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Southern Industrial Educational Association (Inc.)

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Organized to Promote Industrial Education of the
Children of the Southern Mountains

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A Voice from the Mountains.

In September, 1914, the Association published in the Quarterly Magazine a letter from Uncle William Creech, of Kentucky, begging that a school be established in a region that was noted for crime and outlawry, and in which almost nothing was done for the younger generation to keep the children from growing up to become in their turn moonshiners and criminals. In response to the cry from the heart of Uncle William, Miss Pettit and Miss deLong went from Hindman to the remote Pine Mountain region to establish a new settlement school. What the school has meant to the mountain people is described in Uncle William's quaint but earnest words.

November 20, 1915.

To all the Friends that have help the Pine Mountain Settlement School:

I was seventy years old the 30th day of last month, and I'm seem that goin on that I've craved to see for many years. Somethin like two years ago I wrote solicitin aid and assistance for the school which we was goin to try to build. Since that time the work has progressed mightily under the management and supervision of Miss de Long and Miss Pettit. I have invested all I have in the school and it gives me great satisfaction to see the change that's been made. I don't begrudge nary dollar that I put into it. The good people a helpin us had done a great thing for us, in helpin the poor and needy.

We are makin great headway. There has been two good houses built, beside an old log house rebuilt out of the fragments of old log houses somethin like a hundred years old; and a Pole House excellent furnished in old fashioned way to accommodate our visitors. One good barn nearly complete; one stone tool house; one House in the Woods used for school and sufficient in size to accommodate a good audience for speakin or church service. The

frame is agoin up of a large buildin and we hope it can be used by Christmas. We are gettin the farm in pretty good shape and will soon be able to make a good deal of support for the school, in farm produce. We are clearin off and fixin to fence a cow pasture. If we can get money enough we will soon be in good shape.

The school has got on hand about forty children from five years old and up, most of them destitute of any means whereby they could support themselves and with no chance to get any trainin either for labor or education, all bright children, little boys and girls. Without the assistance of this school I don't see any chance for them to ever make anythin out of theirselves. I visit the school nearly every day and I think the children progressin nicely. They don't look any like they did when they come to this school, bare-foot and almost naked. They look now well cared for and wear garments nice and clean, a thing they never knew before. They are doin awful well. We're in hopes we can get money so we can fetch in 150 of just such children as we've been ahandlin. We want to teach them books and agriculture and machinery and all kinds of labor and to learn them to live up as good American citizens. We are tryin' to teach them up so they can be a help to the poor and to the generation unborn.

People of other communities are payin us visits and are so pleased with the work here that they want us to start a school over on Cutshin about fifteen miles from here. On account of the vile work and drinkin carried on in that country amongst children, I think if we had a school there like this, it would be a great blessin to the children there. I think this is all the school that you and Miss Pettit and Miss de Long and me can manage, but I would be glad if somebody could go to help them.

I hope our good friends will come forard and help us all they can to make better people out of our wild mountain people that has been raised up here in ignorance and almost regardless of law. Their fore-parents has laid the pattern

for them of drinkins, killins, whorins and abomination in the sight of God. (It's rough to say, but hit's the truth and I think hit ought to be said.) I see no chance to teach the old but if the children can be taught up in a better light they can lay an example even for their parents.

I don't look after wealth for them. I look after the prosperity of our nation. The question of this world is naught. We are born into it naked and we go out naked. The savin of the soul is what we should seek. I want all younguns taught to serve the livin God. Of course, they won't all do that, but they can have good and evil laid before them and they can choose which they will. I have heart and cravin that our people may grow better. I have deeded my land to the Pine Mountain Settlement School to be used for school purposes as long as the Constitution of the United States stands. Hopin it may make a bright and intelligent people after I'm dead and gone.

WILLIAM CREECH, SR.

A Month at the Berry School.

