

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

A Large Attendance. The Largest Ever in the History of the County... Every Teacher in the County, Excepting Two Enrolled on the First Day.

Monday morning dawned clear and bright, and at an early hour the streets by the unusual number of handsome, well dressed and intelligent looking ladies and gentlemen upon them gave evidence that something of an unusual character had, or was about to occur. It was the time for the convening of the teachers of Columbia County in Institute. The call of the roll revealed the astonishing fact that 241 out of a possible 243 teachers were present. This is unprecedented, and something which has never before occurred in the history of the Institute. It proves in an unmistakable manner the interest the teachers of this County have not only in the Institute, but in their profession as well. After a few remarks by County Superintendent Johnston the convention was opened with scripture reading and prayer by Rev. P. A. Heilman of the Lutheran Church of this place. The address of welcome was delivered by Prof. William Noetling of the Normal School, than whom, there is no instructor in the State who is better known or more loved and respected than he. His address was replete with good advice and sound doctrine.

He spoke of the insufficient remuneration which, for the past ten years, the instructors of our young have been receiving. He hoped that a brighter era was now about to dawn in the life and experience of the teacher, and invited the teachers to observe the work of the "big school on the hill."

This was replied to in an able manner by Prof. E. K. Richardson of Berwick. His address abounded in earnest pleas for the financial betterment of the teacher's profession.

Prof. E. E. Straub, of Conyngham, spoke of the principal duty of the teacher as being the guiding pilot in the wholesome, physical, mental and moral development of our boys and girls.

The Committee on Organization then offered their report nominating the following officers who were unanimously elected; Secretary, A. U. Lesher, Berwick; Treasurer, A. F. Terwilliger, Centre.

3:00 p. m. Dr. Arnold Thompkins of Chicago then addressed the teachers on "Psychology." The Dr. is a gentleman of pleasing appearance and courteous manner who possesses the faculty of presenting this usually dry subject in a clear and interesting manner which secures at once the attention of the audience.

3:45 p. m. Miss Margaret McClosky of the Lock Haven Normal School then addressed the Institute on the subject of "Language." Our first consideration in teaching this subject is to cultivate that observation which will enable the pupil to write intelligently upon any subject presented for composition. The pupil should be taught to carefully observe objects, animals and plants. The things which interest the pupils most should be thought of and observed first. As Burrows says:

"I would let the children see  
What a flower means to me."  
Teach the children to love and to observe the beauties of nature with which they are surrounded. Teach your pupils that nature teaches the lesson of mutual dependence and mutual helpfulness. Teach the child its relation to and dependence upon its God.

After a few remarks by Superintendent Johnston and the singing of the Vesper hymn the Institute adjourned at 4:45 P. M.

The exercises in the evening were opened by Elwell's orchestra rendering in a fine manner one of their fine selections, and after a solo by Prof. Sprengle, Supt. Johnston introduced the lecturer of the evening Dr. James Hedly of Cleveland, Ohio, who took for his subject "What is man Worth?" The lecture was highly appreciated by a large and intelligent audience. From the beginning to the end it abounded in illustrations of the main point of his discourse, i. e. that the value of a man should be measured not by physical ingredients, but by his mental, moral and spiritual character.

TUESDAY MORNING, OCT. 22.

The second day of the Teachers' Institute dawned bright and fair and the members were prompt in their attendance. The Institute was opened by singing No. 65 in "Ideal Songs."

The devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. Mr. Conner, of the Methodist church, who read a portion of the twenty-second chapter of Matthew and offered an eloquent prayer invoking Divine aid for the teachers in their laborious and nerve trying duties of the school room.

9:15. Miss Margaret McClosky then continued her talks on Language she said among other things, "Read something every day that taxes your mind to the utmost." There are several classes of readers. Some are merely literary gamblers, some desire to read all of the latest fiction. We should resolve to read only the best literature. Don't try to read every thing; read for pleasure but read solid matter as well. Read with the aid of a notebook and pencil.

