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SUPERVISION OF ONE-TEACHER  
SCHOOLS

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# SUPERVISION OF ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS.

## Chapter I.

### THE NEED FOR ADEQUATE SUPERVISION OF ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS.

*The one-teacher school the Cinderella of our educational system.*—The one-teacher school in the United States appears in comparison with the best graded schools like Cinderella sitting among the ashes. The building in which it is housed is usually the meanest type of school building; the supplies furnished rural children are the scantiest; the school term is usually the shortest; rural teachers represent the most inexperienced, the least adequately trained, and the least skilled group of teachers; community support of the school is usually less enthusiastic than the support accorded any other type of school in the State. The one-teacher school, like Cinderella, has inherent possibilities of development, but the State must play the fairy godmother and wave fairy wands in the form of wise legislation before it realizes its educational possibilities, before rural children are given educational advantages equal to those of urban children.

*Urban sections reflect nation-wide progress in education.*—A number of agencies at work in the United States have served to raise standards of teaching. The multiplication of high schools, normal schools, and colleges has provided academic and professional preparation for teachers, supervisors, and administrators. Urban boards of education have shown an increasing tendency to employ men and women of experience and with professional training as superintendents, supervisors, and teachers. Such boards appoint and dismiss teachers on the recommendation of the superintendent or delegate to him the authority to employ or dismiss them.

In cities of 8,000 population and over, 75 per cent of the elementary teachers are normal-school graduates, and 10 per cent have received one year of normal school or college training. Boards of education in cities of 100,000 population and over, in addition to employing a city superintendent and a corps of clerical assistants, engage one general supervisor for every 20 teachers and a special supervisor for every 50 teachers. By securing the services of graduates of normal schools and colleges in increasing numbers as teach-



ers, supervisors, and superintendents, urban sections reflect national progress in education.

*Rural sections suffer educational handicaps.*—But 45 per cent of one-room school teachers have graduated from high school and fewer than 4 per cent have completed normal school. Inexperienced, untrained teachers need more help than those with professional training and experience. Yet in only six States is the employment of rural supervisors State wide. A study made by the Bureau of Education in 1917 shows that, on the average, rural teachers receive annually from county superintendents but one or two visits, varying in length from one-half hour to two hours. In but 18 per cent of the counties throughout the United States are assistant superintendents employed; only 29 per cent have clerical assistants; the average territory over which superintendents must travel in order to visit schools is 1,672 square miles. The majority of county superintendents have no voice in selecting teachers for rural schools.

The vital factor in making any school a good school is a skilled teacher. The factors that lead to the maximum acquirement of skill by any teacher are native teaching ability, academic and professional training, and an opportunity to gain experience under intelligent guidance or supervision. In too many rural sections in the United States two of these three factors are lacking. The result is that one-room school teachers as a group represent the least skilled of all classes of teachers, and rural children have poorer elementary schooling than town and city children.

*Lack of supervision creates educational misfits.*—Very little help can be given by a superintendent who is able to visit teachers but twice a year. Consequently, large numbers of the youngest, most untrained, least experienced teachers in the United States are gaining experience under conditions that hamper growth and create feelings of dissatisfaction. Lack of initial training, coupled with the absence of guidance that will help to solve intelligently the complicated problem of teaching a one-room school, is producing every year thousands of teachers who are educational misfits. Society is disturbed over the industrial misfit. Because of the widespread resultant consequences we need to feel far more disturbed over the teacher misfit.

*Supervision makes rural positions more attractive.*—It is difficult to secure and retain for a period of years the services of a well-trained teacher in a one-teacher school. The position is more difficult than a graded school position and the salary is less. In the absence of supervision opportunities for professional growth and advance-



ment are often lacking. Statistics reveal the fact that in cities of the United States of 8,000 population and over the average length of service of elementary school teachers is 9.47 years in the same school. This is in marked contrast to the average of 1.3 years spent by the one-room school teacher in the same school. A large turnover in teaching positions represents a great waste in education.

Ambitious, intelligent, progressive teachers take pride in associating themselves with urban groups whose standards are high. Their pride suffers when they are forced to associate with a group of teachers whose low standards expose them either to patronage or sympathy. A study made recently in a State normal school in Tennessee shows that, while 70 per cent of the students in the school received their elementary training in rural schools, more than three-fourths of the group intend to teach in cities and towns. The unsupervised rural-school positions, which in an earlier period were sought by men who afterwards became great educators, judges, and statesmen, are now looked upon with disfavor by trained teachers.

Adequate supervision leads rural teachers to acquire skill, creates greater community interest in schools, and generates respect for the one-room school teaching position. The years during and immediately following American participation in the World War witnessed a very great shortage of teachers. This shortage was felt most keenly in rural communities. Many one-room schools were closed or had several changes of teachers in a single year. Yet one rural section, employing assistants to county superintendents or supervisors for the first time in 1916-17, reported a reduction in teacher turnover from 60 per cent in 1917-18 to 30 per cent in 1918-19 and, finally, to 18 per cent in 1919-20. The supervisor helps not only to train teachers, but she creates conditions which encourage teachers to stay in the same community for a period of years.

*Farmers need a clearer understanding of the problem.*—Farmers sometimes suppose that young men and women are fitted to teach because they have assimilated knowledge gained in high school. It is just as reasonable to assume that those who have eaten farm products are thereby fitted for farming as that those who have assimilated knowledge of high-school grade are thereby fitted to teach. In each case power is created, but something more in the way of training is necessary. No farmer would think of turning loose in his fields every year 25 or 50 or 100 people with no actual experience in farming. He would anticipate and be unwilling to suffer the loss attending such a policy. The shaping of corn and cotton and potato rows is an important business. The farmer shows wisdom in refusing to trust the greenhorn alone in his fields. The average farmer needs to understand that the imparting of knowledge and the shaping of the character of his children are tasks also requiring skill.



He must be led to see that the undirected teacher in the schoolroom is more dangerous than the undirected inexperienced worker in his field of young corn.

*Lack of supervision is helping to cheapen schools and communities.*—Lacking the training which a supervisor could give, the rural teacher fails to inspire the most intelligent progressive farmers with confidence in her ability. Realizing the lack of educational opportunities provided by their local one-teacher schools, such farmers move to town so that their children may not be handicapped by being deprived of good elementary schooling. An occupation fundamental to the welfare of the Nation loses skilled workers and rural communities lose leaders. The local school becomes a poorer school. It is deprived of financial support. It suffers a loss also in the contagion of interest created by children whose parents are eager for them to have an education. Lack of supervision means untrained teachers and poor schools. Poor schools mean cheapened communities and lessened farm production.

*The need for an adequate number of supervisors.*—The farmer representative in the legislature needs to be convinced that supervision is right in principle. It is also highly desirable to persuade him to make provision for a corps of rural supervisors large enough to make effective supervision possible for every rural school. Not only must the majority of one-room schools be reorganized and the rural teachers trained to follow better methods of management and teaching, but rural parent-teacher associations must be organized and guided first into a sympathetic understanding of and cooperation with the present aims of the teacher and supervisor, and next in the organization of a campaign for improved educational opportunities for rural children. Any attempt to introduce modern methods of teaching into rural schools that ignores the need for educating and securing the cooperation of the public is subject to failure. Because supervisors need to exercise leadership, not only in training teachers but also in influencing communities to support schools more generously, they can not make their influence felt as it should be in more than 25 one-room schools and one-room school communities.

*Summary.*—Lack of supervision handicaps rural schools, making it difficult for them to secure and retain the services of trained teachers. Rural people are deserting the farms in order to provide their children with educational advantages. One of the most vital immediate needs of farming sections to-day is a sufficient number of educational leaders capable of training teachers in service and possessing the ability to arouse communities to give enthusiastic support to local schools.



## Chapter II.

## THE ATTITUDE OF THE SUPERVISOR.

*Investing the word "supervisor" with new meaning.*—Most rural teachers are sons or daughters of farmers. No class of people in America are more independent in spirit and more liberty loving than farmers and the children of farmers. Neither the rural teacher nor the rural community will be quick to welcome a person whose attitude expresses authority. In order to secure the coöperation of rural people, supervisors need, by their attitude, to stress friendliness, appreciation, helpfulness, democracy. They need to invest the word "supervisor" with new meaning. They should make the term mean friendly helpers with superior wisdom.

*The growth of the teacher depends upon the establishment of friendly relations between her and the supervisor.*—Most of the teachers in rural schools are young boys and girls only recently out of school. Youthful enthusiasm and faith in their own ability to achieve are among the most valuable assets with which they begin teaching. Badly organized schools, pupil placement in grades in which the work is far too difficult for them, unattractive and insanitary buildings, inadequate equipment, the absence of all material except a single reader with which to keep first and second grade pupils occupied for an entire school year, irregular attendance, unorganized and seemingly indifferent school sentiment in rural communities, the management of 30 or more class periods each day for children varying in development from the pupil of kindergarten to the one of eighth grade or perhaps even of high-school ability, the presence of a disproportionate number of subnormal or refractory pupils—these are among the conditions which rural teachers sometimes face.

In their struggle with conditions that would discourage experienced, trained teachers, beginning teachers are likely to lose their enthusiasm and the confidence with which they began the work of instructing children. They may lose faith in their ability to teach. More than they need anything else these young teachers need a friend. The rural supervisor has an opportunity to be that much needed friend. By a tactful, sympathetic approach she can help teachers to improve some of their most discouraging school conditions, create in them renewed enthusiasm for teaching, lead them gradually to acquire skilled methods of instruction, and restore their faith in their ability to succeed. By showing intelligent understanding of the difficulties surrounding the rural teacher and appreciation of all that is good in her work, the supervisor will help to establish friendly relations and to promote teacher growth.



*Commendation may be used to promote growth.*—Supervisors who introduce their conferences with teachers by discussing every evidence of good practice which they were careful to note while observing will renew the teacher's faith in her ability. They will also prepare her to receive kindly and to grasp with increased readiness principles explained and suggestions made.

For instance, if housekeeping is good the supervisor may tell the teacher that she is doing a fine thing in shaping in the children attitudes toward clean and attractive surroundings, that she feels confident that some of the homes of the future in America are being affected by the energy that the teacher is expending daily. The supervisor may explain to the teacher how she might go a step further and shape in her pupils habits of industry, helpfulness, cleanliness, and cooperation, by leading them to assume part of the responsibility for the care of the schoolroom. She may illustrate by telling of the experience of a teacher who created in her pupils such an interest in the schoolroom and grounds that they gave an entertainment in order to earn money for sash curtains, pictures, and flower bulbs. The supervisor may lead the teacher to see that the writing of letters for samples of material, bulbs, and picture catalogues, the measuring of windows, the calculating of costs, the study of pictures, the reading of catalogues, the planting of bulbs, the writing of a play or recasting of stories in dramatic form, the learning of folk games, and the entire planning and giving by the children of an entertainment to raise money for the school will promote the formation of habits, attitudes, and skills of much educational worth. It will not be difficult for teachers to understand that such activities will not only motivate the acquirement of skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but will create situations in which teachers can lead children to form habits of cooperation, leadership, helpfulness, industry, and other habits that will help to realize fundamental aims in education.

Attitudes of respect and reverence, shown by children during morning exercises, provide the supervisor with an opportunity to praise the teacher for securing such results and to explain the relation of the shaping of such attitudes to larger aims in education, such as preparing for worthy citizenship. The supervisor may suggest methods other than those used by the teacher for making morning exercises of greater value to children, such, for instance, as the functioning of health and English clubs that encourage pupil leadership, talks by pupils on beautiful pictures or beautiful phonograph records, reports on current events, the telling of stories or jokes, and reports by pupils on activities that promote the formation of health habits.

The supervisor may find a teacher who plays with her children. If she is untrained, she may be doing it not with any sense of con-



fidence that it is the right thing to do but merely out of a love for children and with a desire to make them happy. The teacher may even have a feeling of uneasiness as to whether her action is correct. The supervisor may explain to her how, in addition to promoting the physical welfare of children, the playing of games develops qualities of leadership, cooperation, a sense of justice or fair play, a respect for law and for the rights of others. She will have little difficulty in convincing the young teacher that her action is helping to insure such development. The supervisor has an opportunity to show her how fundamental is the play instinct and how interest in arithmetic, reading, language, and other subjects may be secured by appealing to it. She may explain the use of dramatization and may describe in detail games that serve to provide interesting drill in the various subjects. The skilled supervisor is quick to commend the good, but does not stop with mere commendation. She tells the teacher why she thinks she has shown skill, and lets the telling lead on to suggestions for further growth or improvement.

*An illustration of the effect of expressing appreciation.*—An example of the effect of expressing appreciation is furnished by a rural supervisor. She visited for the first time a one-room school-teacher well on in middle life, a jolly little woman, immaculate and attractive in dress. This woman cared enough about life and beauty to make her schoolroom homelike in appearance by reserving space about one window for a large number of unusually beautiful plants. Her teaching, however, was formal and mechanical in the extreme. She led her children to master only the skeletons, the dry bones of subject matter. Her methods were evidently as dry to her as to the children whom she taught, for she kept a choice piece of crochet near at hand and worked on it at every chance moment.

