

VOLUME XXIII

Practical Work for Humanity at Training School

History of the Foundation and Early Struggle of the School A Revelation of Faith and Sacrifice

It Is a Proposition Dealing With Human Lives.—It Is a Cause That Concerns Eternity.—It Is a Call to a Christian Civilization.

(By J. P. COOK, Concord.)

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Stowell Jackson Manual Training and Industrial School.

My connection with the beginning, establishment and growth of the Stowell Jackson Manual Training and Industrial School has been to me one of the greatest pleasures, coming to man in this life. I have been asked many questions, by interested parties and others, bearing on the genesis of the institution, how it was accomplished, what now constitutes the plant, its accomplishments, and what of the future.

What was on paper in 1907 is now a reality; and what was just an idea, a theory, in 1909, when the institution was opened for the reception of boys, is no longer an experiment, but an accomplishment, a certainty, a tangible result. If these things were not true, the many questions asked would be useless; and those who stood for that theory and wrought that development would be trying to conceal their identity, instead of publicly confessing an intimate connection with the establishment of the institution.

I regard a candid answering of these questions an act of politeness; and, to secure for the institution a deeper sympathy and a stronger support on the part of the public and the state that it may the better serve its purpose. I regard a frank statement a necessity.

WHERE A LIFE BEGAN AND WHAT HAPPENED

A two-room log cabin, squatting on a hill overlooking a small creek, served the purposes of a home for a family of three. One chimney, one fire-place, no stove for cooking; and what light entered that home had to come through a shuttered window without glass. The logs were chinked, and the floor of rough unjointed plank. The only shade for this home was furnished by several old-field pines. No sign of a porch, for the elevation of the story was just enough to accommodate an undersized door.

This was a home in the Piedmont section of North Carolina—it was the home of a man and wife and one child, a boy. Neither the father nor the mother could read or write. There are people in this condition that possess sometimes an unusual amount of intelligence, native ability. These parents did not—they were ignorant. With them it was just simply be-thing, living.

In some unaccountable way, which nature at times practices, the boy was an improvement of the parents. Things better than he possessed or enjoyed attracted his attention; he manifested a desire to see, to hear, to learn of things beyond his sphere, and the advantages of school were denied him. Wading up and down the stream near his home with small fellows accompanying their fathers to the old corn mill near by, serving them and guiding them, seemed to him an hour and a great pleasure.

The people composing this family were white—pure Anglo-Saxon. Without pride, without ambition, without education, without even a reasonable amount of mother-wit, and without an average native or developed sense of the value of virtue. And these people brought into the world another being; and the foregoing was his environment, his opportunity. This is not a typical family of this section, nor of any other section in North Carolina; but in every section there are to be found examples like unto this one of real flesh and blood.

Disease overtook the parents. They died during the same season. The son, the boy, just passing thirteen years of age, was undersized. He had no means of support, no one to care for him—just an orphan.

He Finds a Home.

By neighborhood, common consent, this thirteen year-old boy was given a home with a family (distant relatives) that had enjoyed for generations educational and religious advantages. Entering that home was an event in the boy's life. Though practically becoming a slave to the family, his environment made his physical welfare more agreeable than that which surrounded his previous years. No attempt was made to teach him the lessons of right or wrong; to teach him to read or write; to inspire him with a hope for a better life; to give him to understand the sacred things that he should observe. Enough was done for him when his nakedness was covered, and his hunger was checked. He was just an animal that was permitted shelter and feed for the work the slave could do.

Strong Arm of the Law Grapples Him.

One Sunday afternoon, when the family was away attending Sunday School, the boy, having been left home to guard the cows from the wheat fields, with a childish curiosity could not resist the temptation to investigate the house, to him a marvel of bigness and wonder. The young fellow found in a bureau drawer a small sum of money. The love of money seems to come with the first breath, and to an untutored child it has even a greater charm. The boy took the money (we have not the heart to call it

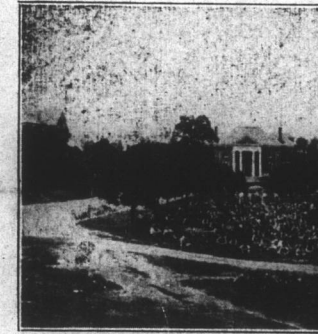
stealing) and returned to his assigned duty. Upon the family's return from church, the man of the house went direct to that bureau drawer. Was it a trap? He discovered the loss. What would you have done, gentle reader, under the circumstances?

