Thesis
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PROPOSED SOLUTION OF SOME RURAL SCHOOL PROBLEMS OF TEXAS

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PROPOSED SOLUTION OF SOME RURAL SCHOOL PROBLEMS OF TEXAS

INTRODUCTION

This discussion, in the main, does not take the form of an original contribution to the fund of knowledge on rural schools, but rather presents some new views and analyses of time-worn rural educational problems. These views and analyses are based upon experiences joined by a number of years of residence as a boy under rural conditions, upon experience acquired as a teacher in rural schools, upon knowledge acquired as an instructor in the department of rural education in college, and upon facts collected by taking an active part in the educational survey that is now being made of the Texas school system.

It would be impossible to make a complete survey of all the work that has been done in this field; for the rural problem is one of the oldest that has confronted the educators in our own country, as well as those of foreign lands. There is a large amount of literature on the subject, varying all the way from articles of little scientific value in daily newspapers and in magazines to excellent books and extensive treatises in professional journals and government bulletins. Such of the material in this paper as is based on publications has been drawn from authoritative sources only.

The rural problem is regarded a vital one by educators; because upon the rural life and population is based our elaborate social and economic structure of the city; upon it is based our civilization, upon it is based our very government and existence. Therefore, our rural people cannot be neglected. If they be lost, everything is lost. It is generally agreed that all classes, whether they are in immediate contact with farming regions or not, are alike dependent upon the efficiency of agricultural production as an underlying condition. This production in turn is conditioned upon the intelligence of the rural folk.

The concensus of opinion of authorities on rural education is that the solution of our rural school problems is to be sought in the economic, social and religious phases rather than in the more specific educational problems.[1] Hence, it would seem that a somewhat extended analysis of these forces is not only permissable, but necessary; for, any solution without regard to these fundamental causes or conditions would result in temporary relief only. This is evidenced by the temporary relief effected occasionally by the rural aid appropriations of the State Legislature. For example, the state may appropriate rural aid for one year but this does

1. Geo. A. Works -"Outstanding Needs of Country Life" p 34. Bureau of Extension, University of Texas.

not solve the rural problem.

Rural school problems are dependent, first of all, upon economic conditions. How do these people support themselves and their schools? Is this support sufficient, is it properly handled? And if not, why not? Is the present form of support the best for existing conditions? The social condition of the people must be examined to see if this is the best type that can be had under these conditions; and, if not, how it may be remedied. Another vital influence in the life of a people is their religion. Therefore, it is essential that a study of the religion of the rural people be made and some solutions suggested. Finally, the rural educational problems may be discussed in the light of these underlying causes, prefaced by an historical sketch, followed by a presentation of existing conditions and followed by suggestions for the improvement of the present status.

In examining the economic condition, it is of interest to follow the development of the rural section. About 1800 the farm was largely a complete unit within itself[1]. Few things were sold, and few purchased. A farmer's economic condition was determined not so much by the markets of the world but by his success as a producer. Land was plentiful

[1] Cubberley - Rural Life and Education p 29.

and therefore cheap; in fact the expression "land poor" was not only common but true in those days. A person needed only enough land to produce what he could consume, more than that became burdensome; for the taxes, small as they were, constituted a real problem. The government did all it could to get this land "taken up", and in some cases actually gave the land away. Even with this aid the owner at times could not pay the taxes, and the government would sell land for delinquent taxes. Thus, land speculation developed very early.

Later, when all the fertile land was "taken up", and a demand for more land increased, the ordinary laborer found it almost impossible to work himself into possession of a home. The government gave further aid and took up the project of the reclamation of waste land. In this way, large numbers of people became home owners; but the plan was never a success from a commercial standpoint. The government soon seemed to reach its limit along this line, and the real problem was yet unsolved.

It seems that rural neighborhoods with small resources cannot provide for the farming population the facilities that are needed to maintain the traditions of country-wide American life. There must be constructive and definite policies,

adopted by the nation and state, for the maintenance of economic prosperity and social dignity in the farming districts. Possibly this should be done through a credit system which may be along three lines. First, the encouragement of land ownership; second, financing of productive equipment; and third, with the ordinary credit supply needed to help in the turnover of the season's output.

But before taking up the farm credit problem, it is necessary to examine the present economic conditions of the farm. At the present time, most farmers do not look at their work as a business nor do they check on the different phases to see whether each part is contibuting its share toward the success of their business, as is done in the larger industries of the city. It is not infrequent for a farmer to keep cows, horses, or hogs, that are really a liability rather than an asset. He does not read and keep himself posted on the most economical method of doing things and on the best paying crops for his particular section. In other words, the typical farmer of the day is a poor manager.

It is thought by some that the government could well afford to maintain demonstration farms in communities as examples to the local farmer. A. & M., of course, is an illustration of this but there should be more of them and on a smaller scale.

Again, the economic problem is important because the type

of school that the farmer maintains will be determined by the amount of money he has to put into it. Therefore, the government should take an active part in the betterment of the economic condition of the rural sections on account of this one need alone. These facts are before us that cannot be disputed; the rural schools are not properly financed; the rural communities cannot keep up good schools under the present conditions; the farmer is not making the greatest possible use of his investment. These conditions are beyond the control of the farmer.

The government has not been entirely inactive on the question of helping the farmer, nor is it a new thing. In establishing the Federal Loan System the government aimed to help the farmer by keeping finances liquidated, by this means enabling him to borrow money from his local bank; but this proved unsuccessful in that the local banks did not care to handle the long loans. Then too, the farmer had to pay too high a rate of interest. The Federal Farm Loan Banks were established with a view of helping the farmer and of relieving the country banks of these undesirable loans. The Uniform Warehouse act was passed to help the farmer in marketing his goods. Next in order came the Intermediate Credit Banks which were accompanied by the Agricultural Credit Corporations. All of these attempts were, however, more or less unsuccessful

for the one requirement of our present system of commercial banking is that the capital shall be kept liquidated. To do this, short loans must be made and loans that can be paid at maturity. The farmer cannot do this. This is not the type of help that he needs. The farmer is at a disadvantage in that he takes in money at only one time a year, which is at the time of production. When he really needs money he has none. The demand for his goods is constant; and when he is ready to sell he has more than society demands. He needs money and is forced to sell, and too, his goods are sometimes highly perishable.

The first type, as already stated, the encouragement of land ownership, is better taken care of than either of the others. Under the Federal Farm Loan Banks the farmer is enabled to borrow money on long easy payments and at a reasonable rate of interest. In this way a large number of people are becoming home owners, which is an indispensable factor in building up better schools, and a more desirable society. This type of loan, however, is handled outside the regular banking facilities, as we shall see is not true in the other two types of help needed by the farmer.