Ever since the time six years ago when I visited the Berry School among the hills of Georgia, I had longed for the opportunity of returning there for more than a day. And this summer that opportunity came. I had the real pleasure of being there a month and of finding that a longer acquaintance increased rather than diminished the charm of the school. During this visit, I was in the Girl's School. Seven years ago Miss Berry had not even said "Let's have a girl's school;" but now, thanks to her indomitable energy and the gifts of many friends, there is a beautiful group of log cottages on a hill looking toward Mt. Lavender where more than a hundred girls are given the chance to learn how to become true home makers.

It had seemed to me before I went that the Girls' School could not possibly prove as interesting as the Boys'. In fact, as I drove through the picturesque stone gate and be-

tween the green hedges of the long avenue leading to Brewster Hall and then by the little log cabin in which Miss Berry had started her work, I felt almost eager to jump down and stay. No one could see the beauties of that campus, kept beautiful by the boys, the buildings erected by the boys, the fields, the dairy, the laundry, the workshop, and the numerous other things which show that the boys are really learning to be efficient farmers and helpful citizens, without becoming an enthusiast over the Boys' School.

Surely a work that gives the opportunity to three hundred boys to learn to make their lives count in their community and State is a work that pays. And there is not a boy there who would get that help any place else. As Miss Berry says, "The requirements for entrance are need, character, and willingness to work. No one who can afford to go elsewhere need apply."

But it was the Girls' School, not the Boys', that I visited this summer. It is located about a mile to the west, far enough away to give each school a chance to grow, but not too far for the boys to come over to help the girls. And the boys have helped them; they have built their cottages, done the heavy work on the farm, made their roads, and added interest to life by their calls on Saturday evenings. One feels tempted to dwell at length on the equipment of the school, the pleasing buildings, all in the log cottage style from little Sunshine Shanty, the first and only building six years ago, to Rome Cottage, the model cottage where the juniors master the difficult art of household management by doing as well as by studying. Then there is the well-equipped laundry, the big airy kitchen, the fascinating weaving room with its looms big and little, the poultry yard, the dairy, and last, but not least, the large garden. After an inspection of all these possibilities for work, one rather sympathizes with cheery, red-headed Ruth Donnegan, who came in from hoeing one hot morning and declared "I come to the Berry School for industrial work and I sure have got it."

It seemed to me that when the girls left they ought to be able to put Robinson Crusoe to shame with their ability to do whatsoever their hands found to do and to do it well.

It is not, however, only the school that seemed so wonderful, but the spirit and charm of the girls themselves. When I arrived the first week of June, I found Commencement over and the majority of the hundred and twenty girls gone. There remained only about thirty or forty girls who stayed for the summer school and nine of the Seniors who stayed over to attend the Teachers' Institute.

For a day or two all were busy cleaning house in preparation for the hundred teachers of country schools who were coming to the Institute.

It seemed to me almost too much for the school to do so soon after a hard year's work, particularly when I heard that they did it at a loss of several hundred dollars. But when I remarked to Miss Berry that it seemed to me they should charge at least enough board to cover expenses, she said, "Oh, no! That would mean that the teachers who most need to come couldn't come." And that was a good sample of the Berry spirit; it is one of joyful service to others. They always live up to their motto, "Be a lifter, not a leaner."

The Seniors, who stayed these two weeks that they might attend the lectures, did all the cooking for us and proved that they had become proficient at least in that branch of learning. They certainly won my admiration when they would come into the dining room after a hot morning in the kitchen and smiling cheerfully would sing the school or class songs, because it pleased their guests.

After the Teachers' Institute, there were a few days' breathing spell and then the Summer School began. It was an innovation this year for the benefit of girls who can not come in the winter or who were backward in their work. I taught some of the little tots of the neighborhood in the morning, those who were too young to be very valuable in chopping cotton.

In the afternoon, I helped in some of the grammar classes and, for the first time, found that a really fascinating subject to teach. The perseverance and energy with which the girls tackled grammatical problems would gladden the heart of any teacher. They showed the same determination to learn and pleasure in doing so that they had in everything else. When Minnie put a sentence on the board and triumphantly announced "If 'taint that a-way, I sure don't know what a way it is," I felt it was a real triumph, for it was "that a way" and she had had to use her brains and not her grammatical intuition to get it.

