

Agrarian Tradition vs. Modern Farm Business: Monitoring a ‘Debate’ in the (Old) Mennonite Church

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The agrarian tradition, dating back to ancient Greece, asserts that farming plays a role in society far beyond growing food. Indeed, it cultivates character in the lives of those who participate in it, developing virtues that are essential for life and membership in democratic society.¹ For centuries, Anabaptists stood firmly within that agrarian tradition, recognizing the ways that farm life shaped, for example, their children’s growth and strengthened their own relationships with the Creator through their interactions with God’s creation. For example, reflecting on the European Mennonites’ heritage of agricultural ingenuity, J. Winfield Fretz wrote:

To Mennonites farming is not merely an occupation; it is a cherished heritage handed down from generation to generation; it is looked upon as the best opportunity for living a satisfactory Christian life. Farm life encourages family life; it provides the bread of life from both the material and the spiritual point of view; it encourages a reverence for the land and for the rest of God’s living creation.²

In the early twentieth century, however, this traditional perspective was beginning to be challenged by a modernizing viewpoint that embraced “scientific” agriculture, formal agricultural education, and the idea of farming as a business. Mennonite modernizing viewpoints were influenced by contemporary non-Mennonite writings, including government agricultural publications. Mennonite opinions on farming within the (Old) Mennonite Church, the largest acculturated body of Mennonites in the United States, displayed considerable diversity even in the first third of the twentieth century. This diversity – what we might call a ‘debate’ between the traditional and the modernizing views – can be seen in farming-related articles between 1908 and 1930 in two Pennsylvania-based periodicals published by the (Old) Mennonite Church, the monthly *Christian Monitor* and the weekly *Gospel Herald*; it occurred well before the mid-twentieth-century “great transformation,” a period historians have often linked with full-scale modernity, and the shift from an agrarian to an industrial philosophy of agriculture.³ But it would be an ironic ‘debate’, for even the most progressive of the writers kept an old Anabaptist agrarian perspective in sight.

For centuries, Anabaptist farmers had been innovators. In Europe, the ability of Anabaptists to reclaim damaged lands in the Palatinate after the Thirty Years’ War, for example, had made them desirable tenants on large estates, ensuring them a livelihood after they were pushed off their own lands for their unpopular religious beliefs. Mennonites in both Europe and in the United States in the eighteenth century were on the cutting edge of agricultural innovation, employing such techniques as rotating crops, fertilizing with manure from livestock, irrigating natural meadows for pasture, planting clover as a forage crop, and utilizing soil amendments such as lime and gypsum.⁴ Their farming operations included a rich diversity of crops and livestock and involved the labour of the whole family.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, Mennonite farmers and community leaders within the (Old) Mennonite Church – mostly in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa – reconsidered this agrarian tradition. A rigorous discussion of best practices, the limits of capitalist farming, the promises of scientific farming, the need to keep old values, and the virtues of working close to nature at times filled the pages of the two church periodicals under consideration here.

It is important to recognize that the Mennonite ‘debate’ concerning how farming should be conducted and taught was part of a

larger conversation within the (Old) Mennonite Church – involving community leaders and farmers alike – about just how progressive Mennonites should be and how much of the surrounding culture they should adopt. Without being specifically identified as such, it was another instantiation of the struggle to maintain Anabaptist distinctiveness while embracing helpful innovation that might secure the foundation of simple farm life.

The *Christian Monitor*, a general-interest Mennonite magazine, was published monthly beginning in 1909 by the Mennonite Publishing House, owned by the (Old) Mennonite Church, and situated in Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Many of the agriculture-related articles draw upon and reflect ideas and movements in the wider secular society, including modern ideas on farming promoted by the US Department of Agriculture. Some of the articles in the *Monitor* are reprints from secular farming magazines. As we will see, the editorial agenda within the *Monitor* also played a key role in the approach to and coverage of agricultural topics. The *Christian Monitor* offers a glimpse into Mennonite thinking regarding progressive ideas on a range of pressing topics of the day, including rural out-migration, the importance of scientific farming and agricultural education, the authority of government farm agents and other farm experts, and, finally, the consideration of farming as a profit-driven business. The second newspaper, the *Gospel Herald*, was the official organ of the (Old) Mennonite Church; it had begun weekly publication at Scottdale in 1908, just a year before the more independent *Christian Monitor*. A consideration of both publications provides a fuller view of the Mennonite perspectives within the (Old) Mennonite Church on agriculture in the early part of the twentieth century than would either publication alone. Unless otherwise specified, articles referenced in this essay appear to have been written by Mennonites.

