

# The West Jersey Pioneer.

A Family Newspaper: Devoted to Morality, Education, Science, Arts, Amusements, Mechanics, Agriculture, Temperance, Domestic and Foreign News, &c.—Independent of Party or Sect.

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## TELEGRAMS.

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## EDUCATION.

For the West Jersey Pioneer.

The following essay on "The Duties and Responsibilities of the Teacher," was delivered before the Cumberland Co. Teachers' Association, by P. L. F. REYNOLDS.

FELLOW TEACHERS:—I have written an essay to read on the present occasion, prompted more by a sense of duty which seemed to grow out of the position which I now occupy by your appointment than by any assurance of competency on my part, to instruct an association of practical teachers, many of whom, perhaps, have had more experience in teaching than myself. You are all familiar with the labors, cares, perplexities and anxieties belonging to the teacher's life. You know how his day-labor almost wholly credits him for successful, intellectual night-labor—how care-worn and weary he retires to his study after the duties of the day, with a vain hope of making greater attainment in science, or even of making adequate preparation for the discharge of the ever recurring duties of the morrow. In speaking before practical teachers a mere hint at the motive of our profession is sufficient apology for the many imperfections you can not help but discover in my humble effort. We want less theory, less speculation on the science and art of teaching. We want facts as they are developed in the school room together with experience practical teachers.

With these desultory preliminary remarks I purpose to call your attention to some of the numberless duties devolving upon us as teachers, and subsequently to indicate some of the peculiar responsibilities growing out of our situation.

The teacher must occupy the whole ground created to him by the community. He must grasp the new on the old. He must thus secure every advantage of the best among established modes of teaching, as circumstances shall permit, the results of his recent experience and of his entire progress and ability to teach.

The light he has gained should be reflected upon the parent. By visiting, when practicable, the homes of his scholars, and by conversing with their guardians, and by inducing them to visit him in his school room, he can do much to soften prejudice, to introduce more liberal ideas of education and to correct hoary-headed errors.

He should be the architect, drawing the true plan of a well educated child, and by giving, as well as receiving suggestions, helps to produce a finished model, one by which parent, teacher and child shall join to erect a symmetrical edifice.

Do you say, teachers, that this will take too much time, that all you can do is to instruct your scholars, while they are with you, six hours in the day? I ask, if it would not save time to have so gained the confidence of the parents by personal interviews, that they would study to comprehend, and would earnestly co-operate in your method of instruction and government? As things now proceed, with many of us, the teacher and the parent are, too often, opposing parties, the one requiring punctual attendance; the other regarding every hour taken from the daily complement, for his boy to do errands, or for the daughter in domestic pursuits, as so much net gain. The one sending messages for new books, the other flaming against teacher, and committee perhaps, for requiring so many books. The teacher wishes to instruct in a few branches only; but the parent demands a long list of imposing studies. Now, were an expense of time needed, to visit and interest himself with the parents, there would be a saving of temper and patience. The nerves would be spared, even though an extra hour must be occasionally given, after a day of toil, to visiting, enlightening and conciliating the guardians of the children.

Supposing, for the present, the teacher to be master in fact, as he is nominally of the course his pupils shall pursue, what should be his aim and endeavor? The general answer is, his mark must be high, his ideal broad, so as to cover the whole ground. He who aims low, with narrow views will be certain of doing but little, while the arrow directed towards the sun, cannot strike a point below mediocrity.

The scholar must be instructed in the exercise and direction of all his faculties. We must do more than simply impress our own opinions and assertions on the minds of our pupils. How much of school tuition has tended to render the intellect a mere scrap-heap on which the teacher has pasted all kinds of pictures. What pieces of transfer-work are the minds of many children. It is not easy entirely to avoid this evil. The teacher is constantly tempted to tell his scholars how the problem in hand is worked, or the word parsed, and there end his troubles. But such instruction is treason to the child. We should never carry knowledge to him, but hold it out towards him so near that he can reach it, and yet so distant that he must make an effort to obtain it. We must guard, too, against our own undue preferences among the studies of our schools. We like grammar, perhaps better than arithmetic, but is it right to deprive our scholars of a knowledge of that important science for self gratification? Or shall we teach geography, or history, or studies which have text books with printed questions, merely because this seems the easier course? If we are competent to our task we will be qualified to instruct in every branch expected to be taught in our school. And it seems to me where conscience is alive, we shall strive to subdue our own prepossessions and to aid our scholars in obtaining a complete education.

