SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

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

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To 10,000 in a Year.

By Supt. J. M. Greenwood, Kansas City, Mo.

Children are usually not admitted to the public schools before they are five years old; some of the states keep them out until they are six, and a few exclude them, in some cases, till they are seven. In general a child should not be started to school before the sixth year. At that year the brain has attained about 85 per cent. of its adult size, and the child is able to use it with as much precision as he controls his hands and feet. Without pursuing this remark further, I wish to call attention to what an average child from six to eight years of age will do in numbers the first year he attends school, if he attends school, if he has a chance; and it is the chance that I am contending for at this time. If any one's toes are tramped, he can obtain ample redress by pitching into me.

I assert that the educational doctors, big-pill, little-pill, foreign, or native, from Missouri, Massachusetts, or the Sandwich Islands, who prescribe "10," or "100," as the maximum dose which the child should take the first year he is in school, should be "bored with a dull gimlet for the simples." Such an educator is a fitter subject to lead the "Alliance Folks" to a haystack than to outline number work for little children.

There are crimes of a more virulent nature than others. It is more humane to kill a fellow creature by one blow with a bludgeon than it is to flay him alive, or to starve him in a noisome dungeon, or to press him to a pulp by a slowly descending heavy mass of wood or iron. But what are these methods of torture, compared to the person who sets himself up as a teacher, and then, in the name of education, starves the mind to a mental death? Who will say it is not a more henious crime? It may lack the element of intent, and, therefore, save the culprit from hanging or electrocution, but the effect is the same. If such an instructor should be arrested for mental murder, what plea could he make that would hold good at the Bar of High Heaven? Ignorance by appealing to mercy might save him, but outraged justice—never!

How long does it take the average child to learn his letters? How long, reader, were you at that job?

This question was put to 165 teachers at an institute in Iowa by the writer, and only one person of that number remembered when he did learn his "a, b, c's," and yet a noted educator had spent forty-five minutes in showing what a herculean task it is for children to learn their letters. How long will it take for the child to learn from "0 to 9?" Should it take more than a day for this job, even if it be let by contract?

In a week a child will read numbers up to 100, if the teacher will first let him learn 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100. A little practice each day and the job is completed. If the child cannot count to a hundred, have him learn to do so at once. Children at first usually count away from the objects to be counted, if they are put to counting them. That is, they like to exercise their imaginations in counting as well as in other matters. It is a good thing for them to do so, irrespective of objects or previous conditions of of mental, moral, or educational servitude. Let the fancy caper, is an excellent motto. The next step is to have them read 11, 21, 31, 41, 51, 61, 71, 81, 91, 101. Only one figure changes at each step. Some fellow from the rural district, or the city percentage district will hop up and say, "Mr. Speaker, it can't be did!" Hold on, my worthy friend. Where is the child that ever went to school for a week, unless it be a school for the deaf and dumb, that did not learn: "Ten, ten, double-ten, forty-five, and fifteen," and have these separate things creep up through his thinking apparatus as fixed forms for all time—eh?

But now let us reconstruct. To destroy the foundation of belief, and not to give something better in its place, is wrong.

Teachers, one more sacrifice! Throw away all your shoe-pegs, tooth-picks, beans, grains of corn, and seldom or never use them except to illustrate some point. Put your children to working with numbers, if you want them to pull ahead. If you give a concrete example, follow it by an abstract one. If one is to be solved on the slate or blackboard, give the next one as a mental problem to be solved in the head.

I can take a class of average children of the age mentioned, and I will give no more time to numbers than I give to other subjects proportionally, and in one year's time, they will write numbers correctly to 1,000,000; add columns of figures up to 100, like a streak of greased lightning; subtract readily, multiply by three or four figures, and divide numbers by any one of the 9 digits, and not hurt or strain or tire their thinkers the least bit. Try it.

Some years ago, I took charge of a class of a dozen little boys and girls, and I heard them for forty minutes each day recite their number lessons. The first rule was, that no one would ever copy or look at another's work till he had finished his own. All their written work was put on the blackboard during the recitation.

During the year, no one ever copied from another. Honest failure was meritorious, and they so regarded it.

This class not only read and wrote numbers to trillions rapidly, but they could work by "long division," as well as by short, and they had learned all the simpler cases of fractions as well as nearly all the tables, by doing them in reduction.