One event that influenced the consideration of agricultural issues in the early twentieth century in the United States was the completion in 1909 of the federal *Report of the Commission on Country Life*. The Commission had been appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt to study conditions of rural life and make recommendations to Congress regarding means of remedying the deficiencies it found. It observed “a widespread tendency for farmers to move to town,”⁵ a tendency that the *Report* proposed might result in an intellectual flight, an out-migration from rural areas that would lead to an ignorant rural population. Thus, as historian David B. Danbom has noted, “The nation would no longer have that vital pool of potential leaders in business and public life from

which it had always drawn,”⁶ and agricultural productivity would suffer. The *Report* concluded that “better farming, better living, and better business” were necessary for rural Americans to keep up with their urban counterparts.⁷ Concerns and ideas such as these were publicized widely after the *Report* was completed.

Mennonites were not unaffected by this movement. Indeed, a brief article about the *Report of the Commission on Country Life* was published in the *Christian Monitor* in March 1909.⁸ A debate ensued. Among submissions in the years after 1909, one by a Jacob K. Bixler of Elkhart, Indiana, outlined the argument in favour of a Mennonite embrace of modern agriculture. The article published in the *Gospel Herald* claimed that the Church had always been an initiator in movements that bettered the human condition, and this aim could be achieved without losing sight of spiritual needs. Indeed, Bixler argued that the church must embrace modern farming methods:

If the ideal of better farming, better business, and better living can be used to promote man’s welfare, if two bushels of grain may be grown where but one grew before, if more and better dairy cattle can be produced and the depleted soil thus fertilized and made fruitful ... and man be made to realize that these gifts are from God and that the Church is the vehicle by which they are brought about and through this men are turned to God and give their lives to the Church for service, then may the day be hastened and we may pray for largeness of heart to accept the challenge and by His grace and in His strength forward the movement.⁹

Thus, “better farming” and increased appreciation for the Church and religious faith seemed to be on a seamless continuum. Significantly though, greater productivity and a “better business” approach for farming also went hand in hand with better natural soil fertility and animal husbandry. For Bixler, modern ways could secure the agrarian values that were at the foundation of rural Mennonite life.

This linkage was not what the government had in mind when it spoke of a “better business” approach to farming. Consider, for example, its campaign to keep people from being drawn away to the city. To that end, it emphasized rural improvements such as school consolidation, electrification, and increasing the availability of modern household conveniences as ways to make country life more pleasant. The out-migration of young people from the farm to the city was also a critical issue for Mennonites, and it was frequently addressed in the *Christian Monitor*. Indeed, when the *Mon-*

itor introduced a monthly "Farm and Home" section in January 1912, the editors stated: "We [Mennonites] are decidedly a rural people. Our stronghold as a Church has been, is, and, we believe, will continue to be in the country districts. . . . Our attention should be directed toward the further spiritual and moral development of this field. To do this we must keep the majority of our young people in the country."¹⁰ In keeping with this editorial approach, Mennonite writers regularly connected rural life with morality; they saw "spiritual advantages" in the countryside.¹¹ Similar sentiments were offered in the *Gospel Herald*. Quoting John Greenleaf Whittier and the book of Job, in her March 1911 *Gospel Herald* article, Martha Shenk linked religious devotion and living close to nature. She notes that "birds and flowers have many lessons for us. They teach us of gentleness, of beauty, of the happiness of living simply, day by day, being cared for by our heavenly Father. . . . If our ears were unstopped we could hear a harmony of praise to the great Creator arising from all of Nature."¹²

