

M. Taylor Memoir (Cover)



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No. 518

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MONTAG BROTHERS, INC. Atlanta, Ga.

The Trip to Foley

I left Orlando, Florida, Sunday afternoon at 3 P.M. on January 25, on the bus.

I rode on the last seat. It was so rough, that I was very sore all over my body when I reached my destination.

The bus broke down on the way and all the passengers were conferred to make three changes before the arrival in Perry.

At twelve o'clock I arrived in Perry, a forlorn, God-forsaken place. I saw a Negro, who owned a car and asked him to take me to Foley.

The Professor and wife was asleep, but awoke and directed me to Mrs. Bovers. I spent the remainder of the night sharing a bed with Miss Cleo Hadley, the other teacher.

A very uncomfortable bed, but very acceptable after a ride on a bus on a back seat.

All told, the trip reminded me of the stories I read of the stage-coach days.

I arose on time the next morning and secured a small hand basin that the family had used, sponged off, drank a cup of coffee, and in company with Miss Hadley trudged over deep sand roads to the little green-painted low-ceiling school-house.

The School

The next morning at 8:30 o'clock, Miss Hadley, a very small woman about nineteen years old, very fair, pessimistic, and in the most dejected condition and I arrived at the school building.

Two low roofed, rambling, frame buildings, painted dark green, with screened, low windows, and two small porches, greeted my eyes.

Inside the building I was shown my home room—and unattractive, unceiled room, opening into two other rooms. Large cumbersome, homemade, ten-foot desks piled in rows, and three blackboards, on bare walls.

The benches or desks, and floor were clean.

There were no flowers inside nor outside. A nice heater graced the middle of the room and plenty of wood stacked in the corner of another room to burn.

At nine o'clock, the bell rang, and Prof. Oney gave the signal to salute the flag. The children trampled in noisily and took their places.

The new teacher attracted attention, but in a little while the bell rung and---Ho! boys jumped over one another's heads, benches, making for the door. What's the hurry? Passing to class to the other building!

I stood, amazed at such order. Well, after the shock, I saw what was before me. Much work. I rolled up my sleeve and waded into work.

The Organization

The plan of the school, or method of daily class-work is departmental: a high school taught thro the senior high school with four teachers including the principal.

The elementary department is only one third equipped for its work because of this method. Children are in need of longer periods for recitations, supervised study and less regimentation.

Many children in different grades have completed the work of the previous grades in a three weeks summer school and cannot grasp the work of the grades they are in now.

The primary school needs one teacher. To get adjusted to new methods of different teachers, time elapsing between the passing of classes, and moving from room to room makes for disorder and maladjustments.

High school courses are too difficult for the pupils because of the poor, inefficient preparation in the grades. English and Literature are two subjects very much unlearned.

The Community Foley, Florida

This is a large sawmill firm or settlement, situated _____ of Perry, in Taylor County. There are about 1500 people living in two sections. Several lakes abound from which much fish is caught. The negroes on the most part are thriftless, happy, and carefree. Much quarreling and separation prevails among the married people, which is reflected in the smallest child. Several old men, some crippled, are piddling, having been with the company for more than 20 years.

Many intelligent, nice-looking young men and women are here that adds to the attraction of Foley.

Very little gardening is engaged in and no farming.

A typical mill town; gambling, fighting, drinking, gossiping, hold-sway.

The Professor

Personality: blustering, pretentious, scheming, loud. Superficial to a great extent. Pretends to be a college dean, lawyer, a condescending intellectual, high-falutin genius—too fine and good to be teaching “little niggers.”

Prof. W.M. Oney is a large, stout character, slightly bald, brown-skin, uses his tongue in talking like a snake. He looks scheming, tricky, and grafty like a snake. Makes loose expressions to his teachers in an impolite manner. A very poor example in courtesy and culture. He teaches precept only.

My Home “Ina and Mitch”

Two young people from rural Georgia 19 and 22 years old respectively; ignorant, slovenly, but good intentioned.

They made me welcome to what they had, but they had nothing.

I had a bed and springs and mattress and a dressing table, only. The room was ceiled in the top, only. I set to work to wash the door facings, the windows and sills, make slats for the bed, build shelves and tables in the room and kitchen, after which I secured cardboard boxes from the trash man and ceiled the room; (after I slept in a wet room) and nearly took sick with pneumonia.

