

Taylor (J. O.)

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THE  
FIRST LECTURE  
ON  
POPULAR EDUCATION:

BY J. ORVILLE TAYLOR.

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## FIRST LECTURE.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

We have assembled this evening for the improvement of the COMMON SCHOOL,—a school that we call *common*; not as inferior; not as the school for *poor* men's children; but as the light and the air are common. And what is common to *all*, should be the best of all.

We have met under those pervading, though, perhaps, unexpressed, convictions, that without incessant watchfulness—without an unsleeping eye for ever over public institutions, they become like wastes and commons,—open apparently to all, productive of benefit to none.

We have come together, not to say whether a railroad shall be made from this to some other place, nor whether one of your citizens shall be elected to some office: No, we have met to advance the best good of *to-morrow's* Society—for children *are* to-morrow's society. Our object is to ask your attention to the infinite worth of this *inward* Being—this immortal Thought—this boundless Capacity.

*Epictetus* was wont to say, that “It was much better for a people to meet, to see how they might elevate the souls of their citizens, than the roofs of their houses.” It is for this better purpose that we have convened. And, before I proceed further, I will re-

quest the privilege of being familiar and conversational in my manner this evening. It is my wish to use the colloquial style, for I have found that if I make men *feel* this subject—if I make them talk about it when they go home, and *act* for it hereafter, I must *talk* to them while they are with me—as a man talks to a man, as a lawyer talks to his jury. In explanation of my object, if you will permit me to bring in conjunction two great names, and a very small one, I will repeat that beautiful and forcible criticism of Longinus, on the manner and effect of the speaking of Cicero and Demosthenes. He tells us that when the people went from one of Cicero's orations, they always said, "what a beautiful speaker! what a rich fine voice! what an eloquent man Cicero is! *They talked of Cicero.* But when the people left Demosthenes, they said to each other, *let us fight Philip.*"—(Applause.)—Ladies and Gentlemen, if I shall succeed to-night in making you say, as you go home, let us fight *ignorance*, I shall have gained the only object I have in delivering this lecture. The less the speaker and his manner is noticed or thought of, the better.

The friends of education are apt to expect every thing from the goodness of their cause, and therefore do but little for it themselves. Yes, the cause of the people's education is so good, so very good, so *undeniably* good, that but very few care anything for it. Yet each one has not only a *public*, but a private interest in this subject. He that attends to his interior self, that has a heart, and keeps it, a mind that hungers, and supplies it; who seeks a useful, not a worthless life, has a deep interest in the subject of education; for he is something less than a man, who does not daily educate himself to the utmost.

“And who would suppose that education were a thing which had to be advocated on the ground of individual or national good; or, indeed, on any ground? As if it stood not on the basis of everlasting duty—a prime necessity and birthright of man! It is a thing that should need no advocating, as much as it does actually need. To impart the gift of thinking to those who cannot think, and yet have the capacity for thought, one would imagine, was the very first function of a government to discharge. Would it not be a cruel thing to see the inhabitants of this city, living all mutilated in their limbs, each strong man with his right arm broken! How much more so, to find the strong soul, with its eyes still sealed, its pulse gone, so that it beats not, throbs not.

“Light has come into this world, but to the ignorant soul, it has come in vain. For six thousand years the sons of Adam, in sleepless effort, have been devising, doing, discovering,—warring, a little band of brothers, against the empire of night. And they have made a noble conquest! But to *this man*, it is all as if it had not been. The thoughts that millions of intellects have lived by, and that now live on, in everlasting music, come not to him. He passes by on the other side—and that rich mental kingdom, the toil-worn conquest of his own brothers, is a boon not for him—an invisible empire—he knows it not. Who would think it to be necessary to advocate an education for such a brother!?”

It is encouraging to see this indifference to man's higher noble nature fast passing away. Europe is covering herself with Common Schools, and thrones are in a contest to enlighten ignorance. The most perfect school system in the world, is that so parentally fos-

tered by the despotic king of Prussia. So perfect, in theory and practice, is this Prussian system, that it educates *every* child in the kingdom. Three of its most striking and peculiar features are worthy of a short notice from us. And first, whatever relates to the system has impressed upon it the highest respect. The Minister of Public Instruction is selected for his high attainments and talents, and he ranks in station next to the king. Secondly, the teachers are educated for their profession. No man is allowed to teach a school, until he has studied the "Art of Teaching," and intends to make the calling his profession for life. Prussia has forty-two Normal schools or seminaries to educate school teachers. These two features we should borrow; for the glory of a people does not consist in never borrowing any thing, but in perfecting every thing they borrow. The third feature we, perhaps, could not introduce. You will say that its *compulsory* nature is contrary to our feelings and to the spirit of our institutions. If the Prussian parent neglects to send his children to school, the police officer takes him to prison, and the children to school. We might improve a little on this, and take the parent to school also,—(laughter.)—for such a citizen needs as much instruction as the children.

Many have said to me, "the state has no right to *compel* parents to send their children to school." What! has the state a right to send a man to the gallows and no right to send him to school. Shall the state be known only as the jailor, the executioner, and not the educator? I say the state has a right to compel parents to educate their children or let them be educated. This compulsion, however, cannot be felt in statute law, but in an enlightened public sentiment,—so pervading, so

resting upon every man, that he who will let his children remain in ignorance, will be looked upon, and pointed out to passers-by, as a felon. With us public opinion is omnipotent; more despotic and compulsory than the most absolute throne in Europe. The friends of education must go to this great source of action for improvement.

Since the School System of Prussia has been adopted, crime and pauperism, according to governmental reports, have decreased 38 per cent. This result is sufficient, in itself, to convince us of the value of a religious education. The Prussian government, by timely education, converts the materials which go to make the felon and the polluter, into the industrious citizen and true christian; and thus saves the fees of jailors and hangmen—the expense of courts and prisons.

But still Prussia remains a despotic government, proving the influence of that monarchial maxim: “Every thing *for* the people, nothing *by* the people.” Our maxim is, every thing *by* the people, nothing *for* the people. The King is at the head of the system, and he sees well to it, that the divine right of Kings, is a very important part of the daily instruction.

Russia has lately adopted this Prussian School System, and there is now at St. Petersburg a Normal School, educating three hundred and sixty young men to teach Common Schools. Emperor Francis of Lombardy, introduced this system in eighteen hundred and thirty-eight; and it being remarked to him by one of the courtiers, that “his people were not sufficiently enlightened to receive this system of instruction.” Francis nobly said: “When my people have learned to read they will cease to stab.” In eighteen hundred and thirty-one, M. Cousin, the scholar, philosopher and

statesman, was deputed by the French Government to examine and make a report of the education system of Prussia. His report appeared in thirty-two, and being immediately followed by the action of the government, greatly improved the French system of education. Time will not allow us to dwell any longer with these foreign systems of education. Such as wish to study correctly and fully, the theory and workings of the European Systems of Education, I will refer to President Bache's Report to the Trustees of the Girard College. This is a volume of more ability, and one affording more valuable, practical assistance than any work that has been published in this country. In this very difficult and laborious effort, President Bache has conferred on his country an immeasurable good.

Let us then, return home, and look over these twenty-six independent states. Here is a whole nation *unarmed!* The asylum of a world,—inviting all to come and partake of this inheritance of liberty! Where all power and protection is, not in a military, posted at every corner of our streets, passing our windows every hour with waving plumes and gleaming blades, and tramping the earth with bayonet and sabre; no! but in the boys and girls of the land, going from their homes to their schools, carrying the Testament and the Spelling book—the boys and girls of our Common Schools, the true standing army of a free people.—(Great applause.)—Here is not a high gilded throne, lifting one crowned head over all—Here are not armed citadels and fortresses, but 50,000 Common Schools! Each school a Sentinel of Liberty—a Light House of Freedom.—(Applause.)—Here is not a society with its thousand abuses to reform; with its half fed untaught millions, crying for food and guidance at the

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point of the bayonet. No! but a prosperous, free people, *with four millions of children to be educated.*

There have always been two empires in the world—one of *force*, and the other of *reason*; for men can be governed only in these two ways. Consequently, there must be either soldiers or schoolmasters—books or bayonets—camps and campaigns, or schools and churches—the ballot box, or the cartridge box. Now the first public buildings of our forefathers were the School-house and the Church. Their united instruction has made us a great people—may their influences be imperishable.—(Cheering applause.)

I have tables, (obtained by travelling in sixteen of the states, and from a close investigation for the last eleven years) which prove, that from all those taught to read in this country, nineteen out of twenty, receive all their instruction in the Common Schools. This important information shows us that, as is the Common School, so is the education of the people. The education of the American people, taken as a whole, is just what the Common Schools are prepared to give. How many in this large assembly have received any other education than that from the Common Schools? If these schools had been better, the education would have been better.

Although all here have been improved by education, every one of reflection is conscious, when he begins to reason and compare, of many defects in his mental powers, and many inconvenient and embarrassing habits, which might have been prevented, or remedied, by a better early education. Yet the Common Schools, whatever may be their condition, teach the nation. These schools educate the farmers, they educate the mechanics, the merchants, the legislators, *the mothers.*

They are the people's colleges—the sun of the people's mind—lamps of freedom, lit up all over this land to pour their light upon our institutions. Defective as they are, the elementary schools bestow and sustain the nation's liberty. It was intelligence that reared up these majestic columns, and the empire and liberty of these states will stand or fall with Common Schools: *For Liberty under law, cannot exist without the school-master.* Whoever builds a school-house, or teaches a good school, is erecting the fairest monument to freedom.

Blow out the light of these institutions, gentlemen,—lock up the doors of the school-house,—let darkness rest upon these roofs, and agriculture is forgotten, manufactures shut down their gates, and commerce casts her anchor. Strike from existence these intellectual fountains, and rapid would be our steps back to the savage state.

But, fellow-citizens, *to neglect* these schools, is worse than to destroy them. Mal-information is worse than no information—hunger is better than poisoned food. The worst people on the whole earth to govern is a half educated people—educated enough to read what the demagogue says, but not enough to know whether it be true or not. Gentlemen, as I have passed through this city, I have said we may pile our hill-tops with Grecian architecture, but let the plain school-house go down and where is our foundation.—(Strong applause.) If the time shall ever come when this great government will totter, the cause will be found in the ignorance of the people. “And the people perish for lack of knowledge.”

I will now ask your attention to the connection between Common Schools and the higher literary institu-

tions—academies, colleges and professional seminaries. If the children all over the land, in their first schools can receive a love of knowledge,—a desire for a higher improvement. If they can in these first steps in knowledge, find their studies their delight, if they shall associate with the improvement of their minds every thing that is agreeable, they will go from the Common School to the academy, and from the academy to the college and professional seminary; poverty nor parents cannot keep them down. And thus will the Common School give the college its best support. But let the Common Schools remain neglected; let the children in them learn to cipher to the Rule of Three, and hate knowledge all the rest of their lives, and you will scarcely be able to drive them to the Common School; they will never desire to enter the academy or college. Take care of the primary schools and they will take care of the colleges; attend to the fountains, and you will have a river. The most valuable aid we can give to the college, is, to improve the Common Schools.

Some have said the Common Schools can never educate the people; knowledge, say they, must descend from our higher institutions down among the people. But, gentlemen, knowledge will no more descend, than heat will descend. If you wished to warm the lower stratum of air, would you heat the upper stratum first? No; warm the lower stratum, and you cannot keep the upper cold.—(Applause.)—Would the prudent house-wife build the fire on the top of the pot, to make it boil?

Self-education, the best education after all, is also dependent on common schools. Why are not the people their own instructors; why do we not see more great self-educated men. Franklins, Shermans, Henrys,

rising up all round us. Why are there not more of our young men, to-day, under the sublime process of a self-education ; because the Common Schools have neither given them the desire nor ability to educate themselves. They left the miserable school half knowing and not half knowing, with feeble thought, and vacant, uncertain perceptions, and there is now nothing to stand upon or to work with. But one thing well understood is an excellent starting point for every thing else.

The great mathematician Edmund Stone was the son of a gardener of the Duke of Argyle ; and when Edmund was but seventeen years old, the Duke was one day walking in his garden and noticed Newton's Principia lying on the grass, and directed it to be taken to his library. Young Stone appeared and claimed it. "Yours !!" said the Duke, "do *you* read Geometry, and Latin, and Newton?" "A little," answered the boy, who being farther questioned, excited the Duke's amazement still more. "And how came you with all this knowledge?" the Duke at last inquired. "A servant," said Stone, "taught me ten years since my letters. Does a man need to know any thing more than his twenty-six letters in order to know every thing else?" Let the schools teach the people their twenty-six letters as they ought to be taught ; with delight—with certainty, and they would afterwards educate themselves. A great truth, which the mass have yet to learn, is, that all school education is valuable so far, and so far only, as it has prepared us to educate ourselves. Man's great concern on earth is education, and the labor of schools is simply to fit him to enter on his course with truth and effect. Look at the farmers of this state, wringing from the soil a scanty subsistence. They

have powers which, had they been evolved by an early self-training, would have placed them among the first statesmen of the age. But now, after their cheap schools and penury of instruction,

“Live unknown, and drop into a peasant’s grave.”

The state neglected the school and lost her true source of wealth ; for an ignorant man is like a lump of iron ore, worth one sou ; while he who is educated to look before and after, who observes while he thinks, and thinks when he observes, is like the lump of ore refined, and made into watch springs, worth six millions of sous.

The success of christian effort depends on Common Schools. We will take for an illustration that best of all causes, the Bible cause. And, ladies and gentlemen, if we wish to secure the triumph of the Bible, we must begin by securing the triumph of Common Schools. The Rev. Dr. Duff, Missionary to India, told the General Assembly that, from a want of knowledge and science, the Hindoos were not capable of estimating the evidence of the gospel, which, to their dark, feeble minds, appeared like an old wife’s fable. Dr. Duff proposed that the Board of Missions should give to the Hindoos instruction in the various branches of a common education, that their minds might be able to see the truth and importance of the scriptures.

Before the sower goes forth to sow his seed, the ground must be prepared. Common Schools must plough for the Bible. The seed will not take root if the ground be not ploughed ; neither can the Bible be understood if Common Schools have not gone before it.

The Bible, then, that charter of liberty—the Magna Charta of a world’s freedom—“shineth in darkness,

and the darkness comprehendeth it not" if Common Schools are neglected. You will keep in mind that nineteen out of twenty, receive from Common Schools all their ability to read the Bible, and that these must read understandingly, or otherwise as these schools are improved or worthless. A great part of the reading with the majority of the people is so *wordy*, so mechanical, so feeble, that the *thought* makes no lodgement, the truth no conviction. A well trained school-master with his primer, must precede the school-master with his Bible. There are in the United States, according to the census of the general government taken in 1840, 546,769 white adults over twenty years of age, unable to read; and 672,442 children between the ages of five and sixteen without the instruction, or the means of a Common School education!! And yet we resolve to give the Bible to every child and youth in the United States—a good resolution; but should we not also resolve, that every child and youth in the United States shall be *taught* to read a copy of the Bible. The reason that we sow so many seeds by the printed page, and see so few flowers, is, the people are not taught to read intelligently and with abiding convictions. A tract distributor passed me a few days since and handed a sailor a tract. The sailor turned it over and up side down, and said "I can't read," and dropped the tract on the ground. "Has our whole duty been discharged by handing the sailor a tract?" said a reverend gentleman to me, now three years since, "I have just completed a tour for distributing the Bible under the direction of the American Bible Society. Seven hundred and two Bibles have been left by me, but unless teachers are sent to teach the people to read them, I had better go and bring back at least five hundred of the copies."