More often, though, the farm was simply seen as "the pillar of the Church" and the place uniquely suited to preserve the Church's "peculiar and distinctive qualities"; it was free of the temptations of town and city.¹³ This dichotomy between the good country life and the evils of city life would become a recurrent theme in Mennonite writings in the following decades. For example, writing in the *Gospel Herald* in April 1913, J.S. Hartzler of Goshen, Indiana, asserted an unqualified dichotomous viewpoint: to his mind, "the country tends to better spiritual as well as better physical conditions," while "temptations" are simply an intrinsic part of city life.¹⁴

While some Mennonite contributors clearly appreciated the value of farm life, progressives within the Old Mennonite Church had more in mind than preserving Mennonite distinctives in a changing society. H. Frank Reist, the editor of the *Christian Monitor* from 1909 to 1920, for one, regularly reprinted articles from secular farming magazines that encouraged more efficient farming and the purchase of modern conveniences for the farm home. Typical headlines – "Profit Sinks," "Taking the Blinders Off of Jim," and "The Efficient Woman" – told the wider story.¹⁵ Reist, who has been described by historian Theron Schlabach as "rural-reconstruction-minded," also took an editorial perspective that clearly favored scientific agricultural education.¹⁶ The new methods of "scientific farming," he wrote in March 1913, were simply necessary to "keep abreast with the times and be rated successful." In editorials titled "Better Farming" and "The Science of Farm-

ing,” Reist insisted that special preparation was required for young people to “be efficient in their chosen profession,”¹⁷ and that the methods of scientific farming were necessary to feed the growing population, since there was no more available farmland. In a 1913 editorial, he asserted unequivocally: “The new agriculture demands specialization,” an emphasis on specific commodities, and thus, it also required specialized agricultural education.¹⁸ The call for “scientific farming” and specialized agricultural education was a frequent refrain in subsequent issues; writers regularly praised the benefits of agricultural experts who could solve all sorts of problems on the farm.¹⁹ Royden Loewen has observed that later in the century, “old order” or more traditional groups, such as the *Kleine Gemeinde* Mennonites of western Kansas, were “skeptical of the technical advice of government-funded, university-educated agricultural agents” and even then interacted with them only in order to survive in a rapidly changing agricultural economy. *Christian Monitor* contributors during this earlier time, in particular, did not display any such ambivalence.²⁰

Indeed, many articles within the *Christian Monitor* regarded government farm and county agents and publications in a positive light, especially when “scientific farming” coincided with “agrarian” values. For example, a 1909 discussion of topsoil loss to erosion in the *Monitor* was based on a government report and prescribed more careful and intensive small-scale farming, instead of “careless extensive farming.”²¹ It is unclear to what extent Mennonite farmers were practicing “careless extensive farming” or how much of this rhetoric merely reflected what was being said in secular or government farm publications. Certainly, none of the writers linked an acceptable, modern agriculture with full-scale capitalist farming ventures, ones that embraced a scale of economy or a profit-driven approach to agriculture; such developments would come later in the century.

Ironically, perhaps, the articles from government sources often coincided with Mennonite values of simultaneously producing more from the soil and improving its fertility. Over a 13-month period between April 1914 and May 1915, for example, four articles by two Mennonite writers, J.H. Peachy of Pennsylvania and Herbert Groh of Preston, Ontario, were devoted to the benefits of alfalfa and clover and featured such headlines as “Why Grow Alfalfa” and “The Importance of the Clovers for Farming.” Peachy argued that alfalfa was an excellent livestock feed and improved the soil, and while Groh pointed out that clover outperformed chemical fertilizers or animal manure. Peachy also approvingly cited experi-

ment station research on alfalfa and encouraged fellow readers to reach out to such agricultural ‘experts’ for assistance.²² One might wonder what had happened to the knowledge gained from Mennonite farm innovators of centuries past, who had used both clover and manure to enrich their land; coming from government sources, old wisdom gained new credibility.

