

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

Managed by the Polk County Teachers' Association, and devoted to the advancement of the Public Schools.

EDITED BY PROF. T. A. HAYES, Independence, Oregon.

All communications relating to this work must be addressed to the editor of this department.

The program for the next meeting will be published next week.

Association Meeting.

Polk county teachers' association met in Dallas, March 2, and was held to order at 10:30 by Pres. Reynolds.

The opening exercises were conducted by Prof. Reynolds and then, Pres. Campbell being absent, Miss Ruth McDevitt gave her "Model Recitation and Reading."

This was well conducted and showed the skill of the teacher. After discussion by Supt. Hutchinson and others Miss Adona Cochran read a good paper on "An Object Lesson for Third Grade."

This was discussed by various persons, and general conclusion was that we need more object teaching, not for memorizing facts but for the power to read nature.

Prof. Parker was not present so Prof. Reynolds took the subject of "Object Lesson for Eighth Grade."

After some further discussion the association adjourned to dinner. After dinner the association sang two songs and then Leolin L. Swann read his paper on "Benefits of Association and How to Improve Them."

Lively interest was manifested in the discussion and the general opinion seemed to be that the association was beneficial to each individual but that there was room for great improvement.

D. A. Hoag seemed to be scared by his class recitation in "Decimal Fraction" from the fact that he absent himself.

"What is Knowledge and How Attained" was critically discussed by Prof. Sanders. There was much discussion on this subject and many good thoughts presented.

A vocal duet, "Sweet Visions of Childhood," by Miss Jennie Snyder and Prof. Sanders was a number well enjoyed by all the teachers.

Recitation, "A Leak in the Dyke," by Blanche Uglow was well delivered.

Quartette, "Merrily on We Bound," by Misses Snyder and Kirkpatrick and Messrs. Sanders Snyder was well received.

The association accepted an invitation to meet at Monmouth on the first Saturday in April. The meeting will be held in the Normal chapel.

Teachers present were: A. M. Sanders, Dallas; W. J. Reynolds, Dallas; W. F. Corbett, Dallas; D. E. Carpenter, Dallas; T. O. Hutchinson, Dallas; Mary Parker, Dallas; Mary Collins, Dallas; Edna Collins, Dallas; Lura Parker, Dallas; Hattie Williams, Dallas; Myrtle Williams, Dallas; Ruth McDevitt, Dallas; Mabel Cobb, Dallas; Lydia Campbell, Dallas; Harry Adams, Dallas; J. W. Butler, Dallas; Alice Bowdoin, Dallas; T. A. Hayes, Independence; W. W. Allingham, Dallas; Nell Hill, Dallas; Mrs. T. L. Tack, Dallas; F. Long, Monmouth; Adona Cochran, Dallas; Clara Hall, Dallas; Leolin L. Swann, Dallas; J. W. Storms, Buena Vista; Lottie Herbert, Dallas; J. N. Hart, Fats City; W. F. Nichols, Dallas; Vina Gilbert, Dallas; Minnie Gilbert, Dallas; W. C. Bryant, Dallas; L. J. Chapin, Smithfield; Zula V. Myer, Dallas; Zella Miner, Siver; Tracy Staats, Lewisville; Lena Prescott, Salem; L. M. Murry, Perrydale.

Association adjured by motion: W. I. REYNOLDS, Pres.; L. L. SWANN, Sec.

REPORTS.

ZENA PUBLIC SCHOOL.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. For month ending March 1, 1895: Number days attendance 782, tardies 18, Average number belonging 41, daily attendance 40, Number neither absent nor tardy 28, visits by board 6.

BALLSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. For the month ending February 22, 1895: Number days present 1703, absence 146, tardies 28, enrolled, boys 57, girls 43, total 100, Average number belonging 92, daily attendance 83, Percent of attendance 92, Number corporal punishment 9, neither absent nor tardy 48, visitors 8.