The wealth and energies of the land are exhausted to send the printed page. Should not the friends of the Bible take a deeper interest in the improvement of the Common Schools? To give the Bible, unasked, to the ignorant and those merely able to pronounce words, is like filling a blind man's house with the paintings of the masters, or casting the seed wheat in the woods, or building a granite temple in the forest for the benefit of the roaming savage.

The Pulpit also, "that most important and effectual guard, support, and ornament of virtue's cause," stands on Common Schools. When the messenger of truth speaks to the congregation, he addresses *mind*; his arguments pre-suppose mind, and, unless the people's schools have raised the audience up to the pulpit, where is the minister's influence. As I have listened to a good consecutive argument from the sacred desk, and have seen the people, with wandering looks and vacant countenances, ready to turn to the door if any one should happen to pass through it, at the very moment, too, when the speaker was educing an important conclusion, I have felt as I have done while seeing a person thrust his hand into a small aperture after something loose, but which he was able to reach only with the ends of his fingers, and from his being able to touch it, he only pushed it further from him. So, with the preacher; he was laboring to get hold of the attention of the people, but the mind was so feeble, so wandering, so vacant, that there was no grasp, and the great truth fell powerless. To make an abiding impression on an empty-headed audience is as hopeless as to make a mark on the ocean.—(Laughter and applause.)—We are told by the historians of the French Egyptian campaign, that Bonaparte found, and attempted to re-

duce a garrison, sheltered by a huge *mud* fort. Had the walls been of timber, the besiegers might have burnt them. Had they been of stone, even blocks of granite, they might have breached them by their cannon. But the vast passive mound received the iron missiles without effect—they just closed in and were dead. And the mighty engines of attack and demolition were paralyzed and powerless. So it is with the preacher when he preaches to the ignorant, (a strong sensation in the audience,) “seeing they see not, neither do they understand.” And I most respectfully beg leave to remind the learned clergymen present, in the quaint language of *South*, the English sermonizer, “the school-master often mars what the preacher never mends.” The preacher should not only see that the truth falls from his lips, but also that the people are capable of receiving it. Now, we ring the Sabbath bell long and loud, but forget to unlock the church door—(*the mind.*) The invitation goes out to the people to come and hear, but the bolted door of ignorance forbids them to enter.

The blessings of a Free Press are also dependant on good Common Schools. My friends, what is the American newspaper press? Fifteen hundred in number; pouring annually upon the wings of the wind, to hide from us the sun of truth, ten millions of printed sheets; and these damp sheets are falling upon us every morning as thick as snow-flakes in a snow-storm; and the people are eagerly gazing upward, with mouth, and eyes, and hands, wide open, ready to swallow ravenously every thing that drops.—(Applause.)—What are these damp sheets filled with. After a few honorable exceptions, *with crime made an amusement*;—see detailed criminal and crim. con. cases—with demorali-

zing advertisements—with party strife, for the object of the press now is, to make partisans, not patriots—with personalities, slander, and unblushing profligacy. Oh, unless the people are intelligent enough to detect its errors, and virtuous enough to be untouched by its corruption, the press is a curse.

The very cheapness of the press has prostituted it to a speedy wide circulation of poisonous prints and libels, things more fatal and deadly to the mind of the uneducated, than ever gunpowder was to their bodies. The old and noble monuments of thought and intellect are neglected, and, upon a sea of frothy conceits, one everlasting, wishy, washy flood, or noisy dulness, the spirit of the age is tossed hither and thither, and not without danger of entirely losing sight of the compass of truth, and the pole star of faith.—(Applause.)—In the press, was the strife ever hotter, or the struggle keener, than at the present day? Does it not strive to make the “worse the better reason,” and the rogue the better man? What can prepare the public for such a press? How shall the people possess a sound, thinking, comparing mind, capable of discriminating and of judging of probabilities?—*By improving their Common Schools*, where nineteen out of twenty receive all their education. Where there is a free press, there must be a free education. The editor will always bring just such goods to market *as will sell*; and the only way we can improve the article sold, is to improve the purchaser.—(Applause.)—And, before I leave this part of my subject, I will ask the politicians, if any such are present, why it is, that the merest frothy rant, the most empty declaration, will go down as well as the best argument? Because, sirs, *in a vacuum*, a guinea and a feather go down with equal rapidity.—(Renewed applause.)

We will now examine the connection between ignorance and crime ; not, however, by ascertaining, as many writers have done, the number of convicts in our prisons who can read, and the number who cannot read. To my mind, this inquiry can prove nothing important. The mere ability to read does not prevent crime. It may prompt the individual into its commission. Where the moral sentiments are weak, and the appetites and passions strong, the depraved taste will give a bias to the reading which will only corrupt and demoralize. The ability to read is simply a *means* to purify and elevate, or pollute and debase. To teach a man his letters barely, is not to educate him, or insure industry or integrity. But to this important view of the subject, I will call your attention in my Third Lecture. The single position that I now wish to assume is, that from the very nature of man, "*uneducated mind is educated vice.*" God made man to *know* ; he is the creature of education, *made* to be educated ; and if he is not educated, he does not fulfil his being, and must be miserable. Now, the miserable man easily becomes the criminal. All see that wickedness leads to misery, and it is equally certain that misery leads to wickedness.

Dr. Johnson was once asked, "Who is the most miserable man?" the sage said, "That man who cannot read on a rainy day." And it was nobly said by Plato, "That every soul was unwillingly deprived of truth." Yes, fellow-citizens, you may place man where you please—you may dry up to the uttermost the fountains of his feeling, the springs of his thought ; and the idea that he was born to know and learn, will survive it all. It is allied to his hope of immortality—it is the divine part of his nature which barren igno-

rance cannot reach. There is in a *right* education a divine alchymy which turns all the baser parts of man's nature into gold.

The Greeks tell us, that when the first rays of the morning sun fell upon the statue of Memnon, it sent up music.—It is only after the first rays of knowledge fall upon man, that his nature discourses harmony.

Your speaker was once passing through a park, and saw nailed to one of the trees this warning, "All dogs found in this park will be shot." A friend who was with me remarked, "unless dogs can read they are pretty badly off here."—(A laugh.)—Now God has not only written his laws upon the trees, but in the stars, and in the flowers. They are above us and beneath us, on our right, and on our left, and if man is not able to read he is pretty badly off here—worse off than the dog, for a dog has a master to read for him, but man has no master between him and his God.

"A maxim, of more truth and force than any other I remember ever to have seen, was thrown off by a British Statesman—by a man who was in learning vivid, varied and philosophical, and who in conversation threw out more gems, sparkling and brilliant as they came, than any other man of his age. His profound apothegm was "*Education is the cheap defence of nations.*"—(Applause.)

"Oh there will be a time when this great truth, electric, shall run from man to man; and the proud cemented pyramids of ignorance, will, by one flash be thrown to earth in atoms."

"Change, wide, and deep, and silently performed  
This land shall witness.  
From culture, unexclusively bestowed,  
Expect these mighty issues: from the pains

And faithful care of unambitious schools  
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear.  
 Hence look for these magnificent results !"

What is our defence ?—courts, jails, prisons, and the gallows. But education is the cheap defence of nations ; and if we shall ever learn to legislate afar off, and upon a great system—preparing the public mind while obeying it—masters of the vast machine and not its tools. If ever that day shall arrive, the first maxim that we shall establish will be, it is cheaper to educate the infant mind, than to support the aged criminal.—(Applause long repeated.)—Give your pence to Common Schools and save your pounds on prisons. No, not save your pounds, but write over your prison-doors "*To let.*" Man was not made to be sent to prison, but to be educated ; and as John Wilkes said, "the very worst use you can put a man to is to hang him."—(Laughter.)

Punishment to prevent crime, gentlemen !! It comes like the physician's prescription at the funeral, *too late.*—(Renewed laughter.)—Tread-mills to prevent crime ! Why, the tread-mill only fatigues the muscles ; crime springs from weak moral faculties and over active propensities ! Would you use an argument to turn over a rock, or a crow bar to convince a man ?—(General laughter.)

But it is our duty to educate a democracy—to warm its faith—to elevate its hopes—to purify its morals, and to direct its energies. This is our high and sacred office ! Yet how slightly have we considered this subject, when, every where it is held to be the first and legitimate duty of the state to provide judges and hangmen for the people. It is a duty to provide the prison, the fetter, and the gallows. It is the duty of the state

to destroy human beings ; living minds that bear the impress of the divine workmanship, however tarnished ; and worse than this, it is held as a duty for the state to immure human beings in dungeons, to deprive them of the objects of the external world, and of God's creation ; to create for them a living death, to turn the mind into a blank, and throw the warm gushings of human feelings, and sympathies, and affections, back into a fearful chaos. It is the duty of the state to punish crime, to send forth fearful retribution to those who break the law. But hitherto the half-civilization of Congress, and the semi-barbarism of the State Legislatures,—(laughter)—and the divine right of demagogues have not thought it a duty to provide for the people, pretended to be governed, the means of religious and intellectual advancement, to enable them to know and understand their duties as regards this life and the life to come. Compelled to obey laws which they scarcely ever heard of, the necessity for which they cannot see, and yet not allowed to plead ignorance of those laws, the poor ignorant law-breaker is held up to the law's vindictiveness and the bitter retribution of his fellows. The law, is severe to punish crimes ; it can kill the poor offending wretch, and send him before his Maker when it pleases. Powerful but impotent law, it judges of the act, it thinks that it knows the motive that led to it ; but here it stops and here it fails. It can punish, and in the very zeal of this sacred power, almost too awful to be placed in human hands, it punishes daily ; but how inefficient are its punishments. When did they ever change the hardened offender ? they coerce the body to convince the mind—vain effort ! the great practical blunder of human society in all ages and in all times. Should not the law be equally powerful to

prevent as to punish crime? how murderously unjust to punish where we might prevent! Is not the depravity of human nature revealed to us from heaven? is it not written on the heart of man? And should not human efforts be means of grace? Statesmen, legislators, how long will you dare to insult both heaven and man? how long will ye trust to penal statutes, public executions, dungeons, chains, and tread-mills, instead of that high intellectual and moral influence by which alone you ought to rule?—(Applause.)—Why, every chain you forge, every prison you build, every torment you invent, whether of perpetual silence or solitary confinement, which blast the mind to idiocy, you might have saved, is and shall be a disgrace to you, your country, and your times,—(cheering and cries of “true,” “right,” from several voices,)—while you leave untouched those mighty means with which the strong arm of power invests you, of giving to the whole mass of the people, down to the lowest citizen king that lives upon this free soil, a perfect acquaintance with his duty to God and man, and fitting opportunities for the full and free development of that immortal mind which but buds here, but shall blossom in eternal freedom hereafter.

Circumstances lead to crime, and it is the office of the legislature and the educator to correct the circumstances, as well as to punish the criminal. But we are more willing to execute the law, than to prevent its infraction. Yet we should remember that constabulary forces and courts cost more than schools; to save pence, we spend pounds, shillings, and pence—we reduce the school-master's salary a few dollars and spend thousands on sheriffs and penitentiaries. But this is not only expensive and ruinous, it is cruelty, for we,

by neglecting the child, produce vice, and then punish it; erect gallows, and then supply them with victims.

The more we reflect upon the connection between crime and blind heedless ignorance, the more we shall be convinced that there is no true eradicator of crime, *but a well principled education*. Penal codes, active police, poor houses on the most liberal scale, are all but substitutes and palliatives. The eye of the law is not all-seeing; the most active legislation cannot be at all times, and in all places, with the people. To check crime, we must check the disposition to crime; to prevent overt acts, we must create an omnipresent control over the heart,—set up the man in watch over himself, and *make conscience the universal preventive*.—(Applause.)—But now it is our purses and prisons first, and our minds and morals afterwards.—If the latter shall follow we are pleased with the news; but under all circumstances, and at all hazards, our purses and our prisons!

Give the children of the poor that education which will enable them to see, honestly, their own condition and resources; which will cultivate in them an onward-looking hope—which will give them in their leisure hours, rational amusement—*this*, and this only, will work out that moral revolution, the legislators noblest ambition.

“Neither is man a *human poor box*, into whose mouth we are to drop a few cents daily.” No, he is a divine being, made for education and usefulness, instead of building poor houses and prisons, let us by education open the doors of these millions of prison houses of ignorance.

“ Oh for the coming of that glorious time  
When prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth  
And best protection, this imperial realm,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation on her part, to teach  
Them who are bound to serve her and obey ;  
Binding herself by statute to secure,  
For all the children whom her soil maintains,  
The rudiments of letters ; and to inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth ! ”

To see a man on the 4th of July, boasting of his freedom ; celebrating the birth-day of his independence, and yet know him to be debased and brutalized by ignorance, with fetters on his soul and a padlock on his lips, is to have before us what is too often seen, *a civil lunatic*.—(Laughter.)

“ The ignorant child left to grow up darkening into the deeper ignorance of manhood, with all its jealousies, and its narrow-mindedness, and its superstitions, and its penury of enjoyments ; poor amid the intellectual and moral riches of the universe ; blind in this splendid temple which God has lighted up, and famishing amid the profusions of omnipotence.”

“ O, woe for those who trample on the soul,  
That fearful thing ! They know not what they do  
Nor what they deal with——  
To lay rude hands upon God’s mysteries there.”

Look at the ignorant man ! Strong in muscle, furious in purpose—he is a Samson without eyes ; the slave of appetite ; the dupe of the quack ; the thrall of the fanatic ; the creature of impulses and impressions ; the passive instrument in the hands of the political agitator. An ignorant man voting !! Holding in his hands a ballot he cannot read ; carrying it to-

wards the omnipotent ballot box, to drop into it the nations' sovereignty!! Do you see your relation to that man? "He is a partner in this political firm; you cannot withdraw from it or throw him out;" his lot is your lot—his end, your end. An ignorant man voting is like a blind physician who goes up to the sick bed with a great club—he strikes—he may hit the disease, he may hit the patient.—(Applause and laughter.)—And how many blows do you dodge, annually, through the ballot box? How long can we continue to dodge these blows? If we do not educate this tremendous power of suffrage, like the strength of Samson, so far from being our protection, will but serve to bring upon our heads, this temple of our ancestors.—(Loud applause.)—We may "go ahead" with this great mass of ignorance, but look out that we break not down, midway in our career.

Says De Tocqueville: "The greatest despotism on earth is an excited, untaught public sentiment; and we should not only hate despots, but despotism.) When I feel the hand of power lie heavy on my brow, I care not to know who oppresses me; the yoke is not the easier, because it is held out to me by a million of men."

