

# THE CHILDREN ARE HAPPY IN AN IMPROVED RURAL SCHOOL AT FISHING VILLAGE IN NOVA SCOTIA

Pupils Find Pleasure In Work, Lose Inferiority Complex --- Have Modern Equipment

Teacher, Miss Helen Nichols, Visitor in This City

General Progress Noted in Rural School Sister-Province--Opposition Overcome--Co-operation

Situated in a poor fishing community at Upper New Harbour near Guysboro, Nova Scotia, is a model rural school, which is well furnished within and without. It has hardwood floors, attractively decorated walls and neat windows, curtains are kept clean. Pictures by famous artists adorn the walls. Hardwood chairs and tables have supplanted the old school desks. There is a well stocked library case as well as reading tables with magazines, newspapers and picture books. Washing facilities, sanitary water container, individual towels and drinking cups safeguard health. The school owns a radio, film slide machine, organ, victrola, rhythm band and the teacher selects good music. The neat woodshed connects the school room with clean outbuildings. The grounds are generously landscaped with garden and flowering shrubs. A concrete walk leads from the street to the schoolhouse. Fences, gates, bird houses, swings, swing chairs, basket ball and other play equipment are kept well painted. Last winter the district donated logs and two additional rooms are being built on the school building this summer; a school and community library, which will also serve as a rest room, particularly for the teaching of hand crafts, with a verandah across the front of the building. All the labour is donated by the residents.

The teacher is a leader and adviser. She and the children discuss activities. No commands are given and the old-time curriculum has been pushed into the background. The children learn by doing. There is a division of labor, and everyone has certain responsibilities. Courtesy, co-operation and genuine interest are evident at all times. There is no truancy. Everyone is happy, and old and young live for the school. A teacher from another province viewing this school called it "a truly vocational school." Still another visitor at the school this spring wrote: "Wish you could have stopped into Upper New Harbour school one morning last week! The school was a revelation—an activity school in action. The radio was bringing a spelling lesson (or an English lesson) for it was on the spelling, meanings and use of words. A group of four girls sat at a table near the radio and were taking it down. Three girls in a group at a table in the rear of the room were weaving—

two of them making mats on large looms, and the third was working on a wool purse. (They are grade XI girls getting credit for handicraft course on their certificates). The little people were around a small table with hand work. A sand table set up had the route of the Coronation march. The decorations at the windows were as dainty as could be, in coronation colors. A table with a map of the British possessions in course of construction, was occupied by a boy deep in the mysteries of poster paint. Another lad was "engineer for the day." It was his job to turn on the radio at the proper time for the various lessons and news; to watch the thermometer, windows, fire, answer knocks at the door, etc.

**A Pupil's Letter from That School**  
Our school is not like schools in the past. It is so home-like that we would rather be at school than at home. Why is our school like this? It is just because we have a teacher who knows how to make us like school.

We know what to do and we do it. If it is necessary to get a drink or leave the room during the school room we can do so without asking the permission of the teacher, providing there is no one else out. We do not have to study one subject until we are so tired we don't know what we have learned. When we start something we finish it before we start anything else.

I enjoy going to school because the teacher tries so hard to make us happy and she knows how to make our school homelike.

We have chairs and tables, which are better than desks. Cooks are appointed each week to prepare the hot lunch. We also have an engineer who keeps the papers and magazines in the rack, sees that the room is properly ventilated and rings the bell, and is responsible for everything about the school that day.

We spend a period every day on music and handicraft. Before Christmas we had had a handicraft sale and raised \$37. Altogether we raised \$21 this year. We have a Junior Red Cross organization in our school and the members keep the health rules.

We have many plans for the future. We are, this year, going to build a library and a workshop on our school, and would like very much

to sell our organ and get a piano. I greatly enjoy going to school—because we have a good teacher and because we are always happy. We do not have to stay at recess or after school to have our lessons.

**A Letter from the Teacher**  
of That School  
"Perhaps the nicest thing about our school life is that we enjoy one another. Naturally therefore, we enjoy doing things together. There is perfect freedom and no restraint whatever. In fact the children feel just as much at ease during class hours as at recess and I feel just as free with them. I am the children's intimate friend much more than I am their teacher—in the old sense of the word. Strong co-operation of the parents renders my task easy.

