tion of taxes and their refusal to pay their just share of the expenses of maintaining the government, I am forced to believe that their action is not due in the first instance so much to dishonesty, but rather to the fact that they recognize the inequalities of our system of taxation, and that each one of them feels that if he will disclose his securities for assessment he will have to pay more than his just share because the other fellows will not disclose theirs. You see this comes back after all to a question of individual responsibility. I can not hope that all of these men who are now evading taxes will come at once to a sense of their duty as citizens and professedly honest men, and will tell the assessor what they have this year; but if each one of us will do that, something will be gained in the interest of tax reform and every step gained will make the next step easier. I am convinced that the responsibilities of citizenship are not studied carefully enough. I hope that out of these Farmers' Institutes and the general system of farm education, will come to the farmers a keener and juster sense of their duties as citizens; and from the farming element will come the reform movement which will stir every man to a desire to perform his whole duty as a citizen, and bear cheerfully the financial as well as the political burdens of citizenship.

THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

W. A. HENRY, Dean College of Agriculture, Madison, Wis.

It is sometimes well, in these matter of fact times to go back to the foundation of things, in order to have a proper conception of the causes for what may now be taking place. It is eminently proper that Wisconsin farmers should have a clear understanding of how our agricultural college originated, who were its founders and what is its purpose.

"The Morrill Bill."

A bill was introduced into our National Congress in 1858 by Representative Justin F. Morrill, of Vermont, now the senior senator of the upper house. Passing both bodies by a good majority the bill was vetoed by James Buchanan. A careful reading of his objections shows no good reason for his action. On April 30, 1858, Representative Morrill delivered an address before the house of representatives, which is a classic of its kind, and which has been unequalled as a plea for the education of the children of the industrial class of our country, especially farmers' sons. In this address he points out how agriculture is the base of national prosperity. He quotes Adam Smith as saying "That which arises from the more solid importance of agriculture is much more durable and cannot be destroyed but by those more violent convulsions occasioned by the depredations of hostile and barbarous nations continued for a century or two together." He shows that "National wealth is greatly increased or diminished by the more or less skill, dexterity and judgment with which labor is generally applied." Congressman Morrill pointed out that European nations
HON. JUSTIN S. MORRILL, SENIOR UNITED STATES SENATOR AND FATHER OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.
were already awakened to the importance of agricultural education and were providing schools and experiment stations for the advancement of this great art. He showed that our system of farm practices was faulty and ultimately disastrous, because each year saw the fields poorer in fertility than before, the crops gradually diminishing in quantity and quality. He showed that our farmers were not indifferent to these conditions, but were groping in the dark for help while only meager or desultory assistance was rendered them. There was some help from agricultural papers, and the annual fairs of the agricultural societies but nowhere were there laboratories and schools for exact investigations and competent instruction.

A Plea to Congress.

Closing his plea, which was one of the most eloquent ever delivered in the halls of Congress, he said “Pass this measure and we shall have done—

Something to enable the farmer to raise two blades of grass instead of one;

Something for every owner of land;

Something for all who desire to own land;

Something for cheap scientific education;

Something to induce the farmers’ sons and daughters to settle and cluster around the old homestead;

Something for peace, good order and the better support of Christian churches and common schools;

Something to enable sterile railroads to pay dividends;

Something to enable the people to bear the enormous expenditures of the national government;

Something to prevent the dispersion of our population and to concentrate it around the best lands of our country—places hallowed by church spires and mellowed by all the influences of time—where the consumer will be placed at the door of the producer and thereby

Something to obtain higher prices for all sorts of agricultural products.”

Washington must have had something akin to our agricultural colleges in mind when he wrote in his last message “It will not be doubted that, with reference either to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population and other constituents of maturity, this task becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage. Institutions for promoting it grow up supported by the public purse; and to what object can it be dedicated with greater propriety.”

