

A SCHOOL-COMMUNITY FAIR

(Third Prize Letter)

A GREAT educational asset to our community is the School-Community Fair, held semi-annually at the opening and closing of the school. Through it we generate a desire to grow the best crops; to have the best all-round livestock; to show the healthiest, dimple-darling baby; to exhibit the most tempting, appetizing canned fruits and vegetables; to display the most perfect stitch, the smoothest embroidery, the daintiest tatting, and linens; to write the best essay, to draw the most perfect map, to write the most perfect examination-paper, to work up the best notebook, to read the most library books; to play the best ball, to run the fastest, to be the strongest. Prizes are given, and honors announced.

In order to be able to do all these things, the school and the community must necessarily study and work together. The schoolhouse is made the social center, in which valuable meetings are held and farm problems are discussed. The ladies find it a great help to meet together to plan and study their various problems, and read the most instructive and educational periodicals, which they pass on to each other.

We have a museum in the school, composed of interesting exhibits telling the histories and processes through which the various things undergo to become useful to us, such as flax, paint, silver, oil, rubber, tea, coffee, cocoa, and others. We were able to obtain these exhibits from the companies dealing in them at a small cost. We also have in the museum our own "chamber of commerce," made up of the first-place articles at the Fair.

We have a Babcock milk tester. The class in agriculture operates it by testing the milk of the cows in the community. It is educational, teaching the pupils and patrons.

We have a stove and sewing machine in the school, donated by patrons. The Girls' Busy Hour Club is seeking to make itself useful on the farm and in the home, through the use of these things in the schoolroom.

The boys and girls of the school grew a small garden of flowers and vegetables, in the culture of which they used and studied hotbeds, cold frames, properly selected and adapted seeds, climate, and soils. We had a school pig, which we sold, and used the proceeds to increase the library. During the school term we had semi-monthly literary programs, and able speakers were secured to lecture at most of them. This work is being partially carried on by the "Reading Circle," which meets once a week at the school building for literary study, and to plan the "Get-together-Community-Laugh." The work of the community and the school is ever a correlative work, and the whole community is one live, wide-awake, cooperative body, working for the good of all, this spirit having been brought about, and made possible, through the influence of the School-Community Fair. CARRIE T. WILSON, Abilene, Texas.

How North Carolina Farmers May Improve Their Schools

(Concluded from page 6, column 4)

A \$30 library of well-selected books for the children can be secured by any North Carolina country school. First raise by subscription or otherwise \$10 or more in the school district; then notify the county board of education which is required to add \$10 more, and the state adds the final \$10. A traveling library of well-selected books, literary and technical, can be secured for children and adults by addressing, "Secretary, State Library Commission, Raleigh." The only expense is payment of cost of transportation. This cost cannot exceed \$1 for the round trip, for if it is more

than this, the state pays the excess.

5. The farmers can aid greatly in improving their country schools by cooperating with the county superintendent and county board of education in securing the best committeemen and by demanding the best teachers and supplying the necessary funds therefor. After all the success and efficiency of the school depend most upon the character and efficiency of the committee and the teachers. Farmers can also aid by manifesting an active interest in the school instead of complaining, criticizing, kicking without just provocation or investigation.

6. We have had for some years a compulsory attendance law, and the General Assembly of 1917, passed a law for the medical inspection of all public school children for the correction of their physical defects and the increase of their efficiency. By helping in the successful enforcement of these laws the farmers can improve the public school and help their own children.

7. Finally, by cooperating with the State Bureau of Community Service, Raleigh, through its Secretary, W. C. Crosby, in the organization of a "Community League" and in the incorporation of the community under the Act of 1917, the farmers can provide an effective organized agency for aiding in improving the public school and every phase of community life.

J. Y. JOYNER,
State Supt. of Public Instruction,
Raleigh, N. C.

SOUTH CAROLINA ENCOURAGES SELF-HELP

Eighty Per Cent of the Districts Have Voted Local Tax, There Are 700 State-aided Rural Graded Schools, Agricultural Teachers Get State Aid

THE chief need of the schools in South Carolina and throughout the South, is more money. Funds must be had if better teachers, better buildings and better equipment are to be obtained.

It is most gratifying to note that nearly three score South Carolina districts have raised their local taxes to 8 mills during April and May of this year. In almost every instance these districts were rural. The voters have not permitted the high cost of living, their subscription to the Liberty Loan, their subscriptions to the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., or other causes to weaken their interest in their community school. On June 30, 1916, more than 80 per cent of our South Carolina Districts had voted a local tax. The remaining 20 per cent cannot lag behind much longer.

The following summary of recent legislation and progress will indicate how vast numbers of South Carolina schools are moving forward, and the opportunities that are available for the others.

1. The state is divided into 45 counties, which in turn are subdivided into 1907 School Districts, with a minimum unit area of 9 square miles. Any District unable to run five months on its regular funds if it will vote a local tax of 2 mills or more, will receive from the state as much money as such a tax raises, up to \$100. This "term extension" aid applies specifically to weak, one-teacher rural schools. Any district taking advantage of the law should be able to run its school seven months, to pay the teacher salary of at least \$50 per month, and to assign to no teacher more than 50 pupils for instruction. The law has been on the Statute Books since 1910 and has proved the starting point of educational betterment. A seven months run is now guaranteed any school voting an eight-mill tax.

2. In order to promote consolidation, transportation and more efficient schools, the General Assembly has devised a practical plan of stimulating better rural cooperation. This law is known as the "Rural Graded

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School Act." The general principle of the law requires a 4-mill tax, twenty-five pupils to a teacher, and a seven months term. Schools employing two teachers are allowed to run as short a term as six months, and each school may receive \$100 from the state for every teacher employed. The plan contemplates consolidated schools with a maximum corps of five (Concluded on page 15, column 2)

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