

white schools has never before been approximated in North Carolina. Ten thousand and one hundred more white children are attending the public schools daily in 1903 than ever before. This is the most practical and substantial evidence of an awakened and abiding interest in education that has yet been presented in any report of the public schools of the State. Let us thank God and take courage."

The Association very wisely refused to be dragged into the Bassett controversy. Personally, there was complete unanimity as to the unwisdom of the South Atlantic Quarterly article, but the teachers have learned what the farmers in their clubs are also beginning to learn, that there is enough for them to do in matters directly affecting their own occupation without going out of their way to heave stones at passing objects.

The State Literary and Historical Association.

This organization, now entering on its fourth year, held its annual meeting in Raleigh last week. It has already accomplished a valuable work for the State. The rural library plan was fathered by it, and would have failed to pass but for the Society's activity. The Historical Museum in Raleigh, the finest conducted by any Southern State, is also the child of the Association. "North Carolina Day" in the public schools was set apart as a result of the efforts of its members. Last winter the Association secured the passage of a bill appointing a Historical Commission and appropriating \$500 for reprinting rare documents bearing on State history. It is now endeavoring to obtain funds for a statue of Sir Walter Raleigh; and one of its committees is at work on a reply to Judge Christian, of Virginia, whose recent attack on the record made by North Carolina soldiers in the Civil War has attracted widespread attention.

At the Raleigh meeting Thursday night President W. L. Poteat delivered an unusually thoughtful address on "The Enrichment of Country Life;" Mr. R. F. Beasley presented a striking paper on the absence of literary spirit in the State; Mr. W. J. Peele gave an outline of the life of Sir Walter Raleigh, and Rev. Hight C. Moore read a bright paper on "North Carolina Poetry."

Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, the gifted professor of English literature at our State University, was chosen president for the ensuing year.

In our article from St. Nicholas reprinted on our Young People's Page, it will be observed that instead of "opossum" or "'possum," we have plain "possum." We follow the new style of spelling because St. Nicholas is published by a very discriminating company, a company composed of some of our foremost men of letters, and because the change commends itself to our judgment. Opossum is an awkward, priggish sort of word, and we shall be glad to see the St. Nicholas spelling become popular. But when Mr. Sharp says that "the colored people, as a rule, are the only people wise enough to eat possum," he betrays his ignorance of Southern conditions. However it may be in New Jersey, the white people here in North Carolina have no idea of letting the negroes have a monopoly of life's luxuries.

A THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK.

Perhaps nothing will do so much to hasten the time when body and mind will both be adequately cared for, as a diffusion of the belief that the preservation of health is a duty. Few seem conscious that there is such a thing as physical morality. Men's habitual words and acts imply the idea that they are at liberty to treat their bodies as they please. Though the evil consequences inflicted on their dependents and on future generations, by violations of Nature's laws, are often as great as those caused by crime, yet they do not think themselves in any degree criminal. . . . The fact is, that all breaches of the laws of health are physical sins.—From Herbert Spencer's "Education."

The Enrichment of Country Life.

"Country life is enriching as never before. I am not now saying that farmers are growing richer. I hope they are, though appearances sometimes point the other way. Be that as it may, we are now concerned with the enrichment of the farmer's life and not the filling of the farmer's purse.

"1. Comfort. It is to be noted, in the first place, that country life is at last beginning to share in the beneficent revolution which science has lately wrought in the means and modes of life. The standard of comfortable living is spreading into the country and, what is important, it is found to be practically applicable there. We have observed, for example, that a given lot of materials for a house can be put together in a comfortable and convenient dwelling at no additional cost for the comfort and convenience. We have a series of practical books on Home Building and Furnishing, How to Plan Home Grounds, How to Make a Flower Garden, etc. We are making another discovery—making it in spots, but the spots will multiply and meet—the discovery, namely, that we are too poor to endure the expense of ungraded roads with mud bottoms, or no bottoms. And for the brightening of country life the good road will—

'Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
Through all the circle of the golden year,'

and the work of the farm is already greatly lightened by the introduction of machinery into well-nigh all its departments, as well as by the control of the fertility of the soil by scientific treatment. In the past fifty years the number of farm-workers has not only doubled, but the value of their work has been increased twenty fold. Are we warranted in expecting the time when the experience of Thoreau will be realized by the average country dweller? He says, you may recall, that for more than five years he maintained himself solely by the labor of his hands, and found that he could meet the expenses of living by working about six weeks a year, which left him the whole of his winters and most of his summers free and clear for study.

