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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

Headquarters: Southern Building, Room 331, Washington, D. C.

MRS. MARTHA S. GIELOW, Founder

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Moonlight Schools in the Mountains.

[There has been a widespread belief that the adult mountaineer in general is satisfied with his condition of illiteracy and ignorance and that he has resented the attempts which have been made to bring about a better condition of things if not for himself, at least for his children. The following account of the work of Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart, the Superintendent of Schools of Rowan County, Kentucky, will do away once and for all with the charge that the mountaineer only wants to be let alone.

This venture of Mrs. Stewart was made in the fall of 1911, in a county where one-third of the adult population could not read or write, and this article is a résumé of her paper read before the Fifteenth Conference for Education in the South, at Nashville, April, 1912.]

"Did any one of you ever have an aged mother come to you with a letter in her hand from an absent son or daughter and an expression of longing on her face which your best elocutionary efforts could not satisfy, and did you ever watch her countenance as you attempted to interpret the communication which meant so much to her, but which she was powerless to decipher, and have you noted on her face the baffled, mystified, unsatisfied expression? Did you ever have a tall and handsome promising youth fit for soldier or statesman, or even for school teacher, whose every feature was expressive of the highest intelligence, quote poetry and sing ballads of his own composition which were delightful to hear and fit for publication, and when you have, in your imagination followed him through a wonderful career, you have been informed by him in a sorrowful tone that hundreds of such productions have been lost to him and to the world because he could not write them down?"

Did you ever offer a tall, manly, proud, prepossessing man a pencil to sign his name and have him shake his head and confess in an apologetic humiliated way his inability to write? Have you ever watched him make the picture of that shameful burden and cross which he carries—His X Mark? If you have never had any or all of these experiences, you may not be fully able to realize the need of moonlight schools.

In puzzling over the problem of bringing relief to the thousands of mothers, who are cut off from their beloved absent ones, and to the thousands of fathers who are deprived of the privilege of intelligent suffrage and the delight of books, and to the thousands of youths and maidens whose rare talents are buried under the blight of illiteracy, the attention of the county superintendent was first directed to the day schools. But there were several serious drawbacks to utilizing them for the purpose—the overcrowding of children, the overtaxing of teachers, and the fact that illiterates, more than any others are chained to labor, and must work by day to eke out their bare existence. On a September evening in 1910, the solution of the problem came—the rural night school—and immediately following the thought came the spectre doubt, which always follows and tries to vanquish inspiration, and raised up an obstacle in the form of dangerous, rough roads, but just at that moment the moon came up over yonder hill, and illuminated the earth, showing every pitfall and prominence in the road near by, and making travel appear as safe as it could be during the brightest light of day. It was a volunteer by the moon of her services, which were eagerly accepted. The obstacle vanished and doubt fled, and there came no other to distress or hinder.

As there was not a dollar back of the effort, it was necessary to secure volunteer service on the part of the public school teachers, and after the day schools were thoroughly

organized the teachers were called together, conditions explained, the plan outlined and the call to service sounded. The movement was put on the basis of a call to arms. The superintendent said to the teachers: 'An inveterate enemy is lurking within the bounds of this county, enslaving many of our people, rendering them helpless and vicious and partly insensible. It has captured them and blighted their lives, and has not only enthralled them, deluded and misled them, as only such an enemy can, but it causes them to antagonize and jeopardize every effort for advancement which we may make.

This enemy is the foe to everything progressive and helpful. Shall we longer suffer its encroachments? Shall we permit it to hold the ground which it has gained? Shall we allow it to hold hundreds in bondage while they are struggling and groaning under its oppressive power? Shall we submit, or will we fight? Must we yield, or can we conquer?' They answered, before a word could be spoken, by flashing eyes, set jaws, heaving bosoms, which showed them ready for the charge. They could hardly wait for the plan to be outlined; and when it was outlined they could hardly wait for the hour of attack.

The teachers went forth on the day previous to the beginning of the night schools to campaign their districts. Labor Day, a holiday, was selected for this general campaign. Every road was traversed, the by-ways and hedges as well as the public roads. The hills were climbed, the valleys were crossed, the best farmhouses and the lowest hovels were entered, and all were invited, encouraged and enthused to accept the opportunity which would be open to them.

The evening following this campaign, when the schools were to begin, the moon came out in all her glory, and it seemed to shed a radiance brighter than ever before, and that no man who came to his door could resist her invita-

tion to venture upon the road, or could decline her offer to provide him guidance, safe and secure, to the school-room door.

