

## FORMAL OPENING OF GRAND NEW COLONA SCHOOL BUILDING

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On last Friday evening, January 7, occurred, without doubt, one of the most momentous events in the history of the little town of Colona, an event second in importance only to the founding of the town. This event was the dedication of their magnificent new school building which certainly is not surpassed in adequency of requirements for school purposes by an institution of its size in the state of Colorado.

It is hard for one to see how Colona can do these things. One is tempted to doubt the reality of so stupendous an undertaking when the size of the town is taken into consideration. There must be about Colona something different. There is, and it does not take the visitor to this little town long to find out what this difference is. He can see it radiating from every face on the streets; he can find it in the casual conversation of the citizens, he can find it everywhere. The people of Colona are awake; they are going after the best; they have banished the pessimist from their midst; they have come to a realization of what even a small town can be to its citizens, and they are going to make that small town the very best things obtainable can be found; that it will send out into life young men and young women who will become a power for civilization wherever they may be. Is that not enough to warrant its progressive citizenship.

The visitor, on entering the Colona school house on the evening of the dedication, was met with a hearty handshake from some member of the reception committee and assured most heartily that his presence was a distinct addition to the festivities of the evening. He was taken over the building and shown every point of advantage with the utmost courtesy. One must confess that Colona has not merely a school building of the highest excellence, but a whole-hearted community spirit which cannot but impress even the most critical observer.

Upon entering the building one is impressed with the fact that there has been no parsimony shown in the allotment of space – running across the building is a spacious hall, from which a wide staircase ascends to the second floor. On the first floor are four large class rooms, well lighted by a row of windows on one side. The lighting is practically perfect, since provisions were made according to the latest scientific principles upon the subject. The walls are beautifully tinted over a hard plaster finish. The colors harmonize delightfully with the dark woodwork, giving one the feeling of restfulness not often noticed in school rooms.

On the second floor are two unfinished class rooms of the same dimensions as those below. These will be used for physical culture work until they are needed for actual study purposes. Across a large hall is the auditorium – a large, well-lighted room which will seat two hundred and fifty people. At one end is a cleverly constructed moveable stage which makes it possible to turn this assembly room into a modern theatre when occasion arises. In this room is the fine new Hobart M. Cable piano which the school has lately bought. This auditorium is an innovation in school house construction, but it is a good one. This room will mean much to Colona's community life. Everywhere educators are awakening to an appreciation of the fact that the school must

be a community center; that the activities of the adjacent population must revolve around the school. Colona in this, as in other things, is leading the procession.

In the cement basement of the building are two large hot air furnaces, wither of which is sufficient to heat the building. There is a novel arrangement whereby the furnace is fed from cool, pure outdoor air during the day, while during the night the vitiated air of the building is thrown back into it to be purged of its impurities. Nearly every person present last Friday evening remarked upon the purity of the air in the crowded auditorium.

The furnace was installed at a cost of thirteen hundred and eighty-four dollars. The total cost of the building was eighty-four and ninety-five dollars. The architect was G. J. Jenkins of Grand Junction. Through-out the building is constructed of Oregon fir as far as wood is used. The outside is beautifully finished stucco work. The secretary of the board informs us that, while some feared considerable vibration in the building, none could be detected with the immense crowd which gathered there.

For the festivities of the evening no less than four hundred people had gathered from the surrounding country while many educators and school patrons from other sections were present. An excellent program was given by the combined school from the primary grades up to the high school. There were many novel and entertaining drills, pantomimes and playlets, all executed with a skill showing much hard and painstaking labor upon the part of both students and faculty. Too much credit cannot be given for this work, and the people of Colona shown their appreciation in hearty applause. A number of visiting friends helped with the program, among which were Professor Edmondson of Montrose, Miss Darrough, instructor of music in Montrose schools; Mrs. G. H. Losee, of Uncompahgre; Grant Turner, Asa Turner and E. H. Creswell of Ridgway. A feature of the program was Mrs. D. W. Faw's rendition of Weber's "The Storm", which everybody admitted to be a superb performance.

After the program was finished visiting educators were called to the front that they might be introduced to the audience. Excellent talks were given by Professor Weidmann, of the Montrose county high school, Hon. T. W. Emerson, president of the Ouray county high school and Mr. William Rathmell, of Ouray, Miss Alma Brockway, Ouray county superintendent, were present. Every speaker expressed his admiration for the new building and wished Colona success in her enterprise of making better citizens.

After the speakers had finished Mr. A. D. Talbot, of Uncompahgre, was called to the front to begin the selling lunch boxes which had been brought by the enthusiastic young ladies of the community. There was a lively scramble for every box exposed to sale, and the piano fund was swelled by the sum of one hundred and twenty dollars when the bidding was finished. Supper was the next event on the program. After this the happy crowd dispersed with a feeling of contentment at the successful consummation of an undertaking which stamps Colona as one of the most progressive towns on the maps of Colona.

One cannot review this dedication without feeling that the community of Colona has a bright future before it; that such initiative is bound to result in influences which will spread farther and farther as the years go by until the will include within their sphere a reach undreamed of by those who have so fondly seen the beginning of the movement. May this reward be that of the people of Colona.