

**EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS.**

**Efforts to Solve Them in the South Proceeding Briskly.**

By Major General Oliver Otis Howard.

My interest in the education of both the black and white youth of the great Southland dates from my last interview with President Lincoln toward the end of September, 1863. He clearly foresaw the early end of the terrible struggle in which we had been engaged and his keen mind was already wrestling with the problems that would surely follow the final surrender.

I was about to leave Washington with my command for Chattanooga when he sent for me. He said to Mr. Stanton later that as soon as I could be spared from the field he wished me to take up a great and important work among the freedmen, refugees and the poor whites of the South. His feeling at my interview was most kind and his great heart took in everybody. With the people of the mountain regions of Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia he was personally familiar and toward them he manifested a particular tenderness.

It was only a few months later, after our victory at Chattanooga, that General Sherman, with the Fifteenth Corps, and I, with the Eleventh, marched a few miles apart into East Tennessee to save Burnside, then threatened by Longstreet at Knoxville. My corps was poorly equipped, many of the men being without blankets, some without coats and others lacking shoes. The kindness of the people exceeded that which we had experienced in Ohio and Indiana. They supplied us to the limit of their ability, women and children bringing water and food and the men in many instances giving up their shoes to soldiers who had none.

The first school which I helped to establish was in the hard winter which we spent in camp in Lookout Valley. General von Steinwehr, one of my division commanders, rebuilt the log church, which had been ruthlessly reduced to firewood on the eve of our arrival. Soon we had schools established and the children and young people of the mountains came eagerly to grasp a privilege of which they had previously been destitute.

It was April, 1864, before I was able to leave the field, and on May 6 I reported to Secretary Stanton at Washington. He told me that it had been President Lincoln's desire that I direct the work among the freedmen, the refugees and others who needed our assistance. He agreed with my earnest plea that the true relief lay in schools for their practical education.

In the months of hard work which followed I bent every energy to increasing the educational facilities of the South, and more than seventy schools were established, some of which have grown into grand institutions. I told the benevolent givers that I would add \$1 of government money to every \$1 they would put into those schools, and everywhere the offer was eagerly accepted.

The centre and sample of this chain of institutions of learning was Howard University, at Washington. They called it after me against my wishes, and we modelled it after the University of Michigan in many lines. At first it was merely a sort of religious school for refugees and freedmen, who flocked to Washington in great numbers at the close of the war. It had and has some peculiar features, which may be of interest.

The nearness of the big Freedman's Hospital brought about the establishment of the medical department. Two-thirds of the medical students were negroes, and many of them studied practical pharmacy along with their regular lectures. The physician-pharmacists were able to go among their people and establish drugstores as well as practise medicine.

The theological department was also developed on peculiar lines. All denominations were asked to participate, to send lecturers and to establish professorships. At first they held back, fearing, I suppose, an entanglement of creeds. I told them to teach and preach freely as they believed, but we permitted no effort at changing the denomination of the students. If a colored minister came to us a Methodist, he went away a Methodist. The result has been that the colored ministers of the South have gone back to their work with a better knowledge of the Bible and Biblical times and far better equipped to teach the essential truths of Christianity.

It needs only a trip through the outlying districts of the South to see what the schools are doing for the people. A typical instance among the mountain whites of a far reaching work is that of the Rev. Dr. E. O. Guerrant, who has formed the Inland Mission Society for work among the mountaineers of Kentucky. He was an adjutant of a Confederate brigade, and after practising medicine for a time went into the ministry. He already has more than forty school and mission stations in Perry, Breathitt, Lee and other counties. By educating the children he is getting at the fathers and mothers. He has struck severe blows through his schools at "moonshine" and at the feuds.

Tribune readers are, perhaps, already familiar with the work which is being done among the white mountaineers of another part of the South by the Lincoln Memorial University, of which I have the honor to be chairman of the board of directors. We have been criticised for calling it a university, yet you must remember its youth and recall that Bowdoin



STUDENTS' BAND AT THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY.

began with \$200 and that the capital of Harvard University at the beginning was only \$400.