"2. Variety of interests. The monotony of country life is relieved now by a greatly increased variety of interests. Transportation opens markets and makes profitable many more crops than formerly. Experimentation on the physical and chemical character of soils, upon the plants and animals upon the farms, offers an unending means of amusement. But more effective than experiments and varied products for importing interest and zest to country life is the new sympathy with the manifold phases of nature, which is one of the pictureque features of our period. This feeling and attitude occurs, indeed, in individual cases from early times in literary history, as in Horace and Lucretius and Theocritus, and in some of the early English poets, but in our day it is getting to be almost universal, as is shown by the popularity and volume of outdoor literature with its invitation

'Come forth into the light of things,
Let nature be your teacher.'

This later phase of it may be treated back to the eighteenth century to such sympathetic observers as Gilbert White and DeSaussure on the scientific side and on the poetic side to Cowper and Wordsworth. In the latter half of the Nineteenth Century it grew rapidly under the stimulus of the general scientific movement of the time, and the influence of men like Ernest Krause in Germany, Jefferies and Ruskin in England and on this side 'Old Silver Toy,' as John Burroughs has been affectionately called, and his younger followers as Roberts, Long, and Thompson-Seton. What an endowment of interest and of beauty have we here for country life.

"3. Fellowship. Let me speak lastly of the new fellowships of country life. In the future its isolation will be only so deep as individual taste may determine. For it has now opened communication with all other sections of human activity. The telephone and the rural free delivery supply the opportunity of personal fellowship well-nigh as close as that of the city, with the distinct advantage that it may be controlled according to one's preference. By the same means the edge is taken off the fear of sudden danger in the country's solitude. Moreover, the rural school is laying the foundation for an intellectual fellowship with all the world and all the ages. And the free rural library, which this Association had the honor to inaugurate in North Carolina, completes fittingly the apparatus of a simple, free, intelligent, strong, happy, country life.

"All this means a return to nature, to a simpler, saner, truer, life. It means the emergence of agriculture into a new dignity and respectability. It means the renaissance of Southern influence in national affairs. If I do not err, it means for us, in this agricultural region, the recovery of at least some of the charm of the social life that crowned the prosperity of other days. It means the birth of a new and richer literature to record faithfully and in tenderness our past and celebrate the larger life of the new day."—From President W. L. Poteat's address before North Carolina Literary and Historical Association, Raleigh, November 12, 1903.

How a Good School Helps.

The writer has been informed that since the people of Indian Trail began their school building, every available farm in reach of the school has been sold or rented to outsiders who will move in. One man told the writer that he would be compelled to leave because the farm he had been renting had been sold to a man from another county who was coming to it, and he could not rent another. Verily, a good school puts life into the dry bones of a community!—Monroe Journal.

National Aid to Good Roads is Simple Justice to Farmers.

Under our method of raising Federal revenue by means of internal revenue and tariff duties, the burden rests about as much on the people living in the agricultural districts as upon all other classes of people. I have stated to you that in that portion of our country lying east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio and Potomac Rivers more than one-half of the people live in cities. But, taking the country at large, including the South and West, where concentration has not taken place to such an extent, it is yet true that more than half of our people live in the country; and while less than half of the wealth is to be found there, under our indirect method of collecting taxes, those living in the agricultural districts certainly bear one-half of the burden. But, on the other hand, not more than 10 per cent of the very great amount that is appropriated annually by Congress is appropriated to the use of those living in agricultural and rural districts, while 90 per cent is appropriated for the use of those living in the cities or adjacent thereto. Public buildings, as you know—great, costly, and numerous—are all built in the large cities. The officers of the Government reside in the large cities. The battle ships are built in the large cities. And so I might go on through the list of expenditures. Now, I am not criticising the policy as an erroneous one; I am not blaming anyone for the policy that prevails, but I am saying that the time has come when justice demands that a larger proportion of these revenues be spent for the benefit of those who live in rural communities. And I know of no better way to do this than by helping the agricultural classes to improve their common roads.—Hon. Martin Dodge in address before National Good Roads Association at St. Louis.