The second type of help, financing of productive equipment, is something almost unknown to the farmer. It is not

within the scope of this paper to discuss here the need of the proper kind of equipment for farm production. The farmer needs certain machinery to produce a certain kind of crop, he has not the money to buy it and the local banker does not care to "carry him over" that long period. Therefore the farmer proceeds without it, and in the end comes out with half a crop. He is then in no better condition to purchase the needed article the next year than before, and thus he goes on from year to year. Possibly this is one of the least recognized but most pressing needs of the farmer.

The third type of help, the ordinary credit supply needed to help in the turnover of the season's output, or government aid in marketing, is one of the largest problems, and one on which much has been written. As stated above, the demand for the farmer's produce is constant; but it all comes in at one time which means that at that particular time the markets are flooded and the demand for the goods is small. This means that the farmer is handicapped in the marketing of his goods, and since he holds only a small portion of all the goods of this kind he is compelled to sell as a retailer; and as he needs the goods back in small quantities he is forced to buy as a retailer. All this is entirely

out of the hands of the farmer, and unless he gets help from the outside he is doomed to go on this way, being exploited by the middleman. The problem then that confronts us is government aid in cooperative marketing. This aid can be of two types; direct or indirect.

The idea of government participation in marketing seems rather well established in the minds of the people generally, but the nature of this participation is in question. Various schemes have been devised for direct control.[1] Australia and Canada tried the compulsory pool which proved unsuccessful. "Government fixed prices" has been tried in this country, as well as in others, but without a marked success. Another plan proposed, though not as yet tried, is the promulgation of prices at the beginning of the crop season. For example, the government will agree to pay $1.75 per bushel for wheat on January 1. Thus, all supply would be made on this basis, and at the stated time the government would take over all surplus and sell it at the world market price. If this price should be less it would be deducted from the price paid the people from whom it was purchased. This would be taking money out of the pockets of the consumer arbitrarily and putting it into the pockets of the producer. Based upon our experience up to the present time and upon the experience of

1. B. H. Hibbard - "The Relation of Government Agricultural Marketing". Academy of Political Science, Vol. 10, No. 4, page 18.

other countries, it seems that direct control on the part of the government in the matter of marketing is not advisable.

If a workable direct plan cannot be devised, then the government must depend on indirect means for controlling marketing. In this direction, the government has been very active; particularly in regulating important marketing agencies such as packers; in specific limitations of certain practices such as dealing in futures; in the modification of freight rates in the interest of the producers; in the limitation of certain middlemen charges; and in the enactment of a tariff. It has also done some excellent work in recognizing certain farmers' organizations, in furnishing information to the farmer about the demands for certain articles, thereby limiting the acreage in a certain product, and in sending out market prices.

The entire question can be summed up by saying that the government influence is naturally limited, and that possibly the strongest influence is in the indirect method with some direct limitations placed upon certain agencies. Direct government aid can also be given in marketing and in times of failures. Under present conditions the farmer is helpless in times of crop failures and is forced to leave the farm.

There has been some attempt on the part of the farmers to organize and cooperate in their work. This has met with

varying success in different places. Possibly one of the most outstanding successes of a movement of this kind is the California Fruit Growers Association. They have been able to control both production and marketing, and it furnishes an excellent protection to the fruit growers. A similar organization was one that was operated in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas[1]. This was rather successful for a time but finally dissolved. Other examples are the Grange, Hesperia movement, and Farmers' Union. The government has rendered these unions a great service in ruling that they are not corporations. The farmers need some real constructive education along this line.

Another phase of the economic situation is that of irrigation and fertilization. From the standpoint of self preservation the government should take an active interest in the supply of water in the arid sections of the state. It seems that no individual can afford to do this, but if handled on a large scale it could probable be made a success in most places. The Rio Grande Valley is an illustration of this. Farmers do not understand the need of fertilization nor do they know what kind they need for their particular soil. In this particular the nation's increase can be helped materially by educating the farmers and giving them needed information.

1. Observed by the writer.

Of course, the county agent is attempting some of this work.

Unscientific breeding is another weak spot in the economic development of the rural sections. Luther Burbank stated that it is one of the disappointments of his life to find that he has spent all these years working along this line, and that now the people will not make proper use of his findings. Farmers need to be taught the value and the economy of producing only the best in both stock and plants.

The subject of conservation may be mentioned here also. The average farmer is destroying the land. The outstanding cause for this is farm tenantry. The renter is on one place this year and expects to move on to another the next. He has no idea of building up the land, but on the other hand, he gets all he can from the land and gives nothing in return. Farm tenancy is one of the most serious problems that confronts the American people at the present time. This subject will be discussed later on. Our streams are not properly conserved. Much power and food goes to waste each year on this account. Conservation of human power also needs attention. The human element should be taken more into account in rural production. Conservation along these and many other lines is an important problem for the farmer.

Modern home conveniences will do quite a bit toward help- the farmer. One of the laws of economics is "never compete against a machine". Now, the farmer is doing this in a number

of instances. He needs to institute a number of the modern conveniences both in the home and on the farm. He can thereby save himself and his family many of the factors of drudgery, and time that he is now spending uselessly. At the same time he will make himself and family more satisfied.

When examining the social phase of the background to rural education, the same situation will be found that was found in the economic. Isolation is possibly one of the greatest curses of the country, but there are a number of factors that are now tending to solve this. Up to very recently, rural social life and rural institutions have always possessed certain marked characteristics. Social life in the early pioneer period was very limited. Isolation and loneliness were the rule. With the coming of more people and the development of roads and villages, social intercoursebecame easier and more frequent, and out of this grew our rural society. There were "barn raisings", "quiltings", and "husking bees", "spelling matches", literary societies, dances, parties, and church socials, to which the farmers would go and take their families. Generally the people were all admitted to these gatherings on equal terms because they were a homogeneous group, and every one knew everyone else. With the present tendency toward urbanization, however, there has been a marked tendency toward breaking up of these close

social tendencies. Different races coming into the same community has also had the same effect. Farm tenantry has also broken into this state of affairs, as the people do not now stay in one place long enough to form strong local interests, and become a strong working social unit along any line. The social effect of farm tenantry is as disastrous as the economic effect.

Factors that have tended to relieve the isolation of the rural communities are the telephone, daily mail service, automobiles, traveling libraries, trolley systems, Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association, and the radio. The term "country boy" no longer provokes a smile, and the farmer cannot now be distinguished from his village neighbor when the two are seen on the street. The thing that the farmer needs is a continuation of these agencies, and others added. The establishment of a system of good roads would do much to solve this problem of isolation.