On her first visit the supervisor was apparently unconscious of the crochet, but she praised the plants, the clean, homelike appearance of the room, and the way the teacher had held on to the joyousness of youth. The commendation seemed to overcome the teacher for a time. Tears filled her eyes. She apologized for her emotion by explaining that in all of her years of teaching no one had praised anything that she had done in the schoolroom before. Gradually this teacher changed her methods, coming finally to support enthusiastically not only the supervisor but the methods in education in which the supervisor believed. Faith begets faith. Praise begets enthusiasm. All of us put forth much energy just for the sake of retaining the good opinion of those who have expressed faith in us.

*Making supervisory visits welcome events.*—Rural schools too often suffer from isolation and eventlessness. The supervisor may plan to make her arrival an event, one welcomed by teacher and children. She has an opportunity to bring joy into the lives of children



by telling an interesting story occasionally, by teaching children new playground games, and by providing them with patterns of simple play apparatus. The supervisor may organize clubs and follow up their work; she may give tests or teach classes in such a way as to renew or create in children and teacher enthusiasm for school work. She may interest herself in the progress made by individuals, in the boy or girl old enough to begin planning to enter high school, in boys and girls who show a fondness for reading or in those showing an interest in performing feats of skill on the playgrounds. By radiating a spirit of interest in all that interests the teacher and pupils, by looking for and commending all that is worthy of commendation, and by consciously seeking to make school life more eventful the supervisor will lead rural children and teachers to look forward to and welcome her coming.

*A need for inspiring patrons with faith in supervision.*—Not only is the supervisor responsible for establishing friendly contacts with teachers and children but she is responsible also for creating in the minds of rural patrons a favorable attitude toward the position with which she has been intrusted. Even though their representative in the legislature or the county board of education has supported a measure providing for the appointment of rural supervisors, it does not follow that taxpayers and school patrons will approve such a measure. Unless the supervisor can succeed in presenting her work to rural communities in a way that will win their favor she will embarrass the powers responsible for her appointment and find herself handicapped in serving those whom she is most eager to serve.

County or other newspapers that are read very generally by rural people furnish one medium for bringing the supervisor and her work to the attention of the public. News items relating to the appointment of the supervisor will naturally lead rural patrons to ask teachers and children, "What do you think of the new supervisor?" The major number of answers should be favorable to supervision if the position is to become established in public esteem.

It is not merely desirable but it is necessary that the public reaction toward supervision should be favorable, else when the question, "Shall we continue to support rural supervisors?" is raised, the representatives of the people, lacking understanding of the importance of the position, may vote "no." For this and other reasons, which will be discussed in later chapters, the supervisor can afford to devote time and energy to making first-hand contacts with school patrons. The supervisor can manage this by helping to effect organizations of parents, by bringing her activities to the attention of the members, and by joining in community activities of various types. The rural supervisor who has no time for school patrons



may one day be rudely awakened to the fact that the taxpayers are not conscious of any need for her services.

*Summary.*—Rural supervisors need to invest the term “supervisor” with new meaning if they hope to establish friendly relations with rural teachers. Upon the establishment of such relations with teachers, pupils, and school patrons the success of the supervisor is in large measure dependent.

### Chapter III.

#### SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF ORGANIZATION.

*A practical plan of class organization needed.*—A practical plan of class organization, lending itself to the development of a program that divides the day into periods long enough to do real teaching, is a necessary first step in improving the quality of teaching in rural schools. The tendency at present in too many rural schools is to follow the eight-group plan of organization, a system developed in urban centers and wholly unsuited to one-teacher school conditions. Until the supervisor can lead teachers to effect a simplified type of organization suited to one-teacher school needs, she will make little progress in improving methods of teaching.

*The eight-group plan discourages teacher preparation.*—Teachers must carefully prepare or plan outside of school hours the lessons that they are to teach if they would grow in teaching skill. An eight-group organization results in 30 or more class recitations each day, with periods of 10 minutes or less in length. Periods so short mean too often that children memorize something from a book and recite it poll-parrot fashion to a teacher. There is little time for explanations on the part of either the teacher or children. Any attempt to develop projects or problems in an atmosphere where so much is attempted in such a short time is absurd. No one can be expected to prepare 30 lessons each day; preparation under such conditions will only retard the teacher's program and make it impossible for her to hear her 30 or 35 recitations a day. So the eight-grade type of organization, by discouraging daily preparation on the part of the teacher, hampers the development of teachers and pupils.

*The eight-group plan represents overlapping.*—The number of years that children have been in a rural school serves too often as the chief factor in their promotion. Standardized tests given in rural schools reveal decided overlapping in the grades. It is no uncommon occurrence to find children of second and third grade accomplishment placed in classes with children of fourth and fifth grade ability and children of fourth and fifth grade accomplishment placed



in classes with children who are able to do seventh or eighth grade work. Children with a 4 or 5-year old mental ability, who would fail even under skilled teaching for two or more years in succession to master a reading vocabulary, are placed in classes with children of 7 and 8 year old ability. Children of second and third grade ability should not be required to do fifth-grade work, nor should children of fourth or fifth grade ability be asked to do eighth-grade work. Such overlapping is a handicap to children and to teachers who are responsible for instructing them.

*A four-group plan of organization is practical.*—Supervisors can lead teachers to effect a four-group organization of their schools with profit to all who are affected by the change.

Beginners, intermediate, and high first-grade pupils can easily work in a single group in such a fundamental subject as reading if emphasis is placed upon enriching the children's experiences. Many beginning pupils are so immature that no amount of phrase drill or other attempts to have them gain a vocabulary will succeed during their first year in school. They can appreciate stories, will enjoy helping to dramatize them, and may just as well hear and help to dramatize selections from a first reader as from a primer. Thousands of beginners in the past had their first lessons in reading from a first reader because primers were not available. Children who are quick and mentally ready will master the more difficult subject matter. The slow ones can drop back during the succeeding year with the beginners who enter in the fall. While three divisions of the first grade are feasible and desirable in a graded-school system, only one division is possible in a one-room school if the highest welfare of the entire group is to receive first consideration.

If pupils are required to pass a second-grade standardized reading test before being classed as second grade, and if during the first school term third-grade children read material of second-grade difficulty, second and third grade pupils can study the same selections in reading. First, second, and third grades can work together in language, nature study, and industrial arts, and may be given an opportunity to read from the blackboard or from charts stories growing out of common experiences. Third-grade pupils will not suffer but will profit by an opportunity to read an abundance of easy material before being introduced to that which is more difficult. A number of States prescribe stories from primitive life as the subject matter in history for second and third grades. There are numbers of books dealing with primitive life sufficiently mature in content for third or even higher grades and yet with vocabularies so simple that they can be comprehended by second-grade children. Such books will help to solve the problem of combining second and third grade pupils.



The combination of fourth and fifth grades offers few difficulties save those of alternating yearly subject matter in geography, history, and other subjects. During one year the group composed of these two grades might study such a topic in geography as "The world as a whole through our everyday needs." If the specific topic or need selected were clothing, a study of methods of producing the various materials from which clothing is made, imaginary journeys to the lands producing such materials, a study of the life of the people in these lands, why the countries studied are better adapted than other countries to the production of certain types of material are topics that might organize a study of world geography. These topics, along with others growing out of those already mentioned, would furnish subject matter simple enough to be understood by fourth-grade children and yet sufficiently difficult to engage with profit the attention of fifth or even eighth grade children. For fifth-grade pupils in geography State courses of study usually prescribe the study of the State, Nation, and continent. This subject matter is within the comprehension of fourth-grade pupils. Any subject matter really simple enough for fifth-grade children to understand should be sufficiently easy for fourth-grade children. "Stories of Colonial Children" and of "How Our Grandfathers Lived" may form the subject matter of a course of study for fourth and fifth grades in history during one year, while "Heroes Who Made America" may be the topic during the succeeding year.

The courses of study in nearly all States prescribe subject matter for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades varying little in difficulty from grade to grade. The subject matter in the eighth grade is not necessarily more difficult than that in the sixth or seventh. The course of study in some States calls for European history and geography in the sixth grade, United States history through the War of 1812 in the seventh, accompanied in geography by a review of the United States with reference to the world as a whole. The eighth grade is supposed to study the period in our history from 1912 on. European history and geography are quite as difficult as the history and geography of our own country, or even more so.

If emphasis in language is placed upon leading children to stand on their feet and use good English in presenting their thoughts to others and upon writing a single paragraph correctly, then teachers will need to teach only the grammar that will help them to do this. Teachers should explain sentence structure, verb forms, and other grammatical help over and over as children's compositions indicate a need for repeated emphasis. Children will be studying new topics in geography, history, and other subjects, and will have new experiences during each new school year that will furnish new subjects for compositions. Emphasis upon the *use* of grammar in speaking and



writing will do away with the study of grammar by pages and will make any scheme of alternation in grammar for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades unnecessary.

New reading material will necessarily be provided each year. The selections that sixth, seventh, and eighth grade pupils are to study and discuss in class should be simple enough to be readily comprehended by all children in the group. A well-selected school library and several magazines adapted to elementary-school children, such as *St. Nicholas*, *The Youth's Companion*, *The National Geographic Magazine*, and *Current Events*, will furnish supplementary reading material adapted to individual needs and if properly used will prevent the dwarfing of any child's development. There seems to be good reason for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade pupils working together in all subjects except perhaps arithmetic. By following a three-year plan of alternation, by adapting the problems studied in these and other subjects to the maturity of the pupils, and by leading the more mature to do much supplementary work the combination of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades will help to solve the problem of better one-room school organization.

*The four-group plan makes longer teaching periods possible.*— Such an organization as is suggested above makes possible teaching periods varying from 15 to 35 minutes in length. If the long study periods preceding them are properly directed by carefully thought-out blackboard or hectographed assignments, periods of such length offer possibilities of becoming really valuable teaching periods. The combination of classes and the alternation of subject matter by years makes possible the type program given below.

*One-teacher school program.*

9.00- 9.20	Morning exercises, including health-club inspection.	
9.20- 9.35	D reading and phonics	} Practice in the fundamentals in arithmetic for A and B groups under pupil leadership.
9.35- 9.50	C reading and phonics	
9.50- 9.55	Setting-up exercises.	
9.55-10.15	B arithmetic.	
10.15-10.35	A arithmetic.	
10.35-10.45	Organized games.	
10.45-10.50	Recess.	
10.50-11.10	C and D industrial arts and number work.	
11.10-11.30	B geography or history.	
11.30-12.00	A history (3); civics (1); A and B current events (1).	
12.00- 1.00	Lunch and game period.	
1.00- 1.15	D reading and language	} Based on nature study or primitive life.
1.15- 1.35	C reading and language	
1.35- 1.50	Writing for the entire school.	
1.50- 1.55	Setting-up exercises.	
1.55- 2.15	B reading (4); hygiene for the entire school (1).	
2.15- 2.45	A reading, language, and spelling.	



2.45- 2.55	Organized games or gymnastic drill.	
2.55- 3.00	Recess.	
3.00 3.25	B language and spelling (4)-----	} Handwork for A and B groups (1).
3.25- 4.00	A general science, including geography, agriculture, home economics (4)-----	

NOTE.—A group includes sixth, seventh, and eighth grades; B group includes fourth and fifth grades; C group includes second and third grades; D group includes beginners and first grade.

*A uniform plan of alternation with spare time.*—The supervisor will save time and prevent confusion by encouraging all one-room teachers in the particular county that she serves to teach each year a common body of subject matter in each group above the first grade. Uniformity in this respect will reduce the development of type units of a course of study by the supervisor to a minimum and will enable children to complete consecutively the work of any single year even though they are compelled to move during the year.

*Summary.*—Good organization is a preparatory step toward securing good results in teaching any school. For administrators and supervisors of one-room schools who would bring about very worth while improvement in the methods and results of teaching, promoting good organization is a fundamental first step. In order to save time and prevent confusion a uniform plan of alternation for an entire county should be adopted.

## Chapter IV.

### MAKING SUPERVISORY VISITS YIELD RESULTS.

*Definite purposes should guide the planning and making of supervisory visits.*—The problem constantly confronting the supervisor is: How can I make the energy which I expend count for most in promoting teacher growth? Since the major part of a supervisor's time and energy is spent in visiting schools, unless the regular visits effect improvement, most of her effort is wasted. Visits that are carefully planned and made under the guidance of definite purposes yield the most satisfactory results.

*Conferences following observation, when handled skillfully, promote teacher growth.*—The supervisor will want to lead teachers to acquire skilled methods of teaching. Observation of the work of the teacher by the supervisor, followed by a conference between the two, should help to realize the foregoing aim. Observation of the teacher's work will aid the supervisor in discovering the ability of the former and the kind of help that she needs. The conference



following observation provides the supervisor with an opportunity to explain modern principles of education and to make concrete, detailed suggestions for improving practice, suggestions that will illustrate the principles explained.

*Supervisory suggestions should be made concrete.*—Many rural teachers have never seen skilled teaching in a one-room school. They may have no experience that will enable them to interpret the suggestions which the supervisor makes so easily and which are so fraught with meaning for the latter. Teachers, eager to improve, find themselves in a situation similar to that of a person who when learning to crochet her first pattern of lace receives only oral suggestions from an expert lace maker. The beginner will learn lace making more quickly if the expert will suggest the proper method of procedure, demonstrate her meaning by crocheting, and observe the learner's practice in order to see whether the latter has gotten the idea. If the expert will continue to demonstrate and explain patiently and cheerfully, the earnest learner will finally evidence ability to crochet without guidance. Similar methods may be followed by the supervisor with success in helping untrained teachers to acquire skill in teaching. For such teachers observation, explanation, demonstration teaching by the supervisor, followed by a conference, is an order of procedure which will if carefully planned in advance gradually result in the acquirement of skill by untrained teachers.

