

## OUR RURAL SCHOOL GROUNDS.

**M**ANY of our affiliated horticultural societies are endeavoring to interest the children of the public schools in floriculture. They give bulbs or flower seeds to them and offer prizes for the best results. One teacher we knew who encouraged his pupils to bring pot plants to the school, and taught them how to care for them and above all to love them for their beauty and their fragrance.

But as a rule our rural schools are an object lesson teaching neglect and distaste for ornamental horticulture. The school building itself is unsightly, and often shabby for want of paint. The school yard is enclosed by an ugly snake or stump fence, or by a board fence, half down, and gates and posts that stand awry. The extent of the grounds may be large enough to meet legal requirements but they are bare of tree, shrub, and sometimes even grass. Arbor Day is a move in the right direction, and we are pleased to credit our authorities with this enactment, which however is too often taken as an ordinary holiday, and the school grounds are no better after than before it.

Prof. Bailey, of Cornell University, Ithaca, U. S., has devoted Bulletin 160

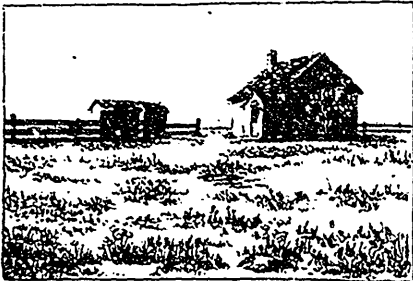


FIG. 1562.—Where Children are taught.  
An actual example.

to Hints on Rural School Grounds, and is thereby aiming to cultivate the taste of the public for better things, so that they will demand a different state of things and make the grants to schools conditional on such improvements.

Quoting a report he says: "If children are daily surrounded by those influences that elevate them, that make them clean and well-ordered, that make



FIG. 1663.—A suggestion in planting.

them love flowers, and pictures, and proper decorations, they at last reach that degree of culture where nothing else will please them. When they grow up and have homes of their own, they must have them clean, neat, bright with pictures, and fringed with shade trees and flowers, for they have been brought up to be happy in no other environment."

Regarding the school building Prof. Bailey says:

"The school building is generally little more than a large box. It has not even the charm of proper proportions. A different shape, with the same cost, might have made an attractive building. Even a little attention to design might make a great difference in the looks of a schoolhouse; and the mere looks of a schoolhouse has a wonderful influence