

100,000 KENTUCKY ILLITERATES ARE TAUGHT BY 5,000 VOLUNTEERS

FRANKFORT, KY., Dec. 27.—"The largest contribution ever made to any cause in Kentucky by any profession or organization was the contribution by 5,000 public school teachers to the services of the State commission for eradication of illiteracy," said State Inspector and Examiner Nat. B. Sewell in a report on the Kentucky Illiteracy Commission, the pioneer organized agency for eradication of illiteracy, covering the period of its existence since 1914, when it was created without appropriation, filed with Governor Stanley yesterday.

"It was the first commission of its kind in the world," said Mr. Sewell.

"The movement which led to the establishment of the commission had its origin in Rowan county. In September, 1911, Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart, then superintendent of schools in Rowan, started a movement to teach adult illiterates in her home county.

"A few public school teachers volunteered to assist. These schools were called 'Moonlight Schools' because the terms were begun at a time when the light of the moon would facilitate traveling to and from the school buildings or homes in which classes met.

New Light Dawns

"The novelty of this new movement in education in the Kentucky mountains soon attracted widespread attention and progressive citizens and school people began to see a new light for the future. They turned to the county superintendent of the little mountain county for information.

"In 1912 eight other counties had organized schools for illiterates, and in 1913 there were twenty-five counties, besides a number in other States.

"In February, 1914, the General Assembly created the Kentucky Illiteracy Commission as a department of State, the function of which was to eradicate adult illiteracy.

"Under the law no member of the commission is entitled to salary, but all are entitled to their necessary expenses. In nearly five years two members never have had any expenses refunded and the other two were remunerated only for a small part of the expenses incurred by them.

"No finer example of unselfish devotion to any Kentucky cause," he says, "ever has been shown than the ungrudging work done by public school teachers, who volunteered in this service.

5,000 Volunteer Teachers

"The number of volunteer teachers has increased from 4,000 to 6,000 this year. It is estimated that at various times 10,000 moonlight schools have been conducted in the State.

"Had these volunteer teachers received only \$1 an evening, their contribution would amount to over a half million dollars, the largest contribution ever made by any profession or organization to any public cause in Kentucky.

"In 1916 the work of the commission had been carried into every part of the State and the work done in the moonlight schools in teaching illiterates and cultivating a strong school spirit had so impressed the school people and legislators that an appropriation of \$5,000 annually for the maintenance of the commission was made for the period extending to the next session.

"At the session of the General Assembly in 1918 the annual appropriation was increased from \$5,000 to \$25,000 until 1920."

100,000 Illiterates Taught

Following this the organization expanded and half the counties of the State were organized with a field agent in charge and 100,000 illiterates have been taught, at least the rudiments.

By the census report this leaves 100,000 illiterates in Kentucky, but the Statewide organization and the sentiment created make the task more simple than the redemption of the first 100,000 from ignorance.

How the spirit of the moonlight school has spread thruout the nation is summed up in the statement that a dozen States now are vying with one another for the eradication of illit-

eracy by 1920, the time set for the consummation in Kentucky.

During the last year's campaign special attention was given to the instruction of soldiers and their families and the army authorities took up the work in cantonments at the suggestion of Mrs. Stewart, who is chairman of the commission, and has been devoting her whole time and energies to the work. She also is head of the National Commission.

The commission is congratulated in the report on its economical expenditure of the funds appropriated and moderate expense accounts.

CLARK COUNTY

WINCHESTER, KY., Dec. 27.—Dr. M. S. Browne has withdrawn his resignation as member of the council from the Third ward. Dr. Browne and C. B. George resigned from the council recently, setting forth as their reasons that they could not conscientiously be parties to the letting of a contract to the present water company.

Cecil Elkin, of the U. S. Marines, has returned from abroad. Elkin was wounded twice and gassed twice, but has almost recovered from the effects. He was among the first local boys to arrive in France, and has had many thrilling experiences there. He has a number of Huns to his credit.

The marriage of Miss Ellen Hughes to Mr. Olme Tolin was solemnized on Christmas day at the First Christian church, the ceremony being performed by the pastor, Dr. J. H. MacNeill.

Claude Bean, son of Mr. and Mrs. Matt Bean, of this city, who was reported killed, is safe and well. This news was conveyed in a letter to the family of Rankin Cornett, wagoner, which was written Nov. 15. He said: "Bean is still with me, and we are fine friends. He is as anxious as I to get back to the States."

Tommie Brinegar, aged about 35, died after a long illness.

MERCER COUNTY

HARRODSBURG, KY., Dec. 27.—J. E. Carpenter, while sawing a log of a giant oak on the old Perryville battlefield, found a musket ball embedded in the heart of the log, where it had been for nearly sixty years.

Lieut. J. I. Whittenburg, of Louisville, was here investigating the influenza conditions in this locality for the State Board of Health. Last week the city appointed a health inspector and Dr. Whittenburg recommended that the county also have a similar official. It is probable that County Farm Agent Gentry will be named, as he traverses the county daily. He found flu conditions here pretty bad, but not as bad as he expected.

Miss Lillie Doyle and Mr. Charles White were married by the Rev. T. H. Athey at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Bland.

The Hon. Leroy Banta, who has been taking special training in New York for overseas Y. M. C. A. service, has been released and returned here.

BOY AND GIRL ARE ACCUSED OF ROBBERY

RICHMOND, KY., Dec. 27.—William Lynch, aged 21, and Bettie Rollins, a 17-year-old girl of Estill county, are in jail here charged by federal officers with having broken into the postoffice at Old Landing, Lee county.

They were held in \$400 bond by U. S. Commissioner W. C. Bennett, which they were unable to give. Deputy Marshal J. M. Elliott, of Estill made the arrest and it is alleged found goods which were identified by Postmaster B. F. Griffin as belonging to his store in which the postoffice is conducted, in their possession.

TAX RATE REDUCED A CENT

LOUISVILLE, Dec. 27.—The city tax rate for 1919 has been placed at \$1.82, a reduction of one cent.