My chief concerns are the development of the individual and their attitude. For instance I am much more concerned about the attitude the child takes towards history and geography or health than I am about what they actually learn. I have proved to my own satisfaction that if the first is uppermost in the mind of the teacher, the second naturally follows. Geography and English they get through play too. I find all ages enjoy plays immensely. They enjoy dramatizing their lessons, and they do that now on their own initiative. Also each week they give two minute talks. They learn both Geography and letter writing by writing letters to pupils in other countries. Letters are always written for a purpose—to be sent away. We have film slide pictures from History.

Although the children are not kept after school, they frequently stay if they are working on something they hope to complete. In fact, they have on numerous occasions come back in the evening for some special project, because they wanted to do so.

When a child stays because he wants to do and wants to know and not because there is any thought of examination connected with it, the hour of the day does not bother him.

There are no final examinations. Each child daily is expected to do his individual best. Tests are given when a unit of work has been completed in any subject. They are not graded on percentage marks, nor do we use the term grade, rather they are taught individually and in groups and may pass on to more advanced work in any subject at any time as they gain a thorough understanding of it. In all groups many books are used other than the prescribed. There is no mass competition among pupil and each pupil advances at his own rate. Great care is exercised to avoid inferiority or superiority complexes. At all times "Only their Best is Good Enough" and today's work is expected to be better than yesterday's. The children delight in it.

Here are some of our aims and activities:

1. A love of the beautiful. Appreciation of many things and particularly appreciation of each other.
2. An atmosphere of making the children feel they can do things.
3. To give the children a share in planning everything, and then doing. Whether for some lesson, project, or a way of earning money, it is their school. A group of 14 pupils earned \$210.00 this year for school improvement in addition to what the Home and School Association raised. These children were timid and afraid to try things by themselves, but they are gaining confidence. No wonder so many go out into the world and feel they can't do anything! Their school never taught them what they could.
4. Teach the thing that needs to be taught at the time. There is a time-table which the children follow themselves. If I am busy, they change their work without being told—self-directed. They helped me construct the time-table. However, we do not follow it closely. The children are never kept in, never scolded nor spoken to crossly. I am careful not to hurt a child's feelings.
5. No homework (in the old sense of the word) for younger grades. There are little chores to help at home, things to watch for and report next day—also they tell of things they have learned to do at home. Even Grade I asks to take little story books home to read. From Grade V up, I sometimes give them definite reading. At other times they choose their own books for home reading. The only school homework from Grade V up, is reading, writing a theme, or preparing a talk.
6. The children have freedom in choosing the methods they want in studying. That is, individual or group project, diagrams, charts, maps and methods of study to suit individual pupils.
7. Teacher stays at school during noon hour (although I could go home). I prefer to stay with the children, and this hour is just as important as any other hour of the school day, as we get much done along various lines—music, games, etc. Rearranging our furniture, or pictures, nature study, and during spring and autumn, the garden. I wouldn't



GENERAL VIEW OF ACADIAN FOREST EXPERIMENT STATION HEADQUARTERS, THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND SUPERINTENDENT'S COTTAGE ARE IN THE FOREGROUND.

want to miss that hour of the day with the children. We have good times when we are eating our dinners, too. Sometimes we have music, or discuss current events, or improve our etiquette.

8. The children all have hobbies and these are often discussed and encouraged in school.

In teaching music, there is the sight reading, part-singing, singing games, and rhythm band.

Handwork includes many things such as basketry, bookbinding, weaving, toymaking and other coping saw work, stenciling, lettering, and poster work, free expression in all these, and of course, paper work. Just now the younger girls (little girls) are making doll clothes and the older ones are making a mat. The boys are doing coping saw work.

9. We take part in the local School Fair and have for the past two years won the Certificate of Merit.

10. This spring we have a School Garden Club and a Poultry Club. There is a school vegetable garden in which the children help, the vegetables to be used for our hot lunch in the winter. The children have their individual garden at home and the raising chickens on a small scale, scientifically.

11. A school twenty-five miles distant visited us this spring, coming on a Friday morning and staying until Saturday afternoon. Some of us are usually at the school on Saturdays anyway. We taught them some weaving and basketry.

We are planning a trip to the Provincial Exhibition next fall. Two cars will take all the older pupils that can go. We will go shore way.

have two days in Halifax—one to see the exhibition, one to see the city—and come back via Truro, stay off a day there and come home the next. That would be a week's trip and a really educational one. It will be counted as a school week on the register.

What I have said has been all about the day school. We have a Home and School association, two Parent Education study groups, a Credit Union study group and a night school. There are 27 attending night school."

