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Southern Industrial Educational Association

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Education for Mountaineers.

WILLETT M. HAYS,

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

Wherever located, mountains produce mountaineers. Mountaineers everywhere have peculiarities owing to their isolation. Their remoteness, often through bad roads; their isolation from neighbors; their very small incomes, the small variety of their foods; the sometimes insufficient quantity of food and clothing; their lack of books and periodicals; the narrow scope of the business of the mountain farm, and of the cabin home, too often leave undeveloped portions of their natures. On the other hand, the virile blood which has come to their veins from Europe and other countries, has resulted in their unusual development along certain lines. In bravery, in the pride of self-support, in loyalty to friends, in patriotic defense of their country and in their willingness to share their last morsel with their fellow men, these people have developed beyond most of their race.

There has almost suddenly grown up in the world a wonderful body of new knowledge relating to country life. The science of agriculture and the science of home making have been developed in departments of agriculture, in agricultural experiment stations and in schools of agriculture with great rapidity. The world has spent a hundred million dollars in making investigations along this line, and it is offering to pick out and give to the people of each locality that portion of this acquired information needed by the farmers and home makers. The more alert communities are building agricultural schools and consolidating their rural schools so that they can do the work of taking this new knowledge to all their people. Several thousand scientists and teachers of agriculture are taking this information through the schools to the young people in the country and through department and college extension work to people who have passed the school age.

Since securing this new knowledge and disseminating it to all the people has become both a State and a National matter, no section of the country should be overlooked and neglected. The isolated people of the mountain regions would be the last to ask for assistance or information. But they are quite as much entitled to it as the people of the plains and valleys, and possibly more in need of this information. The mountaineers need to know how to produce, prepare for market and transport the grains, vegetables and fruits to which their soils and climate are suited. They also need to be taught how to market their forest products to best advantage, and to make the most of the wild game and wild fruits of the mountains. Each mountaineer can not make improved varieties of fruits, and cannot even well design the plan of his own farm unless by wide observation and training he knows all the experiments of his fellows. It is wise for the nation to seek and to create new forms of plants and animals and to arrange so that the growers of each region may secure a start in these new forms, that they may all share in the benefits and that all consumers may have cheaper products. It is the business of the Nation and the State to find which method of farming, which method of growing each crop, which method of preparing for market and which method of marketing is best, and to widely disseminate the knowledge of these best methods. The mountaineer home maker also needs to know the best ways of mountain home making, not only in the different sections of her own region, but also in other mountain regions, that she may make a home that contains all the comforts and sweetness of which a home in the mountains is capable. Even in their social affairs mountaineers should have means of knowing the best customs of mountain folks in all mountain regions. Isolation gives rise to many difficulties in country life. These difficulties are often multiplied in mountain life.

There is a constant flow of wealth from the open country and from the mountains to the centers of population. There

is not enough flow of wealth back to the open country and to the mountains. It is to the interest of the cities that our States and governments do more for the remote sections of the country, including the mountain sections. And while it is to the interest of the cities to do so, it is justice on the part of these remote sections that they receive more return for the things they give to the cities. The mountaineers, for example, are too proud to seek charity. Their pride should cause them to seek justice. They have not had done for them their share in road building, in schools nor in the delivery of mails. Owing to their isolation they do not appreciate and do not even know that more is due them.

There is need that our mountain sections be organized both in a governmental way and in a co-operative way. If there were more collective activities in harvesting the forest products, in making roads, in providing schools and churches and in preparing for market and marketing the products of the mountain home, mountain life would be better provided for all along the line. The mountains would produce better folks.

The mountain school system needs more or less of re-organization. In many cases two or more schools should be brought together. In the larger school a longer term could be provided and a higher salary could be paid, possibly high enough to secure teachers who can teach mountain agriculture and mountain home making. In many cases there should be not only more of consolidation, but an itinerant teacher might be provided who could spend one week in turn at each of four schools, giving each one week per month. There might be eight schools in the itinerant district and two itinerant teachers. The teacher of mountain farming might give each school one week in every eight, and the teacher of mountain home making might also be at each school one week every two months. Then there are needed more schools like Miss Berry's to which the mountaineer children can go for high school work that they may return as teachers or leaders in their home communities.

