

# The Philippine Craftsman

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## THE EVOLUTION OF INDUSTRIAL WORK IN THE NORMAL INSTITUTES.

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The first normal institute in the Philippines was conducted at Manila by Dr. David P. Barrows, assisted by forty-seven American teachers. It began on April 10 and ended on May 5, 1901. Six hundred teachers and prospective teachers, from Ilocos Norte, Zamboanga, and twenty-one intervening provinces, assembled to receive instruction. Great importance attaches to this first institute because of the fact that it was the beginning made by a man who had a remarkably clear view of both the present and the future.

It is significant of the interest in education at that time, that 497 of those in attendance came from provinces other than Manila. The fact that a number of companies operating inter-island steamers gave free transportation to teachers who desired to attend the institute, is also worthy of note.

The sessions of this institute were held in the present Manila High School building, and in the building which was formerly occupied by the old School of Arts and Trades on what is now General Luna Street. Assemblies were held daily at the beginning of work, and then the teachers, divided into thirty-three classes, went their ways to their several classrooms.

At the assemblies talks were given on the duties of Filipino teachers, by Dr. Barrows; on the new school law, by Dr. Fred W. Atkinson; on American Education, by J. W. Taylor; on gymnastics, by Dr. Ageo, of Manila; and on lower forms of life which occasion contagious diseases, by "Captain" N. M. Saleeby. Papers on manual training, the kindergarten, nature study, and art work in the schools were prepared and read by teachers having charge of such work in the classes. Music was a marked feature of all the assemblies. Professor Bernard Moses, the first American Secretary of Public Instruction, addressed the final assembly.

All of the thirty-three classes were taught English, and a few classes well instructed in United States history, geography and arithmetic as direct preparation for work in the schools. Courses were also given in manual training, physiology, nature study, and in kindergarten work, as subjects which would eventually become necessary. Each person enrolled was furnished a copy of Baldwin's Primer; and Dr. Barrows assures us that all mastered this text at least. Some read Montgomery's *Beginners' American History*, Frye's *Elementary Geography* and Wentworth's *Primary Arithmetic*. It is significant that Dr. Barrows commended this last book because of its adaptability to the teaching of English. Those who find amusement in contemplating a set of teachers struggling with these textbooks may need to be reminded that they were young men and women attacking the problem of teaching in a new language.

Of all the extra courses, the kindergarten seems to have excited the greatest interest, with its little children learning to sing and play, to build and sew. Of the course in manual training, the report told nothing beyond the fact that three classes were conducted by Mr. H. G. Squier.

Before the end of the same year, 1901, institutes were held in Iba and Laoag. The report does not specify the kind of work undertaken, but it is safe to say that it was chiefly English, and of the grade found necessary in Manila.

For 1902, forty-seven institutes and two considerable conventions of American teachers are recorded. These were organized and conducted by the division superintendent in the best manner each was able to devise. Reports are brief and very general, including little more than a statement of the place and date. A little advance in English marked the chief difference between these institutes and the first one, conducted and reported by Dr. Barrows. In at least three cases there was some instruction in sewing but in no other industrial work. Probably the other institutes were much like these three.

The two conventions of American teachers, were held in Iloilo and Cebu. In both, papers on very practical subjects were presented. Among those read at Iloilo were one on "Care and Improvement of School Grounds," by Mr. Coddington and another on "The Place of Sewing in the Schools and How to Direct it," by Mrs. Salmon. In Cebu, Mr. Linderman read a paper on "Industrial Work and to What Extent It Can Be Introduced in the Schools of This Division," and the subject was freely discussed. These papers indicated fairly the general attitude of American teachers toward industrial work in 1902.

It was assumed that something was to be done; but what, when, and how, were questions.

Reports for 1913 are much fuller; and from them the fact that in nearly all cases no work of an industrial character was undertaken, may be safely inferred though the writers give no evidence of consciously omitting mention of industrial work. Rather the fullest report is that of two institutes held in Batangas. Attendance here was restricted to those who would pledge themselves to become teachers at the end of the term of eight weeks, and who had had "some instruction in English." It was explained that this instruction should be the equivalent of a term in day school. Remembering that this was nearly two years after the arrival of large contingents of American teachers, one can see what a formidable problem English offered.

In 1904 practically the first uniform course of study for all schools was prescribed, and adjustment to this was the great problem for the institutes of that year. The requirements for the primary grades were much more specific regarding academic than industrial work; and this fact had its bearing upon the development of the work in the institutes. In fact primary industrial work was so tentative and experimental in character that many a division superintendent felt sure only that gardening and sewing were being taught at all.

Most of those who struggled with Baldwin's Primer in the first institute were the product of the old system of education. But by 1904 it became necessary to depend chiefly upon the new schools for a teaching force; and thus the necessity for better training for the profession arose. For the next five years, the teachers' class and the institute were the principal means to this end.

At an early date the majority of the municipal teachers completed the primary course; but no one regarded this as sufficient qualification, they must go into or through the intermediate course. Now the industrial requirements of this course were from the first much more definite than those of the primary; and they were such that they could not be met by the teachers in their homes or in the teachers' class. Accordingly, academic work was done at home and in the teachers' class; and carpentry and cooking became of importance in the institutes, intermediate equipment being used. At the same time primary industrial work was becoming more common and this considerably affected the program of the institutes.

During this period the assemblies in the Philippine Normal School came into existence, the first one being held during the

long vacation of 1906. In the beginning much that was done at these gatherings had very definite reference to the passing of grades. Yet from the first there was also much work which aimed solely at preparation for primary teaching; and a good bit of this was industrial. The attention to grades gradually disappeared as increasing attention was given to professional training. All of this was reflected in the provincial institutes where returned teachers were called upon to give instruction in what they had learned.

By 1910 most of the teachers in the more advanced divisions had finished the intermediate course. In some cases an effort was made to advance them into the secondary course; but this was soon given up. Before long, all effort to raise their grades was abandoned at the institutes. These now became strictly professional gatherings. Many institutes were made purely industrial, but most of them retained some academic work. Specialists were first sent out from the General Office to assist in the conduct of institutes in 1910. All of them promoted industrial work, as they do to the present time.

The last step in the development of the institutes was their coördination with the assembly at the Philippine Normal School. This became possible only when the Director assumed control of both the institutes and the assembly. About this time a reaction set in, in favor of a better balance of the work. At present both the industrial and academic work of each institute are balanced in about the same manner as they are in the schools.

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In any country native designs are in danger of being forgotten when foreign influences assert themselves. For example, all over the Islands the short skirts called "patadiong," were originally woven of native cotton, in native designs. These are now made of Chinese or Japanese machine-made cotton yarn, which is sold ready-dyed in every barrio shop among the Christian Filipinos. Foreign designs along with foreign materials predominate because they are easier to use. There can be little doubt that those articles made among the non-Christian tribes which still retain the primitive motifs would go the way of the coastal weaving industry unless something were done to preserve them. The Filipinos in their handicrafts make use of fewer indigenous designs than other Eastern peoples because they have been longer subject to European influences, and have progressed farther. Therefore every effort is being made by the Bureau of Education to preserve the primitive designs that remain. (J. R.)