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SOME LIFELONG LESSONS LEARNED BY 4-H CLUB MEMBERS
IN WINNING AND LOSING

1935

A radio talk by Mr. George L. Farley, State Club Leader, Amherst, Massachusetts, delivered in the National 4-H Club Radio Program, October 5, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 57 associate NBC radio stations.

Good afternoon, 4-H Club members and friends. I want to open this talk by repeating to you the club pledge and as I repeat it will you please get its full meaning.

As a 4-H Club member I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service and my health to better living for my club, my community and my country.

Any young person who enrolls as a club member and agrees to do any one of the many projects offered in club work, and keeps constantly before him that club pledge cannot fail to get an all-round training in the educational theory that we learn by doing; but over the years, as I have watched thousands of young people enroll in club work, I am convinced that there is one other factor that must enter into the spirit of those who succeed, and that is a determination to stick to the task and make the most of every opportunity. In the few remaining minutes I want to draw out of the many a few illustrations.

Hilton was a 4-H boy who lived on the outskirts of a town. He enrolled in our dairy project. He was so situated that he could have only a limited number of cows and there was no possible way of increasing the size of the barn. He went to work on the problem of building up this small herd with high producers. Time prevented his establishing a milk route so he sold milk at the door at retail and what he did not dispose of in this way he sold at wholesale. At the end of his high school course when he was ready to go to college he sold a part of his herd. His bank account which he had built up during his high school course with the money which he received from the sale of his cows paid his way through college and left him at the end of his course a balance of some three hundred dollars. Today he is a county club agent.

Betty was a club girl in a small community in Massachusetts. Year after year she did her work hoping some day to be chosen as a delegate from her county to the state camp. Finally the day arrived and when she met me on the campus she said, "Mr. Farley, how long do you suppose I have been hoping to be chosen to this camp?" "Betty," I replied, "I do not know." "Well," she said, "Seven years, but here I am."

Our camp is held in July. She had graduated from high school the previous June and wanted to go to college. She was a bit shy in mathematics but was otherwise well prepared. She applied for admission to the Massachusetts State College and was not admitted because of her lack of preparation in mathematics. Later she went to New Hampshire and applied for admission to the State University. The freshman class had enrolled its full quota and the dean, looking over the credentials, told her but for that fact he would be glad to admit her. She was determined to get into college, however, and later got me to take her to Storrs, Connecticut, for admission to the State Agricultural College. We were told that they already had an enrollment of three more than

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their quota for freshman class, but would put her on the list and if any failed to come she would be accepted. This happened; she entered Connecticut State College, graduated in three and one-half years, is a county club agent. That she is a success is indicated by the fact that last spring she had a county round-up of more than 1200 4-H boys and girls.

Jimmie was a city boy but was determined to belong to a garden club. The only available land was the front yard, and he made such a success of this garden that he attracted the attention of a man owning a piece of property on the outskirts of the city, and Jimmie was given a good sized section where he raised vegetables for sale. This property was located more than a mile from his home.

First he took his products to market in a wheelbarrow, later in a four wheel cart, still later he bought a model T Ford and made it over into a truck. Later he joined a canning club and became an expert canner selling canned products. When he enrolled in the garden club he was a grammar school boy. He went on earning his way through high school and then through college. Today he is associated with one of the largest publishing houses in America and solicits advertising for the magazines published by his company. When he approaches companies selling seed, fertilizers, garden tools, glass jars, rubber rings or canned products, as he told a group of boys and girls last summer, he draws out of his experience as a club boy and talks intelligently because of his boyhood experiences.

These are only a few of the many stories which might be told of boys and girls who during the years have enrolled in 4-H club work and gone on until today they are successful in their work. But let me call to your attention the lessons which they teach. Hilton simply took advantage of his opportunity, did not hesitate because of restricted limitations, used his head for clear thinking, and built up a herd not on the basis of size but on the basis of production. He set his mind on his goal, a college education, stuck to the job and today is showing other boys how to make the most of what they have.

Betty would not take no for an answer and although she failed for admission to two colleges her spirit was not dampened. She persisted until she found a college that would accept her. The lesson which she learned as a club girl of working for seven years to be accepted as a delegate to the state camp continued to hold when she applied for admission to the college. Financial reasons drove her on to get her college education in as short a time as possible, and her attendance at her round-up indicates that she is putting something of the same spirit into the work which she is doing today.

In an entirely different project Jimmie shows the same spirit as Hilton in doing with what he had to work with. We also gain from his story the lesson that it is wise to do the thing which offers itself as an opportunity. It may seem a long cry from 4-H Club work to seeking advertisements for a magazine, but one can never tell what opportunities may offer themselves in life.

These stories prove beyond doubt that opportunities still offer themselves to young people who go after them and who make the most of what they have and learn the lesson of stick-to-it-ive-ness and determination.

"Let us then be up and doing
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing;
Learn to labor and to wait."

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