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EFFECTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN RURAL SCHOOL PATRONS  
||

AND THE SCHOOLS

by

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Effective Cooperation Between Rural School Patrons  
and the Schools.

INTRODUCTION.

The late Dr. Harper once said that the rural school question was the coming question in education, and the investigations of the Country Life Commission seem to verify this statement. The Commission reports: "In every part of the United States there seems to be one mind, on the part of those capable of judging, on the necessity of redirecting our rural schools<sup>1</sup>."

The statement is further verified by the fact that in 1909, ten states had commissions searching out the causes of the wretched condition of schools in the country and villages. It is therefore fitting that a subject that concerns over fifty per cent of the population of the United States should receive some study. As a partial aid to the solution of this problem this study has been undertaken.

The report further states that "There must not be only a fuller scheme of public education, but a new kind of education adapted to the real needs of the farming people. The country

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1. Report of Country Life Commission, p.53.



schools are to be so redirected that they shall educate their pupils in terms of their daily life. - - - This means redoubled efforts for better country schools and a vastly increased interest in the welfare of country boys and girls on the part of those who pay the school taxes<sup>1</sup>."

The Commission emphasizes throughout the report the need of community effort and the great necessity of learning to work together, and this is the point which the author would emphasize in this partial solution of the problem - the cooperation of rural school patrons and the schools.

That there is now a lack of this cooperation is shown in the short terms, low tax rates, poor teachers, poor buildings, and the present state of arrested development of the rural schools.

No one would deny that the country boy and girl are entitled to the best educational advantages offered in the best city schools; yet, while the city schools have improved their courses of study, erected fine buildings, and are under careful supervision, the country schools have made but little progress in the last thirty years. One of the Reports to the Country Life Commission dealing with New York state says, - "The great stumbling block in the way of improvement has been and still continues to be

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1. Report of Country Life Commission, p.18, Senate Documents, Vol.21, No.705.



the fathers and mothers of the very children who are cheated most in the name of education. Country people present a curious inconsistency in their attitude toward education. No people have sacrificed more to send their children away to the high school and college; yet toward the school at their threshold they are indifferent<sup>1</sup>:"

That the same thing is true in Missouri is shown in the Report of Public Schools for 1910.

Of the county superintendents who reported on the most pressing educational needs of their counties, 33 per cent answered directly that cooperation between school patrons and the schools was needed. A large per cent of the remainder mentioned needs that could be easily remedied if cooperation did exist.<sup>2</sup>

That the problem is an important one is shown by the attention that it is receiving in Mothers' Congresses, the National Educational Association and local teachers' associations, women's clubs, farmers' institutes, and even in the Conferences of Charities and Corrections.

The writer believes that this need of cooperation is felt by both the teachers and patrons in rural districts, yet neither of them seem to know just how to proceed to remedy existing conditions. The writer believes

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1. Colliers 43: p.24 for June 19,1909.
  2. Sixty-first Missouri Report of Public Schools, 1910, pp.201-258.



that there are thousands of earnest rural school teachers who are anxious to secure the cooperation of patrons, but do not know how to reach them; that there are patrons, who, though conservative, are anxious to improve the schools and only need some one to say, "Here lies your opportunity; do thus and so"; and further, that there are women's clubs and other organizations that stand ready to aid in any way possible to have the rural school fulfil its mission. The one great thing needed is an outline of some definite method of procedure.

Most of the literature on the subject is of a somewhat general nature and arouses a feeling that something must be done at once, and yet attempts no definite lines of solution, so the reader really gets nowhere.

With a view to showing some definite solutions of the problem as carried out in various places and to suggesting a few others from the standpoint of one who was born and raised in the country, attended and later taught a country school, this study has been made.

The writer believes that there are three great factors in the solution of this problem, - the county superintendent, the teacher, and the patrons. Each factor has its own special function to perform - each of them is of equal importance, yet none of them can succeed in solving the problem alone. They must have the assistance and cooperation of the others.



The following paper is therefore divided into three sections:

"The County Superintendent as a Factor."

"The Teacher as a Factor."

"The School Patrons as Factors."

The study is further supplemented with illustrations and with a section on "A Study of Problems in Macon County."

#### SECTION I.

##### The County Superintendent as a Factor.

In securing cooperation between rural school patrons and the schools there is no more important factor than the county superintendent. He is looked up to as the head of the teaching profession; he counsels, advises, and directs the plans of the teachers in reaching rural patrons. And on the other hand, in Missouri, being elected by the patrons themselves, he stands in a position where he may be a most influential power in interesting the patrons in the schools.

He must not only be intellectually and professionally qualified, but he must be a leader directing the work of school officers, awakening the sympathy and arousing the interest of patrons. He must have a controlling influence in the selection of teachers, in the erection of



school buildings, especially as concerns sanitation and hygiene, and in general school work throughout the county.

If the best results are to be accomplished the office should offer a career for which a good man would be warranted in making a careful educational and professional preparation; a man should be able to enter it purely on the basis of merit; the position should never be awarded as charity; and the educational function of the position should be made paramount. Unfortunately in Missouri these conditions do not exist. The man elected must be a resident of the county, and too often he is elected on a political basis. A superintendent thus elected cannot hope to secure the cooperation of all the patrons - some are prejudiced toward him on political grounds and too often his qualifications are not sufficient to overcome these tendencies.

But the question is how can a good county superintendent secure the cooperation of school patrons.

In the first place he has the supervision, at least in name, of all the rural school teachers. While he can not carry out plans in detail, still he directs and inspires the teachers in matters referred to in the following section. He is the one who calls the attention of both teacher and patrons to the needs of the school.



While his visits to the school once or twice a year do not make his work as effective as it should be, he can note conditions and suggest improvements. In these visits there are at least three things that he should observe:

First: the external conditions of the school. The condition of the roads, grounds, outbuildings, and wells should be noted. He should see that ample play space is provided, that the well is tightly covered, and that good drinking water is provided. If the roads are not as good as they might be, he should interest the road overseer and the patrons in the good roads movement. The Missouri county superintendent who wishes can, according to a circular letter sent out by Superintendent Gass dated December 1, 1910, secure a lecturer by writing to Mrs. Frank De Garmo, St. Louis, Missouri, who is in charge in Missouri of the "Good Roads for Child-Welfare Department of the National Congress of Mothers". The United States Department of Agriculture through its Office of Good Roads, has most generously offered to send a Missouri woman as a special agent of the government to go from school to school to lecture on the subject of "Good Roads and their value to the Home and School." She will give stereoptican views and "ocular demonstrations" of the various phases of interest to farmers and their families



in connection with, or as the outgrowth of, "Good Roads." Here is an opportunity of a free lecture to patrons on a subject of vital interest to them and to the school.

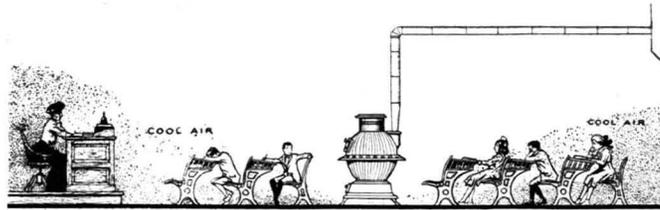
If the grounds are treeless and unsightly he should suggest the observance of Arbor Day and the inauguration of school gardens. At a parent-teachers' association he should have the question discussed and definite plans formulated to carry out the suggestions.

If the outbuildings are a menace to the moral health of the community, and in most rural schools this is true, a campaign should be inaugurated for an improvement at once.

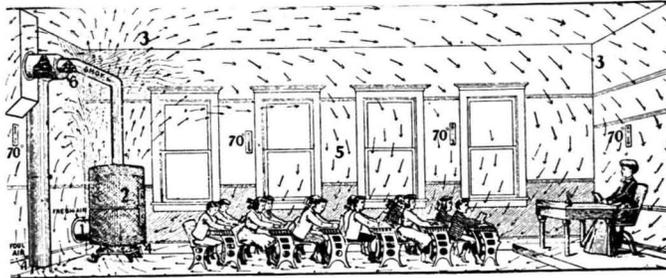
It is an excellent plan to arrange for a meeting with the school board and teacher at the time of his visit, and matters needing immediate attention should be pointed out.

In the second place he should observe the internal conditions - the ventilation, the lighting, the condition of the walls, condition of the floor etc. If the heating and ventilating system is poor he should urge the board, as many county superintendents in Missouri have done, to install a Waterbury or Smith system at a slight expense. (See Plate I) If the light does not come from the rear and the left he should suggest to the board that a change

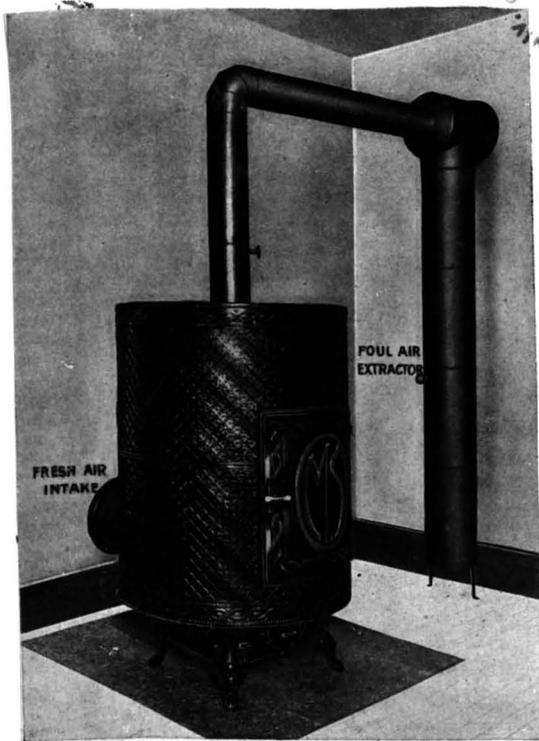




Uneven heat, no ventilation with a stove.



Even heat, perfect ventilation with a Smith System.



Courtesy of the Manuel-Smith Co., Manufacturers,  
THE SMITH SYSTEM COMPLETE.

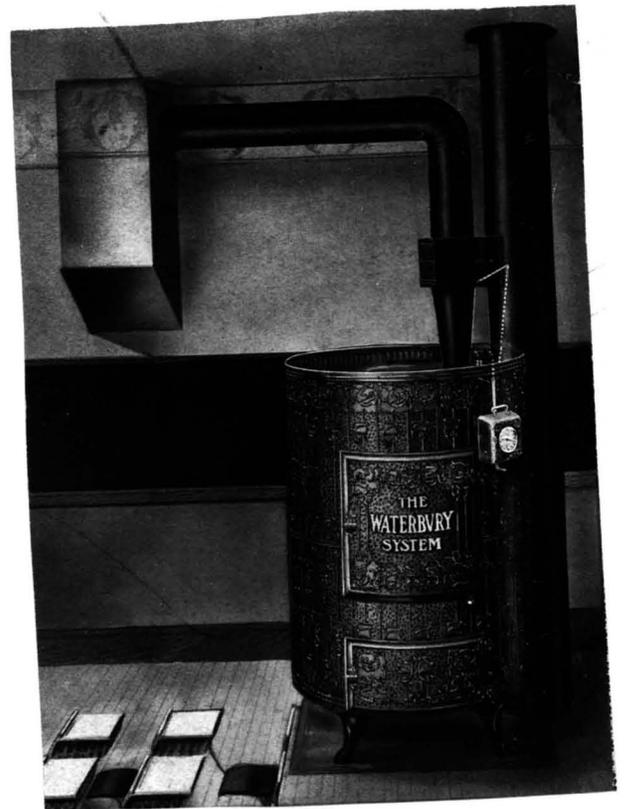


PLATE I.

Old and new systems in heating and ventilation.



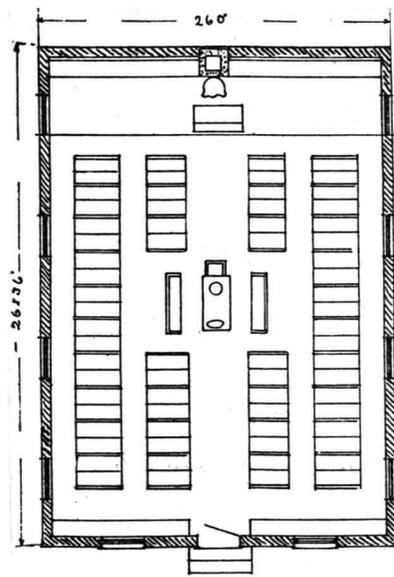
be made - a typical country school house could have proper changes made at a cost of about \$100. (See Plate II.) He should be able to suggest needed equipments and inform the board where they can obtain the same. If the interior lacks suitable pictures, he should suggest to the teacher that she conduct an art exhibit, or some kind of entertainment to raise funds to purchase pictures or casts.

In the third place; the superintendent must be a teacher of teachers. He should observe carefully the teacher's methods, her administration, see that records are properly kept and should be able to suggest to her privately methods of improvement. He should strive in every way possible to preserve harmony in the district and should do all he can to make teachers and pupils happy in their work. If he cannot reach the patrons, he may in his fifteen or twenty minutes' talk discuss the needs of the school so vividly to the pupils that they will in turn tell their parents, thus creating a sentiment for good schools.

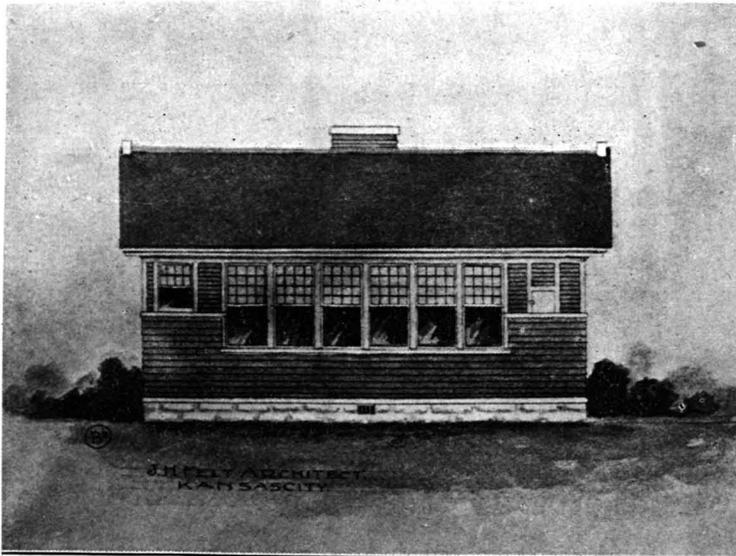
But the superintendent has a great opportunity of influencing the patrons directly by holding special meetings and discussing the needs of the school.

Many superintendents plan their visits, so that the two or three districts visited in a day may come



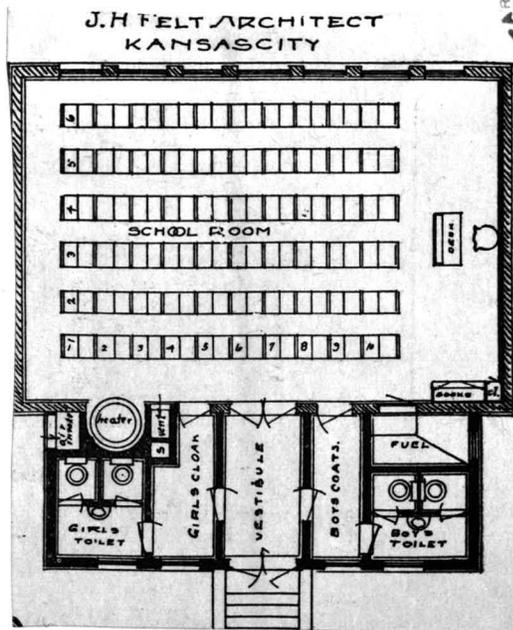


PLAN OF ORDINARY ONE ROOM SCHOOL BUILDING



Courtesy Supt. Howard A. Gass, Missouri.

Same building remodeled, with windows banked on one side. See floor plans



Plan showing how a typical rural school may be made modern at a slight expense.

PLATE II.



together at an evening meeting in a certain school. As an illustration of what may be done along this line the work of Superintendent W. F. Hupe of Montgomery County might be mentioned. He uses the stereopticon as a means of getting patrons to come out to the school houses where he can talk school improvements to them and stimulate on their part a greater interest in the schools. He illustrates various phases of school improvements, also farm and home improvements, talks about school and home sanitation, ventilation, pure water, decoration, etc. He also mixes in slides illustrating incidents in history, masterpieces of art, songs which the children sing, comic slides to produce laughter and give rest and variety, scenery, etc. etc. The programs are often an hour and a half to two hours long. In less than two months seventeen night meetings were held with a total attendance of over two thousand people. Twenty-eight other meetings were held in the first four months of school. He writes: "We are getting wonderful results in the way of school improvements and greater interest and enthusiasm for our schools. Often school boards meet immediately after the meeting and take action toward certain improvements I suggest."

Here also could be explained the conditions necessary for the approval of country schools. One county



superintendent in Missouri writes that he was unable to answer all the requests that came to his office asking for detailed information regarding conditions necessary for approval.

From the reports of the county superintendents in Missouri for 1910, most of the county superintendents seem to be working toward some definite end, - the establishment of libraries, the banishment of the drinking cup, the improvement of grounds, etc. It seems a feasible plan to concentrate the work on one thing at a time. For one year it should be better buildings, the next, better grounds, the next, school gardens, etc. Thus, in addition to the results gained by concentration a generous rivalry between schools is stimulated. Prizes are often offered to the school making the most improvement. (Mississippi County offered a banner last year.)

Then the county superintendent may help organize throughout the county Parent-Teacher Associations, the work of which will be discussed in the next section. It is his business to create public sentiment in favor of the best schools and for this end he should strive in every way to cooperate with all educational forces at work in the community - the church, the Grange, the Farmers' Institute, Women's Clubs, etc.

Superintendent Benson of Wright County, Iowa,



holds a series of educational rallies for the patrons, bringing them together in the school house every little while to discuss homely farm subjects, which have been assigned to them long enough in advance for preparation of remarks. The practical nature of these meetings is shown by the following program. - Four of the school boys read papers before the audience on the four following subjects:

"How can We Improve Farm Life"?

"The Care and Feeding of Horses."

"The Dairy Cow", and

"The Selection, Care and Test of Seed-corn."

The value of farmers' organizations was discussed.

But the county superintendent has another means of reaching the people, and that is through the columns of the newspaper. State Superintendent Blair of Illinois, in circular letter No.19 in his report for 1906-1908, makes some excellent suggestions, from which parts are quoted.

"Every business interest seeks advancement through publicity. More and more is the newspaper considered to be the best means of acquainting the people with transpiring events. The public depends upon the papers to keep it informed and the greater part of our current knowledge is obtained from that source.

The educational work, although the highest in importance, gets really less notice through the press than do most matters of interest. Local sporting events are



sure of much space in every newspaper, but one may look through the same papers and find very little, often nothing, about the schools of the town or surrounding country.

The cause of this lack of publicity lies with the school people rather than with the editors. The latter better understand what the people want to know about the schools than principals and teachers know. The school people live in a different world. -----

Editors often give up in despair of getting items about the schools. When appealing for something of public interest connected with school work, the almost invariable answer is "nothing of importance". -----School news is of interest to the people, and for this reason, the papers want it.

One trouble where schools have tried to supply items of interest in the local papers has been a lamentable ignorance of the kind of matter the public cares for. While long articles sometimes are accepted, short news items pertaining to the work of the schoolroom, even though names of teachers and pupils appear frequently, occasional sets of examination questions, short crisp matter showing the kind of work attempted and the purpose of it, the gradation, conditions, results and even gossip and personals, all make acceptable reading.

If the local press gets school items promptly on the day required, the superintendent will find the editors



glad to get them, the patrons pleased to read them, and a better acquaintance will follow.

