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EDUCATION BOARD MEETS

N. F. Steppe Re-elected County Superintendent—Board Out of Debt.

The County Board of Education met in its office on Monday and transacted the usual routine of business. At 12 o'clock the board went into session to elect a county superintendent and N. F. Steppe was re-elected unanimously.

It was decided that the summer schools shall be permitted to open on Monday, July 21st. No school will be expected to suspend for fodder season, unless it be very necessary.

Supt. N. F. Steppe had all reports for the previous year's work in readiness for the board's inspection. The enrollment and attendance for the past year has been very good. The epidemic, however, interfered seriously, reducing the average attendance somewhat below that of the year previous, which was the best in the history of McDowell county.

The financial statement showed the finances of the county in very excellent condition. Two years ago the board started out with a heavy indebtedness. The board now finds itself clear of debt, with a nice balance to its credit, as shown in the Treasurer's report in this issue.

The past two years five special tax districts have been added, and two bond issues amounting to \$57,000 have been carried. Four new buildings have been erected and two others have been enlarged. There are at present four buildings under course of construction. In all of this work the people of the county have co-operated in a very admirable spirit. They have aided very materially in the erection of new buildings; all special tax elections and bond elections have been carried almost unanimously, reflecting the sentiment in the county for better schools.

At present there are four State high schools in the county. Under the new law it will be possible for additional ones to be added. Several districts are qualifying for classification in this list.

Plans are being worked out for the continued development and improvement of our schools. Better training of teachers is being arranged for, making it possible for teachers to better qualify themselves without having to go to great expense of attending summer schools at a distance. It is the policy of the board to do every thing possible that will contribute to the progress of education and the general uplift of the people of the county. With the increase in the school term and the raise in teachers' salaries it is expected that the coming year will be the greatest in the history of McDowell County in matters of education.

Dr. Cullom Here Next Sunday.

Dr. W. R. Cullom of Raleigh, will preach at the First Baptist church next Sunday morning. Dr. Cullom is one of the strongest men in the State and we must give him a good hearing. Come early for Sunday School and stay over for the eleven o'clock preaching service.

J. T. BOWDEN, Pastor.

Order Reducing Army May Make Present Congress Act.

Washington, July 5.—The question of a permanent military policy probably will be forced before the present session of Congress by Secretary Baker's order reducing the army to 233,000 officers and men by September 30. Military experts here believe only speedy passage of the army reorganization bill will prevent demoralization of the military establishment.

The recent army bill makes mandatory the continuance of the four new staff corps; chemical warfare, motor transport, tank and air service—none of which was provided for in the national defense act. Officers and men must be drawn from the line and from the regular staff personnel to provide the necessary overhead of these branches.

"A return to the status of 1908," was the prediction of one officer concerning the effects. In that year companies could muster only 35 men and regiments were frequently under the charge of one major and one captain.

The general staff is already at work on some program which will come within authorized expenditures, and yet permit the retention of a skeleton establishment which may be expanded for war.

Primary troop requirements which must be met include:

Garrisons for the Philippines, Hawaii and the Panama canal, conservatively figured at 50,000 men; a guard for the southern border, now maintained at 30,000; a force of 8,000 on the Rhine, and for the time being at least, 8,000 men for Siberia.

These total 96,000 officers and men and do not take into consideration the hundreds of small garrisons needed at home army posts, which is estimated at 20,000 with a further addition for the coast defenses. War department plans approved as late as March provided 55,000 officers and men for the coast defenses.

The 23,000 temporary officers who have applied for permanent commissions in the regular army must be discharged forthwith because of the lack of money.

Death of W. N. Peoples.

Mr. W. N. Peoples, of Pompano, Fla., died at the home of J. W. Kirby here last Saturday afternoon about 1 o'clock of cancer. Mr. Peoples was 66 years old and is survived by his wife, who was before her marriage Miss Hattie Smith of Charlotte. Mrs. Peoples is a sister to Mrs. J. W. Kirby of this place.

Mr. Peoples had been a sufferer of cancer for a number of years and following a recent operation came to Marion three weeks ago for treatment under his nephew, Dr. G. S. Kirby, hoping that the climate would prove beneficial. The deceased was a member of the Presbyterian church. He was city tax collector in Charlotte for a number of years and was held in high esteem by a large circle of friends there. The remains were taken to his old home at Steele Creek, Mecklenburg county, for interment.