In a consideration of the rural life problem of today, the real underlying social problem is how to maintain on the farm a satisfactory American civilization. "Large-tract" commercial farming by individuals or companies, on the one hand, and farm tenantry on the other, are not conducive to such an end. The typical American farmer of the past has been an intelligent man of the middle class, interested in community affairs, and

owning a medium sized farm, maintaining a good standard of living and educating his children. How to preserve this standard and how to develop it further is avery important social and educational question. This cannot be done by writing long articles about "back to the farm", about the desirability of farm life, and about the methods of holding the boy on the farm. The boy is going to the farm when the country is made the most attractive place in which to live and rear his family. This cannot be accomplished by some one telling him that it is his patriotic duty, or that it is a fine place to be. The question resolves itself to this: how can the country be made the most desirable place for the boy? The farmer must be so protected that work on the farm gives returns equal to work in other places. He must find on the farm a type of society that will satisfy his social instinct. He must find good schools in which to educate his children. He must find an opportunity to give adequate expression to his religious life. The one encouraging feature of the situation is that the people of these sections are not satisfied and are striving for something better.

Any discussion of rural conditions that omits the religious phase would be far from adequate. The church is an index of how well the farmer is progressing. Good churches andwell paid pastors are found in prosperous communities. Farming must be

carried on by sober religious men; for they are the only type that can meet the demands of the farm.

The church is an old institution and has held various positions of power in society at different times. During the middle ages the church was the dominant power. The church selected the officials, determined the policies of the government,- in fact was itself the government. It also had complete control of education. It determined who should do the instructing. The church, however, was not always judicious in the use of its unlimited power. Therefore, little by little other institutions began to take over certain functions until today the church is far from the powerful institution it once was. It seems that the church at present is not in a position to meet the needs of the rural community. The church as an institution has not been as progressive as many other social institutions, and, therefore, finds itself rather impotent.

There are a number of reasons why the church is losing the place it once held. The division among the churches is possibly the outstanding one. It is not unusual to go into a small community of five hundred or fewer people and find as many as five separate churches, each one working against all the others.

As a result of this friction of the churches none is really doing much good. There must be some plan devised whereby the churches can get together on a more cooperative basis. There are several suggestions whereby this may be accomplished. First, possibly it would not be wise for all to try and unite in the same denomination, but have a union building and employ a full time pastor for an entire year. Get a pastor of one denomination this year and one of a different denomination the next, until all different sects represented have had a pastor of their choice. A second suggestion is to have a union church with different pastors each Sunday. The one essential factor is a common church wherein all work together.

A second cause is the failure to adapt itself to modern conditions. It has a way of holding aloof from progress. A better policy would be to take hold of those inevitable situations, and help to direct them rationally rather than resort to trial or error or dogmatism. Unless the church takes hold of the things in which the boys and girls are interested, it need not hope ever to interest them.

The third reason is somewhat implied in the factors already mentioned; namely, the attraction to town churches. The town churches have made more effort to meet the modern

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demands of its followers, and, therefore, with the incoming of the automobiles and of good roads, the farmer goes into town to worship, and leaves the country church to be managed by the less fortunate and less progressive members of the community. This in turn leads to poor management, shortage in finance, and a conservative policy.

A fourth reason for the decay of the country church, is the fact that they are supplied with poor pastors, pastors who are using the country church as a "meal ticket" until they are promoted to a town charge. The pastors are as a rule new in the field, or else, they have a poor education. In either case, they are not prepared to do the work in this difficult field.

There are certain definite things that the church should do. First, it must not forget to carry on its primary function of teaching fundamental religion. This teaching of religion does not necessarily mean to teach systematic theology, but to give the proper interpretations to social relationships.

The second function of the church is to serve as a leader and inspirer in the larger and more significant advances of the country. The church should be the outstanding social agency in the development that is demanded of the time. It

should lead rather than follow or condemn. When this is done, the church will have a vital influence on the young people of the community and will be a real factor in their guidance and development.

Third, the church should serve as the social center. It should be a social clearing house where ideas for community betterment can be discussed. In fact, the country church must improve country life, and in this way it will improve country schools. It should be the outstanding institution for the general development of the community.

The rural church as it exists today is unfit to meet the demands of the rural communities.[1] There are several ways of improving the condition. First, modern leaders are needed. We should send out into the rural communities, young men who have been especially trained for the work. These men should be interested in the community, and be able to see for it a place and a future. These men should have wide views and deep sympathies. They should be alive to present needs, and have the power to compel people to follow their guidance.

Second, the church should be socialized. We should come to see the wider view and feel that religion is more than getting right with God.

1. Cubberley- Rural Life and Education, page 78.

In general, there should be cooperation between church, school, and other social institutions of the community, that are for the upbuilding of the social conditions. They could and should be vital factors in improving country life, but they will never do this until they become more interested in the community than in themselves. When the church gets the idea of service, it will become a real factor, but as long as it is striving to increase its numbers it will continue to be in the background.

This subject should not be passed over without mentioning the rural Sunday School, which at the present time is far from what it should be. At present, our rural Sunday Schools are taught with a view of instructing those who attend in the doctrines peculiar to our denomination. This instruction is for the purpose of winning them over to our way of believing, so that when they "grow up" they will come into this or that church. Men should be put into the field who are properly trained, and they, through the medium of the Sunday School, can develop the next generation into just about what it should be.

PART II.

Having gone into this study of the basic principles of rural education, the next step is to take up the problems that confront those who are interested in improving conditions of the rural schools, and to interpret them in the light of the conditions outlined above.

Many of the problems seem exceedingly difficult. Looking at the situation as it exists today, there is so much of bad in it that there seems little to give hope for the future of rural schools. But viewed from the standpoint of history, it is remarkable that they have reached even their present state of efficiency, in so short a time. The first schools knew no higher authority than the communities that maintained them. Any policy of an administrative or a supervisory nature was necessarily shaped by local opinion and governed by local needs. This meant that there were as many standards of school management as there were schools, or, more properly speaking, it meant no standards at all. Out of this condition there grew a desire on the part of all the states, to obtain uniform standards through statutory enactment, and all have been successful to some extent.

The entire problem has been in the nature of an experiment, of groping in the dark to find the most desirable plan, the plan that would please the people and at the same time result in a good school system. Various administrative programs of organization have been worked out. Those that have been most popular are the following: 1,community; 2,district; 3,township; 4,county; 5,state.

