

REMINISCENCES

By "Judge" D. F. Morrow,
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Soon after the war between the states, education was at a low ebb. This was distressingly so in all the rural districts; especially so in Western North Carolina, including much of the Piedmont, (meaning foot of the mountains) and the mountain sections. The people then in these sections, like now, were much interested in their children and anxious that they get some education. Money was scarce, times hard and everybody had to work. To meet these conditions there appeared on the scene teachers of subscription schools, some to run for a month or so in July and

August, then a like term in the winter. The object of these schools was to teach reading, writing and arithmetic, rarely anything else taught. These schools were supplemented by ten day subscription schools wherein only grammar or writing was taught. The ten days were not taught consecutively but usually one day in every week, thus making the term run over a period of several weeks. If it was a writing school the teacher and pupils would meet, and on the first day the teacher would "set copies," that is each pupil would carry a certain amount of paper to school and for the first lesson the teacher would make or set copies on the paper. The pupils would then practice making letters under the direction of the teacher that day. For letters were only made in the beginning by the teacher and the pupil had to practice making letters till the next school day usually one or two weeks off. This gave the pupil that length of time to complete the a, b, c, degree. The next school day copies would again be "set." This time it would be words, with instruction how to hold the pen and how to connect the letters into words. In the next week or two as the case might be the pupils were expected and usually completed the word making degree, and then sentences were set to copy by the teacher and the writing begun in earnest. At the final closing day the majority of the pupils could write. Any way they were graduated in it and if they continued to practice usually became experts.

These teachers were in a way circuit teachers, much after the order of the old time Methodist "cureus" riders, for they often had half dozen or more schools in operation at one time in different communities. They often "boarded among the scholars" as did many of the every day teacher class. Our writing teacher in my boyhood days in the seventies, was Webb Yarborough. He taught the Spencerian system. This was something new for before his day it had been only the "Hooker-hand." The usual tuition fee to these "cureus" school teachers was \$1 per term. So if a boy or a "gal" got through and could write good or bad it had cost a dollar. Many of those ten day "cureus" taught boys and girls are still living and can write today so

it can be read and after all that is all writing is for.

Professor Ira Irwin

He was not a writing teacher but a grammar teacher and he was all that and then some. Kirkham's grammar was the one he taught or Kirkham was the author of his favorite grammar. Now Professor Irwin was unlike many professors, he was not only professor but a possessor for what he did not know about grammar was not worth knowing in that day. He knew Kirkham's grammar from back to back by heart. I never saw him take it in his hands to look for anything in it. I have seen him have the boys and girls take the book, and try to select some page where he would not know it. He never failed to tell them what was on the page even the punctuation marks, or marginal notes. He just knew it and was endowed with the happy faculty of imparting it to his pupils. He was grandfather of Clyde Erwin, County Superintendent of Rutherford County at this time. Professor Irwin was a small man, that is he was not very tall but heavy set, weighing about one hundred and fifty pounds, bald head, blue eyes, and comely face. While he was an old man at the time I attended his schools he had much aimable ways and charming countenance that every pupil was his "pal" and friend. They had so much respect for him, obedience to the laws of his school was a pleasure, hence order and decorum in his schools was perfect.

His Circuit

His circuit included part of Cleveland and Rutherford counties at the time I am writing about. I attended at Providence and Cool Springs schools

A scholar being a subscriber in any of the schools on professor's circuit or system of schools had the right to attend any or all of the schools if he wanted to and had the time to attend.

Very few ever did this for if he or she did it was a re-hash, or the same lessons as taught the day before at the other schools. It meant a double dose and some did it for that reason, and when the terms ended the fellow that had taken the double dose usually was the better off because of the double dosing. I took

the double dose and never regretted it.

The First Day of the Term

This was the day of organization, and assignment of lessons and a lecture by the professor telling the pupils what could be accomplished in the ten days term. It seemed impossible and yet the professor proved his case by aiding many to understand grammar in one ten day session. The secret of that dear old professor in producing such results, was that he had the inspiration and in his lectures on the opening day, that inspiration was injected by his eloquence into many of his pupils and it was that class of them that caught the inspiration that succeeded and at the end of the ten days term could answer any question in that old Grammar. There were drones then as now, both as to teaching and as learners.

The First Lesson

Well do I remember my first day at Cool Springs school house, which stood near the Baptist church, and the same place where the cemetery at Forest City is located. This was a good school house for those days. It was weatherboarded, had one or two small glass windows. It was not sealed, had a chimney at one end, a few benches, one chair and table for the teacher's desk. Behind this table stood the professor, no book in his hand, nor rod under his arm but telling the scholars how they all could become great. When I entered, he stopped, looked at me and said just in time. (I had walked four miles to get there.) Have a seat, and now let every one turn to the first page and you will find, and with this he read the whole thing off by heart.