For the benefit of country schools, county superintendents may send school items each week to every newspaper in their counties. The copy can be manifolded by using tissue or thin sheets, or one newspaper can set the matter and furnish proof slips to send to the other papers. Editors will accept, in most towns, from one to three columns sent them by county superintendents. Platte County (Ill.) has followed this publicity feature for years, supplying each county paper and the rural school spirit in that county is excelled by no other county in the state.

The schools need to get nearer to the people and a wider use of the press is one of the most available means of doing it."

We would further suggest that the publicity of the newspaper gives the county superintendent control of that deadly weapon - comparison. If one school has made decided improvements, while another district with equal advantages has done nothing, place the cuts of the two schools side by side. The same comparison could be made in other lines, rate of taxation, teachers' salaries, etc.

Some county superintendents send out circular letters in order to keep the patrons in touch with certain lines of improvement; one county superintendent for a time issued a



school paper of his own distributing it to patrons, pupils and teachers, assisting all to cooperate more fully.

The county superintendent can through his annual school report bring about many improvements. The report of C. J. Kern of Winnebago County is unique in this respect, and represents the high water mark in school reports. Every item in it is of interest, and it is as well illustrated as a first class magazine. Improvements in school gardens, exhibits of corn growing contests, domestic science contests, simple play ground apparatus are all shown.

In his last report, he has a section devoted to the rural home, showing how a country home may have all modern improvements in heating, lighting, etc.

Another county superintendent sends a letter to the clerk of each district to be read at the annual school meeting. He outlines the improvements needed; points out merits of certain equipment; tells what the rate of taxation should be to support a good school; suggests a new school building, etc. thus keeping in close touch with the patrons who may then decide to carry out many of his suggestions.

The county superintendent should keep in close touch with the school boards of the county. Most of the country school boards are men interested and loyal to the school and are willing to carry out plans for the good of the school. What they want is intelligent direction. The movement of county school board conventions is still in its infancy in



Missouri, and as the association is a purely voluntary one, the success and enthusiasm both in arranging and conducting one depend almost wholly upon the tact, earnestness, and untiring efforts of the county superintendent. In Nodaway and Butler counties and others, successful meetings were held. In March 1910, the First Annual Convention of School Boards of Butler county was held, and nearly every district in the county was represented. "Many things regarding better school conditions were discussed - heating, sanitation, ventilation, longer terms of school, more modern buildings, where old buildings were to be replaced by new ones, keeping of records, making of estimates and reports, enlarging the school libraries and insisting upon a larger and more prompt attendance of pupils." Some results of this first convention are: "Estimates made out promptly and in good condition; school terms much longer than ever before; nineteen teachers in rural schools receive \$55 or more per month, when only two received as much as \$55 the year preceding; four new model school houses; one Smith system of heating and ventilation; much improvement in the condition of school grounds, and monthly meeting of school board at the school house during the school term. To those who do not believe the annual convention of school boards will pay, they have only to try to be convinced."

Some county superintendents hold this convention at the same time that the Teachers' Association meets. Two



things are necessary. There must be first a definite program for the directors; second, there must be a long continuous effort made to have each board member attend. The objects are to acquaint the boards with the work and the resolutions of the teachers to acquaint the boards with what is new in education, and with what is transpiring in other counties and in other states. Addresses should be delivered by men familiar with rural school conditions, who can offer tangible, worthy suggestions for the betterment of schools. School boards could be made familiar with new heating systems, adjustable desks, dustless crayon, new equipments for teaching, etc. by having an agent or some one present to explain these things.

The county superintendent may also secure the cooperation of patrons by arousing interest among the children. In his visitation and talks he should not hesitate to point out defects in the school system to the children. They will carry the word home. And then, after all, our chief hope is with the large boys and girls. Talk consolidation, improvement of grounds, good roads, etc. and if we do not get them in this generation, we may hope for better things in the next.

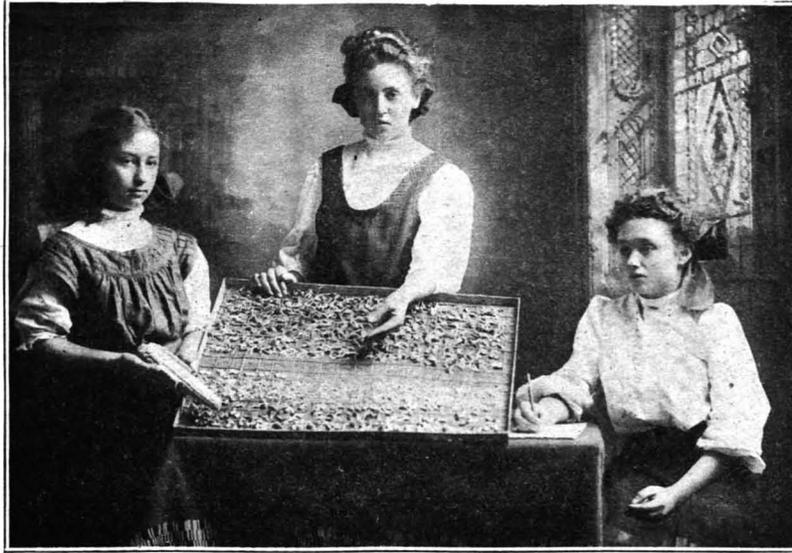
There are also various contests he might introduce among the pupils. Possibly the most wide-spread and the one carried out with best success is that of "Boys Corn



Growing Contests" and girls' contests, (See Plate III) in lines of domestic science. Such contests have succeeded in making the patrons vitally interested in the work of the schools. Here the superintendent may have farmers cooperate by offering prizes for the best corn, and with the aid of a few interested patrons could induce the County Court to make \$100 appropriation annually to the encouragement of the contest. This may be done according to the Laws of Missouri, Section 4715, Session Acts 1907. In some counties over four hundred boys were enrolled. Superintendent W. M. Oakerson of Nodaway County writes: "The thing that has attracted the most attention and given the most inspiration during the past year was a corn growing contest by the boys and a domestic science contest by the

- 
1. The County Court of any county in which there shall be a regularly organized County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, County Corn Growers' Association, County Poultry Association, County Stock Growers' Association or other organization having for its object the advancement of Agriculture or its allied industries, may, if it be deemed expedient, appropriate out of the County treasury for the benefit of such society, a sum not exceeding one hundred (\$100) dollars in any one year; and the money so appropriated shall be drawn by the treasurer of the society on a proper warrant, provided said money shall be awarded by the board of directors or other proper officers in premiums or expended by them in the purchase of premiums to be known as the -----County Premiums, to be awarded according to the rules, regulations and by-laws of the society.





The above represents the Seed Tester used in the High Point Public School for the past three years. Scores of farmers have their seeds tested for germination each year before planting. This work is done free of any charge by the pupils under the direction of the principal of the School.



Experimental Corn Growers in Winnebago Township.

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Exhibit of Cooking made by members of the Girls' Home Culture Club at the Session of the Winnebago County Household Science Association in connection with the Farmers' Institute, January 8, 1910.



girls. There were two hundred eighty-two boys and two hundred forty-five girls enrolled in contests, but some of them failed to enter exhibits. The county court of this county and the business men of Maryville raised \$575 for premiums for the contests. Contesting for the prizes offered, added much interest to the contests. Thirty-five cash prizes were awarded and each boy who entered an exhibit received a good pocket-knife and each girl a pair of scissors."

In Jasper County in 1909, the first prizes were free trips to Columbia for Farmers' Week.

Other contests in spelling, declamation and writing have been held in the various counties; one county also mentions an athletic contest. The plan usually adopted in these contests is to divide the county into districts. Each district holds a contest and qualifies two or three contestants for a final contest. Patrons become intensely interested in these. The results have been better school spirit, and as a result better attendance and longer terms. In Newton County two gold watches and \$30 in gold were given as prizes in spelling. "Results: better spelling, better school spirit everywhere."

Another feature carried out by two county superintendents in Missouri, and Superintendent Benson of Clarion, Iowa, was the field day meet. This emphasizes the physical side, and just such results may be brought about as in the



Paltz Play Festival discussed under the chapter on Patrons.

The school fair has been introduced in some places, notably with Superintendent Benson of Clarion, Iowa, with a result of greatly awakened interest on the part of patrons. Prizes are offered for things varying from the simplest work in drawing, composition, and construction to some fine work in painting, manual training, sewing, etc., exhibits in all kinds of farm products, vegetable and animal. If the exhibit is not large enough to justify a fair, many county superintendents conduct an educational department at the county fair where the patrons may see some of the work that is being done in the schools. By the knowledge even here gained they may put themselves more closely in line in directing the work of the children at home.

Lastly the rural graduation exercises afford another great opportunity to the county superintendent. Time was when the country boy and girl never knew when they had finished the country school. There has been a wonderful advancement made in this direction in the last four years. In 1907 there were 2,747 pupils completing the common school course. In 1910, 8,801 - an increase of 220 per cent in four years. The number of counties holding graduating exercises has increased from 6 in 1906 to 112 in 1910, or nearly 1,800 per cent. It has served to bring about better attendance and more interest on the part of



rural pupils. As the certificate signed by the State Superintendent, County Superintendent and teacher entitles the holder to enter any high school without examination there has been a great increase in the attendance of normal schools, high schools, and academies. Perhaps no other school function creates so much interest and comment. These exercises are sometimes held in the township, sometimes at the county seats. Some county superintendents hold them in the township each year, feeling that the educational functions are thus brought closer to the pupils and patrons. Others hold them yearly at the county seat, feeling that it is more impressive when great numbers get together. Some county superintendents alternate, having the exercises one year in the township, the next in the county seat, thus securing a combination of the two ends.

Vernon County last year had township graduating exercises and then on August 29 had a Rural School Rally Day at which 208 rural graduates and 2,500 visitors were present.

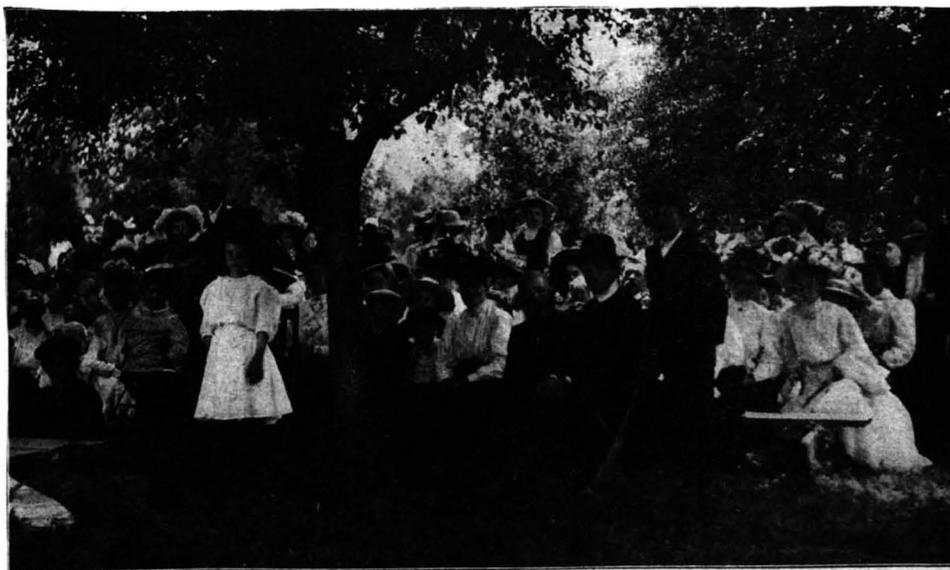
Superintendent O. H. Benson of Wright County, Iowa, has for the past three years held a picnic in connection with the rural schools commencement in each township. (See Plate IV) There have been graduating exercises, including speaking, singing, a picnic dinner, an exhibition of





A PORTION OF THE SCHOOL EXHIBIT AT A PICNIC COMMENCEMENT

A school picnic held by O.H. Benson, Supt. of Wright Co., Iowa.



THE CROWD AT ONE OF THE PICNIC COMMENCEMENTS



school work, a township field day, including baseball games between townships, and regular running and track events, and finally a lecture by some professor from the state agricultural college dealing either with animal husbandry, farm crops, horticulture or soil fertility.

An account of Mr. Benson's work in the "World Today" for September 1910 tells of the astonishment the first time these lecture demonstrations were held. "The platform recently vacated by the white dressed girls with their essays and exercises was occupied by a farm-horse, which a college professor used as a model in explaining how to judge and grade farm stock. But the gasp of astonishment quickly gave way to a gasp of comprehension and appreciation, and the news spread around the county of the new and good work done until the attendance of 250 at that township picnic grew to 1,200 at the next township picnic. Since then corn-judging contests have been added, features and prizes are offered to the boy who raises the best ten ears of corn and to the boy who exhibits the best hand raised calf." "The result", he writes "is notable for the redirected school work, better school equipment, higher salaries for the teachers, new and better school houses, a more sane and satisfied rural citizenship; dignity in agricultural and household duties in common, and the enthusiasm for rural uplift work and organization is growing by leaps and bounds."



These exercises offer an incentive to pupils of the lower grades. This comes to the child many times through the parent, whose interest is awakened by what has been accomplished by the daughter or son. The younger pupils are made to feel that the completion of the work of the rural school is an accomplishment worthy of effort. Would that we had consolidated rural schools where the pupils could receive the benefits of a high school education without leaving home!

Thus the county superintendent by his peculiar relations to teachers, pupils, school boards and patrons, may with the cooperation of the latter almost revolutionize the work of the rural schools.

Having considered the work of the county superintendent in securing cooperation of patrons the teacher as a factor demands next consideration.



## Section Two.

### The Teacher as a Factor.

When we come to the consideration of the teacher as a factor we must first consider just what the qualification of a "live" country teacher should be, for no other but a "live" teacher can hope to obtain effective cooperation of parents.

The teacher should in the first place be a country teacher not because she has failed to get a city job, but because she has faith in the possibilities of country life. She should be well prepared, capable of dealing with the problems of life as met with in the country, willing to make the community her home and to make its economic and educational problems hers. She should be a leader of the people, making the school directly and still more indirectly a place of instruction and of practical life both for adults and children. She should assist in the economic and social organizations of the community, and should not consider her duty done when she has taught the children a certain number of facts out of text-books.

It is to be taken for granted that she should work in hearty cooperation with the county superintendent in all movements for the uplift of the people. She should take advantage of the opportunities offered at our Normals and University for the study of Rural School Problems, school gardens, practical agriculture, etc.



In redirecting country life the teacher must be the leader even at the cost of great energy, time and money. The country people are naturally conservative and have never demanded anything until they have seen the value of it. It is the business of the teacher to create such a demand. As the Country Life Commission points out, "It is probable that the farming population will willingly support better schools as soon as it becomes convinced that the schools will really be changed in such a way as to teach persons how to live."

In just what ways can the teacher do this? In the first place she is to make the schoolroom an attractive place, for the six hours spent there reacts upon the home. If the patrons and directors have not seen that the interior of the building is clean and sanitary, then it is the business of the teacher to enlist the cooperation of the pupils and make it such. As O. J. Kern says, "I am in sympathy, under proper conditions, with the movement to teach higher subjects in the country school; but if it is a choice between higher mathematics and soap, - and soap is needed, I choose soap. I do not care who makes it, so long as it is antidust in its affections. And where cleanliness is lacking instead of foreign language work with a study of that wonderful pair of twins on the banks of the Tiber, let there be substituted the work of the "Gold Dust Twins". Many of our country school-houses need to be purified by fire."



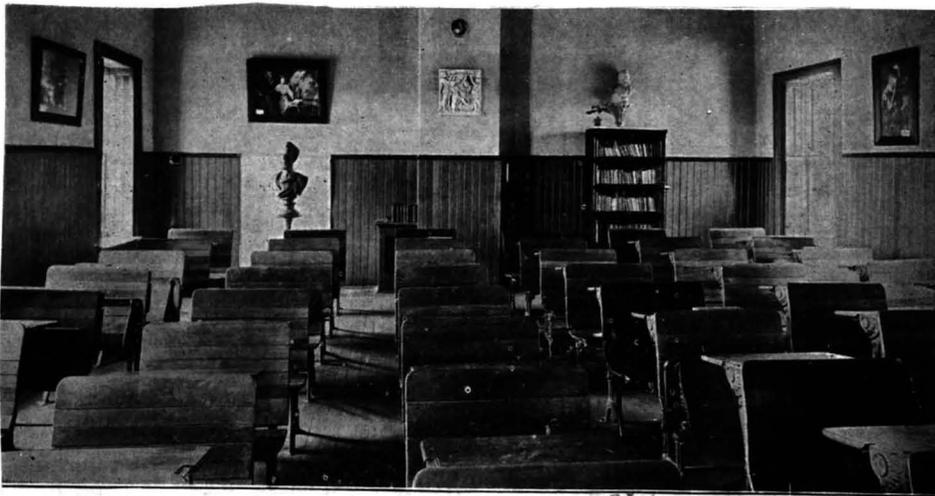
Or the teacher may issue a call for "Clean-Up Day", and have the patrons come out and assist in the work. Many a dusty, unattractive interior may become transformed by cleaning down the cobwebs, and giving the woodwork a coat of paint. If there are no suitable pictures the teacher should interest the community in the matter, and have a box supper or entertainment to secure funds to tint the walls, or to secure well chosen pictures and casts. (See Plate V and Plate VIII.)

Then the teacher, if she is to secure the best cooperation, must restore the school as a social center - a purpose it so well served thirty or forty years ago."Perhaps the relation between the country school and the community is closer than in the case of any other class of schools. It stands often as the only local public institution. When there is no local church few amusements, no public library, no local organization of any kind, it is natural that the country community should look to its school to meet some of the needs supplied to villages and towns by these other agencies." As the Country Life Commission points out, - "The country communities are in need of social centers - places where persons may naturally meet, and where a real neighborhood interest exists. ---- Inasmuch as the school is supported by public funds and is therefore an institution concerned with the government of the community, it should form a natural organic center." It may thus become the





Interior view of the grammar room, Seward Consolidated school, Oct. 12, 1910. Miss Helen Jones, teacher. Color scheme the same in all rooms. The fine pictures and casts in all rooms were donated by Mr. Horace K. Turner of the Horace K. Turner Art Co., of Boston, the originator of the Free Traveling Art Exhibits.



A SCHOOL ROOM WITH WELL-FINISHED WELL-DECORATED WALLS.

LIBRARY UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Interior view of intermediate room of the Seward Consolidated school, Oct. 12, 1910. Miss Mary Whitney, teacher.



A ROOM AT WILLIAMSON, WEST VIRGINIA. Notice the appropriate statuary and pictures and do not notice Burnside stove, as it will be jacketed or removed soon.



center of educational interest for the adult as well as the youthful portion of the population it serves. To do this the school must concern itself with the interests of the people. Public meetings of various kinds, entertainments etc. help to dignify the school by making it more useful.

Judging from the writer's own experience in the country, nothing will serve to bring out the patrons better than an old-fashioned school exhibition. It seems to satisfy the social needs of the rural people just as well as the fairs, bazaars, parties and numerous other entertainments satisfy the social needs of the city folk. Sir Horace Plunkett in his new book "The Rural Life Problem in the United States", says "The simplest piece of amateur acting or singing done in the village hall by one of the villagers, will arouse more enthusiasm among his friends and neighbors than can be excited by the most consummate performance of a professional in a great city, where no one in the audience knows or cares for the performer."

In many country schools the school is such a center - they have musical programs, spelling matches, amateur theatricals, and debates in which pupils, patrons, and teacher take active parts. In such communities, the local news items are full of school happenings and the people are alive to educational advancement realizing that an improvement in the school means an improvement in the community. The teacher in such a case ceases to be a migratory factor and becomes



a vital part of the community's life.

At such meetings the teacher has an opportunity of explaining her plans, urging certain reforms, making known certain needs and the patrons are usually willing to cooperate in securing best results.