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In few lines will private money do more good in education than for education for mountaineers in the Appalachian Mountains. And probably no money can be there spent to better advantage than in organizing the elementary schools. But there is vast need also for boarding schools which the older pupils who have not good school facilities at home can attend. It may be that some county superintendents could use private money as well as more public money to very great advantage in the way of better supervision of these mountain schools. It is certain that such work as the Education Boards are doing through State superintendents of education can greatly help in finding what to do in mountain education, in using private money to induce States to raise more State and local taxes for these schools, as well as to provide money for specific schools.

There is needed much money to do that which we already know how to do; and there is also needed further investigation both as to what is to be accomplished, and especially how to best develop education for mountaineers. There is needed sufficient money to reach all mountain youth with an elementary education, both in the general school subjects and in agriculture and home economics. The relatively small campaigns which are now being made for money will no doubt lead to public movements which will undertake to supply better educational facilities for every boy and girl in the mountains. We need not only universal education, but universal vocational education. We need that every person shall not only have the implements of elementary learning, but that he shall also have at least an elementary training in that vocation into which he will go.

“Our school system should reach every child in the nation with effective elementary teaching. It should offer elementary technical training for vocation to every child. * * * It should bring to all the youth of our country who desire it the chance to train themselves scientifically for their future vocations.”—Dr. Edmund J. James, in *Science*.

The English of the Mountaineer.

ANTOINETTE BIGELOW.

The speech of any isolated, homogeneous group of people presents a many-sided interest. If the group lives close to the soil, amidst natural beauty, the speech may have a strongly poetic bent. If it became isolated a hundred or more years ago it may have such echoes from the past that both philologist and poet will stop to listen. If it has been untouched by other groups, and, especially, unmodified by the puristic dicta of “teachers of English,” it will have such natural corruption of language as tends to produce a dialect, denominated by dictionaries as “vulgar.” The speech of the mountaineer of our Appalachian region presents all these phases, and for these reasons furnishes material for linguistic study that, so far as I know, can be found nowhere else in America. Many people have appreciated the value of this material, and the fruit has come in the collection of ballads that have been gathered from the Cumberland region, in the many dialect stories that have been written, and in the lists of Shakesperian expressions now used in the mountains; but there is still need, it seems to me, to emphasize the right attitude of outside people, the so-called “furriners,” to what is spoken of, often rather slightly, as the “mountain dialect.” The speech of the mountaineer is not a language to be ruthlessly swept away by those who would speak “properly”; it is not a speech to be regarded as quaint and humorous, and so far out of the line of linguistic descent as not to be worth developing. It is worthy of the same discriminating tests that language, at any period, among any people, has had to undergo. Therefore though it is far from my desire, or from the purpose of this article, to make a defence of the English of the mountaineer, I wish to give a few concrete examples of such expressions as I have heard from day to day during four years of teaching in the Cumberland region, and to show, if I can, that while the language has many so-called corruptions, it has much poetry and some historic importance.

To one who has lived upon a remote mountain creek, perhaps in some little unproductive cove with only stump-covered corn fields on either side, it is easy to see why the preacher, who may have scarcely passed beyond that cove, should pray in the fervor of his poetic eloquence: "Oh, Lord, dig about the roots of our hearts with the mattock of Thy love." It is equally easy to see why lads who have never crossed yon mountain until they came to our school, should be missing one morning at daybreak, leaving behind the message, "We was just bound to go, our thoughts was so haunting our homes." One month of May I spent two weeks in the very heart of the mountains in a home which was as clean and sweet as soap and water and two strong woman's arms could make it. It had been painted inside and out a pure white with bright blue trimmings. One early morning as Amanda went down the steep path to milk she saw a dazzling bit of blue sky with a bank of fleecy clouds beside it. "Ain't yon sky pretty! We aimed to have our house look just like it." It was the spirit of poetry within her, if not its diction, that so found expression. Again a touch of picturesqueness is found in such concrete descriptive expressions as: "He follows preachin'"; "I've got no call to hate her"; "He fotched me a pretty" (meaning something pretty); "He is a man with a failable recollection"; "head piece" for head; "flower pot" for a bunch of flowers; "rusty-coats" for russet apples.

