

TEACHING TEACHERS

FINE WORK BEING DONE AT THE UNIVERSITY SUMMER SCHOOL.

PROF. MOSES WRITES ABOUT IT.

Superintendent Alderman is the Right Man in the Right Place--He is Doing For the Teachers of the State More Than Any One Else Could Do--The Great Library and Laboratories of the University Thrown Open for the Use of the Teachers.

RALEIGH, N. C., Jan. 10.

To the Editor of the News and Observer:

The University summer school has already become an important factor in the intellectual development of the State.

This school was organized in 1894 by the authorities of the University. Prof. E. A. Alderman, of the department of pedagogics, was appointed superintendent. It is not enough to say that no wiser selection could have been made. It is simple justice to say that, under Prof. Alderman's management, the school is doing more for the teachers of the State than it would have accomplished under the direction of any other man in the State or out of it.

The good work of the first session was so excellent an advertisement for the school that the number of teachers now in attendance is almost, if not quite, double the number in attendance last year.

Many teachers of the State have long desired the establishment of a school conducted exclusively for teachers, where they might have an opportunity to continue their studies under competent guidance, and where methods of teaching all the branches which should be taught in our public and private schools might be presented by experts. Especially has the need been felt for a school for the training of teachers in science by natural methods of nature study. It is generally admitted that we have made no perceptible progress in teaching the sciences in our elementary schools because of the lack of preparation on the part of the masses of teachers for their work, which demands special training. The University summer school, in addition to its extensive course in the humanities, has taken hold of the work of science-teaching in earnest, in a way never before attempted. The result of the work done in this department alone will prove of incalculable value.

Chapel Hill is an ideal place for a summer school. The great library of the University is thrown open to the student teachers, and at any time during the day one may see there almost every teacher not on recitation engaged in reading or study upon some topic connected with the work. The chemical, physical, geological, and biological laboratories are of great value to the students, and, together with the library, make possible a higher grade of work than could be done at almost any other place and under other conditions. Summer schools without libraries and laboratories cannot in any sense compete with such a school as that now in operation at the University.

But the strongest feature of the University school is the excellent corps of teachers. Far above perfect organization, the splendid library, and the wealth of appliances tower the teachers, masters in their several departments. I trust that a review of their daily work as it appeared to me on occasion of a brief visit there last week will not prove altogether uninteresting to the readers of the NEWS AND OBSERVER.

As the village of Chapel Hill has not yet begun to assume city airs, all are forced to rise early as all good people do who live close to nature's heart, and at 8:15 the exercises of the day begin. After prayers in the college chapel, a period of about an hour is spent in conference upon some question of general interest to teachers. It was my good fortune at this hour, to listen to a plea for the teaching of civil government by Supt. Alex. Graham, of the Charlotte schools, together with suggestions as to the best method of presenting this important subject. The lecture was the ablest presentation of the question I have ever heard. Mr. Graham's power to hold the undivided attention of his hearers throughout and lead them to the end to cry like Oliver for more is enough to make his less gifted brethren absolutely turn green with envy but for their pleasure at witnessing success so well deserved.

At the close of the first morning hour, the school separates for the day. Six periods of instruction successively follow, each forty-five minutes in length. During each period, from four to five professors are at work in their various class rooms; the teachers attending such lectures as bear most directly upon the work in which they expect to be engaged during the coming year, or such as refer to their favorite studies.

Miss Minnie Redford, of the Raleigh schools, in the presence of teachers especially interested in primary work, conducts a class of half a dozen little children of the village in spelling and reading by the natural method. It goes without saying that her work is done attractively and effectively.

The course is particularly rich in the languages. Prof. Foy, who aroused great interest last year in the study of French and German is continuing his good work. I had the pleasure of listening to a recitation conducted by Mr. H. H. Horne, in elementary French. Mr. Horne thoroughly understands, what some teachers double his age seem never to have realized, that a language is to be learned by the use of the tongue, as the word language itself plainly proves. During the recitation French was studied, not French grammar. In this as in other respects the lesson was a model for teachers. Excellent opportunities are given for advanced work in Latin under Mr. Pugh and in Greek under Mr. Wilson. The classes in elementary Latin and in Caesar are conducted by Superintendent Logan D. Howell, of the Raleigh schools, of whom our people expect

much and who will not disappoint them. When entered Mr. Howell's room, he was just beginning the reading from Froude's Caesar of an interesting account of Caesar's campaign, the teachers following him with their eyes upon the map of Gaul. The reading was interrupted at times by remarks from the teachers on questions from the pupils. The effect was to make the subject-matter intensely real, and seemed to me to be the best possible preparation for the critical study of the Latin of Caesar. What a contrast to the course which must have been pursued by the teacher of that boy who, after having "studied" Caesar a year, told me the first day I ever taught school that he didn't know that Latin meant anything, and when questioned to explain, confessed that he thought Latin "a lot of words" to be looked out at the end of the book!

