

UTAH EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION,  
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS. DEC. 22, 1919.

-

This is a difficult day. Our old traditions are crumbling. The world is seeking anxiously a safe anchorage for the new mode of life that will emerge from the present chaos. Our recent calamities have convinced us, again, that neither men nor communities can be legislated into correct action and we have come to believe that by education only can a people be moulded.

Consequently, the schools are asked to do all manner of things. The people, young and old, are to be educated for citizenship and thrift, for health and morals, for every vocation under the sun, and for every need of a growing republic. By correct teaching our democracy shall be democratized;

America shall be Americanized, and the soul of the nation, the heritage from the Fathers of Freedom, shall become the proud possession and source of action of the Sons of Liberty gathered to this their natural home from every corner of the earth. The philosophers' stone, the elixir of life, Utopia--their modern name is education.

It is a mansized job, but the people are right. The destiny of the country is in the hands of the schoolmaster. It is a staggering responsibility, but the teacher bids it a courageous welcome. The teachers of the Nation stand ready, in working clothes, to serve the present day and generation. When the day of accounting comes, as surely it will, the schools will have done their duty.

Teaching Must be Made a Profession. The big job thus assigned to the schools can be done well only if the teachers are well prepared for the work. The new service demands the best teaching of which the profession is capable, that is, professional teaching. Teachers must



prepare for their business; they must learn what to teach and how to teach. Only those so prepared should be admitted to full standing in the profession. To train a child for life is certainly as important as to perform a delicate surgical operation or to argue a case at law, and requires at least equal skill, and should demand as careful preparation. This applies to teachers already in the service, as well as to beginners. Those who hold their certificates, diplomas and other evidences of fitness to teach must remember that their business, even more than most other human activities, is changing, and that only by everlastingly "keeping up" can they maintain their business on a professional plane.

Value of Teacher Training for Women. Let

me not be misunderstood. Thousands of young women teachers look forward only to a few years of teaching, before undertaking the position of teacher, manager, and mistress of a household. These teachers render fine service, and they in turn are better fitted by their school room

experiences for their permanent life careers, especially since normal schools are now including in their courses of instruction studies directly connected with home life and fitting women to become scientific experts in child care and household welfare. However, these women should be fully prepared for teaching before they enter upon the business, both for the sake of the school and of the household. It is a serious present duty to encourage more capable, intelligent young women to qualify themselves for the teaching profession and to spend the years between school and marriage in the professional teaching of our children.

Teachers' Salaries. Now, when the nation looks to the school for industrial and political salvation, is the time to fix a new scale of teachers' salaries. If the people of our free republic demand that their children--all of them--shall receive in schools the best possible training for the various and variable duties of citizenship in a democracy, they



121  
must be willing to pay the bills, including professional wages to professionally trained and successfully tested teachers. Teachers should explain to school patrons the necessity of liberal provisions for the maintenance of schools, and should feel free to accept positions carrying salaries most commensurate with present-day needs and responsibilities. A mere living wage never yet brought happiness into life, and there is no respectable sentiment belonging to starvation.

The citizens of America are ready, I am sure, as soon as the proper legal machinery can be set in motion, to do ample justice to teachers; but, as more commensurate salaries are paid, more professional fitness will be demanded. Professional recognition of every kind will come most readily with professional adequacy.

Need of Efficient Teaching. To "put over" the job that the country is assigning to the schools, our teaching must be more efficient

than ever. The new measure of efficiency will include the degree to which teaching meets present needs. Our children must be trained to express their inborn powers for the good of a democratic community. The rights of each individual to express himself according to his gifts has too often been overlooked in making courses of study and selecting text books. The products of the schools have been largely machine made instead of hand made. The attempt to standardize organic life according to a few patterns has threatened to destroy our Nation. Originality and individuality must be fostered by education, else we shall have a colorless national life. The courses of study and other formalities that often hamper good teaching are only man made and should be revised to meet to-day's need.

The Danger of Facts. Our educational job can be done only if facts, the gods of many school systems, are relegated to their natural place. The teaching profession has



too long juggled with facts and called it education. A fact, by itself, is cold and lifeless. True, "knowledge is power"; but our recent struggle with a grim foe has reminded us that the power of knowledge serves with equal readiness an autocracy or a democracy, an evil purpose or a good one. In our class work, from the kindergarten to the graduate school, as shown, for example, by our antiquated examination methods, we have too often been led to believe that the teaching duty were well done if the pupils went out fortified with facts. Yet it is a commonplace among thinking persons, that if knowledge, alone, is made the end of education, the educated man is a frozen thing, as lifeless as his facts.