Despite these expressed concerns with maintaining soil fertility, farming increasingly came to be perceived as a business, where efficiency and profitability were the key indicators of success. In 1912, a reprint titled “Keeping Farm Accounts,” from the secular farm magazine *Practical Farmer*, stressed the importance of good record keeping and how profitability was an indicator, perhaps the primary indicator, of a successful farm.²³ In her submission titled, “Some Attractions the Farm Offers to College Women,” Anna Kaufman Hess called on Mennonite farm wives with college educations not to abandon agriculture, but to use their education to push for specialization and efficiency; they were encouraged to keep records of farm production, to eliminate unprofitable work, and to hire labor to complete less-valuable tasks for which specific skill was not required.²⁴ These ideas echoed those of the national Country Life reformers who organized extension programs and farmers’ institutes to help modernize the countryside and thus keep more American youth on the farms. In the early part of the century, Mennonites subjected participation in agricultural associations and farm unions to theological critique on numerous occasions, and they concluded that they should not participate in these organizations; indeed, some writers even challenged attendance at farmers’ institutes in light of 1 Corinthians 10:31.²⁵ Yet no such critique of agricultural techniques or what constituted good farming – should it, for example, be subject to the same standards as business, or was it qualitatively different? – was apparent in the *Christian Monitor* or the *Gospel Herald*.

In 1913, the *Christian Monitor* editors invited opinions from farmers on three topics: “Scientific Farming,” “Agricultural Education,” or “Should Our Church Schools Teach Agriculture?”²⁶ The subsequent issues presented numerous responses from readers and special editorials with sharply defined viewpoints. In addressing the question of whether agriculture should be taught at Goshen College in Indiana, the main (Old) Mennonite Church college in the Midwest, the editors, following an overtly progressive policy, only printed responses from the 90% of respondents that favored this initiative.²⁷ Among the few negative comments that made their way into the *Monitor*, a Jacob Hartz of Pennsylvania advocated against

college agricultural degrees, and insisted that the use of “good farm papers and bulletins from our experimental colleges” was sufficient to learn agriculture on the farm. His perspective was met by a sharp editorial comment that compared agricultural education to medical education, asking, somewhat derisively, if Mennonites would be better off if they also rejected medical schools.²⁸ The comments of the ten percent who did *not* favor teaching agriculture at Goshen have been lost to history.

Ironically, the “debate” was not always between two opposing groups; indeed, there was no simple dichotomy, with one group favoring agricultural modernization and the other clinging to agrarian ways. One writer might well express agrarian views and at the same time advocate for a more “progressive” approach, and do so without invoking a theological critique. For example, in his March 1913 submission advocating for “agriculture in church schools,” S.H. Miller of Sugar Creek, Ohio, argued that the importance of character development on the farm during childhood and youth, an agrarian value, was not at odds with an approach to “farming conducted on scientific principles, in a systematic way, and coupled with the knowledge of economy.”²⁹ In the same issue Joseph W. Coffman of Virginia highlighted “scientific farming” as way of ending traditional, folk-based, and now obsolete farm practices, such as using “the signs of the Zodiac, Ember days, and the change of the moon, etc., as the principal features to consider in tilling the ground, planting the seed, and in harvesting the crops.”³⁰ Clearly, a desire to move beyond these folk-based strategies and farm in ways that would maintain or improve the health of the land, had taken root among the acculturated (Old) Mennonites; even so, the Mennonite agricultural heritage from Europe had been one of careful attention to the health of the soil, so perhaps this was just a renewed emphasis on that heritage, now described in “scientific” terms.

But this did not mean that these writers were dismissing older, communitarian values. In fact, two letter writers perceived that scientific agricultural education at Goshen would be *qualitatively* different from what students could obtain at a state agricultural college. In an April 1913 submission, an eastern Pennsylvania writer outlined a link between science and faith. He commented: “[Agriculture] is a science second to no other. . . . Moreover it is a vocation tending to bring a person in closer touch with his Maker. I always think of a farmer as a partner of the Almighty in feeding humanity. The realms [sic] of agriculture is second only to the Heavenly realm.”³¹ Just a month later, D.A. Yoder of Elkhart, Indi-

ana, argued that while it was important that “young people” need to be prepared to understand plant and animal life and soil science, “too often [they] are taught only the financial side of the question, while the beauty and the advantages to spiritual life are wholly neglected”; an agricultural department in the Church schools, he insisted, would address this omission.³² These voices called for a combination of the best of both approaches: holding fast to the agrarian values of the Mennonite past, while learning the skills necessary to farm in concert with nature.

