

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

When I received the letter from Secretary Connor suggesting that the members of the Teachers' Assembly would be interested in hearing of the work of the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina and asking me to take part on an evening program, I was glad to have our Association given a prominent place on the Assembly's program, and immediately accepted the invitation although I am fully aware of my own inability to represent our Association as could our honored President, Mrs. Hollowell, who is always an entertaining and instructive speaker, and who years ago when the Teachers' Assembly was in its infancy was making temperance speeches and helping to blaze the way over which so many of our public men have since travelled to honor. She and others of our number have the gift of speech; I have not. It is my duty as Field Secretary of the State Association at this time to render some account to our Association. Please bear this fact in mind remembering that what I now report is only a very small part of the work done by our Association, as you already know if you have attended any of our meetings and have heard the reports ^{from} of the Local and County Associations. We hope to have some of these reports published in the September issue of North Carolina Education, which will be a Betterment number and which we hope to make the best number ever issued.

At the annual meeting in June 1908 it was decided to add the name of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Executive Committee and to add to the officers a Field Secretary. The Association honored me by its choice. It was not until September 17th that the Executive Committee held a meeting to arrange a plan of work, and I was at that time formally directed to go to work although I had previously visited and organized Davie County and had met with and addressed the Teachers' Institute of Guilford County and had written a number of letters. Since that time in visiting counties and communities for the purpose of

organizing, I have travelled over six thousand miles by railroad, a number of miles by private conveyance; have spoken to at least 20,000 people in North Carolina; have addressed meetings of the Civic League, the North Carolina Academy of Science, Women's Clubs, Teachers' meetings, and other organizations on the subject of Betterment work, and have had conferences with many individual workers. I have failed to keep only one appointment due to a misunderstanding for which I was not responsible. At the request of our State Superintendent and the Chairman of the Campaign Committee I have attended two meetings in Atlanta---the Southern Educational Conference in December, and the Conference for Education in the South in April, where the field workers of our associations from all the Southern States met to consider questions in which all were interested, and in these conferences it was clearly shown that the problem is practically the same every where. *P* The opening meeting of the Southern Educational conference was devoted to our work. We were welcomed by the Governor, the Mayor, and other officials. The Chairman of the School Board in his address of welcome told this startling story.

"Last year the pastor of one of our negro churches---a man of character and education, and a man of common sense---came before the Board and called attention to these facts: During the year, 1200 negro children were without school facilities in the City of Atlanta, and exactly 1200 negro youths were tried in the City court." He said "it costs the city more to arrest ^{and punish} prosecute and convict than it does to educate." *It does everywhere.*

At this meeting the field workers each reported the condition of the work in her own State. *P* Early in the fall I prepared and sent out a circular letter and report blank to each County Superintendent in order that we might find out just the conditions and get in touch with the whole field. I prepared the unsigned matter in our Betterment pamphlet, arranged it and read the proof. Have prepared report blanks for county and local associations so that hereafter our reports may be uniform. Have written by hand about 1200 letters and a number of post cards; have prepared some articles for publication and done other odd jobs too numerous and too varied in character to classify. I have received such uniform kindness, courtesy and help from so many people and organizations it would take all the rest of the evening to simply

mention the name of each and I hereby make most grateful acknowledgment especially to the editors, county superintendents, school superintendents, teachers and preachers.

The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina has no fixed source of income. It has received from its organization about \$500 annually from the Campaign Fund of the Southern Education Board. This sum was used to pay the travelling expenses of those who did the work of organization and there is not a single county, so far as I know, having an organization which has not been helped in this way. The total amount reported as raised by all counties this year is \$15,773.76. This does not include money raised outside of the Association, though the Betterment Association was indirectly responsible for, and helped to raise a much larger sum. There are a number of county and local associations which I know have done fine work and raised considerable money but have failed to report it. Let me appeal to each person present to see to it that the work done in your communities shall be properly reported so that due credit be given and in letting your light shine you will show others the way from darkness to light. The total amount expended for the State work this year has been \$750.82, including the expenses of other workers and the two trips to Atlanta referred to above.

Why should any one of us now exist? Why did God in His wisdom grant to any one of us existence? Does He not plainly teach us that it is to glorify Him, to help each other, and to prepare the next generation to take its place in the journey from the creation to the Millenium? Has He not plainly shown us that whenever we fail in our duty to our fellowman and especially to our children we dishonor Him and disgrace ourselves, who have been honored by being called "co-workers" with Him. The children belong to us all; we are each and every one responsible for their training and their welfare. When I listened last evening to the

address of Prof. Graham I felt that he had put into beautiful form the very spirit of our Betterment work. Oh, that every man, woman and child in all the world could have such a conception of our duty to our children! It requires the combined labor, love and self-sacrifice of both father and mother to make a home for and properly to rear children, and how much harded their task if the environment of the community is not what it should be. Each individual helps to make this environment and each must give an account if he has caused one of these little ones to stumble. If we gladly labor for any person or cause, love is the result; if we love truly we willingly sacrifice. We always did and still do recognize the responsibility of the mother for the home training of the children and too often forget that the father also has a duty to perform which is not discharged when he provides the money for the payment of the house keeping and other accounts; on the other hand we seem to have thought that the mother's responsibility ceased at her own front door when she handed her six year old child a primer, kissed him, and pointed the way to the school house. This school house had been planned and built by the men of the community who chose the furniture, selected the teacher, perhaps mapped out the course of study, and then did not darken the doors again unless some child had been punished and family pride had been wounded. It has been said over and over again that a house without the loving thought, care and work of a woman is not a real home for children. The school house which does not have the thought of the women of the community is not apt to be the school home it should be for all the children of the community. The home and the school determine the ideals of the children. If a child has a well ordered, sanitary, beautiful home and spends five hours each day in a school house which is untidy, unsanitary and ugly, his ideal of a proper dwelling place will be lowered. If his home is untidy, unsanitary and ugly his only chance for getting a high ideal is the school house. The school