The girls themselves were a revelation to me of what the mountain people are. Of course, they came from homes of poverty, some from one-roomed cabins, where children were the only things plentiful; they had had no other school advantages, and most of them had never been to a large city. But their gentle refinement and courtesy, their eager unselfishness in doing something for others, and their neverfailing tact and cheeriness were such as one seldom finds excelled in our cities.

Then, too, they were very eager to grasp the opportunities offered them. Study hour from 5:30 to 6:30 A.M. would scarcely be possible in every school; yet these girls would sometimes start in earlier. It had meant a sacrifice for them to come to school; many of them could not afford even the sixty dollars a year the school asks for board and tuition and they were not willing to lose anything the school could give them.

It is hard to tell which of the girls interested me most, but Alice certainly seemed the most unusual. She appeared one Sunday morning, a tall, rather handsome girl, dressed in soiled white, with a befeathered hat on her head, evidently of last winter's stock, and large pink bows on her hair. By means of many questions, Miss Brewster, the principal, finally drew out her story. She was fifteen years old, one of twenty-one children and their "Pa had never done nothing for none of them." She had "never learned

nothing 'cept hoeing, for there warn't no schools near her home; but she had hearn tell of the Berry School and had come to get some learning." A kind-hearted storekeeper had helped her out by giving her her clothes and some money for her ticket, and there she was, not knowing her letters, her clothes impossible, and a precious seventy-two cents grasped in her hand to cover the total expense of the year. The Berry School is not rich except in friends that help and it was no light matter to accept Alice's credentials for entrance. But there was certainly the need; she assured us of her willingness to work; and we would hope for the best for her character. So Miss Brewster called in one of the girls about her size and told her to give Alice a bath and loan her one of her blue gingham uniforms.

Such a smile of relief as came on Alice's face when she heard this! As she left the room, she awkwardly slipped the seventy-two cents into Miss Brewster's hand with a "Here, take this," and went out to get her first lesson at the school.

Alice's education had to begin with fundamentals. I attempted to teach her her letters and her glee at being able to read the first two pages of the primer after a mighty effort on the part of both of us was good to see. Then there was cooking of which Alice knew nothing; laundrying of which she knew less; cleaning which was a new world to her, and even her hoeing lacked the scientific knowledge necessary to make it a success. When she was presented with the material for her uniform and asked how she would get it made, she answered more truthfully than elegantly, "I'll be dawgoned if I know." The other girls, however, loyally offered their help and Alice was soon settled at school.

I hoped she would find her own saying true, "It is easy to be good if you know how," for there were a number of things in that line Alice had to learn.

Soon after Alice came I had to leave, but I did not entirely say good-bye to the Berry School when I left Rome,

for I stopped in Chattanooga to go out in the mountains to visit Rose's school.

Rose was one of the 1914 Seniors, a slight delicate girl, gentle and unassuming, but with a personality that could manage a school of fifty-four little children where no previous teacher had been able to "hold down" one of fifteen. She had taken this school in the mountains because, as she said, they needed her. As far as salary went she had had better offers elsewhere, but others would take those positions. Her salary was twenty-five dollars a month, fifteen of which she paid for board.

As I listened to Rose telling simply the story of what she did and saw the children and the rough board church that did service for a school, I thought she put the labors of Hercules to shame. She had improved the school grounds, cleaned them up, built a road to one side so that wagons would not drive through the yard, and had made the inside of the school attractive.

She taught from eight to four, five days in the week, having a matter of about fifty classes a day; three evenings a week she had night school for the boys large enough to be at work. When she found there had been no church service for a long time, she immediately set to work, organized a Sunday School, induced the people to start a church service and to have a prayer meeting and finally arranged for a minister to preach once a month.