But James Buchanan turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the people and it was left for Congress to consider the subject once more, and for that patriot, Abraham Lincoln, whose heart was always in accord with the hopes and aspirations of the common people, to sign the bill which gave away eleven million acres of the public domain for the education of the children of the industrial classes. The agricultural college land grant bill was signed by Lincoln July 2, 1862, at a time when this country was in the throes of an awful civil war.

Provisions of “Morrill Act.”

By this grant there was given to each state in the union thirty thousand acres of land for each representative it then had in Congress. It was specified that the income from the sale of all such land should constitute a fund, the interest of which should be forever used to maintain at least one college where the leading object should be the education of the children of the industrial class. This was the grandest gift ever made for education. When the Morrill act was passed Wisconsin had six representatives and two senators in Congress, and consequently received a grant of two hundred and forty thousand acres of land. Some of the states founded
new colleges, while others assigned
the grant to their universities or to
some other educational institution.
In New York Cornell University was
founded on this grant; in Michigan
it was given outright to the agricul-
tural college already established at
Lansing. The legislature of Wiscon-
sin assigned the land grant to the
state university at Madison, and Dane
county bonded itself for forty thou-
sand dollars to raise funds with which
to purchase the lands now known as
the university farm.

The different states handled these
lands given them in trust in various
ways, some wisely and some foolishly.
Iowa made excellent use of the grant,
and its agricultural college now has
a large income from this source. The
Michigan agricultural college received
the same number of acres that was
given Wisconsin; it has sold a little
over half of these lands for $530,000.00
and has remaining over one hundred
thousand acres worth between half
a million and a million dollars.

**Wisconsin's Mistake.**

What did Wisconsin do with her
lands? The legislature directed that
agricultural lands be selected, and
that these be sold at the uniform price
of $1.25 per acre. The lands have all
been sold and the resulting trust
fund amounts to $300,000. Bear in
mind in considering this small return
for the magnificent gift, that the gov-
ernment donation was accepted by
the legislature, which body directed
the selection of the lands and set the
price at which they should be sold.
The regents or trustees of the univer-
sity had no voice or responsibility in
the matter. Of all the states in the
union Wisconsin could and should
have received the most dollars per
acre for her lands if she had only
selected them wisely.

Cornell University, receiving her
land grant at the same time as Wis-
consin, through the foresight of Ezra
Cornell, selected pine lands in this
state and patiently held them until
good prices were secured. Every Wis-
consin citizen has heard of the Cornell
pine lands located in the northern
counties, and know of their great
value. Millions upon millions of
dollars have poured into the coffers of
Cornell university from the sale of
these lands. Had our legislature di-
rected that pine lands be selected
and held in trust for our university
we would today have an interest bear-
ing fund of at least two million dol-
lars, and with good care it might have
been made three or four million dol-
lars.

In the wasting of this heritage we
have an explanation of why our un-
iversity and its agricultural college
must make frequent appeals to the
legislature for assistance in order
that our showing in the way of in-
struction and equipment at the uni-
versity shall equal, or even fairly ap-
proximate kindred institutions in
other states.

**Increased Appropriation.**

Because of the immense bodies of
lands thrown upon the market
through the homestead act, the grants
to railroads, and the agricultural col-
lege land grant, before referred to,
and because of lack of proper fore-
sight and business judgment many
of the agricultural colleges derived
but a small income from the original
land grant. Believing that the er-
rors of a few who had handled this
trust should not be visited upon the
young of our country seeking educa-
tion, Senator Morrill introduced a
supplementary bill increasing the in-
come to the agricultural colleges,
which passed August 30, 1890. By
this second act, money derived from
the sale of public lands to the amount
of fifteen thousand dollars was ap-
propriated to each state, this sum to
be increased by one thousand dol-
lars annually, until it should ag-
gregate twenty-five thousand dol-
lars, at which sum the annual appro-
priation should stand. Our agri-
cultural college receives a portion of this income.

Because of the government grant the cost of the agricultural college to the tax payers of the state has been exceedingly light; most of the expenditures thus far called for having gone into the construction of buildings.

I have entered into this brief history that our people may know how and under what circumstances their agricultural college was founded, and from whence a portion of its income is derived.