A limited, narrow environment has made the vocabulary of the mountaineer often singularly lacking in synonyms. One concrete limited word does the work of a half dozen more abstract general words. The constant use of the word "aim" is an illustration. "I aim to do better tomorrow," is a familiar expression, but when I heard it extended to such expressions as "I reckon it is aiming to snow," I wondered just how far the connotation of the term could be stretched and was really quite pleased when a boy said to me one day, "Old Joe was powerful sick last evening. He aimed to die all night." Since that time I have heard of many a prisoner at the bar who was "aiming to be hung."

Another extension of ambiguities is found in a certain vague indefiniteness that really is dear to the mountain mind, when pinned down to facts of time and place, "A right smart piece ahead," is as definite an answer as it is often possible to get for a question of distance. More than once I have felt sure of the Scotch ancestry of the Appalachian Mountaineer through his unmistakable relation in the present generation to Susanna Crum, of Scotch blood, whose closest answer when asked, "Are these potatoes boiled?" was, "I couldn't say, mum, they mought be and then again they moughtn't."

To eliminate all or many of these expressions from our language would be, in my judgment, a distinct loss. They belong with the homespun "Kivers," the "stir-offs" upon the hill-side in the twilight, when the sorghum cane is ripe, the old water mills to which the corn is "toted" in a "poke," to the hours of rest when the old folks see "some peace and satisfaction," and the younger ones "cap the corn" and "pick the banjo"; in short, they are the expressions of a people whose life is picturesque and even poetic in its rural simplicity. There is many a mountaineer whose speech and character go far to prove true the theory of Wordsworth that poetry finds its deepest and most vigorous life among a simple primitive people. Though the Cumberland region of old England has failed to cast its mantle of poetry upon the Cumberland region of America, there is nevertheless a measure of truth in the fact that only in the highlands and in other rural corners where the plain people are still plain, both language and character have kept their old spontaneity and a certain archaic homeliness that adds greatly, in every way, to the poetry of life.

But just as there is a darker, less pleasing side to the whole manner of living in the mountain region, so there is a less desirable aspect to their language. If there is only too often bad cooking, bad serving, bad housekeeping, and even bad living among the mountaineers, so there is bad speech. If there is no possible defence grammatically for such expressions as "I knowed you the minute I seed you,"

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nor orthographically for such words as "Whar," "Thar," and "pint blank," what shall we say for the heavily over-worked corruptions of "nary," and "haint"?

To an entirely different class belongs a whole group of words which I shall now consider, and which are perhaps the most interesting of all. If not acknowledged in the aristocracy of words today, they can trace their pedigree in unbroken line to Shakespearian stock, and even if marked obsolete in dictionaries have always been and will continue to be "good words." John Fox, Jr., tells us that there are at least two hundred such words used by the mountaineers today. Who shall say that they have not a right to live on? Certainly they have proved their right to "fitness" by surviving through four hundred years.

Such an expression, most tenacious of life, is the double, even treble, negative. Not only was the double negative in good Shakespearian use and even found in the writings of Thackeray and George Eliot, but within the twentieth century it has found a champion for admision and extension in modern good usage in no less a philologist than Professor Otto Jespersen, of Copenhagen, who writes: "Only school-ma'ams say today, two negatives make an affirmative. They never did; they never do." Certainly the little mountain girl who said to me one night, "I ain't got no bed slippers," and then added in most satisfied tone, "But then I ain't goin' to want nothing I ain't got," had no intention of making other than a negative statement, however affirmative a philosophy she may have had. The double superlative too finds an occasional prototype in Elizabethan usage, but never strained probably to quite the extremity of superlativeness that I once heard in a Baptist funeral meeting, when the preacher said of the one who had passed beyond fourteen years before, and whose funeral was just now being preached, "She was the most piousest and ordeliest-walkin' woman I ever seed."

