

Our Farmers' Union Page

Devoted to Education, Organization, Cooperation and Marketing

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SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION IN LOCAL UNIONS

JULY

1. How May We Best Cooperate in Marketing This Year's Crops?
2. Debate on Subject to Be Selected.

TWELVE THINGS YOUR LOCAL UNION SHOULD DO

XII.—It Should Promote Better Neighborhood Schools

HOW can our school be made better? This is a question that should come in for discussion occasionally in the meetings of every Local Union.



MR. GREEN

When the members of a Local Union in Nash County had this question under discussion it occurred to the members who had children that were preparing to go off to a high school

in some other part of the county to enter the higher grades that they could bring the higher grades of study to their sons and daughters at less cost than they could carry the students to the schools of higher grades and pay board and tuition to keep them there. So they decided to spend their good money to build up the school at home instead of sending it to some other district.

When members of this Nash County Local Union caught the better school spirit, it soaked into their systems so deeply that they not only decided to employ one of the best equipped teachers as principal of the school, but they named certain days as "cooperative work days," carried their wagons into the forests and hauled logs to the saw mill, and after the lumber was ready, they appointed other "cooperative work days" and got together with saws and hammers and erected an additional room to the school building.

Under this sort of cooperation they not only opened wider the door of opportunity for the boys and girls who would have otherwise had to leave their home district to continue their studies, but they opened the opportunity to every other boy and girl in this district, many of whom would never be able to go away from home and pay board and tuition.

There is no mathematician who can figure out the cumulative benefits that will come to the boys and girls of that district as a result of this cooperative activity in establishing a high grade school in the-home district.

There are many other ways to make the Local Union an important factor in molding sentiment along progressive educational lines. The important thing to do in every school is to secure and keep efficient teachers. The best teachers do not move every year.

This suggests another field of cooperative activity. A home for a teacher in the district would appeal favorably to any good teacher who makes teaching his life's work, and who wants to become identified with the community life of the people that he is to serve. Cooperative work days with teams and with saws and hammers could be applied for the purpose of building a home for the teacher, just as the Nash County cooperators added another room to the school

building. There are a few districts in North Carolina that have homes for their teachers and as a rule these districts find no difficulty securing services of teachers who are above the average in efficiency.

The Local Union should keep in close touch with the school and be in position to make suggestions for adapting the school more to the life of the community and link it up more closely to the things that directly affect the social life and the business interests of the district.

There is a great deal of lost motion and misdirected effort in many of our rural schools that could be greatly improved by a better understanding and a closer cooperation between patrons and teachers. In great part this closer relationship may be effected by enlarging the cooperative spirit in our Local Unions so as to include greater activity and interest in making the school a more valuable community asset.

J. Z. G.

South Carolina Encourages Self-help

(Concluded from page 13, column 4)

instructors in charge of at least one hundred and twenty-five boys and girls. Already at least three counties

are constantly expecting to out-grow the one-teacher school in the near future.

This law was enacted in 1912, and carried an appropriation of \$15,000. Its effect was phenomenal. During the latest scholastic year, 691 rural graded schools were in operation, and the recent Legislature granted \$187,500 for their support. This state appropriation was of course in addition to the regular income and the local revenues.

One of the most noticeable effects of the law is seen in the reduction in the number of schools. The report of the State Superintendent shows that 187 one-teacher schools were either abandoned, consolidated or developed into two-teacher schools within the last twelve months. South Carolina is now striving to establish a minimum term of seven months for every white school. The State Department of Education seeks to secure only one white school in a district. This minimum basis, when once established, will be a good starting point for other desirable improvements.

These rural graded schools offer the best opportunity for agricultural teaching. At the 1917 Session of the Legislature a bill was passed seeking to develop this possibility. Any rural graded school desiring agricultural instruction and offering a two-acre agricultural plot may receive a subsidy of \$250. Such a school must supply, from district sources, at least \$750 to pay the salary of the agricultural teacher, and this teacher must

be employed by the state and county authorities for a term of three years. The agricultural instructor must be a graduate of a land grant college, or he must be a teacher versed in the knowledge and methods of farming. It is earnestly hoped that the development of rural and industrial education will continue and will be greatly stimulated by this agricultural instruction. The experiment has been partially worked out in Darlington County, where J. N. Napier, V. E. Rector, D. E. Lewis, and others have made valuable contributions to the cause.

With increased funds, more liberal appropriations, a better organization of rural schools and greater attention to agriculture, school authorities ought to be able to do more during the next twelve months than has been accomplished in any previous year. The farmers of the state are the chief reliance of school officers in carrying out this constructive program.

J. E. SWEARINGEN,
State Superintendent of Education,
Columbia, S. C.

AS A TONIC

Hans was speaking about the high price of cabbage in his town.
"Kebbeges is awful high dis year," he said. "Me and mine wife puts up seven, eight, nine barrels of sauerkraut every year—but we can't dis year. De kebweges cost too much."
"But you put up some sauerkraut, didn't you, Hans?" questioned a friend.
"Oh, yes, two or three barrels—just to haf in de house in case of sickness."

"Many of our ancestors had white bread only on Sunday—and now there are millions of people who don't know how good corn bread tastes."



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