He then told us the first lesson would be the ten parts of speech and could and must be gotten by heart by every scholar before the next school day which was ten days off. He said there are but ten parts of speech and of course it was easy for any girl or boy to get one part of speech each day for ten days and then they would have the parts by heart. In his lecture to us in assigning our lesson he gave the definition of each part and by illustration made many of them plain. Why, he said noun is the first part of speech and noun means just anything that has a

name, like cat, dog, pig or pup. At this the whole school breathed easy, and you could hear Tom, Phip, and Jake saying in a whisper I know what a noun is, and they did. Then he said a pronoun is another part of speech and one of ten divisions into which the language is divided. And it meant a great deal but was easy to remember for if pig and pup were nouns, and they were, then any word that will stand for either pig or pup would be a pronoun. Just at this time Tom's pup came into the door and the professor seized his coming into illustrate his point and said whose pup is that and "Tom said mine." Put him out then. Then he told us "him" stood in that case for the pup for he told Tom to put "him" out, meaning the pup and again there was a twitter in the class same as to say I know pronoun and they did in a way; for among the girls could be heard yes I know its him and that's a pronoun, and it was. The professor could see the pick-up and enjoyed it for Jane asked him "him" a pronoun when it means a boy as well as a pup. Certainly he said there is no difference, if the pup is a male. Other parts of speech, in fact all of them were illustrated to the class on that opening day by the professor as well as the noun and pronoun. Each scholar noted in his book the page where the professor said we must get by heart before the next school day and thus ended the first day enroute to a graduation in a grammar school in the days of my boyhood, at a ten day pace.

As the girls and boys hid away home, some for miles, to do first their chores at home, and then by pine knot or tallow candle light, study till the wee wee hours of the night. And many things they had learned that day for Phip said everything he saw was a noun, and Jane said most she could see was a pronoun, Him.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AT HARRIS SCHOOL

Harris, Dec. 12.—On Thursday evening December 22 at Harris school building, the following program will be given by the grammar and primary grades. Immediately after the

program there will be a community Christmas tree.

Welcome song.

Writing to Santa, Louise Bland. Song: Upon the house top, Louise Bland and Lewis Robbins.

"The Reason", Benard Harris. "What Makes Christmas," by six first grade children.

Song: "Away in the manger," primary grades.

Not too little to help, Myrtis Carroll and Virgil Lee Butler.

"Christmas Symbols", by six girls. Christmas Gifts: Clyde Robbins. Song: "O, Little Town of Bethlehem."

Reading—"Miss Prim's Christmas Shopping," by Martha Ruth Harris. Play: "The One True Gift of Christmas", by seven grammar grade children.

A Visit from St. Nick, Eugene Smith.

Song: "There's a song in the air." Play: "Squire Hawley's Christmas," by grammar grade pupils.

Princess Theatre, Shelby, N. C.

Thursday — Friday
Polo Negri

IN

"Barbed Wire

A Paramount picture.

News — Comedy

Also Mystery Spencen, the man that knows all—

Matinee 10c and 25c

Night 20c and 40c

Saturday

Barze Barton

IN

Sling Shot Kid

Comedy—News

Monday — Tuesday

CLARA BOW

IN

"Get Your Man"

Comedy — News

Wednesday

Oh, What a Night

Also St. Louis Stock Company presenting "OVER THE HILL TO THE POOR HOUSE."

In 3 Acts

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At The Princess

Was In Misery All Over

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"One night my husband brought me home six bottles of Cardui and I began to take it. I could tell that I was improving from the first bottle, but I kept on taking the medicine, for I knew that I needed a tonic that would build me up and strengthen me where I was weak and run-down. That is exactly what Cardui did for me. After I had finished the six bottles I felt fine.

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—: PHONE 64 :—

Forest City,

N. C.

Campbell's Removal Sale

Moves on with increasing interest. Many of our customers who attended the opening days of this great sale were so impressed with the wonderful values that we were offering that they have visited us repeatedly since and are still finding more interesting values. The opportunity is rapidly passing and the merchandise is moving fast. Don't postpone your visit any longer, but come at once. Perhaps never in your life and likely never again will you be afforded such a startling opportunity. We are losing heavily on this merchandise which we prefer to do rather than bear the heavy expense of moving it. Don't forget that this is a clean sweep sale, not one item being omitted.

LADIES' & CHILDREN'S COATS

Since the opening days of this sale we have received several lots of the season's very best numbers in ladies' and children's Coats, bought as closeouts especially for this sale. They are selling in this sale at less than one-half their former price.

FLOOR COVERINGS

You will need some new rugs for Christmas. Buy them here at less than factory prices.

9x12 CERTAINTED RUGS, assorted patterns \$6.95

CERTAINTED Linoleum, yd. \$1.00

MEN'S OVERCOATS

One of the most sensational numbers in our sale is our Overcoats selling at \$5.95, and worth up to \$35.00.

SHOES

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SHELBY, N. C.