Prof. Sprengle then conducted a ten minutes singing exercise. After an address by Dr. Arnold Tompkins on Teaching Process, illustrated in teaching language, which was to the point, and contained a great deal of valuable information, the institute took a recess for fifteen minutes. Supt. Johnston announced the following appointment of teachers who are to take charge of the local institute work in their several districts.

- Beaver—H. M. Grotz.
- Benton Borough—Clyde Hirtleman.
- Benton Township—W. A. Butt.
- Berwick—Prof. E. K. Richardson.
- Bloom—Prof. W. C. Mouser.
- Briarcreek—E. S. Martz.
- Catawissa Borough—Prof. Gehman.
- Catawissa Township—Haines Yost.
- Centralia—Prof. Eisenhower.
- Centre—A. F. Terwilliger.
- Cleveland—E. C. Kreischer.
- Conyngham—Prof. B. F. Kelley.
- Fishingcreek—S. B. Crouse.
- Franklin—Thos. Elmes.
- Greenwood—Boyd Trescott.
- Hemlock—Wilmaer Girton.
- Jackson—Arden Hirtleman.
- Locust—Kimber Levan.
- Madison—S. E. Creveling.
- Main—J. F. Fetterolf.
- Mifflin—Chas. Johnson.
- Millville—Preston Eves.
- Montour—Grier Quick.
- Mt. Pleasant—Wm. Sharpless.
- Orange—J. W. Hilday.
- Pine—Clyde Potter.
- Roaringcreek—C. H. Marks.
- Scott—Rush Creasy.
- Sugarloaf—O. M. Hess.

After these announcements were made Prof. Noetling addressed the institute on the subject "Some points on Teaching." He said that reference had been made by several of the speakers to some things in his address of welcome, among them that of teacher's salaries. Good teachers can neither be too highly appreciated nor compensated; but good salaries will not come of themselves, they must be worked for. An educational revival should be started at this Institute, carried by the teachers into every district in the county, and continued the whole year. Teachers must be alive to their calling, in this way they can make their value felt. He said that he had seen a district educationally almost dead, thoroughly revived in one school term by an earnest, enthusiastic teacher. Teaching is not so easy a thing as some people believe it to be. There is no other profession whose duties demand more thought, a keener insight into the springs of human activity, a purer life, and a higher degree of ability to lead and to influence the young to form high ideas of life and character. An institute is not a place at which lessons are assigned and recited or ready-made outlines furnished, but where points are obtained which every teacher must develop in his own, natural way. No successful teacher can be an imitator. There are method teachers. These are no better than machines. Instead of adopting their instruction to the children's needs, they try to adopt the children to their instruction—their machine. There is but one general road to success, and that is to grade the road so that the children can travel it alone with pleasure. To do this intelligently, requires as a preparation, a careful study of the children, their natures and aptitudes. Child study has of late come into prominence, and must, in the preparation of teachers, take the place of text-book psychology, which nobody follows. Much of the instruction given by untrained or half-trained teachers is like trying to pour water with a large tub into a small, narrow necked bottle, more is poured "onto and over than into." Without attention instruction is wasted. Before instruction can begin, the minds of the pupils must be prepared for it, that is, nothing must be on their minds but the subject of instruction. Sowing the best of seeds upon rocks or among weeds, will not produce good crops, but failures instead. Do we, as teachers, ever think that the minds of our pupils, like soil, must be prepared and in a suitable condition to receive the seed of instruction? All new knowledge must grow out of the old that is in the pupil's mind, and must connect with it, or it will not take root. Fit your work to the pupil; make it of interest to him; have him do it himself, it is only what he himself does that has any value for him. The whole pupil must be enlisted in every recitation—intellect, sensibilities, and will, all the powers at the same time. The primary teacher's work is the most important of all; it is also the most trying and laborious. Advanced pupils are supposed to have learned to a considerable extent to help themselves and to control and govern themselves, but not so little children, they need the teacher's attention at every step; they are helpless. She must look into their little minds and hearts, and aid them in their development as the gardener does his most tender plants in their growth and development. It is a shame upon the age in which we live that primary teachers receive no better pay than they do. The very best work that can be done should be found in the primary room and should receive the best pay. Sometimes we find dull pupils, but have you ever found them anywhere but in connection with dull teachers? I have lately seen teaching that defied intelligence to such an extent as to

