The Prairie View Standard - April 1934

Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College

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Levels of Service

(By Mr. Gordon Worley, State Department of Education, Austin, Texas.)

So far as the health and happiness of his customers are concerned, why are not the work and service of the dairyman as important and noble of purpose, as are those of the white collar or professional groups? Is not the well prepared and conscientious dairyman not only a nutrition specialist but a practical bacteriologist as well? Let him neglect, through ignorance or greed, these important aspects of his work and the product which he offers, will not only be foul of odor and palatably poor, but it may and often does become a positive health menace. Typhoid fever, tuberculosis, colitis, septic sore throat, and so forth, are spread through it to his customers to take their toll in human suffering and premature death. But, according to vocational surveys, the college aspiring Negro and white youth of today are little attracted to such necessary and fundamental occupations as dairying, food production, and general farming. They are choosing all out of the relative importance of and to their relative chances of employment in courses that lead to the white collar or professional avenues of services. In fact, some very recent state surveys show college-aspiring Negro youths choosing the white collar vocations in about thirty times the present ratio of employment in them. Youth is not to blame for such disproportional choices, for even school leadership fails to take into account and to point out to youth probable future needs for and chances of employment in the vocations that are today attracting them all out of proportion to future chances of employment in them. Why these distortions in the choice, may I ask? You know the answer is based upon conceptions of possible economic returns and present conceptions of social levels of service.

About three centuries ago a socially ostracized and orthodoxy considered ignorant dutchman by the name of Anthony Van Leeuwenhoek, while doing janitor service at the courthouse and town hall in Delft, Holland, made, polished, and arranged lenses so as to enable him to peer into and fathom secrets of the then unknown. With this simple type of compound microscope he peered into stagnant water, soups, tarred on teeth, saliva, and so on, and discovered for man's first time the existence of a realm of invisible or microscopic bacteria and protozoa. The society, which made of this man a so-called

Professor Claude Leonard Wilson, B. S., M. E., M. S., Director of the School of Mechanic Arts, Prairie View State College.

NEW COTTAGES FOR TEACHERS

Work has begun on the erection of two duplex cottages. The buildings are located on the east campus and will be modern in every respect. Built in colonial style, each cottage will contain two four-room apartments including two bed rooms, kitchen, living room, closets, pantry, and bath.

Plans and specifications were gotten out by Mr. C. L. Wilson, Director of the Division of Mechanic Arts. Most of the work will be done by students in the trades division under the direction of Messrs. Collier, Brittain, Martin, Muckelroy, and Fuller.

This project is in line with the program of Principal W. R. Banks, to provide adequate housing facilities for all teachers and employees. The cottages will cost $2,250.00 each and will be completed by July 1.

DR. W. T. B. WILLIAMS

Dr. W. T. B. Williams, distinguished educator, of Tuskegee Institute, talked to students and teachers during the vesper hour.

Dr. Williams spoke of the crowded profession of school teaching and stressed the importance of Negroes entering business. He was introduced by Prof. C. H. Waller, head of the agricultural extension division.

Following his address during the vesper hour, Dr. Williams was given a reception in Evans Hall, under the direction of Miss M. E. Saurez, dean of women. He spoke again to a large number of students and teachers who had gathered to hear him.

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PRAIRIE VIEW COLLEGE USES WALLER COUNTY NEGRO SCHOOLS AS LABORATORY IN RURAL EDUCATION.

In explaining his work as the first Negro supervisor for Negro schools of Waller County, Professor T. R. Griffith, among other things reports as follows:

Waller County in which Prairie View is located is used as a laboratory in rural education, supervised by Prairie View State College. The idea was conceived by Principal W. R. Banks, strengthened by the results of an educational survey of the Negro schools of the County.

Before entering this new activity, Principal Banks secured authority from the County Superintendent, Mr. Lisle McPherson. Taking advantage of this opportunity, plans were completed for the survey and various members of the faculty used their cars in getting to the different schools of the County. Returning to the Campus with many interesting facts, a research committee supervised by Professor J. B. Cade compiled the material and made recommendations for improving the conditions of the schools. Among the recommendations made was that a Special Supervisor be appointed to act as a co-ordinator of the rural Negro Schools and Prairie View State College. This co-ordinator was to become a member of the faculty and to serve as contact man for the institution. To meet this demand, was quite a problem as the Waller County laboratory was a new project for the College.

Studying the location and environmental conditions of the schools, the problem became more complicated. The appointment of a director was based on three main factors, namely, attitude, advanced training and back-ground. Professor T. R. Griffith employed in the Prairie View Extension School at Nacogdoches, Texas, because of his experiences there in the inter-racial matters as well as the qualities mentioned above, was chosen for the position.

The work in the educational laboratory began in October with no program with the job in the hands of the director or co-ordinator. He visited all of the Negro schools of the County and made maps of the physical conditions so he could study the situation at home and lay plans. The greatest need was money and advice on spending. Working out plans with teachers of the county for raising funds, the director received a very favorable response from the teachers and communities and many of the projects undertaken have been accomplished. The teachers are apparently happy over the success achieved and are

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Notice to Contributors

The Standard requests all professionals as well as the public in general to send articles for consideration for future editions.

DR. JEREMIAH RHOADES

Dr. Jeremiah Rhoades, eminent educator of the State Department of Education, Asumin, Texas, addressed the College at Prairie View and while following the lead of the National Association by the assembly, Rev. Leo CPhillips, Principal and General Superintendent, introduced Dr. Rhoades. Among other things, Dr. Rhoades said, "When the school authorities are interested in the progress of the student, it is commendable to the student."