There are so many opportunities for special programs to be given by the school children - Thanksgiving Day, Harvest Home Festival, Christmas, Arbor Day, Bird Day, Flag Day, Memorial Day and authors' birthdays - in fact there is an almost endless list of special programs that the teacher might prepare. Such work calls for vigorous action on the part of the teacher - she must not be satisfied with a little sensation of inspiration. "Do it now" must be the motto, for all things are possible with the teacher of action. the one who brushes aside little difficulties and "does it now."

Some country schools have lecture courses. Wright County, Iowa, reports that such courses have been successfully conducted. In Kent County, Wisconsin, (in 1901) they were held in connection with Parent-Teacher Associations, with the result that general sentiment and interest was awakened in the schools. The prevailing uplift in educational sentiment was shown at the annual election where propositions for school improvements were readily carried. If a good lyceum course cannot be supported, local talent may serve the same purpose. Country folk drive for miles to such an entertainment. It seems that the reason that



more of these courses are not given in the country is that the teacher remains in the community for so short a time, and does not seem to know that the farmers will appreciate them, and in the second place, she thinks her salary does not measure up to the efforts required to carry out such a course. If there is one thing that the country teacher must, at least for a time, lose sight of, it is the fact that her salary is a mere pittance. She must work "for the joy of the working", and prove her efficiency first, then salaries will follow.

The country teacher may be also instrumental in interesting the community in extension work in agriculture, etc. for as the Country Life Commission states, "education has now come to have vastly more significance than the mere establishing and maintaining of schools. The education motive has been taken into all kinds of work, with the people directly in their homes and on their farms, and it reaches mature persons as well as youth. Beyond and behind must be aroused intelligent, public sentiment. - - - The arousing of the people must be accomplished in terms of their daily lives or their welfare. For the country people this means that it must be largely in terms of agriculture. Some colleges of agriculture are already doing this work by means of the printed page, face to face talks, and demonstration or object lessons designed to reach every farmer with knowledge and stimulus in every department of country life."



The traveling art exhibit is a method a few schools have adopted as a means of teaching the people to appreciate the beauty in art as well as in nature. These can be obtained for a reasonable expenditure. In a consolidated district this is an easy matter, but several districts might unite for this purpose, <sup>and</sup> let the children sell the tickets; some companies offer a prize picture to the school selling the most tickets. Advantage might be taken of a time when the exhibits were being held in a neighboring town, thus making the expressage, which is the chief item, low. Some of the companies require that the proceeds shall be invested in pictures purchased of them. Here is the opportunity of securing good pictures for the school room. In choosing such pictures those that dignify country life should be selected.

One small town in Missouri cleared over \$100 as the result of such an exhibit, together with a carnival held in connection with it. The teachers prepared the pupils for an appreciation of the pictures by a study of the lives of the great artists and their masterpieces as given in the ten cent classics of the Educational Publishing Company. The interest taken by pupils and patrons was remarkable, and they are still talking of certain pictures they saw and liked. The exhibit really served to open the eyes of the people to the beautiful in art.

Such exhibits can be obtained from the Soule Art Co.



Boston; Horace K. Turner Co., Boston; J. C. Witten Co., Fifth Ave., New York City; Art Publishers and Importers, Boston; Elson Art Exhibit, Boston.

The Civic League of Reading, Pa. has adopted a good plan. It has arranged for a traveling art exhibit consisting of a dozen carefully selected pictures for country schools. The set remains for a month in the schools and it is passed on to the next. There are no expenses connected with the movement, and the pictures are loaned free, and transportation charges prepaid. Each set is accompanied by books and leaflets on picture study, suggesting various ways for the teacher to interest the pupils and patrons. Thus to the children the most effective lessons can be given and from the school the children will carry the lessons to the home.

It is interesting to note that in Missouri we will have such an exhibit nearer home. In the last report of the Missouri Library Commission it is stated that "a new departure has been made in the purchase of reproductions of fine paintings. These will be mounted, strongly bound together in convenient form, and loaned as traveling picture exhibitions upon the same plan as the traveling libraries of books." This is an opportunity that every rural teacher may make use of, as the only cost is the transportation charges.



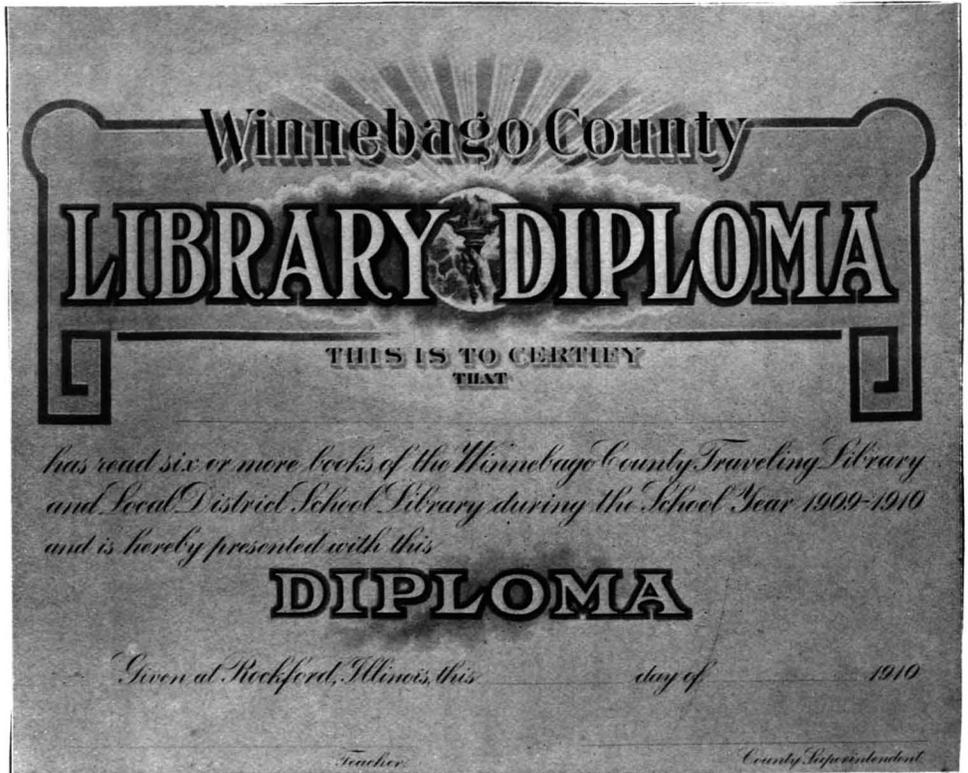
Possibly no movement that has been introduced in Missouri has interested the rural patrons more than the library movement. Entertainments of all kinds have been held in which patrons, pupils, and teacher worked for a common end, the patrons in some places have even been asked to contribute books. Some idea of the movement may be gained from the Missouri Report for 1910. In 1909, 7,201 districts had libraries; in 1910, there was a net gain of 707 districts and of \$27,614 in value. Many districts are still without libraries.

In Missouri the problem is not so great as in other states because we have a library law allowing boards to set aside not less than five nor more than twenty cents for each child enumerated in the district. The law is not in many districts observed, however. With such an appropriation it is a comparatively easy matter for any school to obtain a nucleus for a good library. Circulars and bulletins from the United States Department of Agriculture and from our agricultural colleges may be had for the asking. These would serve as a means of interesting the rural patrons in the building up of a library. Each child or patron may be asked to contribute a book. (See Plate VI.) Or teachers and pupils may give an entertainment (See Plate VIII.) and charge a small admission fee. The plan adopted by West Virginia is a good one. The first Friday





The books on this desk were donated by the patrons at the Stark School, District 113, Cherry Valley Township; Miss Mina Hastings, teacher. About 140 copies thus given in two years. A new library case had to be secured. Miss Hastings has succeeded in putting in several new pictures. One of the new ones shown above.



Library diploma given to all boys and girls who have each read six books during the school year from either the Traveling Libraries or from the local school library. The above diploma was given at the Township Graduation exercises last May and June. A different design is given each year. For 1910 the number of 1272 diplomas was given away, making a total of 11,627 given during the past ten years. In this way the reading habit is acquired. The coming generation of farmers in Winnebago County will be one that reads extensively. This will help to make country life more satisfactory. Sow the seed now and harvest will come in strong men and women living in the open country.



The above shows the 112 Traveling Libraries for the Winnebago County Schools in the County Superintendent's Office August, 1910. There are ten large libraries for the graded schools and 102 small libraries for the one-room country schools. The above libraries were equipped during the last ten years at an expenditure of \$3799.55. Of this amount the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors gave \$1000, and \$2799.55 were raised by charging ten cents admission to the Township Graduation Exercises. The 112 libraries represent 7100 volumes. Each library stays three months at a school. The following pages show library schedule for every library and every school. Read from left to right.



in December is observed as Library Day for the observance of which the state department prepared and distributes programs. Patrons are invited, an admission fee charged, and as much as \$100 has been realized from a single entertainment of this kind. As the state has no legal provisions for library maintenance, the success of the library movement has been due wholly to this cooperation of patrons and teachers.

In other states, the granting of state money to the district depends upon whether school boards or patrons raise a certain amount of money for the library. Minnesota, for example, makes the annual purchase of library books one of the conditions necessary for obtaining state aid.

Some states such as Maryland, South Carolina, North Carolina, and others have conditional library laws requiring the payment of a certain amount on condition the district raise that same amount. Here the cooperation of patrons almost becomes a necessity.

In the selection of books the State Superintendent and Library Commission usually prepare a list. Women's Clubs, School Improvement Leagues, Congress of Mothers, and other clubs often cooperate in furnishing suitable lists.

But the teacher is not only to secure the cooperation of patrons in establishing a library, - she can be a great factor in directing the reading interest of the



community. The library means much in the country. There are few homes supplied with good reading matter. During the long winter evenings when the time is spent around the fireside with no outside attractions, what a wealth of comfort and knowledge a good book affords! The children often take turn in reading their books aloud, and the parents in turn read to the children. The books chosen should therefore be planned to suit all pupils from the first grade to the eighth, and should be so arranged that they will have a value for the community at large.

If the teacher chooses wisely when the child asks for a good book for his parents to read, another book is apt to be called for, and thus interest in the library is awakened. In one school of the writer's experience, a laborer read over 150 books, including all the works of Thackeray, Scott, and Dickens just through his children obtaining them for him through the school library. 

The teacher may also cooperate with the home in encouraging and directing the reading matter of the child. Reading is in many places thus encouraged by awarding a library certificate to those who have carefully read a required list of books. (See Plate VI.) Many states have established Pupils' Reading Circles, one in our state being lately organized. The cooperation of teachers and parents is the one thing necessary to its success.



If an additional supply of books is needed the teacher has access to the traveling libraries, (See Plate VI). Sometimes the patrons themselves take charge of such libraries under the teacher's direction and initiative. From the following description of the libraries in Missouri it will be seen that the teacher has a wonderful opportunity of cooperating with the rural patrons. If the farmer is interested in works on agriculture, if no bulletins will supply the need, the teacher can secure a special library. If a debate is to be held by the patrons or pupils, she has the general loan collection at her disposal. If the mother likes to read good novels, she can send for the regular library, and so on. The statistics show that few rural schools make use of this opportunity, possibly because they do not know that such a thing as a traveling library is obtainable.

These traveling libraries are in successful operation in several states. Fortunately in Missouri, the legislature of 1907 created the Missouri Library Commission and among its duties noted the purchase and management of traveling libraries. The Missouri Federation of Women's Clubs generously presented to the state its 1300 books and 26 traveling cases to be used as part of the equipment of the library commission. "To secure for every town, village, or rural district in the state, access to books of knowledge,



of inspiration and charm is the intention of the commission." Under the system now established books may be shipped to any community from the commission office merely for the cost of transportation.

These traveling libraries are arranged by the commission into four classes; (1) regular; (2) special; (3) school libraries; (4) general loans.

Regular libraries are composed of groups of fifty volumes. The loans are usually made for three months, but the time may be extended. Annotated lists of these libraries are furnished on request and the teacher may thus choose the one best suited to her needs. Requests for such libraries should be made to the Missouri Library Commission, Traveling Library Department, Jefferson City, Missouri. In some states a fee of \$2.00 is charged for membership.

But the teacher must do more than make the school the center of community life; she must make the home and farm subjects the basis of the curriculum. For the country school this means agriculture, nature study, school gardens, and domestic science, not a course "hacked and hewed to fit the Procrustean bed of its city model."

Days and weeks are still given in our country schools to stocks and bonds, the Common Divisor and four story complex fractions; but never a word about the soil, the growth of crops; the care of the home, and other topics of vital interest to the farm and farm home. Shall we marvel then



that the boy who expects to farm finds little to encourage regular attendance at such schools, and his tax paying father little to encourage more liberal support.

The "Committee of Industrial Education for Rural Schools" in 1908 suggest - "That for the improvement of educational conditions in rural communities the people in these communities must be educated to see and appreciate the value of industrial education. That the value of this kind of education in increasing the productive capacity of those being educated is the argument which appeals most strongly to the rural population. Therefore in the beginning of industrial education in any community, immediate practical results that will appeal directly to the interests of the people who support and maintain the schools must be made prominent by those concerned with its development.<sup>1</sup>"

Here is the opportunity for the teacher to show the farmer that by the simple testing of seed corn for vitality the value of the corn crop of Missouri has been increased several million dollars. That one grain added to each ear of corn would increase the corn crop of the United States 5,000,000 bushels. That many boys' agricultural clubs are studying the selection of seed corn

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1. N.E.A. 1908, p.388.



with the results that some boys are selling their corn for five times as much as their fathers are able to get for theirs. That the Danes receive \$8,500,000 a year more for their bacon, butter and eggs than England pays to other countries for the same amount of such products, although twenty years ago before the children of Denmark were taught about such things, the Danish products received less than the usual market price. Professor G. L. McKay of Iowa State College found Danish butter in England constantly bringing two to three cents a pound more than any other butter, because of its dry, mealy appearance. Investigation, however, proved that the butter in question actually contained two to three per cent more water than American or Canadian butter. In other words, the Danes get two or three more pounds of butter to each 100 pounds of butter fat, and yet sell it at two or three cents a pound more. Why? Because they have found the secret of making butter containing this extra amount of water appears to be extra dry and the process is taught in the Danish schools.

One of the incidents cited by Mr. O. H. Benson of Clarion, Iowa serves as an illustration of how the introduction of agriculture may bring about the cooperation of patrons.<sup>1</sup>

"When the policy of the study of agriculture was inaugurated there were those who scoffed. Old farmers who

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1. World Today, Vol.19, p.1036.



turned up their noses at anything suggested by a man out of overalls and with clean hands, contended that "readin" "ritin" and "rithmetic" had been good enough for them, and it ought to do for their boys and girls. "I induced the leader of this sort of opposition to attend one of our commencement picnics", said Mr. Benson. "There were nineteen pupils, and all but five little toddlers in the first and second grades could tell me what was meant by 'rotation of crops". He then asked why they rotated crops and a small girl gave an answer in her own words which could not be improved upon for soundness by a college professor. After that he had children judge and grade ears of corn which they had selected as the best of their fathers' cribs. When they were through, the most enthusiastic man in Wright County was that farmer that had opposed him, and there on the spot he offered a series of prizes for corn-judging contests in that township, prizes which are making every boy take an interest and spreading the gospel of good seed corn far and wide.

This illustrates well that in the teaching of agriculture it is not so much books that is required as an awakened inquiry upon the part of pupils and patrons. Object lessons and competition exhibits with proper direction by the teacher will count more than books. One of the greatest forces in education is to get the people to compare their products and realize that there is a method



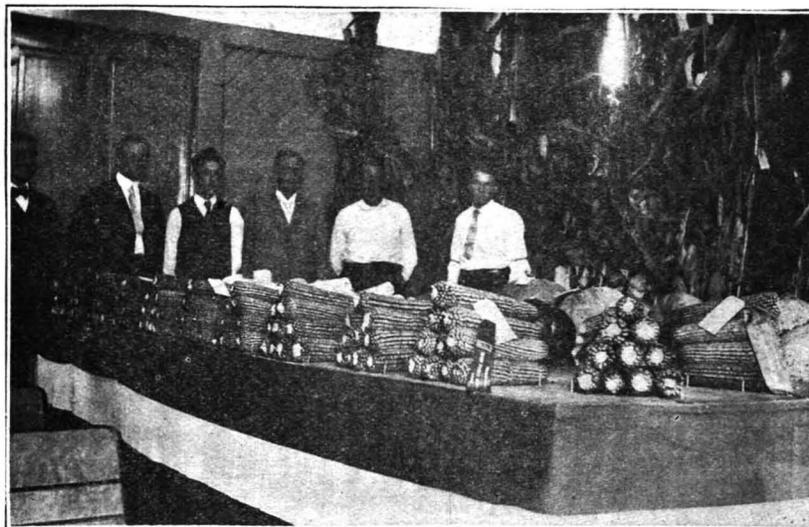
that will produce better results.

To this end, boys' and girls' clubs may be organized with the object of working out at their homes, in the garden, and on the farm, the lessons inculcated at the school. Mr. T. O. Melton of High Point School near Sedalia, holds a school fair each year, (See Plate VII) - the premium list is almost as large as those of some of the town fairs. Prizes are given for the best corn, pumpkins and other farm products; suitable prizes are offered the girls for cooking and sewing. These prizes are given both by local farmers and city merchants, and the affair is as successful and as largely attended as the various town fairs are. In fact these competitive exhibits on "Agricultural Day" are just as vital to the highest success in agricultural instruction as the agricultural fairs and farmers' institutes are with the adults, and bring about a cooperation of patrons that could never otherwise be realized.

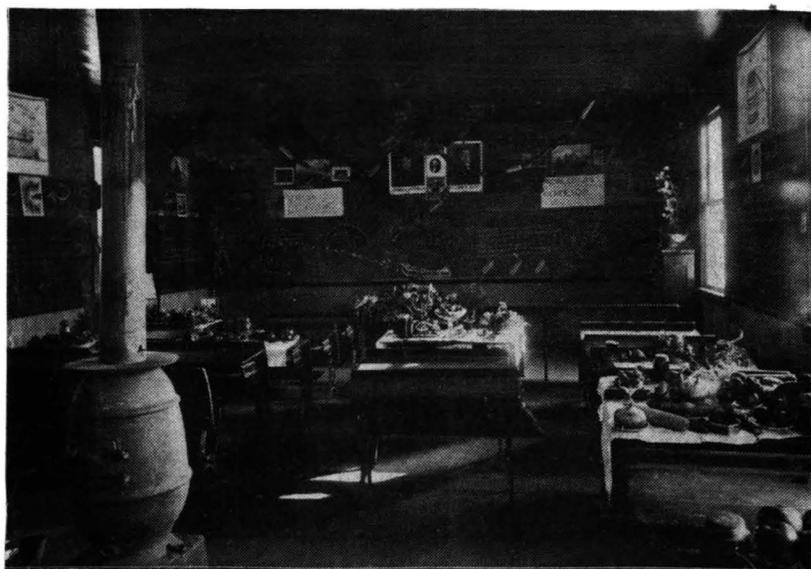
Mr. Melton also has free testing of seed corn (See Plate III) for the farmers of the neighborhood. This work is done by the pupils under his direction. It is needless to say that the people in that community have come to realize that the school exists for the community's welfare.

The teaching of agriculture is not an experiment. At present it is taught in every rural primary school in France, almost every school having a garden where intensive





The above represents a section of the High Point District Fair of 1908.  
All articles grown by boys under 21 years of age.



AGRICULTURAL FAIR IN A COUNTRY SCHOOL IN CABELL COUNTY  
TAUGHT BY E. DIEFENBACH.

The unusually attractive wall decorations of charts, seeds, and grain are not well shown in the picture. This picture should encourage many other rural school teachers to try a similar plan.

School Fairs.

PLATE VII.



work is carried on. Belgium has one of the best systems of elementary agriculture in Europe. While nothing was done in the United States before 1900, and practically nothing before 1905, thirteen states now require the teaching of agriculture, while it is encouraged and taught in the rural schools of thirty-one other states.