make the brightest dull. A musical drill, and remarks by the County Supt. on the subject of regular attendance at the Institutes brought the morning session to a close. The Session of Tuesday afternoon was opened with music after which Miss McClosky took up the subject of "Busy Work," or in other words, work calculated to keep the pupils engaged. Such as clay moulding, paper cutting, mounting, building color charts &c., and its importance in a well regulated school. At 3 o'clock P. M. Prof. E. K. Richardson addressed the Institute on the subject of "Some things to Teach." Among which was mentioned temperance, proper respect for public officers, the support of the administration, the principles of good citizenship and a proper respect for the Sabbath. After this, Dr. Tompkins spoke on Mental Processes, which was enjoyed by all who were fortunate enough to hear it. Prof. Sprengle gave a short talk on music, and after a few remarks by Supt. Johnston on the necessity of refraining from whispering during the lectures in the evening, the session of the day came to a close. The entertainment of Dr. Byron King in the Opera House Tuesday evening was enjoyed by a large audience and by his excellent impersonations had the audience with him from the beginning to the end.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

The session opened by singing and devotional exercises conducted by Rev. G. E. Weeks pastor of the Baptist church of this place. Dr. Tompkins took up the subject of "Principles underlying the Expression of Language." He said among other things, "The distinction between words, sentences and discourse is not one of length. The word hush may be a word, a sentence or a discourse." A child is a natural orator. He is a user of discourse.

In all language work aside from words and sentences the child must live in the effect which that language produces. Self forgetfulness is the law of all effective discourse. Distinguish between mere correctness and effectiveness. Have the pupil think not of what he is doing but of the thing to be done. Argue a question for the truth involved. A man is an orator not because he has a larynx, but because he has a soul. "Never permit a man to speak unless he has something to say." There is a difference between elocution and yellow-cution. "Unless a man can forget himself in the thing he is doing—he can't do it at all. The little child who comes to school is already an elocutionist; he is learned in the art of expression. It is seldom an elocutionist when he leaves school. Emphasis and inflexion must come to him unconsciously of the effort to produce them.

You can't work a boy's jaw up and down so that he will emphasize correctly. The boy must love himself in the thing he wants to say or do.

After an exercise in vocal music, Prof. Noetling spoke on "Some Points in Teaching." He asked the teachers what the first thing should be when a class appears for a recitation. Several of the teachers replied, "Attention." Yes, without attention there is nothing learned. The minds of the pupils must be upon the subject under consideration. Pupils who come to class gossiping about matters foreign to their work, are not fit to begin a recitation. I have known teachers who, at every recitation, were obliged to call their classes to order before they could begin work. Such teachers seem to be unaware that self control and self government are two important elements of an education to be acquired in class.

The teachers were asked how many of them had daily reviews at the beginning of every recitation. A number of them raised their hands. A daily review is a necessity to thoroughness of work. It enables the teacher to ascertain to what extent his previous instruction has been comprehended, and rooted in the pupils' minds. The review enables the teacher, too, to connect his instructions, from day to day, in the minds of his pupils. Reviews should be spirited, not slow and sleepy, and should be given from the pupils' imagination and not from a memorized outline. An outline demands two mental activities, one of them a useless effort. Much careless work continues to be done in our schools and that necessitates a repetition of the same thing from year to year. Penmanship, not a difficult subject to teach when taken at the proper time, continues to be taught as poorly as ever. Pupils graduate from high schools unable to write with anything but scrawls. Who is to blame for this state of things? Certainly not the pupils. Is the English language taught much better than penmanship? If it is possible for anything to be taught worse, it is English. The cause is not want of time, but want of knowledge how to do it. There is no other branch that enables teachers so easily to waste their pupils' time as this. The ability to write or use the English language correctly and fluently, can be acquired in no other way than by practice with intelligent criticism. The written method is the only one that is sure to accomplish the end. Taking the sentences, paragraphs, and essays of others and analyzing them, will never

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