Indeed, Goshen College did institute an agricultural program and college farm for several years. College President J.E. Hartzler provided an update in the *Gospel Herald* in 1915: “The teaching of agriculture shall not be a matter of theory only, but one of practice. The farming must be scientific and up-to-date and at the same time must be on an economic basis. The purpose shall not be so much to experiment as to work out the theories and experiments presented by the State Experiment stations.”³³ Science and the agrarian community need not contradict one another.

After the start of World War I, the *Christian Monitor* saw a substantial decrease in the number of farming-related articles. Other than two articles on the beneficial use of clover to improve the soil, most farm-related articles were reprints from non-Mennonite publications. But even before the end of the war, the *Monitor* reintroduced agriculture as a subject, although now with a decided turn away from a focus on technique, particularly scientific technique. The debate on the scientific nature of agriculture seemed over, and now a reassertion of farm simplicity returned. In the May 1918 issue, for example, Clayton F. Yake of Pennsylvania wrote about the deep satisfaction found in simply working the soil, particularly in the spring, with the newly-turned earth underfoot: “Whenever [man’s] spirit has been distraught and sore he has turned back to the land and with its soil in his fingers and odors in his nostrils has found healing and calm.”³⁴ It seems appropriate for a wartime reflection, but such ideals continued to be expressed after the end of the war.

Reist ended his tenure as *Christian Monitor* editor in 1920, and C.F. Derstine took the reins in 1923. Indeed, articles in the mid-to-late 1920s had a decidedly more agrarian viewpoint. Consider two articles and one editorial from 1924. In one, Nelson Kauffman of Minot, North Dakota, wrote about the “Appeals of Farm Life,” and in another, A.L. Rowe outlined “A Day with Nature and the Poets,” after which came an editorial rejoinder titled, “God Made the Country.” The letters and the editorial focused on the connection

between God and the farm and countryside, emphasizing the beauty of creation and the independence and flexibility that farming allowed, especially in comparison with other occupations.³⁵

But these articles also signaled the embrace of agrarian social and political values. In his submission "Quietness in Rural Life," from January 1926, O.N. Johns of Ohio extolled farm life as providing a solitary place to pray (as Jesus prayed) and observed that the farmer could meditate while working in the fields. Johns also reflected on the value of farm life in developing the character of the children who were raised there, particularly how it was able to inculcate the qualities of "individuality, stability, [and] integrity," characteristics that were intrinsic to democratic citizenship.³⁶ Similarly, Silvanus Yoder of Goshen reminded readers of the *Gospel Herald* in September 1925 that although a boy was useful on a farm, what was most important was the effect of the *farm* on the *boy*; its resources must be used "in forming the character of an honest, industrious Christian."³⁷ Anabaptist values of humility and simplicity seemed to have been overtaken by the values of hard work and thrift that were critical to formation as citizens in a democracy.³⁸ Finally, a submission by J.D. Burkholder Jr. in July 1929 included a two-part reflection on "God in Nature," and then a poem encouraging people to "stay on the farm"; among the reason given for this imperative was that farm-life provided "safety" and the best opportunity for "freedom"; again, it would appear that old Anabaptist values were being recast with vocabulary of post-war America.³⁹

Overall, though, the debate on scientific farming had run its course. Although Editor Derstine promised in 1929 that "articles on the Home and Farm [would] . . . have a prominent place in the paper," suggesting a support for a debate on best practices, few such pieces appeared. In 1930, for example, just a single article, titled "The Book Farmer," praised scientific farming, recommending that an agriculture course be offered in high school; otherwise, these articles were home-related.⁴⁰