The laws of health are a proper object of school instruction. If the body be diseased, the mind will suffer with it. Hence the teacher should inform his scholars, of the conditions of health and the causes of sickness, for the sake of their intellectual progress. If they bring unwholesome food into the school room the teacher has an opportunity of giving a short lecture on diet. As a pupil observed bending over his desk let him give some idea of the lungs, and show the necessity, for their well being, of an upright position. Instruction can be given them incidentally on the virtues of cleanliness and its potency in preserving and restoring health, on the structure and functions of the brain, that great organ they are daily to exercise, on the evils consequent on breathing impure air; on the need of sufficient, and well regulated exercise and on many kindred points. Plato, the father of spiritual philosophy, received his name from the broad shoulders which he acquired by bodily exercise. Let us, as teachers, aim to reproduce Platonic physical and religious as well as intellectual ideas.

Among the objects of the school we should regard moral instruction as of the highest moment. Every teacher should propose to himself the formation, in his pupils, of sound and virtuous habits. Exercising parental oversight, he ought daily to inculcate the necessity of truth, love, justice, courtesy, industry, self-respect, order, submission and obedience as the condition of happiness—in a word—of an unceasing self-control. The youth desires to be a man; he pants for freedom and independence. He must be convinced by well-timed instruction, that excessive liberty is licentiousness, that true freedom comes from length of years, nor from the acquisition of property, nor from mental culture alone, but from a life sustained by internal resources and dedicated to moral excellence.

We must excite, as far as possible, the interest of our pupils in their studies. Before doing this we must feel, ourselves, a deep interest in the children, we must love them and desire to do them good. Without these feelings we shall find all helps and experiences fruitless and our own duties irksome. I have known a teacher who complained of dull scholars recommended to procure illustrations, pictures, cabinets and apparatus. But, valuable as these are in true hands, there was one aid omitted in the catalogue, which would have supplied the place of them all, and that was a hearty love for his work. He toiled in the school room only to make money. He absolutely hated his profession, and as to children, he loved them only at a distance.—How could it be, that he was not beating always up a stream and against a tremendous current.

It is the teacher's duty to secure the greatest possible concentration of mind while exercising study or hearing recitations. We lose immeasurably by requiring a length of attention to their books inconsistent with severe application, a child learns nothing, while in a dreamy, half-stupor state and many thus spend much of the three hour's exercise.—Memory depends on attention, and that can be given unremittingly but for a few moments at once, at least by children. They are volatile and unfixed in their habits of thought.—We should never forget this, but allow them perhaps more time than we commonly do for their recess, or change their objects of attention more frequently. Let the teacher select his own means, but I would earnestly press the necessity of requiring a fixed, intense application of the mind when study and exercises are in hand, and of giving proportionate recreations.

We should teach habits of observation.—Children naturally discriminate; they do in their sports, the boy always knows who should stand at the goal and who toss the ball.—Make him just as certain in his studies. For

this purpose he must watch. He must distinguish between things nearly alike. Educate him to perceive shades of difference between truth and error. Do not allow him to call a thing yellow which is orange-colored, or that white which is of a pearly aspect.—We should make ourselves master of the science of Phonology. It is a system of mental philosophy founded on observation and the true inductive mode of reasoning, laid down by the Restorer of scientific investigation. A knowledge of this system of mind will shed more light upon the art of teaching than a life's reading of the speculations of a Wats, Locke, Brown, Priestly, Reid, Smuker and Abercrombie,—who differing from each other in numerous essential particulars, leave the mind of the reader in doubt and uncertainty. Thus only can we hope to train up men, to be accurate in business, to testify intelligently and correctly in a court of justice, to be true specimens of the symmetrical man. Children should be trained to good habits of expression. They must not only know how a problem is solved, but must be able to state the method clearly and fully.

