

The CAROLINA

Union FARMER



Vol. VII.—No. 1.

RALEIGH, N. C., JANUARY 2, 1913.

One Dollar a Year.

RURAL LIBRARIES—THEIR IMPORTANCE

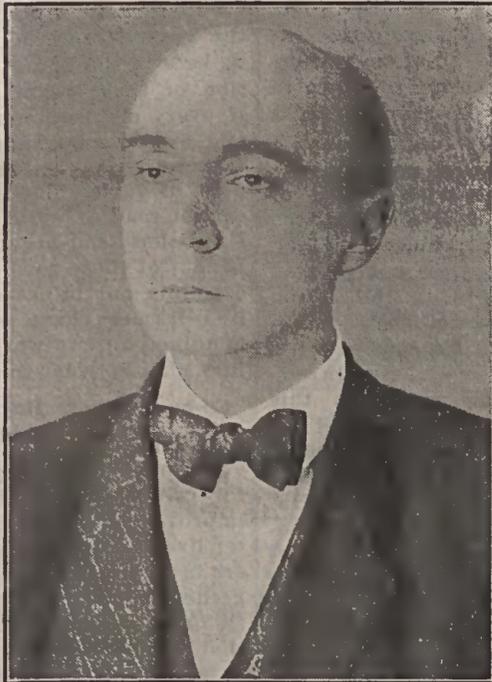
Prof. C. C. Wright, Hunting Creek, N. C., Superintendent of Schools of Wilkes County and Chairman of National Educational Committee of the Farmers Union.

As the long winter nights are again upon us and as they furnish ample opportunity for reading, I wish to write this month emphasizing the use of the rural school library. As practically all of the States have some kind of a rural school library law and as most of these laws have been in operation for some time, I take it that there are very few, if any, progressive communities which have not already secured these school libraries, hence I shall not waste time in stressing the need of good books in the hands of the boys and girls of the country schools, but instead thereof would emphasize the importance of having the teacher direct and supervise the reading of the children under her care.

Where there are libraries in the schools there will always be found boys and girls who will read the books, and it is a matter of no little concern that our children have access to only the best obtainable. I care not how closely the selection of these books for the schools may be guarded, nor with what care they may be selected for each individual school, mistakes are likely to be made and, in our opinion, the teacher has no greater duty in the school room than in the direction and supervision of the child's reading. "As the twig is bent so the tree is inclined," is an old but none the less true saying and a mistake made here in early life may largely determine the destiny of the individual.

A great deal depends upon the teachers' attitude in regard to the library. If her mind has no literary trend, if she does not call the attention of the children to the literary treat in store for them by coming in contact with the master minds of all the ages, if she does not encourage her children to read the probability is that there may be a number of her pupils who will never receive any real or lasting benefit from the library. Not long since a teacher took up the work in this county in a community where a school library had been placed a year or two before and at the close of her term reported five hundred and twenty books read during the session. During the very same year another teacher in the same county taught or rather kept school and at the close of her term reported to the county superintendent that there was no library in her district. A library had been placed here three or four years before this occurrence. The teacher of the first named school was a teacher in deed and in truth and saw something in her work beyond the mere pittance of dollars and cents, which she drew as her salary at the close of the term. In the latter case comment is unnecessary. Unfortunate indeed is the school which must suffer with such a type of teacher, and the sooner our people realize that a cheap teacher is dear at any price, the better will it be for the schools.

To those communities which as yet may not have secured school libraries I would suggest that you confer with the teacher and the school officials—the committeemen and the friends of education in the district and set about raising the necessary funds to put these in. I know of a number of schools that have had no trouble in raising the amounts required by the State and county by means of box parties, entertainments, etc., etc. I happen to know a number of teachers who have



PROF. C. C. WRIGHT, Hunting Creek, N. C.
Chairman National Educational Committee.

donated at least one day of their salary for this purpose, and then would see the citizens for private donations. A number of instances have come under my own observation where public spirited citizens have donated books as the part required by law for the school to raise in order to secure the aid of the State and county.

In conclusion let me urge the importance of supplementing from time to time the original libraries which have been placed in our schools. The State laws provide for this being done at stated intervals, and as there are many good and suitable books being issued almost every day I would suggest that the library be supplemented at least as often as once in every two years. This furnishes fresh reading material as often as the average boy or girls needs it and it will serve too to keep alive the community interest in the work.

Let me ask that the various educational committees of the Farmers' Union look after these matters and let them aid the teachers and school officials in the manner suggested above.

Hunting Creek, N. C., December 28, 1912.

FARMERS' UNION POETRY.

There being no committee on poetry at the recent Farmers' Union Convention in Raleigh, Mr. John M. Sharpe, of Iredell, Secretary of the Resolutions-Committee, introduced in the Convention a poem and recommended that it be received without prejudice. Here it is:

I've an invitation to Columbia
Which is just across the line,
There to meet some dignitaries
Which surely would be fine.

For how I long to go, with—
Alexander, Poe, and Union City Barrett,
To miss this meeting, dear friends;—
I fear I cannot bear it.

You know I'd go if I'd the dough
If only to meet Sir Alfred Plunkett,
But I've searched in vain and can
Not find the necessary plunket.

* * *

The editor of this paper set out to beat Brother Sharpe on poetry, but he couldn't get it to rhyme and has dumped the original manuscript into the waste-basket and substituted the following from Edmund Vance Cooke in a current issue of *The Country Gentlemen*:

Drat Them Hens!

Well, drat them hens! when eggs is cheap
They lay the hull place ankle-deep.
Just keeps me lame a-stoopin' round
A-pickin' egg up off the ground,
A-tryin' to clean some corner out
An' give the crops a chance to sprout.
Just keeps me poor a-hirin' hands
To haul them eggs from off my lands.
They overflow the barns an' sheds,
The kitchen sink an' family beds.
Don't get no chance to eat or sleep,
The way it is when eggs is cheap.

But drat them hens! when eggs is dear
They sit around for half a year
Eatin' my wallet to its marrow,
With no more conscience than a sparrow;
Indulgin' in a conversation
On every subjec' since Creation
Exceptin' "eggs an' how to lay 'em."
Makes me so mad I want to slay 'em.
Here's eggs a-sellin' by the carat
And every darned hen is a parrot!
Just ornamentin' this here sphere
Is all they do when eggs is dear.

But 'pears to me, aside from jokes,
That hens is purty much like folks.
Not carin' what's the worst or best,
They want to do just like the rest.
By grab! us folks is worse than hens;
Hens can't lay eggs exceptin' when's
The layin'-time, but people could
Do different, often, if they would.
Now, take a bank: it lends its pile

(Continued on page 4.)