This is my political creed. Teach and habituate the people to make a right use of the faculties which God has given them, and *then* trust them fearlessly to themselves.—(Continued applause.)

But why is there this great mass of untaught feeling and muscle? Why are there so many children in the United States without the means even of a common education? Why are the schools so low in character? The great cause, gentlemen, lies in the views and practice of our wealthy, intelligent, and prominent citizens.

These, except a few, more noble minded and patriotic send their children to private schools, and academies, and seminaries. The Common School is left in the hands of the uneducated, or with those whose business is so pressing, that no time can be given to its improvement. The Common School thus becomes a low, disreputable school—deserted by all who feel an interest in their children’s education, and patronized only by those who look upon it as a good prison to keep their children out of the way, till they are able to work. We are aware that in many places, improvements and sacrifices have been made, and that this is not now the condition of things. But in the majority of the places I have visited, the citizen of wealth and influence has said to me, “I can’t send my children to the public school to sit on the bench by the side of the unwashed.” I say, then, you had better go and wash the children—(laughter)—while they are young and easily handled; for they will grow up and soil your children much more hereafter. For these unwashed, (and your children will have to partake with them,) will obscene, vulgar speeches be made; for *them* will festering, polluted papers and books be published, and for them will dishonest, ignorant rulers be elected. Of all these heavy curses will your children, however separate you may keep them while young, be equal partakers. Had you not better sweeten the fountain at its source, than let the bitter waters swell and increase, until they overflow and enter your dwellings?—(Three rounds of applause.)—Look at that child in the gutter—hatless, coatless, shoeless—*he* is a part of our king—one of our sovereigns—and a part of the sovereignty! Should he not have a sovereign’s education? There is a gem, too, under that soiled face—let the diamond be polished,

and the rays of truth and greatness will reveal the brilliant. There is "a beam ethereal," though sullied and dishonoured, still divine. Men of wealth, men of learning, pour instruction upon the heads of the people, you owe them that baptism.

But says the rich old bachelor, what interest have I in the school, and complains that he is taxed for its support. Complain of taxes for the support of schools, does he! Why, taxes for the diffusion of knowledge, are like vapors which go up, only to come down again, in showers, to beautify and fertilize the earth. In this truly; "with what measure ye mete shall be measured to you again."

These wealthy men without children, will pay hundreds of dollars to an insurance company to secure their property, and yet do not see that education is the great insurance company that insures all other insurance companies. Carry to them, for the support of the schools, a tax bill, and they will cry out as Macbeth did to the ghost of Banquo: "take any shape but that."—(Laughter and applause.)—But no one is so high as not to need the education of the people as a safeguard; and no one is so low as to be beneath its uplifting power. The safety of life and the security of property, lie in the virtue and intelligence of the people; for what value is there in law *unless there is intelligence to perceive its justice, and virtue to which that law can appeal?*

If we withdraw our children from the Common Schools—keep from them our share of support, our respect and attention, they will be either discontinued, or struggle on, disreputable and secondary institutions. To such schools the poor have but little desire to send their children, and we find a great number of them,

soon to vote, and to control public opinion, growing up with an abandoned, envious, and irresponsible *street education*. Were the Common School (the only school within the reach of the poor) respectable—if the rich would send their children to it, the poor would make every effort to obtain its *reputable* and elevating instructions. Let the Common School, then, *be the best school, and let all send to it*. Let *all* have a fair start, and no distinctions be made in the *early* education of all the citizens. Said Bishop Doane, in a strain of eloquence, which is always *logic on fire*: “Mind is immortal. Mind is imperial. It bears no mark of high or low, of rich or poor. It heeds no bound of time or place, of rank or, circumstance. It asks but freedom. It requires but light. It is heaven-born, and it aspires to heaven. Weakness does not enfeeble it. Poverty cannot repress it. Difficulties do but stimulate its vigor. And the poor tallow-chandler’s son, that sits up all the night to read the book which an apprentice lends him, lest the master’s eye should miss it in the morning, shall stand and treat with kings, shall add new provinces to the domain of science, shall bind the lightning with a hempen cord, and bring it harmless from the skies.”—(Applause.)

Yes, gentlemen, on that kite, when the city, upon which it that day looked down, shall be known only by its ruins, will be read by posterity, as it waves high up in mid air, in blazing colossal letters, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.—(Tremendous applause.)—These are strong feelings, fellow-citizens, but on a theme like this “’tis impious to be calm: Here, passion is reason.” Shall there be an education for the poor as such? Rather, shall not the Common School be the best school, and common to *all*?

In the words of Carlyle, speaking to the great heart of humanity, I will say to you, "It is not because of the low toils that I plead for the poor; we must all toil; and the struggle with the dense brain is of all labor the most consuming. For the laboring poor, hungry and athirst, there is food and drink—for the weary and heavy-laden, the heavens send sleep the deepest and the sweetest.

"No! as a laborer, I plead not for him; but I do mourn that the lamp of his soul should go out—that no bright visions should visit him; and that his mind through the whole of life should be filled with two great spectres—fear and indignation. Oh! that one man should die ignorant, who had a capacity for knowledge, should make us all weep."

The common idea is, that man needs no other education than will fit him for labor. But this is treason to his divine nature. His claim for an education springs from his *nature*, and not from his calling. He is to be educated because God made him for this high purpose, and not because he is to labor and move stones about the earth. He is not a mere animal of muscles and work. He has close and tender connections with his neighbors and his God. He is a father, husband, son, friend, christian! He has a *home*, a country, and a church; and is such a being, so nobly and fearfully related, to be educated only for a trade? Yes, says the spirit of the age, an education will only make him discontented with his lot.

And now, my friends, what is this spirit—this character of the age? Is it educational? devotional? No; it is *mechanical*.\* We live to make great things,

\* See Carlyle's "Essay on the Spirit of the Age."

rather than great men. We set too much value on the *work*, and too little on the *workman*. It is an age of rail-roads, canals, banks, currency, and legislation. If you wish to see the spirit of the age embodied, and at one glance—as you sit in the rail-car, carried through the air, like an arrow to the target, at the rate of twenty miles the hour, look into the field, and see the free horse, throwing his heels into the air, leaving a fire-horse yoked in his stead!—(Redoubled applause.) The sailor, on the wings of steam, flies over the ocean, and rides the billows as a tamed horse. We live to perfect the outward machinery of life, rather than educate and ennoble this inward living principle. We worship the bellows-blower of life's anthem, and not the organist. It is an age not of education, but of profit and loss. It does not adore the true and the beautiful, but calculates the gain. The heart of the nation pours out its worship toward the body politic, but the soul politic is forgotten. Every thing is done,

“Not for Conscience sake, but for Purse's sake.”

Now, worth means *wealth*, and wisdom, the art of getting it.—(Laughter and applause.)—And, as Fielding said, “A patriot, in these days, means a man who wants an office; and politics is the art of getting one. Worth, means power, wealth, rank; and true knowledge means the art of getting all three.”—(Laughter.)

We have become not only mechanical in action, but mechanical in thought. We have now our committees and societies for making and publishing public opinion—and our educational machines—Lancasterian and monitorial systems, and lessons made easy.—(Applause.)

Thus, man has lost his conscience, his separate existence, and become incorporated in the soulless mass. He

has, in the words of Carlyle, become a part of a great machine. Man, thus confounded, is a thing—*many things*. The planter is a thing sent into the field to gather food; he sees his bushel and his cart, and sinks into a farmer, instead of being a man on a farm. The merchant is caged in the higgings of his shop, and his soul is subject to dollars. The mechanic becomes a machine, and the lawyer a statute book. All is for sensation, motion, mechanism! Nothing for thought, conscience, love, education. All is for *physical* well-being. The great strife of the nation is “for what it shall eat, and what it shall drink, and wherewithal it shall be clothed.” The body is Dives, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day—while the mind is Lazarus, lying in rags at the gate, and fed only with crumbs which fall from the physical table.—(Prolonged cheering.)—Yes, gentlemen, the age has taken away man’s divinity—his nobler part, and it would be satisfied with King Henry IV., if each peasant had a chicken in his pot. The age would inquire with that man, who, having heard a great poem praised, asked *if* it would make mutton cheaper.—(Roars of laughter.)

It is an age of money and machinery—money setting machinery in operation, in order to reproduce money. I do not know how it is here, but I do know how it is in the city where I live. You can tell whether it be the same here. *There*, the great struggle, from sunrise to sunset, with each man is, to see how many pockets he can empty into his own.—(Renewed laughter and applause.) To be rich there, is accounted a merit; to be poor, an offence. A false standard of merit is thus erected, by which it is less important to be wise and virtuous, than to be rich.

The estimation we give to wealth may be seen by the simple phrase that “a man is said to be *worth so much*”—worth so much as his money amounts to, and no more. The term *gain*, is not applied to knowledge, virtue, or happiness: it is used solely to mark pecuniary acquisitions; it is synonymous with gold, as if nothing but gold were gain, and every thing else were loss.\*

I will give a rule for you to teach your child to consider money-getting as the chief end of man. Make the way in which you manœuvred to get things cheap, and what you saved by this or that bargain, frequent subjects of conversation. When you speak of a person, always say, He is worth so much a year, or his business brings him in this or that sum. Read to your children accounts of those who died and left large sums behind them, with evident satisfaction in your looks. If you happen to have acquaintances who are neither rich nor likely to be so, treat them with coolness, and frequently say, Poor things, they have *got nothing*. Should any one who happens to be rich, call upon you, pay him the greatest respect; agree with him in every thing, make out to your children that he is learned, good, and wise, and what a great man he is considered to be by the world. Your children will soon learn that the value of a thing is just as much money as 'twill bring; they will find that principle and morality are drugs in the market; that the softer affections are drawbacks upon success in life; that religion is only to be followed when something is to be gained by it; and that the ledger is better than the Bible, the counting house better than the church, and the desk better than the altar.

\* See Mammon, by Harris.

The very prevalence of this evil, forms its powerful protection and plea ; for the “ multitude never blush ;” and ah ! what strength in

“ the solemn plausibilities of custom.”

But what resistance to all this do we make ? A faint sigh, perhaps, a hurried, heartless prayer, an occasional struggle, *so impotent as to invite defeat.*

“ Yet what is life thus spent ? and what are they  
But frantic, who thus spend it ?”

The *soul* twice lost ; first starved and dwarfed on earth, then doomed hereafter.

But this love of money can be cured only by the expulsive power of a new affection. If we would not have the ivy to creep on the ground, we must erect an object for it to embrace, and by embracing, *ascend* ; and if we would detach the heart from embracing the dust, we must give to it another and a nobler object. True and universal culture must show it, that

“ The only amaranthine flower on earth  
Is virtue ; the only lasting treasure, truth.”

And that

“ Religion ! she is the joy of man ; his better wealth  
The richest !”

THE  
SECOND LECTURE  
ON  
POPULAR EDUCATION:

BY J. ORVILLE TAYLOR.

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REPORTED, IN FULL, BY A PROFESSIONAL STENOGRAPHER.

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## SECOND LECTURE.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

In the first lecture I endeavoured to enforce,—for it was not necessary to prove them,—the great truths, that the hope and safety of our country had been committed to the 50,000 Common Schools—each school standing for the nation, a sentinel of liberty.—That liberty under law could not exist without the school-master.—That our civil and religious institutions and the progress of man, were not only looking to the Common Schools for their support, but for their very existence—that education was the only true eradicator of crime.—That the Common School system was the only system that could educate the *whole* people, and that the present age was not educational, but mechanical—an age that valued the work more highly than the *workman*—an age of money and machinery—and that worshipped the body politic, but forgot the soul politic.

My object, at this time, is to address more, directly, parents and teachers, and to bring before your minds in as *specific* a manner as practicable, some of the obstacles which the cause of general education has yet to overcome.

It is not unfrequently that I am addressed in words similar to these. Why, Mr. Taylor, do you publicly address the people on this subject? This great duty of educating children has been assumed by the state—

Have we not a good school system, and a large school fund? This matter belongs to the state, and she has undertaken to educate the children—It does not belong to you or to me. These remarks are made as an excuse for a conscious neglect of duty, and the authors of them have always reminded me of the boy who was indentured in the old fashion way—to work nine months in the year, and receive an education the remaining three months. But the boy could never be induced to go to the school! And when his neighbours said to him, “why do you not go to school as other boys do,” his only reply was; “My master has agreed to give me an education, and he is bound in the indenture to do it, and I am not going to the school-house arter it.”—(A general laugh.)—It is so with these people, they say the state is bound to educate the children—that the school system and the school fund are compelled to give instruction to all; and it is not for them to make a personal effort. But, gentlemen, personal effort and personal sacrifice is the price of knowledge. A school fund, however princely, is not education—A school system, however perfect, is not education. And if you rely upon these they will only cheat you of an education. The crying want of this state, is, a hearty, general, liberal co-operation, on the part of the people with their school system, to breathe life into it—to carry it out—and thus improve it. This is much more important than legislative changes at the Capitol. Not what is done *by* a democratic government, but what is done under such a government, by private agency, is really great.

Education is something which is procured by one class—the parents—for another class, the children. And as children cannot feel its value or see its impor-

tance they will neglect its acquisition. And as parents are not *immediately* benefitted by it, the matter cannot be left to the natural principles of demand and supply, but becomes a *duty* on the part of parents, and like all other duties is liable to be neglected. Now it is the office of legislation to offer such inducements as will ensure the action of the people—but not to go so far as to paralyze individual effort.

It is a trite but true maxim that what we get without asking for or paying for, we care but little about. Where we pay our money we feel an interest, and when the state either by a fund or taxation, or both, gives a parent a dollar, it should require him to take another dollar from his own pocket, *directly*, and put with it. He will then watch the expenditure—and be anxious to receive the benefit of the whole sum. The true policy as far as my experience goes is this; keep the schools open the entire year—tax the property in the district to twice the amount received from the fund—and collect the required balance from those who have sent children to school, and in proportion to the number sent. If you endow a church with a fund to support the minister, he will, in a very short time have to preach to empty pews.—If I *give* you a book you will take it home and feel grateful to me for it, but probably will never read it—But if you pay me five dollars for a book, you will read it to get the worth of your money.—These illustrations I mention to show you the cause of this indifference to *free* public schools: and these if principles of action be correct they should enter more generally into legislation. But these remarks are dry to a popular audience, and I will leave this part of the subject.