Miss Hattie Holler has returned to Hickory after spending a few weeks here with her parents.

MUST ATTEND FULL TERM

Rules Governing School Attendance in the State Effective July 1; Rules Governing Absences.

The State board of education announces that school children in North Carolina must attend the full term of their district. The enforcement of this law is in the hands of State Superintendent Brooks, Roland F. Beasley, commissioner of public welfare, and Dr. Watson, secretary to the State board of health. The law is effective July 1.

The Greensboro News bureau, Raleigh, says:

"In defining the school age between eight and 14, the superintendent begins with the eighth and ends with the 14th natal day. The commission then determines that children between these ages must attend continuously for a period equal to the time when the public school in the district in which the child resides shall be in session. If the school in such district runs six months, the child must attend that length; if more, even 10 months, the attendance must be continuous. If the child attends a private school, it must go for a term as long as that of the public school, provided in the district in which the child resides. Attendance records must be kept by that school and it must make reports of that character exactly as the public schools. If it fails or refuses to keep these records, attendance on these schools shall not be accepted in lieu of attendance on the regular schools. Instruction by private tutors will be accepted if his qualifications are approved by the county superintendent of schools and the State board of examiners. The time of such instruction must equal that provided by the public schools.

"The next most important feature of the rules issued is that governing the excuse of absences. The teacher in charge shall have the right to excuse pupils for temporary absence for the following reasons:

"(1) Illness of the child that incapacitates the child from attending the schools, but a physician's certificate must attend the child if it is continually absent for illness. In cases where it is inconvenient to get the certificate the teacher must investigate the illness and if dissatisfied with the evidence of illness must report the cases to the county health officer.

"(2) Illness in the family where it is apparent that the child's services are needed in the home and wherever there is danger of spreading contagious disease if attendance was not interrupted.

"(3) Death in the immediate family.

"(4) Quarantine in which isolation is the order of the local or the State board of health.

"(5) Physical incapacity, which shall be interpreted to mean that such defects make it difficult for the child to attend school.

"(6) Mental incapacity, interpreted to mean feeble-mindedness, or such nervous disorder as to make it either impossible for such child to profit by school or impracticable for the teacher to instruct properly the normal pupils of the school. In such cases the defects are to be reported to the proper authorities for treatment.

"(7) Severe weather that is dangerous to health or safety of the children.

"(8) Distance from the schools, two and a half miles from the nearest school being considered an excuse for absence, it will be the county's duty to furnish transportation.

"(9) Poverty is an excuse, but it must be reported, such indulgence to be reported to the county superintendent of public welfare. In some cases of this character the county board of education may order aid to the family from the incidental fund.

"(10) The completion of the course of study in the district shall be an excuse.

"More difficult to regulate is the section of the compulsory act which provides that 'the immediate demands of the farm or home' in several sections of the State shall in certain seasons of the year be a cause for non-attendance.

"The State board of education, realizing the difficulty of administering this feature from Raleigh, leaves it to the county boards until further notice. It recommends that where the demands of the farm are serious enough to require the immediate services of the child and such assistance cannot be obtained elsewhere, and where sickness in the home or other cause, calls for the child because assistance cannot be gained otherwise, the county boards may excuse. Very broad powers are conferred on them. A full report on each and every case arising under this section must be made to the State superintendent in order that the State board of education may determine to what extent this section of the law is appealed to.

"The commission suggests in cer-

tain places in which farming conditions demand the work of children at the regular school hours, schools might open an hour earlier and close about noon or 1 o'clock.

"Defining truancy is likewise a hard job for the commission, but it makes it as easy for the layman as possible by holding that wilful absence from school one day is truancy. The parents will be first apprised of this conduct, and if that fails to bring results, reports will be made to the attendance officer. The cause will be investigated and if this wilful truancy continues the child will be carried before the juvenile courts, which have jurisdiction in such cases.

"There are other causes which may take the offending child before the juvenile courts. When the conduct of the pupils is such as to menace the welfare of other children at school, the offender becomes a case for the courts.

