: $1 07

There were five and one-half bushels at 45 cents, or $2 48

Cost of raising: 1 07

Gain: $1 41

Marvin Bates,
Winnebago, Ill.
R. F. D. 2.

I print all the letters in my annual report, and this report goes into nearly every farm home in the county.

I thought it would be a good thing to get our boys to go on an excursion to Champaign and inspect the College and Experiment Station. Six carloads of people, boys and adults, went over to the Experiment Station in 1902 and saw alfalfa fields, and all the main things connected with the experiment work at the Station. The girls visited the Domestic Science department. Two hundred and nine went on the second excursion to Champaign in 1903, and only thirteen went the second time of the total number visiting the first year. These are all missionaries for better things with reference to the farm.

In 1904 we went over to Ames, Iowa. Two hundred and one went on this trip. Our fourth annual excursion will be June 2 and 3, to Wisconsin Experiment Station at Madison.

I do believe in the country child and we should do all we can for him, so he can have just as good an education and preparation for life's work as now given to the most favored city child attending the public school.