

Message

The owner of a major league baseball team recently told me about a member of his squad who could not read or write when he signed with the team about four years ago. His education is still very limited as he can barely read and his writing is confined to signing his name.

I asked the owner, "Is this man easier or harder to manage as a baseball player because of his great lack of education?" The answer was, "Much harder. As a ball player he belongs in the world where he now lives, but in other respects he would fit better in the mountain community from whence he came. Without the ability to read and to appreciate the kinds of information so commonly expressed in print, he does not know how to make profitable use of his time when he is not engaged in playing ball."

The story of this ball player illustrates the importance of education which in these modern days is hardly to be expressed in terms of value but rather in terms of necessity. We cannot live without air, food, and water. They are absolute necessities. In Minnesota there are times in the year when it would be very difficult to live without clothing and shelter. Hence we regard them as necessities. As society is now organized, education as a necessity, might be compared with clothing and shelter.

Agriculture has reached a state of development, which makes agricultural education or its equivalent a necessity, if the man on the land is to be successful at farming and country living. By agricultural education I mean a more or less general education needed by all men on which is built a special training designed to help a man in becoming proficient in farming and rural citizenship.

I sincerely hope you have this conception of agricultural education and that you have learned how to carry on in your educational advancement.

W. C. COFFEY.