You will now direct your attention to that class of

parents, who, from the want of good schools or leisure to attend them when young, do not perceive the value of knowledge, and neglect the education of their children. How shall I address this large and useful class of citizens? I will repeat the conversation with one a few years since. At the request of the chief magistrate of one of the states, I visited the legislature, then in session, to impart such information as I had on the subject of school systems. And while in conversation, one day, with the governor, in the executive chamber, a member of the lower house came in; the governor requested him to take a seat, and continued the conversation with me on the subject of education. This member, after listening to us for a short time, rose from his seat, came round directly in front of me, and said: "Sir, do you think education does any good?" I was, at first, a little surprised at the singularity and directness of the question, but, after a moment replied, "certainly I do: what has given liberty to nations, influence and happiness to individuals? What took Sherman from a seat at the shoemaker's bench and gave him a seat in Congress? What made Franklin's name known throughout the world?" "Stop, stop, my young friend," said he, "you hav n't lived as long as I have yet; I have always found that them what learned much never grew rich; I have always seen them what went to school was always proud and lazy."—(A hearty laugh.)—I looked at the governor and a smile was exchanged. He perceived this and appeared a little chafed, and instantly said, "You needn't laugh, I can prove it. My next neighbor has three sons; two of them are college larnt; one studied to be a lawyer, and the other studied to be a doctor; but the one that studied to be a lawyer lives in New-York city, and the old man has

to send him six hundred dollars every year to support him ; and the one that is a doctor, he lives at home, a good-for-nothing idle, lazy fellow ; but the other son that doesn't know how to read, he don't want to go from home, he stays at home and works, and he is the joy of the old man's heart ; I don't know what he'd do without him."—(Laughter.)—Gentlemen, I could not reason with that man, I had to leave him second best.—(Laughter.)—His three facts were much stronger in his mind than any argument I could show him ; the difficulty with ignorance is, the horizon is so *low* you cannot get an argument under it.—(Peals of laughter.)—You might as well undertake to show a blind man the colors of the rainbow, as to show an ignorant man the advantages of an education. Just in proportion as a man's knowledge increases, his desire to know more increases ; and the great difficulty with him, lies in making a beginning.

But I can get the laugh on him sometimes, when I fail in the argument ; and you know we can laugh away some things, we cannot reason away. I go into a district composed of parents similar to this legislator. They will readily assemble at the school-house to hear what I have to say. Now I do not pretend to reason with them, or, if I do, the argument is not made longer than your finger, and composed entirely of similes and figures.—(Applause.)—But I say to them ; suppose a blacksmith should come into your place and hang out over the road a great sign, and write on it, "watches mended cheap." You take your watch to him ; and the quack, having heard that the silversmith rubbed, and pinched, and hammered the watch, would take it and rub it, and pinch it, and hammer it ; but would your watch *keep time*?—(Laughter.)—So it is with your

cheap teacher; he takes your children, and he rubs them, and pinches them, and *hammers* them; but do *they* keep time?—(Roars of laughter.)

The question, "do you think education does any good," does not surprise me. Cheap teachers have given us a poor article; and we have not much to appeal to when we refer to the educated man as an argument in favor of education. And *school learning* is universally regarded as education; when it is only the means of acquiring one. The great object in this country is to *diffuse* knowledge,—to give a *little* to every one; and we have given so little that it is not seen to be *available*; the only quality with us, that can prove its value. To *improve* our schools would be the surest way to multiply them.

Again, analyze the minds of many of those who have received a liberal education. Forced, powerless, artificially made men, who hang as useless burdens upon the laboring classes of society. These conceited individuals, and in most cases systematic men of dissipation; whose joys, regrets, pains, and pleasures, are all of self; and who seem to retain nothing of the intellectual faculty, but the power to debase themselves and brutalize the very nature whose semblance they wear—*these* men, having grown up without labor, and thinking it necessary to be without any calling in order to be the gentleman,—(Applause)—become, while they are looked up to as the educated, and the results of an education, the paralyzers and destroyers of our institutions. They fill public offices for which they are incompetent, and stations in society where their example is fatal to every noble aspiration. I say again, gentlemen, I do not wonder at the question, do you think an

education does any good? *Such teachers, and such taught,* are enough to make any cause unpopular.

How penuriously do we regard this subject. Look at that farmer, sitting at the door of his dwelling; he is examining a stranger coming in through the gate. The stranger approaches and asks him if he does not want to hire a hand. The farmer answers, "Yes, if I can find one to suit me." And then he puts the following questions to the stranger:—"Can you drive a team? Can you mow? Can you chop? Can you cradle?" &c. &c. He is catechised most thoroughly.

Immediately after, another stranger approaches, and very timidly, asks him if "his school does not want to hire a teacher." The only question which the farmer now asks, is—"How much do you ask a month, sir?"—(Great laughter and applause.)—We ask the reader to remark the difference in the examination of the two applicants.—(Continued laughter.)

Again, the parent will either work with the hired man all day, or direct his son to do so, to prevent the laborer from slighting his work, or wasting a moment's time. Or he will ask his neighbor to peep over the fence occasionally, to see that the hired man does not sit down on the plough too often. But the same *watchful* parent will put a man over his children in the school-house, *and never go near him for years!!* Is it more important that you should watch the hired man while he hoes a squash vine, than while he is educating your children?—(Laughter.)

If a parent could stand on the shore of the Atlantic, and with one blow knock out all the light-houses, would he not be accountable for the shipwrecks made during that darkness? And if the parent, through avarice or negligence, withholds from his child the light of truth,

is he not responsible for the crimes that child may commit ?

I have always admired that law of the Icelanders, which makes the court inquire, when a child is accused, whether the parents have given the offender a good education. And if not, the court inflicts the punishment on the parents.

A parent will take a favorite horse twenty miles to a distinguished blacksmith to have the horse shod, fearing that an unskilful hand might so drive a nail as to lame the horse for life. Should less care be taken of a child's heart and soul than of a horse's hoof? Where is the parent that will even go five miles in search of a better school-teacher? Where is the parent that would employ a man ignorant of anatomy to set a dislocated arm for his child? Is it not more difficult to see the workings of the mind than the shape of the body? You will not let a man make a boot for you for fear he will waste your leather, unless he has prepared himself by an apprenticeship of years.

But what good does the parent do the school, if he happens to visit it. Does he examine, intelligently, the progress of the children—the character of the teacher, and his modes of instruction and discipline? Oh no, he is from want of attention to his family's education, incompetent for this. He has plenty of time to understand and discuss politics, but no time for his children. A few years since, after much persuasion, a father went to the school, to examine it, with me.—But while I was talking with the teacher and hearing the children's recitations, I saw that he fixed his eyes with great seriousness on one part of the room, giving no attention to the operations of the school. After we left the school, and as soon as we had stepped from the

door he placed himself suddenly before me, and with an anxious countenance said; "Did you see that hook in the post?" I said "I did not." "Well" said he "I could not help but think, all the while I was in the school, what if the children should climb up on the desks and get their chins over that hook!"—(Convulsive laughter prolonged and renewed.)—All that parents are able to do when they visit the school, *is to look at the hook*;—(continued laughter.)—Why, the character of the school and the education of your children should occupy, at least, an hour of each day. In this way you will give them a better legacy than houses and lots. But now, parents plant the germs of truth after this manner.

A farmer says, "I have a field of ten acres that I have taken several crops from, and the soil has become something reduced, and I should like to seed it down for a few years. But then grass seed is high, and money is rather scarce—and I think I can't afford to buy more than a *pint* of seed for this field." He takes the pint of seed out to the soil and selects a single grain and puts it down by his feet—he walks on some rods and puts down another single seed—and then a few rods and drops a seed again, and in this way passes over the field—What has the farmer in the fall? A crop of weeds! For if grass does not grow weeds will.

If parents are disposed to sow knowledge as scatteringly as this in their children's minds, what must they expect when their children grow up—A crop of vice, for if virtue does not grow, vice will.

And now parents, how do you sow knowledge so thinly? By sending your children to school at nine o'clock one morning, and ten o'clock the next morning By sending them one day.—and keeping them home

the next.—By being unwilling to procure for them the necessary books and apparatus. By never visiting the school to show the children that you consider an education of some importance. By taking the children's account of the teacher and his method of instruction and government, without any personal examination. By such omissions and negligences you let your children grow up in ignorance, and all the vices which follow in its train. Your children ask you for bread, and you give them a stone—they ask for a fish, and you give them a serpent. But parents should remember that he that soweth plenteously shall reap likewise, and that, with what measure ye mete shall be measured to you again.

Why, parsimony is not economy. Expense and great expense may be absolutely necessary to economy. Economy is a relative term, and consists not in saving, but in rightly appropriating. Ah, how hard it is for parents to learn the lesson, that in educating their children, present expenditure is future gain—and that no price is enormous unless out of proportion to the thing purchased—the elevation of the minds of their offspring to intelligence and independence is beyond all price. If it required set hours and set lessons, indolence or avarice might put in an apology. But no such thing; the father can converse with and instruct his children while they are getting up, and while they are going to bed; while setting with them, and while walking with them; at meals, and at other interviews. The mother can do it while she is at her labors, at the broom, or the distaff. No person in the wide world has so fine a chance to instruct children, especially girls, in such a way as will cause the instruction to sink deep, as the mother at her various avocations. There is not, on

the face of the whole earth, another educator so efficient as the fond, intelligent, persevering mother.

“ A parent that keeps his child from school that there may be an immediate gain of a few cents, acts as wisely as the Maine Farmer who dug up his seed potatoes for his table, the week after they were planted—such parents “ *hate to give long credits.*”

Said governor Everett, “ give me the means of educating my children, and I will not exchange the thirstiest sands nor the barest peak, for the most fertile spot on earth, deprived of those blessings. I had rather occupy the bleakest nook of the mountain that towers above us, with the wild wolf and the rattlesnake for my nearest neighbors, and a snug little school-house, well kept, at the bottom of the hill, than dwell in a paradise of fertility, if I must bring up my children in lazy, pampered, self-sufficient ignorance.

A man may protect himself against the rattle and the venom, but if he unnecessarily leaves the mind of his offspring a prey to ignorance, he may find, too late for remedy,

‘How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is,  
To have a thankless child.’

A thankless child? No, I will not wrong even him. He may be any thing else that’s bad, but he cannot be a *thankless* child. What has he to be thankful for? No. The man who unnecessarily deprives his son of education, and thus knowingly trains him up in the way he should not go, may have a perverse, and intractable, a prodigal child, one who will bring down, aye, drag down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, but a thankless child he cannot have.”

Most certainly would I choose for my son a state of

poverty, with nothing to depend upon but the powers that God has given him, in preference to a large fortune, with its temptations to ruin and its fashionable vices. These sumptuous, magnificent mansions, had they tongues, could tell many tales. Those fine robes conceal much. The poor man who can read, and who possesses a taste for reading, can find entertainment at home. He does not lie prostrate and afloat on the current of incidents, liable to be carried withersoever the impulse of appetite may direct. The man who has gained a taste for books, will, in all likelihood, become thoughtful; and when you have given your children the habit of thinking, you have conferred on them a much greater favor than the gift of a large sum of money; since you have put them in possession of the *principles* of all legitimate prosperity. Parents, sow broad cast the seeds of knowledge in the infant understanding—save—stint—spare—scrape—do any thing but wrong, to nourish that growth. How poor was the gift of Midas, fabled to possess the power of turning whatever he touched into gold, compared with *your* power of turning gold into knowledge, wisdom, and virtue.

A good education is a young man's best capital; and of equal value is it also to the young lady. I see in the distance a dahlia, a showy, magnificent flower, though without fragrance, large in its volume, splendid in coloring. By its side is the moss-rose, equal in coloring and beauty. As I gaze at them in the distance, I scarcely know which to admire most. But, ladies, suppose I am permitted to go and pluck one, to wear it in my bosom,—which do I take? The rose *for its fragrance*. I look upon the ignorant lady and the educated lady, and, as they pass me in the street, I

scarcely know which is the more beautiful. But, suppose I am privileged to go and pluck one of them, a partner for life, which do I take?—(Applause.)

But, ladies, what is *fashionable* female education? Does it not aim more at the gilding than the gold? more at the accomplishments than the acquirements? Perhaps it is rightly termed *accomplishment*—as it is intended to accomplish a certain thing—*matrimony*.—(Laughter.)—Do we not value a female's education more for its show than its use—more for what it costs, than for what it is worth. In educating females, we load the fingers with jewels, but cut off the muscles of the wrist.—(Applause, and a strong feeling through the audience.)—She has learned to make rugs for tea-urns, pretty ottomans; and is delicately prepared with all the plans, designs, and materials, of lace handkerchiefs, muslin collars and cuffs; but she cannot cut out and make a garment, nor does she know how to mend a pair of stockings.—(Applause.)—She can make card-racks, flower-stands, and chimney ornaments; can knit beautiful silk purses, knows something of bead-work, and can make wax flowers; but she does not know when a meal is well cooked. And yet she is to be the mistress of a family, and to render her home the place of order, beauty, and peace!

We do not, however, contend that woman should be merely the "notable wife," and great only in pickles and preserves, making good bargains, or in shopping. No; she must unite with this much of the ideal. She must not be without a large share of sensibility and imagination. She must be able to discourse sweet music from the energies of her own soul;—(Applause.)—to exalt by her conversation, even her husband from

the matter-of-fact turmoil of worldly business, to the purer atmosphere of christian sympathy and love.

Man, in his various struggles with the world, sees on every hand enough to disgust him, and make him sick of all mankind. As he proceeds he is liable to become the same hard man with those that surround him. He too, lives by circumspection and circumvention; singleness of purpose, sincerity of heart, become with him names only. Surrounded on all sides by those who would impose upon him at every turn, he finds it necessary to work, if not on the same, at least on a similar principle. In the world, he finds little of real honor, of genuine integrity or disinterestedness—where should he find them? At home—in the wife of his bosom. Should all the good and holy virtues grow round the altar of his own hearth, he will never become a villain, though abroad he may be surrounded by villany.—(Applause.)—How much then here depends upon the woman!

Tongue cannot express the importance of woman in relation to this part of her social duties; and how indispensable it is that she should have a mind so ennobled, that nothing can shake it; so enlarged, that it cannot be circumscribed by any thing short of her husband's love; so exalted, that it reaches to heaven, and from those "sublime heights" hold the balm for every wound of the spirit. It is for her to keep man within the sphere of duty, of charity, of virtue, religion and peace; and shall she not be educated for this?

And why, gentlemen, is she not so educated? Because, with us, gentlemen, whose most momentous thought is, to determine in our minds whether the locks of our heads shall hang lower before, or behind—(laughter)—whether they shall curl, or hang straight—

(renewed laughter)—whether the whiskers shall come down under the chin, or stop half-way—(cheers of laughter and applause)—the most perfect character for a woman is, to be characterless—fine by defect beautifully weak.—(Laughter.)

Madame de Stael, a woman of more talents, more genius, more learning, than any other woman of her age, was often heard to say,—disgraceful as the sentiment was to herself, but ten thousand times more disgraceful to us, gentlemen,—she was often heard to say, “I would give all the beauty of the mind for the beauty of the body!” Now, gentlemen, why did she say this? Because she saw you and I ready, at all times, to flutter around some little animated vacuum, provided it be pretty, and to leave her sitting in the corner alone.—(Long and repeated applause.)

Said a mother to her daughter the other day, “Mary, I am afraid you will never get any time for reflection.” “Why, ma,” said she, “I stand before the glass three hours every day.”—(Three rounds of applause.)—Mary understood what pleased us, gentlemen. If I occasionally make you laugh, my friends, it is to afford a little relief, and to make you hear me out; for the subject is of vital importance, and demands our most serious attention.