Quite as much is gained by endeavors to communicate knowledge as by solitary study. This habit gives a command of language which the scholar will hardly otherwise acquire.—It shows him the extent of his resources and where he needs fresh application. It gives him fluency of utterance, and at the same time grammatical propriety. In some schools the teachers are content with guessing out the ideas and meaning of their scholars. They speak by hints, in half-formed sentences and with a tone and manner so loose, disjointed and slovenly, as to savor of any place; rather than a school-room. It is quite as important for the education of a child that he should understand *how*, as he is. I was surprised at the indistinct, half-utterance of the pupils of the Normal school at Trenton. The habit was so firmly fixed that it seemed impossible to correct it, even under the pruning and fostering hand of the most vigilant of teachers. I regard a clear, round, full articulation in a primary as well as higher school, one great excellence. It is only by a clear and distinct enunciation on the part of a scholar that we can determine whether he is really acquainted with the subject before him, whether he has just ideas or is only giving us mouthfuls of words.

Aim in all things to secure the utmost accuracy. In teaching Penmanship, be not satisfied with a scholar's marking over the destined page, or half-page, but see that an easy and natural position of both body and hand are assumed and every letter is correctly formed, if but ten be written for an exercise. In teaching spelling, do not judge of the proficiency of your pupils by the number of columns they can rattle through. If each pupil can spell but a single word, let that word be pronounced, clear and distinctly, and then let each letter, and then each syllable, be given separately with their elementary and then their combined sounds.

But the most infallible means of success in teaching, is that the teacher add to all other helps, that of taking heed to himself. Of all the streams he would send forth, he must be the fountain head. It is not by set speeches, that he can convey all knowledge to his scholars. He must study books combined with the characters of his pupils, unless he possess the personal power to excite a thirst for learning, his efforts may tend to their intellectual poverty. He must gain and secure their affections. Love is a silken cord stronger than cables of coercion by which he must draw them to the fountains of wisdom. It will be his countenance, his manner, his tones, and not his cold words alone, that will interest their young hearts in him, and through him, in the studies they pursue.

Let him not hope to effect anything, however, by mere appearances, children pierce every covering and see the naked heart.—We must, therefore, subdue all unkind and unjust feelings, and cherish a parental regard for our pupils.

The teacher should watch daily the occurrences of the school-room, and draw thence material to mould their characters. If the plant be watered at the right hour, when the calm evening of reflection has come, its roots will be nourished and vigor, and beauty, and life will be shed through its foliage and flowers. The same service performed in the heat of mid-day, when the sun of passion is high, would but waste the waters of wisdom, and leave the stock parched with all evil.

Oh, woe to those who trample on the mind, That deathless thing! They know not what they do, Nor what they deal with! Man, perchance may bind The flower his step hath bruised; or light anew The torch he quenches; or to music bind Again the Lyre-string from his touch that flew, But for the soul, oh tremble and beware To lay rude hands upon God's mysteries thus."

In speaking of the responsibilities of teachers, I shall quote the language of Mr. Sweet, principal of the Rinecoen School, San Francisco.

"It is time the business of teaching were made a profession in reality, as it is, there is a regular system of 'rating' carried on, and stupid examinations make no discrimination between good teachers and quacks. Teachers

ought to be examined by practical teachers. They have been quizzed by politicians long enough. In the name of common-sense, how can it be expected that men who know nothing about practical teaching are competent to decide on a teacher's qualifications? Could a board of merchants examine an applicant for the bar and decide on his qualifications as a lawyer? Could the wise lawyer examine a medical student? Could ten men at large examine our position and demand that a board of practical and intelligent teachers, examine teachers and grant certificates according to merit. Then a teacher coming from home or abroad can be examined and go out into the State with some character.