The community system is the simplest and possibly is the least efficient. Under this system, any teacher or other person interested, may direct a petition to the county superintendent or county judge, place on it the names of the children that are to attend the school, procure the signature of parents and guardians of said children, and present this petition to the county judge or superintendent, who credits the school with the state and county pro rata, and appoint three citizens to act as trustees for one year. At the end of the term the school dissolves into its original elements. As a school each is an experiment which must be repeated from year to year, never advancing beyond the experimental stage.[1] The originals of some of these contracts have been examined, and the description of the system was found to be true. (Fortunately this system was confined to Texas. The other states have not had to outlive

1. Foght--The American Rural School, p. 33.

this influence). At one time practically every county in the state used this system, but at the present time they have all been abandoned. This type of school had a peculiar appeal to the citizens because it gave them direct control and came nearer representing to them true democracy. The teacher was usually paid part of his salary in money, and the other part in corn, meat, and other food products that the farmer could produce. Communities using this system usually employed the poorest teachers, had the poorest daily attendance, and, in general, did the poorest type of work of any school organization yet tried. They were expensive to maintain and their terms were usually very short. They, however, have constituted one of the most serious barriers to the introduction of a larger and more efficient system, since the people of the rural sections were not willing to see the control of their schools taken from them.

The district plan is just a step higher, and as a whole seems to be the most popular. This is a very democratic type of organization and administration. The plan originated in Massachusetts to meet the local needs of that state, and was carried rapidly from there to other places farther west, as the settlers advanced to that section.

Whenever a sufficient number of families lived near enough together to make organization possible, they were permitted to form a school district. They could then elect a school board to represent them, erect a school house, employ a teacher, and by vote levy a tax upon the property of the people within the district. At first the districts were naturally large, but under the law it was easy to alter the boundary and soon a little school house was in walking distance of every family.

Each district, once legally created, becomes a body politic and corporate, is assigned a certain name or number, and possesses certain important legal powers. These include the right to make contracts, the right to sue and be sued, and to purchase and hold property for school purposes. The trustees are usually three in number and are elected by the people. After the system is once set in motion one trustee is elected each year, making it a continuous body. In the early times these trustees had almost absolute control of the school. Later, however, their power was curtailed more and more in the interest of efficiency. In fact the marked tendency in this state as well as in others is in the direction of centralized authority. The state now certificates the

teachers, selects text books, outlines the course of study, and limits greatly the powers of the board in such matters as making contracts, fixing boundaries, fixing the tax rate, and salaries for teachers, and directing the teachers in general.

It appears that this system is no longer adapted to meet the needs of present conditions; that the district authorities seldom see the real needs and possibilities of their schools; that as a system of school administration it is expensive; that it leads to unnecessary inequalities of schools, terms, educational advantages, and to an unwise manipulation of schools; that the taxing unit is too small, and the trustees too numerous; that trustees assume too much authority over things that they are not competent to manage; and that the trustees hinder the general progress of the schools. Under this plan we would have six hundred board members supervising two hundred teachers.

There was a time when the district system served a useful purpose and met a need that no other system could meet, but obviously that day is passed. The present state of society and civilization demands a different type of organization and a state is measured today in educational progress by

how far it has succeeded in curtailing the powers of the local board and the distance it is from the district system.

Our next step upward in the study of the different types of organization is the township system. This is a distinct advancement over the district type because it is a larger unit and will come nearer giving equal educational opportunity for all. The advantages of the plan are: 1.Since the schools are under the control of a single board elected from the township at large, schoolhouses will far more likely be built where they are needed. 2. The tendency will be not to multiply schools unduly. 3. Equality of school opportunity will be secured more accurately. 4. Better supervision can be secured. 5. Administration will be simpler and more economical. 6. The tendency will be to employ teachers for longer terms. 7.Transfer of pupils from one school to another will be made easier. 8. Consolidation of schools will be simplified.

The statements made above would apply equally well to almost any other type of organization that is larger than the district plan. Since this does not seem to be the ideal plan for the state, no more time need be devoted to it here.

The county system will be postponed until the state system has been disposed of. The state as a unit of organization and

administration will be omitted as it is only a theory and has not yet been tried out in any state; and possibly Texas is too large to take the initial step along this line.

Superimposed above all these other systems, however, is the state that acts as an official to see that the local units carry out their part of the larger educational plan. The state officials inspect, suggest, supervise, and give advice in general to the smaller units.

The last system or plan to be discussed, the county unit plan, is the one that educational leaders believe to be the one best fitted for the needs of the Texas schools, and, therefore, more time will be taken with this plan. The county unit plan is slowly evolving and in the future is likely to be the outstanding unit for school organization;not a system as Texas has it now, but as a real working unit. Practically half of the states of the union now use this system in some form.

The plan is very similar to our city school system. The people would elect a board of either five or seven. One should be elected from each commissioner's precinct and the others from at large over the county. This county board should have the power to form school districts, alter boundaries of districts, elect the county superintendent, hire teachers, consolidate

schools, build school houses, buy books and supplies, and levy school taxes within limits fixed by law.

The foregoing powers are important and should be controlled by a smaller body than the people at large. There are certain counties that are poorly districted and under the present plan this cannot be changed except by the majority vote of both districts. The next duty, that of electing the county superintendent, is of very great importance, for without this the board really has no power. Under our present system the county superintendent's office is a political one and this greatly limits the efficiency of our superintendents. This plan removes it a step away from the public, but still leaves it in the hands of the people since they elect the board. The board should be allowed, as they do in city schools, to select this superintendent from anywhere they wish. This would be quite an improvement over the present plan, which provides that he must have been a resident of the county for a period of two years immediately preceding his election. It frequently happens that there is not a man in the county that is available who is capable of holding the position, and if there should be, it is necessary for him to spend most of his time in playing politics rather than in superintending the schools of the county.

The power to hire teachers is another important duty of this board. They should hire the teachers for the entire county, from a list that is submitted to them from the county superintendent. These teachers should be hired only on the recommendation of the county superintendent and should be hired subject to placement by the superintendent. This would result in placing the proper teachers in the country schools and do away with the present evil of allowing the local board to hire the cheapest teacher that can be obtained regardless of her training. It is only reasonable to suppose that a trained school man who gives his life to work along this line would be more capable of selecting good teachers than a group of farmers who had had very little experience along this line.

If this board should have the power to consolidate schools they could take a number of the one-teacher schools that are now doing very poor work and make of them larger units with longer terms and more efficient work. As it is now, this cannot be done without a popular vote and there are always enough reactionary people to greatly retard progress of this kind. If the board is given the power to erect school houses the county would have fewer houses but better houses, and they would be more conveniently located. A new stone school building that

was just completed this year was recently visited, and it was found that ninety per cent of the patrons lived more than three miles from the school.[1] A large number of other buildings were visited also, and these had been constructed without regard for such important factors as light, air, and heat.

