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OF THE
Southern Industrial Educational
Association

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Southern Industrial Educational Association (Inc.)

(NON-SECTARIAN)

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

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1228 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C.

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Women of the Southern Mountains*

After a long tiresome day in a little jolting mountain train on a melting July day, it was a great relief to see heavy clouds gathering overhead. Presently we were in the midst of a terrific mountain storm. The accommodation stopped in the center of a narrow gorge while the lightning played wildly about us.

Emerging from this valley, the storm passing as quickly as it came, the train "flung" us around the side of a steep precipice. There (I could almost touch the side of the hill from the window) was a sheep all trembling and shivering, scarcely able to keep its hold and not slide down the bare mountain and under the train. I was immediately reminded of, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold," "Go, seek, bring them in," and I thought of those three millions to be sought out of the Southern Mountains.

It was during the Civil War that Dr. E. O. Guerrant, then a young soldier going with Morgan's men through the mountains, resolved, if God spared his life, to come back and give it to those people living in such sin and ignorance and isolation.

Because there were no churches, no schools and because the illicit distillers would have less fear of women, and they would have greater access to the homes, Dr. Guerrant called for women workers. Many who could went without salaries, and many worked for the sum of ten, fifteen and twenty dollars per month.

When a mission is first opened, the teacher lives in the home of a family in the community, sharing one of the two rooms with the many members of the family. In the absence of a school house the teacher begins her work under the shade of a tree, by the side of the road. In this way she catches the children who pass by. The Sunday School is conducted in like manner. In the winter they go

*The Missionary Survey of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, June, 1923.

into the homes in the community for services. Soon the people are interested and on a day named they come together, have a "working," and thus the church and school is founded. Pretty soon the worker has along by the side of the chapel-schoolhouse a three-room "boxed" house (shack); there she has her home. These houses are often built of green lumber which when dried leaves great cracks where the winter wind drives the rains and snows through in spite of the many pastings of newspapers which have been sent in barrels. One worker told me how in the winter, when it snowed at night, she pulled the bed spread over head and in the morning before rising she would shake the snow off her bed. Will you wonder when I tell you that that same woman walks on crutches much of her time from rheumatism? Few of the workers' homes have even suggestion of comfort or convenience. Often the water is carried from a distant neighbor, the coal must be carried in and the kindling split, as there's no man on the place. Aside from her many duties as a Christian worker she must do these heavy household chores.

Often the "teacher" lives alone with never a congenial friend from the "outside world" with whom to talk. Even the mail is irregular in its arrival, in the winter especially. The post office is perhaps at the foot of the mountain from the mission cottage and it may be three miles away and it may be seven or ten miles. In that case she depends on the boys of the community bringing hers when they go once a week for their own family.

There on the side of the mountain the winter sun soon drops behind the horizon. Then, when family circles are gathering around the bright fires, the day's work done, is when the hearts grow weary and discouraged and lonely. What's that? A rap at the door; it is quickly opened. "Why, Johnny, come in and get warm. Why are you out in the cold and snow when you should be in bed asleep?"

"Mammy's mought nigh to die. We lows how you would come to see her. We can't git no doctor."

Thus all thoughts of self are dismissed and nobody's lonely.

* * * * *

Some customs peculiar to the mountain people have been much discussed. The women never sit down at the table to eat with a group of men. In the early history of our country the women of the hills were true American women. The work of the men was hard, clearing virgin forests, hunting down and killing the fierce wild animals, providing food and making laws. Woman, as ever playing her part, often cut the wood. While the husband felled the trees, she plowed, hoed, and fenced the garden. While the men planted corn, flax and cotton, she prepared the meal, the neighbor women coming in to help her. At noon the men came in all tired out. None of the wives were seated until every husband's appetite was quite satisfied and they were out resting in the shade. Then the women, too tired to care, slipped down in the men's chairs or stools, often not even changing the dishes. Today it is a habit, and when we sit down with the men we are excused because we are "quare critters anyway. No tellin' what new notions we may bring from furrin' parts!"