This is done to some extent in the Eastern States; let us demand it here. It is the only thing that will give us any character, the only thing that will make our business a profession.

We have seen enough of "humbag" examinations. Shall the future teachers of this State always submit to the same humiliation? At the next State Convention, fellow teachers we must organize ourselves, and effect a reformation. We can do it; we must do it.—We must demand that the teachers appointment be considered as permanent during good behaviour, and while he gives general satisfaction. A teacher who has not some enemies is a milk and water man, unfit for his business. A dough-faced teacher is worse than a dough-faced politician. Is not the teacher's office as responsible as that of a politician and shall the politician hold his place during life, while the teacher is made chess-man for political moves? Must he become yearly, a log-roller and wire-puller among politicians to secure the continuance of his daily bread? Shame on any place if it comes to this; and still more shame on the teachers who will submit to it and sell their souls for a mess of pottage.

To make our business a respectable one, we must demand that it be well paid. No occupation is more laborious; none wears out muscle and brain faster. It is only in the vigor of early manhood that a man can follow the profession; shall he then be paid no more than the mechanic or the day laborer who shovels sand in the streets? Shall he teach for a pittance, merely enough to yield him a scanty subsistence, and in his old age be turned out like Nebuchadnezzar, to grass? The position of every class in society is determined, to some extent by the salary they can command. In American society; money is better currency than brain. Shall the teacher receive a salary no greater than that of a swine herd? Like the prodigal son of old, shall he live upon husks and return to his fathers dwelling in rags? The brain labor of the teacher should be as well paid as the brain labor of the lawyer, the physician, the clergyman. His expenses are great. He must dress as well, and live as well. We must demand, then, a salary sufficient to supply ourselves with books, magazines and the periodical literature of the day. The teacher needs a large library. We ought to be able to provide ourselves with cabinets of minerals and simple apparatus. We should demand a salary sufficient to enable us to live respectably, dress neatly, move in intelligent circles of society; not fashionable society, where brilliancy of diamonds make up for dullness of wit; and sufficient to maintain a family, if such a consummation devoutly to be wished, should ever happen to any of us! If we are well paid we can devote cheerfully, all our time and energies to the schools. We are no greater philanthropists than our neighbors whose children we educate. We do our duty and expect pay for it. None of us teach out of pure love of teaching. It is the way we get our living. We ought not to be expected to break mental bread to others and feed ourselves with staves!

The people want good teachers and are willing sometimes to pay for them. High salaries will command talent, and the best teachers make the best schools. The reason why the schools of Massachusetts have sustained so high a reputation, is because she has paid her teachers higher salaries than any other State in the Union. And shall this State, dole out a pittance to the teachers of her Public Schools?

A true teacher is not to be measured by his daily wages of one dollar. A poor teacher is a living curse to community. Teachers enough could be found who would be glad to fill all the places in this county at one half the present wages, but it would prove a losing speculation to the public. By a late census report in England it appears that there were five hundred teachers who asked their marks to their reports. Fifty of them could be imported at a very low price. But we want no wretched, parochial and parish schools in this country.

If the people of this country desire to have good schools, let them pay their teachers living salaries.

"What constitutes a state? Not starved and spangled courts Where low-browed meanness waits perfume to pride. Men, high-minded men. Men who their duties know, but know their rights, And knowing dare maintain."

If we are not men ourselves, how are we fitted to educate those who make the men of the future? We hold responsible positions; let us act with respectful firmness, neither transcending our powers nor allowing our rights to be disregarded. It is the teacher who gives character and efficiency to the schools. Boards of education may legislate, and appropriate money and build school houses, but if the teacher be found wanting, the school will be inefficient. He is the engineer of the minds that make up the living machinery of the school-room.