The teachers were in their places, ready, willing, and anxious to instruct all who might come. Only small classes of illiterates were expected to make their appearance. Would they come? They had all the excuses which any ignorant and laboring people have had; doubt, timidity, weariness and all the rest. But they were not seeking excuses; they were seeking knowledge and freedom, *so they came*. They came, singly and alone, they came in groups, they came carrying babes in arms, they came bowed with weariness from the day's hard toil, they came bowed with age and leaning on canes, they came whole families of twelve and fifteen, they came a regiment, TWELVE HUNDRED strong. Some came to learn to read and write, others came to receive instruction in other subjects, and to increase their limited stock of knowledge. We had prepared to teach but illiterates alone, so we had an unexpected demand to meet. Former teachers or educated persons who lived in the various districts volunteered their assistance, and took charge of one of the classes.

In writing we used the blackboard and copy books. In reading the text was a little newspaper, especially prepared for the purpose, having a strong local cast, and especially adapted to the needs and enjoyments of the adult beginning. The purposes in having a newspaper were: to save them from the embarrassment of using a primer, to give them a feeling of importance in being from the beginning a reader of a newspaper, and also, to arouse their curiosity, an element strong in the ignorant mind, that as they read each item about the folks they knew and the country they loved, they might be tempted to seek out and master the news contained in the next.

I wish I had the power to picture to this audience the scenes in those schools as I witnessed them; the picture of

stalwart men standing at the blackboard writing their names for the first time, and of gray-haired men and women of sixty, seventy and eighty years bending over lessons and occupying desks that their children and grandchildren had occupied during the day, and of the earnest, volunteer teachers, themselves rural products, as they labored with such patience and diligence to instruct their senior pupils. The buxom lass of twenty and the grandame of eighty-six sat side by side at the desk, vieing with each other in the earnestness of their quest for knowledge. The awkward youth and his bowed grandfather of seventy-six stood shoulder to shoulder and recited in class together, each trying to outstrip the other. The children in the day schools did not grapple with their problems half so earnestly or assiduously as their parents and grandparents pondered over theirs at night.

During the first two weeks, as nearly as could be ascertained, from the reports, one hundred learned to read and write, some merely to write their names, but the majority to write crude but legible letters. Before the month of September closed, the county superintendent was the recipient of a number of these, the first letters ever penned by these adults. At the end of the first two weeks, which constituted a term, there was a general clamor from both teachers and pupils for an extension of the term.

To estimate the results of these schools in this, their first session, would be an impossibility. Already several redeemed illiterates have gone out and taught some friend or kinsman to read and write, and many such are writing letters to absent ones to-day. To register the noticeable influence upon the lives of the twelve hundred, would be impossible, without attempting to measure their individual and combined influence upon other lives. Most marked was their attitude of increased respect, sympathy and co-operation with the day school. There was an immediate increase in the enrollment and attendance in the day schools. Regu-

larity of attendance and a more self-respecting deportment on the part of the children whose parents had attended night school was distinctly noticeable, and before the end of the term, when the streams were swollen and the children could not cross them to reach the school, some of these parents, who had kept children from school before for any trivial cause, and had never thought of sending a child regularly during the term, took their horses out of the wagon, and missed hauling a five-dollar load of ties, and transported their children to school.

The obliteration of friction and factional feeling, and the revival and re-establishment of friendship and good fellowship in the different communities created an entirely new and more wholesome atmosphere. They were schoolmates, and that hides many faults, and causes many real and fancied injuries to be forgotten. The circulation of newspapers, farm journals, and other periodicals increased, and the demand and sale for books is almost twice as great as ever before. The volume of mail from the rural post offices has been remarked by the postmasters, and the evident care and neatness of the superscriptions, a lesson which they were carefully taught, is particularly conspicuous. There is even a change in the personal appearance of some individuals, particularly an expression of awakened interest, which gives a new light to the countenance; a spirit of determination, which added a new brightness to the eyes, and a more upright and elastic carriage, all of which are indications that they are enjoying that most rejuvenating of all processes, a reawakened hope and a developing mind.

If compelled to sum up briefly the three most remarkable things connected with this night school work, I should say, first, the intense eagerness of adult illiterates for instruction; second, the remarkable rapidity with which they can learn; third, the influence which such schools exert in bringing them in sympathy with the cause of education."

Recent Tales of the Mountains.

A new book by John Fox, "The Heart of the Hills," like his other works, "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," and "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," deals with the mountain people of Kentucky. It shows how unprepared they are to meet the new conditions that are inevitably associated with the opening up of the mountain resources by great business interests from the outside. The mountaineers are Fox's own kinsmen and he writes from the standpoint of one who has complete and sympathetic knowledge of these untaught but virile people.

