

February 16, 1929

I have spent a few days this week in Raleigh attending the second state wide Institute on Parental Education. A year ago about this time there was held in Raleigh the first state wide Institute on this subject of Parental Education. It is interesting to those who attend these meetings to see how many people in North Carolina are very much interested in seeing that the parents of North Carolina are educated so that they will know how to help their children. The conference a year ago dealt with very young children primarily, that is with the duties, obligations, and those things the parents ought to know to help their children when they are quite young.

The program this year dealt in a large measure with the adolescent child. I do not know if we should say child as the adolescent period begins with the child when in high school and sometimes before high school and extends sometimes thru college. It is the period of human adjustment. It is the greatest period so far as human adjustments are concerned in the human life. It deals with that period of human life when a child becomes a man or woman and when he makes his decision as to his life work. It is that time when a boy does not have to be told to brush his teeth or brush his hair or polish his shoes as he does it himself. It begins with that period when he begins to realize that he does not live by himself. It begins when one realizes that he has an obligation outside of his own self.

This conference was an exceedingly instructive one. I want to give you just a little bit of an idea at least of some of the things that were dealt with.

On Wednesday, of course, we had an address of welcome and at 12:30 there was a luncheon for the committee and the group leaders, the committee who had been working on the plans for this institute for some time and the group leaders who would lead the discussions. The group leaders met with Dr. Linton who had a considerable part in putting into operation the program which the committee had outlined. In the afternoons we met in six groups.

I attended the group discussing "Spiritual Adjustments of the Adolescent Youth." Of course, I know more what they did in that group than in the others. Dr. Poteat was the leader and it was a most instructive and helpful session. We had all kinds of folks in this conference,--teachers and preachers, old maids and old bachelors, etc. I want you to see that practically every type of our citizenship was interested in that question. "Is the youth of today less religious than the youth of yesterday?" You will probably be interested to know that the conference said no that they were probably more interested in religion than the youth of yesterday. It was also brought out that the youth of today was seeking for the truth and was not interested in a lot of things that have no foundation. The question was discussed, "Is the church meeting its problem?" The opinion of this conference was that the church as a whole, not any particular sect, that the church as a whole is trying its very best to give the truth to the boys and girls of today.

I do not know when I have attended a conference that dealt with the subject of religious adjustments that had so much of real good in it. It was quite interesting to see that so many people knew the Bible and they discussed the Bible in this conference and it was the final decision of those that were there that the Bible is the greatest guide for the spiritual life, the only real guide to spiritual life that the human family has ever

had. That it is a great guide but not a textbook for Geography, Astronomy, etc. That it was not intended to be so, that God did not dictate it to be a treatise on Geography or Astronomy or Science.

Another group studied the place of recreation in child development and I have been told that they had splendid sessions. I heard that discussed by a woman doctor who had also given her life to high school boys and girls. She said that there were children who were not physically fit to enter certain athletics.

A third group studied child guidance and that was an exceedingly helpful one. There is a great deal of difference between child guidance and control. We have to help children find their way in life.

The family and the home was another subject dealt with. What influence does the home life have that is not found anywhere else and it was the consensus of opinion that in the home probably more than anywhere else the child's decision for success or failure is made. The home is the greatest institution in our civilization. There is no doubt about that. Everything we have is built up around the ideal of the home.

The physical development of the child was another subject discussed by a group.

The home and the teacher's relationship was discussed by still another group. It was brought out rather clearly that they have to get together if they want to help the child. If the home is going one way and the teacher another the child is torn between them. For the best development of the child the home and school must work together. That is, the teacher has to do some things that she does not want to do. On the other hand, the home has to give up some ideas that do not work with the school, that they must get together and work for the best development of the individual

child.

After these conferences that were held in the afternoons we had an evening meeting and Wednesday evening we had an address "Life More Abundant" by Dr. Richards who is working with the children at Black Mountain. Dr. Richards did not talk very clearly but what I could hear was very worthwhile.

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