Fellow teachers, have you troubles to encounter, be patient. Look into your own heart first, for the cause of it. Let your own practice be a model for your pupils. Do we acquire our scholars to be accurate? We must be diligent, just, patient; bestesbleit, fute? Let us ask ourselves if these traits are in healthful exercise in our hearts. This nation needs shining lights at the teacher's desk. Each who now fills that high station should count himself called to be a reformer as Fellenberg, when looking on Switzerland; said of the three hundred pupils training for his teachers, so let this community say of us; "These instructors are the great engine to renovate the land." Let us so estimate our office and each of us will be a living code, enlightening the minds, purifying the hearts, and, under God, redeeming the souls of the precious band, given by parental solicitude and in patriotic faith to our charges to be prepared for the solemn and illustrious future.

## AGRICULTURE.

### AGRICULTURE—ITS RESOURCES.

The Capabilities of Agriculture ought not to be judged by anything that has yet transpired. The old Romans knew something of the art. Modern Europeans have learned more. We, in this country, are making advances. A thousand minds are intensely engaged in investigating the means for increasing the earth's productivity. Success is already achieved, sufficient to warrant the expectation of further advance. But if we look at the present means for diffusing intelligence, by the printed sheet and by the telegraph, writing the news at the place desired, though hundreds of miles off, instead of writing it at home and sending it by a post; if we compare present facilities for manufacturing with past; if we look at the strides made in navigation between the times of Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria, or even between those of Washington and our own, we shall find that science has not yet achieved for agriculture what she has for other departments of human enterprise. But we are not to despair. The task is a great one. She will yet achieve more for this great interest than for all others. In order to understand this subject fully, let us look at the nature of agriculture.

What does Agriculture propose to do? Not to create something out of nothing. That might be, certainly would be, too hard a task. Not to work with sparing materials. There is a great deal of bread-stuff in the air and the ground. The very rocks are full of it. Every drop of rain contains it. Using ever so much it does not diminish the supply; for soon it returns to its original condition, and is ready to be used over again. Some English manufacturer, a few years ago, found out that in taking old pants, picking them in pieces, and working them over, he could spin and weave them again; and make new pants of them. We wondered what made our pants wear long and tear easy, lose their shape and stick out at the knees. They told "it was not wool; it was shoddy"; and we did not like shoddy much; but it was using the same materials over; there was economy for somebody, if not for the buyer; and if we will forgo our own pants, instead of giving the wool-growing to our own farmers, and the cloth-making to our own manufacturers, and the fitting to our own tailors, it is good enough for us if we do get cheated. But look at the economy; the same wool that made the Duke of Portland's pants last winter, will make those of his servant next, those of his servant's waiter the third, and then make a pair of blue pants for a new boy for his butler; the fifth, and so on, perhaps after a while shipped in some taking form to this country. It is so with the materials of plants and of human food—except the wheat. The same elements of matter which made the diners of our forefathers, make ours, had made those of their ancestors back to Adam, and will make those of our descendants as long as time lasts. The phosphate of lime in your beef and bread, the sulphate of lime in your corn cake, and the potash in your potatoes, have figured at many a table; and the organic elements combined in them have travelled round the globe more times than Ledyard ever thought of doing, and have constituted a part of the food at more tables than he ever sat by; and yet are not shoddy—are just as good as ever, and will be, till the end of time. More than nine-tenths of the materials for all plants are taken from the air; less than one tenth comes from the ground. The business of agriculture is to work over the materials—to use them again as food formers. Carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, as they exist in atmosphere and water, afford no food; are mere air—wind, if in motion, nothing more. The farmer combines them, as starch, in the kernel of wheat, corn, rye, barley, rice or oats. Thus combined, they form an important office in the support of animal life; and then are pretty sure to find their way back into the next year's crops. All nature is in motion; moves for man's good; will move in spite of him, but will move to better results if he understand her laws and deems himself in accordance. The resources of agriculture are illimitable. A learned Doctor, somewhere south of Canada, was hear, is lecturing, that the world is soon coming to an end. If he can point to a declaration of revealed religion to this effect, we will respect his re-

