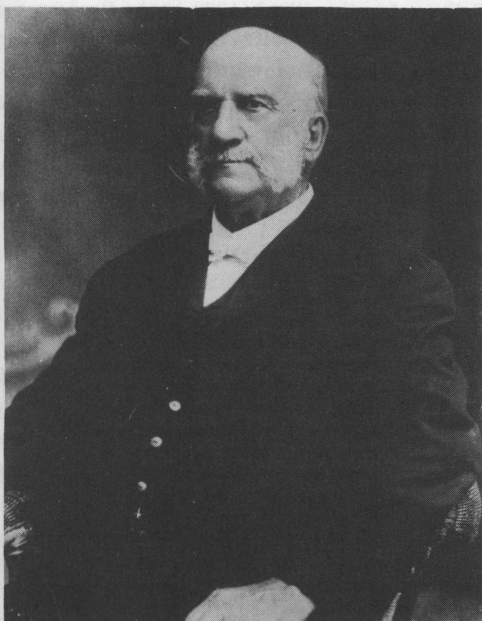


Select Quotations From Dr. Seaman A. Knapp

Published on the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of America's Great
Agricultural Statesman, Father of Cooperative Farm and
Home Demonstration Work
December 16, 1933



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

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Select Quotations From

Calendar of the Life of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp

BORN—Schroon, Essex County, New York, December 16, 1833.

COLLEGE—Union College, Schenectady, New York, 1856, with Phi Beta Kappa honors.

TAUGHT SCHOOL—New York and Vermont, 1856-1866; Iowa College for the Blind, 1869-1875; Professor of Agriculture, Iowa State College, 1880-1883.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT—Iowa State College, 1884.

WROTE EXPERIMENT STATION ACT—In Iowa, 1882.

COLONIZATION LEADER—Southwestern Louisiana, 1885-1903.

PLANT EXPLORER—1885-1903—Founded Southwestern Rice Industry.

INAUGURATED THE DEMONSTRATION—Walter Porter's farm, Kaufman county, Texas, 1903.

ORGANIZED DEMONSTRATION SYSTEM OF U. S. D. A.—Houston, Texas, 1904.

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION LEADER—1903-1911.

DIED—April 1, 1911.

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1914—Smith-Lever Act followed by organization of Extension Service in every State.

1933—Extension Service Administers Farm Adjustment Act in counties.

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

To All Who May Read These Lines-

THIS WILL INTRODUCE to you my friend, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, who is still young on his hundredth birthday. Some of you knew him but some have grown up since he lived among us. Others coming later will need to know him for he thought and built for the ages.

Dr. Knapp was an educational reformer. He went direct to the farm and home and made teachers and leaders out of the people who lived there. He didn't talk down to them but rather induced them to make their own object lessons. They then became centers of influence. That was a reformation both in approach and method.

Dr. Knapp built an organization which works where the people live. It is not a lecture bureau traveling back and forth from institutions. He lived to see his machine tested out with successful and efficient models in all the Southern States. He envisioned its establishment in every state and the spread of the idea to all civilized nations.

Some most thoughtful citizens have advanced the thought that if all the Extension workers had fully grasped the principles of his philosophy and had earnestly carried them out agriculture would not now be in such great distress. Well, reforms require time. It takes several official generations for truth to permeate. In a comparatively brief period the demonstrations have shown their worth in every phase of farm and home life. They are growing in magnitude, content and power. Adult and youth have proved the process in war, peace and depression.

Dr. Seaman A. Knapp was patient, pleasant, persuasive and progressive. He was interested in every person he met. A master of English, he was as eloquent in talking to one as to a thousand. The following quotations are representative of the beauty of his language and the character of his thought.

