

"NDLOVU"

It was in July 1922 that I first met Sister Pauline when she was on her way to the College to take up an appointment on teaching staff of the Normal Department. It was only six months after my own arrival and so we had much in common when trying to adjust our European ideas to the needs of the Bantu.

In those days specialising in subjects was unknown and we spent the whole of the school time each day with the same class taking every subject on the class time-table whether we knew much about it or not ! The staff, of course, was a small one and so we were thrown much together especially as all three years were taught in one of the smaller Halls and the teachers had to compete one against the other to make himself heard above the general din.

I soon came to appreciate Sister Pauline's good qualities and I found that not only was she a good teacher but outside she could readily win the co-operation of the male students. (I have heard rumours that the girls did not find her quite so ready to accept excuses and to overlook their misdeeds.) Even the inspectors were not immune from her wiles and I only know of one who could resist her cheerful and bland enquiries after each individual member of his family while all the students sat anxiously awaiting their "trial by ordeal" in the annual Practical Examination.

Geography, History and the Theory of Music were her "strong" subjects until 1925 when Mr Paterson (now Priest-in-charge of Potchefstroom Native Mission) came to the College for a year and began to explore the possibilities of woodcarving on discarded pieces of wood from the Carpenter's Shop with shilling penknives from the Dee Bee Bazaars. In Sister Pauline he found a ready disciple and she gave all her enthusiasm to handwork - at one time, I believe, she was using eleven different kinds of material including clay, papier mache, fencing wire, soaked newspapers and other messy substances. Some of these had a short if gay life but woodcarving had come to stay and it is due entirely to Sister Pauline that the elaborate carving of today has come into being. Refusing to be discouraged by insufficient and inadequate tools and equipment she took up her stand in the diminutive Black-board room behind the Duxton Hall and when the material on which she was working proved to be too large for the "shop" part of it would appear through an open window - to the danger of any unwary passer by.

In school, if an unpopular lesson were due any boy knew that he had only to produce his carving and say how anxious he was to get it finished and he would gladly be given permission to retire from the class. It took the combined strength of the staff to put an end to a regular "tap-tap-tap" proceeding from Sister Pauline who would arrive early for a class and then fill in spare moments with hammer and chisel at the back of the room to the confusion of the luckless teacher who was trying to finish his lesson. It was by such means as these that what was started as an unimportant side line developed and ultimately became a Department of its own. The College became known, both in South Africa and overseas not as a training ground for teachers (there were many of these) but as

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the home of revived Bantu craft, and photographs of the work done appeared in Church papers and books with a wide circulation.

The College will miss Sister Pauline when she leaves at the end of this session, but I think that a portly ghost will often be seen entering the Woodcarving shop to greet Job and Dick and to revel over some new idea or design. Those still at the College will miss her wonderful cheerfulness and unconquerable optimism, her interest in people - in animals and birds - her keen interest in individual students and her readiness to help them out of their difficulties and scrapes. On S.Mary's Drill ground, carefully protected from a hot sun by her parasol, she will no more urge on the luckless students to fresh efforts of abandon and vigour. Few perhaps have realised that Sister has for a long time past been a sick woman and has only been able to carry on through an indomitable will-power. At the College, in spite of this, she has inaugurated and carried on a work for which she will always be remembered and for which the College will never cease to be grateful. As she returns to the Community Mother-House at Grahamstown after sixteen and a half years' work at the College she will take with her not only the good wishes of all with whom and for whom she has worked but she will also take their very real affection and prayers.

S.P.W.

SHAKESPEARE AT THE COLLEGE

On Friday November 24th, when the fever of the half-yearly examinations was over, we were pleased to welcome the teachers and scholars of Khaiso School at the College and to enjoy the two plays they brought with them. The first, put on by the Bantu Pietersburg Dramatic Society was Noel Coward's "Fumed Oak". Portraying the wreck of a home in twenty minutes is almost impossible but as a spicy prelude to Shakespeare the play fulfilled its purpose well enough. As the adenoidal school girl E.Seshemane deserves special mention and the performance was delightful striking the full chord of the audience's sympathy.

Then Shakespeare took the stage. The play, Macbeth, naturally was much abbreviated: we missed the weird sisters and Lady Macduff but as the story of the murder the scenes chosen rang well together and we are left when the crime is discovered with a pithy wonder as to what will happen. As Lady Macbeth M.Malefo was outstanding among a strong cast. Her lines were always clearly spoken with an obvious appreciation of their meaning and she suggested the masterly lady of a weak man admirably. As Macbeth C.Motsepe was good notably in the scenes of blank misgiving. His delivery of the "Macbeth hath murdered sleep" passage was most stirring. G.Khomo suggested a lovable and happy Duncan and his ease of manner was very noticeable. E.Ramkhala made a sturdy Banquo and one would like to have seen him in later scenes. The rest of the cast carried their parts with ease and distinction. As the porter C.Maimane was vigorous and most amusing. The costumes designed by Miss Potter were excellent, colourful and most suitable, and the production in the very capable hands of Mr Mdebele was smooth and understanding. He is to be congratulated most heartily on the results. To him and to Mrs Fuller we extend our sincere thanks.

V.A.B.

WOODCARVING NOTES.

At the beginning of this session we were able to welcome another woodcarving pupil who has made a good start and bids fair to become a really good craftsman.

More work has been sent out than ever before, two of the cases going to England and one to the United States of America.

Amongst the orders for this country we have made a Bantu Madonna, statues of our Lady & S. John, while a prayer desk and a dining room suite were carved with original designs, consisting of pictures of Bantu life. We also exhibited work at the Bantu Arts and Crafts Exhibition held in Grahamstown early in August. A report of this states :-

"Among the striking exhibits from Institutions were the basketry from the Athlone School for the Blind, the furniture and scissal mat from Tiger Kloof and the woodcarving from Grace Dieu. The last named was of a very high standard and by no means Europeanised. Archdeacon Mather said of the figure of the Child Christ that it was the best piece of Native carving he had seen. This statue rather overshadowed a fine piece of modelling of a native head, but it was the right kind of overshadowing.

The Bishop of Grahamstown said of the whole work from Grace Dieu that the exhibit marks a great appreciation of cultural value and it shows the great feeling there is naturally among the Bantu for ecclesiastical art. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Aliwal North too was much impressed."

One other thing we have done lately is to make more use of the knife and the beginners have had nothing else to use and with it they have made some good paper weights and paper knives.

(The woodcarving class has to say "goodbye" to Sister Pauline at the end of this session but the work will still continue and we trust go from strength to strength. Orders should be addressed to the Principal, Ed.)

F.C.R.

A.B.C. Motsepe has sent the following letter to students who were in the same class as he was. It has been curtailed but the Editor hopes it may fulfil its purpose.

"Since I left Grace Dieu I have met very few students with whom I completed. Some I ^{am} ignorant as to their whereabouts like E.A. Mashabela, George Matlala, Nervil Pule and Joram Manamela. I wonder how many of you ever reflect on the good old days we used to have on the farm. Every evening after dinner the smokers could be descried going steadily to the "smoking hole" to enjoy the fragrant weed.

Do you remember the amusing displays which used to be rendered during social functions by prominent figures like D. Masogo & A. Thebothe ?

Do you remember the Sunday afternoons when we would gather at the sports field to watch matches between the Houses, the deafening noise from the excited members of the winning House ? (To say nothing of the meeting with the other sex. Ed.)

Do you remember the Drill with the striking commands of the instructors ? Do you remember the "home go" spirit that used to overwhelm students with maddening excitement ? Above all do you remember the beautiful Church Music with the inspiring services?"