During my first week (in July) in the mountains, Uncle Bill invited me to attend the "funeral meetin'" of "Marthy Ann" (his wife) which was to be held in October. How could Uncle Bill know just when Marthy Ann was going to depart from this earth! However, my co-worker explained that Marthy Ann had been dead some three or four years and as a matter of social standing as well as a religious rite, the departed one must be properly funeralized. It is a time of feasting and of family reunions. At last the second Sunday in October arrived; so did the "funeralizers." By sunrise people on horseback, muleback (often two or three to an animal), as well as loaded wagons, and men, women and children on foot were on their way to Marthy Ann's funeral. We were late arriving, for we did not get there until 9.00 A.M.!

The meeting was not held in the church, but at Uncle Bill's son's house, in the narrow yard of the three-roomed cottage, where the son and son's wife and eleven children, the wife's mother and Uncle Bill resided. Seats were improvised of rough boards placed on blocks or stones. The preacher's stand was the kitchen table, the Bible, water-bucket, and tin drinking cup placed on it, the water not necessarily for the use of the preachers but for the congregation! Each of the seven "preachers" took his turn exhorting and telling about Marthy Ann now three years departed.

Strange custom? Yes, and perhaps it came about like this. In the early days the visits of the "Circuit Rider" were few and far between, perhaps three or four years. When he did come to the community he found there had been many deaths. All these funeral services were held up for him. The relations and friends of all families concerned attended en masse. Time has passed, more preachers have come, even teachers, and still the old custom remains. Today the "funeral meetins" are the social and religious affairs of the autumn. Often the family who is having the meetin' feeds over one hundred people, killing sheep, pigs and chickens, besides the vegetables, pies and cakes. The social position is somewhat gauged by the appearance made at this time. One beautiful feature of it is the hospitality of the tiny home with all its crudities of life.

There are many lonely homes in the rural districts of the mountains. However, we are speaking of those who particularly need us, our help. On one creek where I worked, there were three houses which had windows and three which had cook stoves in them. The iron skillet and pot were used over the fire around which the whole family gathered. However, if there is a mission house near, the women are not long content with these conditions. After they make a few visits to the mission the teacher can see a difference in their homes.

The girls marry young and rear large families. Infant mortality is great. Home ties are strong. The mother is the center of the home. One woman when spoken to about her large family said, "Seems like one orter have at least a dozen." A bright little tot who when she entered school was asked how many brothers and sisters she had, said, "Jim and Stella (her father and mother) had heaps of young 'uns."

It is the mother who longs for opportunities for her children.

There are children's societies and clubs, and the workers try to touch every side of their lives. I am reminded of one group which had been studying the Bible, memorizing verses and chapters, repeating hymns and catechism, working very hard indeed. Then the teacher decided to give them the other side—social—and had a party. Of course refreshment was the great problem, being ten miles from town. However, some good neighbor was going to town and offered to do errands for us. As many of the children had never seen lemons nor tasted lemonade, she decided to serve *lemonade* and *cookies*. Time for the party arrived. Up the creek, down the creek, and over the hills came children dangling their tin cups (there were a limited number of cups at the Mission Cottage), each rushing to be at the house first to see the party before anybody else. There was surely "something strange hidden in them women's closets!" They came, saw the party, played games, drank the lemonade and ate the cookies and went home.

Little five-year-old Mott was too "shamed-faced" to play very much, but seemed to have a good time looking on. The next day his mother was down to find out about the party. She said when Mott went home his father took him on his knee to have a report about the affair.

Said the father, "Well, Mott, did you have a good time at the party?"

"Unhuh," replied the solemn little fellow.

"Did they give you anything to eat," asked the father.

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"Unhuh," was the answer.

"Was it good," persisted the father.

"I jest tell you, pap, them thor cookies wux alright, but that thor whiskey warn't fit to drink," replied the young man.

In the wonderful forward movement of America, the women of the hills have been left behind. But the mother longs for opportunities for her children. A man who has done much for education in the Mountains says, "I have yet to see illiterate children of a literate mother, but have found many, many cases of illiterate children of a literate father." This fact if nothing else should impress upon us the great need of finding and educating the mothers of future generations.

A TEACHER.