Truth Must Be Applied. Our present duty requires that truth be taught with reference to its use for human good. The possession of a loaded gun gives power, but until we know at whom it is to be aimed, it is

little less than a menace. Moreover, it is wonderful how the cold fact leaps into warm, throbbing life whenever its possible use for human welfare, material or spiritual, is brought into view. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." In addition, the teaching of truth through its human applications becomes easy, and the teacher goes at his work with a new spirit, for he deals with living needs. To-day, with a world in chaos, when men look with faith only into the future, the use that men and nations will make of their knowledge is of first consideration. It was this, that truth should be used properly in man's behalf, that democracy battled for, and stands ready to battle for again. In American schools, from the beginning to the end, we must teach the place and use of all knowledge, in a social structure dedicated to human good through equal freedom and equal rights, under righteous law. And we shall not quibble about the relative value of necessary tasks. Our knowledge shall be applied with



equal willingness to all our concerns and pursuits. By steadily teaching truth in relation to the needs and purposes of our democracy, the understanding of the spirit of our republic will issue from the schools, and our future will be secure.

The Test of Americanism. But, even as

it is insufficient to know how to read fluently or to add figures quickly or to know the motions of planetary and stellar bodies, so it is not enough to know that such knowledge may be used for the benefit of man and his community. Our teaching must convince the coming men and women that it is well, that it is best, to use all that they know and have, for the upholding of the ideals of their country. The real test of worthy Americanism is less the possession of scholastic acquirements, and more to be filled with an understanding love for the free institutions of a land of liberty and to be immersed in the respect which the people of such a country give to the laws made by the majority

and upheld by the majority. To develop love of truth and of the use of truth for our country's good is a main business of the efficient teacher of to-day. "With all thy getting, get understanding."

Need of Good Men. Let us not forget, however, that good citizens must be good men. Community contentment is determined by the existence of a contented membership; and individual contentment, unless a social anaesthetic has been administered, is derived from the ability to fit into the scheme of life--man-made and God-made. A life that understandingly moves onward under the law of the land and the higher law is happy. Such a life recognizes the existence and immutability of the moral law, for which all other laws have been made, and has established for itself a satisfying, all-embracing, continuous philosophy of life. Only those who possess such a coherent map of life can compel the presence of the joy of life, and become, indeed, safe and worthy citizens of our country.



The Objective of Education. The citizens of America, in placing upon the schools the burden of protecting the foundations of democracy virtually ask us to do a large part of the natural work of the home and the church. We must lay bare before our pupils the fundamentals of life, so that no future superstructure can obscure them. The simple virtues must be taught and extolled. The laws of morality and the principles of ethics must be shown to be derived from the host of universal forces and to be quite as necessary and unchangeable as physical laws. We must not hesitate to explain that while the ethical soundness of a people determines the permanence and character of a people, it is only by the possession of a religious faith that a people becomes resistant to the insidious diseases of mind and soul. Lives so fortified are fully worth the living.

In our new teaching the task is not complete until the inner meaning, the soul, of the thing has been revealed, so that we know not

only how it may be used, but whether it should be used at all. We are emerging from a contest with a foe who failed to teach the deep meaning of things, and who believed that compelled respect for man-made law would win world-wide success in spite of a national material philosophy. The soul of Germany shrivelled and weakened under the treatment, until madness seized upon the nation, and it became the business of the world to treat her as one insane, and, until she recovers, unfitted for the society of her neighbors.

We must keep ourselves in good health by the open teaching in our schools of the everlasting, simple, spiritual truths which always have, always will, and always should determine the righteous course of human action. There is no place in our schools for sectarian teaching; but if the aspirations of our liberty loving fathers shall be realized, we must make place in the schools for the free consideration of the spiritual life, which involves the deep issues



of daily action. When we do this we shall move towards the true objective of education.

Summary

^ ~~So~~ runs the course of my thoughts:

Education has indeed become the main business of our republic. The field of educational service has been broadened immensely. To render full service to the Nation under the new conditions, teaching must be made more efficient than ever, which requires first of all adequate professional training for all who undertake to teach. Teaching must take its place by the side of the other time-honored professions. For such service the teacher must receive an adequate wage. Then, the efficient teacher for the needs of our country must teach, with due regard to individual gifts, facts in relation to man's needs; must establish within the hearts of the children a love for the use of truth for the upholding and developing of our democracy. The laws of morality and the necessity of a religion for every individual life must be taught to all who enter our schools, so that the nation may

truly be alive.

All this we shall do. In this State we have already made a brave beginning. I doubt not that guided by the spirit that made our country possible we shall build in this land a system of education which in its field shall be, as is our political government, a light to all the world.