*Careful planning should precede the supervisor's visits.*—The supervisor will need to plan carefully in order to demonstrate skilled methods of teaching. When after visiting school after school she finds that teachers very generally need help in methods of teaching, she may select for emphasis those subjects which are fundamentally important and take time to make type plans for helping the teachers to improve their methods of handling these subjects.

Should the supervisor, for instance, select reading, English, the formation of health habits, and the direction of seat work and study periods as phases of school work upon which she will concentrate her energies for a period of years, she will naturally prepare herself to teach reading and English and to direct seat work. She may lead in the organization of health and better language clubs.

By securing copies of reading texts in use in the county in which she works the supervisor should not find it difficult to make reading-lesson plans which she can use over and over on her visits to schools. She may have poems or short selections, accompanied by a few questions to guide children in studying the material, mimeographed. A copy of the mimeographed material for each child will save writing definite assignments on the blackboard. Such material will serve to illustrate what the supervisor means when she suggests



that the teacher should make definite assignments which will serve as guides in forming good habits of study.

Let the supervisor gather around her near the blackboard first, second, and third grade children and ask them questions which will lead them to tell their experiences. Then follow the informal questioning by queries intended to draw from the children answers that will form a connected story. For instance, the supervisor may ask such questions as: "How many children have noticed the trees lately?" "What has happened to them?" "What color were the leaves in summer?" "What colors are they now?" "What season of the year is this?" "What is the name of the saucy fellow who makes us turn red with cold?" "Do you think he may have made the leaves change their color?" "What do you need on your bed after Jack Frost comes?" "Where do the little seeds sleep?" "What will the leaves do for Mother Earth when they fall?" "How will they help the little acorn, maple, and other seeds?" "How many think it would be fun to write a little story about autumn?"

Then, in response to questions, a few sentences given by the children similar to the following may be written on the blackboard:

#### AUTUMN.

Jack Frost has come. The leaves have turned red, yellow, and brown. Soon they will fall to the ground. They will make a cover for Mother Earth.

Children will enjoy reading such stories. They can be led to make an autumn booklet cover so that they may keep the stories which they copy from day to day. The supervisor can lead them to compete in learning to spell words in the stories, which they may copy from the blackboard in spelling booklets as soon as they can spell them orally. The making of covers will provide seat work.

*Methods of managing seat work and English periods.*—The supervisor, during the first few months of visiting, can well afford to take with her to country schools a supply of such seat-work materials as scissors, crayolas, bogus paper, rulers, seed and furniture catalogues, and a good primary reading manual. The seat-work supplies will enable her to follow her demonstration of the teaching of primary reading by a demonstration of methods of providing primary children with seat work.

While teaching reading the supervisor has an opportunity to emphasize the teaching of oral English by encouraging children to make sensible statements when reciting. She will have innumerable opportunities to foster habits of courtesy. Her demonstration teaching will give her an opportunity to illustrate for the teacher, in a tactful way, many good points in school management.

On her visits the supervisor may find that teachers rather generally are employing the copying of pages of reading as a device to



keep primary children busy. By dwelling for a time on the environment and experiences of rural children she should have little difficulty in demonstrating a method of substituting exercises in copying that will prove of real educational value.

*Conferences an important phase of each visit.*—Unless teachers are led to comprehend principles underlying demonstration teaching, the supervisor may easily do more harm than good by engaging in such activities. A conference between the teacher and the supervisor should always follow demonstration teaching by the latter. This conference period will offer an opportunity for the teacher to ask questions. It will enable the supervisor to explain her purpose in departing from the practices followed by the regular teacher, and will prove an opportune time for her to suggest the use of outlines, manuals, or courses of study in which the use of modern methods is emphasized. If the supervisor will comment frankly during these conferences on weak as well as strong points in her own teaching, she will lead teachers to appreciate the professional spirit in which she analyses subsequent lessons taught by them and will thus serve to take the sting from such criticism.

*Demonstration teaching an aid to the supervisor.*—By teaching children in the various schools which she visits, the supervisor will gain a knowledge and understanding of the teachers' problems that she can secure in no other way. She will discover on observational visits, following the demonstration visit, which teachers are most responsive to suggestions and most enthusiastic over skilled teaching, and will thus be in a better position to select teachers who can do demonstration teaching for parents and for groups of teachers. She will gain valuable knowledge which will serve in helping her to outline series of lesson plans or units of a course of study. Problems, plans or units of a course of study, which are developed by supervisors for the use of rural teachers, should be tested by use in the schools before they are distributed to teachers. Demonstration teaching by the supervisor offers her an opportunity to do this.

*Demonstration teaching by the supervisor should not be over-stressed.*—There is a danger involved when the supervisor teaches without previous preparation and when she places undue emphasis upon demonstration teaching. Such teaching of any subject on one visit should be followed by observation of the teacher's work in that subject on the next visit. When the one responsible for supervision can afford to visit a school once a month or oftener, half a day periods should be spent at least once a year in observing the teacher's work in order to get definite ideas of the teacher's ability in teaching the various subjects and managing the school as a whole. A balance between observation, demonstration teaching, and discussion needs to be preserved if each is to yield the best results.



*The supervisor's energies should be directed toward improving methods of teaching a few subjects.*—It is difficult for anyone to acquire numerous skills within a short period of time. Teachers will comprehend principles and acquire skills more readily if the supervisor continues for a year or longer to direct effort on every visit toward improving methods of teaching a few subjects. The supervisor who determines to continue centering attention upon improving methods of teaching reading and oral English, for instance, until she secures results, will at the end of a year have results to show for the effort that she has expended.

*Summary.*—Supervisory visits that are carefully planned, that preserve a proper balance between observation, demonstration teaching by the supervisor and conferences between supervisor and teacher, and that continue to encourage improvement in methods of teaching a few subjects until satisfactory results are evident tend to promote the growth of the rural teacher.

## Chapter V.

### TEACHERS' MEETINGS AN AGENCY FOR IMPROVEMENT.

*Rural school management requires demonstration.*—The growth of the teacher's skill in handling class periods in a one-room school depends to a very great degree upon simplified organization and skilled management. Under the best type of organization in rural schools from two-thirds to three-fourths of the time of pupils is spent in study or in activities other than class work. This means that during the greater part of the school day children are not under the immediate direction of the teacher. The direction of study periods is not less important than the handling of class periods. The question which presses the rural teacher most urgently for solution is not "How shall I teach reading, geography, arithmetic, or any other subject?" but is, "Granted, that my school is organized on a four-group basis, how can I, during an entire school day, keep three groups employed so busily and profitably that it will be possible for me to concentrate attention upon and guide skillfully the fourth group?"

The management of morning exercises, the three-minute setting-up exercises or rest periods, playground games, club work, and the serving of a hot dish at noontime are all important phases of school work. Rural teachers need an opportunity to observe at least twice each year for a half-day period each time skillful management and methods of teaching in a one-room school taught by a member of their own group. The half day of observation needs to be balanced and completed by a half day given to discussion of



the principles underlying the work observed. All-day teachers' meetings, devoted to observation and discussion of skilled work, promote the growth of rural teachers.

*Establishing demonstration centers.*—The supervisor who discovers upon beginning work one well-organized, cleverly managed, and skillfully taught school is fortunate indeed. She can very early in the school year after gaining the consent of the teacher perfect arrangements for holding an all-day teachers' meeting at such a school. Having discovered a high type of work, she will help all rural teachers by creating an opportunity for them to see it and to understand why she considers it superior.

In the absence of well-organized, skillfully managed one-room schools the supervisor has the privilege of creating the first one for use as a demonstration center. Even in the absence of trained teachers she will find that this is not an impossible task. It is a strange group of teachers that does not have in it at least a few teachers of outstanding ability. One method of dealing with the problem of training teachers, most of whom have received little or no training, is for the supervisor to concentrate attention upon one or more schools selected as demonstration centers. She will probably find it necessary to spend from 4 to 10 half-day periods, spread over a number of weeks, in helping a single teacher to create a superior type of school. The supervisor's object, however, is to help all teachers, to make it possible to convey to them in concrete form ideas which it would be very nearly impossible to transmit with clearness by any other method. The end justifies the means used to attain it.

*Organization and program making are necessary first steps.*—As has been suggested in a previous chapter, four group or simplified organization is a necessary first step in making skilled management and teaching possible in one-room schools. A program adapted to the new type of organization, providing class periods sufficiently long to allow time for discussion, is naturally the next step.

*Careful planning is fundamental.*—Following one or more preliminary visits, during which she has selected a school for demonstration purposes, the supervisor will save time and double the results that she accomplishes by careful planning prior to her next visit. Though the knowledge of the school gained from a single visit would not enable her to make very definite plans, yet she could think through and copy a tentative daily schedule, prepare seat work for primary children, and plan reading assignments for each group with the idea of providing definite guidance for study periods. The supervisor will do well, after selecting a school for demonstration purposes, if she can in a single day help effect reorganization, plan a daily program, demonstrate methods of teaching one subject, and



make suggestions looking toward improved management and teaching.

*Methods of improving the teaching of reading.*—Because of its importance reading will naturally be the first subject selected for emphasis. It is possibly a good plan to have reading methods with each of the four groups demonstrated at the teachers' meeting. This will deepen the impression made upon those observing and will make it easier for the supervisor to lead teachers to understand that the principles underlying the teaching of reading are the same in whatever grade the subject is taught. In States whose courses of study provide detailed type lesson plans the supervisor need only call the teacher's attention to them and demonstrate and discuss the value of their use, or she may need to develop plans in greater detail and adapt them to the rural environment. There is value in leading untrained teachers to use type plans. The one suggested below, for instance, stresses the desirability of getting an idea of the story as a unit, the use of judgment, organization, individual differences in taste, the questioning attitude, an opportunity to use the dictionary, class discussion of selections studied, silent reading, and good methods of study.

Modern readers for elementary schools abound in selections full of action. Such selections are well adapted to a type form of assignment similar to the following:

Read the selection silently. Name the characters in the story. Which do you consider most important? Why? Be able to name the situations. Which situation did you like best? Be prepared to ask the members of your class one question on this selection. Make a list of the words which you found it was difficult to pronounce or whose meaning was not clear to you.

*Type assignments in other subjects.*—Similarly type assignments, meant to guide children in intelligently analyzing problems in arithmetic, may be prepared and their use demonstrated in intermediate and upper grades, such, for instance, as: Read the problem through carefully. What does it tell you? What does it ask you? What processes will you use for solving it? Plans made for demonstrating the use of games for drill with the second and third grade group and a lesson on the construction of an alphabet booklet or a similar project for first grade, in which the use of numbers is introduced, will show some of the possibilities for enlivening the teaching of this subject.

Or helpful type assignments in other subjects may be developed by the supervisor, their use demonstrated by her for the teacher in the school selected as a demonstration center, and later demonstrated by the latter for a group of teachers. The problem-project type of assignment in geography, history, and other content subjects may be introduced and its use promoted by such methods.



*Demonstrating club activities.*—We need to make an organized attack on the formation of good habits in English; next to hygiene no subject in the curriculum is more important. The English or better-language club will make this possible. Pupil officers may be elected and encouraged to assume responsibility for conducting morning exercises at least once a week and to plan programs for entertaining parents and other members of the community. Dramatization, story-telling, reports on current events and local happenings, jokes, talks on art and music, phonograph selections, singing, Bible reading, and flag salute, when made a part of morning exercises as a result of planning by the children, will be added interest for the school.

Such clubs have operated successfully in several school systems to enliven and socialize schools. Children form the habit of setting up worthy aims, or fixing and reaching goals. The growth of fine school spirit, a very desirable objective in rural schools, not infrequently results. Such organizations lend unity to the problem of supervising English; consequently the supervisor can well afford to arrange for demonstrations of club activities at teachers' meetings.

Below is given a better-language club plan which has secured results in one county:

#### HUNTERDON COUNTY BETTER LANGUAGE CLUB.

Any pupil who will work to improve his use of English may become a member of the Hunterdon County Better Language Club.

The officers of the club shall be a president, vice president, a secretary, and an assistant secretary. Together the officers shall constitute a board of managers who shall meet once each week to plan methods of "boosting" the earning of credits. They shall consult with the teacher in each school and secure her cooperation in making plans for earning credits.

The president shall appoint committees to take charge of morning exercises at least once each week and to help arrange entertainments on days when parents are invited to the school. The vice president shall assist the president and act in his absence. The secretary shall keep a record of the credits earned by members and shall make a monthly report to the county superintendent. The assistant secretary shall assist the secretary and act during his or her absence.