The following morning this man, faithful to his idea of his Sunday duties, for himself and his family, sought a local magistrate, swore out a warrant for the thirteen year old boy's arrest. In the county jail the high sheriff placed him. Fifteen prisoners were in there—all colored, and, as it so happened, all were confirmed criminals, serving various sentences for various crimes. Not a living man volunteered aid—not a soul gave the boy a passing thought.

The Judge and Solicitor Arrive.

There was naught to speak for the boy. The court devoured him. The solicitor's prayer for sentence upon this white boy, who made no defense—no appeal for mercy, or even humane justice—was the meekest, coldest utterance ever spoken in the state. In the language of another,

WATER MELON TIME



Happy Scene on the Campus of the Jackson Training School

reviewing the course of a certain judge, that solicitor's act and enthusiasm in putting away that particular white boy, where his could be properly damned, "was as cruel as the grave."

Then the Judge took a pass at the boy, finished his case, in the name of the state and justice and civilization. That particular judge, if he had any compassion, adroitly concealed it. He appeared not to see the child before him—just a criminal. He asked no questions. The birth, the home, the environment, the opportunity, the cowardly conduct of the great, big stalwart man, who swore out the warrant against him—none of these the judge ever heard. He coldly, easily and quickly sentenced that small thirteen year old boy to a county "chain-gang for three years and six months at hard labor." And this was the treatment meted out to a child in a North

THE BEAUTIFUL CHAPEL



This Chapel Was Given to the Jackson Training School by the King's Daughters of North Carolina

Carolina Superior Court of 1890.

A Midnight Warning. The disposition of that case by the court was severely criticised by a certain paper at the time. The criticism was not a legal friend awakened the editor more eloquent than judicious. In the to warn him of the committed "contempt of court." The friendly advice was appreciated, but the way out of the difficulty was too hard and thus declined.

The legal friend finally agreed that the judge might not take cognizance of the act, since the opportunity was at hand to use certain conditions, for which the judge was responsible, in making him more uncomfortable in the eyes of the whole state. But the boy—

Why, He Was Chained to a Negro.

That was his condition. The only white person in the group, and chains and lock around his ankles, keeping step with a hardened criminal without hope, or the hope of a hope, building roads for civilization—that was a queer way of punishing a boy—a miscarriage of reform.

A SYMPOSIUM STARTS TALK IN THE STATE.

Unable to put this court tragedy behind, and other boys, with or without chance to be what they should, getting mixed up with the law, this particular paper suggested the establishment of a

Reformatory along the lines of a school

to handle boys of certain ages. A symposium by a number of ministers and others deeply interested in the welfare of children was published in one issue. Throughout the state it received no little attention, being favorably commented upon by the majority. The only big editor of a strong influential paper that did not fully endorse the movement was the late J. P. Caldwell, then of the Statesville Landmark. Privately this wonderful power in state journalism wrote: "Your position is correct; the treatment of certain youthful offenders is a crime against civilization; there is a need for just such an institution you suggest; but the old state is so conservative that she will not listen to you now, and, being your friend, I wish to save you from a sore disappointment." When the state was ready, in the course of time, to do its duty by wayward boys,

one of the strongest agencies in shaping the work and getting it started off on correct lines, was Mr. Caldwell, often consulted and who never tired of lending a helping hand.

The First Gubernatorial Recognition.

So far as this writer is aware, the first governor of North Carolina to pronounce for a Reformatory, as then thought of, was Governor Daniel G. Fowle, who, in one of his messages to the General Assembly, recommended the establishment of such an institution in the state. His attention was called to the matter during an outing at Morehead City. But the General Assembly did not act. Now and then, after that time and up to 1907, the subject was agitated, discussed pro and con. In the fall of 1906, the time for a vigorous campaign, looking to the chartering of a Reform School in the state by the legislature, seemed propitious.

Strong Advocates.

The aid of the Women's Clubs and the King's Daughters was invoked. The subject was ably discussed editorially by Hon. W. C. Doud Mr. J. P. Caldwell, the Raleigh News and Observer, the Monroe Journal, the Asheville Citizen, and many other editors and newspapers in North Carolina.

In presenting the matter before the legislative committee, wisdom suggested the superior qualifications of the women for that work—and most of it was done by the good women of the State. So many ideas of the right way of authorizing the establishment of the institution developed among legislators and even among the advocates, that it appeared for a time that the cause was hopeless even in the General Assembly of 1907.