An Appeal from President Hutchins of Berea College

The greatest need of America is Americans who are loyal, and who have a certain religious reverence for American ideals. In our Southern mountains there are three million under-privileged men and women, boys and girls, every one of them a straight, pure-blooded American—that is, there are as many of these people as there were colonists who fought Great Britain at the time of the Revolutionary War. I think we are agreed that about the best investment of life or money is an investment in the boys and girls of this stock who may one day save us from going the road to chaos. I am putting my life into this job, and I should like mighty well to have you put your money into it.

A Letter from a Mountain Weaver

MY DEAR MRS. STONE:

Thelma and I will be glad to send you the two pair of spreads by June. It seems so good of you to give us work to do, and we surely do appreciate it, too. I often wonder

what us mountain women will do to earn money of our own when we can no longer sell the knotted spreads; it is the only opportunity that we have ever had to make anything for ourselves. I would be so glad if you could only realize the good that you have done in this work. Thelma has another baby 5 weeks old; the oldest one is just beginning to walk, so you see she will soon have her hands full taking care of babies. We are having some beautiful spring weather now; the fruit trees will soon be in full bloom.

Thanking you again for all you have done for me,

I am, very sincerely yours,

JOSIE CRITCHER.

April 29, 1923.

Progress in the Hills*

The gift of one million dollars and sixteen thousand acres of rich timber lands, to establish a fund for the educational, agricultural and economic development of the mountain counties of eastern Kentucky, was recently announced. E. O. Robinson, the donor, has entrusted the fund to the University of Kentucky for administration. We asked Miss Pellit, who with Miss May Stone of the Hindman Settlement School led the way into the hills years ago, and who now guides the work of the Pine Mountain School, to sketch the outlines of the present need and opportunity along Greasy Creek and Laurel and in the other isolated little valleys where her neighbors live.

Twenty-four years ago this May I spent a month walking from the Virginia Mountains across into a remote part of the Kentucky Mountains, visiting every house. This last statement is not strictly true, for often we found a house empty, and the entire family at work in the fields. There

*The Survey, May 15, 1923.

was no railroad within fifty miles and the old-fashioned life of a pioneer farmer was the only kind. This was unbelievably simple and primitive. We met some men and women who had never been to the county seat, only a few miles away. Few houses had any windows, there were no sheets, feuds still raged, and every man, carrying his own pistol, was a law unto himself. He had to right his own wrongs, if they were righted. Contact with the outside world came only through an occasional traveling preacher, an outsider interested in coal or timber, or a lawyer who was examining titles. We stayed overnight wherever we happened to be when dark came. People did not always know what we meant when we asked to have prayers, but in the morning, when we asked the price of lodging, the invariable reply was, "Nothing but a promise to come again and stay longer."

This May day finds a great change on the far side of the mountain from the railroad—a change for better and for worse. A settlement school has been here for ten years. Significant of its work are better homes, some of them provided with cellars, some of them with a two-sheet standard, and with well-cooked food, chosen with a regard to its value. The improvement in the health of the babies is especially noticeable. Many schools are provided now with toilets and the older children are learning how to take better care of themselves and are being helped in this by medical examination and care. At the settlement school is a stone church, the only church building for many miles along the mountain.

On the other side, the changes are many of them for the worse. Every few miles up the river, the train stops at little mining towns. At most of them, sanitary conditions and water supply are deplorable. For the old life of outdoor toil with its freedom and independence, the new industrial order has little to offer. There are as a rule no playgrounds, no gardens, no churches, sometimes no schools, but there is a commissary, where finery and canned food

may be bought. A neighbor of ours who had been over to visit a married daughter in a mining camp, said: "They don't do no work; they think they've got to have 'em a hired girl, and a new silk dress before the one they've got is worn out." The young girl who washes dishes in a boarding house in the mining camp for \$25 a month, a month of money which her father probably would not have collected in six months, walks back across the mountain to visit her lonely little home on the steep hillside, chewing gum and wearing high-heeled, patent leather shoes and a silk dress, and afflicted with a venereal disease which was unknown a generation ago.