She boarded with a family of sixteen—four little girls shared her room—where the mother was too tired or too ignorant to cook well, so Rose "took over" the cooking. Add to all this the incidental things that came up, nursing the sick, visiting, making dresses for a motherless little family, and you will realize Rose's life was certainly one of active service. And she was happy as a lark in it all, too, only, as she wistfully said, "If I could only stop to go to school a little longer, I could do so much more for them." I thought as I sped northward that a school with the courage to welcome Alice and the ability to inspire and equip Rose for her

work is worthy of our deepest admiration and most generous help.

What Ignorance Has Cost the Mountaineer.

The writer, together with another mountaineer, rode across the Black Mountain from Kentucky to Virginia one year ago. The bridle path led through an immense tract of fine timber. The trail from the waters of the Cumberland River on one side of the mountain to the waters of the Powells River on the other side of the mountain was twelve miles. It led across the backbone of the great mountain which had, below its crest and above drainage in the valleys, ninety-six feet of coal. We passed through one tract of land consisting of 56,000 acres. It was purchased for \$26,000, less than fifty cents an acre. Though they are blasting from both sides of the mountain, the ninety-six feet of coal imbedded will not be mined in the next two hundred years. It is hardly possible to estimate the wealth in timber. We counted two hundred thousand dollars worth of trees within eyeshot of the path over which we traveled.

We rode down a familiar creek which one of our immediate relatives owned and sold forty-five years ago for a horse and a squirrel rifle. At one dollar and seventy-five cents per day, two of his sons were digging coal out of the hills he once owned. This is typical. Had the original sons of these mountaineers had the culture of the outside speculators they would have built coal tipples instead of moonshine stills, and the sons of the mountaineers would sit at the executive desks in the great industrial centers of the mountains instead of digging the coal from the mines as they now do. The mountains were there with their natural resources. The mountaineer was there with his natural endowment. The awakening of the mountaineer through the process of culture, educational and religious, means his redemption.

REV. JONATHAN C. DAY,
Home Mission Monthly.

Quarterly Magazine

OF THE

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All communications relating to the QUARTERLY MAGAZINE should be addressed to the Editor, Mrs. C. David White, Room 331, Southern Building, Washington, D. C.

Miss Large's Work.

In the September QUARTERLY our readers were told of a new departure undertaken by the Association, namely, the securing of a worker who should visit the cabin homes and assist the women in bringing to a higher state of perfection the industries with which they are familiar, to establish friendly relations with the women and show them how their homes may be made more wholesome and attractive, and to teach them simple nursing, better methods of preparing their food, in short to do anything and everything within her power for the betterment of the people and the conditions surrounding them.

The Association was fortunate enough to secure the services of Miss Mary H. Large, who has long been familiar with mountain conditions and needs, and who was eager to undertake the cabin extension work in the region extending out from Tryon, North Carolina, into the mountains, to a distance of 26 miles.

The report of her first month of work fully justifies the new undertaking. She writes that she visited twenty-one homes in which she helped the workers in basketry, weaving, knitting, tufting, old embroidery and wood-work. She also visited four schools, a county fair, a bazaar and the Mountain Fiddlers' Convention.

Through her endeavors some of the older people are attending the moonlight schools and gaining their first lessons in reading and writing. She is planning to hold classes in weaving at a central point where mountain women and girls will also be taught the making of genuine vegetable dyes. Miss Large writes that she has met a universal welcome in the cabin homes and the kindest hospitality, also that the women have shown much interest in her work.

The result thus far of Miss Large's undertaking fully justifies the Association in its purpose to carry on the cabin extension work by the employment of teachers who shall really be advisers to the homemakers of the mountains. In this way a double result will be accomplished for not only will the boys and girls who are in the schools assisted by the Association be prepared to make better homes in the future, but the present mothers who have known nothing outside their restricted environments will be helped to keep pace with their children and will have the things that their children are learning brought into their homes by the cabin extension visitors.

The Association is ready to place two more workers in the field in regions where the women are most eager for this kind of help, and we trust that some of our readers will feel that they must join in this new opportunity to bring new light to the people who have been shut away so long from helpful and stimulating influences.

Extract From a Letter by Martha Berry.

The Berry School for Girls is not now making a specialty of handicraft work: such as basketry and weaving.