Among the most earnest advocates in the General Assembly were Hon. E. R. Preston, Hon. J. S. Manning, Hon. R. B. Redick, Hon. M. B. Stickley and others. When a final decision was made to eliminate either in name or operation any prison feature, and to name the institution properly: The Stowell Jackson Manual Training and Industrial School, the prospects for a charter brightened. The honor of introducing the bill that led to the charter of the institution, of which we write, belongs to Col. W. Penn Wood, the chivalrous member from the county of Randolph.

CHARTER GRANTED—STARTS HANDICAPPED.

No movement of any kind in the state was ever started with a smaller financial appropriation. Undertaking what was an innovation in the educational life of the state, with so few friends among the politicians and representative men and women, on a meager ten thousand dollar appropriation, looked at the time to those who stood for this service as a severe test. There was no looking back. Going out into a barren and uncultivated field, following up a sentiment, backed only by a theory, with no available site, scarcely any funds, the wealthy patrons, and the leaders engrossed with the public affairs closest to them, the cause promised slow progress, calling for cautious acts, no little wisdom and unconquerable faith.

The First Board of Trustees.

In conjunction with certain ladies, who had thrown their earnestness and enthusiasm into the struggle for the char-



Contributed to the Jackson Training School by J. E. Latham, of Greensboro, N. C.

ter, Governor Glenn, particularly friendly to the project, caused the following to become the first board of trustees: Mrs. Stowell Jackson, Mrs. W. H. S. Burgwyn, Mrs. G. P. Erwin, Mrs. J. W. Faison, Mrs. A. L. Coble, Mrs. W. N. Reynolds, Mrs. D. Y. Cooper, Miss Easdale Shaw; Dr. H. A. Royster, Geo. W. Watts, E. R. Preston, J. H. Tucker, J. J. Blair, Caesar Cone, and Jas. P. Cook. They were called together, by Governor Glenn, on September 3rd, 1907, in Raleigh, Governor Glenn presided on the board that it was undertaking an important task, with difficult obstacles, but the work was so necessary and important that he urged all to meet the task with earnestness and hope.

The organization was perfected by the following selection of officers: Jas. P. Cook, chairman; Dr. H. A. Royster, secretary; Caesar Cone, treasurer; and several officers were constituted an executive committee. At that meeting, besides other details of perfecting the organization, an advertisement calling for propositions for the location of the institution was authorized.

At this meeting letters of regret were received from Messrs. G. W. Watts and E. R. Preston, stating that on account of business engagements they could not serve on the board. Some months afterward, these two vacancies were filled by the appointment of Messrs. D. B. Coltrane and R. O. Everett, who accepted the trust.

The Matter of Location.

Soon after the publication calling for propositions for the location of the school, offers of sites came from a number of points and sources. The discouraging feature of them all was the price asked for said sites, requiring for the most generous proposition all the appropriation except \$750.00, and the least favorable one left just \$25.00. This for the time being seemed to spell the doom of the cause, a site, no buildings, no management, appropriation exhausted, meant disaster and ridicule. Having reached this point in the long waiting since 1890, the friends of the cause were right up against the wall.

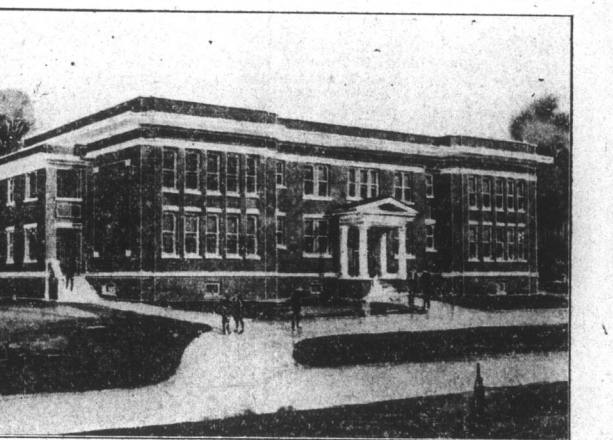
Concord Won a Place on the Map.

After a conference with several of the leading citizens, an informal meeting was held in the city hall, presided over by the late Dr. Robert Simonton Young, in October, 1907. At that meeting it was decided to put on an campaign to raise by popular subscription ten thousand dollars. In a few days success was attained. When the Board of Trustees of the institution met in the Guilford Hotel, in Greensboro, a full attendance of the trustees being noted, the question of location was taken up. It is recalled that Mr. Caesar Cone, who took a deep interest in the entire matter, remarked: "I could raise a much larger amount than the best offer before us, but for good and sufficient reasons and for the especial sake of the school, I think it should be located near Concord; therefore, I move that we accept the proposition made us by the citizens of Concord." Mr. Cone's motion was unanimously adopted.

