

HOW TO MAKE COUNTRY SCHOOLS ATTRACTIVE.

BY MISS ANNIE FOOTE—"BON ACCORD."

A COUNTRY SCHOOL! With what do we associate the term? The low-roofed, old log school-house, with the additions made as the population of the section required,—the unchinked walls, the tumble-down porch, guarding (?) the entrance, the small windows, the long rows of pine desks with the deeply carved initials of former generations of boys, the uncomfortable forms and decaying floor—to how many does the term recall such a picture? Happily these "gaunt, ghastly edifices, with order, symmetry or taste unblest," have become almost things of the past, and we find in their place, the more commodious structure, built to fulfil the requirements of the law as regards size and enclosure, but, in nine cases out of ten, just that and nothing more. The trustees too often satisfy themselves by choosing a site, the most central and whose price will least affect the public purse. This done, they build at the required distance from the road, enclosing with the regulation fence, providing furniture as cheaply as possible, and their duty is done. The result, a plain, staring structure, comfortable enough, it may be, but having no pretensions to beauty or ornament. Add to this the wear and tear of a few years. The fence, innocent of paint, has suffered from wind and weather, and a missing board here and there does not improve its appearance; the building has become weather-stained, there are a few broken panes, the yard is overgrown with thistles and other weeds,

or strewn with firewood, the interior is in keeping with the surroundings; the whole making up a picture that would depress the spirits of the most buoyant child. Much of the work of improving this state of affairs, and making the school attractive, falls upon the teacher. It may here be stated that by *making school attractive* is to be understood, placing it under such circumstances as will prove the most beneficial to the pupils and satisfactory to the teacher, trustees and parents. How can this best be accomplished? First, by improving and beautifying the surroundings. Let the building be kept in repair and the grounds properly levelled. A row of healthy shade trees along the fence will be a great improvement. The teacher can get some of the larger boys to assist in procuring these from the woods, and in planting them. "But," some teacher may say, "what is the use of my taking all this trouble? I will not be here when the trees become worth looking at." Will he not have the satisfaction afterwards of pointing to them with just pride and saying—"I was the means of having this done. I have left a lasting evidence of my stewardship in this section."

Keep the school-room bright and cheerful. Here the teacher and pupils spend a great portion of their time, and it is their duty to make the place as pleasant and comfortable as possible. I pass, with mere mention, the attractiveness of a clean, well ventilated room, with furniture well arranged,