It has been recommended both by the Committee on Industrial Education for Rural Schools and by the Committee on Industrial Education of American Colleges and Experiment Stations<sup>1</sup> that the course in agriculture should, during the first three years be devoted to generalized nature study.

"Our best farmers are also coming to see that nature study in the rural school is a necessity, because it will tend to give a knowledge of the laws that govern agriculture, because it will teach the children to love the country, because it will show the possibilities of living an intellectual life upon the farm. Nature study, therefore, will have a very direct influence in bringing the child into close touch with the whole life of the farm community." In this work seeds of all kinds may be gathered and preserved in small bottles. Collections of every kind of wood may be made. In one school in Missouri, 135 different kinds were collected. Specimens of nuts and grains may be

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1. Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education under Agriculture.



gathered, including best heads of wheat, rye, oats, barley, and best ears of corn. Specimens of bark and pressed leaves may be collected when learning to distinguish trees. Collections of insects may be made and specimens of plants and flowers may be pressed.

Collections of birds' nests, bumblebees' nests, butterfly and moth cocoons, collections of different rocks, soils, of animals, etc. may be made, and the school will become a museum for the neighborhood. (See Plate VIII.) It affords activity for the development of the child's collective instincts, besides acquainting the children with their surroundings and making the school serve the needs and interests of the community. One rural teacher several years ago succeeded in bringing out every patron in the district to see the work of the school, merely by having on exhibition a "cabbage snake".

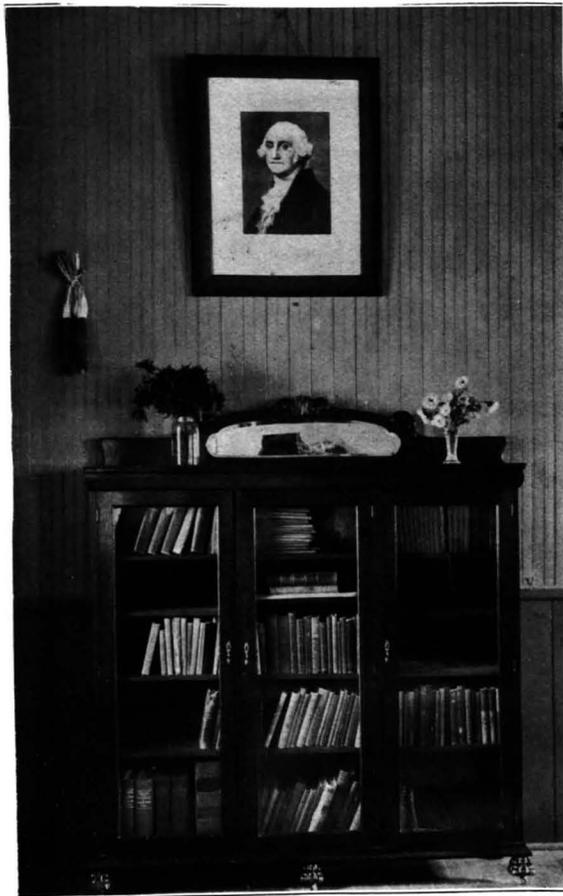
It is further suggested that school gardens be conducted in the first three grades; that nature study with school and home gardens be conducted in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Here the home cooperates with the school in assisting children to raise vegetables, flowers, etc. for the exhibit in the fall. Other countries consider school gardens as a necessity for rural schools. Over 90 years ago, the Germans began to encourage this movement, and in 1869 Austria and Sweden passed laws prescribing that





LIBRARY AND MUSEUM—Cottage Hill, 1904. (Ill.)

The Library contains over 225 Volumes. This picture also shows collections of wood, insects, seeds, geological cabinet, pressed flowers from the school garden, specimens of manual training, etc.



Library case put in the Centerville School, Rockford Township, as a result of a school social. Miss Bertha Baxter, teacher. Along with the Library movement has gone the movement for better pictures in the school room. By count of teachers there were 489 good framed pictures in the 112 schools on October 1, 1910.



Interior of the Vandercook School, District 114, Cherry Valley Township. Miss Erma Witherstine, teacher. Social netted \$60.45. Part of money expended for pictures. Directors painted interior. The directors here take deep interest in school. Their names are James Cotton, Albert Linden, William Hall. For color scheme for new wood read article in Chapter V. entitled, "Inexpensive Wood Work for Modern Interiors."



"wherever practicable a garden and a place for agricultural experiments shall be established at every rural school." The movement spread rapidly in Europe, has had a wonderful growth in the United States, and Canada, affecting both cities and rural districts. The movement is yet only in its infancy in Missouri, and it is doubtful whether one rural school in a hundred has school gardens. Saline County from the State Superintendent's report shows up with thirty,- only one or two other county superintendents mention the fact that they have them.

The country teacher can do this work with little interference with the other work of the school, for as Dick J. Crosby of the office of Experiment Stations of Washington, D.C. states,<sup>1</sup> "experience has shown that devoting four or five hours a week, or even two hours a day to nature study and gardening if properly conducted, enables the pupils to accomplish more in the remaining time than they formerly accomplished in the whole time spent in school.

Due to the fact that children in the country have active interests at home in the summer, school gardens might be conducted at home and prizes offered in the fall for vegetables, etc. grown. Even then there should be a garden in connection with the school, for children do not learn practi-

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1. "Agricultural Education" Bureau of Education, Bulletin No.2, 1907, p.40.



cal agriculture best at home. There are instances even among the best farming communities of the state where a boy has learned at school to mix his agriculture with brains and thus raise more bushels of corn to the acre than his father does. How many of the country boys know just by observation how to turn a furrow, hoe potatoes or cultivate a row of corn? The child learns thus to know the pests such as destructive insects, birds, and other animals, noxious diseases, and multiform vegetable diseases, also learns the useful animals, knows the composition of the soil and how to care for it, the value of fertilizers, and the selection of seed. These things which touch the life of a farmer in an economic way cause him to take a renewed interest in the school when he sees his children accomplishing real, tangible results.

The school garden also tends to dignify labor and lends its influence toward keeping the boy on the farm rather than sending him to the city to be a doctor, lawyer, or banker. It seeks to eliminate from ~~our~~ country the type of the unjust steward who said "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed."

In regard to the influence of these gardens, Mr. R. H. Cowley, Inspector of Public Schools, Carleton, Ontario  
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says - "In the care of their own plots the pupils fight

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1. Quoted from the Report on Macdonald School gardens, Kern "Among Country Schools", p.81.



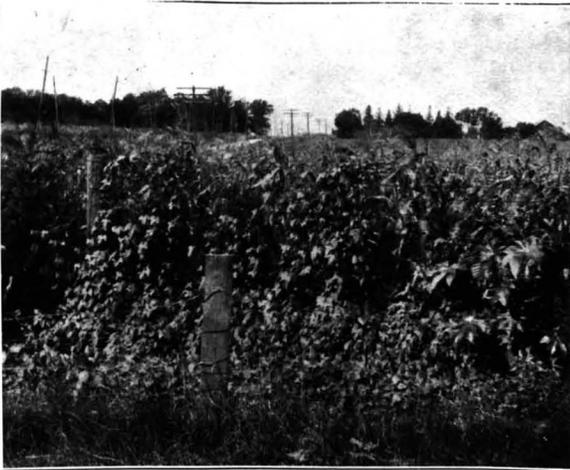
common enemies and learn that a bad weed in a neglected plot may make trouble for many others. The garden is a pleasant avenue of communication between the school and the home, relating them in a new and living way and thereby strengthening the public interest in the school as a national institution."

Out of the school garden may evolve beautiful school grounds, (See Plate IX) which in turn may have their effects upon the lawns of country homes. In Superintendent O. J. Kern's report there are numerous illustrations of how a little work on the part of teacher and pupil may turn some of our desert, wind-swept places into oases. The school grounds may be rendered beautiful and attractive. Mr. H. W. Foght, in his recent book on the "American Rural School" gives this description of the ideal school grounds: "Such ideal grounds should present a vision pleasing to the eye - the school-house set in the midst of a carpet of velvety green, broken here and there by flower beds, bright with beauty and color - bits of scarlet and yellow cannas, old fashioned geraniums and in the fence corners many-colored hollyhocks; winding walks and rustic seats; climbing vines on lattice and wall, and rustic baskets pendent from post and tripod; groups of evergreens and shaded trees; at the rear, separate playgrounds for the boys and girls; outbuildings set well back in opposite





LIBRARY UNIV. OF MO.



Lincoln Garden at the Stone School, district 70, Rockford Township. Miss Myrta Osborn, teacher.



Lincoln Garden at the Kishwaukee School, New Milford Township, Mrs. Ella Davis, teacher. This is the first country school to have a Parent-Teacher Association and a committee of which to help the children keep the flowers growing during the summer vacation.

LIBRARY UNIV. OF MO.

School grounds in Winnebago County.

PLATE IX.

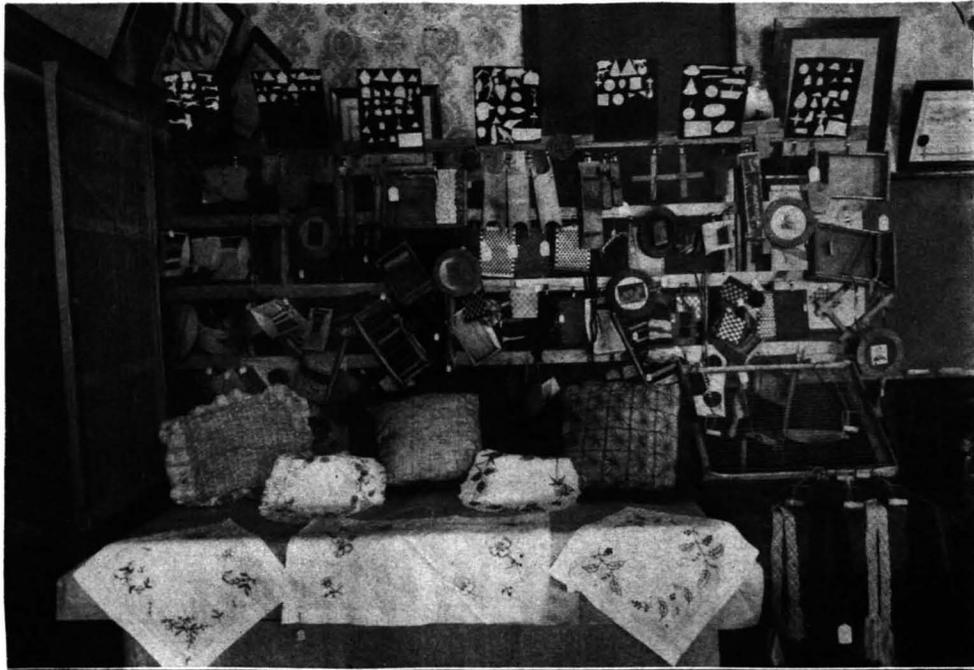


corners near the school garden which occupies the extreme rear, and screened with vines and shrubs; all this finally inclosed with fence or living hedge."

Viewed in its proper light and in a sense of relationship of education to environment the rural school offers a better opportunity for giving adequate manual and household arts training than the city school. There can be a closer cooperation between the home and the school and a more direct application of hand-work to environment than is possible in the city school. It is believed that this industrial training will have an economic value in the eyes of the parents and will assist in keeping the children in school. The boy may be taught to do things in the line of construction and repair work necessary upon the farm - he might learn how to set window glass, to mix paint and whitewash, to sharpen saws, to make chicken coops, brooders, model gates and fences. Cornell University has worked out a plan whereby a very satisfactory manual training equipment can be obtained for \$87.50.

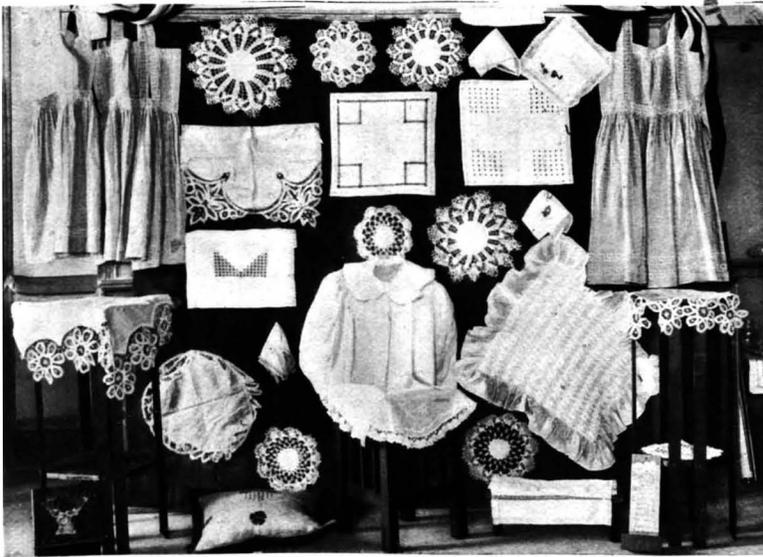
The girl may also be taught the various household arts. She should work with real things - darning real stockings, making full sized aprons, shirt waists, etc. (See Plate X and Plate XI) If the girl learns to make a loaf of bread, to prepare a dish for the table, to make an apron for herself, etc. if she combines with her work cheerfulness, careful thought, and intelligent study, she





HAND-MADE ARTICLES—Cottage Hill, 1904.

All of this work was done outside of school or during time that would have been wasted. The general tone of the school was much improved by having "something to do with the hands." Lessons were learned better, the hand-work acting as a stimulus.



Sewing work of pupils of 7th and 8th grades, District 68.



Manual training work of pupils of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, district 68, the North End school, Rockford township, Miss Libbie Powell, teacher.

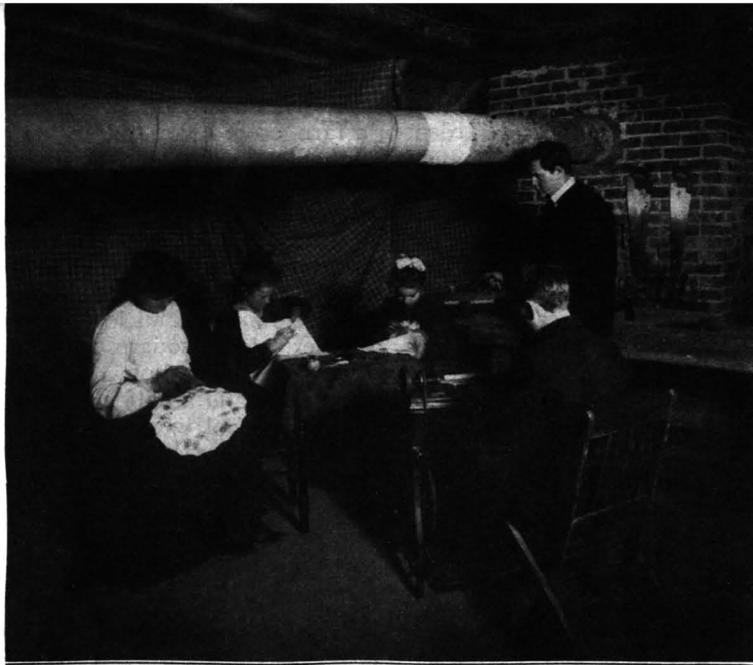


will ere long become an expert in home duties. The work in domestic science developed from home needs and conditions. It reaches to the making, the sanitation, and the decoration of the house to the furnishings and conveniences of the home to the deep subject of home economics and household management. In many of the country homes, the most common facts of health, beauty and harmony are disregarded. Children and parents sleep in rooms, with all the windows tightly closed, or with a lamp turned low. Dust catching carpets, cheap lace curtains, ugly wall paper, poor lights, overcarved furniture, shades drawn to keep the parlor carpet from fading, are some of the things we find in our country homes today. What is needed is to teach these home subjects in the school and transfer the teaching to the actual practice in the home.

The Household Arts Department of Cornell University has developed an equipment and course of study which makes it practical to have household arts in every rural community. This may be obtained for \$50. The University of Missouri has worked out an equipment at the same price.

Here again is a means for cooperation. Have a mothers' meeting some afternoon; have the class give a demonstration lesson in cooking and table service, and later serve a lunch. This work would touch the mothers and even the fathers, just as much as agricultural teaching in the life of the boy.





PUPILS AT WORK IN BASEMENT—Cottage Hill, 1904.

work bench and sewing room in basement. The work bench was made by the pupils. Here is where the pupils spend a part of their time making useful articles. No lessons were lost. All work was done on "idle time."

LIBRARY UNIV. OF MO.



Dist. 53, McDonough county. Corner in front.



Dist. 53, McDonough county. Corner in the rear showing work bench.



DINING ROOM—Cottage Hill, 1904.

Dining Room in the Basement, where pupils ate their dinners. Every article in this room was purchased with money raised by the pupils and teacher.



In a Virginia county Friday afternoon is set aside as a sort of "party lunch hour". Girls are asked to bring various things to eat, prepared by themselves. The boys are requested to make report on the "meat bill at home this week" or the flour account, stating to the "Home Club" such information as they may have obtained as to where the meat was produced, or from what source the flour was derived. All of the home matters are studied in this way. They thus try to emphasize such facts as, for example, that an incompetent farmer raises one thing in Virginia, and buys his pork from Iowa and his corn from Illinois; while an intelligent farmer in Virginia raises all that he eats or uses about the farm and more besides. The people are vitally interested in this rational treatment of the problem.<sup>1</sup>

Another rural teacher has succeeded in having the parents cooperate with the school by supplying hot dishes for the noon luncheon. The idea was first suggested to her by a chafing dish luncheon. The equipment is two saucepans, one of which fits into the other, a lid and an alcohol lamp. Twenty-five very simple lessons were typewritten and supplied by the county superintendent. The idea became so popular that men teachers in the same county took up the work.

Some rural schools in Missouri have introduced this industrial work with marked success. One teacher who has

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1. Commissioner of Education Report 1909. Vol.1,p.112.



tried the work only on a small scale writes, - "I notice a great change in the attitude of the patrons toward the school. They have at last come to believe that the school belongs to them, and exists for the good of their children. They visit often, inquire about the progress of the children and offer their help and strongest support<sup>1</sup>." Before introducing this work, she had tried to induce parents to visit the school, but with no avail.

In general, it might be said that the per cent of average daily attendance is a safe index to the amount of cooperation existing between patrons and the schools. To secure this end some teachers award certificates for regular and punctual attendance. In the writer's own experience a boy who had always played truant whenever he could, by this inducement, made the record of being neither absent nor tardy for three years. The certificates are looked upon by both pupils and patrons as being just as important as diplomas of graduation. In many instances, parents made great sacrifices that their children should be present on time each day. The certificates were in nearly every case framed and pointed to with pride. This may seem insignificant to some, but cooperation in securing regular attendance is an item of no small moment to the rural teacher.

It is not to be expected that the rural teacher can accomplish all the things herein suggested in one year.

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1. Letter from Grace A. Blackledge, Morley, Missouri.



"Rome was not built in a day", and if she works faithfully and concentrates all her energy along one line and makes it a success she has nobly done her duty. The next year she should take up another line of work.

It is self-evident that upon the rural school teacher rests the greatest responsibility in securing effective cooperation of patrons. She must, in almost every case, take the initiative. "To her the patrons have a right to look for information and advice and leadership that make for the uplift of the community, for the founding of a library, for the improvement and beautifying of the school room and grounds, for an understanding of the possibilities of rural life. Tact, energy, and purpose will transform a district in a short time."



Section III.

The School Patrons as Factors.

"The school with its surroundings represents the culture of the community" :- Baldwin.

"The intelligent setting in operation of well-planned influences to bring about increasing cooperation between the home and the school is greatly to be desired. Education is primarily a matter of parents and of home influences; only secondarily does the school come into the matter at all. Unfortunately, however, the conditions of life have long since placed the entire burden upon the school - a burden which it cannot possibly bear. The home must not abdicate in education unless the whole basis of our civilization is radically to change. Those who are laboring with wisdom effectiveness, and patience to bring the home and the school into closer understanding and more intimate cooperation are real benefactors."

