

indeed. This thought is uniquely expressed by an article appearing in the New York Outlook of recent date:

"I am the one room school. The farmer has improved his house and barn; he has left me primitive.

The farmer has improved his machinery; he has left me primitive.

The farmer has improved his corn; he has left me primitive.

The farmer has improved his hogs; he has left me primitive.

But I feel the throb of new growth; I feel sensations of infinite yields about to be made.

I feel the wild strains giving place to the power of a new science. I am in process of being civilized.

Soon I, too, shall burst from the hard shell of my primordial self. One room is too small for my accretions.

I must have two, four, ten rooms.

Let me go, let me rise, let me expand.

I am to be the consolidated rural school.

I will make newer, higher, richer educational yields.

I will produce a better type of farmer-proprietor, farmer-legislator, farmer-citizen."

To my mind the first step towards the re-organization of the district school is through a union of several schools or consolidation. With the belief that the far-reaching importance of this step has not been generally understood by the people nor its merits made known to them, I am writing the present article. I hope that it may in some small degree serve to stimulate them and interest them sufficiently to inquire into the subject of consolidation and from their inquiries, gain a knowledge of the existing order of things and of methods of improvement which will lead them to concerted action in the right direction resulting in a re-organized educational environment.

I shall discuss this question from several standpoints, that of the pupil, the teacher, the parent and the ratepayer. Following up these various viewpoints, I shall expose some of the faults of the present system and suggest some improvements, endeavoring as far as possible to show the advantages and the disadvantages. I do this because both sides of any question must be known before we can pass a fair and unbiassed opinion, and people are not wise to enter into any project whatever without a due amount of thought and a full consideration of that project in all its relationships to the daily life of every individual concerned.

I.—From the standpoint of the pupil.

The pupils in an ungraded school-district have not all equal advantages of obtaining an education; the children who live within one-half a mile of the school have a decided advantage over those who live two miles away.

These various distances obtain in sparsely settled districts; the disadvantage does not merely consist in the distance which has to be travelled but in the twofold added inconvenience of inclement stormy winter weather and neglected condition of the roads. Consequently, under the present system of things as existing in the country districts two-thirds of the pupils there get schooling only part of the year. Let us take a concrete example: a child of ten starts out on a cold winter's morning to the school a mile and a half away; he has to endure the cold for that distance and the chances are that, after he arrives at his destination the school-house is not properly heated, depending as it does on the common wood stove which does not distribute the heat evenly and in very many cases there is a cold draught along the floor of the room which renders comfortable seating of the children impossible. Now the child is obliged to endure this all day as well as other inconveniences such as improper seating, arrangement of light, ventilation, etc., which, despite all efforts to the contrary are bound to occur in certain districts, and he has to travel back that mile and one-half in the evening; the result is that the child is exhausted by the length of the walk and comes home "tired out." Also the following day's lessons cannot be well prepared and the child loses interest in his work and falls behind.

Some persons in their short-sightedness and prejudice have said that, in "our days" when we were young we had even greater difficulties than these to contend against and even urge that hardships should be left in the way of the children obtaining an education; but is the mere fact that we had difficulties to overcome sufficient reason that we should impose needless discomfort upon the children of this generation, when it is within our power to better the conditions? Will not hardship enough exist, even after we have exerted ourselves to the utmost to remove all the difficulties?

To say that we today should tolerate conditions in education which prevailed thirty years ago would be much the same as saying that the farmer of today should revert to the sickle, the flail and the tallow candle.

In a Consolidated school the worst of the evils mentioned above are counteracted. This system places a school at everyone's door. A closed van calls at each home, and takes the children in pleasant surroundings overseen by an adult whose business it is to look after them until they are safely lodged in a comfortable school building, properly ventilated and heated. They are not separated from their parents, but are in touch with their homes during the whole process of their education, a point which must commend itself to every parent and educator.

II.—From the standpoint of the teacher.

Naturally my discussion of this section will consist