ADDRESS.

Hon. W. D. Hoard, Fort Atkinson.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am no more fit to make an address than I would be to court all those beautiful milk-maids. Their inspiring presence, their dainty ways, their beautiful music has put all sober enunciation out of my head, and I am a boy again, after the girls. I did not suppose, Gen. Bur- chard, that there was so much of the old time inspiration left in the sober and prosaic dairy business, as we have listened to tonight.

I have attended every meeting of this Association but one since it was organized, thirty-six years ago, and in all that experience,—the Wisconsin Dairymen’s Association has never had presented to it as graceful and pretty a compliment as we have received tonight. I am surprised. I was not prepared to believe that in this little city of Monroe there was as much genius and sentiment as I have seen and listened to tonight, and the idea of asking an old fellow like me, full of recollections of his youth, to make a speech,—why, I simply can’t do it. I have a good notion to cut loose and tell a story, and if I do, I want you to understand there will be neither rhyme nor reason in what I say.

(After delighting the audience in his inimitable way, with a number of “stories”, the Governor continued.)

I want to say one sober thing before I close. I wish that the good people of Monroe could see in one clear, straight presentation what the meaning of this convention here is. I wish the good people of Monroe could understand what part this great dairy interest plays in the destiny of the state of Wisconsin. Last year we passed through a great panic, one which has not been equalled since 1857 in some particulars, and yet let me say to you that the great agricultural interests of the state of Wisconsin do not know it to-day. The dairy industry of the state did not know it in 1893 when the manu-
facturing and the commercial interest of the county were suffering severely; all of those sections which had been devoted to the cow sailed as calmly and as serenely through the storm as though they had been an argosy freighted with flowers. Not a single tremor passed through the districts devoted to dairying.

Again in 1907 came a great paralysis all over the body politic, profoundly affecting all the industries of the country, but every dairy district of Wisconsin has stood like a rock; the commercial interests of Monroe, of Fort Atkinson, of Sheboygan, every district in the state, where there was a strong cow population, sailed along steadily as they are doing to-day.

What does this mean to the schools? What does it mean to the social conditions? What does it mean to those things we call the civilization of our day, and which are built solidly and serenely as upon a rock? That is the reason why we come together year after year and have been doing so for thirty-six years, and struggle for the dissemination of knowledge, striving the best we know how to get the farmer to understand the meaning of his own salvation, and to-day Wisconsin assumes a proud place. The ladies who sang to us tonight about Wisconsin had in their utterances, almost, I might say, the gift of prophecy. Her College of Agriculture stands to-day without a peer in all of the United States; no such work is being performed anywhere in promoting agricultural culture as is being performed in Wisconsin by the College of Agriculture.

Last winter I had the pleasure of standing in Madison and addressing six or seven hundred young men belonging to the Experiment Station; young men who have graduated from the Short and Long Courses of the College. The other day I asked Dr. Russell to come before the Board of Regents, because I wanted him to present a graphic picture of what the college was doing, and he brought in a map dotted in such a way as to show where every young man is located who is engaged in the experimental work on barley, alfalfa and corn. That map showed that there are to-day over 1,000 young men in Wisconsin engaged in experimental farming under the leadership of the college, and each one of them is a culture center in his own locality, disseminating by example and by precept and in all
manner of ways the knowledge he has gained at the College. Think what that must mean to the agriculture of Wisconsin.

Then again Wisconsin is becoming a wonderful stock-breed-ing state; my own little county of Jefferson twenty-four miles square, last year sold over a half million dollars worth of dairy cattle besides two million dollars worth of dairy products.

Let me take you, in imagination down to the old township where I was reared in New York and where I saw farms once sell for $100 an acre. I can buy them today for $30 and $40 an acre. A farm of 358 acres, with $50,000 worth of build-ings on it, was offered to me by the Bank of Syracuse for the face of the mortgage, $10,000.

Now, what makes the difference? Why is Wisconsin to-day with a constant appreciation in the value of her farm lands, and what is the matter down in New York and New England where such farms are abandoned? It has been stated on good authority that the state of New York in the past thirty years has lost over $130,000,000 in the decline of the value of her farm lands, while Wisconsin has been constantly appreciating. The Yan-kee farmer has been truthfully said to be a destroyer of forests and fertility. From the time he started on the Atlantic Coast until he reached the Rocky Mountains, the Yankee farmer has been constantly going west to destroy another country, but for-tunately for the nation the German, the Scandinavian, the Swiss or the Bohemian farmer has come in and taken his place, and wherever those men have settled you see at once a growing appreciation of the price of farm lands. And do you know the reason? Let me tell you; go back to the homes of these men, back to Switzerland, to Scandinavia, to Germany, go where you will on the continent in Europe and you will there find every government teaching its little boys the elements of agriculture in the common school.

It was not taught to me, no, nor to my father; those founda-tion things have been forgotten, overlooked, and New York has suffered in consequence to the extent of $130,000,000, and so I preach to you tonight, the people of Wisconsin, that this is one of the things we must do. It is written in the destiny of our state that we must take hold of the school in the country, the
school in the city, in the village, the high school, everywhere we must begin to teach these people the elements of agriculture.

In my little paper, we have a department of inquiries and answers. We there construct rations, give advice and answer questions concerning the life of the people to whom the paper goes. We have to use scientific terms sometimes; for instance, there is no equivalent for the word “protein,” and so we must use that word, and the same with “carbohydrates,” and we found that if we were going to use these terms in making up rations, that some of our readers would not understand them, and we had to go to work and construct a little dictionary, called a “Glossary,” putting these terms into as simple words as possible. Now, if the state of Wisconsin had done rightly by these people and had taught the meaning of these things in the schools, that would not have been necessary.

We need to change our methods and give our people, our children, a practical education, so that men will be enabled to understand the literature of their business. The trouble with our schools is we are trying to give a fifteen cent education to $1,500 boys and girls; too many of them have crammed into them, things they can never make use of, while they are sadly lacking in things they need every day of their lives. Knowledge that no man can use is without justification, either by faith or works, and so I say tonight that we must take hold of this proposition and begin to teach the elements of agriculture in our common schools.

Selection by the Harmony Club.

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