A PYTHIAN ORATION.

Delivered Before Homer Lodge, No. 46, in this City, on the 31st Anniversary of the Order, by M. O. Potter.

BROTHER KNIGHTS AND LADIES: I have been requested by my brother Knights to present this evening the objects and aims of our order, the Knights of Pythias, and if it is possible for you to glean from what I may have to say as to the highest purpose of our order, I shall feel that I have accomplished something.

If I were only able to present you this picture in beautiful words as has been my privilege to enjoy such presentation from men of grand thoughts and oratory; if I impress you with the noble sentiments and worthy objects which our order endeavors to impart and attain, I will feel that my efforts have not been in vain.

Chief Justice Rathbone, the founder of this order, in conjunction with a few friends, met in Washington, D. C., on the 19th day of February 1864, and there organized the first lodge of the order of Knights of Pythias. It was at a time when there was heard the cannon's roar and the crash of musketry, engaged in the bloody strife of a great civil war.

The seed then planted soon took deep root and grew up since became the giant oak under whose branches have gathered 6000 lodges and 400,000 Knights, in good standing.

It is said that when the bigoted nobles of England presented Napoleon with a notorious pedigree, tracing his descendants from some ancient Roman, he turned upon them with disdain; "My pedigree," he proudly said, "dates from Monte Notte," the field of his first battle.

As Napoleon was a child of his own deeds, so this great American brotherhood is the consummation of its own achievements, it parades no false pedigree and claims no kinship with those whose ignoble blood has crept through the veins of many scoundrels from the time of the recorded flood to the present.

Our order is a confraternity dedicated to Friendship, Charity and Benevolence, founded on a broad and liberal basis. Friendship has been for ages the corner stone of almost every secret society, and numerous orders have been established to exemplify this great principle.

Our order is trying to emulate this principle in remembering that, as our hero Pythias said, "Friendship sits upon a throne that never encumbers nor can be transferred." Few people in this world ever feel and know what true friendship is.

A fine example of this friendship we have in the story of Jonathan and David, recorded in the book of Samuel. Worldly friendship is like a morning, yet scentless flower, bright with beauty when the sun shines to refresh it, but when the chill frost comes it withers and fades leaving not even a fragrance to tell what it has been.

True friendship, like the soul, never dies. I maintain that it should be more than a mere name; it is a gem whose sparkling rays can be seen at a glance, and as wearers of that emblem, we should have friendship stamped on our every act.

Although our order regards the whole human race as one family, and excludes no one on account of creed or sect, yet its origin and its teachings are full of the spirit of him who said: "Blessed is the mortal who seeks his brother's need and supplieth him seeking his own and another's good. What a grand thought there is here, remembering that we live to bless mankind."

Our order takes its name from a legend that gleams through the darkness of ages, and blends with the future and present, as time turns the pages. This legend we gather from the island of Sicily and the city of Syracuse, which has a brilliant record both in science and art, many of the most renowned philosophers, scientist and artists among the ancients, either resided in Sicily or visited that country.

Damon and Pythias of Syracuse were devoted friends, and members of the Pythagorean brotherhood. The story of their self-sacrifice is known to all, and whose example hath welded the Pythian chain that girdles this planet and clasps in its folds a host of gallant knights. We, as an order, try to emulate this undying principle of these immortal heroes. And one of its greatest principles is to care for the widow and orphan and help one another.

I have seen a discouraged and almost broken-hearted brotherhood, especially during this financial crisis; and amid the hardships that come to them, they seem to turn away from the altars and sacred shrines of our order. May I ask: Is Pythianism a delusion and a snare? Are these obligations nothing but dreams and empty, meaningless words? Does no love exist, and is this elaborate and costly citadel built simply to dazzle the eyes of the world, but within there is nothing but skeletons and rags? If this be so, then let us cease our adorations, let us meet no more; rather let us raise its foundations and burn to ashes so gigantic a mockery, so imposing a fraud!