"The Right of the Strongest," by Frances Nimmo Greene, is a romance of the Alabama Mountains, and deals with somewhat the same conditions which John Fox considers in his book. It too sets forth the complications that must inevitably arise when capital invades the mountains to exploit their resources for financial gain.

Grace McGowan Cooke's story, "The Power and the Glory," while not new this year is one of the recent stories dealing with the mountain people and conditions and is well worth reading by those who have not already made its acquaintance.

Mrs. Martha S. Gielow has just brought out a thrilling tale entitled "Uncle Sam," similar in size and binding to her very successful story, "Old Andy the Moonshiner," both of which Revell is publishing for the holiday sales. "Uncle Sam" deals with the fortunes of a mountain couple who find out for the first time in their starved lives that their country has any interest in the welfare of its people and through the gift of seeds from the Department of Agriculture they come to know that "Uncle Sam" means the United States Government, the nation "who is more powerful than jes blood kin when hit comes to gettin' seedlin' and sich fer workin' better craps."

Quarterly Magazine

OF THE

SOUTHERN INDUSTRIAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

SEPTEMBER, 1913.

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

Monte Griffith.

It is with great sorrow that the Association reports the death of Dr. Monte Griffith in July at his suburban home in Cherrydale, Va. Dr. Griffith, who was a charter member, had been a Trustee since the beginning of the Association and was an earnest and enthusiastic advocate of the purposes for which it stands. Until his failing health rendered attendance impossible, he was always present at the Trustees' meetings and cheerfully gave his services wherever they were required. He was a generous contributor to the work and his loyalty and devotion were an inspiration to all of his associates. Dr. Griffith was one of nature's noblemen, with a rare gift for friendship and many lives have been enriched not only by his professional services, but by his sweet and sunny nature.

While the Southern Industrial Educational Association has not established any schools solely its own, it has enlisted the activities of other forces and indirectly has accomplished splendid results. The establishment of the Pi Beta Phi School in a community near the Tennessee-North Carolina line, where such work was very greatly needed, is a direct and positive outcome of the influence of the Association and it points with pride to this practical result.

The Pi Beta Phi Settlement School

AUTHORIZED BY THE 21ST BIENNIAL CONVENTION.

Established in February, 1912.

GATLINBURG, TENN., Aug. 1, 1913.

In the winter of 1909-10, in Washington, D. C., a small group of earnest college women, members of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity Alumnae Association, started a movement for commemorating the 50th anniversary of the founding of its organization. Miss Emma Harper Turner, a former Grand President, suggested a school in the Appalachian Mountains of our South. With this in view the club members investigated the needs of these people, and consulted men and women with personal knowledge on the subject. Mrs. C. David White, of the Southern Industrial Educational Association, addressed the Washington Club in the winter of 1909-1910 and Captain Richmond Pearson Hobson, went before the Convention of the Fraternity in June, 1910, with his plea for our help for these needy people.

On June 27, 1910, at the 21st Biennial Convention, held at Swarthmore College, Philadelphia, a unanimous vote of the delegates sanctioned the proposed plan for establishing and maintaining a settlement school in the Appalachian Mountains "in honor of the Founders and founding of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity."

A committee of ten was named and empowered to collect funds and develop the work. The years of 1910-11 were spent in careful study and investigation of many sites, but not until February 12, 1912, was the school finally established at Gatlinburg, Sevier County, Tennessee, fourteen miles from the end of the railroad, at Sevierville, the county seat, in the Great Smoky Mountains.

There is no authorized Census nor accurate information to be gotten about these people, but it is estimated by various authorities that from one to two and a half millions of

people are living in isolation in these mountains to all intents and purposes in the pioneer conditions of the Revolutionary period, and our modern life is unknown to a large number of them. The ancestors of these mountain people "went West" with the same impulse which peopled the fertile Mississippi Valley and our Middle West, but they unconsciously stepped aside from the beaten paths and were entrapped in the fastnesses of the mountains and have since been beleaguered by nature.

To illustrate: On January 31, 1913, the first American flag ever flown to the breezes in the district was raised in front of the new two-roomed school building at Gatlinburg. Surely the students of history can never forget the splendid support of John Sevier and his men at Cowpens and King's Mountains in the Revolutionary struggle, and again the fearless and indomitable energy and courage of the same people during the Civil War.

The Pi Beta Phi Settlement School began its second session in August, 1912, co-operating with the four months county school and together we held sessions in a dilapidated, abandoned church building with what settlement work it was possible to carry on in a hired, three-roomed cottage near by. On December 1st, after a careful reorganization and with an additional teacher from the North we moved into a new two-roomed school house and carried on our work more satisfactorily. From the handful of eleven scholars at the starting of the school, our numbers increased to one hundred and fifteen in January, 1913, and for the time we were compelled to close our doors to more pupils. So eager and anxious were these people for knowledge that a number of children walked ten miles daily to come to school and two families moved all their worldly goods to an available home under the shadow of our school. These people are eager for book knowledge and freely plead with you to give of your abundance.