#### PLAN BY WHICH PUPILS IN GRADES MAY EARN CREDITS.

- |   | Maximum. |
|---|----------|
| 1. For substituting, for a period at least a month in length, a correct for an incorrect speech habit, 4 credits.   | (20)     |
| 2. For retelling a story well during morning exercises, in an English period, or to entertain parents at community or parent-teacher association gatherings, 4 credits. | (40)     |
| 3. For telling an original story, 5 credits.  |          |
| 4. For reciting a poem or other beautiful or worth-while selection well, 3 credits.   | (30)     |
| 5. For every such selection remembered until the end of the school session, 1 credit.   | (10)     |



- |   | Maximum. |
|---|----------|
| 6. For neat and well-written stories the result of cooperative work by first to fourth grade children, 4 credits.   | (40)     |
| 7. For good independent work in composition, 5 credits. This work by fifth to eighth grade children must be submitted to the helping teacher in order to receive credits. | (30)     |
| 8. For an excellent topical recitation in any content subject or for reporting well a current event, 3 credits.   | (30)     |
| 9. For cooperation in preparing programs for the entertainment of parent-teacher associations or other members of the community, 3 credits.                               | (30)     |
| 10. For the reading of each book or continued story approved by the teacher or helping teacher, 5 credits.  | (50)     |
| 11. For each new word added to the pupil's vocabulary and used correctly at least ten times, 1 credit.  | (20)     |
| 12. For each habit of politeness practiced over a period at least a month in length, 3 credits.   | (30)     |

#### HABITS OF POLITENESS SUGGESTED FOR EMPHASIS FOR COMING YEAR.

1. The habit of saying "Yes" or "No," followed by the name of the person addressed.
2. The habit of saying "I beg your pardon" when one wants another to repeat a remark or answer, or when it is necessary to interrupt another person who is speaking.
3. The habit of saying "Excuse me" or "Pardon me" when it becomes necessary to pass in front of another person.
4. The habit of standing and saying "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" when a visitor enters the room and is introduced.
5. The habit of standing when addressed by the teacher or by another person who is standing.

Compositions for upper grades shall represent four different types of work. Suggested types are:

1. An original story.
2. An original fable.
3. The completion of an unfinished story.
4. A story retold with an accompanying outline.
5. A dialogue or simple play or a story rewritten in dramatic form.
6. The description of a familiar thing or process.
7. Dictation of prose or poetry.
8. Written work based on history, geography, or reading.
9. A friendly letter.
10. A business letter.

Under the heading, "Maximum," is given the largest number of credits of any one kind that one may count toward earning a certificate or pin. All credits earned may count toward winning the B. L. C. banner.

A first-grade child who earns 100 credits by the plan outlined above will be awarded a certificate of honor by the county superintendent at the county festival. Each pupil above the first grade who earns 150 credits by the plan outlined above will be awarded a certificate of honor by the county superintendent at the township festival.

Pupils above the first grade must have credits for both oral and written work. Any eighth-grade pupil, who earns a certificate of honor in June, will also be awarded the highest honor of the club, a B. L. C. pin.



The school club making the highest average for a school month will be awarded the township B. L. C. banner for that month. Secretaries shall report their club averages to the county superintendent monthly.

## NOTES.

Correction of speech habits shall be fixed by usage through at least a month before credit is given for them. Let the club decide to correct one or two errors a month and every one work to use the form decided upon.

"Telling a story well" means telling it in such a way as to hold the interest of a group of people, without unnecessary repetition of *and, so, but, or then*.

"Reciting a poem well" means to recite it so as to give pleasure to others.

An excellent topical recitation is one during which a pupil stands squarely on both feet and talks to the class in two or more sentences, using good English.

Written work which has been corrected by the teacher or someone else and then rewritten is not entitled to credit.

Credits shall be awarded by the teacher for oral work on her own judgment or by a vote of members of the club. Written work shall be mailed to helping teachers, who will give credit for it.

A copy of an excellent health club plan may be found in Health Publication No. 4, "Teaching health," issued by the Bureau of Education. It may be obtained by writing to the Commissioner of Education, Washington, D. C.

*The need for emphasizing a physical-training program.*—The development of many rural communities lags for lack of leadership and cooperation. Emphasis upon the growth of these two qualities in the rural children of the present will contribute to the welfare of rural communities of the future. Apart from a health-giving value and the respect which they foster for law or for abiding by the rules of the game, no school activity is probably richer in possibilities for developing leadership and cooperation than playground games. Rural children too often stand around and do nothing during periods when they should be playing. After observing this tendency in a number of schools the supervisor will naturally develop playground activities as part of her demonstration program. The securing of a few pieces of simple playground apparatus will make the demonstration more effective.

The play period is usually given at 10.30 in the morning and at 2.30 in the afternoon. An hour and a half is too long for children to sit physically quiet. The energetic, conscientious rural teacher is so active herself and so eager to make every minute count that she tends to forget the children's need for activity. She needs to be led to realize that she will save time by arranging for three-minute physical-training drills in the middle of the long hour-and-a-half periods, both in the morning and afternoon. Pupil leadership in conducting these drills may be encouraged and demonstrated at the teachers' meeting.



The organization of health clubs, with pupil officers, should be a part of the physical-training program in every rural school. The time for asking the health-club questions need not occupy more than five minutes. Health-club activities, along with better-language club work, may be used to enliven morning exercises. Detailed suggestions for organizing and managing health clubs may be secured from a Bureau of Education bulletin, "Teaching Health," Health Series, No. 4. The management of such a club, as this bulletin suggests, may profitably occupy part of the morning-exercise period at a demonstration teachers' meeting.

*Training children to assume responsibility.*—It is a comparatively simple matter to promote pupil leadership in class discussion. When blackboard space is available the making of very definite blackboard assignments may be encouraged. In the absence of blackboard space, hectographed assignments may be used. When questions for class discussion are definitely proposed by the teacher a class chairman or leader can ask the questions quite as well as could the teacher. Such a leader can also call on various children to propose the questions which the teacher's assignment has encouraged them to ask. Under the guidance of assignments that emphasize the problematical type of question children will show a tendency to ask questions of a similar type. When this happens the children are ready to propose assignments and should be encouraged to do so. Demonstrations of such an advanced step may be arranged for other than the first teacher's meeting. Never do for children what you can encourage them, to their own educational advantage, to do for themselves, is a valuable principle in school management worthy of demonstration.

*Demonstration of enlivened community interest in the rural school is needed.*—The rural community needs to be taken into the confidence of the teacher and supervisor when any program for radically changing school practices is being considered. Parents will be interested to know that the county supervisory forces are planning to make their school a demonstration center or one of a number of such centers in the county. They will be glad to contribute to the success of the plan and will usually cooperate in efforts to make the school building more sanitary and attractive, will help to secure necessary equipment, and will often go so far as to serve lunch to visitors. School-board members or trustees are vitally interested and will appreciate an opportunity to understand, and to share in making successful, plans for improvement. Demonstrations in rural schools can emphasize with profit not only the enlivened school but the enlivened school community.

*Plans for guiding discussion during the afternoon.*—The entire afternoon of the all-day meeting can very profitably be spent in dis-



cussing the principles underlying the teaching observed during the morning. Preparations for making the afternoon discussions profitable should be as carefully made as are preparations for making the work of the morning superior.

*Circularizing plans.*—Circular letters announcing the meeting may be mailed to all teachers weeks before the date on which it is to be held. Such letters may contain copies of types of lesson plans and explanations of problems in management which are to be developed by the teacher who is to demonstrate a morning's teaching in a reorganized rural school. Teachers may be asked to try out these plans prior to the day of the teachers' meeting. This will help to prepare them to discuss intelligently the work that they observe. On visits to teachers preceding the meeting the supervisor may by demonstration and conference lead them to use plans, copies of which she has developed and mailed to them.

*Leading teachers to read professional books.*—Sometimes teachers may be asked to read a book or books dealing with the subject or principle which is to receive emphasis at the demonstration meeting. With the assignment of reading may be sent a request that teachers report to the group on the book assigned, on the application which they intend to make of the principles discussed in the reading assignment or on the application of such principles made by the teacher who does the demonstration teaching.

*Problem organization of discussion.*—If the problem type of assignment is to be demonstrated and discussed at the all-day meeting, then the supervisor may in leading the discussion in the afternoon cause it to center about some big problem. For instance, such a problem as "What habits and attitudes desirable in a good citizen is the teacher leading her pupils to form?" is big in scope, subordinates the teaching of subject matter to the teaching of children, and will serve to organize and unify the discussion of an entire morning program of teaching. This problem, along with subordinate problems growing out of it, may be used to direct the afternoon discussion in a number of all-day meetings. Its use will serve to make teachers familiar with the technique of problem teaching, with the use of type assignments, and will emphasize a few fundamental ideas, such, for instance, as that character is formed by acquiring certain definite habits and attitudes and that the habits and attitudes that are formed while studying facts are of greater importance than the facts themselves.

An outline to guide the morning's observation and the afternoon discussion may be mailed to the teachers along with the notification of the approaching meeting. A type letter mailed by one supervisor to groups of teachers will illustrate this point.



## AN ILLUSTRATION OF OUTLINES ORGANIZED ON A PROBLEM BASIS.

DEAR COWORKER:

An all-day teachers' meeting for the teachers in your group will be held at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ beginning promptly at 9 o'clock. You are requested to attend.

Will you come prepared to observe teaching with the following questions in mind:

What habits and attitudes desirable in a good citizen is the teacher endeavoring to shape?

What desirable factors in good habits of study did you see emphasized in the definite blackboard assignments or during lesson discussion periods?

Please come prepared to make note of instances of emphasis upon good habit or attitude formation. Miss \_\_\_\_\_ has kindly consented to teach for visitors. Let us be appreciative, quick to see good in another's teaching, to make note of it either mentally or otherwise, and quick to express our appreciation for it during the afternoon discussion. We are going to depend upon you to help make the afternoon discussion period a live and interesting one.

An outline in the form of questions is inclosed. You will probably find this helpful in judging your own work as well as that of the teacher whom you are to visit. Check yourself by it daily until the time of the meeting. This will help to make the teachers' meeting more valuable for you.

Cordially yours,

The following outline, accompanying the letter, would be suitable for use, and might be utilized a number of times until the teachers show skill in following it.

## THE HABIT OF GETTING JOY OUT OF LIFE.

Did the morning exercises contribute toward a happier school family life? Were they calculated to shape in children attitudes of devotion to country and reverence for a Superior Being?

What emphasis is the teacher placing on the formation of good health habits?

Is the teacher the kind of a person with whom you would, if you were a child, enjoy spending most of your waking day?

Is she attractive in dress and pleasant and courteous in manner?

Has she made the schoolroom a clean, attractive home-like place in which a group of children would enjoy spending 30 hours each week? Have children shared the responsibility for these conditions?

Are all the children occupied during the major part of their time in school with work which they seem to enjoy?

Are children allowed some voice in choosing the activities in which they will engage and in reaching decisions, or does the teacher decide everything herself?

Has provision been made for the child who can express his ideas better by making things than by talking or writing?

Are children learning to be helpful, to be courteous, to cooperate?

Is there evidence that the teacher is teaching children to use their leisure time wisely? Do you notice evidences of the reading of good books, or good current literature; appreciation for beautiful music; joy in games?

Is provision made for the exercise of pupil leadership and pupil initiative?



## GOOD HABITS OF STUDY.

Does the teacher seek to lead children to study under the guidance of problems closely related to the children's lives and interests? (A problematical question is a question large in scope, thought-provoking in quality, and possessed of organizing value.)

Does the teacher lead the children to supplement facts found in the text with facts from other books or from their own experience?

Did organization receive emphasis in any way? (By the making of outlines, by asking pupils to name the situations in reading selections filled with action, by deciding what question or topic should be studied next in order of development, by rearranging material in a composition so that like things are treated in one paragraph, or by the sequential arrangement of material on a poster.)

Did assignments or discussion provoke any use of pupil judgment?

Was any provision made either by assignments or in discussion for individual differences in children?

Was the spirit of tolerance and open-mindedness encouraged or were prejudicial attitudes fostered?

Was an attempt made to fix knowledge by use or by the mere act of parrotlike repetition?

To what pupil motives did the teacher appeal in her effort to secure results?

*The need of following the principle of selection.*—The above outline, while it represents plans used by a supervisor not at a first but at a sixth meeting of rural teachers during her third year of work, is given because it illustrates the idea of centering discussion about a single topic, and neglecting all other topics which might be considered. The use of this principle of selection and neglect will tend to make all teachers' meetings more profitable. It is impossible to emphasize some things without neglecting others. For instance, at a first meeting of rural teachers, discussion should probably center about such phases of school management as organization of classes, program making, the direction of seat-work periods, and principles underlying methods of teaching reading. At future meetings it should be unnecessary to discuss organization and program making. These phases of management, having been demonstrated and discussed once, need only to be followed up by the supervisor on individual visits, and can be neglected in the discussion at future meetings. Other phases of management or methods demonstrated may be ignored in the discussion until the time arrives for centering attention upon them. The direction of seat work or study periods and methods of teaching reading should receive emphasis at all meetings until teachers very generally give evidence, through skilled practice, of understanding the principles discussed and the suggestions given. Skill involves habits and habits are formed slowly.