In the South, above all things, you must take the material as you find it. It is ridiculous to put in a programme of classical studies when your student could not possibly prepare to take them up. Teach him his A, B, C's, if nec-

essary, tuck them in according to his knowledge, but give every one a chance. Discontinue the lower grades as your normal students go into the outlying districts and build up preparatory schools. Finally you will have worked up to a collegiate curriculum.

We have heard a great deal of late from our writers of romance about the mistakes of 1865-'66 and the hardships worked on the Southern people. It is surprising to me that there were so few real mistakes and that we got the colored people through that trying period so well.

The problem of educating blacks and whites in the same schools is again prominently before

as education is the thing desired. The case of Berea College, in Kentucky, which has recently attracted much attention, is peculiar. After the school has been so long established on mixed lines, it seems hard to separate the races. It would be a crime, in my mind, to drive the negroes out of Oberlin. They have been there from the beginning, and a wonderful work has resulted. It would be just as advisable to drive them from the Christian Church.

I do not believe that there is much, if any, falling off in the desire of the Southern negroes for education. They are taking advantage of their opportunities to the fullest possible degree. I have followed up the careers of many of the graduates of Howard, Hampton, Berea and other colored institutions, and in every case I find they are doing well. The prejudice and consequent hostility of the white man have been a fearful handicap, and only the application of the true principles of Christianity will bring the negro up to his proper plane of development and civilization.

There has been a falling off in interest, however, which seriously threatens the work. It is the interest of the wealthy people of the North, and with their lack of interest has come a lack of support. Several institutions which I have reason to know were doing a remarkable work have been sadly crippled for lack of funds. The negroes, situated as they now are, are not yet able to shoulder their own educational burdens, and we of the North must continue to help them out. But the white mountaineers are now receiving special attention and showing that every aid extended to them brings abundant and speedy fruitage.

**SPORTS IN ARGENTINA.**

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which the Latin race is noted, and which have so demoralizing an effect on their youth.

To-day, while this custom has not entirely died out, the very young men are conspicuous by their absence, for one and all of them are practising for the coming regatta or the next football or cricket match. That result in itself is sufficient to justify all the trouble and expense necessary to bring about such a healthy interest in sport, but there are other and much more far reaching effects that will undoubtedly influence the whole future of the Argentine Republic.

If there is one thing more than another that will help place Argentina in the vanguard of nations, it will be the eradication of the fatal inclination to put off until to-morrow what had much better be done to-day. While so thoroughly is every one imbued with this tendency that it will take generations to entirely overcome it, if anything will eradicate this disease it is the training of the young men to athletic sports which require prompt decision and quick action, for this training will unconsciously make the coming race more prompt and decisive in the ordinary affairs of life.

We have only to look at our English cousins to be convinced that plenty of exercise out of doors makes a robust, healthy and long lived people, and their love of bathing has become a byword, so that personal cleanliness may be said to follow athletics as a natural sequence, and we all know that neither Spain nor Italy is noted for its attention to this most important detail. Some of the native houses away from the cities bear witness to the fact that change of country does not entail change of habits.

Last, but by no means the least benefit that healthy competition in outdoor games will confer on the future Argentine race is the love of fair play.

Had such a quality been instilled and fostered two hundred years ago the history of South America would have been a very different one, and even in our enlightened age justice as we understand it, or, as President Roosevelt has put it, "the giving to every man a square deal," is practically unknown in any South American state.

Therefore, it does not seem too much to say that the introduction of athletic sports into Argentina may change the whole future history of that prosperous and progressive republic.



MATTRESS MAKING AT LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY.

When the student learns to make a mattress she often sends it home to her parents, who regard it as a great luxury.

the South. Several States have passed laws prohibiting it. It is my opinion that under some circumstances it is advisable to have mixed schools. We found it so at Howard University in Washington to the extent named. Where prejudices are deep and strong, however, I believe that it is best not to precipitate conflicts,



MOUNTAIN GIRLS OF FOUR STATES. Transformed at Lincoln Memorial University.