In conclusion, although there was still a strong agrarian philosophy alive and well in the (Old) Mennonite Church in the early twentieth century, movement in US agriculture toward increasing efficiency and productivity and treating farming as a business were being accepted by Mennonites. In contrast to the old order and more traditionalist Mennonite communities, many *Gospel Herald* and *Christian Monitor* writers in the early part of the twentieth century willingly engaged with government experts. The push for agricultural education and scientific farming, one instantiation

of the movement toward “progress,” was joined by an uncritical acceptance of agricultural experts and their techniques. Ironically, the reason for this acceptance was, no doubt, related to the fact that the “science” of farming in the first third of the twentieth century coincided with agrarian values of sustainable agriculture and close-knit rural community. This equation no longer held in the 1950s, for example, when agricultural progress became linked to the industrialization of agriculture. By that time at least some members of the wider Mennonite community in the United States were raising concerns about the extent to which economics – rather than faith – was molding their lives and communities. At the 1958 Farm Study Conference hosted by the Western District Education Committee, for example, modern farm ways came under theological scrutiny.⁴¹ By this point, the very idea of “scientific” farming had been rephrased and now farmers were pressured to implement the latest technology, chemicalized farming and techniques to keep up with an increasingly globalized market. Unlike the early twentieth-century ‘debate’, the debate at mid-century specifically raised the question of how Christian virtues could continue to be cultivated by participation in farm life. By the 1950s church leaders began to call for a theological critique of modern agriculture. They spoke of faith informing all of life, and argued that rigorous critique and analysis would help keep Mennonites from discarding practices or engaging in activities whose consequences could only be fully known in hindsight. But it was a different “modern” than the one members of the Old Mennonite Church had encountered in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Notes

- ¹ James A. Montmarquet, *The Idea of Agrarianism: From Hunter-Gatherer to Agrarian Radical in Western Culture* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press, 1989), viii. For a more detailed treatment of agrarian philosophy overall, see Paul B. Thompson, *The Agrarian Vision: Sustainability and Environmental Ethics*, Culture of the Land: A Series in the New Agrarianism (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010).
- ² J. Winfield Fretz, “Farming Is Our Heritage,” *Dairy Service Bulletin*, December 1945, 2.
- ³ Royden Loewen, *Diaspora in the Countryside: Two Mennonite Communities and Mid-Twentieth-Century Rural Disjuncture*, Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Thompson, *Agrarian Vision*, 258.

- ⁴ Rebecca Horner Shenton, "The Cross and the Plow: Fertile Soil for a Mennonite Ethic of Food and Farming" (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2014), chapter 1.
- ⁵ *Report of the Commission on Country Life* (New York: Sturgis and Walton, 1917 [1911]), 38.
- ⁶ David B. Danbom, *Born in the Country: A History of Rural America*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 169.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 170.
- ⁸ *Report of the Commission on Country Life*; "Roosevelt and the Farmer," *Christian Monitor* (hereafter *CM*), March 1909, 93.
- ⁹ Jacob K. Bixler, "Good Farming Dependent upon Good Churches," *Gospel Herald*, September 7, 1916, 437, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/gospelherald191609kauf>.
- ¹⁰ "Farm and Home," *CM*, January 1912, 410.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹² Martha Shenk (Hesston, KS), "Our Schools and Schoolmasters," *Gospel Herald*, March 16, 1911, 794, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/stream/gospelherald191003kauf#page/794/mode/2up>.
- ¹³ J.W. Yoder, "The Farm Home, III," *CM*, March 1912, 474. Responses by readers P. J. Blosser and S. H. Miller in "Symposium: Agriculture and Church Schools," *CM*, March 1913, 80. The column disappeared entirely in 1916, with only occasional agriculture-related articles after that time.
- ¹⁴ J.S. Hartzler, "Our Young People: City and Country," *Gospel Herald*, April 3, 1913, 10-11, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/gospelherald191306kauf>.
- ¹⁵ *CM*, April 1915, 123; July 1915, 219; November 1915, 344.
- ¹⁶ Theron Schlabach, *Gospel Versus Gospel: Mission and the Mennonite Church, 1863-1944*, Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1980), 273. Undoubtedly, the influence of Noah E. Byers (Goshen College President from 1910 to 1913), who also served on the editorial staff, contributed to this editorial emphasis.
- ¹⁷ *CM*, March 1913, 68; *CM*, April 1913, 124-25.
- ¹⁸ "The Demands of the New Agriculture," *CM*, April 1913, 100-1.
- ¹⁹ See, e.g., C.B. Blosser, "Value of Science to the Farmer," *CM*, April 1913, 110; J. H. Peachey, "Farm Efficiency," *CM*, April 1913, 123.
- ²⁰ Loewen, *Diaspora*, 8; J.H. Peachy, "Alfalfa Notes," *CM*, April 1914, 523; see other articles, cited below.
- ²¹ "A Great Waste," *CM*, March 1909, 69.
- ²² J.H. Peachy, "Why Grow Alfalfa?," *CM*, April 1914, 457; J.H. Peachy, "Alfalfa Notes," *CM*, April 1914, 523; Herbert Groh, "The Importance of the Clovers in Farming I," *CM*, April 1915, 122-23; Herbert Groh, "The Importance of the Clovers in Farming II," *CM*, May 1915, 155, 158.
- ²³ *CM*, May 1912, 538.
- ²⁴ *CM*, April 1913, 115-16.
- ²⁵ This Scripture states, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (KJV). For examples of this critique, see George J. Lapp (South English, IA), "Labor Organizations and Our Attitude toward Them," *Herald of Truth*, October 6, 1904, 325-26, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/heraldoftruth41unse>; "Is It Wrong to Attend Farmers' Institutes?" *Gospel Herald*, February 23, 1911, page 744, ac-

- cessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/gospelherald191003kauf>.
- ²⁶ “Agricultural Education,” *CM*, February 1913, 48.
- ²⁷ “Answers to Questions,” *CM*, April 1913, 116.
- ²⁸ Jacob Hartz, “Learn Agriculture on the Farm,” *CM*, April 1913, 125.
- ²⁹ S.H. Miller in “Symposium: Agriculture in Church Schools,” *CM*, March 1913, 80.
- ³⁰ Joseph W. Coffman in “Symposium: Agriculture in Church Schools,” *CM*, March 1913, 81.
- ³¹ “Answers to Question,” *CM*, April 1913, 116-17. James C. Juhnke, *Vision, Doctrine, War: Mennonite Identity and Organization in America: 1890–1930*, Mennonite Experience in America (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1989), 172-73, eBook Academic Collection (EBSCOhost).
- ³² D.A. Yoder in “Symposium: Agriculture in Church Schools,” *CM*, March 1913, 81.
- ³³ J.E. Hartzler, “Our School of Agriculture,” *Gospel Herald*, April 22, 1915, 62, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/gospelherald191508kauf>. Hartzler noted that the program was to begin on September 15, 1915. The Goshen College program lasted only a few years, proving to be financially unsustainable, and the College as a whole also suffered financial difficulties. Hartzler resigned in 1918.
- ³⁴ Clayton F. Yake (Manheim, PA), “Echoes of Life: A Plowed Field,” *CM*, May 1918, 514.
- ³⁵ Nelson Kauffman (Minot, ND), “Appeals of Farm Life,” *CM*, July 1924, 506-7; A.L. Rowe, “A Day with Nature and the Poets,” *CM*, February 1924, 446; “God Made the Country,” *CM*, February 1924, 424.
- ³⁶ O.N. Johns, “Quietness in Rural Life,” *CM*, January 1926, 20-21.
- ³⁷ Silvanus Yoder, “The Boy on the Farm,” *Gospel Herald*, September 3, 1925, 454, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/gospelherald192518kauf>.
- ³⁸ The communal perspective was not completely abandoned, even though it is not present in these publications in later years. Publications originating from Civilian Public Service during the Second World War and *Mennonite Community* magazine after the war advocated a return to Mennonite community values. For an analysis of this perspective, see Shenton, “The Cross and the Plow,” chapter 2.
- ³⁹ “Stay on the Farm,” *CM*, July 1929, 209.; J.D. Burkholder, Jr., “God in Nature,” *CM*, September 1929, 258, 285.
- ⁴⁰ “The Christian Monitor for 1930,” *CM*, December 1929, 387; M.T. Brackbill, “The Book Farmer,” *CM*, January 1930, 30-31.
- ⁴¹ “A General Statement of Findings,” in *Farm Study Conference* (Newton, KS: Western District Education Committee, 1958), 2.