Nicholas Murray Butler. *Beige*  
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The school is historically an extension of the home. As the demands of the developing civilization made it impossible for the parent to give systematic attention to the teaching of the child, a new institution, the school, was invented and its duties centered around the instruction of the child. The home and school are still the two great agencies in the education of the child; their aims are



identical; neither can work effectively in ignorance of the other. A child's loyalty to the school is almost invariably a product of home understanding. The reaction of the child to his school work is seen fully only in the home, and the teacher who has no point of contact with the home loses the best opportunity of testing the value of her work. The most effective results are obtained when the life of the child in the home and in the school is an unity, "not a life divided between two neutral, if not hostile camps." At present the rural schools are suffering from this lack of support from the homes. Many of the schools are not able to maintain standards of scholarship, and secure proper physical conditions and necessary school equipment on account of the indifference of school patrons. The patrons seem to think it is enough that they pay taxes to support the school and elect three directors to look after it. The people seem to have lost interest; the directors themselves are often incompetent or indifferent, and the consequences are that the one-room country school has made but little progress in the last thirty years. It has been heroic, but not efficient. The same old box car type of buildings stands on grounds bleak and bare - treeless, unsightly, cheerless. The outbuildings are a menace to the moral health of the pupils, and, judging from appearances, the ventilation of the woodshed is still all that can be desired. Some of Missouri's school buildings



are situated in graveyards, some have no well nearer than a quarter of a mile, and the report for 1909 showed there were 1,066 school houses valued at less than \$300 each.

The typical interior has a stove standing in the middle of the room, thus making even heating impossible; four windows on each side of the building, placed opposite each other, causing strong cross lights, ruinous to the eyes; double desks, small seats placed in front of larger ones; requiring some pupils to sit in seats too high and use desks too low; no small seats for the little ones, who are compelled to sit for six hours with their feet six inches from the floor; possibly no library, no maps or globes, no pictures on the walls. Such buildings too often are the breeding places of diseases, and the children tramping to them in all kinds of weather with wet feet and clothing, and sometimes frozen fingers present a pitiable spectacle. What wonder that the Country Life Commission found health conditions in the country in a deplorable condition! Who is responsible for such conditions? There is an old saying, "As is the teacher, so is the school." True as this is, there is another equally true: "As is the community, so is the school." The school is a safe index to the spirit and advancement of the people, and as has been already pointed out, these are conditions for which the patrons alone are responsible.



The main trouble that conditions are not better seems due to the fact that patrons have neglected the school - know little of actual conditions and seem to be satisfied just as long as the tax levy is low. In our fathers' day, when the school master boarded round, school matters were affairs of neighborhood interest and the friendly relation between teacher and pupils and the pleasant comradeship of the school made life wholesome and simple. The school master was the most respected man in the neighborhood. Now too frequently the teacher is an unknown, often negligible quantity; she is peripatetic by nature, almost, and like the journeyman carpenter, she never can rest but must ever so often pick up her kit and move on to new fields. Patrons should know the school through friendship with the teacher and frequent visits to the school. They should be familiar with all the teacher's plans and purposes; they should give her their sympathy and be slow to condemn her for supposed faults. It is their duty to see that their children attend regularly and promptly, that they are neatly clothed, and cleanly in their person. They can create a community sentiment for the best teacher and see that she is well paid for her services. They can demand improvements from the school board, where the same demand on the part of the teacher would be ignored. These in fact, are the things that rural patrons must do if effective cooperation is to be secured and the country school rejuvenated.



The country patrons need to be aroused from their slumbers, and that awakening must come through the county superintendent and the teacher. When their eyes are opened, they will rise to their opportunities and maintain schools in the country equal in duration and in equipment, and equal, if not superior, in efficiency to the best schools now maintained in the cities.

If this state of things is to be brought about the first thing that must be done is the election of an intelligent, interested, progressive board of directors. Do the country patrons now take sufficient interest in the delegation of their power into the hands of these three men, or do they allow some one to have the job who is interested in placing his niece in charge of the schools, or do they choose a man, who having no children of his own to educate does not believe in educating his neighbor's, and consequently strives to keep the tax levy low? Do they exercise the right at the April election of voting for the best man for County Superintendent, or do they allow the whole affair to be run by some political machine? If conditions are not what they should be, in the last analysis, who is to blame?

The office of school director is at the same time an opportunity and a responsibility. He is the "go-between" for the teacher and the patrons and upon him rests largely this matter of cooperation. He is at the head of the school



system of Missouri. Others may counsel and advise - he does things. He, in a measure, levies the taxes to support the school and can say whether too little or too much shall be spent by the people for educational purposes. He hires the teacher and may choose one who is of no account or one who becomes the child's best benefactor.

The young people's future lies practically in his hands. He is the most useful man in the community if he does his duty.

Then the directors should at the annual election give a faithful account of their stewardship. The public has a right to demand it. They should be willing to acknowledge their mistakes and above all their boast should be not that "We have run a cheap school", but that "We have spent much money and we feel that we have spent it wisely." Such a report should contain all items of interest to the patrons, including a report of (1) amount of money received; (2) amount of money expended and how. Itemized account. (3) number of pupils in the district, number that have attended school. (Few know this.) (4) Daily cost for each child in school. If certain measures are needed compare with other districts, city districts, etc.

But the school patrons are not to consider their duty done when they have elected a capable board. Their task is as important and distinct, and its influence as far reaching. They can bring about better conditions if they will.



To show what has been accomplished by patrons, let us turn to actual results in different states. Some of these organizations have been effected directly by the patrons themselves; others have been inaugurated by the teachers or county superintendents, but the patrons have taken such an active interest that the success in most cases has been directly due to their efforts.

Maine, in 1898, was the first state to form a School Improvement League; its membership now numbers 60,000. Its objects are

- (1) To make the school a central point of interest in the community;
- (2) To improve the physical conditions of the school;
- (3) To help to provide school libraries, pictures and supplementary equipment;
- (4) To unite the pupils, teachers and citizens in a movement for the improvement of educational facilities for school conditions.

They have local, county, and state leagues. The membership in the local league is open to pupils, teachers and friends of the local school in which the league is organized. The only condition for membership is that the applicant agree to help in any way within his power, to forward the interests of the school.

The county league helps in the direction and organization of the local leagues and holds its meetings annually



in conjunction with the County Teachers' Association.

The state league assists in the formation and direction of plans to be followed in the local league and meets annually in conjunction with the State Teachers' Association.

Local meetings are held once or twice a month. Papers, debates, readings, musicales, lectures, discussions, etc. are features of the program. Notes of public interest are sent to the papers.

On November 28, 1908, J. G. Crabbe, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Kentucky, opened a Whirlwind Campaign for better education in Kentucky, and through the cooperation of patrons, women's clubs, etc. accomplished great results.<sup>1</sup> "It was a continuous cyclone bombardment against illiteracy and ignorance for a period of nine days. Twenty-nine speakers, forceful, sensible, well-informed, intelligent, enthusiastic, were in the field. Nearly 300 public set addresses were delivered. The entire state was covered - every county was visited by a speaker or speakers." Nearly 60,000 people heard "a new gospel of education, of inspiration, of helpfulness." Other states also inaugurated such campaigns.

The Second Whirlwind Campaign<sup>2</sup> which lasted eight days, began June 27, 1909. One hundred earnest speakers -

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1. "First Whirlwind Campaign" Bulletin No.10, Kentucky Dept. of Education.
2. "Second Whirlwind Campaign", Bulletin No.5, Kentucky Dept. of Education.



prominent business men, political and school men were kept in the field.

Each county planned a rally day for Monday, June 28. Thousands of people were in attendance, and in many counties it was pronounced "the greatest event in the history of the county." Sunday, June 27 was designated as Public School Sunday, and the clergymen helped carry on the campaign by delivering in their churches, addresses on public education.

The women's clubs assisted in the movement, with a result that public sentiment in favor of better educational conditions, local taxation, and county high schools have been greatly strengthened. The newspapers gave space without stint, and the success was in no small measure due to the wide spread and intelligent influence of the press of the state.

<sup>1</sup>  
"The Campaign", writes J. G. Crabbe, "has had a wonderful effect in bringing the gospel of public education nearer to the hearts of the people. The people are thinking. Under the operation of the new County School District Law the local taxes in the counties have been increased from the sum of \$180,000 in 1907 to an amount estimated at \$1,000,000 for 1909. Much has been accomplished, but the work is incomplete. It is merely in its infancy and we propose to fight it out on this line."

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1. "Second Whirlwind Campaign", Bulletin No.5, Kentucky Dept. of Education.



In West Virginia, the ministers observe one Sunday as a special day for preaching on sanitation, health and other topics of vital interest to patrons and pupils. They also observe "Clean Up and Beautify Day" when the country folk meet at the school house, wash windows and floors, clear away debris, plant vines, build walks, erect flag poles, or put up pictures. But the movement does not stop with the school house and grounds, but is carried to the roads and fence rows, then the springs and streams, then the churches and cemeteries. Missouri also has a "Clean Up Day" for rural schools.

Through the wide circulation of the book on "School Architecture" sent out by the State Department, there has been a wonderful improvement in rural school buildings.

The State Department also requests the patrons to observe Arbor and Bird Day, and sends out manuals for programs, consisting of graded reading lessons and general suggestions. The object of these is "to take the school into nature and to bring nature into the schools, to the end that nature will uplift the school, and the school will in turn love and protect nature."

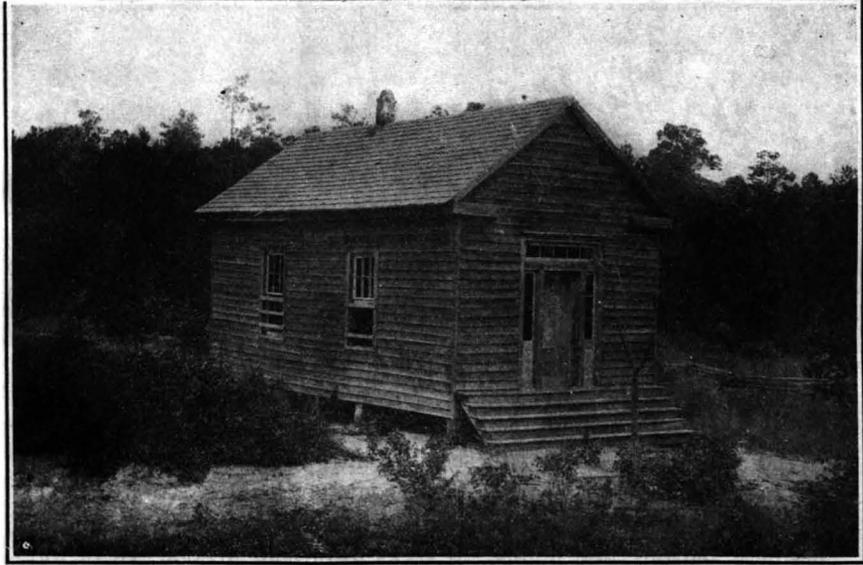
The school improvement movement was first inaugurated in the South by the Women's Club of Richmond, Virginia. Now the work is carried on in every southern state. In 1902 Dr. Charles D. McIver perfected the North Carolina Betterment Association. A few months after, Dr. D. B. Johnson organized



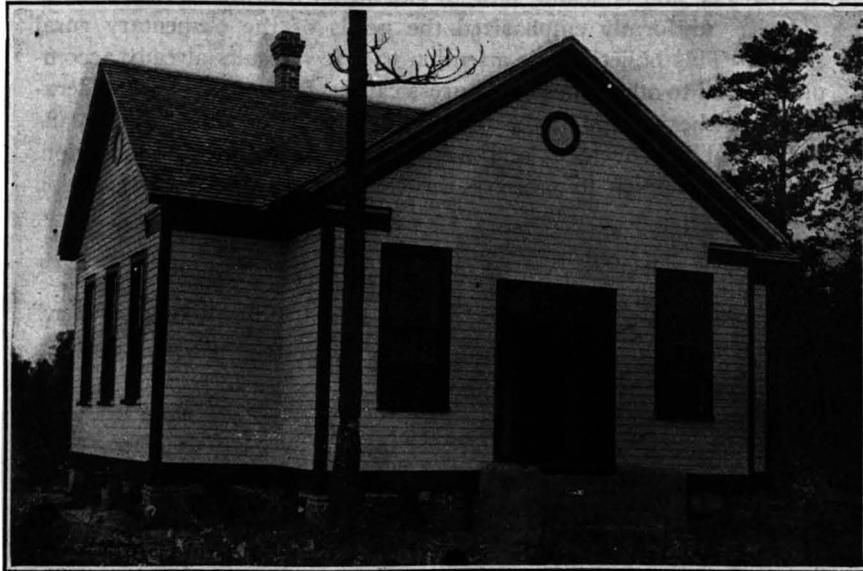
the South Carolina Association, which immediately began improving buildings and grounds of the rural schools. Literature was distributed all over the state, and by pushing the work daily from year to year there are now hundreds of organizations in the rural communities, some in each county of the state. The membership now numbers approximately 10,000 - all working for one grand aim - to give the children in the country better school advantages and to make life in the country worth living. Any white woman interested in the betterment of rural schools is eligible to membership. No fees are required - only service. Each woman is required to pledge herself to do at least one thing for the improvement of at least one country school sometime during the year.

"These local associations strive to get every patron interested in the upbuilding of the school and the ennobling of every boy and girl in the district; to enable patrons to cooperate with the teacher for the common good of all the pupils; to bring together the people from every corner of the district and have them meet as friends and fellow workers; to make them realize they are responsible for the education, the training, and in a measure, the character of every boy and girl in that community; to help them realize the part environment plays in the life and education of the child and thus to stimulate the desire for better schools with proper equipment. Indeed, these local associations are





LANE GRADED SCHOOL. OLD. WILLIAMSBURG CO. VALUE, \$50.00.



LANE GRADED SCHOOL. NEW. WILLIAMSBURG CO. \$50.00 PRIZE.  
VALUE, \$900.00.

Work of the South Carolina School Improvement Association.

PLATE XII.



working for the improvement of every man, woman and child in the community, the schools of the community, and the roads leading through the community."

A field worker visits every county in the state in the interests of rural schools. It is estimated that as a result of her labor \$100,000 worth of material improvements were made in the schools in the state, that were sadly neglected before that time.

For several years the association has offered between \$1000 and \$2000 in prizes for the best improvement in rural schools during a certain time. Thirty-five prizes were offered in 1909, and 135 schools entered the contest. In 1910, \$3,000 was given in fifty prizes; ten prizes of \$100 each; forty of \$50 each. (See Plates XII and XIII.)

The prize money is in turn spent upon the improvement of the schools. Among the items for which it is expended are painting, musical instruments, library reading tables, magazines, daily papers, and periodicals; maps, globes, charts, and pictures, teachers' chairs, desks, tables, and patent desks; bells, flags, water coolers and drinking cups; curtains and shades for windows; waste baskets, dust pans, dusters, and door mats; blackboards, dustless crayons, noiseless erasers; lamps for lighting the building and curtains for the stage; encyclopedias and dictionaries;

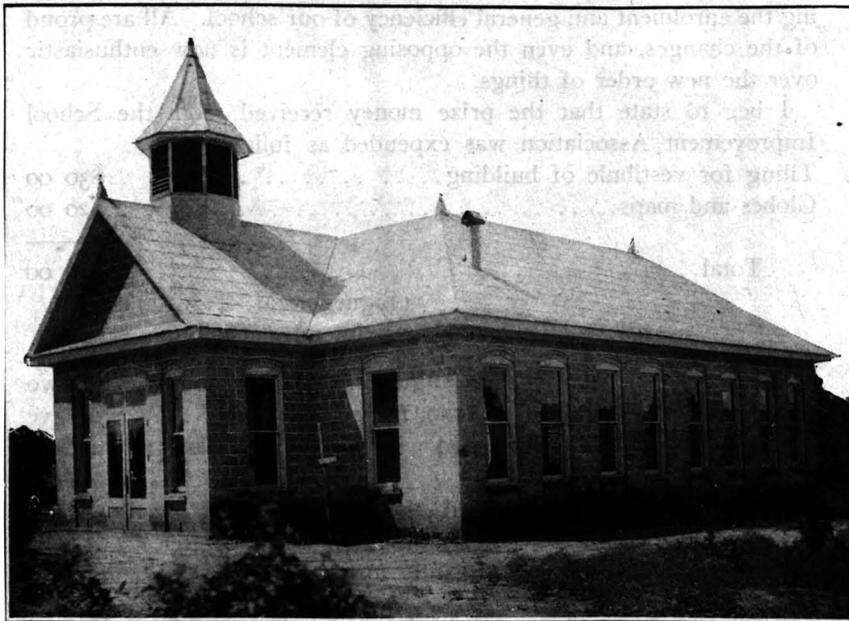
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1. South Carolina School Improvement League. Bulletin V. South Carolina Educational Department.





WEST UNION SCHOOL, CCONEE. OLD.



WEST UNION SCHOOL, CCONEE CO. \$100 PRIZE. NEW. VALUE, \$2,543.50.

Work of the South Carolina School Improvement Association.



basins, towels, soap, scissors, comb and brushes; manual training tools; for exterior improvements in fences, flower seeds, shrubs, trees and garden implements.

The State Legislature was also aroused to the situation and it appropriated \$60,000 to increase the length of school terms. It also passed a law whereby any school desiring to construct a new building may receive \$50 from the county and \$50 from the state for every \$100 raised by the patrons, friends or trustees, up to \$300 on the part of the county, and \$300 on the part of the state. Consolidated districts may receive an additional bonus of \$50 from both county and state. Thus a community by raising \$600 for a consolidated school may build a \$1300 school house. There is therefore no excuse for poor buildings in South Carolina.

The South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs have also cooperated in this movement.

Very similar to this is the Women's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina." The aim is "to gain the cooperation of every man, woman and child in the community; to secure the best teacher for the school; to have the best house and grounds; to have each child in school every day of the school term; to make that term longer whenever it is less than nine months, and to improve the entire school environment."



Texas has an educational organization called the Conference for Education in Texas, which is original in its character, peculiar in its mission, and effective in its work. It was organized February 22, 1907 to supply a popular need for a non partisan association composed of business and professional men to promote the interests of education in the state. It now boasts a membership of 8000. Since its formation the conference has been unceasing in its efforts to create a public opinion favorable to good schools and improved school equipment. "Up to April 1909, it had issued ten bulletins of which it had distributed more than 250,000 copies and it has sent speakers to all sections of Texas<sup>1</sup>. The Conference has been mainly instrumental in securing the passage of important laws that increased the appropriation per capita for the support of the public free schools, lengthened the school term from five months to more than six months, established professional county supervision in more than sixty counties, and otherwise contributed to the improvement of the whole system in the state. Through a state wide campaign a constitutional amendment was adopted in 1908 substituting majority rule for the two-thirds rule in the school-tax election, and authorizing districts to levy certain local taxes."

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1. Com. of Education Report for 1909, Vol.1,p.63.



Organizations for school improvement exist in all the Southern states, those already given being typical.

The Committee on Education of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in Missouri worked quietly though persistently for county supervision in Missouri. They sent out leaflets to every county superintendent in the state and to 500 rural teachers. It is their intention to reach every director and school patron in the state. "With a view to stimulating popular thought in regard to the efficiency of modern school methods, and the lack of productive cooperation between home and school forces", a series of 22 questions were submitted; not in a spirit of criticism, but with a desire to bring about a more general consideration of the purpose of state education and its more effective accomplishment. The chairman of the committee, Mrs. Henry N. Ess of Kansas City, has asked the members of her committee in each of the nine federated districts to visit at least one rural school, to make a thorough examination of conditions, to talk with teachers and patrons and to make a report to her. Superintendent Gass says that the good which the work of women's clubs has accomplished is very marked in rural districts. He says "There is not a cottage in the state too humble to help along this agitation for better schools, better teachers, better school directors; and there is not a man or woman who cannot bring some influence to bear that will bring to



every boy and girl a better chance to make a first class citizen. The training of the individual is necessary to his success in life, and the training of the many is necessary to the successful life of the community. No state can rise above the level of her average man. Every untrained man lowers her moral and economic value. For the sake of our own children let us look beyond the education of our own to that of the community in which they must live."