But, in my experience, I find this is not the case. Our castle-hall

is the resting place for many weary feet, and I find that the links of friendship grow brighter with age.

There is no interference in man's rights to follow the dictates of his own conscience with respect to State and Church.

Erroneous impressions have been received by minds prejudiced against secret orders, but they can not impede their progress, and the edicts and bans of all the Popes and Cardinals in christendom can not harm the immortal sentiments which underlie these great societies. For, like an Oregon mist before the morning sun, these prejudices will disappear and dissolve under the power of truth; for "truth is mighty and must prevail."

And now, ladies, I have a few words to say to you: Whatever goes to shape life's toward perfection in an intellectual or moral point of view, we owe more directly to you than to ourselves, and our great aims will meet with success if you will but give us your approval and we ask that of you, and if you can find anything in what I have said, or will have to say, that will impress you with the great aim and profound scope of our order, I trust you will consider it.

I have heard our brothers remark, "Well, my wife objects and I must keep peace in the family," so he stays at home." It is true it does take him from your home and from your side; but it takes him where honor is sure, and where he is drinking at the fountain of truth and virtue.

Could you enter our lodge-room you would be astonished at the simplicity of our mysteries, there is nothing horrible in our secrets; they have a single object, and that is one no sensible woman would condemn; we elevate the character of man and send him forth better fitted to discharge the various duties of life. It should not matter to the world what means have been employed. In ancient times the fair lady buckled on the armor of her lord, and sent him forth to battle; you can emulate this principle by sending your husband or brother to lodge on every meeting night.

Pythianism is a heroic as well as chivalrous order. Need we go farther than mention Samuel Holder Hinds, who sacrificed this life in an attempt to rescue a brother Knight at Richmond, Va. Having forced his way, through the suffocating smoke and smothered flame that choked the passage-way of that fated Spotswood hotel, to a place of safety, for a moment he listened and hearing the cry of distress from a brother knight, who was sleeping in an upper room and exposed to danger, despite the warnings of danger he rushed back through the livid flame and suffocating smoke and perished in the Pythian and chivalrous effort to save and rescue his friend. He nobly sacrificed his life on the altar of friendship. This is no fiction, no creation of the poet or novelist, it is an actual fact. We have placed a monument to his credit, not only a material monument, but a monument in the memory and hearts of every true Pythian Knight which bears the inscription, "Peace to thy ashes and honor to thy memory." This is but one of the many examples of true pythianism, which bears witness to the truth, as I have stated before, that we live to bless mankind. An ill-tuned ear cannot appreciate this, for to such harmony is discord.

And now before closing, I have a few words to say to my brother Knights. Let us remember the virtues inculcated by our order, let us endeavor to show to the world that we are not mere poetic members, but with us these virtues are living realities; let us remember that our prosperity depends on our own efforts, and that all men will not make good knights. Hence guard well the portals of our castle hall. No man should be admitted to our lodge who is not a welcome guest at our fireside, let us be obedient, brave and faithful to our laws, remembering that fixed and high purposes not following and looking on, but in the language of the immortal Whittier, let us be earnest and live for something!

Have a purpose. And that purpose keep in view, drifting like a helpless vessel. Thou canst never be to life be true.

Half the wretches that strow life's ocean. If some star had been their guide, Might have now been riding safely, But they drifted with the tide.

Let us have a purpose and that purpose to practice the precepts of our order that we may have higher aims in life and noble attainments. There are times in the lives of men when they should be in the full possession of all their mental faculties, when it is essential for them to exercise prudence, caution and courage, for there is always some one placing obstructions in the way of our advancement that would seem almost impossible to overcome. And there are others, who from an inborn friendship, are willing to help bear the burdens and lessen the trials and hardships of their fellowmen, though they be strangers. But life at its best is no easy task, trials and temptations beset us on every hand, and the king of the power of darkness is ever on the alert leading mankind into trouble all along

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