*Leading teachers to take an active part in the afternoon program.*—The rural supervisor will naturally serve as chairman of the afternoon conference following the demonstration work of the morning. She may invite discussion by first giving teachers an opportunity to



ask questions or to talk for a few minutes, suggesting that they use the outline provided as a guide if they wish to do so. It may prove profitable to ask them to spend the first half hour of the afternoon-conference period either alone or in groups checking off the questions in the outline to which they wish to respond and those whose meaning they would like to have explained by the supervisor. They may also be asked during this half hour to formulate questions which the observation of the work of the morning raised in their minds. The use of such methods should impel teachers to take an active part in discussing questions raised and make the afternoon period in very truth a conference rather than a lecture period.

As has been previously suggested, teachers may be asked to look up and present to the group an exposition of principles of teaching that will help them and the members of their group to a deeper appreciation of the teaching observed; they may be invited to tell the group about some phase of their teaching in which the supervisor thinks they show ability, or they may be requested to mail to the supervisor two or three questions which they would like to hear discussed at the afternoon session of the meeting.

While changes in individual classrooms will later register the chief value of the demonstration meeting, the teacher reaction in the afternoon conference will indicate in some measure the degree to which the supervisor's plans have provoked in teachers a consciousness of their problems and a willingness to discuss them.

*All-day conferences prior to the beginning of the fall session are valuable.*—Meetings prior to the beginning of work in the fall are great savers of time and energy for the county superintendent, supervisors, and teachers. This type of meeting enables the superintendent and supervisor to announce policies for the year, explain any new problems relating to administration or school management, and make clear the use of new material such as courses of study, tests, arithmetic practice material, new tests, or supplies with which the teachers may not be familiar. Changes in the daily program or in organization may be discussed and type programs and organization sheets showing the grading of children and the combination of classes may be distributed to new teachers. Outlined plans for the year may be explained and distributed to all teachers. A new method of teaching some subject may be demonstrated and discussed. Suggestions may be presented for making the first day of school interesting and valuable for children.

Teachers who have had unusual success with clubs or parent-teacher associations, or who may have succeeded in placing the evening entertainment of parent-teacher associations by the children on a really educational level, may describe for all teachers the methods used to secure results.



Individual teachers may review for the group an inspirational book, with the idea of getting every one interested in reading it. Teachers who have attended summer school may tell what they have gained from the experience. Representatives to a rural teachers' council may be elected.

The all-day teachers' meeting prior to the opening of school in the fall provides a source of inspiration and information for teachers, establishes contacts between them and their fellow teachers, and makes possible on their part intelligent cooperation with the superintendent and supervisors.

*Summary.*—Skilled methods of teaching a one-room school wait on such phases of school management as class organization, program making, the direction of study periods, and the cooperation of patrons. So important are these factors that the supervisor can afford to spend periods of time approximating several days in length helping a single teacher to reorganize her school, plan a program, direct study periods, and secure the cooperation of patrons in order to make it possible for her to demonstrate for a group of teachers modern methods of teaching in a skillfully managed one-room school. Other phases of management presented in the demonstration may be the development of pupil leadership and responsibility through club work, physical training, and regular class work. Type plans, embodying important teaching principles, may be prepared by the supervisor, mailed to all teachers, their use demonstrated by the supervisor for the demonstration teacher, and later by the latter for the whole group of teachers. The conferences which follow demonstration teaching should be as carefully planned as is the demonstration work itself. All teachers should be encouraged to take an active part in the discussion, which should center about a few of the most important phases of the work observed. All-day conferences between supervisors and teachers, prior to the beginning of the fall term, economize time.

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## Chapter VI.

### EXTENSION COURSES FOR TEACHERS.

*Handicaps in the training of teachers.*—The instructor in a training school for prospective teachers, with ample time at her disposal, is handicapped by attempting to teach students the principles of teaching before the latter experience any need for such knowledge. The rural supervisor, on the other hand, possesses a distinct advantage in that she is called upon to train teachers whose experience causes them to feel a need for help. Yet the supervisor soon learns that the time which she spends in after-school conferences with teach-



ers on her infrequent visits to them and in conferences following demonstrations at teachers' meetings is inadequate for giving instruction in fundamental principles underlying modern teaching practice. She is handicapped by lack of time, by the long periods that must necessarily elapse between conferences, and by having to hold many of her conferences with teachers at noon or while school is in session. The last-mentioned condition is a handicap, because the teacher's attention is apt to be divided between her school and the supervisor.

The attempt to convey the same body of knowledge, through individual conference, to a large group of teachers tends to deaden interest for the one who makes the effort. Having set forth the principles of teaching a particular subject 25 times, the supervisor may find herself slighting certain important phases of such knowledge in all future explanations.

By arranging demonstration teachers' meetings and by visits to individual schools the supervisor arouses in rural teachers a desire for help to which she soon realizes that she is responding very inadequately. She suggests, by demonstration and in conference, methods which teachers can understand only imperfectly until they use them. When they do attempt to use such suggestions difficulties arise. They may fail utterly, after putting forth earnest effort in trying out new ideas. Because a month or more may elapse before the supervisor appears on her second visit, the question is forgotten, the inspiration for using the new method gone, the teacher discouraged; consequently, on her second and on future visits too much of the supervisor's time must be spent in pulling the teacher out of the quagmire of discouragement, in encouraging her to make another effort to follow modern practice.

*One method of overcoming handicaps.*—When untrained teachers are attempting to try out new methods they need an opportunity to confer with their instructor or supervisor once a week or not less frequently than once every two weeks. They need courses in psychology that will help them to understand child nature, and courses in general and in special methods directly related to the solution of problems that confront them. No one should understand better the needs of rural teachers or be in a better position to give such courses than is the rural supervisor. Local normal schools and State colleges are usually glad to furnish instructors for courses extending over a period of weeks or months. The services of skilled supervisors in near-by towns is sometimes available. When instructors are available, a phase of teacher training which will serve to remove the handicaps referred to, namely, the organization of a Saturday extension school for teachers, is made possible.

*Encouraging attendance at extension courses.*—The success of such a plan depends not alone upon the willingness and ability of the



supervisor to give courses to teachers or upon her success in securing normal school or college instructors for Saturday work, but also upon the readiness of teachers to devote extra time and energy to professional growth. The existence of a teachers' council makes it easier to discover the attitude of leading teachers toward the plan and to secure support in encouraging the attendance of teachers. A tentative plan of possible courses which meet the needs of rural teachers may be mailed to all teachers with a request that they indicate the courses which hold greatest interest for them and make known such choice to the supervisor. Normal schools may be induced to give teachers credit for satisfying requirements in courses taken in the extension school. The knowledge that leading teachers favor the plan, that they are able to take courses which interest them, and that they will receive professional credit for work done will tend to encourage all teachers to attend.

*Advantages of the extension school.*—The extension school, in which a group of teachers meet on successive Saturdays for instruction by local supervisors and by instructors selected by themselves, possesses these advantages: The supervisor is so well acquainted with the needs and abilities of the teachers attending the school that she is in a position to relate instruction to such needs and abilities. She is able to follow up the work of individual students and discover to what extent the instruction given in the extension school functions in modifying actual classroom practice. The supervisor has opportunity not only to theorize but to demonstrate her theories. Students in the extension school are apt to be mentally active during class discussions and lectures, for they have probably enrolled in the extension courses for the express purpose of gaining clearer ideas of what is expected of them. Fifteen hours of instruction by a skilled supervisor, under circumstances that encourage both instructor and supervisor to submit theories to the constant test of actual practice, will probably secure results surpassing those to be gained by 30 hours or more spent by rural teachers in merely considering the theories of teaching.

*An instance of the organization of an extension school.*—In one county in which an extension school was organized by rural supervisors, the county superintendent, two local town supervisors familiar with rural needs, a normal school instructor, and the two rural supervisors offered courses. The school met on alternate Saturdays in the high school at the county seat. The session lasted from 9.30 a. m. until 4 p. m. Courses in supervision for school principals, in the problem method of teaching English, geography, history, and hygiene, in handwork, music, nature study, and in the serving of a hot lunch were offered. Teachers were left free to elect those courses which interested them most. Every instructor visited



classrooms of the teachers who were in the extension classes and sought to relate the subject matter of courses given directly to the needs of the rural teachers taking the courses.

*Results of relating courses to the needs of teachers.*—For instance, the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades in the rural schools in one county, during the year in which the extension school was organized, were studying European history and geography. This work was new to the teachers. All needed help with it. One rural supervisor, who gave courses in geography, history, and English, showed the teachers how, by starting with such a simple problem, as "Why must European people depend upon the people of the United States for food?" they could provoke in the minds of children such questions as, "Why can not Europeans grow enough food for themselves?" "What is needed in any country in order to carry on agriculture successfully?" "Which of these necessary factors does Europe lack?" "What have Europeans ever done for us that would put us under obligations to help them?"

The supervisor attempted to show how, by taking a simple problem growing out of the children's everyday experiences, teachers could lead them to want to work out problems in geography, history, English, arithmetic, civics, and handwork. The problem suggested involved a comparison between food production in the United States and Europe, a study in an elementary way of the origin of the people of the United States, our literature, and our institutions. It led the children to want to make four-minute speeches on thrift and the Red Cross, to want to buy stamps and to become Junior Red Cross members, to want to study current-event periodicals.

At the end of the year the teachers who took the problem courses were leaders in putting on in their townships a pageant called the "Gift of Nations," which answered in a concrete way the questions, "What do we owe to Europe?" "What have we done toward paying our debt?"

A second supervisor, in the county referred to, had specialized in industrial arts and hygiene. She taught rural teachers the kind of hygiene that would help them in shaping in their pupils right attitudes toward the formation of health habits. She led them to use handwork to express ideas gained in other subjects and to make such handwork artistic.

The music supervisor from the county seat gave teachers guidance in the selection and use of phonograph records and taught them appropriate songs for the various seasons. She led to refinement in the type of selections and in the quality of tone in the music in a number of rural schools.

Finally, the domestic-science supervisor, through her hot-lunch course, made the lunch hour a delightful social occasion for isolated



teachers, and through the course that she gave ultimately brought about the serving of one hot dish at noon in 40 of the 90 schools in the county.

The first year that the school was organized 16 per cent of the rural teachers enrolled. The second year 50 per cent took one or more courses. The increased enrollment evidenced the teachers' willingness to make sacrifices to take courses that had proven helpful.

*Extending the benefits of extension school work to all teachers.*—Every teacher who attended the extension courses, which were held in the high school at the county seat, doing regular work for the 15 Saturdays, did demonstration teaching later in all-day or afternoon teachers' meetings for groups of teachers. In this way the supervisors managed to secure for the whole rural group, in a measure, some of the benefits of the energy which they had expended upon a few in the group.

*A method of defraying expenses.*—Before organizing the extension school the supervisors presented the plan for the proposed project to a representative group of teachers in order to get their reaction. They were enthusiastic about it and made this valuable suggestion which the supervisors had not even entertained for a moment, that every teacher should pay a fee of \$2 for each course for which she registered. Teachers argued that people appreciate more highly the things that they pay for, that it gives one a finer respect for one's self. Teachers, in most cases, registered for as many as four courses, so funds were available to pay for materials used and to pay, in small measure at least, for the generous services of the two town supervisors.

*The extension school valuable in supplementing and extending the work of normal schools.*—The extension school can not take the place of State institutions for training teachers. The organization of extension schools by county superintendents and rural supervisors will provide the machinery which the State normal school or college can use to extend its influence to a greater degree in rural communities. Rural communities share with urban communities in the support of these State institutions. Normal schools supply rural schools in the United States with only 4 per cent of their teachers, while providing urban schools with 75 per cent. By furnishing instructors for extension schools the normal schools would recognize their obligation to serve all the children of the State. Such instructors should have frequent opportunities to visit rural schools in order that they may appreciate the problems of instruction of those whom they are responsible for helping. Not only may the normal schools help in training the untrained but they will provide opportunities for growth for their own graduates. Normal-school graduates are usually the first in any rural group to enroll in extension



courses. The establishment of rural extension schools will provide a medium through which the State normal school or college can make available for rural teachers opportunities for growth already provided in urban centers by the great universities.

*Summary.*—Supervisors, in their efforts to train teachers in service by means of conferences, are handicapped by lack of time; by the infrequency of their visits; by a deadening of their own interest in the principles of education, resulting from the need for their constant repetition at numerous individual conferences; by having to hold conferences following morning visits at noon when the teacher's attention is naturally divided between the supervisor and her school; and by the unduly discouraged teacher. The extension school provides one method of overcoming these handicaps of the rural supervisor. It can not take the place of State institutions for the training of teachers but will furnish a medium through which such institutions may extend their influence.

## Chapter VII.

### THE RURAL TEACHERS' COUNCIL.

*Applying the project method to supervision.*—Administrators and supervisors will expedite the execution of school policies by giving teachers a voice in shaping them. Project teaching is a recognition of the principle that all human beings, even those of tender age, engage more wholeheartedly in activities which they select. It is to be expected that teachers will put forth more energy in carrying out school policies which they have helped to shape. The philosophy underlying project teaching will prove a safe guide for supervisors in their work of training teachers.

*The organization of a teachers' council.*—In counties in which distances between rural schools and some centrally located village or town are not too great conferences between supervisors and teachers for the purpose of discussing and agreeing upon plans for school progress may be easily arranged. It is probably undesirable to ask all teachers to attend, but each township, zone, or district group may be invited to elect a representative who will be willing to meet with supervisors for the purpose suggested above. At the first meeting a rural teachers' council may be organized and a chairman and secretary or such other officers as the group may desire may be elected. The council will doubtless need to meet on Saturdays. In order to attend the meetings teachers must sacrifice time and may be subjected to the necessity of bearing the cost of traveling expenses.