As for single Shakespearian words, I add a few that I have verified in Shakespeare and heard repeatedly on the

lips of mountain people: "Ill," in the sense of ill-tempered or "techy," which also is Shakespearian; "favor," meaning resemble; "sorry," in such an expression as a "sorry man"; "clean," in "clean-forgot"; "afeared," "agoing," or "a-talking," which last word even in its mountain significance of "courtin'," may have been used in Elizabethan times with the same meaning. If some expressions such as "light from your beasties," or "hit was at the infare" (meaning wedding feast); or "look at that possum sull," (meaning that he is sullen and will not move), take us back to a Scottish source; still others like "holp," or "holpen," "clomb" and "beholden," suggest unmistakably the English of King James' version of the Bible.

Nor is the bond which ties the mountaineer to the days of the Stuart kings of England merely one of suggestion and tradition. It is a very real bond of blood descent. Having left England and the north of Ireland, where English had already mingled with Scotch, in the troublous days of the Stuart rulers, the ancestors of our mountaineers brought with them to this country a bit of old England. Being of hardy pioneer stock, they pushed on to the west, becoming the backwoodsmen of our Revolutionary days, and the independent, self-respecting farmer and lumberman of today. The bit of old England that they brought with them then has survived here and there even until today. We find it in such customs as the observance of Old Christmas, so that the sixth of January still appears to many a mountaineer as the only true Christmas Day, or in the ballads found almost line by line in Percy's Reliques still handed down occasionally from mouth to mouth; but in the language there has been more than a mere survival. The speech of the mountaineer is not only a memorial of a worthy past, but, properly guarded, may have an important future. The mountain people have reason to be proud of their origin and of their history. They have equal reason, when further scholarship has sifted in their speech the good from the bad, to be proud of their language.

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All communications relating to the QUARTERLY MAGAZINE should be addressed to the Editor, Mrs. J. Lowrie Bell, 1459 Girard Street, Washington, D. C.

Christmas in the Mountains.

In many of the mountain regions any celebration of the Christmas season was unknown until teachers from the mission and settlement schools went up and down the remote valleys gathering the people together in little school houses or cabins and there for the first time told the Christmas story and distributed gifts from the first Christmas trees that had ever been seen in those lonely regions. Old men and aged women listen with as much eagerness to the story of the first Christmas as the children and it is no uncommon thing to find gray-haired men and women who have never heard the Christmas story with its message of peace and good will.

In his book, "Blue Grass and Rhododendron," John Fox, Jr., relates the following incident:

A mountain evangelist once stopped at a mountain cabin and told the story of the crucifixion. When he was quite through an old woman who had listened in absorbed silence, asked:

"Stranger, you say that that happened a long while ago?"

"Yes," he replied; "almost two thousand years ago."

"And they treated him that way when he'd come down fer nothin' on earth but to save 'em?"

"Yes."

The old woman was crying softly, and she put out her hand and laid it on his knee.

"Well, stranger," she said, "let's hope that hit ain't so."

She did not want to believe that humanity was incapable of such ingratitude. While ignorance of this kind is rare it is not impossible to find those who have never heard of Christ and the Bible, says Mr. Fox.

A mountain teacher relates the following Christmas incident:

On Christmas Day the father of two of our most attractive girls, a man less than forty years old, living nine miles from the school, dined with us. Afterwards, sitting before the library fire, he sang "Loving Nancy" and other old ballads for us, and then told some interesting things about the Christmas customs he had been used to.