The trustees should buy the books and supplies for the entire county on the recommendation of the county superintendent who would be an expert and would know just what the county needed. This would enable the county to buy in large quantities, with the result that a large saving could be made. The last point mentioned, that of levying taxes within limits prescribed by law, is a very sane proposition. The people could vote a certain limit beyond which the board could not go. This would enable the board to know the amount of money available and it could make its plans accordingly. If the county were willing to pay for good schools then they could put the limit high. The superintendent could make his estimate of how much would be needed to run the schools, and then go to the tax roll and determine the rate needed to meet the expenses for the year, which would possibly vary from year to year. This would enable the school to have sufficient money and at the same time not collect more than would be necessary.

1. Visited by the writer.

3 3053 00224 4408

The county superintendent, as stated above, should be appointed by the board and may come from anywhere the board may see fit to choose him. He should appoint his assistants, nominate all teachers, plan the course of study, recommend text books and supplies, supervise, direct and visit teachers, shape the educational policies of the county, and act as an executive officer of the board. It is important that he rather than the board appoint his assistants, for the superintendent should be held entirely responsible for the schools of the county and therefore should have complete control of all his helpers. Then, if his assistants fail to measure up, he cannot hide behind them but must assume all responsibility. As stated above, it is highly important that he nominate all teachers. It is presumed that he has spent years in studying teachers and that he would come nearer knowing a good one than the board would. Also, under this plan the teacher knows that she is responsible to the superintendent and will come nearer striving to carry out his plans and suggestions. Then, too, if a teacher fails, he cannot say that he did not want her, but must accept her and be responsible for her work.

Planning the course of study is important, because it will give uniform courses all over the county. Of course, this is done now to an extent through the state course of study. It

is sometimes hard to adapt this plan to local needs and the superintendent can do this for the entire county. Being a specialist, he will know just what books and supplies the county will need for the coming year and then he could make all recommendations to the board.

Possibly one of the weakest places in our rural school system is the lack of supervision. The superintendent should make a special effort to see that all teachers of the county are visited frequently and given just as good supervision as the city teachers get. A man who had been teaching in the rural schools of Texas said that he had been teaching thirty years and had never had one visit from anyone whose business it was to supervise or direct.[1] Our rural teachers are usually the youngest and poorest prepared teachers in the system and, therefore, need the most careful supervision, but they get the least attention.

In shaping the educational policies of the county the superintendent should be more efficient than a board of men who do not give their entire time to educational matters. The superintendent is the logical man to carry out the plans of the board and should act as their executive officer. He should be present at all board meetings and allowed to discuss all subjects

1. This statement was made to the writer.

brought up.

This, in brief, is the county unit plan with its various strong points discussed, and is probably the best plan for Texas, since it should not meet with great opposition from the people and at the same time give us a good system of schools. Possibly this would do more toward solving our Texas rural school problems than any other one suggestion that could be given. In fact, a large number of the suggestions that will follow will be conditioned by the selection and adoption of this plan.

In passing to the maintenance of rural schools we are on one of our most serious problems. Texas has never spent more than thirty five dollars per pupil on her school children, and by far the larger part of this has gone to the city school child; while other states pay as high as sixty and seventy dollars per school pupil.[1] This goes to show that our rural children are not getting an education because no one is paying for it.

In colonial times the support was entirely local. Those people who had pupils to send to school would pay a certain sum for each pupil sent, the idea being that only those should pay whose children were directly benefited. Later, schools were established by the town but the support was still purely local.

1. Texas Department of Education-Bulletin No.157,p.34,Jan., 1923.

The next step in the support of schools was the establishment of the permanent school fund, made by land grants. This, however, was not sufficient to meet the needs of the schools, so various units of support came into existence.

The first of these units was the district. This plan worked nicely for a time for wealth was not at that time piled up in centers, and every one had about an equal chance. Since these earlier days great change has taken place in the distribution of wealth and this unit is now much too small. For example, there may be an oil well in one district and because of this wealth the people of this district have good schools. In an adjoining district the land is very poor and there is no oil well, and, therefore the people may tax themselves highly and still have insufficient money to maintain a good school system because the wealth is not there to produce the money. The first district did nothing to create the well and are no more entitled to its benefits than the people of the other district. Another example is a district in which is located a town, where wealth is centered, possibly a railroad coming through. The surrounding country has made this town possible, has brought the railroad there, and still the city school gets the

benefits of it for its schools while the rural district, even though it creates this wealth, has not sufficient finance to carry on its schools. The unit then should be large enough to give all of these the benefits of all this wealth which is created by all.

The township is another unit that is used in some states, though never in Texas. It is an improvement over the district in that it is larger.

The next unit to be discussed will be the county unit. This is one of the best units for taxation as well as for administration. The unit is sufficiently large to provide for an equal use of the wealth of the county for the schools of the county. This will insure good schools over the entire county rather than a very poor school in one district and an excellent school in another.

Possibly the state forms the best unit for the support of schools. Education is something that is more than county-wide and its effects extend out over the entire state. It is frequent that one county is wealthy and can afford good schools while another is poor and can provide for only very meager schools. The students from one become the citizens of the state just the same as the students from the other, and one is

as much entitled to the wealth of the state as the other is. Therefore, the wealth of the state should be used to educate the children of the state, and a sufficiently large unit should be taken to make this education approximately equal.

There are a number of other ways that have been suggested for the support of our schools. Among them are income taxes, inheritance taxes, corporation taxes, taxes on amusements, and various other incomes of this kind that need not be discussed in this connection. It seems evident that the money is available to support as good a system of schools in Texas as could be found anywhere but the question is finding the best method of obtaining and distributingit.

There has been in recent years a movement instituted for the consolidation of rural schools and much good has been the result of this movement. A large number of our little one-teacher schools have been combined into one larger school that is now doing a very good type of work. However, this is one of the weak places in our rural schools. More work and informationare needed along this line. As stated above a one-teacher school is very expensive to maintain, and if a a number of these one-room schools can be placed in a central location and form a three, four, or five-teacher school much

will be gained. In the consolidated school we get better enrollment and better attendance; better grading and classification of pupils is possible; more interest comes from numbers; the number of grades that each teacher must teach will be reduced; longer recitations are possible; subjects such as music, nature study, etc., can be taught which would not be possible in the one room school; better school buildings are possible; longer terms can be had; community interest in education is quickened; group games are made possible, and better teachers are employed. There are, however, some objections to the plan. Prominent among these are: the parents object to sending their children so far from home; the children are forced to eat cold lunch; children need better clothing to attend the central school; bad roads; and the children are forced to travel a long way in bad weather. It seems, however, that the advantages out-weigh the disadvantages, and we should do all in our power to bring about more consolidation. There are some places in the state, however, where consolidation is impossible. The small local school is the only possible arrangement under the present condition, and it must be made the best school possible.

