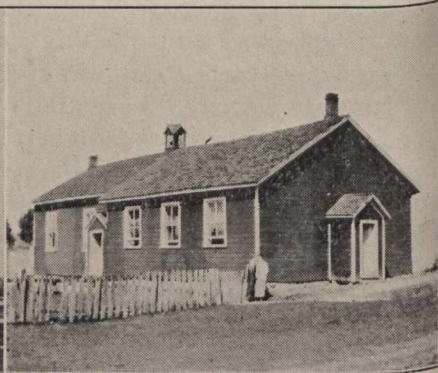


The New School.



The Old School.

The Social Activities of a Rural School

CLAYTON DUFF,
Bluevale, Ont.

TWO or three winters ago, noting the number of bright young people in the neighbourhood with somewhat limited activities, the schoolmaster induced them to organise a "Literary, Social and Debating Society", and obtained permission to use the schoolhouse and firewood for the meetings. It was surprising what a cheerful meeting place the somewhat dingy schoolroom was made by a few flags and mottoes, several large hanging lamps loaned by the Young People's Society of a local church and the bright faces of the audience who filled the school seats every Wednesday night. The constitution stated that everyone was eligible for membership "over nine and under ninety", and this made the society in reality a neighbourhood club. In order to secure the widespread interest desired, the people of the whole countryside were personally solicited for their support. The interest thus aroused was maintained by the regular use of the local press. People never had to ask, "Is that Literary Society going yet?" They were not allowed to forget it. A membership fee of fifteen cents, with five cents admission each night for the general public, was found ample to cover the expenses of lighting, stationery, an honorarium for the caretaker, and the rental of a musical instrument. An organ was obtained the first season for five dollars, but a piano the second year at \$3.50 a month was much more than worth the added cost as there were several capable musicians in the society, and no piano for public performances had been available in the village before.