The industrial change has to be met squarely, but the deterioration it has brought could be offset if each mining camp had a center for all sorts of settlement activities. These might be managed by the Y. M. C. A. or the Y. W. C. A. or health organizations. Better teachers must be found for the country schools. Industrial training is needed both in country schools and in special schools. Church organizations should see to it that the men they send into the mountains are practical Christians rather than theologians. Just as everywhere else, there is need for the right officers to enforce the "pistol-toting" and prohibition laws.

Schools where mountain farmers may be practically helped are greatly needed. The old method of cutting down a forest tract for raising a crop can no longer be followed, the land is so nearly gone; and the farmers must learn to terrace their denuded hillsides and conserve the soil. A movement for reforesting sections of the mountains which have already been cut contrary to modern forestry regulations should be inaugurated. More and more, the remote sections will be confronted with changed industrial conditions, which can be met with less loss if the people are prepared with better education, knowledge of better living conditions, and higher ideals for their children.

The greatest need of the mountains is for contact with

the right people. In twenty-eight years I have seen many splendid, well-equipped workers, who loved to live among the mountain people, leave this country because they could not afford to stay. If workers here could be assured of a pension, or have an adequate salary from which to set aside something for old age, the immense value of steady, friendly relations would be secured. Few city-trained social workers can qualify for mountain work, because of our different approach. Nothing can ever be so significant for the mountain people as constant, quiet contact with friends and teachers—living among them—who have wider experience, and who are modifying day after day, in unnoticed ways, the ideas and standards of the mountains.

KATHARINE PETTIT.

A Life of Achievement

Rev. Edgar Tufts, of Banners Elk, North Carolina, died December 6, 1922, from an illness whose beginnings are traceable to exposure to cold and contagion while ministering to the people to whom for a quarter of a century he devoted his life as pastor, teacher, friend and counsellor.

He was born in Georgia in 1870, graduated from Washington and Lee University in 1894, and Union Theological Seminary, Va., in 1897, and entered upon his life work at Banners Elk in 1898. His friends, knowing that he could choose from several more attractive calls, asked why he had selected Banners Elk, saying that it was considered one of the worst places in North Carolina. His reply was prompt and characteristic: "That is the reason I am going there." When he began his work there was no church building or schoolhouse. As he lived among his people and visited their homes he quickly realized the need of better educational opportunities for the children, and there gradually developed in his mind the conception of a boarding school where young men and women should have training in the practical things of life, and not in books alone. The subse-

quent accomplishment of the vision he held is summed up in these words, taken from a tribute to his life and work published in the school magazine, *The Pinnacle*, for March, 1923:

"The first cash contribution towards the building of the school was one silver dollar, and from this humble beginning these results followed:

"A small dormitory for one teacher and a few girls was opened in 1900. The school was then called the Elizabeth McRae Institute, in honor of Mrs. E. A. McRae. Soon after this it was changed to the Lees-McRae Institute in honor of Mrs. S. P. Lees.

"In 1905 the Boy's Department was opened at Plum Tree, under the same name and management. This relation continued until 1921, when the two schools were separated. The Girls' Department retained the name, Lees-McRae Institute, and the Boys' Department, taking the name of 'Plum Tree School for Boys.'

"In 1909, the Hospital Department was opened on the west end of the campus. For thirteen years this has been a blessing to the school and to the people for many miles around.

"In 1912, the first of the rock buildings—the Church—was started.

"In 1914, the Orphans' Home Department was opened on a beautiful farm belonging to the school. In this there are now fifty-one children. In addition to the two dormitories—one for girls and one for the boys—the Home has built a school house, a complete laundry with electrical machinery, a work shop for cabinet making and for training the boys in the use of tools, and last, it has just completed a baby cottage which will make a home for fifteen tiny babies. In the same year the High School was opened.

"More than one thousand girls have been taught within the walls of this school. And now many of their children are being instructed in the rooms where their mothers were taught.

"In 1919, the second permanent building—'The Rock House by the Side of the Road'—was built.

"On June 6, 1921, ground was broken for the first permanent rock building—the North Carolina building for the school.

"In June, 1922, the last and highest peak of the work was reached—the founding of Woodrow Wilson College.

"In the summer of 1922, the old wooden hospital was torn down and work was started on a permanent fire-proof brick building.