O. B. MARTIN, Director.

On Agricultural Re-adjustment

LET IT BE THE HIGH PRIVILEGE of this great and free people to establish a republic where rural pride is equal to civic pride, where men of the most refined taste and culture select the rural villa, and where the wealth that comes from the soil finds its greatest return in developing and perfecting that great domain of nature which God has given to us as an everlasting estate

The time is opportune for this great work. Friends will rise up to aid it. Providence, destiny cannot be thwarted. The revolution must continue until the problems of poverty are solved, the measure of human happiness full and the reproach that has hung over our rural domain, by reason of unthrift, ignorance and poverty shall be wiped out and America shall possess a yeomanry worthy of a great nation. In advocating a campaign of demonstration for increasing the earning power of the people on the farms I would not detract from any line of spiritual or intellectual uplifting. Churches must be established, schools and colleges maintained, science taught and country betterments promoted, but they must keep step with increasing productive power. I am simply calling in question the possibility of obtaining all these grand results of a high civilization without any money to pay the cost and without earning power to sustain them

He made a great crop, but the man grew faster than the crop. There can be no reform until the man begins to grow, and the only possible way for him to grow is by achievement—doing something of which he is proud. He is a common farmer. What line of achievement is open to him but doing better work and securing greater results on his own farm? As soon as the man begins to grow he will work for every rural betterment

Until every farmer and planter shall be so well instructed that he will mold the soil to his profit and the seasons to his plans, till he shall be free from the vassalage of mortgage and the bondage of debt and become a toiler for pleasure, for home, for knowledge, and for country; until capital and labor shall unite under the leadership of knowledge and equitably divide the increment of gain. Your mission is to solve the problem of

poverty, to increase the measure of happiness, and to the universal love of country add the universal knowledge of comfort, and to harness the forces of all learning to be useful and needful in human society.

On Demonstrations

TO READJUST AGRICULTURE, to reconstruct the country home and to place rural life upon a higher plane of profit, comfort, culture, influence and power

There is only one effective way to reach and influence the farming classes, and that is by object lessons

It is an easy proposition to enlist the masses in the army of reform, if wisely managed; but impossible, if undertaken along the lines usually pursued. Frequently the first farmer in a community where a demonstration is to be made is secured by furnishing some improved seed and showing how to plant and work it so as to maintain its vigor and enable him to sell seed to his neighbors. With success in his first trial he becomes an earnest advocate of the cooperative plan. Thus the influences gather force and soon the reform has attained mighty proportions and a State has been revolutionized. A few demonstration farms scattered throughout the country,—say five or six, such as would be the case where one agent had charge of seven or eight counties,—do not create sufficient public sentiment and moral force to change the long-established usages of the masses. There must be at least five or six demonstration farms and quite a number of cooperators in each township so that practically we reach every neighborhood, arouse interest and competition everywhere, and arouse the whole community. To do this requires at least one agent in each county.

Counsel to Agents

YOU CAN CREATE a love of investigation and give it direction. You can enlarge the knowledge of the people in common things and thus lay the foundation of common sense. At your instance, fingers will touch the lines of deftness, mechanical skill will become universal, and thrift and alertness will transform the toilers into captains of industry

Do not go before your people with an elaborate program. The average man like the crow cannot count more than three. Do the next thing

Your value lies not in what you can do, but in what you can get the other people to do

One of the foundation principles of our work is that the farmer should raise the food for the family and for the farm stock so that his principle cash crop may be all profit. If your people will take that as an axiom to live up to, I believe that it will help them

Through the tomato plant you will get into the home garden and by means of canning you will get into the farm kitchen; it will then depend upon your tact, judgment, common sense and devotion to the work as to what you may accomplish for the women and girls in the home

Public opinion is brought into harmony and made forceful by the support of the press and the cooperation of the best farmers and leading merchants and bankers

The power which transformed the humble fishermen of Galilee into mighty apostles of truth is ever present and can be used as effectively today in any good cause as when the Son of God turned His footsteps from Judea's capital and spoke to the way-side children of poverty.