Let us now turn our attention to the number, character, and influence of our school teachers. And we have in the United States about 60,000 common teachers, teaching 4,000,000 of citizen-kings—4,000,000 of sovereigns! For every child is a citizen-king here. Are these men qualified to educate kings—to train sovereigns? Who are they? Where do they come from? How long do they intend to teach? A large class of them teach because they want a little money

to progress in a higher course of studies. They hate and despise the business, and hope soon to step from it. Another class teach, thinking that the labors of the school-room are not quite as rough and arduous as the labors of out-door weather. They work during the summer on the farm, and teach the school in winter. Others, again, teach because they are too lazy to do any thing else, or have failed in every other calling. By all these, teaching is made a *temporary* thing.

In summer, the schools are *kept* (not taught) by young girls from 16 to 18, and 20 years of age. One teaches, wanting a dress too expensive for her parents to procure. Another one teaches because there are rather more girls at home than is required; and a third takes a school, being afraid of the butter and cheese room, and the cows. The whole business is thus conducted by raw apprentices, ready and willing "to teach cheap;" and cheapness being the best qualification with the employers, they are smuggled into the schools, like pieces of contraband goods.

But to give children such teachers—men who have no other knowledge of the human mind, than that it has a faculty called memory, to be acted upon by birch rods, is like giving darkness to the eye—silence to the ear. What capabilities have such teachers to make battle against the great empire of night? They are like darkness striving to illuminate light. Far better there be no education going on, than education under the guidance of ignorance and immorality. Not to be taught is only the absence of good; to be mis-taught is positive evil. It is self-delusion, and most miserable weakness to talk of an education from *such* educators. Before there can be teaching, there must be schools for teach-

ers. We must educate educators before we can expect an education.

And, sirs, what trusts are these! What trusts are these we commit to hands incompetent! The school-masters and school-mistresses of our nation are more important to its welfare, than its magistrates and legislators. It is more important to us *what* the former are, than what the latter are. Legislators may make improper *laws*, but they do not *educate* the nation. They may embarrass the currency, and the enterprise and the industry of the nation; but what are all our banks, and our manufactories, or our commerce, compared with our nation's *character*? We may afford to suffer in our *pecuniary* concerns—but we cannot afford to be *ignorant* and *vicious*. We may endure to be *poor*—but we cannot endure to see *our children illiterate, and our country ruined!*—(Applause.)

Parents, look well to your school teachers; for the old proverb says, “that he who lives with a lame man, will learn of him to halt.” Whatever the teacher may be, he stamps himself upon his pupils. They are with him for years, while impressions are readily made, and when the mind is easily moulded into any shape. He is their criterion—their model. They imitate his gait, his looks, his speech, his manner, and they sympathize with his feelings, and adopt his opinions. The Common School teachers give character and education to the nation.

But who is watching this influence? Who is jealous of its nature? Who are endeavoring to make it better? It is controlling more mind, more of our destinies than the press. Yet what, as a nation, are we doing to enlighten and purify this influence?

It is known that M. De Felleberg of the Hofwy;

school, in Switzerland, determined to devote his fortune and the labor of his life, in the endeavor to effect the regeneration of his native land, by means of education. "I will infuse good habits and principles into the children," said he, "for in twenty short years, these children will be men, giving the tone and the manners to the nation. But here," he remarked, pointing to a number of young men, "is the great engine upon which I rely for affecting the moral regeneration of my country; these are *masters* of village schools, come here to imbibe my principles, and to perfect themselves in their duty. These men have six thousand pupils under them; and if, by the blessing of God, I can continue their education, success is certain."

The teacher is with the child while the feelings and the capacities are active and shaping into character. The children are the *warm wax*, and the teacher is the stamp. The children of this city are like so much melted lead, *growing cold every minute!* What form and shape are they taking? Look at your teachers!—the moulds of character!

The teacher closes the school-house door—he walks up the aisle surrounded by living capacities—immeasurable faculties—*possible angels!* He is at work, not on brick and stone, but is to lay his hands upon this "dome of thought," whose "Architect, is the Architect of the Universe!" What a *model* of a man should this soul-builder be!—(Applause.)—"His influence," says the Hon. Horace Mann, of Massachusetts, "is like that kind of ink which, when first put upon paper, is scarcely visible; but soon it becomes blacker, and now, *so black*, you may burn the paper on coals of fire, and the writing is seen in the cinders!" It lasts beyond the grave. How skilful should be his hand who

is to sweep that harp—the human heart—that harp of a thousand strings—the tones of which are to remain in the strings for ever!—(Applause.)

Says that nervous old English writer, *Mr. South*, “There is no profession which has, or can have, a greater influence upon the public, than that of teaching. School-masters have a negative upon the peace and welfare of the kingdom. They are indeed the great depositories and trustees of the peace of it, having the growing hopes and fears of the nation in their hands. For subjects are, and will be such as these teachers breed us.”

There is no influence so fearful and responsible as that of teachers; and they should be men so carefully taught and trained, that from the very hem of their garments would be a virtue, even in the crowd, continually going out.

“So shall licentiousness and black resolve  
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take  
Their place; and genuine piety descend  
Like an inheritance, from age to age.”

We want teachers who can give to the expanding frames of the children, vigor, health, and activity—to their senses, correctness and acuteness—to their minds, power and truthfulness—and to their hearts, honest virtue, and christian love and hope.

My friends, a teacher should be a man,

“So various, that he seemed to be  
Not one, but all mankind's epitome.”

He should so *impart* each gem of truth, that the child would feel,

“As if the soul that moment caught  
Some treasure it through life had sought.”—(Applause.)

And an aptness to teach, united with a warm, generous fellow feeling *for children* are indispensable requisites for him who is

“To aid the mind’s development, to watch  
The dawn of *little* thoughts—to see and aid  
Almost the very growth”——

Teacher! the child is given to you as a diamond, whatever you engrave on it, will stand before the world, and at the judgment-seat of Christ!

A teacher should possess a good moral character.

He should be at all times under the most watchful self-government.

He should possess a good judgment—“that high, clear, round-about common sense,” as Mr. Locke calls it.

He should have an even, uniform temper.

He should have decision and firmness.

He should be able to discriminate character.

He should be qualified to illustrate and simplify the studies.

He should *love* his business.

He should make his calling his *study* and profession for life.

He should be patient and persevering.

He should be pleasant and affectionate.

He should be capable of surmounting difficulties, and of showing pupils the importance of knowledge.

Who is sufficient for this? He will be found only by being sought out with a *lantern* at mid-day. Who is capable of giving instruction—that mysterious union of wisdom with ignorance? Truly in our school-houses, “Fools step in where angels fear to tread.”

There should be seminaries for teachers—supported

in part by the state—to prepare men for this useful and honorable profession.

“ M. Victor Cousin, in his report upon the Prussian system, remarks that ‘ the best plans of instruction cannot be executed, except by the instrumentality of good teachers ;’ and the state has done nothing for popular education, if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared ; then suitably placed, encouraged and guided in the duty of continued self-improvement ; and, lastly, promoted and rewarded in proportion to their advancement.”

Without good teachers, schools are but a name. Says Dr. Channing : “ An institution for training men to train the young would be a fountain of living waters, sending forth streams to refresh present and future ages. As yet, our legislators have denied to the poor and laboring classes this principal means of their elevation. We trust they will not always prove blind to the highest interest of the state.

“ We want better teachers, and more teachers, for all classes of society, for rich and poor, for children and adults. We want that the resources of the community should be directed to the procuring of better instructors, as its highest concern. One of the surest signs of the regeneration of society will be, the elevation of the art of teaching to the highest rank in the community. When a people shall learn that its greatest benefactors, and most important members, are men devoted to the liberal instruction of all its classes, to the work of raising to life its buried intellect, it will have opened to itself the path of true glory. This truth is making its way. Socrates is now regarded as the greatest man in the age of great men. The name of *king* has grown dim before that of *apostle*. To

teach, whether by word or action, is the highest function on earth."

In establishing teachers' seminaries, the legislature would not depart from the strictest economy ; for an enlightened community produces and accumulates wealth faster, in a vastly greater ratio, than the proportionate additional cost of their education. A million of dollars a-year, judiciously applied to the improvement of young heads and hearts, for the next thirty years, would not merely be refunded, but the state would be much more than thirty millions richer in visible property, at the end of the period.

But the legislature must not only afford facilities for the preparation of teachers ; she must appoint a superintendent of Common Schools to traverse the state, and to edit a paper for the improvement of education. Unless public sentiment is enlightened, we shall not be able to secure the services of qualified teachers. These men will go where their labors are best rewarded. And if the reward is greater behind the counter, or in the school-room of some other state, this commonwealth will lose him as a teacher. To instruct men to teach, and to instruct the *public mind*, so that it will be willing to offer an adequate compensation to qualified instructors, are the two great movements now demanded of the legislature.

Female teachers should share largely in this assistance from the state. Until children are ten years of age they should be sent to a female teacher—she is always the best instructor for small children. She can so readily put her heart on her lips and by the child's ~~heart~~, that

" 'Tis pleasing to be schooled by Female lips and eyes,  
They smile so when one's right, and one's wrong

They smile still more; and then there  
 Comes encouragement in the soft hand  
 Over the brow, perhaps even a chaste kiss—  
 I learned the little that I know by this."

BYRON.

Love teaches more than doctors do.

And for our higher schools, we need noble minded men—gifted men—men worthy by their intelligence and their moral power, to be entrusted with a nation's youth. But such men will not seek the office of instructor, as long as there is certain to be a pressure in the money market whenever a teacher is to be hired. They now know, that for this class, all times are hard times. On whom do we lavish our wealth, our respect, and our attention? Do we not pay those best who amuse us, and those least who instruct us. "Are not the purse, talents and all, squandered upon those who pander to ignorance and folly? Vagrant singers and harlequins are flattered and feasted; quacks realize a fortune—a foreign dancer, publicly violating all decency, and (in correspondence with her own movements,) turning the public mind upside down;"—(Laughter)—the rank, beauty, and fashion of the land, rivalling to pay her their devotions, or so far made the animal by her influence, as to be eager to be harnessed to her car!!—(Tremendous applause.)—Whom, we ask again, do we honor and reward? Not the quiet conscientious school teacher, daily and steadily, though obscurely, preparing himself to be the great teacher of mankind. Not him whose laborious office it is "to control petulance, excite indifference, and enlighten stupidity." Not him who gives to freedom that richest boon—two ideas, where there was but one. No! Of *him* it may be said, of all men, he is the most illy requited. Yet, noble laborer, thank God! your calling is high and

holy; your fame is the property of nations, and your renown will fill the earth in after ages, as it sounds not far off, in your own day. Yours will be that humble, but not inglorious epitaph, commemorating "one, in whom mankind lost a friend, but no man an enemy."

The qualified teacher must be a greater man than the legislator. To educate a child, *correctly*, requires profounder thought, greater wisdom, than to govern a state. The interests and wants of the state are more obvious, than the spiritual capacities, the growth of thought and feeling, and the subtle laws of the mind, which must all be studied and known by the educator. How few of us apprehend the meaning of the word—*Education*. Parents suppose that to educate a child, is to send it to school to learn the book and listen to the teacher. They consider their children as empty vessels to be filled up by the teacher. Just as a druggist, from a large vessel, fills the rows of phials on his table and corks them up, to be set aside for further use.—(Laughter.)—But the meaning of the word, *Education*, is not to fill up. It comes from the two Latin words, *E* and *Duco*. *E* means, *out of*, or *from*, and *Duco*, *to lead*; together, they mean, *to draw out*—not to pour in.—(Laughter.)—The business of a teacher is not to teach, but to assist the child in its efforts to teach itself. If a child asks a question, do not answer it, but ask such other questions, that the child will be able to answer its own. The labor of a teacher must not be to carry the child a glass of water, but to teach the pupil the way to the well. Create the thirst, and let it go after its own drink; not deluge it with an avalanche of snow and ice, in the shape of words, and, when too, it is not asking for a single drop.

The office of the teacher we say is to *draw out*

the child—evolve its faculties. When Phidias, in his poetic inspiration saw the perfect form of the Apollo Belvidere, in the rough block of marble before him, all he had to do, was to bring it out. When Moses smote the rock, the waters gushed out. The intensity and purity which the skill of the lapidary gives to the brilliant, does not make the diamond—it only reveals, its splendour.

We learn too much for our children, just as we legislate too much for the people. And as legislation should excite the people to action, but leave that action free—so the teachers should excite their pupils to effort, but leave that effort to instinct.

We want in our teachers the great glowing heart with fire in it—the clear deep seeing eye, with bursting tears in it. For without this comprehensiveness and sympathy, no man can be great, or fit to breathe life into his fellow man. The same spirit that was requisite in Napoleon to carry the soldiers over the bridge of Lodi, is necessary in the teacher, to rouse the children to industry and ambition. It is a singular circumstance, that, of all problems, the problem of education is that to which, by far, the smallest share of persevering and rigorous analysis has yet been applied.

No journal is kept of the phenomena of infancy or childhood—no teacher has yet registered, day after day, with the attention of an astronomer, who prepares his Ephemerides, the marvellous developments of his pupil. And what is the result of all this inattention to man's development. Listen to the conversation of three or four individuals, either in the store or the drawing room—What do you learn? Why, that hesitation, hemming and drawling are the three graces of conversation.—(General laughter.)—We are not taught to talk—

this communicating faculty has never been educated.—The wedge of knowledge has, by moral bunglers, been driven into the head, *the big end first*; and there is no getting it out—it is dovetailed in.—(Continued applause.)—Why do I meet, daily, with men of comprehensive minds, good sense, and yet find them unable to converse intelligently, or to address an audience? Why cannot these impart their knowledge readily, eloquently, and with ease? Because they were not daily taught while young to arrange their ideas and express them in words. They grow up with uncertain vacant minds, and feeble confused perceptions, and they now have no confidence in themselves in an unpremeditated effort. A good system of mental development, founded on observation and experiment, is, up to this last day of 1841, still the great crying want of humanity.

New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, have lately commenced this work. New York has sixteen departments for the education of school teachers—a superintendent of schools for each and every county, whose whole time is spent in lecturing, visiting and examining the schools. Fifty-six counties, and fifty-six men traversing the state continually to address the people by lectures like the one this evening—New York (through the influence of James Wadsworth of Geneseo,) has also sent to every school-house in the state—and there are 10,720 of them—a library of 300 volumes, consisting of the best works on agriculture, history, biography, science of government, political economy, social duties, &c. This single effort will make New York thrice the empire state, for a reading people, will become a thinking people, and a thinking people, a great people.

What is this state doing? Is she not asleep? She reminds me of that fable of the beasts, where the Hare and the Tortoise were appointed, by lot, to run a race—And when they were brought out to start, the Hare said, “What! run a race with such a thing as that—a thing that can scarcely creep?” And the Hare lay down and took a nap. But when the Hare awoke, the Tortoise had reached the goal. Your state is the Hare; while perhaps some other plodding state is the Tortoise. And yet this is a brave state.

“\* \* \* \* Of mountain, vale, and tree,  
Where hands, and thoughts, and tongues, are free  
And men do find a welcome.” \* \* \* \*

Let her *arouse*. Let public sentiment be enlightened.