The work in mathematics is admirably done by Prof. Cain who has classes in trigonometry and geometry, and by Supt. Noble, of Wilmington, who teaches algebra and arithmetic. In his recitation in arithmetic, which I heard, Mr. Noble, as usual, showed himself to be a true teacher of teachers. He has probably taught consecutively teachers in summer schools and institutes for a longer period than any other man in the South, and his labors have done much to elevate the professional character of the work of the schools throughout the State.

In the scientific department there is chemistry, by Dr. Baskerville; geology, by Prof. Holmes; physiology, by Supt. Graham; physics, by Prof. Gore, and physical geography, by Mr. Lewis. The experiments which I saw in Dr. Baskerville's room were highly interesting and instructive. At intervals the teachers took copious notes and showed great interest in the excellent work before them. Prof. Holmes did not carry on his work in geology by asking questions from a book. Perhaps he has never heard that anybody ever pretended to "teach" geology in that way. After a pleasant introduction he had the rocks about which he proposed to speak placed before the eyes and in the hands of the teachers. At the close of his lesson, the names granite, quartz, feldspar and sandstone meant much more with many, it cannot be doubted, than they had ever meant before. The following day he conducted a party of teachers on an excursion. I know from one who was with him that he opened his eyes to some things in nature never previously perceived. At night he delighted the school with stereopticon views, showing different aspects of the earth's surface, and proved to the satisfaction of the youngest child in the house that the whole earth was not just like the mountain home of his old friend in the Smokies. I found Prof. Gore explaining an electrical machine to an attentive class. At the close of his lecture he courteously conducted me through his laboratory, where I found much to admire, especially a large number of instruments which he himself has made. I trust it is not out of place to express the hope that soon more fitting accommodations can be secured for the University's valuable collection of physical apparatus. Mr. Lewis, who had charge of the work in physical geography in the Asheville schools and later took an extensive course in geography at the Cook County Normal School, Chicago, under Col. Parker, is doing good work in his favorite science.

Prof. Claxton's lectures on psychology are invaluable. He insists upon a philosophic basis for every school-room method or device, and is arousing great interest in the work. During the remainder of the session he will conduct classes in elementary science with especial reference to the needs of primary teachers. Dr. Hume has charge of the work in Anglo-Saxon and English literature. He is not attempting to teach literature by giving lessons in a hand-book that tells about literature, but he is teaching literature itself. I found him engaged in reading, with a very large and enthusiastic class, Shakespeare's Henry IV, upon which he poured a wealth of historical and philological learning. Dr. Battle lectures daily on history. I regret that on account of his temporary absence at the Guilford Battle Ground, I did not have an opportunity of visiting his class room. He is doing a great work for North Carolina schools and teachers as he has done for the past twenty years. It was Dr. Battle who was impressed with the great value of the summer school for teachers back in the seventies and started at the University the first successful school of the kind in the South. For years he was its life and inspiration. Superintendent Graham's lectures on English grammar are thoroughly practical and enjoyable. In his favorite field of etymology, he has no superior. Literature, without absolutely correct ideas of the meaning of the words therein is as worthless as faith without works. In arousing the interest of the teachers in this vital subject, he is entitled to high praise.

Prof. Alderman's lecture on pedagogics have been attended by so many, attached by his powerful and captivating presentation of the Herbartian philosophy that he has been forced into more commodious quarters than his lecture-room afforded. I shall attempt no review of his lectures. "Who can gild fine gold or paint the lily?"

The University Summer School is an honor to President Winston, to the University, and to North Carolina scholarship. It richly deserves the patronage of every teacher who is able to attend it and the good-will of every patriotic citizen of the State.

EDWARD P. MOSES.

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