

GIRLS OF THE FARM.

Pretty and healthy and strong,
Noblest the world ever knew,
Gladdening the heart with a song,
Bidding all troubles adieu;

Every day battling with wrong,
Every day striving anew,
Helping the old world along,
Living a life that is true;

Think of the work that they do,
Think of their grace and their charms,
Think of their modesty, too!
These are the girls of the farms.

GEO. B. WRENN.

AN EXCELLENT JUROR.

The judge had his patience sorely
tried by lawyers who wished to talk and
by men who tried to evade jury service.
"Shudge!" cried the German.
"What is it?" demanded the judge.

"Do you think your father would like
me as a son-in-law?"
"Yes; I believe he would."
"Oh, joy! I—"

CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS FOR THE WEST.

The system of consolidated schools
is one by which several school sections,
weak as individuals, with poor attendance
and poor equipment shall be united in one,

In Eastern Canada the consolidated
school seems to have safely passed the
experimental stage. As yet, they are
few in number, but the introduction of
a system differing so radically from the
old must be a matter of time.

1. One good building built to accom-
modate comfortably the children of
three or four school districts, will not
cost as much to erect and maintain as
the three or four poorly built, poorly
ventilated and maintained, separate
buildings would cost.

2. Instead of having one teacher,
teach eight or ten classes with perhaps
two or three pupils in each, several
teachers each taking the grade of work
for which she is most fitted can give a
much greater proportion of time to the
classes under her care.

3. Inspection can be much more
thorough. The Inspector having less
ground to cover, can thoroughly super-
vise the schools in his district.

4. The children are carried to and
from school in vans, (covered in bad
weather.) They are thus landed at the
school door warm and dry and ready
for work, instead of cold and tired with
wet shoes and clothes in which they
must sit all day.

5. The attendance under this system
is larger and more regular. The child-
ren as a rule are anxious to go—the
ride is pleasant and competition at
school is keen. The child who shirks
at nine o'clock has to put up a pretty
good excuse to be let remain home
when the van is standing at the door.
There are no late-comers either.

6. A measure of high school work
can be taken up, and especial branches
such as music, drawing and manual
training can have some time devoted to
them without infringing on the claims
of the more practical subjects. This
makes it unnecessary to send the older
boys and girls away from home to add
to the education received in the little
schoolhouse.

THE RED RIVER VOYAGEUR.

Out and in the river is winding
The links of its long, red chain,
Through belts of dusky pine-land
And gusty leagues of plain.

Only, at times, a smoke-wreath
With the drifting cloud-rack joins—
The smoke of the hunting-lodges
Of the wild Assiniboin!

Drearly blows the north wind
From the land of ice and snow;
The eyes that look are weary,
And heavy the hands that row.

vide them with plenty of robes. The
team and driver might be obtained
from one of the farms furthest from
the center. In many cases families
already provide horse and carriage for
their own children, and one of the
largest and most trustworthy of these
pupils would like nothing better than
to be entrusted with a van.

3. The cost is too great. This diffi-
culty is usually presented first. I have
reserved it until last so as to give it
more space. From reports sent in by
the districts which have established con-
solidation it is not easy to make any
hard and fast statement. Some re-
port the cost much less, some the same,
and others that it costs more but the
schools are better. The aggregate cost
may be greater but the cost per child is
much less as so many more children are
regularly in attendance.

In many places in the West a school
is erected and a teacher engaged for the
benefit of eight or ten pupils, the total
cost seldom being below \$600 and often

The voyageur smiles as he listens
To the sound that grows apace;
Well he knows the vesper ringing
Of the bells of St. BONIFACE,—

The bells of the Roman Mission,
That call from their turrets twain
To the boatmen on the river,
To the hunter on the plain.

Even so in our mortal journey
The bitter north winds blow;
And thus upon life's Red River
Our hearts as oarsmen row.



THE OLD EDIFICE WITH "TURRETS TWAIN," WHOSE CHIMES INSPIRED THE POET WHITTIER.

And with one foot on the water,
And one upon the shore,
The Angel of Shadow gives warning
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of wild-geese?
Is it the Indian's yell,
That lends to the voice of the north-wind
The tone of a far-off bell?

And when the Angel of Shadow
Rests his feet on wave and shore;
And our eyes grow dim with watching,
And our hearts faint at the oar.

Happy is he who heareth
The signal of his release
In the bells of the Holy City,
The chimes of eternal peace!

—J. G. WHITTIER.

7. The consolidated school helps
materially to solve the question of
rural mail delivery. The farmer's
boy can bring home the mail five days
a week.

