

know, as an evangelist, that there is no better timber—and more of it—out of which to make consecrated Christian men and women than that which may be found in our mountain homes. The school has yet to do for eastern Kentucky and western Virginia what it has done for Rowan county. Here is a large field where illiteracy abounds, but where there is a desire in the hearts of thousands of bright young people for an education. The experience of the Morehead Normal School in her local field has simply ripened her for this enlarged work."



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## OUR MOREHEAD, KY., MOUNTAIN MISSION SCHOOL

The continued violation of the sixth commandment in Rowan county led to the establishment of a school in its county seat, Morehead. The county and town had long been notorious as the home of a bitter and deadly feud in which many lives had been lost. The progress of the feud was a veritable reign of terror. The whole community was terrorized and many reputable families were driven for a time to other places. The seeds of violence and vengeful resistance of evil were sown broadcast in the hearts of the young, and a dark name was fixed upon the county and the inhabitants. No "foreigner" can appreciate the evil of such an experience. It is almost impossible to picture the depth to which civilization sinks at such a time.

In the midst of such vengeance and murder, the Morehead Normal School had its

birth, with an avowed purpose to root out by years of patient toil and teaching the evil in men's hearts that prompted and supported such deeds. It desired to be corrective of the prevalent ideas of courage, chivalry and the value of life. It came at the darkest period in the history of Rowan county, when all other moral forces seemed to be in abeyance and when the powers for evil had full sway. The founders of the school sought the darkest corner of Kentucky and there let shine their light. An existence of seventeen years has brought about the aim and purpose of the beginning. To-day, through the influence of the school, Rowan is an orderly and quiet county and Morehead is one of the best-managed and most law-abiding towns in the State. The school has been a potent factor in the regeneration of the community. It has served to prevent the continuance or recurrence of the feud; it has caused the saloons to go. About three hundred teachers have been trained within its classrooms for their profession, and through these teachers the children of the community are being reached.

Morehead is a center of mountain life and enterprise. No town in eastern Kentucky has a larger territory tributary to it. It is the distributing point for four or five counties and in part for five other counties. It is the railroad center for a vast stretch of mountain territory. Not a day passes with-

There are problems in this work which are in process of solution. How is it possible to reach directly the poor mountain boys and girls? For it is simply out of the question for them to come to school paying their way. Money—they have none. Ten dollars a month—they can not pay it. This problem is being solved in three ways: by means of industrial features, chief of which are a printing plant and a broom factory; by several scholarships granted to worthy young men and women of promise; and by an extension movement yet in process of development. One young man walked this year (1904) one hundred and eighty miles from the Tennessee Mountains to Morehead and is being educated by means of a scholarship. Indirectly, through the mountain school teachers who have been trained in this school, the poor pupils in the mountains have been reached. This is perhaps the best feature of mission school work. It is a great incentive to have seventy-five school teachers in attendance, as was the case last year. These teachers do not enroll until January first. Many more will be in attendance this year (1904).

The future is full of promise. Undoubtedly there is a great work before this mountain mission school of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions. R. B. Neal says:

"Morehead is the school center for an area as large as one-third of the State, and I

cipal. Thus for fourteen years the school was under the control of the Kentucky Christian Missionary Convention and was conducted with a large measure of success. The new epoch in its history began on July thirty-first, 1900, when the school passed under the control of the Christian Woman's Board of Missions.

Under this management many improvements have been made. There are sixty acres of land, comprising the greater part of a beautiful hill and the ground at its base. It is a most beautiful location. The main school building has been enlarged and refurnished. "Hodson Hall," too, has been enlarged and refitted. A substantial two-storied veranda adds greatly to its appearance and convenience. The grounds have been supplied with stone walks. A new building combining industrial and dormitory facilities has been erected. It is a handsome building of brick and stone and cost about ten thousand dollars. At present, with Professor Button, there are E. W. McDiarmid and wife, Miss Magdalena Stukey, Miss Jessie Pendleton Spencer, Miss Anne B. Holey, Mr. Andrew Sharp, Mrs. Cora D. Dayton and R. B. Neal. The school is steadily increasing in power and efficiency. The many additions and improvements made by the Christian Woman's Board of Missions make possible an increased patronage and an enlarged work.

out the appearance on its streets of many wagons that have come for miles to procure supplies. It is the only point of departure for many miles from the valley in which it is situated to the country on either side. It is located on a through line of railroad, and two branch roads through it are in course of construction. It is admirably situated for a work whose aim is to reach a large number of poor mountain people. It is the gateway to eastern Kentucky and western Virginia.

One need not go for a mile in any direction from Morehead without finding typical mountain homes where the number of children is by no means the lowest common multiple of the number of rooms. Rowan county is one of the smallest and poorest counties in the State. The conditions typical of mountain life, so admirably described by President Frost, prevail to a surprising extent in Rowan county. Woodrow Wilson says:

"No one who has ridden, as I have, through the silent lengths of that great region, can fail to have his imagination touched by what he has seen—the almost limitless forests lying there untouched upon the long slopes of the towering hills, as if they had been there keeping their counsel and holding their secrets ever since the creation; and here and there in the little clearings the houses of a secluded people, as reti-

cent as the hills above them, slow to speak, their eyes watchful, holding back the secrets of their quiet life. And it is surely not to be wondered at that those of us who have known the better things that they have never had news of should feel the impulse of duty to return to them."

Such a field furnishes a good missionary opportunity. It is for the education of these people and for their enlightenment in Christian living that the school exists.

General Wm. T. Withers, formerly a prominent citizen of Lexington and a gallant ex-Confederate officer, who was thoroughly acquainted with the dark side of life in the Kentucky mountains, was moved by his State pride and by his loyalty to the teachings of Christ to establish a school in Rowan county. He selected the State Board of the Christian Church of Kentucky, of which he was a member, as the organization through which funds for the school should pass and by which the school should be conducted. Mr. Withers contributed five hundred dollars annually to the support of the school until his death, after which the gift was continued for two years by his estate. The first step in the organization of the school was the employment of F. C. Button and his mother, Phoebe E. Button, in September, 1887. The school began with one pupil in attendance in October of the same year. A wise choice was made in the selection of

Mr. Button and his mother. Professor Button is known and loved for his great worth. with the exception of three years spent with the church and school at Corbin, Ky., he has been with the school since its beginning. Of his mother one who is well qualified to speak says:

"She is one of the best women I have ever known; I have never seen her superior or her equal. In her movements among the people, in their homes, by kind words and deeds, she became known and loved by all the community. Not to be profane, she was positively angelic in her character and disposition."

In 1890 the grounds and money for the first school building were given by Judge Thomas F. Hargis, of Louisville, Ky., who was raised in Morehead. In 1892, Paph Julian and wife were employed to take charge of the school. F. C. Button was appointed to raise funds for the erection of a new school building and dormitory. Robert Hodson, of Oquawka, Ill., gave a sum sufficient to insure the erection of the dormitory and the building was named "Hodson Hall" in honor of his daughter. The rest of the money was raised from the Christian Church of Kentucky and from the citizens of the town. For two years, 1897-1899, Prof. W. J. Henry and wife assisted in the management of the school. During the year 1899-1900, J. South Hawkins, of Lexington, acted as prin-