They neglected no other work, but they were always a little ahead of time in getting into my recitation room.

Instead of having children copy "nonsense" on their slates, and calling it "little stories in numbers," put the children to the blackboard, give problems either to the entire class, or to each individual member, or to sections of the class, and put them to work and let them work with a will, not dream and snore, and grow lazy and dull, doing a little very laboriously. We want teachers who know how to get children to do rapid, intelligent, sensible work. Method in general is worth something, but that which cannot be put into practice, and does not charge the pupils with enthusiasm, is not worth raising a disturbance over.

Throw away the things about numbers, and let the children work with numbers, if you wish to succeed and quiet your conscience.

This is getting at the subject in downright earnest.

Teachers Take Notice.

After consultation with the county school superintendent, I think best to change time of the next teachers meeting to the second Saturday in May on account of the conflict in dates, between this and the Polk County Union S. S. Association, which meets on the first Saturday in May. As many would like to attend both meetings, and some are on both programs I make the change.

W. I. Reynolds, Pres.

REPORTS.

BUENA VISTA PUBLIC SCHOOL.

For year ending April 19, 1895:

Number days attendance	8120½
" " absence	530½
" tardies	86
" enrolled	87
Average number belonging	63
" daily attendance	59
Per cent of attendance	93.8
Number cases corporal punishment	0

This year's graduating class consists of seven members. Their work, for the past two years was above the average for public school pupils.

Their average grades are: Robt. Emmons, 92 2-11; Grace Whiteman, 91 6-11; Owen Powell, 90 10-11; Edna Culver, 90 8-11; Williard McClain, 90 1-11; Clarence Culver, 84 2-11; Charley McClain 82.

J. W. Storms, Prin.

MONMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL.

For the month ending April 19, 1895:

Number days attendance	2466
" " absence	175
" tardy	38
" enrolled	136
Average number belonging	133
Average daily attendance	125
Per cent of attendance	93
Roll of honor	45

F. Long, Prin.

PARKER PUBLIC SCHOOL.

For the month ending April 5, 1895:

Number days taught	20
Number days attendance	278
" " absence	40
" tardy	0
" enrolled	17
Average daily attendance	13

Those neither absent nor tardy during the month are, Dell Grigsby, Belle and Tommie Calbreath, Nannie Chambers and Jennie Tom.

Nettie Crosby, Teacher.

BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOL.

For the month ending April 5, 1895:

Number enrolled	29
Boys	13
Girls	16
Average attendance	22
Number tardy	6

Names of those on roll of honor are, Willie Shepherd and Laverne Burns.

C. J. Graham, Teacher.

THE POLK COUNTY PRESS.

News Items and Editorial Expressions.

(Transcript.)

It is a source of satisfaction to know that Dallas has three men who are "sound on republicanism."

It is said the South Methodists of Dallas will this year build a new edifice in which to worship.

Eight or ten of our wheelman took a spin around Monmouth and Independence, Sunday.

Rev. Ross, the evangelist, who stirred things from center to circumference in Dallas two years ago, is expected here to open out a meeting about the first of May.

Sheriff Plummer has an industrious set of "bees" in the county hive. They complained of having nothing to do, so the sheriff got a lot of wood, some buck-saws and put them to work. A capital idea.

W. E. Clark, of Rickreall, was up to see us last Friday. He says that Messrs. Gibson, Burch and Foreman have bought of Messrs. Kuykendall, and Kirkland the the Dixie dryer and that it is intended the institution will be run by ladies.

Church street, through which runs the railroad track, is a disgrace to the town, as it will mire a saddle-blanket almost its entire length. If there is no way in which this street can be improved, it should be fenced up to the track and abandoned to travel.

One of the greatest sources of revenue that could come to Dallas would be the opening up of the stone quarry three miles southwest of town. We have seen samples of rock taken from the Yaquina quarry, which is rated as high-grade rock; but it doesn't begin to compare in fineness of texture and and firmness with that from the Dallas quarry.

(Observer.)

"Uncle Cage" Morrison is still very poorly.

Polk county's tax has been rolling in for the past few weeks at a pretty good rate. At present there has been $25,153.41 collected.

The meeting at the Baptist church under the management of Rev. Swackhammer closed on last Sundy evening. There were not so many converts at this meeting, but the congregation was wonderfully revived. Rev. Swackhammer, who is a forcible and entertaining speaker, will talk to this church each Sunday.