“For action treads the path  
In which *opinion* says he follows good or evil”  
And opinion gives report of good or ill  
As men are educated.

Laws do not change opinion, but opinion changes law—Get public sentiment right, and law will be right, —when thought is agitated, truth rises.

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again  
(The eternal years of God are hers)  
While error wounded writhes in pain  
And dies amid her worshippers.”

Does some one say to night, “I know something should be done, but what can I do alone.”—What can you do alone? Why you can make a revolution! You can leave your thoughts and your feelings impressed upon the age.—All great national revolutions have been commenced by one individual. Peter the Hermit sent the whole of Europe on a crusade—Bonaparte shook all her thrones—Bacon revolutionized philosophy—and

the spirit of Washington gave us our independence ! Some Luther, or Bacon, or Franklin, or Washington, must rise up for our Common Schools. Who among you shall he be ? The Hon. Henry Barnard of Connecticut has made a revolution in that state,—so of Samuel Lewis of Ohio—“ Whatever man has done, man can do.” But I must close this lecture, and if, by its delivery, I have chrystalized a few drops of truth, to remain in your memories for ever, I shall feel amply rewarded.—(Loud and very general applause.)

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EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS OF THE UNITED STATES.\*

No. of Colleges and Universities,	173
“ Students in them,	16,079
“ Academies,	2969
“ Students in them,	154,335
“ Common Schools,	47,789
“ Scholars in these schools,	2,973,312
“ White persons over 20 years of age unable to read and write. }	546,769

From the whole number of white persons in the U. S. over 20, the number who cannot read and write is, as 1 to 12 6-8.

From the whole number of persons in the U. S. over 16, the number in college is, as 1 to every 56.

From the whole number over 8 years of age, in the U. S. the number in the academies is, as 1 to every 71.

From the whole number in the U. S. over 4 years of age, the number in the Common Schools is, as 1 to every 5.

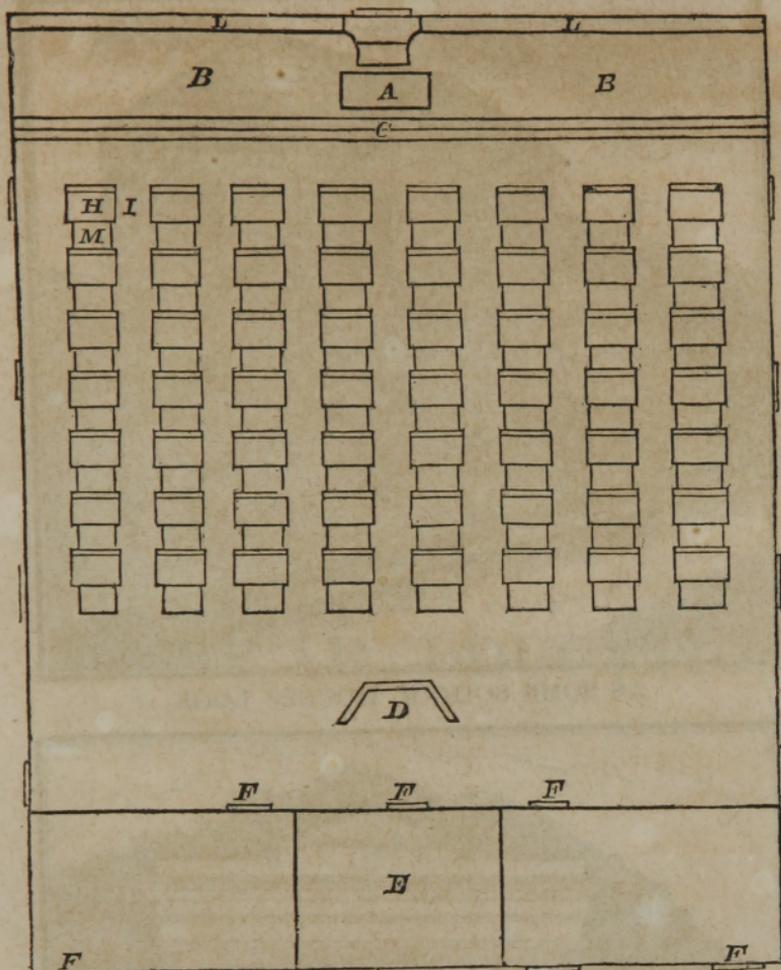
\* Deduced from the Census of 1840.

## INTERESTING SCALE OF INSTRUCTION.\*

*A Comparative View of States as to the Number of White Persons over 20 years of age, who cannot read and write.*

Connecticut,	1	out of every	568
Vermont,	1	“ “	473
New Hampshire,	1	“ “	310
Massachusetts,	1	“ “	166
Maine,	1	“ “	108
Michigan,	1	“ “	97
Rhode Island,	1	“ “	67
New Jersey,	1	“ “	58
New York,	1	“ “	56
Pennsylvania,	1	“ “	50
Ohio,	1	“ “	43
Louisiana,	1	“ “	32½
Maryland,	1	“ “	27
Mississippi,	1	“ “	20
Delaware,	1	“ “	18
Indiana,	1	“ “	18
South Carolina,	1	“ “	17
Illinois,	1	“ “	17
Missouri,	1	“ “	16
Alabama,	1	“ “	15
Kentucky,	1	“ “	13½
Georgia,	1	“ “	13
Virginia,	1	“ “	12½
Arkansas,	1	“ “	11½
Tennessee,	1	“ “	11
North Carolina,	1	“ “	7

\* Made out from the census taken by the General Government, in 1840.



## EXPLANATION OF THE CUT.

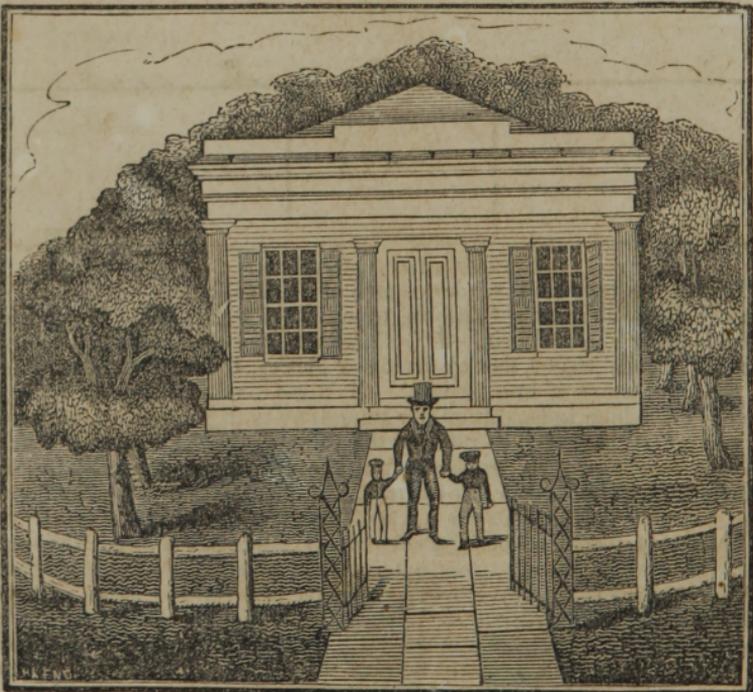
This figure represents a general plan of a School-house.—*A* Teacher's Desk.—*B B* Teacher's Platform, from 1 to 2 feet in height.—*C* Step for ascending the Platform.—*L L* Cases for Books, Apparatus, Cabinet, &c.—*H* Pupils' Seat 1 foot by 20 in.—*I* Aisles, 1 foot 6 in. in width.—*D* Place for stove, if one be used.—*E* Room for Recitation, or retiring in case of sudden indisposition, for interviews with parents, when necessary, &c. It may, also, be used for the Library, &c.—*F F F F F* Doors into the boys' and girls' entries,—from the entries into the school-room, and from the school-room into the recitation-room.—*G G G G* Windows. The windows on the sides are not lettered.

Theseats for small scholars, without desks, if needed, to be movable, and placed as the general arrangements of the school shall render convenient.

Where there is but one teacher, the space between the desks and the entries to be used for recitation. Here, also, is the place for black-boards, whether movable or attached to the wall. This space should be 6, 10, or 12 feet wide, according to the size of the school. The height of the room should never be less than 10 or 12 feet.



AS SOME SCHOOL HOUSES LOOK.



AS A SCHOOL HOUSE SHOULD LOOK.

THE  
THIRD LECTURE  
ON  
POPULAR EDUCATION:

BY J. ORVILLE TAYLOR.

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REPORTED, IN FULL, BY A PROFESSIONAL STENOGRAPHER.

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## THIRD LECTURE.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

Knowledge, in itself, is pure and bright, and the channels through which it is poured in upon the human species, should ever be kept open and undefiled. Look, now, at our school-houses. Are they not among the very lowest specimens of architecture in the country? Can you not, while travelling, point out the school-house, and never be mistaken, some time before you reach it? Conceive, for a few moments, the location, structure, and condition of the school-houses you have seen while passing over the state. Are they not standing on a part of the road, almost into the wheel rut, where the dust and the noise of the passing carriages distract the mind? Are they not, also, on the point of some stony hill, where all around are sharp flinty rocks—where the summer's sun, and the winter's winds have an unbroken sweep? Not a leaf of shelter, or a shrub, or flower for ornament near! Or, perhaps, they stand reeling, on some sunken refuse piece of land, good for nothing else, but to bear so unimportant a thing as a school-house—where the green pools and poisonous vapors are sure to give desolation, dulness, and sickness to the children. Again, they are found standing by a public-house, a mechanic's shop, or foundry, or other place still more distracting and noisy. The house small, dark, smoky, and filthy, with fifty or

one hundred literally crowded into it ; the door off from its hinges, windows broken out, roof leaking, desks cut full of holes and ridges, seats hard, rickety, and without back pieces ; the whole scene presenting a most painful, desolate, disgusting view ! And here children are to form their character, their taste, their respect for public buildings and works of ornament—here they are to form their manners, “those minor virtues” upon which life’s happiness is founded !

Why, fellow-citizens, is it, that in this age of improvement, there is no more change or progress in a school-house than in a bee-hive ?—(Laughter and applause.)

“ How slow  
The growth of what is excellent ; so hard  
To make improvement in this nether world.”

We know that the people are heartily ashamed of these rookeries, but they think “it would not do to change too suddenly !”

“ Indignant at the sight,  
I blush for the *patience* of humanity.”

How such models became so universally adopted can be explained only by the poet.

“ Some applauded, a venal few,  
Rather than think, the others too.”—(Applause.)

It is said by philosophers, that truth comes to us only through the channels of error, and it is certainly true, so far as it comes from the school-house ;—(laughter)—and as history shows us, that man will not form a right opinion, until he has exhausted every absurd one, it is hoped that this exhausting age has had its day.

Why, parents, there are other teachers than books

and school-masters. All nature teaches—every running brook, and shady grove, and singing bird, and flowering shrub, *teaches*, and where nature is the most eloquent, parents should place the infant mind. The school-house should stand back thirty or forty rods from the road, surrounded by at least an acre of land, filled with trees, throwing their branches over the house, which should be the most beautiful specimen of architecture in the neighborhood. Why, order, and symmetry, and proportion, and fragrance, and cleanliness, and beauty, all teach, and all these should combine in the growth of feeling and character.—(Applause.)—Every thing animate and inanimate teaches. The child is educating or mis-educating—is moving, thinking, living. We can choose, indeed, whether it shall be educated well, or educated ill; but we can no more put knowledge or education, of some kind or other, in abeyance, than we can life.

Look at your jails. Perfect gems of architecture. Go into them—all is light, airy and healthy, as it should be. Why cannot our school-houses be the fairest ornaments of the land!—the people's *Idols*, if they are permitted to have idols. It is my prayer, that I may live to see that day when these *CAPITOLS* of Liberty, filled as they are with Kings and Sovereigns, shall be our proudest *Monuments* of Freedom.—(Deafening applause.)

And these buildings, my friends, are improving; and for our hope we can say with Jean Paul Richter, “although their evening shadows now lie dark and cold along the earth, they all point to the *MORNING*.”—(Applause.)

But let us now go into one of these old school-houses—champions of the great stand still system. The first scene before you is a row of little fellows,

sitting, bolt upright, upon a bench without a back piece, and so high that the feet are swinging six or eight inches from the floor, without soundings; and the desk before them so raised, that they have to make a temporary stretch of the body to get the chin above it—(laughter)—and there they are hanging in rows by the chin.—(General laughter.)—That gentlemen, is climbing the hill of science.—(Peals of laughter.)—That, as my Lord Brougham, would say, is “the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties.”—(Continued peals of laughter.)—Gentlemen, you seem to be much amused, but if these children, could come and look in at us through these windows, they would say with the frogs in the fable, this may be sport to you, but it is death to us.—(Convulsive laughter, with stamping and cheering.)—You now have had a good hearty laugh out of that black, scaly, mutilated, old school-desk; about the most unlikely object in the world for a man to extract a heaving *diaphragm* laugh out of. Now, the only way we can give the children a laugh over it, is to go and improve it; change this stool of penance and deformity, into a seat of ease and knowledge. For as Cousin faithfully and beautifully said to the French Chamber in his report of the Prussian School System, “It is of Prussia I write, but of France I think.” I can say to this audience, it is for your amusement I speak, but of the children I think.—(Applause.)

*High and narrow* seats are not only extremely uncomfortable for the young scholar, tending constantly to make him restless and noisy, disturbing his temper, and preventing his attention to his books, but they also have a direct tendency to produce deformity of the limbs.

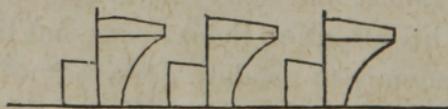
If the seat is too narrow, half the thigh only rests upon it; if too high, the feet cannot reach the floor;

the consequence is, that the limbs are suspended on the centre of the thigh. Now, as the limbs of children are pliable or flexible, they are easily made to grow out of shape, and become crooked, by such an awkward and unnatural position.

Seats without backs have an equally unfavorable influence upon the spinal column. If no rest is afforded the backs of children while seated, they almost necessarily assume a bent and crooked position, such a position often assumed or long continued, tends to that deformity which has become extremely common with children in modern times, and leads to disease of the spine in innumerable instances, especially with delicate female children.

The seats in school-rooms should be so constructed that the whole thigh can rest upon them, and at the same time the foot stand firmly upon the floor; all seats should have backs high enough to reach the shoulder-blades; low backs, although better than none, are far less easy and useful than high ones, and will not prevent pain and uneasiness after sitting a considerable time. Young children should be permitted to change their position often, to stand on their feet, to march, and to visit the play-ground. One hour is as long as any child, under ten years of age, should be confined at once; and four hours as long as he should be confined to his seat in one day.

Here is a drawing of a model school-desk, large enough for two occupants.



A light green is perhaps the best color for the desks

and seats, as it is more grateful than any other to the eye. For the outside of the house, white is the color most universally pleasing. The floor of the room should be level, and not on an inclined plane. The lids or tops of the desks are usually made to slope too much. They should be nearly level with the floor; an inch to a foot being a sufficient slope. The seats and desks should be fastened to the floor.