While no subscription was large, it is Board to select a superintendent of the institution, and having considered the fitness of various parties for the position, offered the superintendency to Prof. Walter Thompson, then in charge of the city schools of Concord. Mr. Thompson accepted, and with the first of the year, 1908, he began service. Taking every precaution to avoid errors, he too spent a while in the institution heretofore mentioned. Active building of two cottages (called cottages to designate a system other than the dormitory idea) was commenced in early spring.

SCHOOL BUILDING

The cost complete of a cottage today is \$24,000. How the Board could erect two cottages and meet the superintendent's salary with a capital in hand of only ten thousand dollars was a problem. It was necessary and imperative to meet two cottages, for that was the smallest plant with which operation could be begun; and the institution must



School Building at the Jackson Training School Showing Auditorium in the Rear

be ready for service by the first of 1909, or else a long drawn-out campaign might have to be gone over again.

It is a fact that the generosity of the King's Daughters of the state, assisted by the N. C. Federation of Women's Clubs, who unitedly contributed five thousand dollars at the time, prevented an absolute failure. It is, also, a fact to keep body and soul together Supt. Thompson parted with his old (family) gray horse; and modesty prevents relating what the other party in that struggle parted with. One cottage was complete by Christmas; the second nearing completion; but not a range, nor a bed, nor table, nor chair nor any one thing that goes into the furnishing of a home for thirty boys was in evidence, and not a cent, available or due with which to purchase same.

An Ideal Location.

Visitors from every section of the state and from without, stopping over, have remarked upon the splendid location. One woman, who has visited a number of institutions, and who has had to do with the management of one, remarked: "It seems that this spot was specially made for the Stowell Jackson Training School." It is three miles southwest of the station in Concord, and the property includes within its bounds a little less than three hundred acres—this, then, is the gift of Concord.

THOROUGH INVESTIGATION—DEFINITE PLANS.

Before a single item of building material had been considered, or any move made to put into existence what had been developed on paper, a member of the Board spent near a month, practically as an inmate, in a most splendid institution in the state of Pennsylvania, merely for the purpose of information. This particular institution at that time had been the most successful of its kind in all the country, and represented an expenditure of more than a million dollars.

Selection of Superintendent.

The superintendent, a scholarly and very practical Baptist minister, took a lively interest in the work before his North Carolina brethren, and warned us against errors and mistakes. So before a brick was ever laid, the character of the buildings to make up the plant of the Jackson Training School was decided upon; and the locations agreed upon.

In November 1907, the Executive Committee having been instructed by the

Board to select a superintendent of the institution, and having considered the fitness of various parties for the position, offered the superintendency to Prof. Walter Thompson, then in charge of the city schools of Concord. Mr. Thompson accepted, and with the first of the year, 1908, he began service. Taking every precaution to avoid errors, he too spent a while in the institution heretofore mentioned. Active building of two cottages (called cottages to designate a system other than the dormitory idea) was commenced in early spring.

The Struggle of 1908.

The cost complete of a cottage today is \$24,000. How the Board could erect two cottages and meet the superintendent's salary with a capital in hand of only ten thousand dollars was a problem. It was necessary and imperative to meet two cottages, for that was the smallest plant with which operation could be begun; and the institution must

SCHOOL BUILDING

The cost complete of a cottage today is \$24,000. How the Board could erect two cottages and meet the superintendent's salary with a capital in hand of only ten thousand dollars was a problem. It was necessary and imperative to meet two cottages, for that was the smallest plant with which operation could be begun; and the institution must

A Christmas Visit.

Between Christmas of 1908 and New Year's Day, Mrs. J. P. Cook visited furniture factories at Thomassville and High Point, securing the donation of sufficient furniture for one cottage; in Salisbury she secured from merchants table linens and other necessities; and in Charlotte, from Parker & Gardner, enough knives, forks and spoons to supply the needs of thirty-six individuals and later a piano from the same firm. By an entertainment given in Concord, Mrs. Cook raised the funds to pay for all the crockery and tableware needed, also for the purchase of a two-horse wagon. (These are the outstanding articles secured in a campaign of less than four days.)

Other Good Samaritans.

What's the use of dining tables, cups and saucers, dishes and spoons, beds and chairs in a house-keeping game, even with food, when no range and pots are at hand. The day of the bake-over out in the yard had passed; and, no chimney was large enough to hang enough pots to supply the food for thirty or more people.

There came walking out from among

(Continued on Page Thirty-eight.)