"The county superintendent of public welfare is the chief attendance officer and enforcement of the law is in his hands."

Plans for Highway Improvement.

Chairman Frank Page, of the State Highway Commission, spent some time here Monday in conference with the Hugh F. Little, chairman of the county highway commission. Mr. Page stated that he will have a state engineer on the highway beginning at the Burke county line this week, and that the Central highway will be divided into four sections—one from the Burke county line to the C. C. & O. depot, one from the C. C. & O. depot to the court house hill, one from the city line to Old Fort, and from Old Fort to the Buncombe county line. The road between the C. C. & O. depot and Main street will be concreted and some hard surfacing will be done on the section of road between Curtis creek and Old Fort.

Glenwood township has secured an order from the county commissioners to issue \$10,000 00 in bonds for building and improving the roads in that township. The township commissioners have applied to the county highway commission for a highway through this township and it has been ordered that an engineer look into the matter at once.

The Broad River commissioners were before the county commission Monday and announced their readiness to issue bonds for road construction and improvement through that township.

Officers and Directors of Building and Loan Re-elected.

The annual meeting of the stockholders of the McDowell Building and Loan Association was held at the court house last Monday night. The meeting was well attended and the report of Secretary Neal was highly pleasing to the stockholders. The association has had a good year and is steadily growing. Mr. Neal reported that at the close of the year June 30 the number of share in force totaled 2,745 and that 300 or more applications had already been received for shares in the new series.

Officers and directors of the association were re-elected as follows: Thomas Morris, president; R. F. Burton, vice-president; J. E. Neal, secretary and treasurer; D. E. Hudgins, attorney; J. L. Morgan, Geo. I. White, J. Q. Gilkey, G. S. Kirby, W. M. Sweeney, Thomas Morris, R. F. Burton, D. E. Hudgins, J. E. Neal and J. M. Tyler, directors.

Services at St. John's next Sunday at 11 a. m. and 8:30 p. m.

STATE NEWS OF THE WEEK

Items Concerning Events of Interest and Importance Throughout the State.

Major Westall, U. S. army aviation instructor, made a successful flight across the Blue Ridge from Asheville to Morganton last Thursday.

The Southern Labor congress, which meets at Asheville August 20, has invited President Wilson to attend and he was also asked to deliver an address.

Actual work is soon to be started on the North Carolina Orthopaedic Hospital Home and School at Gastonia. The plans and specifications will within a week be placed in the hands of the contractors by R. B. Babington, of Gastonia, prime mover of the institution for the care of crippled orphaned children of sound minds. It is the intention of Mr. Babington to award the contract just as quickly as possible, and by the middle of August he hopes to see the building under process of construction.

Farmers' Institutes Begin.

Beginning the latter part of July, approximately 87 institutes will be conducted by four parties of Extension specialists in 45 counties of western and piedmont North Carolina. These institutes will be held under the supervision of the County Farm and Home Demonstration Agents in the different counties, and will be under the direction of Mr. T. B. Parker. The institutes are conducted cooperatively by the State Department of Agriculture, the Experiment Station, and the Agricultural Extension Service.

This year an effort will be made to promote the general agriculture of the entire State. As outlined by Director Parker, the aims of the institutes are: More fertile and better cultivated farms, a diversification of crops, more pure-bred livestock, and, finally, an enlarged community spirit which means better schools, better home surroundings, and a more highly profitable system of agriculture.

The institutes which have been arranged for McDowell county by Mr. Parker are as follows:

Dysartsville, August 18; Stroudtown, August 19.

Cotton Crop Less Than Last Year.

A cotton crop of about 1,000,000 bales smaller than last year's is forecast for this year by the department of agriculture in estimating prospective production at 10,986,000 bales.

Acreage this year shows a cut of 8.7 per cent from last year's, the decrease being 3,247,000 acres, the total being 33,960,000. The agitation for a reduction in acreage which the department of agriculture says occurred in every cotton-growing State, the scarcity and high price of labor and unfavorable weather caused the heavy decrease.

A play will be given at Glenwood school house Saturday night, July 12th, followed by an ice cream supper. Admission 15 and 20 cents. The proceeds will be used for the benefit of Glenwood High School.