The majority will naturally be left to decide the question of the frequency with which the council shall meet.

*The council will promote the growth of teachers as community leaders.*—The supervisor's ability to gain generous community support of school policies is dependent upon the amount of confidence in her ideas with which she can inspire the public. "What do you think of the new ideas of this supervisor?" is a question frequently asked by rural-school patrons. It is naturally addressed to the local teacher. Consciously or unconsciously, the rural teacher is the leader of educational thought in her community. By taking teachers into their confidence, carefully explaining the purpose of new supervisory plans to them, and giving them an opportunity to approve or to suggest different methods of procedure, supervisors will cause teachers to feel an added interest in and increased desire to further the success of plans which the latter have approved or perhaps even initiated. When asked by interested members of their local communities what they think of new school plans council members are likely to express their approval in no uncertain form. They will be in a position to give intelligent reasons for their support of new school policies. Such an attitude on the part of teachers will react favorably on school communities. Thus teachers will become active leaders in gaining community support for improvements which supervisors wish to effect.

*The council will make willingness to support supervisory policies contagious.*—Teachers will tend to elect the one in their group for whom they have most respect to represent them on the rural council. Supervisors who succeed in securing the loyal support and cooperation of leaders will find that the spirit of the leader spreads quickly to other members of the teaching group.

*The work of one rural teachers' council.*—An illustration of the results of organization is furnished by a particular council which has served for five years to promote progress in the county in which it carries on its activities. At its first meeting it was decided that future meetings should be held on the second Saturday in each month and that plans for the year should follow the outline presented below:

1. Improve school attendance—
  - (a) By making school work as worth-while and attractive as possible.
  - (b) By enlisting the cooperation of parents.
  - (c) By emphasizing health, better language, and Audubon club work.
  - (d) By securing legislation to improve the compulsory attendance law.
2. Secure the interest of parents—
  - (a) By inviting them to visit the local school.
  - (b) By discussing school needs with them.
  - (c) By organizing parent-teacher associations.



3. Enlist township cooperation by means of spring festivals to be held in each township at a central school, features of which shall be—
  - (a) An exhibit from each school.
  - (b) Demonstration work.
  - (c) Athletic contests.
  - (d) A pageant.
  - (e) Speakers on rural-school betterment.
4. Secure books for the professional growth of teachers through the State library.
5. Improve school equipment by securing—
  - (a) More blackboard space, maps, and globes.
  - (b) Supplementary textbooks.
  - (c) Yearly additions to each school library.
  - (d) Better seating conditions.
  - (e) Clean outbuildings.
6. Obtain from helping teachers monthly suggestions for teaching handwork and English composition.

At the request of the council, supervisors began making detailed plans for teaching English and handwork in rural schools, copies of which were mailed to each teacher. Courses of study, outlined by problems, grew out of these first attempts to give a very definite type of help.

Every year township representatives were invaluable aids in helping the supervisory force to arrange for township and later for county festivals. They held and encouraged other teachers to hold afternoon and evening community meetings in the schools. They helped to plan and to make successful midwinter township parent-teacher association meetings. They organized their groups and stood together in making requests for salary increases. Needless to say they received the increases asked for.

Council representatives served as sponsors in each township among teachers, board members, and laity for the improvements which the supervisor was endeavoring to promote.

During the first two years of its existence rural supervisors were elected and served as chairmen of the council, but at future organization meetings the two supervisors refused to serve as officers. They asked, however, the privilege of attending all council meetings and continued to submit supervisory policies for action by the council.

Later a council executive committee was appointed. This committee organized for the purpose of definitely placing on a few persons the responsibility for managing the annual county festival. The chairman of the present council was president of his class in high school. The members of the executive committee occupied similar positions in high school and normal. This particular rural-school council has not only developed leaders, but has provided a medium through which leadership already developed might express itself in helping to promote rural-school progress.



*Summary.*—Rural supervisors and administrators who have tried to secure the cooperation of teachers have found that one way to accomplish this result is to take representative teachers into their confidence, encourage them to show frankness in criticizing policies, and lead them to share responsibility for putting such policies into operation.

## Chapter VIII.

### GAINING THE SUPPORT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

*Excessive teacher turnover is due in part to lack of community support of the school.*—Rural schools are handicapped by an excessive teacher turnover. Small salaries, inadequate equipment, uncomfortable boarding places, the desire on the part of board members to place a relative or friend in the local school, the position which the teacher often occupies on the outer fringe of the social group, actively expressed opposition by patrons to the use of new methods of teaching, inability to manage a one-room school, and lack of opportunity for professional growth—these are some of the reasons for the frequent changes of teachers in rural schools. Five of the seven reasons mentioned are due to the fact that no one has made an earnest effort to lead communities to express anything other than a perfunctory interest in their schools.

*The success of programs for improvement depends upon community support.*—No supervisor will make much progress with, say, a five-year program of supervision if more than half of the teachers for whose training she is responsible are new to the work each year. Instead of progressing she will find herself repeating, always starting but never getting beyond a certain fixed point in developing plans for improvement. Any supervisory program for the improvement of rural schools is subject to failure unless the people who are taxing themselves for the support of public education are led to appreciate the worth of the program and to cooperate in putting it into operation.

*Patrons actively interested in the school tend to the removal of causes for which teachers leave.*—Progressive teachers are inspired by community cooperation and are usually willing to continue teaching in schools whose patrons evidence appreciation for their efforts. Enthusiastic patrons will do much to retain the services of a teacher in whom they have confidence. They will increase her salary, secure additional equipment, invite her to their homes, secure for her a comfortable boarding place, and express appreciation of her work. Because it is such a vital factor in rural-school progress, supervisors



are justified in spending time and energy in order to secure support for the capable teacher.

*Methods of securing the support of school patrons.*—Methods of securing such support have already been suggested in previous chapters. When any radical change from the proverbial way of doing things in the one-room school is initiated, children may be led to write notes to parents and other members of the community inviting them to the school for an afternoon session. Such a visit will provide an opportunity for patrons to see just how the new methods operate and to hear the reasons for making changes explained by one capable of doing so. They may be invited to ask questions following the demonstration of methods so that the reasons for any phases of the change that are not clearly understood may be made clear.

On this the first visit of patrons to the school for the purpose of observing regular school work the supervisor may be the one who makes the explanations and invites questions. She may follow such explanations by an appeal to patrons for their cooperation, showing them how, by visiting the school at least once a month and by securing needed equipment, parents will increase the educational opportunities of their children and will encourage teacher and pupils to show greater zeal for school work. She may, by setting forth the reasons why the teacher's work is good, by explaining her need for the cooperation of school patrons, and by emphasizing the desirability of retaining her services for another year, establish the teacher in the confidence and good will of the school community. A parent-teacher association may be organized and a program of active community support of the school launched before the visitors depart.

If efforts to induce parents to come out in the afternoon fail, an evening program of regular school work, entertaining in character, may be prepared and school patrons invited to an evening meeting. This type of meeting has the added advantage of making the attendance of men at school meetings a certainty. They will come to bring their wives. Men are usually glad to be included in any program for school improvement. Their support is certainly not of less value than that of the women members of the community. Even when regular meetings are held in the afternoon, supervisors and teachers can well afford to plan for several evening meetings during the school year in order that fathers as well as mothers may have an opportunity to attend school meetings.

Finally, if a program of regular school work fails to attract an audience, the local teacher and supervisor may resort to the popular type of entertainment, such as a box social, an old-fashioned spelling bee, a cakewalk, a Halloween, or other kind of social occasion.



In very conservative communities or in a community in which it is difficult to secure unity of action for any program, house-to-house visits after school hours by the teacher and supervisor will often succeed in securing the attendance of patrons at a school meeting where other methods would fail. When a teacher's work deserves support, when it is desirable to retain her services, the supervisor can afford to exercise much ingenuity, to put forth much energy, in an attempt to win community support for her.

*Helping the teacher plan the first community meeting.*—The teacher is more eager for the help of the supervisor when she is called upon to demonstrate modern methods of teaching for others than she is at any other time. The supervisor's part in the first community program is that of sponsor for the teacher, a promoter of school stock among patrons. For these reasons she will find it desirable to visit the school several days prior to the date set for the community meeting, and by observation, demonstration, and conference help the teacher to prepare a superior program of teaching for school patrons.

Many changes have taken place in teaching methods since the school patron of to-day was a pupil in the elementary school. Parents will be interested in seeing demonstrated some of these changed methods of teaching, such as the dramatization of reading; the use of games for drill in reading, arithmetic, and other subjects; the construction work with which children occupy themselves during seat-work periods; the invention of simple fabrics or other interesting types of composition; problem teaching; and the socialized recitation. Most of these new methods of teaching will be as new to untrained teachers as to school patrons. Because they are new, the young teacher will naturally need much help in learning to demonstrate them.

*Making clear the purpose of parent-teacher associations.*—In order to avoid the development of future difficulties, it is highly desirable that at the first organization meeting of a parent-teacher association the supervisor make very clear the purpose of these organizations. In one county, in which such associations have done much to promote school progress, the purposes of the parent-teacher association in rural communities were set forth as follows:

To express active interest in the school by visiting it while in session; by making every effort to retain or to secure a capable, trained teacher; by expressing appreciation for good work done by teachers and children; by cooperating with boards of education in securing necessary equipment for the school.

To leave the giving of negative criticism to teachers to the one most capable of deciding when it is needed, namely, the supervisor.



To plan and present programs for interesting all members of the local community in the welfare of children.

To cooperate with State and national organizations to secure the passage of bills relating to child welfare.

*The organization of a county council of parent-teacher associations.*—Having organized parent-teacher associations, the supervisor will naturally want to keep in close touch with them. She will feel responsible for keeping the organizations alive and helping them to grow in vision and in ability to serve rural children. As the number of organizations increases and as her supervisory program develops she will find it increasingly difficult to visit individual associations several times a year. The organization of a county council of parent-teacher associations is one method of enabling the rural supervisor to keep in touch with what every parent-teacher association is doing, to bring them the inspiration of her leadership, to bring local associations in touch with State leaders, and to economize time.

When five or six associations have been organized, the supervisor may secure the help of State leaders in bringing such a council into existence. A chairman, a secretary, a treasurer, and a representative from each locality in which there is an organization may constitute the members of a county council. The council is supposed to arrange for several meetings of delegates from each association at some central place each year and to plan programs for general meetings intended to promote the development of all associations.

*Plans followed by one county council of parent-teacher associations.*—In one county in which the county council has succeeded for several years in securing a very good attendance at county meetings the following program for a single meeting was followed: Delegates from parent-teacher associations met during the morning of an all-day meeting in the high school at the county seat, with representatives from township boards of education, and heard the State commissioner of education and a representative from the State teachers' associations tell about the approaching crisis in education and explain why increases in the salaries of teachers were necessary. The whole group became acquainted at first hand with the new domestic-science department in the high school by partaking at noon of a well-cooked dinner served by the rural students taking domestic science. Both groups visited the new agricultural department in the high school.

In the afternoon the parent-teacher association delegates held a separate meeting, heard reports from all associations, and met the county Red Cross nurse, who talked to them about the health needs of school children. The domestic-science teacher demonstrated for visit-



ing delegates the packing of a child's lunch. At subsequent meetings officers of the State association spoke on health, religious education, and club work; the county Red Cross nurse, State club leaders, the State librarian, and other State leaders delivered messages connected with their particular interests; and a visiting county superintendent gave an illustrated lecture on consolidation. The local county superintendent and the rural supervisors explained school needs and educational policies. Plans were made and later followed up for raising money to defray the expenses of one rural student in the State normal school. Plans for holding sectional meetings were made.

Such meetings make possible a broader outlook for women from every section of a county. They inspire local leaders and create in them renewed determination to secure additional school advantages for rural children.

*The holding of township or sectional meetings.*—Some associations are enthusiastic about county meetings and will have half a dozen delegates in attendance. Other associations will not be represented. Many patrons who could not be induced to attend a general meeting at the county seat or in some other town will attend township or sectional meetings in a small village where they feel more at home.

In many States the township is an important unit of school government. In such States every township has many educational problems that are common to all others, and many also that are peculiar to itself. For these reasons and because such meetings offer an opportunity for voters to become better acquainted with those capable of serving on boards of education; because also, the social consolidation of the group will work for the future best interests of the schools, the county council of parent-teacher associations will find it worth while to arrange to hold township parent-teacher association meetings once a year at some central place in each township. Where the county or district rather than the township is the school unit, sectional instead of township meetings may be arranged.

*Plans for township or sectional meetings.*—Often a rural supervisor is elected chairman of the county council of parent-teacher associations. She will naturally take up with township or sectional representatives and other members of the council, early in the school year, arrangements for holding the county and township or sectional meetings. In preparation for the latter type of parent-teacher association meeting, the supervisor may write to officers, teachers, and leaders, suggesting the purpose of such a meeting; list dates which she has free, and ask local leaders to cross off dates unsuited to local people; list child-welfare subjects from which local leaders



may select those which they think their communities are most eager to hear discussed; write local leaders to determine whether the meeting shall be an all-day or an afternoon and evening meeting; and ask them to be responsible for advertising the meetings locally. The supervisor will soon discover that it is a good plan to limit the speakers at any sectional meeting in order that local people may be given an opportunity to discuss local school problems.