There were only two plates 2 spoons and two cups, so Ina would wait until “Mitch” and I ate. “Ina” and “Rhoda” and “Mary Lizzie” used the same two pots; so that left me to buy two pots and a small pan to cook my food in.

Roaches and mice infested the walls. I spoke to “Mrs. Ezell” the shopkeeper for syrup buckets; in which I kept my raw and cooked food. I built a shelf up high on the one porch to put butter, milk and cooked food.

Ina is an attractive country girl, just getting an insight in to life. Very virile. Very immoral, but apparently has no sense of right, discretion, obedience, wrong-doing and a wife’s duties.

The School

An attempt to teach eleven grades with four teachers.

Departmental work in all grades.

Result

- A poor comprehension
- Stultifying mental growth
- Restlessness and disorder
- Poor teaching skill

The Quarter Boss

George Rodenberry is a tall, mean looking man, is over the white and Negro sections with full control to arrest, whip and give so much time to leave the place; according to his discretion.

He collects rent—that is see what houses are empty, what occupied.

“Mr. George” as he is often called is the “court” in Foley. It is reported that he has brutally treated many women and men. A typical “degree”

Mrs. Ezell

A country store and home combined, a bolita and whiskey joint, the most of the sporty crowd gather nightly to carouse until a late hour, Sunday included.

The fun increased to such an extent until a high barbed wire fence was built around the Negro quarters and an edict said that no one was to cross night or day and nothing sold over it.

The Church

Orderly services, a choir, ushers and a well organized Sunday school using denominational literature.

The services are led and well attended by men. In all the organizations, men lead. The women follow sparsely.

Mrs. Gonzales is an efficient organist and her music is well selected and played with life.

Songs

“Give me that B.Y.T.U. Spirit” (tune “Old Time Religion”)

Response after Prayer

“let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart,” etc.

Activities

“Shoe Rally”
“Car contest”
“Trip around World”

The teacher asked, “children, what week is this?” “Easter week 7th week” Teacher: This is Passion week. What does that mean? “Don’t know,” said children. “Umm,” said teacher. I will give you a few points from Matthews. He cussed out the church and talked about religion—but he has yet got to explain what passion means.

The Mascot 3 grade

Ella May Taylor and Eddie Williams—
Two children in the grade, very small but knowing working and grasping working.
The principal insists that they remain. Sad situation from the child viewpoint.

The 2 Grade

Johnny Baskin
Johnny May Barner
James Joner
Dorothy Thompson
Annie Mayell Barnes

Project (class)

“Animal Book”
“Clay bowls, pots”
“rubber ball from innertubes”

The Commissary “Big Store”

The price of everything is high. Dry goods, meats, fish, and fruit and vegetables are carried in stock.

The rental from houses range from \$1.35 to \$3.50 and \$4 per week. There are about 400 houses.

The Depot



The Office: Brooks Scanlon Lumber Company

The Picnic
1-2-3 Grade and Guests

Hadley-Taylor, sponsors

Vocabulary

Us for ours and we

Brăng – bring

Clămb – climb

Thăng – thing

Nūdin – another one

Cūtin – couldn't

Yăōsm – yes ma'am

Dăboy – that boy – John – Mary

Dishyuh – this



White women's clubhouse

General Psychology of the Children

1. A combative spirit in big and little. No harmony; lack of cooperation and sociality; sensitive, no forbearance
2. Careless and indolent in attendance, slouchy in dress, loud in speech, whining, complaining, anguish and irresponsible. Some exceptions.
3. In all the grades the children are rebellious on provocation, and resentful

Indoor Gardening

GROW THEM INDOORS.—By Allen H. Wood Jr. Boston. Hale, Cushman & Flint. 1936. \$1.75.

Whether the reader is an experienced outdoor gardener, or a modern city apartment dweller, this book will guide him in the cultivation of plants indoors. All the lovely little bright-colored flowers and plants that make the interior cheerful and attractive are here.

During the Winter months there is a chance to cultivate not only common well-known varieties, but strange and exotic plants, that breathe the spirit of some far-off foreign land.

Have you seen the beautiful white grape hyacinth, the hybrid begonias, the African violet, the drooping fuchsias and Japanese cherries? These and many more are cultivated in this attractive manual of house plants.

Mr. Wood takes up the subject of potting and re-potting, soils and ventilation, pruning, cuttings and seedlings, miniature greenhouses, cacti, vines and miscellaneous house plants.

A flowering period and a color chart on plants for decoration is included, also many lovely photographs.

PATTIE FROST.