"The old academy building is almost torn down. On this site dirt has already been broken for the Tennessee building—the second of the Woodrow Wilson College buildings.

"Surely with such a history and with such equipment, the future of this institution, guided by the Spirit of God, is only in its infancy."

The rooms of the Association in the Washington office are closed for the summer, but the work of aiding the mountain weavers and other phases of the cabin and fire-side industries, will be continued through the many tea houses and gift shops which have made application for spreads, baskets, hand-woven towels and rugs, feather fans, homespun dress goods and other articles that come from the mountain workers to the Exchange maintained by the Association. Through these agencies the beauty as well as the intrinsic value of the varied articles of mountain craftsmanship are brought to the attention of the public at large, and the many sales made prove how great is the appreciation of these survivals of Colonial days.

REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS

Wooton Settlement House

WOOTON, KY.

*To the Board of Trustees of the
Southern Industrial Educational Assn.,
Washington, D. C.*

During the month of February we have had two of the "tides" of which I wrote previously. One of them was so severe that it washed away our only real bridge, not to mention several foot-logs, so that travel has had to be confined to the places where one could get instead of to where one wanted to go. This same cause has interfered with the mail, and while most of the letters have finally arrived, the parcels of needed materials are still over at Hazard, and there is some uncertainty as to when they will arrive. During this period the mountain women have been most kind, many of them coming to me when they felt it would be hard for me to get to them.

The dyed yarn for the linsey was taken to the weaver, more than four miles away, the road being *in* Wooton Creek most of the way, but she failed to understand why I wanted that particular yarn woven, and suggested that I buy some that she had woven for herself. As soon as I can get there, I will go out and see that she uses the material I sent her. As she cannot read, it is useless to send a letter.

I have been asked to lead a discussion on the value of fireside industries at the Conference of Mountain Workers at Knoxville, Tenn., in April.

Respectfully yours,

MARY H. LARGE.

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Quarterly Magazine

OF THE

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MARCH and JUNE, 1923

All communications relating to the QUARTERLY MAGAZINE should be addressed to the Editor, Mrs. C. David White, 1228 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D. C.

In Memoriam

A Brother's Tribute

Thomas Nelson Page: A Memoir of a Virginia Gentleman, is the title chosen by Dr. Page's brother, Roswell Page, to commemorate the life of one who was not only gentleman, scholar and diplomat, but a man of singular modesty, sincerity and graciousness of character. This is in no sense a pretentious biography, but a tribute characterized by simplicity and charm to one who in the midst of a busy and varied career maintained the dignity and glory of the old-fashioned virtues,—loyal to his country, his fellowman, his community and his church. In these days, when too often a so-called successful man is estimated by the amount of money accumulated, the social position he has climbed to, or the number of organizations whose list of officers his name adorns, one reads with a sense of satisfaction and contentment this affectionate portrayal of an American writer and gentleman.

(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.)

Another School on Our List

After careful investigation the Association has added the Boone Fork Institute to the list of schools with which it is cooperating. This school is located at Shulls Mills,

Watauga County, North Carolina, 3,700 feet above sea level, in the very heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is on Boone Fork, a historic little stream named after the famous woodsman, Daniel Boone, and while it is still in the pioneer stage it gives promise of becoming, under the enthusiastic and able direction of Rev. and Mrs. C. G. McKarher, one of the best mountain schools.

At a recent meeting, the trustees of the Southern Industrial Educational Association voted to contribute towards the salary of a teacher of carpentry and industrial training for the coming year.

Report of Practice Home, Hindman Settlement School

The work of the Practice Home family has gone on about as usual since the last report was sent in. The housework has been divided among the six girls, three of them having charge of the cleaning of the house and keeping it in order, while the other three did the planning, cooking, and serving of meals, washing dishes, etc., the girls alternating from week to week, so that each girl has had training in all the different branches of the work.