*Suggestive Program for a Township or Sectional Child-Welfare Day.*

Questions proposed by parents and others for discussion.

(NOTE:— Please be prepared to introduce and discuss the question relating to child welfare which interests you most.)

Is playground space as necessary for the best development of children as is pasture for valuable colts?

Does it pay to provide simple play apparatus for our school playgrounds, such as swings, tector boards, basket balls, etc.?

Does your community make some provision for wholesome amusement for its young people?

Should any growing animal or plant be kept in an unnatural, uncomfortable position for hours? Should growing children be forced to sit in seats that are uncomfortable for five hours each day?

None of our schoolhouses have screens. Flies are thick during the early fall and are much in evidence at lunch time. Should our school toilets have buckets of lime for disinfecting purposes?

Should the schoolhouse floors be oiled at least twice each year?

If you walked several miles to school on a bitterly cold day in winter, would you like to sit in a cold schoolroom? Would you enjoy a cold lunch? Is your schoolhouse warm when the children arrive?

Would rural schools be more attractive to teachers if janitor service were provided?

Do the children in your school have a cup of hot cocoa, or other hot dish at noon? Do you know what proportion of the children in your community are undernourished? What are you going to do about it?

Does the one-room school meet the needs of to-day?

Should teachers in one-room schools receive smaller salaries than teachers in nearby towns?

Should every school have—

1. Library books elementary enough to interest even first-grade children?
2. A phonograph and worth-while records?
3. Really fine pictures selected by the pupils under the guidance of the teacher?
4. Homelike touches such as growing flowers, sash curtains, or a library table give?

Who should be interested in the local school? When may this interest be manifested?

Should women be members of boards of education? Should parent-teacher associations take an active interest in school elections?

**Summary.**—Rural schools are handicapped by an excessive teacher turnover. This turnover can be very materially reduced by leading communities to support actively a program for the improvement of



rural schools. The organization of local parent-teacher associations and county councils composed of representatives from such associations are types of organizations which supervisors may use as means for gaining the support of school patrons. Without such support supervisors will find themselves hampered in carrying forward programs for school progress planned to extend over a period of years.

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## Chapter IX.

### THE LOCAL OR COUNTY SCHOOL FESTIVAL.

*Values to be gained from school festivals.*—In a period when time, energy, and money are spent in constantly increasing amounts for material comforts and amusements, school leaders must not let the school be lost sight of. A means, in addition to those already mentioned, for bringing the work of the school to the attention of patrons and for leading the community to feel kindly toward it is the township, sectional, or county school festival held annually at or near the close of the school year. People who could not be persuaded to attend the meetings of a parent-teacher association will drive miles to a school festival and view with interest and approval contests, parades, pageants, and exhibits of school and outside club work.

The gathering of rural people in great numbers at a central place provides an occasion for supervisors and teachers to present, through speeches made by local or State leaders or through four-minute speeches made by rural children, a discussion of problems relating to the welfare of rural children. By providing an opportunity to display, for the approval of a large group, good work done during the year, it furnishes motivation for all concerned in or with rural schools. It stimulates local school pride. It promotes the spirit of neighborliness among rural people. The holding of a successful school festival is impossible without the cooperation of parents, school officials, teachers, and pupils. One of the values of the festival is to be found in this situation which it creates requiring all those who are a part of or responsible for the school to direct their energies for a short period of time at least toward a common end.

School patrons who do not believe in the new school "fads and fancies" may be converted and come to understand the reason for purchasing construction paper, crayolas, scissors, and other seat-work material when they see exhibited the interesting things that children have constructed from such materials. The worth-while exhibit at the county or township festival will probably do more than all of the talking in the world to convince backward boards of



education and patrons that certain kinds of seat-work material are worth while and should be purchased for their schools.

The school festival provides for the rural child, living in a rather narrow social environment, contacts with an enlarged social group. Children of superior mental attainments from one-room schools enter contests in which children of like attainments from other schools take part. The timid child may gain in confidence and the overconfident child in modesty as a result. The contact which individuals gain from ever-expanding groups has a value which can not be gained from a study of books. The festival will begin for many rural children this process of group expansion, of broadened social contacts.

The rural-school festival should serve to improve methods of teaching. Four-minute speech contests; contests in the making of health or other posters, in spelling, arithmetic, and athletics; the presentation of units of a geography, history, or health pageant; exhibits of handwork and of graphs and charts that show class progress in reading or other subjects should enliven the work of pupils during the entire school year. Such contests, pageants, and exhibits will create in teachers a desire to have their pupils do creditable work.

From the exhibit of the best projects worked out by individual schools, all teachers will gain ideas which should help them in guiding the future activities of their pupils. Through the introduction of pageantry a new method of teaching history and geography may be introduced, a new method of summarizing a year's work. By helping her pupils prepare to take part in a history or geography pageant or to represent ideas in other concrete forms, a wide-awake teacher, if she receives the right sort of guidance from her supervisor, will catch a glimpse of what is meant by one type of project teaching. Some supervisors find that the awarding of prize ribbons in spelling and arithmetic to the pupils in the various grades or groups scoring highest in either a local or a county contest will stimulate increased interest in the teaching of these subjects; that the awarding of honors for the best four-minute speeches will serve not only to improve the teaching of English but, if the subjects are wisely selected, the children's efforts will influence parents, as no adult could.

*The desirability of limiting certain contests to the township or sectional type of festival.*—At local festivals the spelling, arithmetic, and four-minute speech contests, and the awarding of honors to individuals may well form part of the day's program. The holding of such contests and the announcement of awards at county festivals may result in confusion. A better plan would probably be to have pupils in the schools of each locality who show superior



ability in these subjects enter a local or sectional contest given by the supervisor in the spring at some convenient place, and then to have the local winners meet for a county contest before the day of the festival. The names of successful contestants may be announced at the county festival.

Honors for good attendance or for excellent work in English or health may be mailed to teachers, and a list containing the names of honor pupils posted in a conspicuous place on the day of the festival in the school exhibit building. Some county superintendents have established the custom of awarding certificates of honor for good attendance or for good work in English and health on such occasions. The county festival exhibit hall is a good place to display the names of winners of such certificates.

The awarding of honors only, instead of the holding of contests in the subjects referred to, will leave the day of the county festival free for more spectacular events, such as a school patrons' parade, an historical, geographic, or health pageant, and athletic or amusing contests between children and between adults. Time will be left for rural people to visit with each other and to spend time in seeing the rural exhibit. The day should be filled with events but not crowded to the point where participants in such events are unduly wearied at the end of the day.

*Methods of securing cooperation.*—As has been suggested in an earlier chapter, one of the best ways of securing teacher cooperation in the planning of the school festival is for the supervisor to organize a teachers' council, and encourage members to assume partial responsibility for planning the event and for appointing committees who will help to carry out the program of the day. The teachers' council or the supervisor may submit plans for the festival to the county council of parent-teacher associations, to individual associations, and to school boards for approval, accompanied by very careful explanations of the values to be gained from such an event. Each group may be asked to express approval and to make some definite contribution to the successful carrying out of the plans submitted. Farm wagons and autos for conveying children to the festival grounds must be provided and crêpe paper or other material for pageant costumes furnished. School boards and parent-teacher associations may be asked to provide them. If leaders are careful to avoid the farmers' busiest season for holding the festival, and if they appeal to the higher instincts of teachers and patrons, they will experience little difficulty in securing from a very large majority of them a high degree of cooperation.

*Means of defraying expenses.*—The cost of printing the programs and other expenses, attendant upon staging a festival, may be de-



frayed by collecting a nominal entrance sum to the festival grounds from patrons, or by having every parent-teacher association that sets up a stand on the grounds for the sale of ice cream, sandwiches, coffee, and other refreshments contribute toward festival expenses. A single association will sometimes clear several hundred dollars for school improvement in a single day at a county festival and will gladly help with festival expenses.

The following is a type of county festival program used in a New Jersey county:

## PROGRAM

9:30, arrival of schools.

10:00, parade.

10:25, flag salute.

Community singing—"Battle Hymn of the Republic," "America."

10:30-10:45, physical-training drills.

10:45-11:00, folk dancing.

11:00-11:30, four-minute speeches.

11:30-12:00, address by State commissioner of education.

12:00-12:15, awarding of prizes—B. L. C. pins; better language and health club certificates; medals of distinguished service in health and other prizes by the county superintendent.

1:30-2:15, pageant—"The Making of America."

2:30, athletic contests.

All events on standard time.

Exhibits of general school work, baking and sewing, boys' and girls' club work, and health-contest work will be displayed in the main buildings.

Prizes donated by the parent-teacher associations of the county.

## PAGEANT—"THE MAKING OF AMERICA."

The landing of Columbus.

The French flag is planted on American soil.

John Cabot plants the English flag.

Incidents in the settlement of Virginia:

"Corn or your life."

A church established.

The first lawmaking body meets.

Incidents in the settlement of Massachusetts:

The pilgrims worship while soldiers keep guard.

Women work contentedly in the wild region.

The New England town meeting.

The coming of the Quakers.

The coming of the Dutch to Manhattan Island.

English soldiers force the French to haul down the French flag in America.

Winning independence:

The first Continental Congress.

Committee draws up Declaration of Independence.

(Ring of liberty bell.)

The victory at Trenton.

Suffering at Valley Forge.

George Rogers Clark marches on Fort Vincennes.

French ships and men come to our aid.



## Becoming a nation:

The Constitutional Convention:

The Constitution adopted.

Washington takes the oath of office.

## Fighting for freedom of the seas (War of 1812).

## Enlarging our boundaries:

Louisiana added.

Florida added.

Texas added.

Oregon added.

## Inventions that have helped our country:

The cotton gin.

The steam engine.

The steamboat.

The telephone.

The telegraph.

## The work of immigrants (see Beard &amp; Bagley history).

## Saving our Union.

## Abolishing slavery.

## Our wealth:

Agricultural—wheat, corn, cotton.

Mineral—iron, coal, gold.

Manufacturing.

## Education:

The American school.

The American college.

## Winning the fight for democracy:

Soldiers.

Red Cross workers.

The garden army.

Farmers.

## ATHLETIC EVENTS.

Gebhardt trophy (silver cup) for school making highest number of points.

*For boys.*

Faulks award (a week at Camp Taylor) for boy making highest number of points.

## Baseball throw for—

75-90-pound class.

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.

## Bicycle race for—

60-90-pound class.

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.

## Standing broad jump for—

60-75-pound class.

75-90-pound class.

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.

## 50-yard dash for—

60-75-pound class.

75-90-pound class.

## 100-yard dash for—

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.

## 220-yard relay for—

60-75-pound class.

75-90-pound class.

## 360-yard relay for—

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.

## Running broad jump for—

60-75-pound class.

75-90-pound class.

90-115-pound class.

115-pound class and above.



*For girls.*

- Fullerton award (a week at Camp Taylor) for girl making highest number of points.

50-yard dash for—  
 60-75-pound class.  
 75-90-pound class.  
 90-115-pound class.  
 115-pound class and above.  
 Hop, step, and jump:  
 100-yard relay for—  
 60-75-pound class.  
 75-90-pound class.

Hop, step, and jump—Continued.  
 100-yard relay for—  
 90-115-pound class.  
 115-pound class and above.  
 75-yard dash for—  
 60-75-pound class.  
 75-90-pound class.  
 90-115-pound class.  
 115-pound class and above.

*Summary.*—The sectional or county-school festival offers a valuable means for bringing the rural school to the attention of patrons whom it is difficult to reach in any other way. By providing an occasion for contests and exhibits it stimulates both teachers and pupils to improve the quality of their work. It creates a situation which requires the cooperation of supervisors, teachers, pupils, board members, and school patrons. This cooperation can be secured by leading the members of the various groups to voice approval of plans before final arrangements for holding a festival are made, and by leading each group to assume at least a small share of the responsibility for making the school festival a success.

## Chapter X.

### SECURING ADEQUATE SUPPLIES FOR RURAL SCHOOLS.

*Rural schools lack necessary equipment.*—One-room rural schools are too often in an impoverished condition so far as textbooks, library books, and other necessary equipment are concerned. Schools in communities providing free texts are sometimes without enough readers to supply even the first four grades with one text each. The use or purchase of supplementary readers has never even been considered by numbers of rural teachers and school boards. If supplies that should arrive early in the fall are not delivered—and this sometimes happens—children in one-room schools will continue rereading the same book for a year and a half or a two-year period. Textbooks in use are frequently the most uninteresting that publishers produce. One book, a reader, is too often the only material provided for occupying the six-hour school day of first and second grade children. Libraries, maps, globes, sufficient blackboard space, window shades, a covered water container, and other necessary equipment may be altogether lacking. The interior quite as frequently



as the exterior of the one-room school building gives evidence of conditions similar to those that were prevalent in pioneer days.