Our rural schools may be equipped well with every thing except teachers but let them remain as they are and these schools will continue to be ineffective. Practically one-third of the teachers of Texas are teaching on second grade certificates and have not graduated from any school[1]. Of this number a very large per cent are in the country schools. A very large per cent of the rural teachers have had no experience; or else, they may have taught a long time but still are of the type that the better systems will not employ. Many of our rural school teachers are local girls who have studied and passed the state or county examinations for a certificate and are teaching the home schools until they can either get married or get a position in the city. To be a good rural teacher requires a sound body and good health, good common sense, natural aptitude and insight for things educational, a social and agreeable nature, patience, sympathy and love for children. She must be genuine, frank and unsuspicious, firm and self-reliant, altruistic, and must have academic and professional training. She must have a love for the country and believe in the place and future of rural schools. She should not hold the job just as a "meal ticket" until she

1. Texas Department of Education. Bulletin No. 157-p 42, Jan. 1923.

can get something better, but she should believe that she has a real work to do and that she is the one to do it.

Our problem is, how are we to attract more and better recruits to our rural schools? This may be answered by saying that we must make it worth while to teach in the rural districts. To do this adequate salaries must be paid, the teacher's tenure of office must be made more secure, the management of our schools must be more democratic, the teacher must be granted more social recognition, the teacher must be safeguarded against injustices, a pension plan should be adopted, and teachers should be induced to spend their vacations in study and improvement. Many of our teachers in rural districts are indifferent and for the reason that they can see for themselves no future beyond what they now have.

Much has been said in recent years about the rural school curriculum. Many educators say that the rural school should have the same curriculum that the city school has because of the great mobility of labor and the great number of the people who leave the country schools for the city schools. This, however, seems to many to be a very unwise position. All educators agree that there should be constants in every curriculum. But there should also be variables, and these variables should fit the school to meet the needs of the local

community; and surely the needs of the rural community are not the same as the needs of the city.

The old curriculum was very unbalanced. Too much time has long been spent on the subjects of arithmetic and grammar. Those who have determined the type of training that our boys and girls have received have been too much interested in the individual and have forgotten the needs of society. There was a time when people believed that it made no difference what a child studied just so it was hard and distasteful to him. But the old idea of mental discipline has now broken down. This is due to two forces, first, the increased knowledge of psychology; and second, the vast amount of new material that has been clamoring for a place in our course of study.[1] The only reason this type of curriculum has continued is because of untrained teachers and a patronage that was not alert to the needs of the children that were attending the schools.

Our children on the farm need to be taught how to make better homes, live happier lives, how to improve farming, how to provide a richer and better life for the people in the country; and to do this the school must stress form subjects less and content subjects more. In other words, the school must relate itself to the community in which it is located.

1. Betts - Class-room Method and Management, p 80.

The curriculum should contain such subjects as nature study, agriculture, manual training, domestic science, music, play and many other similar subjects that will enable the child to appreciate the community in which he lives and make real contributions to the community. Of course, under the district system with state curriculums this will be a difficult undertaking, but the teacher must make and use every opportunity to teach these subjects.

Another important factor to be considered in studying any school system is the school plant. The type of work a school can do is conditioned by the type of building they have, and it is the opinion of most educators that this is one of the weakest points in the rural school system. In selecting the place for the sight the convenience of the children is a very important item, and it should be borne in mind that the center of the district is not always the center of the population. Even the center of population is not the only factor to be considered. The soil should be of the proper kind, it should be well drained; it should be as free as possible from noise and dust; there should be nothing to obstruct light; and it should be removed from offensive places and have ample play ground.

The proper dimensions can be easily obtained from the

state and from standards that have been made for survey work and need not be gone into here, However, such important factors as lighting, heating, ventilation, drinking fountains, water supply, and toilets are important factors and should be given careful consideration in the study of any school building.

In the recent Educational Survey of the Texas School System a careful study of a number of school buildings was made. In Llano County, a typical West Texas rural county, seventeen of their twenty-six buildings were surveyed.[1] It is predominately a county of one-teacher schools as is indicated by the fact that eleven of the seventeen schools surveyed were one-teacher schools. Three were two-teacher schools, one was a three-teacher school, one with four teachers and one with thirteen teachers, the last one being the only high school in the county. Some of the buildings have been there as long as thirty years. See illustration 1 on opposite page. Some were more modern, as is illustrated by number two. Number three is an illustration of a building erected as late as 1917, but without state aid or supervision. Number four is an illustration of a building that was constructed a number of years ago when the subject of lighting was not given a prominent place. It was found in this survey

1. These buildings were surveyed by the writer in connection with the Educational Survey.





Illustration 1 Oatman Creek School

This building has been erected for more that thirty years.

Fourteen pupils were enrolled in this building.

There is no toilet provision of any kind at this school.

The water is carried four hundred yards from a neighbors well.

The building was provided with green shades all of which were badly worn, and could no longer be adjusted.





Illustration 2 Tow School

A modern two room building with the windows properly grouped. The two rooms can be made into an auditorium by opening the folding doors that separate them.

Two modern jacketed stoves are used for heating.

The buiding was erected in 1915.

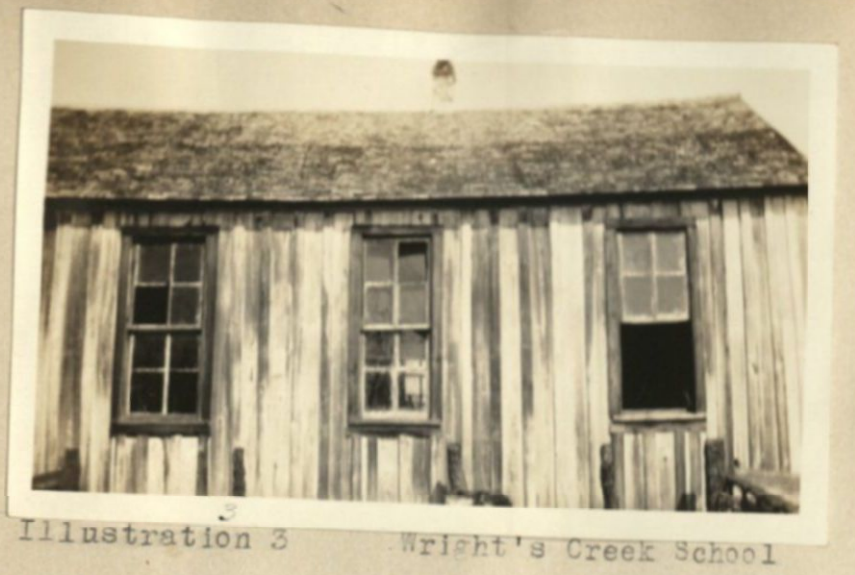


Illustration 3 Wright's Creek School

This building was constructed in 1917 without state supervision or aid.