The National Congress of Mothers is a wide spread movement. In Pennsylvania almost every school has a Parent-Teachers' Association which is a part of this National Congress.

Some of its objects are: to bring into closer relations the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of the child. It seeks to do this through the formation of Parent-Teacher Associations in every school and elsewhere by distributing literature which will be of practical use to parents in the problems of home life.<sup>1</sup> "It has steadily increased its educational material and suggestion for study courses by the parents. It has established "The Child-Welfare Magazine" which each month publishes one or more papers suitable for the program of a Parent-Teacher Association.

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1. "How to Organize Parents' Associations". National Congress of Mothers, 1910.



It has typewritten loan papers which are graded for different needs and which furnish valuable educational material for any Parent-Teacher Association and which make it independent of speakers, whom it is often expensive or impossible to procure." These papers read and discussed are pronounced of great interest and value. Mrs. E. R. Weeks of Kansas City, Mo., the chairman, gives some helpful suggestions as to how these Parent-Teacher Associations may be organized and conducted. "They may be held at regular intervals or semi-occasionally, and are very informal organizations, needing only a chairman and perhaps a secretary who will correspond with like societies for interchange of methods and papers. The teacher should not be called upon to fill either position. Calls for the meeting may be made by the children during the writing lesson and carried home as samples of progress sure to be read. The reason for the first meeting may be anything that the teacher thinks will interest the greatest number, perhaps the inspection of unusually good board work, or the recitation in some subject that needs special interest at home to make it accomplish more; perhaps some needed improvements in grounds, building or management which the teacher thinks may be easily accomplished if the parents will talk it over. The children may write "I have a plan for improving the playground which I want to talk over with the fathers and mothers"; or "the fathers have a plan to interest the boys in the agri-



cultural work of the school." Perhaps the parents or teachers want to discuss the value of county graduations, or the consolidation of rural schools, or plan a county school picnic at which these things can be talked over; or they may discuss the method of feeding children to get the best results from school work, how to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, or how to get a school library or needed apparatus. Many such organizations want a formal paper to start the discussion, and patrons cannot spend time to write one. Loan papers on the above topics and many others suited to a great variety of needs may be obtained at a cost of ten cents for postage; helpful literature as to organizing and carrying on meetings and information as to free literature for reading and discussion, at the cost of a two cent stamp may be obtained from Mrs. Weeks, Kansas City, Mo., the chairman of this department. All information literature is free to teachers."

The object of these meetings is not primarily for entertainment, but for a conference of parents and teachers upon subjects of vital interest to the welfare of the child. Two groups of questions present themselves for consideration - the first relating to the home and growing out of the mother's experience, and therefore affording topics on which she is prepared to speak. Questions such as the child's attitude toward his school work as shown in the home, the amount of time given to home study, children's



food, sleep, discipline, and punishment come under this group. The second group consists of problems that bear upon the methods of teaching - questions which the teacher is most competent to discuss. Other subjects such as ventilation, sanitation, etc. afford common ground for both.

All Parent-Teacher Associations may be admitted as members of the National Congress of Mothers on the payment of ten cents per capita. It now has organizations in thirty-two different states. In Missouri the work has been confined chiefly to the small towns hoping through them to reach the rural districts. For example "In Stanberry the circle while not large, is taking up school gardening, and will distribute seeds to school children. It expects to invite people from the country districts to its meetings and get them interested." In some places they assist the county superintendent in arranging programs for his Parent-Teacher Associations.

Near Appleton City is an organization of mothers, fathers, teachers, and children who meet together. They have collected by free offerings over fifty dollars to be used in prizes this coming fall to the young folks of the neighborhood for farm and domestic exhibits. A big basket dinner is to be given and prize winners announced.

The Ohio School Improvement Federation is an organization begun by the teachers, and emphasizes the fact that because the teachers of the state had been indifferent, or



through self-interest had failed to cooperate for the general educational interests of the state, all had thereby suffered. But it is not a strictly professional organization. It includes prominent educators, members of school boards, patrons of the schools and citizens in various walks of life, thus cooperating with all influences having for an object the improvement of our common schools. It seeks cooperation with the Ohio Teachers' Association, and other teachers' associations, the state university and colleges, the Grange, the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Experiment Station and the State Board of Agriculture - all vital educational forces operating in Ohio.

It has planned three specific lines of attack. They are

1. To create wholesome, intelligent educational sentiment in the citizenship of the state. To do this, the public should be well informed and should have a sincere appreciation of the value of education and culture.

2. To secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state. "Better schools for the children of Ohio is its motto."

3. To make teaching a profession recognized, protected, and justly compensated.

The management has not failed to make good use of the public press. They have appointed a special legislative correspondent. Editors were willing, even desired,



to use condensed articles, setting forth the object of the Federation and its work at different stages. Thus the homes were reached and public sentiment was aroused and effective influence brought to the support of the work. Especially has it tried to familiarize the patrons with needed laws, and it has worked for law enforcement. It has been instrumental in securing some important laws for the teachers and the schools, particularly the law removing school elections from partisan politics, and the minimum salary law, which provides for at least eight months school each year and state aid for weak school districts.

By reason of its increasing numbers it is exerting an important influence in the field of education, more especially, perhaps, in the betterment of the rural schools.

Each member pays a minimum fee of five cents a month for twelve months in the year.<sup>1</sup>

The Grange, more nearly a national farmers' organization than any other in existence today, has assisted in making the rural school the social center of the community. Organized in 1867, it is today a live institution represented in thirty states, and since 1890 it has almost doubled its membership.

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1. "The Ohio School Improvement Federation" by S.K. Mardis.



One of the paragraphs in its declaration of purpose reads thus: "We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves and for our children, by all just means within our power. We especially advocate for our agricultural and industrial colleges that practical agriculture, domestic science and all the arts which adorn the home be taught in their courses of study."

"The Grange has always taught the need of better rural education. It has also tended to develop its members so that they may not only appreciate education, but that they may be themselves living examples of the value of such an education." The three principles upon which it is founded are organization, cooperation, education. It is strongest in the states of New York, Maine, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire.

Its area of jurisdiction has nominally a diameter of about five miles. The membership consists of men and women, and of young people over fourteen years of age, who may apply and by vote be accepted.

Mr. P. G. Holden of Ames Agricultural College in a letter writes, - "One of the things we are now developing is the organization of granges. Wherever there are granges, we find that the schools are in much better condition, as are also the roads, rural school buildings, community spirit, etc."



In our own state and others they are working for the consolidation of rural schools.

The Home Makers' Conference and Conferences held Farmers' Week at Columbia, Missouri, are also trying to aid in bettering rural school conditions.

In the N.E.A. there is now a department of School Patrons with eighteen active state committees for 1910. Missouri is organized, but made no report. While the work being done is not essentially confined to rural schools, still the things they have worked for - medical inspection, county supervision, school gardens, libraries, consolidation, banishment of drinking cups, minimum salary laws and the like - will affect in large measure the improvement of the rural school.

There is one thing that the patrons of Missouri may do and that is to put themselves in line with the work of the State Superintendent of Schools in his effort to bring about a system of approved rural schools. The plan is briefly this: the county superintendent inspects and reports the school for approval on a blank furnished by the State Superintendent. Before a school can be approved it must comply with the following general conditions.

1. The term must be at least eight months in length.
2. The teacher must hold a certificate higher than a third grade county.
3. The salary paid must be at least \$40 per month.



4. The board must have complied with the library law, section 8186. Rev.Statutes,1909.

5. The State Course of Study or its equivalent must be followed.

6. Agriculture must be taught in the higher grades.

7. The organization and classification of the school must be definite and satisfactory.

8. The instruction and discipline must be satisfactory.

9. The school building, grounds and outbuildings must be adequate, cleanly, and sanitary.

After a school has met the above conditions it can be approved provided it can make a showing of 80 points out of a possible 100 on a score card included in the Inspector's report. The items are these, and values allowed are as follows:

Condition of school building - - - - -	20 points
Apparatus and equipment of building - -	17 points
Grounds and outbuildings - - - - -	13 points
Course of study and organization - - - -	25 points
And the teacher - - - - -	25 points

The State Superintendent examines the report of the school, and if satisfactory, places it on the approved list and mails a beautiful lithographed certificate of approval to the county superintendent to be signed by him and presented to the school. The certificate is signed by the State Superintendent and has the seal of the department



of public schools. It remains in force as long as the conditions are complied with.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the formation of school improvement leagues in Missouri, and a place where the school and home may cooperate in placing their school upon the approved list.

The Hesperia movement affords an excellent example of what one community may accomplish, for the work begun in the little village of Hesperia in 1886 has spread out not only over the state of Michigan, but to other states as well. Annual meetings of school patrons are held in February, beginning on Thursday night and lasting till Saturday night. The three evenings are given over to lectures and entertainments, and the two days spent in solid programs including subjects ranging "all the way from the raising of potatoes to the raising of citizens."

Its objects as stated are to bring about cooperation of patrons, teachers, and pupils, to make the rural schools character builders by arousing a healthy educational sentiment by a sympathetic cooperation of farm, home, and school, and to furnish wholesome entertainment in the rural districts. The annual membership fee is fifty cents, which entitles its holder to a reserved seat at all meetings. The programs are so arranged that both teachers and patrons take part in the the discussions.<sup>1</sup>

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1. "The Hesperia Movement", Review of Reviews, 23:443 to 446.



Kent County, Michigan, has meetings of a similar nature, only they are itinerant and several are held during the year.

A good example of what might be done along this line in a broader way is shown in the Play Festival at Paltz, New York. In June 1905, a circular letter sent out in Ulster County, New York, announced an athletic field day and play picnic for the country schools. The teachers were urged to have the children take part in the games and contests; the patrons were urged to come to the performances and to do some "stunts" on their own account, - in fact, it was to be a general play day for everybody. 1,000 people came the first year, 3,000 the second year, and next year 4,000.

Under the auspices of the Normal School at Paltz, a number of country conferences were held where pertinent educational questions referring to agriculture and domestic science were discussed. An Athletic League for Country Children was organized. The grounds at the Play Festival were divided so that every child might spend the whole day in play. A day nursery took charge of the children so the mothers enjoyed a day of freedom also.

An opportunity was afforded for organizations that would interest rural communities to display their work and explain their purpose, and many useful organizations have thus sprung up in rural communities. Display work of the schools might be also placed on exhibition.



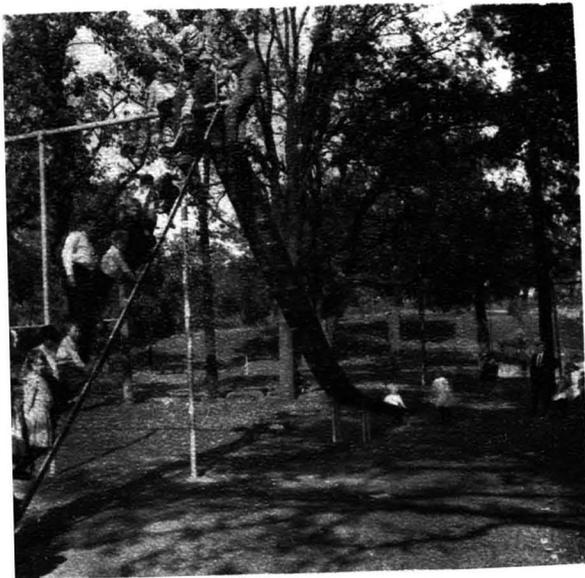
Such festivals might thus be the means of awakening the civic and institutional life of the community. They produce a fine community spirit, awaken civic consciousness and cooperation and develop community loyalty. Play festivals are now held in Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, North Carolina and Vermont.

Mr. Joseph Lee of Boston, father of the play ground movement in this country says: "The thing that most needs to be understood about play is that it is not a luxury, but a necessity; it is not simply something that the child likes to have, but it is something he must have if he is to grow up. It is more than an essential part of his education; it is an essential part of the law of his growth, of the process by which he becomes a man at all."

The country children need play just as much as the city children do, and where land can be purchased for a small price and inexpensive apparatus installed (See Plate XIV) the country patrons should see to it that the child has his play instincts cultivated.

In the country places, play grounds, if they come at all, will have to come through the generosity of some individual or club, or on the initiative of some organization like a powerful women's club, etc. Two examples of such benefactors that have encouraged physical development are Mr. Grant B. Schley in his gift to Far Hills, New Jersey, Mr. Watson Whittlesey in his gift to Livingston Manor near New Brunswick, New Jersey.





Large pleasant playground at the Gunsolus School, district 115, Cherry Valley township. Children are playing "Three Deep." Miss Alma Stevens, teacher. This game is described on page 196 of Bancroft's Games for Playground, School, etc. Some playground apparatus would be enjoyed by the children here.



The "giant stride," a piece of playground apparatus on the old County Fair Grounds. This installed by the Rockford Township Park Board. Swings and "teeter boards" in background. See drawing of an inexpensive "giant stride" for the country school.

OF MO. LIBRARY



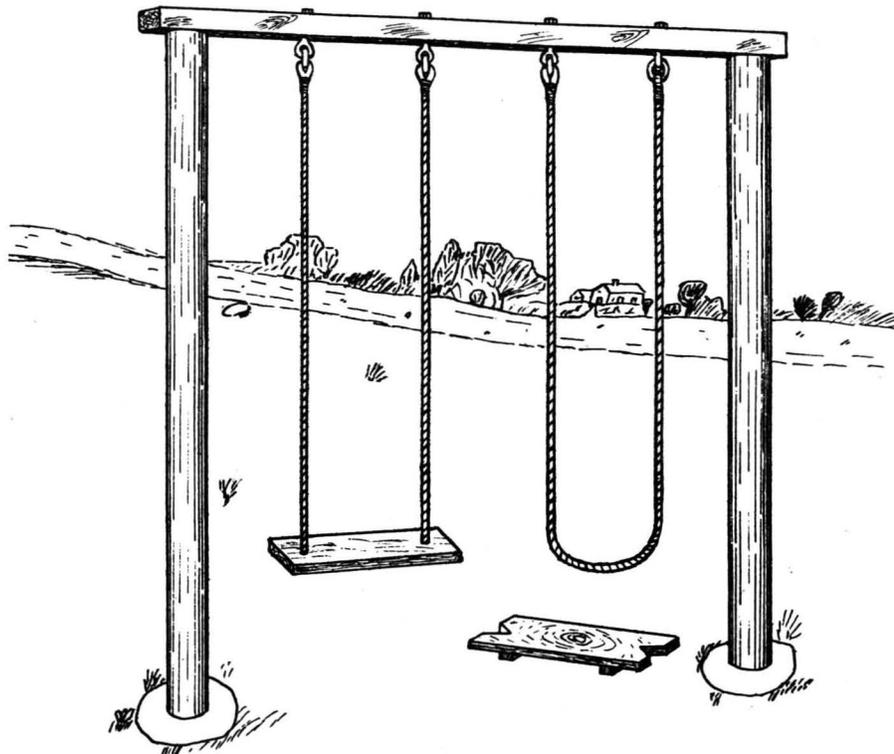
The legislature of Minnesota took judicious action when it directed that the site of country schools shall contain at least two acres, and when any schoolhouse site shall contain less than such amount, the board shall, if practicable, acquire other lands adjacent to or near such site to make, with such site, such amount. The school patrons will thus learn that they are to cooperate with the boy in his play as well as his work. As the result of these play festivals and the discussion of the subject in Parent-Teachers' Associations, the patrons may be influenced to supply the country children with every opportunity for play. In speaking of the present situation Henry S. Curtis, Secretary of the Playgrounds Association in America<sup>1</sup>, says that in his acquaintance with rural schools in the East and Middle West, he does not know of a single school with a playground large enough for a game of baseball. In many places the ground may be had for a song, but it has simply not occurred to the community at large that such a playground is desirable. The idea of physical training is almost completely lacking. The farmer expects that his son will become strong from farm work, and he sees no further object to be secured.

It would be a good thing if the playgrounds were large enough for picnic grounds for the parents.

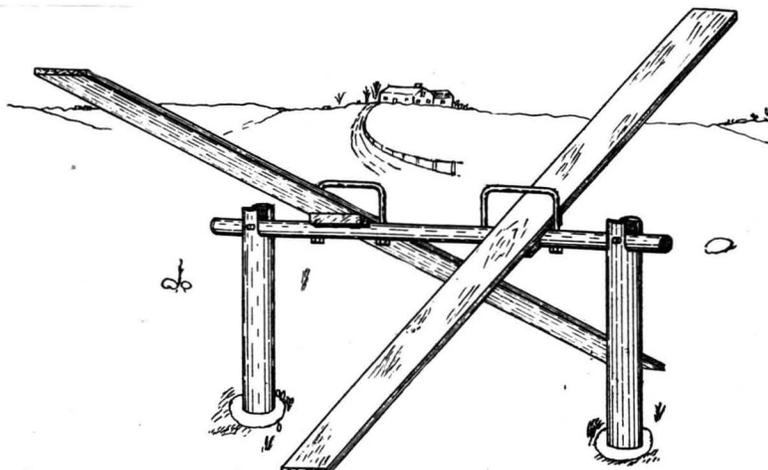
Mr. O. J. Kern has solved the problem of introducing simple, inexpensive apparatus on country playgrounds. (See Plate XV. -----)

1. 15th Biennial Report, Supt. of Public Instruction, Minnesota, 1907-08.





Plan of swing for country school playground. The estimated cost of material is as follows: Two cedar posts 16 feet high, 10 inch diameter bottom and 7 inch at top, each post two dollars; cross piece of 3-inch galvanized iron tubing instead of oak wood, 12 feet at 30 cents per foot is \$3.60; 40 feet three-fourths inch manilla rope with honda for two swings at 50 cents per foot is \$2.00; hooks 10 cents each; seats 25 cents each. Thus making a total of \$10.50 not counting labor. The posts should be set in cement three feet deep in the ground.



Inexpensive "teeter" for a country school ground. Material, two polished fir boards 2 inches by 10 inches, 14 feet long, each \$1.75; two posts six feet long, 10 inches diameter at base, 7 inches diameter at top, set three feet in ground in cement, each \$1.00; 3 inch galvanized pipe 8 feet long, 30 cents per foot, \$2.40; 4 castings and bolts, \$2.25, making a total of \$10.15. Castings may be had of the Rockford Malleable Iron Works, H. F. Forbes, President, Peoples Ave. and C. B. & Q. tracks.

Inexpensive playground apparatus for rural schools.



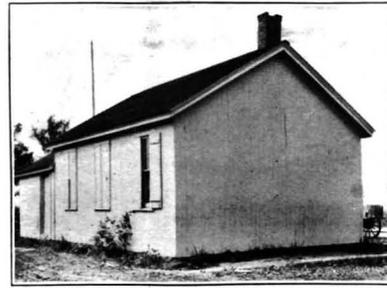
There are many things needed in our rural schools of today - things which demand the interest and cooperation of patrons. Some can possibly be remedied by legislation, others only by an active campaign on the part of teachers and patrons.

We need to encourage the movement of consolidation, and whenever possible, build a consolidated school of four rooms, maintaining a three years high school course, fully equipped to teach agriculture and domestic science; a place that will be the social center of the community. (See Plate XVI) The same wagons that transport the children in the day time may be used to convey the patrons to evening lectures, socials, etc. The transportation experiment has been tried at Kirksville, and at Wyaconda, Clark County, both being very successful. In the United States there have been over 600 successful experiments at complete consolidation of rural schools, and practically no failures. Kansas has not fewer than sixty-two consolidated schools with an enrollment of 5,362 pupils and employing 166 teachers. All this has been accomplished in the last twelve years. Missouri has been working almost as long and has not exceeded twenty. With the new law permitting free transportation Missouri patrons should be able to do away with many of our one-room district schools. The problem of cooperation will then be much more readily solved.





