

THE NORMAL MAGNET

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The Normal Professional Club

The Normal Professional Club has given the students of the Normal department a taste of real college life. The first suggestion of its organization may be attributed to the thoughtfulness of Mrs. M. E. Doles, Supervisor of Practice Teaching. This organization, whose pledge is "We shall always try to be honest, fair and efficient in our teaching" has caused the members of the High School to sit up and taken notice. Twice it has entertained the members of the Senior Hi School Class who anticipate returning next fall to take normal work, and in each instance interest in the club has been intense, to say nothing of the pleasant entertainment of both evenings. The Club was responsible for the nationally famous Hampton Quartette which appeared here on March 16.

The question of inefficiency in teaching is ever looming up giganticly before us. This question presents a problem to the normal schools of the state which is gradually being solved and which when solved will give teaching that recognition of which it has so long been denied. To do this the normal school must have an attractive influence. This was one of the purposes for which the Normal Professional Club was organized to serve, and at present prospects are bright. We are looking forward to next fall when we can measure more accurately the success of this college club.

Normal Course of Course

By MIRIAM GORE

While knowledge of subject matter is the first requisite in the training of the teacher, it is not all. It is one thing to possess certain

knowledge and quite another thing to be able to teach it to others. People once believed that scholastic training was all that was necessary in order to become a successful teacher, but it has been discovered that this is not true. President Butler says that the worst of all teaching is done in the colleges and universities. The professors are noted scholars but many of them are not teachers.

Professional training is what the world is calling for. Teachers cannot do their best work unless they are professionally trained. Example—a lack of professional training: There was once a rural teacher who held a degree from a well known college. She began when Normal training was not considered essential; she did not know children, nor how to teach them. She seemed to assume the idea that children learn just as she herself learned. Finding the elementary branches of the rural school easy for her own mind to grasp, she failed to understand the difficulties they presented to the minds of the children. This woman taught for twenty years but no two of these years in the same school, in some schools she was called a medium teacher, in others a failure and in no school was she thought of as a successful teacher. She failed, and it is to be feared that she will always fail. (1) Because she lacks knowledge of children; (2) She lacks the knowledge of school organization; (3) She lacks knowledge of methods. The chances are that if this well educated teacher had at the right time been given proper instruction in the practical problems of the school room she would have developed into an excellent teacher. A teacher of that kind soon finds that her poor methods develop in to poor class room habits and they become so stamped upon her that she fails to seek a better way. She loses confidence in herself and no longer expects success even with her academic equipment.

Teachers should know their subject matter and know it well, yet there are many more things to know. Above all a good teacher should know how to get over to others what she has already learned. For teaching is an art. It rests on certain scientific principles, and has to be learned, the same as any other art. It is often said that some persons are born teachers, but this only means that they more clearly and easily get the foundation and fundamentals, and can more skillfully put them into practice. But even born teachers need to be trained in the principles of their art. For such training will save from many mistakes and blunders. A teacher's mis-

takes are always made at the expense of some child's growth and development.

We do not place tools in the hands of untrained workmen and set him at work on expensive rose wood and mahogany. We first train him in the use of his tools so that he will not waste costly material, but save and beautify it. Yet the rosewood and mahogany are only wood. If a piece is spoiled it does not so much matter a few dollars will replace it. But the teacher works not on material that can be replaced if injured or destroyed, but on lives whose success and happiness depend on the teacher's skill. A mistake made in the education of a child can never be wholly compensated, life is too short even at its best, and time too precious to be lost through poor methods or lack of skill on the part of the teacher. There can be no making up for the past, the present is too full of its own demands. It is more than probable that if teachers were able to put into practice in their instruction the best teaching principles now available to them, at least, double the educational progress could be made by our children. Think of the great achievements that would be wrought by our people. Think of the great expenditures of educational energy and power that would then be conserved.

The necessity for training in the art of teaching is now coming to be recognized every where. Hence we find Normal schools and teacher's colleges springing up in every state.

Observation work is one of the great essentials in the training of a prospective teacher. The prospective teacher has the opportunity to see a master work in situations in which she will labor. It inspires and stimulates the practice teacher to see the skillful easy way the work is put over. Normal training schools whether normal high schools, or strictly normal elementary schools must afford opportunities for the prospective teachers to take part in the teaching under the direction of a trained teacher. How different might have been the result of the teacher who had no professional training had she taught her first school fresh from under the influence of a helpful teacher. It is safe to say that she would not have been a failure, but a success. She could have observed how a skillful teacher manages and teaches children. She would have discovered the necessity of meeting children on their own mental plane, and not expecting them to be grown up in their understanding. She would have learned that scolding and fault finding are not the best ways for