Early in January the "Pine Tree Tea Room" started on its second year of serving afternoon tea at Practice Home to the teachers and workers of the Settlement and to the people of the town. Every Thursday afternoon the girls have kept open house from three until five, serving a simple menu, such as salads, rolls, tea and coffee, and cake or pie, all at a nominal charge of about forty cents per person. Under the supervision of the house mother, the girls have planned the menus each week, prepared the food, arranged and decorated the tables, and kept account of the finances. These teas have given the girls a very valuable training which they will be able to use later on in their own homes; they have also met a long-felt need among the workers in the Settlement, who have so few opportunities for coming together in a social way. The average attendance has been from twenty-five to thirty each week. Financially, too, the

teas have been a success; the girls have already bought their uniforms from the proceeds, and they are now planning to buy new Victrola records for the house with what money they may have on hand at the end of the year. In addition to the serving of tea each week, the girls have also taken outside orders for cakes, pies, and doughnuts.

In connection with their work in sewing, each girl has made herself a new gingham dress and one or two cooking aprons. They have also remodelled their last summer's wardrobes, so that each of the six will have at least three dresses ready for wear when the warm weather comes. Two of the girls who will complete the course this year have begun to make preparations for graduation in May.

The girls have all been much interested in their work, particularly in the serving of the afternoon teas; they have worked well together, and all have shown a marked improvement since the beginning of the year.

MRS. L. WILSON,
House Mother.

Weaving at Pine Mountain School

The second year of weaving at Pine Mountain has just come to a close, with a class of six in the school, and two neighboring girls weaving. Out in the country many women are rejoicing in the money that has come to them by spinning wool. One old lady rides in from ten miles away, at her home at the head of Big Laurel, bringing her hanks. Another, recently left a widow, found for many weeks her support in the money she earned by spinning wool. You know from our account of the weaving department in the February Notes, about Phronic, the young mother who bought herself a set of false teeth with her wool money. I wish you could see the forlorn little home where some of our prettiest wool is spun by a mother with a big brood of children.

One of our neighbors has bought two new rams, and is

going to try to improve his stock so his wool will be softer. This is the beginning of a much-needed movement through the country, where the sheep are taken very much as a matter of course and not as a source of a crop which must be kept up and improved constantly.

All this work out through the country really demands a special worker, to keep the lonely homes in touch with the school industry. We hope some time soon to have a volunteer to do this much-needed work.

Miss Sabrina Ritchie, a graduate of the Hindman School, has been our weaving teacher this year, and has brought much to pass with her class of six—two boys and four girls. I wish you could all visit this school, and just watch all that goes on. All the washing of wool goes on in the school laundry, which must be specially "borrowed" when other washing is out of the way. Try and fit all this in with a school, work and play scheduled for ninety children, and you meet difficulties! The wool is dried on the big rocks near the houses, if there isn't enough clothes-line available. All this takes hours, and is heavy work for young children. Then the dyeing takes more time. This is the most tedious part of the process, demanding close attention for hours, working out ancient recipes that are none too clear in their directions, and back-breaking hours of stirring the dye-pot, a great iron kettle swung tripod-wise out of doors. You can understand, too, that the collecting of the bark and roots for the dyes in the woods takes much time. The preparation of the wool is the principal part of weaving, really, at Pine Mountain; when it comes to setting up a piece in the loom and weaving, the work goes fast.

You have had our monthly reports, and know of the many blankets our looms have turned off. We are very proud at the end of our second year to have begun pattern weaving. Our first coverlet, "Pine Bloom," made by the first girl who ever came to the Pine Mountain School, Becky May Huff, hangs from the balcony of our big dining room.

Subscriptions are:

\$1.00 a year for a Member.

\$5.00 for a Sustaining Member.

\$25.00 for a Patron.

\$100.00 will place a child for eight months in one of the better-equipped, remote settlement schools.

\$50.00 will place a child for eight months in one of the smaller schools where industrial training is given.

\$10.00 will give industrial training for eight months to a day pupil who does not live in the school.

\$600.00 will pay the salary of an industrial teacher or nurse.

Official receipt and the QUARTERLY MAGAZINE will be sent to all subscribers.

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

Southern Industrial Educational Association

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Enclosed please find.....Dollars

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Name

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Make checks payable to Joshua Evans, Jr., Treasurer,
and send to the Corresponding Secretary.

Mrs. A. S. Stone,
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