Sheriff Plummer, on complaint of W. Waterhouse of Monmouth, brought Henry Ridinger before the County Judge on the charge of insanity, Wednesday. The complaint was not sustained, and Mr. Ridinger was set at liberty.

The following officers were elected to serve the Dallas Hook & Ladder Company: H. B. Grant, president; E. D. Cooper, secretary; T. A. Riggs, financial secretary; H. C. Dale, treasurer; Al Dray, foreman; B. H. Grant, 1st asst. foreman; Geo. Richmond, 2nd asst. foreman, Geo. Bowles, janitor.

Dallas has many natural advantages to be a prosperous little city. All she needs is to develop these resources, and keep going the enterprises she has already undertaken.

(Itemizer.)

Loren Bailey, of Bethel, is a warden at the insane asylum.

In the schools of this county there are not now one case of corporal punishment where there were five a few years ago, nor does it necessarily imply less firmness of government. It is a fact that the best disciplinarians have the least friction in school. A few extra tough boys or girls may have to be handled roughly a time or two until they are made to realize that the teacher is master of the occasion and that they must behave. Where one finds that he or she cannot govern a school without continuously resorting to harsh means, it is evidence that the person was not cut out for a teacher and ought to engage in some other calling.

Some chicken stealers have been plying their vocation in the northern part of the county.

All of our older residents know Ed Caystal as a Dallas raised boy. A number of his former schoolmates and playmates have been invited to attend his wedding at Vacaville, California, next Wednesday.

From Willamina we understand that Messrs. Stone, Savage, Campbell and Lamson have driven their cattle to the mountains to remain until fall and that the last named has about 400 head of cattle.

Ross and Henry Pigg and Charlie Richardson will start for Guatemala, in Central America, next week. The boys will travel in a light wagon as far as San Francisco, where they expect to dispose of their traveling outfit, and go by water the rest of their journey.—McCoy Cor.

Miss Ellen Sykes started the 31st of March on a trip to England via San Francisco, New Orleans and Pennsylvania.—Popcorn Cor.

C. H. Barberow and Mr. Chilcot, of Lewisville, have spent a week prospecting over in the Siletz region and found some good vacant land and lots of fine timber. When they came out last Saturday the snow was three feet deep at the upper tanbark camp.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Gathered from our Various Exchanges Throughout the State.

The city of Tillamook is out of debt, has money in the treasury, and levied no tax this year.

Douglas county's debt is $124,526.51, less by $19,349 than that of a year ago.

Sixteen carloads of sheep, about 3000 head left The Dalles yesterday for the East.

Wm. Levens, who is working a claim on Tennesee Gulch, has one of the best paying mines in Southern Oregon, no doubt. He was in Canyonville recently with $700 or $800 in gold dust taken out of two or three sluice boxes.

D. S. Bales, of Trask, Tillamook county, has a mental affection which has alarmed his family, and which may result seriously. About two weeks ago he began complaining of a pain in his head and since that time seems to have lost his memory entirely. He talks rationally at times, but with difficuly remember anything which happened in the past, no matter how recently.

The 16-year old son of Mr. Kenney, residing three miles above Holly, on the Calapooia, a few days ago ran upon an old cougar and three yearling cubs. The boy only had a 22-caliber rifle; but he faced the music, and before he was through with the cougars every one "bit the dust." Four in one day is a good record, and the boy has the scalps to testify to his prowess.

The accidental shooting of Mrs. Pratt of Whiteson which occured on the 9th inst., was a peculiar accident. The ball left the Winchester rifle in the hands of her husband, passed through an overcoat, then a partition, striking the lady on the hip, glanced downward around the femur bone and passed through the fleshy portion of the opposite thigh, missed by a few inches the thorax of a small boy, passed through another partition and was picked up outside of the house. The lady is recovering.

We have from good but unofficial authority, says the Yamhill County Reporter, that the engineer has filed his report and estimate of the Lafayette locks project with the department in Washington. Our infomant states that the report is favorable and the estimate of cost below what was generally expected, being somewhere below $70,000. With such a favorable report, in view of other circumstances surrounding, there is every reason to anticipate favorable action from congress at the coming session. It is indeed probable that the appropriation will be made and the work placed under contract inside of twelve months.