**Early Days of Our College.**

The government gift of lands was accepted by the university in 1866, at which time the university was reorganized and placed upon a broader and more secure foundation. Dr. W. W. Daniells, a graduate of the Michigan Agricultural college, was the first professor of agriculture. Practically no students applying for instruction Professor Daniells' time was gradually absorbed in the upbuilding of the chemical department, which had grown to such magnitude by the year 1880 that he asked the board of regents to be relieved of the care of the university farm, which was all there then was of the agricultural department. In 1880 I was asked to take charge of the botany in the state university, and the agriculture. Doubtless botany was named first in my duties for the reason that it was surmised that agriculture would occupy but little of my time, and it was important to keep me busy. When I came to the university there were no students asking for instruction, nor was there, aside from the farm with a limited amount of stock and tools, and a couple of wheel-barrow loads of books in the library, any evidence of a department or facilities for instruction.

Some farmers who now listen to me will recall those early days when in the meetings of the old state agricultural society in the capitol or the farmers' meetings, held at other points in the state, I was asked how many students there were in my department, sometimes I stated that I had one or two, or occasionally I was forced to admit that at that time there were none. Experience showed that with our limited facilities for agricultural education, and with the opportunities for employment but few young men would come to us for the four years' course of instruction, which was all that was then offered.

**Rapid Growth.**

Twelve years ago the board of regents directed the establishment of the short course in agriculture. This course provided brief, practical instruction in agriculture designed to meet the wants of young farmers who could be spared from the farms during the winter months. The first term found nineteen young men seeking instruction with us, and we were greatly encouraged with the prospect. For a time numbers increased each winter, then there was a decrease, brought about by less favorable agricultural conditions, and by the further fact that we still lacked the equipment and instructors required to make the course attractive to those whom we were seeking to instruct.

By the favorable action of the legislature, heartily supported by the board of regents, we were enabled to increase the number of instructors and improve our facilities, though we have not yet all that we wish or are needed. Our short course has grown until it now covers two winter terms of fourteen weeks each, and the outgrowth of the course known as the dairy school, provides instruction for a term of twelve weeks.

**Our Present Status.**

During the term just closed we have had 157 students in the short course, and 115 in the dairy course. Several college graduates have been students with us, and half a dozen young men are taking the long course in agri-
culture. In all, more than 275 students, representing 16 different states of the union, have received agricultural instruction this year at Madison.

During the first three years I was connected with the university I did not have even so much as an office in any of the university buildings. At last I was given three small rooms on the third floor of old south dormitory for an office, library and chemical laboratory. Having gained admission to a building, there was gradual growth and expansion until we acquired the whole structure, and a generous legislature has provided two additional buildings, so that now the college of agriculture occupies three of the university buildings. Our library has grown until it now numbers more than four thousand bound volumes. Instead of being obliged to teach all of the botany of the university, and constituting the sole representative for agricultural instruction I have now associated with me about twenty professors and instructors in agriculture during the winter months.

"The Hatch Bill."

In 1887 congress passed what is known as the "Hatch act," giving fifteen thousand dollars annually to each state in the union for the establishment of an experiment station. Confining our instruction almost wholly to the winter months, those professors who are engaged for the most part in teaching during that time have the remainder of the year for investigation. Wisconsin farmers are quite familiar with the work of our Experiment Station, and I will not enter into a description of it at this time. Some idea of the magnitude of our work may be gathered from the fact that last year over eight million pages of printed matter were distributed by the station to the farmers of Wisconsin.

Farmers' Institutes.

A dozen years ago our legislature performed what time is proving to be the wisest act standing to its credit—the establishment of the Farmers' Institutes, and placing these in the care of the University. In our triune system for the advancement of agriculture we have the Farmers' Institute instruction forming the base of the pyramid. Here all farmers and others studying agriculture who cannot attend the university find instruction and assistance. At the university facilities are provided for those who are gathered there to learn of agriculture. Finally, at the apex of the pyramid we have original investigation under the direction of the Experiment Station.