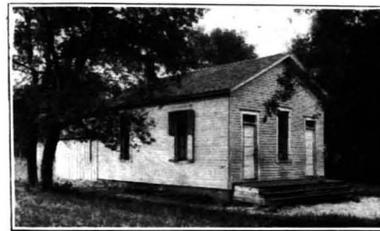
Bruner School, District 52,  
abandoned.



Free Soil School, District 56,  
abandoned.



Lovejoy School, District 49,  
abandoned.



Union School, District 61,  
abandoned.

*A Page of Educational Progress in Harlem Township*



The \$17,000 Harlem Consolidated School substituted for four abandoned schools shown above.

This page is also a study in Elimination and Substitution.

Four districts consolidated in Winnebago County, Ill.



Another thing for which they should work is the banishment of the common drinking cup. This is a movement of humanity for humanity. The drinking cup is a prolific spreader of disease and one of the most dangerous points of contact by which epidemics are spread.

Kansas was the first state to abolish public drinking cups. In 1909, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Delaware, Wisconsin and Oklahoma prohibited their use.

State Boards of Health have advised against them in California, Iowa, New York, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Maine and other states. In the rural schools where water cannot be had under pressure, the readiest solution is the closed water cooler with a faucet and individual cups. Aluminum cups may be had at a small cost. They may be stored in a simple closed cabinet with numbered hooks, or the children may use the collapsible cup which may be kept in their desks. The sanitary paper cup may be used several times; the cost is slight, - about ten cups for a cent. A cup may be used for several days.

Then as a protection from poor teachers, the minimum wage law should interest patrons. Eight states - West Virginia, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, North Dakota, Ohio and North Carolina have passed such laws with good results. France, Germany, Sweden and Italy also have such laws.



Another thing toward which the patrons of Missouri should work is providing equal educational advantages for every boy and girl in Missouri, whether his home be in the Ozarks or in the city of St. Louis. This cannot be brought about without a state law providing for a high school in every county.

On every hand there are problems requiring solution - problems which the patrons should assist the teacher in working for the best interests of the child. There are health problems, school improvement problems, actual problems of the school room, recreation problems and legislative problems - all of which concern the future as well as the present educational status of Missouri.



SECTION IV  
C O N C L U S I O N .

The writer believes that the paper has shown that definite methods of procedure on the part of the county superintendent, the teacher, and the patrons may bring about effective cooperation between rural school patrons and the schools.

The county superintendent may influence and direct the work of the rural teachers in their efforts to secure cooperation. He may directly influence the patrons in his educational meetings held throughout the county. He may also reach them through the columns of the newspaper, or through his annual report and circular letters, he may outline some definite method of procedure he wishes carried out. He may influence school boards to purchase necessary supplies and by holding annual school board conventions may inform boards of new appliances and apparatus necessary for an up-to-date rural school. He may further influence the patrons and secure their cooperation by holding corn-growing and other contests, field meets, school fairs, school picnics, and rural graduation exercises.

The teacher may secure the cooperation of patrons,

1. by making the school room and school grounds attractive, and calling the attention of patrons to needed reforms.



2. by restoring the school as a social center by having entertainments, art exhibits, and lecture courses;
3. By interesting patrons and pupils in the regular or traveling library;
4. By making the home and farm subjects the basis of the curriculum, - teaching agriculture, domestic science, and manual training;
5. by introducing nature study, school gardens, and museums;
6. by encouraging regular and prompt attendance.

The patrons should take more interest in the work of the rural schools. They may do this by friendly visits to the school, by attending the April school election, seeing that competent directors and county superintendents are elected, and voting increased levy for needed school improvements. They may do all they can to assist the teacher in her work, and may create a sentiment in favor of good schools. Much more effective work may be accomplished if school improvement leagues are organized. Especially helpful are the Parent-Teacher Associations and such organizations as the Hesperia movements. Patrons may further cooperate in raising money for libraries, special playground apparatus, and may work for consolidation. They may also direct their organized efforts toward needed legislation such as the minimum salary laws, the establishment of high schools in every county in the state, and the banishment



of the common drinking cup. In Missouri the patrons of each district may work to the end of having their own rural school approved.

As John F. Riggs, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Iowa says, "Union and cooperation alone make possible the twentieth century school. We may project the nineteenth century school into the twentieth century, but the school that keeps pace with the times and meets the demands of the age must have the interest and financial support of many people and the services of a number of skilled teachers working in cooperation.<sup>1</sup>"

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1. John F. Riggs, Conditions and Needs of Iowa Rural Schools, p.30.



EFFECTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN RURAL SCHOOL PATRONS AND  
THE SCHOOLS.

Section V.

Problems in Macon County.

"Charity should begin at home", so the author has attempted to show conditions as they really exist in Macon County<sup>1</sup> to point out definite problems facing the rural school teacher and the rural patrons, and to suggest ways in which they may cooperate in solving them. A glance at conditions reveals the fact that there is at present little cooperation, but wherever attempts have been made to enlist the patrons in the work of school betterment they have usually met with success. But there are problems facing the rural schools of the county that can never be solved by the rural school teacher alone, nor can the directors or the rural patrons solve them alone. They must all work together. It is the purpose of this section to show by statistics gathered from the office of the county superintendent of Macon County, Missouri, that there is need for earnest effort on the part of teachers and patrons of that county.

In the first place, the health problem might be considered. Over 90% of the school buildings are of the box car type of architecture, with the cross light, so ruinous

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1. Her own county.



to the eyes. Many of the desks are unsuited to the sizes of the children, and spinal curvature is often the result; little children sit on seats so high that their feet cannot touch the floor. If patrons would but visit the school occasionally, or if the teacher could at some Parent-Teachers' meeting explain the situation, in most districts it would be an easy matter to procure funds to set things right. The whole trouble seems to lie in the fact that these things are not explained; and their necessity for the welfare of the child is not emphasized.

The problem of good drinking water is another problem requiring cooperation. It is the business of the teacher and county superintendent to emphatically inform the patrons if the drinking water is impure. If the patrons are aroused to the situation, a few may easily volunteer and clean the well. The writer knows of several instances where just such a thing occurred. What the teacher usually does is merely to complain to visitors and if the county superintendent comes round she says "Our drinking water is awful. Just let me get you some and have you taste it."

The writer knows of one instance where the attention of patrons was called to the fact; men volunteered labor and contributed enough money to sink a new well. "The well to be safe should be drilled deep and cased with the best quality of galvanized iron pipe, so that there is no possibility of



drainage getting into it. There should be a cement basin and curbing about the top of the well with a drainage pipe so that all waste water may be carried off quickly. The well should be thoroughly cleaned out at the opening of each term, and the pumping or bailing apparatus should be kept in perfect sanitary condition. Children need to drink an abundance of water, and their health demands that it should be pure and free from injurious germs.<sup>1</sup>"

Another problem that needs attention is the matter of individual drinking cups. In but one school in the county is there any attempt being made along this line. The teacher should impress upon the children the necessity of them, and by so doing the parents may be induced to buy folding aluminum cups. In the writer's own experience, most patrons responded, but some saw no need for such action. In such a case, the teacher should at a meeting of the patrons exhibit by the use of a microscope, or, if it is not available, by use of a chart showing the germs found in the ordinary drinking cup. Physicians would be glad in many cases to cooperate and to explain the matter, and popular sentiment would be aroused and the common drinking cup banished. How many of the rural school patrons know that tuberculosis, catarrh,

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1. School Architecture, State of West Virginia, p.75.



diphtheria, tonsillitis and scarlet fever are spread through the school by the use of the ordinary drinking cup? What the patrons need is information.(See Plate XVII.)

Allied to this is the use of slates. Many of the rural schools have not abolished them. Here the teacher should take her stand, refusing to allow children to use them; if parents object, as they sometimes do, when the teacher explains her reasons, the patrons rarely fail to respond with pencil and paper for the children.

Ventilation and heating are other things affecting the health of the child. There are but three or four schools in the county that have modern systems in heating and ventilating. Here again the cooperation of patrons, teachers, county superintendent and directors is needed. It is just as easy to place the stove in a corner of the room as in the middle, and it may be jacketed at a slight expense.

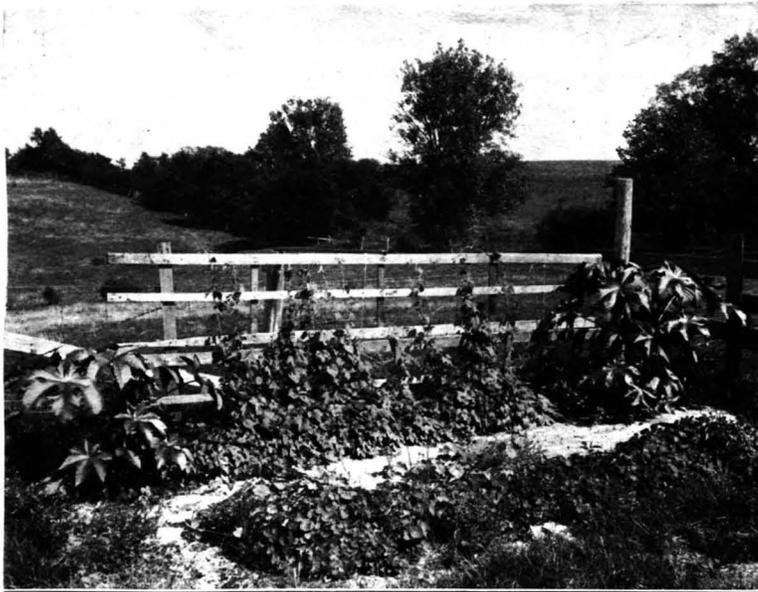
Thomas S. Ainge, Sanitary Engineer of the Michigan Department of Health writing on this subject said<sup>1</sup>:

"As a result of an investigation of Indiana relative to the ventilation of school buildings in that state, it was found that in a single term, 80 per cent of the pupils suffered from colds or coughs, and that 90 per cent of these ailments were due to the bad air of the school-room."

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1. "School Architecture" Kentucky, p.36.



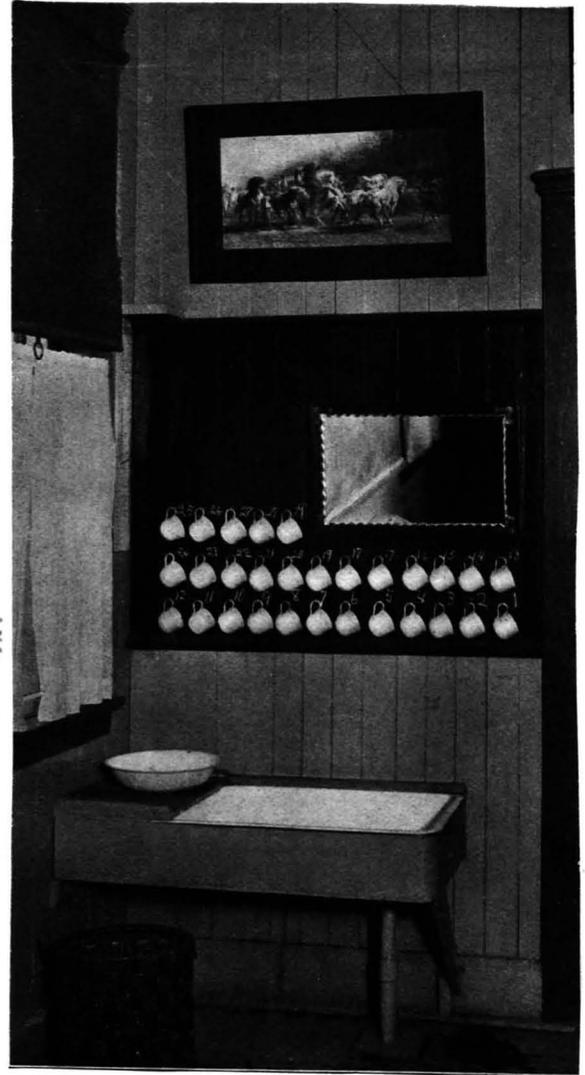


Lincoln Garden at district 58, the Marsh School, Guilford Township. Miss Georgia Marsh, teacher. You will note the good results in spite of the extreme drouth. The nasturtiums and castor beans came through the best. The nasturtium is very hardy and there seems to be no good reason why this particular plant could not be found on every school ground. Plant the climbing variety of deep red and rich yellow colors. If seed bed is well prepared to begin with and plants cared for during the vacation once a week there is no reason why abundant color should not be seen on the grounds when school begins in September.

UNIV. OF MO.  
7



Lincoln Garden at the Elmwood School, district 46, Owen Township. Miss Stella Cliekman, teacher. Morning Glories, Castor Beans and Nasturtiums thrived well here without water for a long time. Cultivate surface well and keep moisture from getting out of the ground.



Individual aluminum drinking cups and porcelain sink at the White Swan School, Guilford Township. The water tank is expected soon. Teacher, Mrs. Alma Norton. Directors are A. V. Grow, Frank Post and Fred Kelly.

In Winnebago County, Illinois, why not in Macon County.

Missouri?



"In Michigan over 90 per cent. of the cases of pneumonia and at least 80 per cent of the cases of consumption, in recent years, were reported to have had their beginnings in a bad cold or cough, and many of these were probably due to the attempt to regulate the temperature and improve the conditions of the air in school-rooms by the opening of windows."

These are the facts that make the proper heating and ventilation of school-rooms a real problem. It is because patrons of country districts have not realized and appreciated these facts that modern heating and ventilation have so long been neglected in the rural schools.

The matter of play and playgrounds should also come under the health question. Play is a necessity for the development of the country boy and girl. The old adage "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" is as true in the country as in the city. The author is heartily in sympathy with the work that Superintendent O.J.Kern of Winnebago County, Illinois, is attempting to carry out. It has already been referred to. While a majority of the schools of Macon County have an acre for playgrounds, some have only one-half acre, and there is no attempt made to install special apparatus. For some of the districts this would not be advisable; one-half acre is possibly all the play space needed for the school which enrolls only five pupils, but there are districts in which swings and teeters



could be installed by having an entertainment or box supper for that purpose.

In fact "the best money that can be expended in school education is that expended to make the health conditions, under which both teacher and pupils must work, the best possible."

In a previous section it was suggested that the patrons of Missouri might well direct their efforts toward securing the approval of the rural school in their district. This involves a number of problems, as each item enumerated in the list could receive its full score if patrons and teachers would cooperate for the interests of the school. That there is a possibility of having but one approved school in Macon County is certainly a reflection on the people of that county.

The first condition necessary for approval is that there must be an eight months' term of school. From the graph (Table I) we find that more than 50 per cent do not have as many as eight months. Four districts of the 131 maintain only a five months' term. Over 24 per cent have but six months, over 20 per cent, seven months, over 40 per cent, eight months, and only 5% nine months. An additional problem is met here by the fact that many of these terms are divided into spring and winter terms with often a different teacher for each term. Twenty-five per cent of all the schools



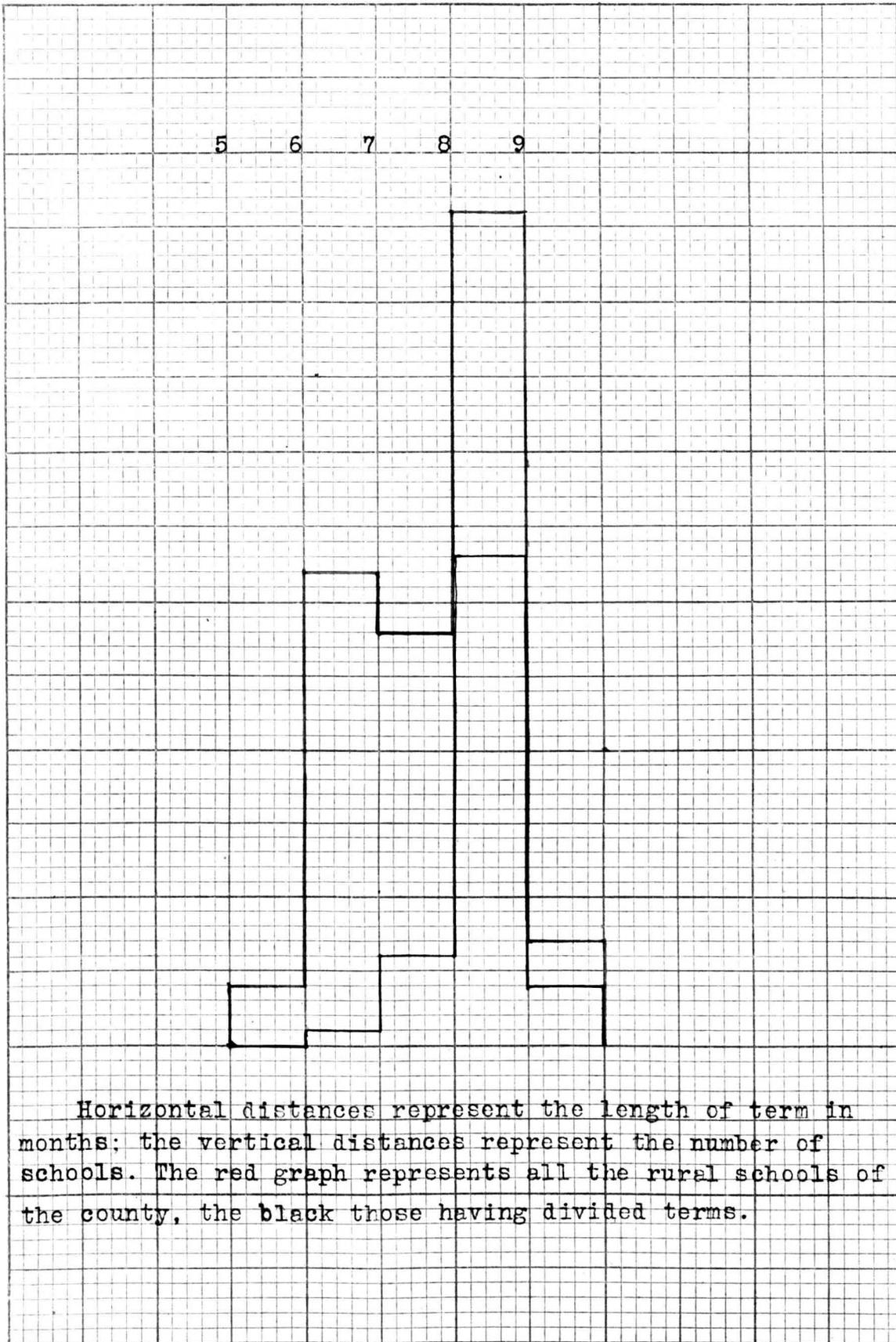


PLATE A - FOR SALE BY THE UNIVERSITY CO OPERATIVE STORE, COLUMBIA, MO.  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Length of rural school-terms in Macon County.  
Black shows number of divided terms.

TABLE I.



of the county have the term thus divided. Almost sixty per cent of the eight months' terms, fifty-seven per cent of the nine months' terms, and even twenty-one per cent of the seven months' terms are divided. That this is so is merely a matter of tradition. It was the way our fathers had it, and the country people have had no desire to change. There has never been any campaign instituted against it, and the rural people are doubtless unaware that it has been abolished in the majority of counties in Missouri. Here lies the opportunity for the county superintendent - he has the newspapers at his command and could by vigorous action and by use of the method of comparison, cause the divided term to be a thing of the past.