The desk before the sitting child should not be higher than the elbow when the arm hangs naturally by the side. If the desk is too high, it raises one shoulder and distorts the back—if too low, the pupils lie down on them, and in this position the bones of the chest are crowded in, and cramped down—leading to narrow chests and derangement of the digestive organs; and soon there is pain in the breast ending in consumption.

Let me ask your serious attention to the want of ventilation in our school-rooms. After I have walked in the fresh air and have gone to the school-room door, it has been only after the most determined resolution that I could enter—the foul air, producing immediately, a sickening, oppressive sensation. It is known to all that each child destroys about a gallon of air every minute. This air not being permitted to escape, soon fills the room with disease; and here the children are breathing it in, and throwing it out,—breathing back and throwing out—steeping the young lungs in poison for six hours in the day! Parents, why is the child stupid, the face pale, the frame languid, the skin dry, the cheek flushed, the stomach sickening, the head aching? And why are there these chronic affections, this loss of appetite, this flaccid debility? And why, in the teacher is there this languor and exhaustion and

irresistibility. Go to the school-room and breathe that air, pregnant with death, and you will learn.

“In our school rooms,” says Dr. Bell, “we make near approaches to the summary poisoning process of the Black Hole at Calcutta.” Yet the school-house is the place where

“Should step forth immortal man  
   In beauty clad,  
 With *health* in every vein,  
 And reason throned upon his brow.”

The air in the school-room may be kept pure in this way. Let the windows extend up to the ceiling, and then let the top sash drop an inch or two—Now we raise the under sash, and let in the cold current of air from without directly upon the heads of the children. The bad, or mephetic air cannot come down and go out, being lighter than the common air, and it remains in. If the top sash could drop, the air from without would come in so far above their heads as not to injure the children, and the bad air would escape. Several apertures should also be made in the ceiling of the room. Every care should be taken to let out the effluvia, continually escaping from the children’s bodies, and the air, destroyed by breathing and the contact of the skin. I say skin, for we are all aware that when we inspire, the air taken into the lungs undergoes a change, with the nature of which we are not acquainted; this we know, that when it is expired, its nature is changed and it has acquired the qualities of carbonic acid gas. We find that this result is made by the functions of the skin. If you take a wine-glass or tumbler, and inverting it on the skin, hold it firmly for a short time, the air in the glass will be found to have undergone a

change analagous to that which is breathed from the lungs: a candle thrust into it will immediately be extinguished. From observations of this kind it is evident that the whole surface of the body is, as it were, an extension of the lungs, dealing with the atmospheric air in the same manner, though with considerably less energy. Whatever change the lungs effect on the oxygen of the air brought into contact with them, is effected by the skin.

Look now at the prevailing method of warming school-rooms. The small children sitting next to the stove, and within twelve inches of it, are melting with heat; and the next moment plunged into the depths of a snow bank—Those sitting in the back part of the room have cold feet all day; for it is impossible to send the heat downwards to the floor in the remote parts of the room. You have only to step five paces in a school-room, to go through the five zones.—(Laughter.)—The stove pipe is sent winding around the room, just above the children's heads to heat the brain and make the head ache. You are aware that when the child is studying the only part of the body exercised is the brain—and this is frying under a red hot stove pipe—cold feet and hot heads!—(Laughter.)—If the physicians' rule is to be observed, to keep the head cool and the feet warm, the pupils will find it necessary to reverse their position.—(Applause.)—But without any further assistance we believe there is already in the world quite enough of the heels uppermost.—(Applause and laughter.)—If a stove is used, it should stand near the wall, and the pipe should enter it, about a foot above the stove. A basin of water should be kept on the stove, to moisten the air. The room should always

be well warmed in the morning before the children assemble.

The best way to warm a school-room, however, is by pure air heated in a stove or furnace, placed in the cellar, or a room beneath the school-room. The fire in such places can be maintained without noise, and without throwing dust, or snow, or smoke into the room. It also frees the room of offensive odors, and impurities of burnt air. The stove and pipe do not take up a part of the school-room, or disturb the movements of the pupils, or the supervision of the teacher; and a part of the children are not (as with a stove among the pupils,) burnt one moment and frozen the next. The heat can be let into the room at different points; or what would be still better, through every part of the floor, by small holes in it, an inch apart, and as large as peas. The warmth in this way would rise against the feet, and keep an equal temperature and summer heat in every part of the room.

The house should face the south, and it would be better if windows were made only in the south and north sides of the house, as painters, and those who study this subject, *always avoid cross lights*. Northern windows give a more steady light, and those in the south side should have broad strong curtains, to break the glare of the meridian sun. A wood-house, as large as the school-house, to give the children a place for exercise in stormy weather, should stand on the west side of the school-house, and directly against it, to cover from the west wind.

The school-house should also be supplied with an easy good pump, with a towel, a basin, and a mat and scraper.

From this universal inattention to the comforts of

the school-room, I believe that the sum total of human suffering is greater in our school-houses, than in our penitentiaries. Says, Mr. Man, "I have no hesitation in declaring that from the bad construction of our school-houses, there is more physical suffering in them endured by our children, than by the convicts in our jails and prisons."

It appears to me as if these institutions, (such immortality has error and wrong in them,) had been dedicated to suffering and deformity.

Who would not hate to go to school? Who can blame children for this dislike of being cooped up— young, cheerful, exulting children—with all their being fresh and glowing within them, for six or seven mortal hours!

No matter how the summer breezes may play abroad—no matter how its laughing flowers may peep out on the meadow—no matter how its joyous birds may mock the captives at their desks within—no matter how blue the sky, or how green the sward, or how bright or playful the brook; there they are, and there they must remain, till the 'task' be duly thrashed out—till the treadmill penance be to the last minute performed; stifling in their little hearts all its natural impulses, planted there for the wisest purposes; refusing all sympathy with all those beautiful and happy things about them; chained to 'learning' as the galley-slave to his *boule*; and finally compelled to consider it as a privation and a punishment, when it ought to have been felt as a gift and a reward. The injury to their whole nature, by such arrangement, is excessive. If the limbs and lungs are not allowed their play, not less is the intellect clouded, and the will rendered sulky, listless, or sour. These long, long hours of captivity are

the causes of half the irritation, resistance, and punishments in school. Send them forth at once, master and all, on the fine spring morning, or the long summer's afternoon, to the green plot before the school, covered with flowers of their own planting; under the tree familiar to their fathers' recollections, when they too were children like themselves; and there you will have some chance of keeping their attention, not forced, but yielded with a loving heart; then, indeed, you may speak of Nature, with her page wide spread before you, and pray, secure of the piety of your audience, with such a temple over you as God's own glorious sky. —(Applause.)—But I must leave this part of our subject, neglected and important as it is, and turn to *School Government*. The value of the school depends very much upon its discipline; for I praise a school as Pope did a government.

“That, which is best administered, is best.”

It is to be regretted, that a blow is much easier given than a reason, and that many are able to give blows who cannot give reasons; for he who overcomes by force hath overcome but half his foe. You will not, however, misunderstand me in this, for I think blows necessary sometimes. An old writer has said, that, “Every child has some brute in it, and some man in it; and just in proportion to the brute we must whip it.” And on the other hand, Dr. Bell, the English educator, gave it as a truism, that a *maximum* of improvement, could not be obtained without a *minimum* of punishment. With both of these distinguished men I agree—whippings should be seldom—and they should always answer their end.

They should seldom be given before the school—

Come to me James, says the teacher. James well knows the issue, and he braces his nerves and stiffens the muscles to the utmost firmness—Hold out your hand, says the teacher—the hand is made a purple piece of jelly, by the master's ferule. But not a tear or the movement of a muscle. The teacher thinks him obstinate and insensible, and directs him to hold out the other hand which is almost mashed with the heavy stick.—But still not a tear or a quiver of a lip! Why, Gentlemen, why? Because the presence of his associates touches his pride, and if he had flinched, they would have called him a fellow of no spunk.—(Applause.)—If James had been corrected when alone, in kindness and calmness, and after an affectionate conversation, the very first blow would have brought a tear of pain and sorrow.

Again, teachers do not discriminate character. The most sensitive and the most obdurate are squared by the same rule and severity. But you should know that to some a frown is a whipping, and a whipping death.

Whipping should be judiciously administered. It is a government of fear; and the principle of fear was given to make us shun an evil, not to obtain a good, says an old divine. How cruelly and thoughtlessly do some teachers govern! They stealthily approach two or three pupils in covert whisperings, and using both hands, bring their heads together in a crack—They pull the hair, and pinch the ears, and beat the head—All this debases and stupifies both teacher and pupil. Such men should not be permitted to drive even contrary and vexatious swine.—(Laughter.)

I am aware in believing that corporal chastisement is necessary sometimes, I shall differ with many who have great experience and mature views on this sub-

ject. All that I can say is, that if a teacher can *govern* without the rod, it will the better please me, and show him the greater teacher. I have heard men say that whipping breaks the spirit of the child. But great men, heroes, conquerors, philosophers, and divines, have been whipped. It is a good old practice too. Milton one of the proudest spirits that ever gave battle to oppression, was whipped at school. The mother of Bonaparte, when asked if she ever found it necessary to whip the young Napoleon, replied, yes, I often switched him soundly. Lord Byron was cudgelled at home and at school. These were not men of broken spirits.—(Applause.)—Still corporal chastisement may be, and is, carried to an unpardonable degree of severity. To show you the extent that these thoughtless, frequent whippings may be carried, I will read an extract from the “German Pedagogic Magazine,” for 1838.

We are told that “there died lately in *Swabia*, a schoolmaster, who, for fifty-one years, had superintended an institution with old-fashioned severity. From an average inferred from recorded observations, one of the ushers calculated, that in the course of his exertions, he had given 911,500 canings, 124,000 floggings, 209,000 custodes, 136,000 tips with the ruler, 10,200 boxes on the ear, and 22,700 tasks to get by heart. (These I presume, gentlemen were from the New Testament to increase our love of the book.) It was further calculated, that he had made 700 boys stand on peas, 600 kneel on a sharp edge of wood, 5000 wear the fool’s cap, and 1708 hold the rod”—amounting in all to 1,421,208 punishments, which, allowing five days for every week, would average above a hundred punishments every day. There is something extremely revolting in the idea of such a series of punishments

being connected with learning; and we may justly infer, that, however much classical learning may have been advanced, very little useful knowledge or moral principle was communicated in that seminary. For, a system of moral and intellectual instruction, calculated to *allure* the minds of the young, is altogether incompatible with such Gothic rudeness and severity.

Corporal punishments have generally a *hardening* effect on the minds both of young and old. A blacksmith brought up his son, to whom he was *very severe*, to his own trade. One day the old vulcan was attempting to harden a cold chisel, but could not succeed. "*Horsewhip* it, father," exclaimed the youth, "if *that* will not harden it, nothing will."—(Hearty laughter.)

We are told that in the Inquisition physicians were kept to place the finger on the pulse of the victim, to say how far the punishment might proceed and still leave life. Some of our teachers seem to govern with the same cruel and revolting calculation! Neither should there hang in the school room a code of laws.

The scholars governed by a set of rules soon learn to square their conduct by them, without consulting their own moral sense of right and wrong. The moral discipline of the school is, this way, one of fear and calculation; each pupil balancing in his mind how far it will do to go, and escape punishment, instead of inquiring how far it will do to follow his own inclination, and not do what is wrong.

All government is defective that does not make men govern themselves, for any government is pernicious in its influence, that does not leave men to reflect and decide upon their own conduct.

The teacher, instead of writing out a list of laws, and punishing to the letter any violation, let the aggravating

or palliating circumstances be what they may, should labor to make his pupils discern between good and evil, and right and wrong. He should transfer the government to the pupils as much as possible, leaving the moral faculty and the judgment, to accuse or excuse. Oh that the talent of this land would come forth to rescue the youth from the moral bunglers I have met with.

But, after all, parents must remember that the teacher cannot govern the children in school, if they are not under a strict and willing obedience to authority at home. A few days since, while in conversation with a gentleman in his drawing-room, his little son, I should think ten years old, came into the room, and giving us no salutation, although his father requested it of him, went to the centre table, and commenced turning over the engravings that lay upon it. "Take off your hat, Vincent," said his father. The boy showed no appearance of hearing the command. After a few moments, the father said in an increased tone of voice, "Havn't I told you to take your hat off, Vincent?" The boy continued to appear as if he did not know of any one being in the room. Said the father, in an angry voice, "Vincent, go out of the room in an instant—I am ashamed of you." The boy still kept his hat on, and his post—when the father turned to me, and said, "Since my son commenced going to school, I believe he has lost all his manners." (Laughter.)—I thought there was something wrong at home, as well as in the school. How can the teacher even force obedience in such children?

I think there is, at the present day, a great relaxation of parental government. Said a reverend old gentleman, "when I was a boy, I did not dare to go

into the street after dark, or to make a noise in it at any time. I can well remember," said he, "seeing my father, then an aged man, go up the lawn, on the Sabbath morning, to the church. The boys would respectfully stop as he passed them, with their 'good morning,' and he would recognise them with a smile, and call them by their names. Oh, it warmed the heart, and made us love and respect our fellow-beings to see it.—(Applause.)—But now," said he, "when I walk the streets, the boys run against me, and I have to pull one this way, and another that way, to prevent my feet being knocked from under me."—(Laughter.)

But we will leave these reflections, and go into a school—a fair sample of a majority in the country. The first sounds heard are, A-eh, B-eh, C-eh, D-eh, and having been repeated for six months, the child can call the letters by their names. You perceive that this first lesson of the school is a lesson of unmeaning *signs*. And now, ladies and gentlemen, let me ask for a little philosophical reflection on your part, for time will not allow me to enlarge. And, if any one shall call these *beginnings* in knowledge *trifles*, I will reply that trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle. A very wise neighbor (in his own estimation,) went into Dr. Franklin's study one day; and, said he, showing great contempt in his manner, "Doctor, what is the use of all these experiments?" The Doctor raised his eye towards him, and said with a severity of emphasis, "Sir, what is the use of an infant?" and went on with his labors. The second step, to return to the school-room, is to put these *signs* into syllables—ba, be, bi. This is a lesson of *signs*. The next effort is to join these syllables into words. This is also a lesson of *signs*, and a combination of signs. And now they

are fastened to these columns of words, as they stand marshalled into rows in the spelling book, for years, spelling signs and whole volumes of words, but not an idea is obtained—not an idea has ever been annexed to the book! And when they make the next advance,—to put these words into sentences,—they read the verse to *pronounce the words* in it—not to get the meaning of the author. No, they have always looked upon a book as having words in it to be *spelled* and *pronounced*; and if I ask them the meaning of what they have read, the girls begin to giggle, and the boys to stare at me. This mere mechanism of words—words without an idea, or the smallest mental operation, is the crying defect of all our schools. Millions of dollars are spent in teaching the people to read, but they do not afterwards read to learn. Why are not the great mass fond of reading during their leisure hours? Because they learned words in early life, and not their meaning; and when they take up a book in after life, not getting the meaning of what they read, they care nothing about reading. We overwhelm children with words, and they ever afterwards look upon a book with disgust.

