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Newsletter - August 1940

Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College

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Mr. D. J. Baker

I. OTHER MATTERS -

A. CALENDAR

- 1. Special Session Graduating Class - August 4
The Reverend I. B. Low 120 - Kingsville, Texas
- 2. Graduating Exercises - 8:00 P. M. - August 5
Address - Professor Oscar Anderson Fuller - Prairie View

3. L. S. Burdette - August 5-10

4. [Faint text]

5. VOLUME IX Medical Association - NUMBER 12

6. Summer School closes (officially) - August 15

B. MISCELLANEOUS

NEWS LETTER

1. All staff members are requested to assist with Farmers' Market

2. The next NEWS LETTER will carry financial statement of community
last. Kindly see Mr. Buchanan this week if you have any news or
ready.

3. Please check your records and see if you have paid your dues to
Houston Y. M. C. & B. AUGUST - 1940

4. The official date of all staff members who are not on
this basis to report for duty the next fiscal year is September
1940

5. Wish for each of you a pleasant and profitable vacation period

PRAIRIE VIEW STATE COLLEGE
Prairie View, Texas

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tion. [Faint text]

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of things, those prominent personalities of immediately before and after

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I OTHER MATTERS -

A CALENDAR

- 1 Special Sermon Graduating Class - August 4
The Reverend I B Loud '28 - Kingsville, Texas
- 2 Graduating Exercises - 8:00 P M - August 5
Address - Professor Oscar Anderson Fuller - Prairie View
- 3 4-H Encampment - August 5-10
- 4 Annual Farmers' Short Course - August 11-15
- 5 National Negro Medical Association - August 15
- 6 Summer School closes (officially) - August 15

B MISCELLANEOUS

- 1 All staff members are requested to assist with Farmers' Short course.
- 2 The next NEWS LETTER will carry financial statement of Community Chest. Kindly see Mr Buchanan this week if you have not done so already.
- 3 Please check your records and see if you have paid your pledge to the Houston Y M C A Building Fund.
- 4 The official date of all staff members who are not on a twelve months basis to report for duty the next fiscal year is September 7, 1940
- 5 I wish for each of you a pleasant and profitable vacation period

II THE DRAMA OF 1881

By 1881 the Southern States were in the throes of circumstances and events consequent to the Civil War, the period known as Reconstruction. The policies and programs of dealing with these forces were taking definite form; objectives were passing through the last stages of debate; and, convictions and judgments were meticulously defined. In the center of things, those prominent personalities of immediately before and after the war were playing the leading roles, such as Bob Toombs, Alexander Stevens, Joseph Edmondson Brown and John B Gordon of Georgia; Robert Vance of North Carolina; Robert E Lee of Virginia; and Jefferson Davis of Mississippi. These dramatic figures had kept thoughts, opinions and

points of views in motion until their understudies, such men as Tom Watson, Henry W Grady, John Temple Graves and Hoke Smith of Georgia; Cole Blease and Ben Tillman of South Carolina; and, the late Senator Vardaman of Mississippi reached the scene and occupied the colorful spot light of public attention for more than a generation.

Now the newly emancipated slaves were beginning to learn - reading, spelling, writing and ciphering - to take the first steps of citizenship in a democracy, acquire property, homes, start churches and businesses. They responded immediately to the benign influences of missionary education and also had begun to feel the workings of a dual system of public education. At that time the predominant thought regarding the Negro hinged upon two important questions, viz:

- 1 What shall be the content and scope of the education of Negroes?
- 2 What shall be the place of the Negro in a Democratic government?

It was in the year of 1881 that Booker T Washington, the father of functional education for the masses of Negroes, arrived at Tuskegee, while W E B DuBois was still studying Latin, Greek and Philosophy at Fisk University. It was not apparent then that these powerful personalities would be leaders of different thoughts in their day.

The Cotton Kingdom had received its blessing. It was to be supported by Negro - sometimes peonage - and tenant labor. Consequent to the sin of neglecting soil conservation and the evils of agricultural peasantry, cotton supremacy collapsed fifty-seven (57) years later - the story is well told in the "Grapes of Wrath" and "You Have Seen Their Faces."

Another event stole a march on Golden Dawn, by three hours, August 8, 1881. In the foot hills of the Piedmont Plateau, three miles in the country from the sleepy town of Hartwell, Georgia, a baby boy slipped into this Drama without a whimper. He was named Willette Rutherford Banks, call-

ed for years "Scrap" for short. His entire career has been colored and influenced by the subtle movements and amazing events of this period - August, 1881 to August, 1940 ----- now he can tell tales.

Principal W. R. Banks
Prairie View, Texas

I am

Dear Principal Banks:

I notice with a great amount of interest in the Dallas News concerning your school. You are doing an excellent job in presenting your school to the people of Texas to assist in getting the

Yours truly,
W. R. Banks

Willette Rutherford Banks
"Scrap"

I have always told my colored teachers in this county that whenever they used the opportunities they have to the best advantage possible that they can rest assured that new opportunities will be afforded them. I have been thinking for the last year or two that may be your school was going to be an exception to this rule. I do not know of a school in Texas that has used the facilities to as good an advantage as have you folks. You have done a wonderful job and you need an expansion of your program. It did not seem to me that this expansion was coming as it should and it was beginning to make me wonder whether or not I was right in the philosophy I was teaching my teachers. This article makes me believe that still I was right, because a need can go just so long and then those in authority and those with ability can call this to the attention of those who have the power to do something about it. The case was well presented in this article. It told the truth and it presented the need. I believe that series of articles similar to this will do much to secure the needed additional educational facilities for the colored youth of our great state.