But what can the patrons do? Referring to the graph on tax levies, (Table II) in Macon County one would answer directly, "Increase the tax levy." Forty cents is the prevailing levy, levied by over thirty-six per cent of the districts, seventeen per cent levy fifty cents, and twenty per cent, sixty cents. Two districts have a levy of \$1.20, while one district levies only 5 cents, and has a term of only seven months. Compared with the graph of tax levies, (Table III) in special districts, the lowest levy is 80 cents and the highest, \$1.50 with an average of \$1.13. The county superintendent should look after this matter and see that all boards levy at least 40 cents,



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120

TABLE II.

Horizontal distances represent the tax levy in cents on \$100 valuation. The vertical distances the number of cases.

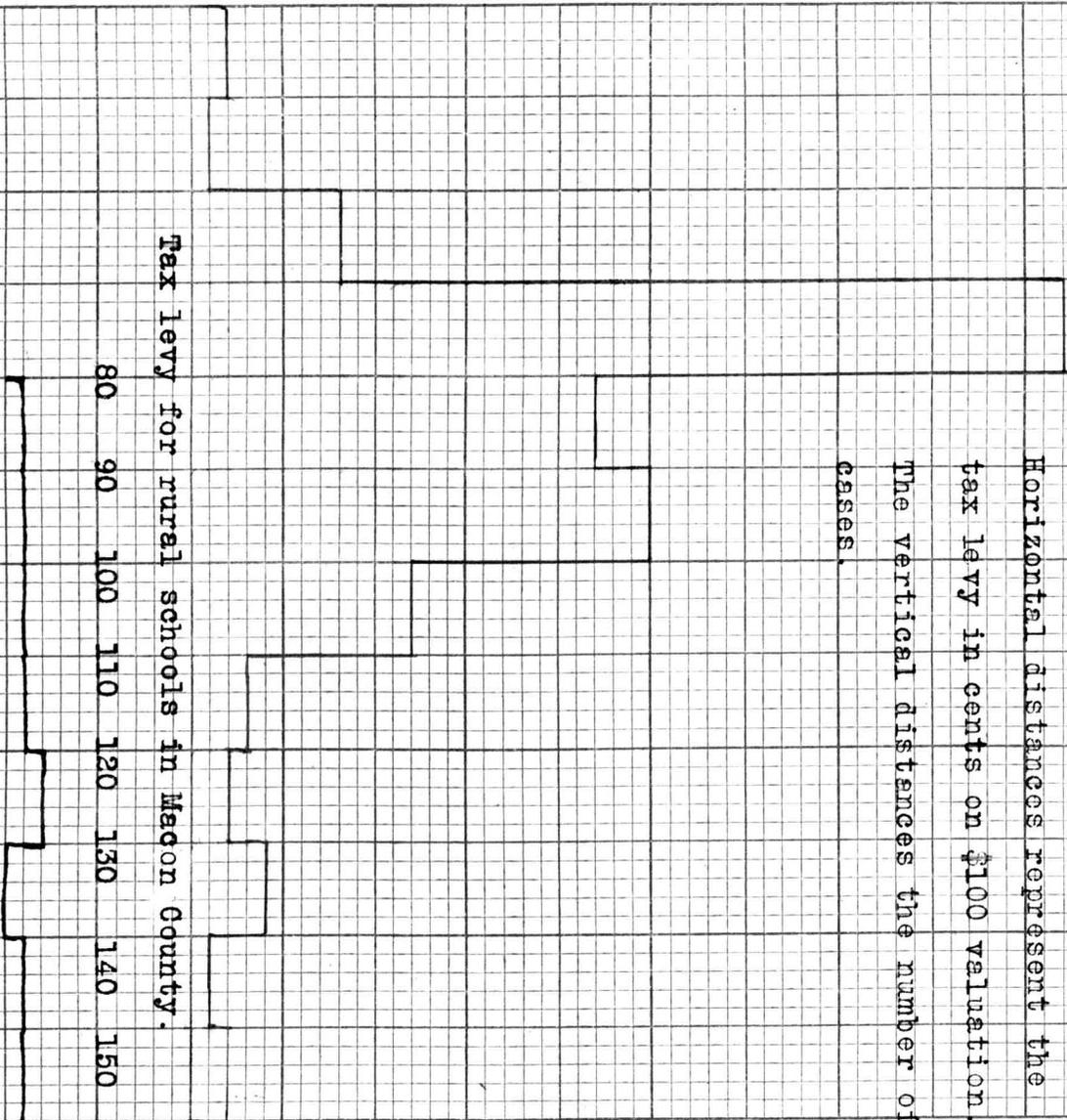


TABLE III.

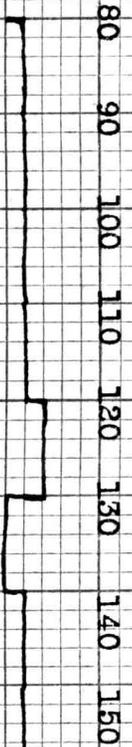


TABLE III.

TABLE III.



which they are authorized to do without the vote of the district. County clerks are liable to prosecution for failure to enforce this law. There are eleven districts levying less than 40 cents, although all but one of them maintain at least an eight months school, and pay at least forty dollars per month for the teacher. In perhaps a majority of the schools, the money received from the state pays over half of the teachers' wages; in many it pays from 60 per cent to 75 per cent, in a few over 80 per cent, and in one district the state money pays 86 per cent of the teachers' salaries. The new school law passed by the 46th General Assembly provides a special state aid to weak rural schools of \$80 per year, or so much thereof as may be needed to maintain an eight months' school at \$40 per month. Provided that such districts

1. Levy 65 cents for school purposes.
2. Have a valuation of \$40,000 or less.
3. Have an area of 6 1/4 square miles or more.
4. Enumerate 25 or more school children.
5. Have maintained during the past school term a daily attendance of 15 or more pupils.

Few people know of this new law, and it is the duty of the county superintendent to call the attention of school boards to this matter. Boards may, under the new law,



call a special meeting, without a petition, to vote this additional levy. Here is an opportunity for patrons to cooperate for the interest of the school.

The second requirement for approval is that the teacher must hold a second grade or higher grade certificate. The report of Macon County shows 53 first grades, 64 second, and 68 third grade certificates in the county. That the third grade certificates outnumber either the first or second grades is certainly a reflection on the teaching force of the county. But there is another side to the question. From the graph (Tables IV and V) on teachers' salaries, it is shown that the average salary for men teachers is \$308 per year, and for women \$280, while the prevailing salary (mode) for men is \$320 and for women \$200. The median is \$320 for men and \$260 for women. Is it any wonder then that there are so few well qualified teachers in the field?

Reports from thirty cities in every part of the country place the average salary for ordinary street laborers at \$512.45, which is over 1 1/3 times the salary of the men teaching in Macon County rural schools.

A teacher has to spend much time and money in preparation for his work and yet painters, blacksmiths, carpenters, machinists, and even brewery employees, earn a much better living than he. The writer knows of farm



TABLE IV.

160 180 200 220 240 260 280 300 320 340 360 380 400 420 440 460 480

Horizontal distances represent the yearly salary in dollars. Vertical distances represent the number of cases.  
Annual salaries of men teachers in Macon County.

\$308 average

320 median

320 mode.



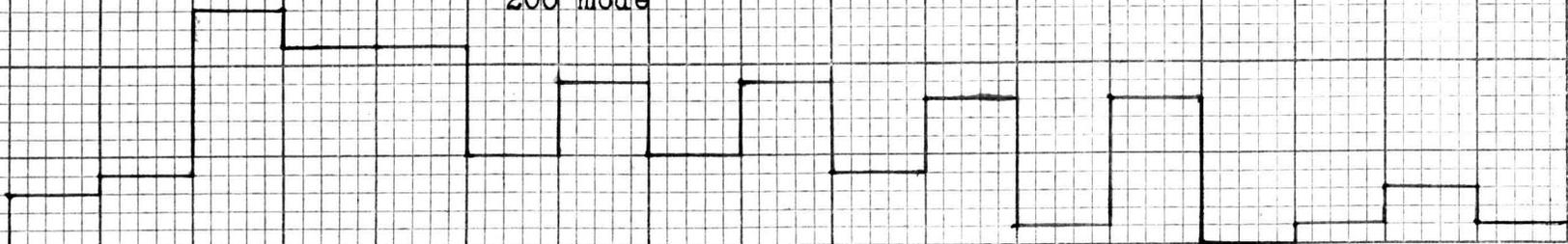
TABLE V.

Annual salaries of women teachers in Macon County.

\$280 average

260 median

200 mode





hands in the county who receive \$25 per month and board, or the equivalent of at least \$40 per month, with comparatively little expenses for other things. Over 35 per cent of the rural teachers receive less than \$40 per month, some even receiving as low as \$28. That this is true is certainly a reflection on the patrons of Macon County, and especially the school boards. Macon is a comparatively rich county. There are farms of hundreds of acres, fine stock farms, rich lands, comparatively good farm homes, many in every sense modern. The teacher has had to wait till the barns were built, the Herefords and the Percherons installed, and, in some cases, even automobiles purchased, and still his time for consideration has not come. We have already suggested that in most places, the tax levy needs to be raised. As O. J. Kern so well says. "The fundamental consideration is that the farmer must spend more money on the education of his children and must spend it in a better way to meet the changing conditions of country life. This proposition is the sine qua non in the consideration of any advance in the country school interest over the United States. It is the duty of educational leaders to demonstrate to farmers that a new educational ideal must obtain, and that the increase of expenditure will pay<sup>1</sup>."

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1. World's Work, Vol.16, p.10462.



The third grade teacher must go in Macon County, and with her elimination, there must be a raise in salary. To be approved on the salary proposition a school must pay \$40 or more. The teacher must raise her standard of qualifications, and the district must see that she is well paid for her services.

The third requirement for approval is that the library must have twenty or more well chosen books. In this Macon shows up far better than any of the adjoining counties. 80 per cent of the districts are supplied with libraries. That this is true is due to the effort of former county superintendents who made this their one aim - the establishment of libraries. In almost every case the money has been raised by box suppers and entertainments, and the patrons have heartily cooperated. Several schools have this year raised over \$50 for a library fund, and from the writer's experience the books are eagerly read by pupils and patrons. An opportunity lies at the door of the remaining 20 per cent, and with but little effort on the part of teachers and patrons, six points for approval may be made on the condition of the library and book case.

In the fourth place, the State or county course of study must be followed. The writer questions if 5 per cent of the patrons know anything whatever of either of these, and yet the county superintendent is required to publish



a course of study. Patrons should familiarize themselves with it, should know exactly what is required of each child, and they could thus cooperate more readily with the teacher. The writer further questions if ten per cent of the teachers of the county carry it out to the letter. The carrying out of the course as outlined together with other things closely connected with it counts for 15 points for approval. Why could not patrons and teacher work together for this end? Patrons must cooperate; in some places, country patrons say they don't want Johnnie to study grammar and physiology, history is out of the question, all he needs is spelling, reading, and particularly arithmetic. A well organized school is thus impossible. In most cases the teacher may tactfully overcome such objections.

In the fifth place, agriculture must be taught in the higher grades. The county superintendent says that seventy-five per cent of the schools teach agriculture and yet it is still locked upon as a "joke" by many of the farmers. He further states that some of the farmers refused to give the boys the ground to plant their corn for the corn-growing contest, and some even refused to give the boys the dime to purchase the seed. But their attitude is changing. When the boys' corn judging contest was announced last fall, farmers flocked to the county seat. They were interested and curious. They asked questions



of the judge, and wanted to know why one ear of corn was better than another. When the contest was over several remarked that they had certainly learned something; that their eyes had been opened to the possibilities of the teaching of agriculture in the country school. In places where agriculture is being successfully taught, the farmers are reading bulletins more than they ever read before.

In the corn growing contest there were forty entries. The prizes, however, were not given by the farmers themselves, but were contributed by the local business men of Macon. Why should merchants be more interested in encouraging agriculture than the farmers themselves?

The sixth and seventh requirements are - the instruction and discipline and the organization and classification must be satisfactory. These bear directly upon the work of the teacher, and it is the business of the directors to elect teachers who will be able to score every point for the district. Patrons may often assist in the matter of discipline by a friendly consultation with the teacher on matters needing attention.

The eighth and last requirement for approval in that the school building and grounds must be in good condition. The condition of the building comes in for first consideration. There are but ten modern buildings in the county. How can this state of things be improved? Again the reply



is in most cases, "Increase the tax levy." A new building has to be voted by the people, and it always means more money. One building in the county is of concrete, fire-proof. It means to that district a tax levy of \$1.15. The school with its surroundings serves as an index of the educational sentiment of the district. In the previous chapters, methods of improving the interior and exterior of the building have been fully discussed. No attempt has been made at school gardening in the county, and few schools have well shaded grounds. When the call was issued for Clean-Up Day almost every district in the county responded. In the approval of schools the condition of the school building may count 20 points; the apparatus and equipment, 17 points; and the grounds and outbuildings 13 points. The districts voting less than 40 cents might levy an additional tax rate and supply needed apparatus and equipment.

One way in which the patrons may show their interest and bring these things about is by attending the April election, discussing needed improvements, voting an additional tax levy, and electing competent directors.

It is not intended that all of these things may be accomplished in a year; one thing well done is better than trying to remove mountains all at once.

Another problem confronting some of the districts is consolidation. Here the county superintendent who is



TABLE VI.

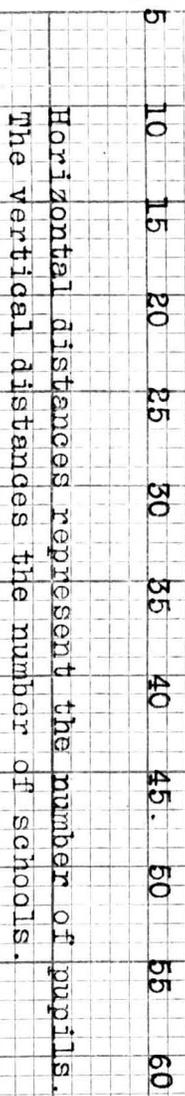
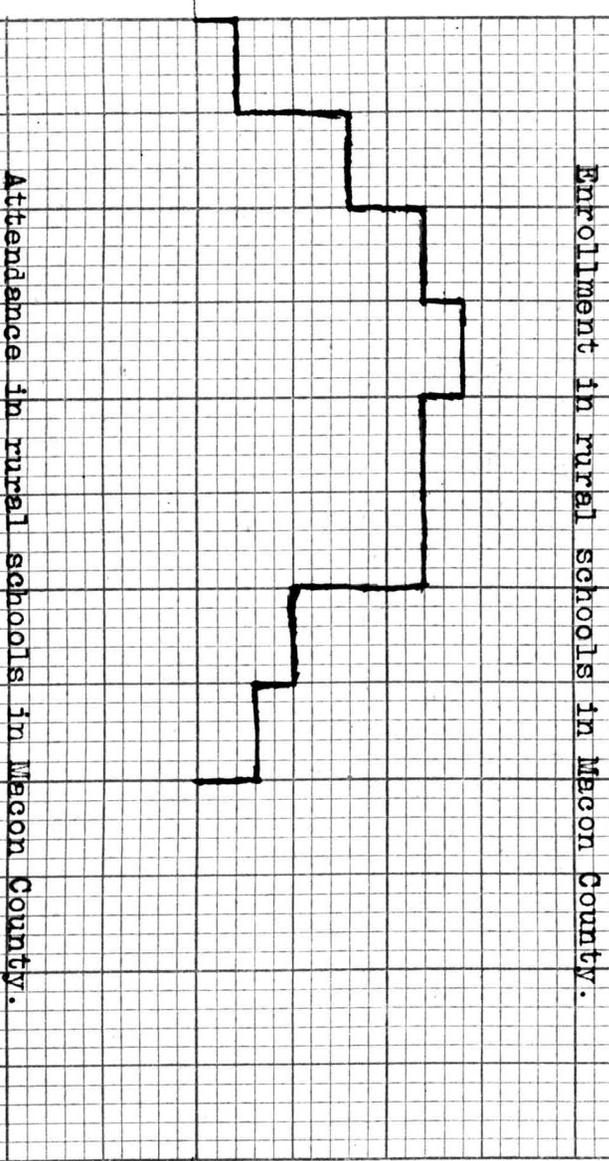


TABLE VII.







familiar with the situation should direct the work. That something must be done is shown by the graph on enrollment and attendance. (See Tables VI and VII) The report of the county superintendent shows ten districts having enrollment of fewer than fifteen; twenty-one having from 15 to 25; while in the average daily attendance seven have fewer than twelve, and forty, from 12 to 20. One district enrolls only five pupils; three have an enrollment of only ten. The cost per pupil in such a case is very high, and there can be little school spirit. In such a case, the school should either consolidate or transport its pupils to another district. Consolidation is not a new thing in Macon County. It was among the first counties to have a consolidated school. Some interested patrons saw the advantage of such a combination, pushed the question, and secured the consolidated school at Elmer. The school is graded, employs four teachers, and maintains a two years' high school course. That the patrons are cooperating with the school is shown by the fact that in this district thirty are enrolled in the high school. There were eleven graduates last year. The building is in every sense modern, well heated and ventilated. There are sheds built on the grounds for the horses and many children drive or ride to school. The school has been in every way satisfactory, and has succeeded in giving the country boys and girls a



high school education without necessitating their leaving the farm to obtain it. Consolidation is a movement that must be brought about by the patrons and county superintendent, the teacher often being one of its chief agitators.

County graduation has led to the people keeping their children in school till the term is out. On the farm, there are so many things that the boy and girl can do that parents are often tempted to keep them out in the spring on account of the monetary value of their labor. In 1907 when the new superintendent took charge, the movement had not been agitated until after his election, and there were only 25 graduates; the next year, by directing efforts of teachers along this line, and by city districts awarding scholarships there were 104 graduates, the next year 110. The graduation exercises are always held at the Court House, and there is a large delegation of patrons. Here they hear talks on current educational topics and have some chance of knowing what should be done for school improvement.

By awarding certificates for prompt and regular attendance for at least five months in the year the county superintendent reports that there is an increased effort on the part of patrons to keep their children in school. The patrons will now need more than ever before to cooperate in this one thing as the apportionment of the state funds will be determined by the average daily attendance.



There should also be efforts made to restore the school as a social center in the community. The Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union is indirectly striving toward this end in Macon County. In one district, debating societies are conducted at the school house, patrons and pupils taking part. In other places, literary societies have been conducted. Teachers often fail to realize how much a slight effort on their part would mean to the district. In the writer's own district, the people always speak of two fine teachers they had. It isn't what these teachers taught the children they remember, but it is the evening entertainments they conducted, the old fashioned spelling matches and singing schools, the debates, and the declamation and oratorical contests held. Everybody in the neighborhood went and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Suggestions have been given in the preceding sections as to how the school may once more occupy such a place.

In the solution of many of these problems Parent-Teacher Associations would be very useful. Why not thus transform the educational meetings held throughout the county? As they are now conducted very few patrons attend and if asked to prepare a paper for the program they almost invariably absent themselves. If they could read such papers as the Parent-Teacher Associations send out, it would perhaps be a much easier matter to have them take



part. The meetings should be made interesting, helpful and attractive. At one educational meeting in the county, a patron much interested said, "We have directors who care little about the school; many of the patrons are interested and would be glad to help - what can we do?" Nobody was able to give her any definite plans or suggestions. The writer believes that this is the attitude of many. It seems that the patrons have responded to every call that has been made. They are appreciative of any efforts on the part of the teacher in their behalf. It seems all that is needed is for the teacher and county superintendent to ask for greater things still and they will receive the cooperation of patrons. One thing that every patron can do is to visit the school and assure the teacher that she has his sympathy, and assure her of his hearty cooperation in anything she may suggest for the good of the school.

The writer believes in the people of Macon County. They are conservative and hard to convince at first, but once convinced, they are enthusiastic for any measure for the advancement of education. All they need is intelligent leadership.



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Nos.1,3,4,8,9,10,12,30 and 31 are of special interest to patrons.  
Nos.20,21,17 and 27 are of special interest to county superintendents.











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