*A carefully planned program necessary.*—It is probably unwise for a supervisor during her first year in a county to ask boards of education to purchase all of the equipment needed in the type of school referred to. Rural communities, generally speaking, are slow to change and slow to increase the burden of taxation. A campaign of education, extending over a period of years, is sometimes needed in order to induce boards of education to increase expenditures for school equipment. A five-year program for the purchase of necessary supplies may be planned by the supervisor: and teachers, patrons, and board members gradually led to support it. At the end of such a period schools should be generously equipped.

*Demonstrating the value of adequate equipment.*—Many rural teachers are unaware of the inadequacy of equipment supplied them by boards of education. They need to be brought to realize this inadequacy. By introducing the use of supplementary material in one school, and by having teachers meet at that school to observe teaching, the supervisor can demonstrate the fact that the use of supplementary material secures better results, in the way of increased interest and enthusiasm, in broadening the scope and in quickening the assimilation of knowledge, and in promoting an attitude of open-mindedness on the part of pupils. By the use of similar methods supervisors may stimulate teachers to request boards of education to purchase seat work and other kinds of equipment. Teachers usually want supplies which they see used successfully by others. Consequently, the teachers' meeting serves not only to bring about improvement in methods of teaching but will lead teachers to understand the need of adequate equipment for one-room schools.

*Appealing to boards of education.*—The supervisor's next point of attack in securing needed equipment is the board of education. Only a small percentage of teachers are bold enough to ask boards of education to equip schools more generously. The supervisor will need to reinforce the requests of a few teachers and make the appeal for adequate supplies general. She will, by carefully explaining conditions and needs, convince many boards of the advisability of securing an increased appropriation for books and equipment.

*Parent-teacher associations an invaluable aid.*—When boards are not responsive to such requests, supervisors may secure desired results by explaining the needs of the school at meetings of parent-teacher associations. After stating her belief that the board is ready and willing to do what the people want done but hesitates, in fear of increasing tax rates, to spend additional money, the supervisor may show why an appeal from parents should prove effective. When



members of boards of education are elected by the people, the latter are in a position to insist that their requests be granted. Parent-teacher associations are an invaluable aid in leading boards of education to adopt a more liberal policy in purchasing supplies.

*Summary.*—Many one-teacher schools are very inadequately equipped. Having planned a five-year program of improvement, supervisors may lead teachers and school patrons to influence boards of education gradually to remedy this condition.<sup>2</sup>

## Chapter XI.

### THE GROWTH OF THE SUPERVISOR.

*Abundant initial resources needed.*—The person who accepts the responsibility for helping teachers, the majority of whom are untrained and inexperienced, to solve the very complex problem of training children in one-teacher schools needs to be possessed of abundant resources.

One who aspires to become a successful rural supervisor should teach for at least three years in a one-teacher school, taking during that time an active part in community work in the section in which her school is located. It is very desirable that she have in addition to high-school graduation at least four years of academic and professional training, which should include courses in psychology, methods of teaching, rural supervision, rural sociology, and economics. Skill in handling many of the factors of her problem of the supervision of teachers in the field may be secured through successful experience in helping to train student teachers in normal school. The rural supervisor needs qualities of leadership, abundant energy, a large fund of human sympathy, the ability to set up definite goals, and the quality of "sticktoitiveness" that will cause her to keep on keeping on until she reaches goals. She should have the ability to inspire others with a desire to improve the rural schools.

Beginning with such an equipment, the rural supervisor has within herself many sources of growth. Her experience and broad training prepare her to set up for the rural schools 5-year goals in matters of methods of teaching, standard equipment, and in community support for an increasingly higher type of rural school.

*Supervisors need to grow.*—The supervisor who plans and succeeds in promoting worth-while development in others must herself grow in skill in more quickly and easily solving such problems of development, in breadth of human understanding and sympathy with

<sup>2</sup>See U. S. Bu. of Educa., Rural School Leaflet No. 3, Modern equipment for one-teacher schools.



her fellows, and in faith in her own ability to help rural teachers. Being a frequent listener to stories of the discouragements of others, she must grow in ability to face her own discouragements and hardships in a spirit of optimism.

*The outlining of courses of study and demonstration teaching are sources of growth for the supervisor.*—The outlining of courses of study in the various school subjects, in the form of problems which may become projects for children in rural schools, will enable supervisors to discuss intelligently with teachers and to demonstrate methods of teaching the subjects outlined. By demonstrating the development of such problems for individual teachers, the supervisor not only promotes the development of the teacher but insures growth for herself as well. The supervisor needs to be a skilled demonstrator. Frequent demonstration teaching of units, outlined in courses of study, will enable her to grow in acquiring necessary skills, not alone in teaching children but in expressing courses of study in terms of pupil interests.

*The rural supervisor needs contacts with others whose problems are similar to hers.*—There is always the danger that even when fortified by excellent training the supervisor may gradually lose sight of the vision and inspiration with which she began her work of supervision. There is the danger that, once established in the position to which she has been appointed, the supervisor may build about herself a shell of lack of interest in, or skepticism toward, all new ideas in teaching and supervision and become satisfied to render a type of service short of her best.

The rural supervisor needs to keep in touch with what other supervisors are doing by reading professional books and magazines, by attending conferences on questions related to her own profession, and by attending State or university summer schools.

In order to discover how others are solving their problems, the rural supervisor needs to visit schools with a fellow worker occasionally. Much help should be gained by conferences with heads of rural departments or with heads of teacher-training departments in the State normal schools. Since her chief aim is to promote skilled teaching, the rural supervisor will profit much by the opportunity of visiting, at least once a year, the classrooms of teachers outside her own field of supervision who have attained a high degree of skill in teaching.

*She needs to keep in touch with what people are thinking and doing outside of schoolrooms.*—Needless to say, if she is to stand as she should for a high type of rural citizenship, she should not confine her reading to the professional type of literature alone, nor her conferences to those with educators alone. Contacts with leaders in lines of activity other than her own and a general knowledge of



world events are as necessary for the supervisor as are contacts with educators and knowledge of her own profession. The rural supervisor was a human being before she became a supervisor. Having become a supervisor she should not narrow her interests but should become more broadly human.

*The use of standardized tests will suggest the direction that growth should take.*—The use of intelligence tests and standardized subject-matter tests will prove a source of development for the rural supervisor. The giving of the tests and the discussion of results with teachers, coupled with the supervisor's own personal observation and knowledge of the children tested, will raise and help to answer questions relating to the reliability of the tests. Their use will throw light not only upon weaknesses in teaching but also upon accompanying weaknesses in supervision. A serious study of the results of tests given will indicate directions which growth should take.

*State leaders are responsible for the growth of rural supervisors.*—Opportunities to attend conferences of those engaged in work similar to her own, and the privilege of visiting supervisors and the heads of rural or teacher-training departments in normal schools presupposes a State or county department that assumes responsibility for the rural supervisor's growth.

When, because it is impossible to secure enough people with specific training for rural supervision, or for other reasons, it becomes necessary to appoint persons with insufficient training as rural supervisors, a State leader or leaders with rural experience and broad training should become part of the staff of the State department of education. Such educational leaders should be held responsible for the growth of rural supervisors just as county leaders are held responsible for the growth of rural teachers.

*Methods used by State leaders to promote the growth of rural supervisors.*—That State leaders in the United States do feel this responsibility is shown by the presence of one or more State supervisors of rural schools in the State departments of most of the States employing rural supervisors.

Some States require rural supervisors to attend university summer schools every summer unless they are excused from attendance by the commissioner of education. Other States arrange summer conferences for supervisors varying from one to six weeks in length. Conferences with members of the State department and heads of training-school departments several days in length are held during the school year.

One State supervisor sometimes follows this plan, when visiting a county: He calls a meeting of the county superintendent and all supervisors. Together they visit one or more classrooms and observe



teaching for an entire period. At a conference following the observation every supervisor present is given an opportunity to tell how he or she would help the teacher observed to improve her methods of teaching. A similar plan is followed at the summer conferences which are held at the State summer school, where demonstration schools are a part of the established plan. Local supervisors will grow under the direction of a skilled leader just as teachers will. Growth is just as essential for them as for teachers.

One State, in which rural supervisors are appointed by local boards of education, has as part of the staff of the State department of education three supervisors of elementary education who spend most of their time and energy helping rural supervisors. These State supervisors spend much time visiting with rural supervisors and county superintendents. They plan and hold special institutes a week in length prior to the opening of schools in the fall. They have arranged a supervisors' exchange by collecting circular material from all county superintendents and supervisors, selecting the most valuable material and making multigraphed copies, which are mailed to every member of the group. The State supervisors also make out suggestive plans which supervisors may use to improve teaching or to stimulate local community interest in schools.

*Summary.*—Generally speaking, one-teacher schools are poorly taught. They are the weakest link in our educational system. If rural children are ever to have a square deal in education, the local community, the county, and the State must each bear a share of responsibility for seeing that trained teachers replace thousands of untrained teachers, that not only rural teachers but supervisors of rural teachers grow in service.

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## Chapter XII.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT WITHOUT ASSISTANTS.

*Foregoing suggestions intended to apply to county superintendents.*—In only six States in the United States is provision for supervisory assistants to county superintendents state-wide. This means that the majority of county superintendents are now without assistants. Until adequate supervision is provided, county superintendents will necessarily act both as administrators and supervisors. The term "supervisor," used throughout this pamphlet, is intended to apply not alone to special rural supervisors who are to be found as yet in but comparatively few States but also in modified form to



the county superintendent acting in the capacity of supervisor of rural schools.

*Using a few teachers to raise the standards of the entire group.*—In counties in which one-room schools are numerous superintendents can not be expected to make many visits to every school. They can, however, during each year arrange to visit often one school in each township, district, or zone in the county. By using methods similar to those described in the foregoing chapter or others equally good or superior to them, superintendents can bring about marked improvement in methods of teaching in the schools selected for intensive visiting.

The schools selected for improvement will present many problems common to all the schools in the county. The experience gained in continuing to observe, demonstrate, and confer in a small number of schools until satisfactory results are obtained will tend to render more practical the suggestions that the superintendent makes to teachers in the entire group. Detailed plans made for the purpose of helping teachers in the selected group may be copied and mailed to all teachers. Even when stenographic assistants are not employed, a hectograph or mimeograph will make it possible for superintendents to distribute such plans and to issue circular letters.

By holding demonstration teachers' meetings in the improved schools the superintendent will present to all rural teachers higher standards in concrete form and will establish for himself a position of real leadership in the group of which he may be only the nominal leader.

Such a plan continued from year to year, if accompanied by efforts to retain the services of the members of the selected group, should establish in the county, after a period of years, a large group of superior teachers possessing a fine professional spirit that will touch new teachers, and slowly but surely serve as leaven to raise the standards of the entire group.

*Other methods of improving teaching.*—Superintendents without assistants may organize extension schools and secure the services of instructors from near-by normal schools or universities. They may lead boards of education to pay higher salaries to those who give evidence of superior training and ability. They may encourage teachers to attend summer schools. All such efforts will tend to improve the quality of teaching in the schools.

The head of the rural department of the State normal school at Ypsilanti, Mich., has experimented with what he terms the zone plan of supervision. This plan might be used by superintendents without assistants. Children in the schools of the zone supervised advanced approximately 194 per cent, as far during the seven months



in the particular functions under investigation as did the children in the unsupervised schools in a similar zone with whom they were compared.<sup>2</sup> Such results make an investigation of the plan used of particular interest to rural leaders.

*Improved schools made to serve as illustrations of the need for adequate supervision.*—Standardized intelligence and accomplishment tests may be given to the children of schools in a small selected group of schools that have benefited by supervision and to children in a similar control group without the benefits of supervision at the beginning and end of the school year. The results may be used to convince the public that the rural teachers of the county would profit by more help than it is possible for the county superintendent to give them. Boards of education and patrons may be invited to attend demonstration teachers' meetings. Boards of education and influential patrons may be induced to spend a day with the county superintendent visiting the schools upon which the latter has concentrated supervisory efforts and those which he has been forced to neglect. The contrast presented by the teaching in the two types of schools, accompanied by explanations from the county superintendent, should do much to convince visitors that assistant supervisors are needed.

The superintendent may follow up such a visit by arranging township, zone, or sectional evening meetings of patrons in the centrally located improved schools throughout his county. At these meetings board members, influential patrons, local teachers, the county superintendent, and an influential person not a resident of the county—possibly a member of the State department of public instruction or a member of the staff of the State university or normal school—may have an opportunity to speak on the need for employing assistants to aid the county superintendent in the work of supervision. The teacher of the improved school may prepare and present at the meeting a program of regular school work intended to demonstrate the use of modern methods which the appointment of rural supervisors would promote.

*The superintendent has an opportunity to educate public opinion.*—By providing a demonstration of what he means by adequate supervision and by holding sectional community meetings where patrons may hear the question discussed, the county superintendent will do much toward educating the public to support the employment of assistants. He is, by virtue of the position that he occupies, the educational leader in his county. He has an opportunity to mold educational sentiment. Majority opinions are not created quickly, but a 5 or a 10 year program for progress in any county will naturally

<sup>2</sup> Pittman's "The Value of School Supervision."



include the education of public opinion as well as the training of teachers.

*Summary.*—In counties in which assistants are not employed, county superintendents, as educational leaders, have the opportunity to originate plans for raising educational standards among both teachers and school patrons and for leading the latter to provide an adequate number of rural supervisors. Several plans already in successful operation have been referred to in the foregoing chapter.