Much credit is due to the secretary of the school, Bandford Nickerson, who although he himself laughed at the first teacher who proposed such a drastic change in the school, which five years ago was in a dilapidated condition, was willing to give the scheme a trial. The little rural school of Upper New Harbor near Guysboro, N. S., has now become an attraction for visitors from everywhere, as well as a boon to the children and parents of the district.

The village school has also been favored in having a teacher, Miss Nichols, who apart from special training and preparation for her work, brings to her work an individual interest and love for her pupils who collaborate with her in this marvelous task.

Miss Nichols is a guest at the home of her sister, Mrs. Starr A. Young and Mr. Young, Manager of the Maritime Electric.

## BALANCE NEEDED IN DISTRIBUTION

Pacific Women Study Problem of Making Resources Meet Needs --- "Food For All."

VANCOUVER, July 23—Balancing resources with human needs is the old and urgent problem receiving attention at the Pan Pacific Women's Association Conference being held here this week.

Stressing the need for "well balanced distribution of commodities and purchasing power" as one of the major correctives in eliminating starvation and resultant world unrest, Mrs. Tsune Gauntlett delivered her Presidential address.

Mrs. Gauntlett, Japanese wife of an English professor, resident in Tokyo, believed "a entire change in the mentality of all nations" was necessary for world harmony.

Mrs. Marie Keesing of Honolulu, director for the topic "Population Pressures in the Pacific and World Peace," claimed it is possible with modern tools with relatively little effort to produce in abundance enough to supply people of the world with all material things required for healthy and happy lives.

"There is enough food for all children of the earth, yet one part of the family is suffering indigestion and fatty degeneration and the other part is wasted and diseased through malnutrition," she said.

## WHEAT CROP PROSPECTS ARE IMPROVING

(Special to The Daily Mail)  
WINNIPEG, July 23—Reports of greatly improved outlook for feed and pasture in many districts and a possible return of seed in some areas of Saskatchewan where rain has refreshed the dry lands have been received by the Canadian Pacific Railway Department of agriculture. Harvesting of barley has begun in southern Manitoba and southeastern Alberta and the Reston subdivision in Saskatchewan started wheat cutting July 21. Northeastern Saskatchewan's crop prospects continue to be good but need more rain to fill the heads, Manitoba, with but few exceptions, is fortunate with sufficient moisture to carry the crop to maturity.

Reporting on rust conditions in Manitoba, the Dominion Rust Laboratory, Winnipeg, finds the entire area of durum wheat inspector shows only one to two percent touched. Infection on such susceptible varieties as marquis, queres and reward varies from slight to 35 percent.

"The Pacific region, according to general agreement, could support many more people than now live in it. But how can this be achieved with the least possible disorganization and misery, and how by controlling both population increase and the distributive system a measure of balance be attained?"

Cause of uneven distribution of Pacific population, present-day facts as to actual pressure of numbers on food resource, popular and Government desires for higher material living standards, are being discussed in the first round-table conference. These bring up questions of average income, food prices and advantages or disadvantages of the present system.

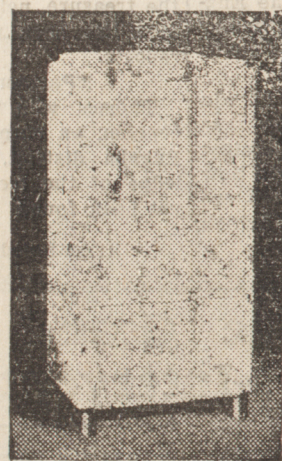
Miss Kathleen Courtney, honorary delegate from London, England, told delegates the present obstacles to international co-operation were fear and a feeling of insecurity which could only be overcome by study and the promotion of understanding and sympathy between nations.

"There must be a readiness to make sacrifices of national prestige and privilege for the sake of international appeasement," the slim Englishwoman said.

Delegates were welcomed to Canada by Miss Mary L. Bollert, Vancouver, Chairman of the Canadian section.

Chairman of foreign delegations who brought greetings were: Mrs. J. W. C. Beveridge, Australia; Miss Elsie Andrews, New Zealand; Dr. Isabelle Morelock, Hawaii; Mrs. H. C. Mei, China; Mrs. Sizue Komai, Japan; Mrs. Induk Pak, Korea; Mrs. Edgerton Parsons, United States; Mr. J. Cortezan, Philippines.

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