The blackboards are painted boards placed against the wall.

There is no kind of inside finish. The building is constructed of twelve inch boxing and the undressed side of the lumber forms the inside walls.

There is only one toilet for both sexes.

The building has never been painted.

It is supplied with double unadjustible desks that are badly carved.

The water is carried in a bucket about one fourth of a mile from a neighbors well. They use a common drinking cup.



Illustration 4 Llano High School

This is the only high school in the entire county.

It is poorly lighted as can be seen from the distance between the windows.

It is one of the old stone buildings that has outlived its usefulness, and should be replaced with a new one.





5

Illustration 5 Oestreich School

This building was constructed in 1916. It has only two small windows on each side and they are placed near the floor.

Only one toilet is provided for both sexes.



6

Illustration 6 Six Mile School

This is a typical shoe-box type.



7

Illustration 7 Prairie Mountain School

The play ground here is deep sand and no kind of playground apparatus is provided.



7



Illustration 8 Llano Colored School

This is the only colored school in the county, and it is taught in the above building which is the colored church.



BUTTERWORTH SCHOOL-BUILDING SCORE CARD

Devised by JULIAN E. BUTTERWORTH
Professor of Rural Education, Cornell University

FOR ONE-TEACHER SCHOOL BUILDINGS

This is the score card used in making the survey mentioned this paper.

Name of School.....County..... State.....

Scorer .....Date .....

Year schoolhouse was built.....
Year of additions or alterations costing $500 or over.....
Estimated present value of buildings and grounds.....
Assessed valuation of district.....
Is title to school property properly recorded? .....
Amount for which building is insured .....

1. **Size** of classroom
   1. Width .....
   2. Length .....
   3. Height .....
   4. Pupil capacity.....
   5. Enrollment .....
   6. Floor area .....
   7. Area per pupil of room capacity .....
   8. Area per pupil of enrollment .....
   9. Cubical contents.....
   10. Cu. ft. per pupil of room capacity .....
   11. Cu. ft. per pupil of enrollment .....

2. **Shape** of classroom
   12. Ratio width to length.....

3. **Window placement**
   13. Number of windows for lighting on: front.....; rear.....; right.....; left.....
   14. How far do windows extend beyond front seats? .....
   15. Height of window sill.....
   16. Distance top of windows to ceiling .....
   17. Distance between windows on left .....
   18. Ratio height of windows to width of room.....
   19. If ventilation windows, name requirements not met.....
   .....

4. **Glass area**
   20. Front.....; rear.....; right.....; left.....
   21. Total area.....
   22. Ratio glass area to floor area .....

5. **Shades**
   23. Color .....
   24. Type .....
   25. Condition .....
   .....

6. **Floor**
   26. Material .....
   27. Condition .....
   .....

7. **Walls**
   28. Kind .....
   29. Finish .....
   30. Condition .....
   .....

8. **Color scheme**
   31. Ceiling.....; walls.....; dado .....

9. **Inside finish (woodwork)**
   32. Material .....
   33. Color .....
   34. Workmanship .....
   35. Simplicity .....

10. **Blackboard**
   36. Kind .....
   37. Location .....
   38. Height from floor.....
   39. Number linear feet.....
   40. Condition .....
   .....

11. **Bulletin board**
   41. Kind .....
   42. Size .....
   43. Is it within reach of children? .....

12. **Desks**
   44. Kinds of pupils' desks.....
   .....
   .....
   45. Is number sufficient?.....
   46. Number of sizes.....
   47. Is this number sufficient?.....
   48. % cases where seat is not properly adjusted .....
   49. % cases where desk is not properly adjusted .....
   50. Condition .....
   .....
   51. Type of teacher's desk.....
   52. Type of teacher's chair.....
   53. Condition .....
   .....

13. **Seating arrangements**
   54. Are seats arranged on long axis of room? .....
   55. Width of aisles.....
   56. Minimum distance between desks and right wall.....; desks and left wall.....
   57. Are rows of seats arranged so far as possible according to size?.....
   58. % cases where distance between desk and seat is not satisfactory .....

14. **Closet (for teaching supplies)**
   59. Facilities provided.....
   .....
   .....
   60. Deficiencies .....

15. **Clock**
   61. Kind .....

16. **Fuel room**
   62. Facilities provided.....
   .....
   .....
   63. Deficiencies .....
   .....
   .....

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BSBSC—1

17. Cloakroom
64. Facilities provided.....
.....
.....
65. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

18. Workroom
66. Facilities provided.....
.....
.....
67. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

19. Storeroom
68. Facilities provided.....
.....
.....
69. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

20. Library
70. Facilities provided.....
.....
71. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

21. Teacher's room
72. Size .....
73. Equipment .....
.....
74. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

22. Playroom
75. Facilities provided.....
.....
.....
76. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

23. Neighborhood room
77. Facilities provided.....
.....
.....
78. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....

24. Heat and ventilation
79. Facilities .....
.....
.....
80. Grate area .....
81. Area air intake.....
82. Area foul air outlet.....
83. Is there a thermometer?.....
84. Deficiencies .....
.....
.....
.....

25. Fire extinguisher
85. Kind .....

26. Cleaning system
86. Method of sweeping.....
87. Method of dusting.....
88. Is floor oiled?.....

27. Water supply
89. Source .....
90. How far is water carried?.....
91. Distance of well from nearest stable, outhouse, or other possible source of contamination.....
92. Is well protected from surface drainage? .....
93. How often is water analyzed? .....
94. Other facts.....
.....
.....
95. Drinking facilities provided.....
.....
96. If not fountain, are paper cups or individual drinking cups used?
.....
97. Are individual drinking cups adequately protected when not in use?
.....
98. Washing facilities provided.....
.....
.....
99. Kind of towel provided.....
100. Is soap provided?.....
101. Is there a mirror?.....

28. Artificial lighting
102. Kind .....
103. Is it sufficient?.....
104. Rooms not lighted.....
.....
.....

29. Toilets
105. Kind .....
106. Location .....
107. Is there sufficient seclusion?.....
.....
108. Are they well lighted?.....
109. Are they well ventilated?.....
110. Are they adequate?.....
111. Condition .....
.....
.....
.....

30. Telephone
112. Is there one?.....

31. Bell
113. Kind .....

32. First aid outfit
114. Is there one?.....

33. Mail box
115. Is it satisfactory?.....

34. Flag and pole
116. Size of flag.....
117. Location of pole.....
118. Condition of flag.....
119. Deficiencies .....
.....