search. So far as he bases his doctrine upon the alleged fact, that the earth, physically, is waxing worse; that man has almost spoilt it as a residence for human beings; that it can produce food and clothing only a little longer, we take issue with him. Man can no more harm the globe permanently, than the smallest fly can mar the proportions of St. Peter. So far from cultivation having diminished the earth's capability of furnishing food, the contrary is true. Hitherto the only limit to the production of food has been in the non-payment of a sufficient price to remunerate the farmer. We can remember the time, when the lawyer had 50 cents for writing a dunning letter of three lines, and the farmer got but three cents for a pound of veal. The time was, when nearly the whole population of our country was employed in agriculture. The pervasiveness of the British government, in the first instance, and subsequently, an error of our own, was the cause of our farmer had no place among us; and the farmer had no protection. A consequence was that everybody wanted to sell farm produce, and nobody to buy. Let the plow, loom and anvil go together; let but half the community be engaged in agriculture; let the other half be able and willing to pay fair prices; and the earth will show no signs of having become effete. Her capabilities are yet almost intact.

Old as agriculture is, compared with other arts; it is yet in its infancy—has hardly begun its work of making the earth what we believe it is destined to be. It is a fact beyond all controversy, that the more the soil is made to produce, by judicious means, the more it becomes capable of producing. If there is a limit to this, it is a great way off—fairly out of sight. Till we come in sight of the limit, we need have no fear of running against it.—The more we cultivate a region is cultivated, the more productive its soil, the healthier its climate, the more desirable its way. So well convinced are we of this, that we really wish that all who live by fighting all who live by race; and all who find nothing else to do, would mend their lives and go to cultivating the soil.

## NOTICE.

New Jersey M. E. Conference. FRIDAY April 11, 1756.

The Conference was opened with the usual services, B.ishop Simpson in the Chair. After the usual formalities, the Bishop took up that question of the discipline referring to the ex-amination of young men who had been on trial in the Conference for two years, and were eligible to be received into Conference membership. Previously to their election, they were called up in front of the altar of the church, where several disciplinary questions were propounded by the presiding officer, and a most beautiful and impressive address was made to them by the Bishop, in reference to their work. He remarked that this was a solemn moment; not only to the candidates—but to the preachers—that it must of necessity recall to their minds the time when they stood in the same position, and made the same vows, when the legal bond of union between them and the Conference was consummated. He stated that the position and work of a Methodist itinerant minister could never be understood by theory only. The work involved a call from God, felt in the soul and realized in the experience—that it involved the feeling of a duty that could not be repressed. The itinerancy, he remarked, was in many respects peculiar, and its peculiarities called for large sacrifices. There was almost constant sundering of the ties of association with beloved friends—friends all the more dear because of the little time in which their presence could be enjoyed—the long and numerous absences from home, in which much of comfort must necessarily be sacrificed—the labor assigned, often hard, and always difficult, and also the privation of almost every kind which would be their constant lot. It behooved your ministers to examine and see if their call was of God, whether the Divine influence was upon them, pressing into the ministry, for if it were not, then the work of the ministry must of necessity be sacrificial—the labor assigned, often hard, and always difficult, and also the privation of almost every kind which would be their constant lot. It behooved your ministers to examine and see if their call was of God, whether the Divine influence was upon them, pressing into the ministry, for if it were not, then the work of the ministry must of necessity be sacrificial—the labor assigned, often hard, and always difficult, and also the privation of almost every kind which would be their constant lot. It behooved your ministers to examine and see if their call was of God, whether the Divine influence was upon them, pressing into the ministry, for if it were not, then the work of the ministry must of necessity be sacrificial—the labor assigned, often hard, and always difficult, and also the privation of almost every kind which would be their constant lot.

He exhorted them to visit the families; to do it as a Christian pastor, with always a word of religious instruction, to practice and commend fasting. In this matter the Bishop thought that as a Church they were deficient. The last question asked of them was—"Are you in debt so as to embarrass you?" The philosopher's stone, said he, consists in owing no man anything. The borrower is always a slave to the lender.

Dr. Beecher says:—Never choose a lie. Let it work, and it will run itself to death. It can work out a good character much faster than any one can lie me out of it.

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