The objections raised to this scheme
are not so many nor so valid as the
points in its favor.

1. The roads are unsuitable, and the
weather often unfit to take out a team.
But those bad roads are a hindrance
to many other things, hauling milk or
grain, church-going and visiting. Why
not mend the roads? As for the team,
a merciful man is merciful to his beast;
but should not the children be consider-
ed? Many of them have a walk of one
mile or two or even three in the cold of
winter, or the rain and mud of spring
and fall, over those same bad roads.

2. Conveyances are not fitted for the
purpose and drivers are unreliable.
The district can own the wagons, fit
them up to keep out the rain and pro-

much above that sum. The expense
for each pupil often closely approaches
\$100 per year, a higher cost to give the
country pupil an ordinary public school
course than the city pupil pays for both
public and high school.

As an example of what may be ac-
complished by this method with the
same outlay of money as would be re-
quired for the old, the following report
from Royerton, Indiana, may help to
explain the question of expense:

"As a solution to the rural school
problem, the school at Royerton is a
fruitful field for study. Six districts
have been combined into one. This
union school is located in the town of
Royerton. Under the separate dis-
trict plan, seven teachers were employ-
ed—two at Royerton, and one at each
of the other districts; now five are em-
ployed in the union school, a difference
of two teachers resulting from the
change. Three teachers are doing

grade work, one does high school work
and one divides his time between grade
and high school work. Some little
high school work was given when there
were but two teachers in the Royerton
school, but no high school work was
given in the district schools outside of
the Royerton school. Under the sep-
arate district plan, seven rooms were
maintained; now there are but four,
and a small room used for recitations,
which adds no expense. No additional
buildings were needed at Royerton, due
to the fact that there was an old build-
ing which had not been used for several
years. Thus there has been a saving
in tuition by reducing the number of
teachers. Not considering the high
school, four teachers do the work form-
erly done by seven teachers—a differ-
ence of three. The cost of fuel, supplies
and repairs for seven rooms has been
reduced to the cost of four. There are
190 pupils enrolled in the school, 129
of whom are conveyed from the aban-
doned schools—about two-thirds of the
number enrolled in the union school.
The daily expense for transportation is
\$8.75. The following will show the
comparative cost of the two plans:

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Rows include District Plan (Salaries for seven teachers, Fuel for seven rooms, Supplies for seven rooms, Repairs at \$20 per room, Total \$2912.00) and Consolidated Plan (Salaries for four teachers, Fuel for four rooms, Supplies at \$10 per room, Repairs at \$20 per room, Total \$1682.00).

Transportation at \$8.75 per day,
\$1225.00."

In Canada, the schools at Guelph,
Ont., Kingston, N. B., and Charlotte-
town, P. E. I., are not particularly
described here, because they received
very material aid in their establishment
from Sir William Macdonald. Tryon,
P. E. I., however, with only the govern-
ment grants due to the separate dis-
tricts and the school tax as formerly
levied found their expenses at the end
of the first year of consolidation to be
ten dollars less than the previous total
cost in the individual districts. Middle-
ton, N. S. is also working out this prob-
lem with the following result:

At Middleton seven rural schools
were combined with the town district.
Middleton itself employed three teach-
ers, and each rural district one. The
consolidated school employs nine teach-
ers, and has a high school department.
In 1902, before consolidation, these
districts enrolled 367 pupils, with an
average attendance of 108.4 or 54 per
cent. The consolidation went into
effect on August 1st, 1903. In Dec-
ember, 1903, the consolidated school
had an enrolment of 358, with an aver-
age attendance of 280 or 78 per cent
and the enrolment in January, 1904,
was over 400, with a corresponding in-
crease in the average attendance.
Eleven vans are employed, and the
longest route is six miles.

The following letter from Oak River,
Man., gives a clear and concise presen-
tation of the opinions held in this dis-
trict by the people on this subject and
the means taken to accomplish the
desired result. Our thanks are due to
Mr. Brassey for his kindness in enab-
ling us to supply this information to our
readers.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:
Your communication of the 18th inst
addressed to "the Chairman of the
Board of Education" has been handed
to me.

I might say that the item you saw
was correct, the school districts of Oak
River and Maplewood were consolida-
ted into one last spring, officially known
now as the School District of Oak River
Consolidated No. 253. We carried a
by-law last May authorizing the bor-
rowing of \$10,000 for the purpose of
building an up-to-date four roomed
brick school here, the foundation of
which is now about completed. Our
intention is to open this school after
Xmas holidays with three teachers
to begin with.