We have not found this work of practical value to the girls, and we put the most of the time in training them to be good housekeepers. The cooking department absorbs a great part of their time. We also have a greenhouse and are teaching them to run practical gardens; and we find these more useful than to teach them to weave baskets and

make rugs. Then, too, we have an excellent sewing department, where they are taught to make and to mend their own clothes in the most practical and the neatest way. This department is very thorough. The girls are taught to make infants' clothes, and in fact, everything of the kind that a woman should learn. We are also teaching these girls how to take care of their sick in the best way and how to give thorough hygienic care to their own bodies.

We think basketry and weaving very good for old women who live in their own homes, but we find them not entirely practical for an up-to-date school. The girls feel that it is more practical for them to learn cooking, sewing, dairying and gardening. We have a complete dairy, where the girls are taught the thorough care of milk and butter. They make the most beautiful butter. Then, we teach them the principles of country hygiene and how to test water and to keep it from becoming contaminated.

Noon-time A-top the Blue Ridge.

BESSIE MILLS EGAN.

"Now, Miss Bessie, you pull right up and I'll cut this hyar varmint in pieces. Pitch right in and he'p yo'se'f. I reckon this pig won't never whistle no moah."

At this hospitable invitation from "Ache" Hurt, we pulled our benches up closer to the home-made table, as my mountain host proceeded to carve a delicately browned ground hog, dexterously severing the head and placing it on his own plate with no envious glances, whatever, from his city guest.

Inside, the low beamed cabin glowed with the flames from the fire place, for even in early September, the wind snarled among the protecting oaks that surrounded the cabin, like a pack of jackals at bay.

The heavy rafters of the ceiling, black as ebony with age and smoke, caught the fire gleam and reflected it into the shadowy corners, festooned with cob-webs of marvel-

ous breadth and design—freshly woven—for Sukie Hurt is known as the cleanest old "ooman" from Nichols "Holler" to Tanner's Ridge. Spiders are master weavers, re-decorating every night.

Flanking the hearth on each side, in culinary array, were the cumbrous iron cook pots and three legged skillets that had seen service in the preparation of this "company" meal. Even here, at the fire's edge, lurked evidence of the spider's trail for tea kettle spout and coffee pot snout were each fortified against its explorations by wads of tufted paper, fantastically projecting.

One tiny window in the room made a rough pine frame for the mountain scenery that tumbled magnificently round about, rivaling in interest even at the noon hour, the smoking ground hog spread out enticingly before us.

Three tined forks, pewter spoons, no table cloth (scout the thought in such a setting), and a general scarcity of dishes; the gap, however, more than filled by the warm hospitality that mingled with the steaming viands.

On the floor, in various alert attitudes, expectant of tidbits from the table, crouched eight dogs of the following personnel: four hounds, Lead, Doc, Hunter and Hound. The last boasts the more elevating name of "Lawyer," but with almost human intelligence, "Ole Houn'" has refused persistently to recognize the legal profession as belonging to a caste higher than his own and insists upon the name of "Houn'." Not even a "cawn pone" will induce him to acknowledge the name of Lawyer and only when "Houn', Houn'," rings out upon the air, will he respond to call.

Added to canines of such learning were four fice dogs, the prize rabbit hunters of the ridge, Beauty, Robert E. Lee, Rackey and Yaller Pup, the dog population supplemented by two old cats. One bore the marks of rattlesnake encounters, the other was minus a foot though too close contact with a coon trap, and all keenly dividing their attention between the table and their individual crop of energetic fleas.

The lusciousness of the piece-de-resistance was speedily attested to by the bones deftly tossed into the dogs' mouths. This performance precipitating, every whip stich, a dog fight, which affray would be occasionally quelled by shouts of "Hyar, yo Houn'," "Hyar, yo Rackey," but more generally by the telling application of a brier switch kept conveniently at hand across one end of the table.

The shadow on the door sill had crept well passed the notch marking the noon hour and Pap Hurt still was working like a Trojan to disconnect the clinging bits of meat from his favorite piece, the head, its eye sockets looming up grimly as morsel by morsel disappeared.