He said: "The old folks always claim that the sixth day of January is real Christmas—Old Christmas, they call it; but the young folks has a notion, like you have, that it comes today—New Christmas. I don't rightly know which it is, but I always feel more like Old Christmas is Christmas than New Christmas, and I wouldn't do any work on Old Christmas. On New Christmas they don't give presents like you women do, but the young men do a sight of drinking, and the girls visit around and frolic. The old folks let them have their way then (they say New Christmas is for young folks). But when Old Christmas comes, they won't stand any antic ways. They cook beforehand so's they won't have any work to do. Then Old Christmas Eve at midnight the cattle kneel down and pray and th elders blossom. Anybody that will get up and listen and watch can see the elder stalks put out a head of blossoms. Next morning when the old folks get up they just set around and hold their hands and mourn all day, and don't eat; and the young folks have to eat cold victuals; and if any of them get noisy or foisty, they are liable to a scolding, for it's a solemn season."

It is with sincere grief that we record the death of our generous friend and patron, Miss Cornelia A. Taylor, of Quaker Hill, New York. The most important of her gifts to the Association was that of five thousand dollars which built the Pauline Taylor Hall at the industrial school for girls at Brewton, Alabama. By her will she designed further to aid the cause of industrial education for the mountain people through bequests of fifteen thousand dollars to the same school at Brewton, and ten thousand dollars to Miss Berry's School at Rome, Georgia. It is much to be regretted that contesting litigation threatens greatly to delay if not ultimately to annul these much needed gifts.

The Bazaar of Mountain Crafts held by the Association in the ball room of the Arlington hotel, in Washington, November 18th, was a success in many ways. Besides the net receipts of \$235.90 to the working fund of the Association, the treasuries of the several schools making exhibits were enriched substantially by sales of weavings, basketry, woodwork, embroideries, etc., and by orders for articles to be delivered later. Many new members of the Association were enrolled and local interest in the cause was greatly increased. The splendid addresses by Dr. Thomas Nelson Page, one of the best workers in the Association; Mrs. Ida V. Woodbury, of Boston, Mass.; Mrs. Gielow, the founder of the Association, and Mr. Skaggs, of Chicago, were heard by a large and highly appreciative audience.

It is hoped that the headquarters of the Association will be removed to the new Southern Building, 15th and H Sts., Washington, D. C., on the completion of that edifice in the coming spring. It is the plan of the Association to open in these rooms a permanent exhibition and exchange of the mountain crafts and to furnish the rooms with desks, tables, chairs and other equipment made by the children in the mountain schools that have been aided by the Association. Visitors will be welcomed and here will be found the literature of the Association including Mrs. Gielow's story, "Old Andy the Moonshiner."

Appeals for Clothing, Books, Etc., for Schools in the South.

The teachers in the settlement schools in the South are very grateful for articles that can be used in their schools and in the neighborhood. Clothing is most valuable. It is not given to the pupils or their parents. The people like to pay for things themselves, and when they have not the money they bring articles from their little farms in exchange. A man will give chickens or corn meal to the value of one dollar or more for a suit of clothes. The teachers use these in their own homes and place the market value in the treasury of the school, and the money is used for the purchase of materials used in the industrial instruction. School books and simple story books are invaluable. Books of one syllable are often loaned to girls and boys who are learning to read.

The following articles will be most gratefully received: Maps, globes, blackboards, books and materials for manual work, Bibles, flags, wash-basins, towels, soap, combs, clothing of all descriptions, blankets, pieces of silk and calico for patchwork, sewing materials, pencils, stationery, books, pictures, needles, thimbles, scissors, toys, dolls, a magnifying glass, etc.

The Secretary of the Association will be glad to furnish the names of schools and the addresses of the responsible persons to whom articles may be sent direct by the donors.

We must have funds to extend the work of the Association, and we ask your co-operation.

We need:

1. **A Foundation Fund** to build settlement industrial schools.
2. **Scholarships** to place children in industrial schools that are aided or approved by the Association.
3. **Salaries for Industrial Teachers**; also teachers of elementary domestic science, simple nursing, and hygiene.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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