I do not know of a group of people any where that have done more to establish cordial relations between the white and the colored than have you and your faculty. If you will continue this great work I still believe that your needs will be met to a greater degree than they have in the past. We need leaders of your type.

Any time that I can assist you in your great work please feel free to call on me.

Yours sincerely,

L. H. Griffin /s/
County Superintendent

LRG:mer

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BOWIE

Boston, Texas

July 19, 1940

Principal W. R. Banks
Prairie View, Texas

Dear Principal Banks:

I notice with a great amount of interest the article in the Dallas News concerning your school. I believe that you have done an excellent job in presenting your case to the best man I know of in Texas to assist in getting what you need.

I have always told my colored teachers in this county that whenever they used the opportunities they have to the best advantage possible that they can rest assured that new opportunities will be afforded them. I have been thinking for the last year or two that may be your school was going to be an exception to this rule. I do not know of a school in Texas that has used the facilities to as good an advantage as have you folks. You have done a wonderful job and you need an expansion of your program. It did not seem to me that this expansion was coming as it should and it was beginning to make me wonder whether or not I was right in the philosophy I was teaching my teachers. This article makes me believe that still I was right, because a need can go just so long and then those in authority and those with ability can call this to the attention of those who have the power to do something about it. The case was well presented in this article. It told the truth and it presented the need. I believe that series of articles similar to this will do much to secure the needed additional educational facilities for the colored youth of our great state.

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Yours sincerely,

L. H. Griffin /s/
County Superintendent

LHG:mwr

OUR UNPREPARED GRADUATES

Every day brings us more and more to the realization that the graduates of our schools and colleges are failing to get positions not so much because there are no positions available as because they are untrained. Our graduates are coming out, equipped with a fair knowledge of teaching history, geography, some arithmetic, general science or some subject; but they are not equipped with what it takes to actually get a job done.

With the teaching profession over-crowded (in quantity although not in quality), there is little need for training the majority of students to be teachers. There must be more concentration upon making a living and getting along with people. Somewhere in the curriculum there should be provided courses designed to show the students the advantages of opening businesses of their own. What would prevent a young man with a keen mind and a willingness to work from succeeding in a grocery business? Why couldn't an enterprising young lady make good with a dress or hat shop? Why doesn't someone with good standing start a laundry?

The answer to the problem will not be given, however, until something is done about preparing teachers to give the students the proper training. There has been an intense leaning toward degreed teachers, who know nothing about making a living except what they have read in books. The average school teacher is impractical in his interpretation of the problems of making a living because he has never really been exposed to anything but ideal situations.

The college campus is as a rule a false environment. The student is protected by the college and therefore has a tendency to view everything as it relates to his small world. When he is thrust out upon the world, he is bewildered because it is altogether different from the world he has heard of. With the over-emphasis upon degrees and lack of stress upon practical things, the teachers are not informed themselves and subsequently cannot impart to the students anything other than the knowledge they have gained in their own little world.

Our schools and colleges need a general house-cleaning; and men and women must be employed who have had experience themselves, and are thus in a position to give the students the benefits of their experience. There is often a clash between theory and practice. It takes a man or woman with experience to know when that clash exists and to iron it out to the student's advantage.

Four years of college life may be a good thing as a social venture. But it is worthless if it does not prepare the student for making his way in the world. It is time now for our college heads to discard their craze for highly degreed faculties in favor of the zest for giving the world each year a class of graduates who will "know what it's all about" and become benefits rather than handicaps to the people with whom they live.

SOUTH BANDS FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Farms, Industry and Schools covered in
10-Year Plan; Balance Program

By Brooks Smith
United Press Staff Writer

Atlanta, Ga., June 24 — The South has charted a decade of planned progress to solve what President Roosevelt called the "nation's outstanding economic problem."

The program encompasses the problem faced by agriculture, industry, education and business. It has been indorsed by all Southern governors.

The Program calls for:

- 1 Balance money crops, including forestry, with food, feed, and fertility crops.
- 2 Balance crops with livestock production
- 3 Balance scientific production of high quality products with scientific marketing, grading, processing and packing, and establishment of adequate transportation methods without trade barriers.
- 4 Balance farms with factories
- 5 Utilize and develop all natural resources in keeping with best conservation policies.
- 6 Provide adequate educational opportunities at all levels
- 7 Encourage thrift, home ownership and local development
- 8 Beautify homes, communities, highways, parks and playgrounds.
- 9 Raise the standard of living conditions by improving housing, health and other essentials of human welfare.
- 10 Balance economic gains with gains in culture and moral values.

Urgency of the program was stressed at a meeting here by Dr Clarence Poe, editor of the Progressive Farmer, who warned that the South is in a "perilous situation" because it has relied too much on an expert system of farming.

"The current European war" Poe said, "will leave the South in a worsened condition, regardless of which nation wins.

FROM MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE PRESS-SCIMITAR
June 24, 1940