The feat accomplished, he fingered the skull tenderly, musing in an "Alas! poor Yorick" voice: "Pore little feller, them teeth won't crack akerns (acorns) no more, I reckon." Then turning it over to Sukie, he said: "Maw, you hanker so powerful atter brains, yo crack em out. The Master never give me teeth good enuff fer that."

Maw, took it eagerly, and soon a pair of steel trap jaws wrestled with the defenseless skull, but to no avail. "I 'clare to goodness, I caint bust it neither," said Sukie, "I got to take it out to the hammer en rock."

Moving to her word, she disappeared and a swift whack and grunt of satisfaction from the "lean-to" were followed shortly by her re-appearance at the table, the chuckling possessor of that delicacy of all delicacies to the southern mountaineer, a ground hog's brains.

A Helpful Book.

The Association is frequently asked to recommend some one book which shall sum up the main facts concerning the mountaineers as to their history, numbers, customs, and needs. While there are many books dealing with various phases of the mountain problems, the one that contains reliable statistical information as well as a general knowledge of the past conditions and present needs is the book, entitled,

"The Southern Mountaineers," by Dr. Samuel Tyndale Wilson, President of Maryville College. In this volume of 200 pages the story of the southern mountain people is told by one who has spent his life among them and who knows them as only one can who loves them and is their friend and champion.

The earlier edition has been revised to incorporate the results of the census of 1910 and includes much hitherto unpublished material generously furnished by Dr. John C. Campbell, Secretary of the Southern Highland Division of the Russell Sage Foundation.

The character of the book is indicated by some of the chapter headings, The Southern Mountaineers, The Service of the Mountaineers, The Appalachian Problem, Appalachian Power and Appalachian Promise, Statistical Tables of the Presbyterian School and Community Work in Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia.

The book is attractively printed in cloth binding, with numerous illustrations, and is for sale at the modest price of sixty cents. Orders should be sent to The Literature Department, Phesbyterian Home Missions, 156 Fifth Ave., New York City.

The November Bazaars.

It is with much satisfaction that we report the successful bazaars held in November by the parent organization in Washington and the youngest of the Auxiliaries, that in Philadelphia.

Word was sent to the mountain workers in the spring asking them to prepare articles for these sales, and during the summer in many a cabin home old looms were set up for the weaving of the beautiful coverlets, and busy fingers were making the artistic knotted and tufted spreads that are so charming in colonial bed-rooms. In other homes baskets of new shapes were woven from the hickory splits, willow and other materials, that the mountain fields and

forests furnish. In design and workmanship these articles surpassed those of previous years, thus fulfilling two of the purposes of the Exchange, namely, the raising of the standards of workmanship and the realization on the part of the workers that their handiwork is quite as beautiful and as much worth while as that of the great outside world of which they are no part.

The Washington bazaar continued through the week of November 15-21, a room on the first floor being kindly loaned by the manager of the Southern Building where the display attracted many who saw the mountain work for the first time.

Miss Margaret Wilson, the Honorary President of the Association, kept the room supplied with fresh flowers from the conservatories of the White House, which added greatly to the attractiveness of the exhibition. The amount realized from the sales was larger than ever before and many mountain workers were made happy by the money that their handiwork had brought to them.

The Exchange maintained in the headquarters of the Association was organized five years ago for the benefit of the workers in the cabin homes in the remote rural districts of the Southern Appalachians. Its purpose is not that of making money for the Association, but to give the mountain people a place where they can send in their beautiful knotted and tufted spreads, woven "kivers," towels, rugs, etc., and baskets, none of these things having had any market value to them until it was proved by the ready sales found for them. The money received from the sales of these articles enables the women to send their children to the schools near them, and has brought to them a little touch of the outside world. One woman on receiving a check for a spread, wrote back: "I have been watching the road for a letter from you over a week, I thank you so much, it wan't so much the check as the letter I was longing for." They are eager to send in their work and most grateful when it is sold.

*1st Exchange
1910*