A few years ago, a gentlemen took two Esquimaux to London. He wished to amuse, and at the same time to astonish them, with the magnificence of the metropolis. For this purpose, after having equipped them like English gentlemen, he took them out one morning, to walk through the streets of London. They walked for several hours in silence: they expressed neither pleasure nor admiration at any thing they saw. When their walk was ended, they appeared uncommonly melancholy and stupified. As soon as they got home, they sat down, with their elbows upon

their knees, and hid their faces between their hands. The only words they could be brought to utter were: "Too much smoke—too much noise—too much houses—too much men—too much every thing."

And so it is in our schools, "too much every thing."—(Applause.)—The child neither feels an interest in, or understands the lessons. Why cannot teachers remember that "the quickest way to fill a small necked bottle is to drop in a little at a time." Why, the mind does not grow like a vegetable, by having its roots littered with an etymological compost, but like a spirit coming in contact with spirit—thought kindling at the fire of thought. To teach wisdom by empty words is a device "to fill vacuity by pouring in vacuity." It is dispensing knowledge like soup at a charity house—a pint to each comer, *and that thin*. By this

"We drop our buckets into empty wells,  
And old are grown in drawing nothing up."

And truly, "it is in literature as in finance, much paper and much poverty may co-exist."

To teach the soul by words is to make some dead thing, which an upholsterer had been employed to put together. "For all is of the letter which killeth, and not of the spirit which maketh alive." The mind thus grows up with no quickening power in it—the whole a dreamy, confused, uncertain existence. The soul comes out in a poor plight—all crippled, blinded, paralytic,—clogged, and smothered by wrappages and hulls.

The teacher should not let children read without obtaining thought; and thought that they feel an interest in too. The meaning of the important words as they read should invariably be given by the pupils. But we well know that if the teacher was to pursue such

a plan, the parents would besiege him with complaints that their "children didn't read four verses six times yesterday." Short-sighted beings! do you not know that the real service which a teacher may do your children, is like a check payable twenty years after date.—(Applause.)—This school instruction is valuable only so far as it enables your children to educate themselves in after life. If "*Towns Spelling Book*" was used the great evil of learning words *without* ideas would be remedied. I have no interest in this book, and its merits are so obvious to all that I make this work an exception to my general rule, not to mention school-books, for fear that unjust motives, might by some, be attributed to my efforts.

Again, the children will spell the words correctly in school when pronounced [put out] by the teacher, and yet go home and spell almost every word incorrectly in a letter to a friend. Why is this? They learn to spell at the school by the sense of hearing—at home, *this* sense is not appealed to, but the *eye*; and the eye, not having been educated in school, does not detect the errors of orthography. If the eye was educated in the school, it would correct the spelling at home. Let the children then learn to spell by *writing* the words. Let the teacher dictate to them, and then examine their slates; and let him dictate notes, receipts, bills, letters, &c. Children should also follow these and similar forms, in their writing exercises, in the place of "*set copies*."

Arithmetic is studied with little thought and less application to the practical business of life. The pupils will readily recite the rules, and obtain the answers to the examples in the book, but they cannot do any thing without the book. I examined a class in arithmetic,

not long since, and one of the lads said, "Why do you give us such easy sums, I can do any sum in the ciphering book." I believed, however, that he had made figures without thinking, and as he had partly challenged me, I was disposed to try him, and asked him this question: What will nineteen pounds of beef come to at seven cents per pound, *provided the beef is two-thirds fat?*—(Laughter.)—After a moments consideration, he said, "If you will tell me what the fat comes to, I will do it."—(Hearty laughter.)—I smiled, when he said with considerable emphasis: "If you will tell me what rule the fat comes under I'll work it." I still smiled in his face, when he said, "There is'n't such a sum in the book, sir—it's an unfair sum." Now this boy had "gone through" Daboll's Arithmetic three times, but he never before had found a sum that had any fat in it.—(General laughter and applause.)—But he will have sums with fat in them in after life, and he should be able to understand it in school. Take a boy into a store and after you have purchased several articles, ask him to state the amount. If he can do this, although he may have gone through the arithmetic, he is a lad of a thousand. The business of practical life must be brought into the school-room and put upon the slate. Let the children throw away the books for a month, and if the teacher understands his business the children will learn more during that time, that will aid in after life, than they will in years as the subject is now taught.

The study of geography, is also, a mere memoriter exercise. The pupils lay up the words of the book in the memory, to recite them to the teacher. They do not transfer the mind from the words, to the thing described. "A bay is a portion of water running up

into the land," is repeated by the child ; but it does not conceive a bay. After hearing a class of girls recite a lesson in geography on a certain occasion, I asked the question, what is a river ? All were silent, until a little girl more pert than the rest, said " I knows what rivers is." Well what is it—" Theys are crooked lines on Sally's map."—(Laughter.)—She had seen the words river by the side of this crooked line, and farther than the map and the book her mind had not gone. A globe and an orrery should be placed in every school ; for without these visible, tangible signs, the study of geography will be unintelligible to the children. We all know the truth of the maxim that " seeing is believing," and how much more vividly an object of sight is conceived than a sound or a sensation.

We will take the subject of grammar. And do the pupils speak more correctly, and write more correctly after pursuing this study for years ? Do they make any use or application of their ability to recite the words of the book. The grammar directs us to say those books, those rules. But the teacher and the children say, *them* books and *them* rules. The grammar tells the pupil that the verb must agree with its nominative ; but the pupil says, " You *daresn't* do it. The grammar tells the scholar that *ought* admits of no auxiliary ; but he says " You *had* ought to do it." " They *hadn't* aught," &c. The grammar directs him to say, " I did not think it was she ;" but he says, I did not think it was *her*. Instead of saying is that he coming ; the pupil says, is that *him* coming. In the place of saying, between you and me, the scholar says, between you and *I*. I *done* it—for I did it, &c., &c. Now the grammar class will parse volubly in " Young's Night Thoughts," but they are unable to correct the violations of grammar men-

tioned above, made daily by themselves. A teacher should speak correctly and be able to note down, to show to the pupil, every instance of inelegance and violated grammar. He should train his scholars to speak with accuracy, force, beauty, and precision; for we should value that most which we have the most frequent occasions to use, and what do we use so frequently as language.

We have now mentioned all the branches pursued in the large majority of Common Schools. And you have seen how defectively these *means* of knowledge, (for they are not knowlege,) are taught and learned. These neglected, cheap schools teach just enough to please the demagogue—sufficient to enable the people *to read* what he says, but not so far as to know whether it be true or not, An ancient demagogue once said, that “as long as the people had eyes and ears, he would rather they would be without understanding.” The political zeal of many, and their indifference to the people’s education, show that there is a large class of citizens of the same opinion still.

But is there any thing in all this instruction that makes the *man*? Is it of a kind to impart useful, practical knowledge for resource in life; does it communicate to the pupil any light on the important subject of his own nature and place in creation; on the conditions of his physical welfare, and his intellectual and moral happiness? Does it, above all, make an attempt to regulate his passions, and train and exercise his moral feelings, to prevent his prejudices, suspicions, envying, self-conceit, vanity, destructiveness, cruelty, and sensuality? Alas! no. It teaches him to **READ**, **WRITE**, and **CIPHER**, and leaves him to pick up all the rest as he may.

With this most abstract accomplishment may co-exist unregulated propensities, selfish passions, sensual appetites, filthy and intemperate habits, profound intellectual darkness, and moral debasement; all adhering to a man as closely after, as before, he could read; and, be it marked, these qualities will give their bias to his future voluntary reading, and assuredly degrade and vitiate his character; it will tend to strengthen his prejudices, deepen his superstitions, flatter his passions, and excite his animal appetites. Well, is all this known to the agitator, the quack, and the corrupter. They know that the laborer can read; but they know, as well, that he is incapable of thinking, or detecting their impositions, if they only flatter his passions. And I would most emphatically say that every ignorant or immoral school-master,—every puerile, or polluted writer of books—every crude system of education—every man living in indifference to the Common Schools, is a murderer of souls, and a sure forerunner and begetter of quacks, impostors and demagogues.—(Applause.)

Let us, then, look at the necessity of *religious instruction*, which, only, can elevate man to the possession of happiness, and to Civil and Religious liberty. Knowledge is *power*—power to do good, and power to do evil; and hence a knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom. To educate the head only *is to arm vice*; for the march of intellect separated from religious instruction, has always been the *rogues' march*.—(Applause.)—And that progress of mind which leaves the Bible in the *rear*, may be an advance, but it will be like that of our first parents in Paradise, towards the tree of knowledge—*the advance of death*.

Said Milton,—“Imagination’s mightiest son,”

“Think not that liberty  
From knowledge and religion e'er will dwell  
Apart; companions they  
Of heavenly seed connate.”

And even Lord Byron, who, for the want of religion,  
“shot madly from his sphere,” and “from the zenith  
dropped like a meteor star,” was compelled to say—

“The tree of knowledge is not that of life;  
\* \* \* \* I have known  
That knowledge is not happiness.”

In proof of this, what a fearfully terrific illustration  
was his life !!

The children of this free people, then, should receive  
at our hands that highest boon to man,

“That pearl which rich men cannot buy,  
And which learning is too proud to gather up,”—

a *Bible education*,—an enlightened religious culture.

Men could not dwell on this planet, and take from  
them the Bible. It is the great instrument for achiev-  
ing man's elevation. It would be as destructive to the  
intellect to take the Bible from it, as it would be to the  
body, to take the oxygen from the air. Take the Bi-  
ble from our schools! When the stars in heaven can  
cut themselves loose from God, and continue to shine;  
when the earth can bud and blossom without the sun  
and its creator, then can our schools do without the  
Bible.

Object to the use of the Bible in our schools! You  
might, with as much reason, object to the sunbeam for  
lighting up this globe; to the air that sustains existence,  
and carries to the fields the rain-drops of plenty; or

to the rich bounties that are poured into our laps from the liberal store-house of the earth !

Say, why are there so many unsatisfied, aching, throbbing hearts, all over this world? Because the Bible, with its fulness, and its love, and its hopes and promises, has not been their study. Why do so many *fail* of happiness here ?

In that lexicon of youth which religion reserves for a brightman hood, there is no such word as *fail*. But where the heart has been hardened by the fierce fires of the world, it is convinced without faith, and believes without feeling.

Let the Bible, then,—that charta of liberty—the *Magna Charta* of a world's freedom,—be the text-book in every school-house, that Sentinel of Liberty.—(Three successive rounds of applause.)—Yes, I would say, close up the windows of these schools, and let the children sit in them, and blear at each other in darkness, rather than close out the Bible. Take away, if you will, the teacher of the school, but take not away from it that “Teacher sent from God.” A free constitution, liberty, and all, do not prevent crime, poverty, and suffering. No ; the practice of the precepts of the Bible only can do this. Our money-making system is perfect. But let us not forget that man has another end, an end far more noble, more divine, than to move stones about the earth. The end of man is joy, love, conscience, thought, adoration, and there is a broad common ground for all sects, and for the school-room ; for pure religion, on angel's wings, soon rises over the walls of sectarianism.—(Applause.)

The moral feelings of the children may also be strengthened and elevated by the practice of vocal music in every school. It is as unfrequent to find a

deaf and dumb child as to find one not capable of learning to sing; and who has measured the influence of music? The following German proverb on its influence is expressive and beautiful: "Music is the gymnastic of the affections." Truly it is so; it strengthens and develops them.

An old German teacher was once heard to say, that "whenever his school commenced singing, the devil always went out doors and began to growl."—(Laughter.) The highest and purest morality may be taught through music, and when the hardened mind seems closed to all other means, for we can *sing* things into men, that we cannot talk into them. The last presidential canvass shows this.—(Great applause.)

Every great people should have a national anthem, to be sung every where,—in the great assemblies, and in the humble schools. It should be a simple, noble composition—inspiring truth and patriotism—bringing home to the heart a thousand endearing holy sentiments. The English "God save the King," is a beautiful song of this description, and so is the "Marseilles Hymn" of the French. And we have one or two, offsprings of the revolution.

Practice in vocal music produces health—renders an upright position necessary—expands the chest—strengthens the voice—and accustoms the organs of speech to a deliberate, strong, and correct mode of enunciation.

But time admonishes me to drop this topic, which I will do, by reading an eloquent extract from a report on the introduction of vocal music into the public schools of Boston.

"In the language of an illustrious writer of the seventeenth century, 'Music is a thing that delighteth all ages

and beseemeth all states, a thing as seasonable in grief as joy, as decent being added to actions of greatest solemnity, as being used when men sequester themselves from action.' If such be the natural effects of music, if it enliven prosperity or sooth sorrow, if it quicken the pulses of social happiness, if it can fill the vacancy of an hour that would otherwise be listlessly or unprofitably spent, if it gild with a mild light the chequered scenes of daily existence, why then limit its benign and blessed influence? Let it, with healing on its wings, enter through ten thousand avenues, the paternal dwelling. Let it mingle with religion, with labor, with the home-bred amusements and innocent enjoyments of life. Let it no longer be regarded merely as the ornament of the rich. Still let it continue to adorn the abodes of wealth, but let it also light up with gladness, the honest hearth of poverty. Once introduce vocal music into the Common Schools and you make it what it should be made, the property of the whole people."

Ladies and gentlemen, I must bring this lecture to a close—yet before I leave you let me again importune you to the one great work of a free people—the education of their children. You must give your money, and your time to the subject—for education is like a top, the moment you cease whipping, it drops. You have, in this state, to strike not only when the iron is hot—you have to make the iron hot by striking.—(Applause.)

Frequent meetings should be held for the improvement of the schools. By the reciprocal action of men on each other, the heart is enlarged, feelings and opinions are recruited, and the human mind is developed.

It will be good and pleasant for the citizens thus to come together for an object so dear to you all ; to feel conscious of the equality of freemen ; to reciprocate the most kindly feelings ; to find that you have a common interest ; to provide for the improvement in knowledge, in usefulness, and in piety, of the thousands of children and youth who are soon to take your places ; to forget the distinctions of party and of sect ; and to invoke the blessing of the Almighty upon your deliberations and doings.

And, in this great matter, let us all evince the determination of the old patriot—John Adams—that indomitable hero of the revolution,—and who fearlessly proclaimed after the battles of Bunker Hill and Lexington, had cut loose the colonies from the mother country, and when all were waiting death on the field, or on the scaffold ; “Blandishments,” said he, to the British general “cannot fascinate us—nor will threats of the halter intimidate ; for we are determined whenever, and wherever, we shall be called to make our exit, we will die *freemen*.”—(Prolonged applause.)—“Those great hearts of the sires of the revolution ; how warm and full are their beatings yet, when we go near them !—(Applause.) Truly, a great intellect, is not a temporary flame, burning bright, and then expiring in darkness—It is a spark of radiant light with power to kindle the common mass of human mind—so that when it finally goes out in death, no night follows, but the world is left all light, all on fire, from the potent fervency of the great soul that left it.”—(Loud Applause.)

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