35. Vestibule
120. Size .....
121. Is it well lighted?.....
122. For what purposes used?.....
.....
123. Other deficiencies.....
.....
.....

36. Material of construction
124. Material .....
125. Color of paint.....

37. Foundation
126. Material .....
127. Height .....
128. Condition .....

38. Roof
129. Material .....
130. Condition .....
.....

39. Condition of repair
131. Repairs needed.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

40. Location on grounds
132. Does building interfere with play ground? .....
133. Is it well placed for æsthetic effect? .....
.....

41. Orientation
134. Direction .....
135. Is this the most satisfactory orientation under the conditions?.....
.....
.....

THE SCORE

Note. In column 2 below place the credit allowed each item as "essential standard credit"; in column 4 place the "additional credit" allowed in terms of the standards and values presented in the bulletin that is designed to accompany this scale. The various credits may be summarized in columns 3 and 5 under the different group headings. If additional credit is granted for items not given in the bulletin, these should be included at the bottom of this page under "Other Items."

	Essential Standard Credit			Additional Credit	
	1	2	3	4	5
I. The Classroom		340			
1. Size	40				
2. Shape	20				
3. Window placement	35				
4. Glass area	30				
5. Shades	15				
6. Floor	15				
7. Walls	15				
8. Color scheme	20				
9. Inside finish	15				
10. Blackboard	30				
11. Bulletin board	10				
12. Desks					
a. Pupils	40				
b. Teachers	10				
13. Seating arrangement	25				
14. Closet	15				
15. Clock	5				
II. Other rooms or room facilities		80			
16. Fuel room	20				
17. Cloakrooms	25				
18. Workrooms	—				
19. Storeroom	15				
20. Library	20				
21. Teacher's room	—				
22. Playroom	—				
23. Neighborhood room	—				
III. General Service Equipment		255			
24. Heat and ventilation					
a. Kind	30				
b. Adequacy	30				
c. Thermometer	10				
25. Fire extinguisher	—				
26. Cleaning system	20				
27. Water supply					
a. Source	25				
b. Facilities for drinking	20				
c. Facilities for washing	15				

	Essential Standard Credit			Additional Credit	
	1	2	3	4	5
28. Artificial lighting	10				
29. Toilets					
a. Kind	20				
b. Placement	10				
c. Condition	20				
d. Adequacy	15				
30. Telephone	—				
31. Bell	5				
32. First aid outfit	10				
33. Mail box	5				
34. Flag and pole	10				
IV. The building in general		155			
35. Vestibule	20				
36. Material of construction	25				
37. Foundation	15				
38. Roof	20				
39. Condition of repair	30				
40. Location on grounds	20				
41. Orientation	25				
42. Architectural appearance	—				
V. The grounds		170			
43. Size	25				
44. Shape	10				
45. Slope and drainage	25				
46. Condition	20				
47. Fencing	5				
48. Walks	10				
49. Playground apparatus	25				
50. Environment	25				
51. Accessibility	25				
Other Items:					
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
Total Score					

42. Architectural appearance
136. Desirable features.....
.....
.....
137. Undesirable features.....
.....

43. Size of grounds
138. Number sq. rds.....
139. For what purpose is more land than 160 sq. rds. needed under these conditions?.....
.....

44. Shape of grounds
140. Shape described.....
.....
.....

45. Slope and drainage
141. Are grounds fairly level?.....
142. Are they well drained?.....
.....

46. Condition
143. Unsightly objects.....
.....
.....
144. Attractive features.....
.....
.....

47. Fencing
145. Kind .....
146. Height .....
147. Condition .....

48. Walks
148. Kind .....
149. Condition .....

49. Playground apparatus
150. Apparatus .....
.....
.....
.....

151. Condition .....
.....
.....

50. Environment
152. Desirable features.....
.....
.....
153. Undesirable features.....
.....
.....

51. Accessibility
154. How far is school from one of the main highways of the district?
.....

155. Percentage of homes in district within 1 mile.....; 1-1½ miles .....; over 1½ miles.....

156. Is transportation at public expense provided for pupils over 1½ miles away?.....

that five of the districts have no special tax and with one exception they have the poorest buildings visited. The average attendance of the one-teacher schools was twenty. Four of the buildings were built of twelve-inch boxing planks without any kind of inside finish. Examples of these are numbers 1, 3, 5, and 6. Six of the buildings were not painted. Eight of the buildings were of the shoe-box type, examples being numbers 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. In these the windows are on as many as three sides and often four, with the student practically always facing the light. The windows are small with as much as six feet between them. The ratio of the glass area to the floor area is as small as 1 to 11 while it should be as much as 1 to 5. Seven of the buildings have no window shades, (which means that some of the children have the direct light on their desks practically all day).

The water supply was found to be very defective. Seven of the buildings got their water from cisterns; three from wells; two from springs that were open; and two from open creeks; Six of the schools used the common drinking cup.

The toilet system was in worse shape than any other one thing. Only one school had a concrete pit. Nine had surface toilets that were badly kept, and four had none of any kind. Of these nine, three had only one for both sexes and the teacher. No school has any special provision for the teacher, and there is not a washout toilet in a school in the entire county.

Nine of the schools visited had no kind of play ground apparatus. This means unsupervised play and usually no play at all.

Thirty-four per cent of the families are within one mile of the school, twenty-six per cent of the families were within and and one-half miles of the school and forty per cent of the families were more than one and one-half miles from the school, and transportation at public expense is provided nowhere in the county.

This gives the reader some idea of the condition of our rural schools in the open country.

A number of schools in Williamson County, a typical black land farming county were visited, and on the whole better conditions were found. The toilets especially were better since every school visited had either a washout toilet or a concrete pit. There is more attempt toward consolidation in this county than in the other one studied.

The rural community needs more surveys. They need to know exactly what their condition is and to find out how it can be improved. These surveys should be along all lines such as social, church, economic, school and similar lines that are vital to the rural people.

The conditions outlined above indicate that the rural schools are in rather an unsatisfactory condition. A

number of suggestions have been made that, in the writer's judgment will greatly improve the conditions that now exist in the rural schools, but it will be some time before the people of the state can be brought to see the good in these and similar suggestions. To say just what the future of the rural school is would be impossible. A number of suggestions have been made. Some think that the time will soon come when all the people will live in little villages and go out to work their farms. Others believe that the time will soon come when all the rural schools will be consolidated into a central school with free transportation furnished. In the writer's opinion the one-room school is to be with us for quite a while yet, and it is our duty to make it the best school possible under the existing conditions. It seems, however that the tendency is toward consolidation and that we will have a larger amount of consolidation within the next ten years than we have had during the past ten. This being true then, the person who wants to make a real contribution to civilization can find no better field than the field of rural education.

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