

Greensboro, N. C., August 25, 1904.

Mrs. W. R. Hollowell,
Goldsboro, N. C.

Dear Madam:

It was my privilege for a short time during the month of July to work for a short time in the interest of the Women's Association for the Betterment of Public Schoolhouses in North Carolina.

In Nash County I visited three schoolhouses and spoke to the general public. I also visited the County Institute where I talked with individuals in regard to the work of the association in their several communities. I wrote about fifty letters of encouragement and suggestions as to how to work for the schoolhouse, to teachers, school officers and members of associations formed last year. The busy season and political excitement made it difficult to secure large audiences or much interest at the places visited. However, the larger students seemed to take hold of the idea and at one place individuals volunteered donations to the schoolhouses. One young man in the audience proposed to give a teacher's desk to the school.

In Warren I had three appointments but rain and swollen streams made it impossible to reach two of these. At Wise in the county, I found the association organized last summer doing excellent work. The schoolhouse had been enlarged from two to five rooms, the interior painted and several large

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pictures framed and put upon the walls, some furniture and a library secured. Here the children who attended the meeting pledged themselves to secure an unabridged dictionary for the school, and the young men present promised a stand for the dictionary. Some of the money for this was raised at the meeting.

The greatest drawback to the work seems to be the lack of efficient leadership. The people seem willing to work but are timid about taking the initiative, one waiting for another. In some places the conditions are so unsettled as to the permanent location of the schoolhouses, the people so divided on the question of consolidation and local tax that it is impossible to get them to do much towards improving the schoolhouse before these questions are decided. However, the influence of the associations is being widely felt. Even where the women are not organized, often the community has caught more or less of the spirit of our movement. This is seen in the improved attendance, cleaner schoolhouses and grounds, the desire for books and pictures, as well as efforts to secure longer school term and more efficient teachers. Upon these (the teachers) the success of our movement rests very largely. A tactless, selfish or lifeless teacher can destroy in one session the most ardent enthusiasm of a community for the school.

With congratulations for the success of the movement which you have presided over for the past year so ably, and wishing you even more success in the future, I am,

Most sincerely yours,

Viola Braddis