The conference method as ordinarily used is to set down in one form or another a series of questions and answers aimed at presenting the subject and its appreciation. This method is "digestion" of facts, without which there is no learning. The conference method is a term so broad and general that it embraces all methods of self-instruction by which means alone can the information become concrete.

Second point: If the class is sufficiently advanced so that it has some background to draw upon, it sometimes proves more stimulating to initiative merely state the subject for study and give the student a systematic assignment. Usually due to the economy of time of the recitation hour, there is little opportunity to labor the living conditions, which is "digestion" of facts, without which there is no learning. The conference method is a term so broad and general that it embraces all methods of self-instruction by which means alone can the information become concrete.

The conference method, though limited to certain types of studies, lends itself stiffly to all forms of stimulating in the step by step way which is right that, "we do nothing by impulse or sudden decision."

Since then three hundred years have fled,

And traveled some three miles for one.

And the traffic of a continent.

The recitation method has specific fields only where it is a commendable form of recitation. The conference method is a term so broad and general that it embraces all methods of self-instruction by which means alone can the information become concrete.

The patient, painstaking, manual laborer,

And by those old woods a path was made.

And drew the flock behind him too,

And drew the flock behind him too.

To do what other men have done.

And I infer the calf is dead.

But I am not ordained to preach."
A WORD ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL

By Dr J. H. Dillard

Ten years ago it fell to my lot to make a brief address at Harvard University. Speaking of educational problems in the South I expressed the conviction that the weakest place in our Public School system was the High Schools: I am sorry to say that I still think so. From what I hear I believe this is true not only in the South, but that it is pretty generally true in other parts of the country, and that most of our educational observers hold this opinion.

There are three considerations which seem to support this view. First, one hears from business people employing High School graduates that these graduates are lacking in at least two accomplishments which they ought to have. They are lacking in ability to write English correctly, and in ready and accurate use of figures.

A second complaint comes from colleges. It is a common thing to hear that a majority of students entering from High Schools are not prepared to do college work, because of their poor English, because of lack of habit of close study, and because of lack of foundational preparation in the subjects they are pursuing. I heard a distinguished teacher of Physics in a leading college say that he much preferred to have students in his classes who had not studied this subject in High School.

A third consideration which has led me to have doubts about the efficiency of High Schools is that the students, when questioned and tested, seem to be hazy in their knowledge. An examiner who visited a large number of High Schools says that it became almost ludicrous, when he would ask a question, how the answer would be, Ain’t it so and so?

It is my belief that at least one cause for these honest complaints lies in the curriculum. The students have too many subjects and not enough concentration. It seems to me that there is too much changing of subjects during the four years. It would be better, for example, for the student to have one science two years, than to have two sciences, one each year. It would be better for him to have French three years than to have French two years and Spanish one year, or vice versa. The point is that whatever the subject be, it should be carried on long enough for the student to get a grip on it. In English courses not enough writing is kept up during the four years, and there seems a lack of careful correction and prompt return of any papers or compositions that are required.

Now if the complaints about High Schools are fairly well founded, of course we want to seek a way to improvement. In spite of the obvious fact that there are some High Schools doing good work, and that we may well take pride in the increase and development of High Schools, there seems to be justification in the criticisms. In looking for ways of betterment we shall have to keep in mind one sure fact. The fact is this, that, however the curriculum may change, education in its essence is a thing which does not change. In the process of time subjects may change, as they ought to change. Yet it is still true that the most modern, progressive education finds its highest value in simply doing the job right.

A WORD ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. G. W. Buchanan Delivers

DEDICATORY ADDRESS AT CONROE

The new school building for Negroes of Conroe, Texas, has been recently dedicated. It is estimated that this structure cost $25,000.00. The building is well equipped throughout and is a credit to the interests of education, local and state.

The dedicatory address was delivered by Mr. George Washington Buchanan, manager of the College Exchange, and long a student of education and public affairs. On this occasion, Mr. Buchanan discussed to an appreciative audience, white and colored, “Is Education the Remedy?” He insists that education of the proper kind is the remedy for the social evils afflicting the country and declares emphatically that proper education should embrace at least two major factors, namely: (a) Scholarship and (b) Character, justice, honor and unselfishness. Sound and seasoned in the affairs of life, and gifted as an orator, his address left a lasting impression for good in Conroe, and Montgomery county.

PRAIRIE VIEW COLLEGE USES WALLER COUNTY NEGRO SCHOOLS AS LABORATORY IN RURAL EDUCATION.

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looking forward to greater achievements in the future. One pleasing accomplishment, not measured in dollars, was the change in attitude of some of the teachers towards supervision. Convincing the teachers that the supervision was only to assist and try to make teaching more pleasing and effective, the reception became inviting.

The Waller County project is serving the rural population, and the people appreciate the interest that Prairie View State College is taking in improving local conditions.

KIRBY HALL

Prairie View was founded in Kirby Hall in 1876. This building was formerly a slave mansion. Many of the former students and teachers look upon this building as a mile post. But it is now being torn down and the lumber will be used for the erection of modern teachers cottages. All wooden structures in the immediate campus area will be razed in the near future leaving nothing but fire-proof and modern structures.

The district meet for district 27, composed of Austin and Waller Counties, was held during the past week at Prairie View. The meet was held under the immediate direction of Professor B. S. Luter, District Director General. Members of the College faculty joined in making the meet harmonious and entirely satisfactory.

ENROLLMENT

We are happy to report that the enrollment this year shows a 28.5 per cent increase over that of last year.