On the Home

A COUNTRY HOME, be it ever so plain, with a Father and Mother of sense and gentle culture, is nature's university, and is more richly endowed for the training of youth than Yale or Harvard

It is also realized that the great force that readjusts the world originates in the home. Home conditions will ultimately mold the man's life

The home eventually controls the viewpoint of a man; and you may do all that you are a mind to in schools, but unless you reach in and get hold of that home and change its conditions you are nullifying the uplift of the school. We are reaching for the home

The farm must be made a place of beauty, so attractive that every passing stranger inquires: "Who lives in that love-

ly home?" The house is of minor consideration—the gorgeous setting of trees and shrubbery holds the eye

If much can be done for boys to interest and instruct them in their life work, more can be done for girls. Teach them to mend and sew and cook; how to doctor; how to dress a wound or make a ligature; how to adorn the simple home and make it appear like a palace; how by a simple arrangement the environment of the home can be transferred into a place of beauty. In the United States the art of cooking is mainly a lost art. There are communities where not to be dyspeptic is to be out of fashion. If we could have some lessons on how to live royally on a little; how to nourish the body without poisoning the stomach; and how to balance a ration for economic and healthful results, there would be a hopeful gain in lessening the number of bankrupts by the kitchen route.

On Education

OUR GREATEST NEED being a wide knowledge of common things, the teacher who really enters into country life and seizes its opportunities for developing the resources of the country, for increasing the harvests, improving the landscapes, brightening the homes and flooding the people with knowledge about helpful things, will never want for friends nor for places to teach. How joyfully will such a teacher be welcomed! The sound of her footsteps on the approaching walk will be sweeter music to the cottage inmates than ever came from organ or piano even under the touch of genius

Mere school teaching merely instructs; it rarely reforms.

What can you, teachers, do to help our rural conditions? Everything. You are an essential part of the greatest of all universities—the home. You have charge of the extension courses. You can inspire in youth a love of knowledge and make all its avenues look delightful. You can unlock the books, which are treasure houses of human wisdom, and give them a golden key. You can cause the soil to become more responsive to the touch of industry and the harvest more abundant to meet the measure of a larger hope. You can add to the comforts of the home, shape its environment into lines of beauty and increase its attractiveness, till the home shall become the greatest magnet of our people.

Anecdotes of Dr. Knapp

AT SIX O'CLOCK in the morning just before an important day's conference with the Governor and other state officials the President of the Agricultural College and other college authorities, Dr. Knapp came into the adjoining room in the hotel where one of his men had been sleeping and asked: "Have you figured out just how things are going to happen today?" "No," his associate said, "I have not." "Well," said Dr. Knapp, "You don't have to be a brilliant man to succeed in the world. All you have to do is to think ahead of the crowd."

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THE INCIDENT which best illustrates the spirit and philosophy of Dr. Knapp's democracy occurred when he was in British India at the time he visited the Orient to make the rice investigations. He was traveling on the train, when it stopped at a station where thousands of people had assembled. They were making obeisance and doing homage to one man. They bowed down to him and kissed his garments. The man came into the car where Dr. Knapp was and took a seat opposite him. Many folks followed and placed flowers all about him and then left him in his glory. Dr. Knapp thought to himself: "This is too much for one man so I'll look out of the window and not appear to notice him." He did this for a few miles, but he soon saw that the distinguished personage was restive under such inattention. Dr. Knapp seemed very much interested in the crops and landscape. Finally, the Hindu ruler, for such he was, could not stand it any longer, so he sent over his card. Dr. Knapp returned the courtesy. The ruler then came over and introduced himself by saying: "I am So and So of such a city and province of this country." The reply was: "I am Seaman A. Knapp of Lake Charles, Louisiana, United States of America." "But I am a rajah and the ruler of fifteen millions of people," said he. "I am a maharajah and a joint sovereign of eighty millions of people," replied Dr. Knapp.

The Hindu sovereign took another tack; he said: "I have the power of life and death over my subjects."

Dr. Knapp said: "I have the power to give life and hope to my people and I do not want the power of death over them." The rajah became intensely interested in the methods of democracy of the American Republic, and Dr. Knapp, after giving him further information, went on his mission of service to his fellowmen.

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WALTER C. PORTER traveled with Dr. S. A. Knapp quite a bit after Mr. Porter had put on his demonstration and Dr. Knapp was getting his work started. Mr. Porter said one day, "Dr. Knapp, you talk a great deal about an independent farmer. What is your idea of an independent farmer?" Dr. Knapp replied, "He is a man who in a case of a total crop failure would have enough to carry on at least another year."