Last year, we kept our school open eight months, holding

classes in the common school grades. The settlement work was confined to visits in the homes and entertaining at our teachers' cottage. The sewing clubs for the girls accomplished good work and the adoption of Boy Scout rules in the Boys' Clubs brought about telling results, especially in regard to the boys' treatment of women and girls. The mothers' meetings brought the mothers together for lunches, and life at the teachers' cottage furnished means for demonstrating domestic science and economy and opened up a new vision of living and home life to our sisters in the mountains. On Sundays the big boys were perfectly happy in sitting still and simply listening to our teacher who read to them aloud from the Bible.

In July of this year a seven-acre farm near the village was offered us for our new school, but this being too small the people subscribed \$1,200 among themselves and we purchased the most desirable site possible for our future home. It contains thirty-five acres of fertile, gently sloping and mountain land, and includes a three-roomed cottage, a barn, carriage house, the village store and several smaller buildings. Miss Abbie B. Langmaid, of Minneapolis, Minn., is our resident in charge, assisted by Miss Carolyn Wynn Ledbetter, of Oklahoma City. Miss Langmaid comes with a long and valuable experience in settlement and educational work and both are members of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity. Later, when the crops are harvested and the school becomes crowded, we expect to send two and probably other assistants from our Fraternity for the needed work. Orders have been given for getting out lumber for a six-roomed building where the regular school work will be conducted in connection with the much enlarged settlement scheme. As fast as we can develop the work, agriculture, domestic science, manual training, club organizations of every desirable kind for the young and adults will be inaugurated.

The alumnae of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity are wholly responsible for the founding and maintenance of the enter-

prise. Of the many philanthropic and charitable works before the public this must appeal most strongly to us. It is for and among our own people. It touches the deep sympathies and arouses in us a most earnest desire to help train and develop the heart and hand along with the mind and body.

If history repeats itself, these earnest, untarnished children of the mountains will furnish us with great men for the nation in the generations to come.

Let us remember that they are our brothers and sisters unstained by contamination with the modern rush of life. They need only the light of knowledge and proper training to make them our peers in this wonderful country we so dearly love.

ELIZABETH A. HELMICK,
Chairman and Treasurer,
Pi Beta Phi Settlement School.

In November the Association will hold its Annual Bazaar for the sale of articles made in the mountain schools and the remote cabins, by workers who have no other way of bringing their products to the attention of the outside world. Baskets of rye straw, willow, hickory, and oak splits, beautiful in design and workmanship, homespun articles of linen, wool, and linsey-woolsey, turkey-tail fans, carved nut-bowls and trays, hearth-brooms, and several pieces of well-made walnut furniture, the work of some of the mountain schools, will be ready for purchasers who wish to select their Christmas gifts in good season. In many of the mountain homes the money that comes from the articles which the Association disposes of at its sales, is practically the only money which the women ever have of their own, and the Association is glad to be the medium which enables the mountain workers to make profitable the few industries which they possess.

CAUTION!

We wish to caution friends and patrons of the Association not to put money intended for the Association in the hands of irresponsible parties. It appears that on several occasions imposters having no connection with and being unknown to the Association have fraudulently solicited money in the name of the Association.

Subscriptions to the work of the Southern Industrial Educational Association should be sent by mail either to the Corresponding Secretary or to one of the officers or trustees, a list of whom may be found on the second page of the Quarterly.

Mrs. A. S. Stone, the Corresponding Secretary, gave two entertainments at Clifton, Mass., during the summer by means of which a substantial sum was realized for the purchase of a new typewriter for the office of the Association and much interest created in the work which the Association is accomplishing for the mountain people by means of industrial training.

The illustrated edition of "Old Andy the Moonshiner," by Mrs. Gielow, sold for the benefit of the work of the Association will be available for the holidays—50c net, 5c for postage. Address, Room 331, Southern Building, Washington, D. C., for gift copies and help the cause. Special copies also of Mrs. Gielow's new story, "Uncle Sam," can be secured on same terms at this office, for the benefit of the work.

In a recently formed Sunday School in the mountains of Kentucky a teacher of a class of girls, ranging from twelve to fourteen years of age, found that, though studying the life of Moses, not one knew either what State or country she lived in, and one in answer to the question "what country do you live in," replied, "Ireland, I reckon."