

SCHOOL LAW AND SCHOOL REPORTS

An Address Delivered Before the Oregon State Teachers' Institute, August 22, 1878.

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Mr. President—Ladies and Gentlemen: The Executive Committee, in casting about for someone to treat this subject, selected me to perform that work.

This is a prolific subject. Much has been said upon it, and much attention is being paid as long as school teachers exist. Whenever, in Oregon, a teacher fails to do his duty, he blames the school law. School clerks curse the school law because they do not make their reports correctly.

County Superintendents frequently arraign the school law when they are called upon to do anything pertaining to school work, and, as a consequence, the State Superintendent must blame the school law for not receiving complete and correct reports from those who are never coming in their wails about the school law.

What we need now, more than additional law, in my humble opinion, are conscientious, industrious and efficient teachers and school officers. If the laws we have were faithfully executed, the schools of Oregon would be in a much better condition than they are at present.

Nearly every County Superintendent in Oregon complains of deficient clerks and teachers' reports, and excuses his own contemptible efforts on that ground. My opinion is that most of these officers could do better if they would exercise themselves and had the real interest of public education at heart.

The principal objection I find to the school law is the lack of penalties for its violation. But, in all candor, I would be glad to know what good penalties will do if we have not officers who will use them when occasion requires!

Certain duties are required of teachers, but no provisions are made for cases of neglect. Perhaps the law presumes that school teachers will not neglect duty. If so, the presumption in too many instances is erroneous.

For instance: In addition to what is now required, School Law Constitution of the United States, Physiology and Mental Philosophy should be required for a certificate of any grade and any applicant who falls below seventy per cent, in arithmetic, written and mental, and grammar should not be granted a certificate to teach.

quirod of him, and the County Court shall bring suit against him to recover the same if he fails to pay it within sixty days after said fine is assessed. This sounds as though he might be made to do his duty if we had County Clerks with backbone enough to execute the law.

By considering the condition of our school affairs, it seems very plain that we are in need of improvement. Something needs to be done. We are not advancing in our school work as fast as we ought.

When a measure has been thoroughly tested and found impracticable it should be modified. If we have thoroughly tested our school laws and found them inadequate the Legislature should be called upon to make the needed provisions.

First the examination of the teachers. The law provides for quarterly examinations and requires County Superintendents to call to their aid two or more competent assistants, but makes no provision for paying them for their services.

If district clerks do not make full and correct reports, their districts should not be allowed their State and county funds. Be assured if this were the case, those officers would do their duty.

The schools of the county should be graded by the Superintendent according to a plan provided by law, into at least three grades. Three grades of certificates should be granted teachers, good for one, two and three years; and no one holding a 3d grade certificate should be allowed to teach a 1st or 2d grade school; and no one holding a 2d grade certificate should be allowed

who has but a dim perception of the simplest rudiments of a subject, dare to offer himself as an instructor therein! How crude and scanty, and circumscribed and shallow are the resources of many who presume to take the honored name of teacher!

Private examinations should be prohibited. Superintendents should be paid a respectable salary, and not be allowed perquisites for examining.

To secure correct teachers' reports, the law should require every teacher to present his report to the Superintendent before drawing any salary. Hence, no school money should be distributed among the district, but should remain in the treasury and be paid out as occasions require, on the warrant of the County Superintendent.

District Clerks should not be allowed to handle the State nor county funds. These officers do not generally know what a correct teacher's report is, because they do not have much occasion for studying them.

This is the best way I see under the present circumstances to secure complete and correct reports from teachers. The County Superintendent of Tillamook says if teachers do not report to the district clerks and County Superintendent, their certificates should be revoked for one year.

Forms for teachers' record books, or registers, should be provided by the State and before the teachers could receive pay for their work, these books should be submitted to the County Superintendent for examination.

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to teach a first grade school. The law should positively prohibit, and at present the State Board should specially rule, that no second or third grade certificate should be renewed without examination.

The State Board of Education should be composed of the Governor as president, the State Superintendent as secretary, the president of the State University, the County Superintendents of four of the most populous counties in the State, and two eminent professional teachers.

The County Superintendents should be allowed mileage and the teachers mileage and per diem when attending the meeting of the Board. It should be made the duty of the members to attend all meetings of that body, and every case of absence should be heavily fined.

An appropriation should be made to meet the expenses of an annual State Teachers' Institute; and for employing competent lecturers and teachers to conduct it. District Teachers' Institutes should be continued until a State Normal school is established and an appropriation made to pay the expenses and hire instructors.

The President of our State University has never taken an active part in an Oregon State Teachers' Institute. The President of the State Agricultural College lectured once. We must have money to hire competent persons, or we shall always find it difficult to get them to teach.

These men whom I have mentioned are paid high salaries, and from that standpoint can afford to do something, but they need their vacation and they take it. The pedagogues in the common schools who will work are paid starvation salaries and cannot afford to attend Institutes and pay their half fares and reduced board rates.

School teachers are generally looked upon as a sort of charity creatures. They cannot go anywhere unless the fare is reduced and the board is half price. Business men have come to know that when school teachers deal with them they must put goods down at cost, or feel the pangs of a guilty conscience for taking profits from their miserable pittance.

Conclusion next week.

TRADE AND FINANCES OF ENGLAND.

Alluding to the fact that the bank of England has advanced the rate of interest on money loaned to five per cent per annum, in the course of remarks upon the cause that lead to this high rate of interest, high at least for the Bank of England.

Foreign demand for her ships has been curtailed; her carrying trade is being trampled by other maritime nations; and her wealth has been heavily depleted by investments in worthless

foreign bonds, and reckless speculations in worthless stocks. It is stated, on sound authority, that within ten years England has sunk the enormous amount of between five and six thousand million of dollars in such operations.

Those are some of the causes that are now operating upon the Bank of England, and forcing it to stop the drain upon its coin and bullion fund; but there are others equally potent, and far more difficult to remedy.

The exflux of coin without a corresponding influx on account of domestic production; the enormous losses she has sustained by bad foreign investments, the rice and growing competition in manufactures and maritime commerce instituted by other nations, her late heavy expenditures for army and navy; the inroads upon her tea monopoly by the construction of the Suez Canal which gives other European nations equal opportunities for direct importation; the unproductive condition of much landed property in the realm, and the convenience which the telegraph and cable give equally to all countries, would seem to warrant Mr. Rathbone, Member of the Parliament from Liverpool, in his decision, that "England, as a whole, has been extravagant, and has overreached to an extent which is reducing its capital and eating its savings."

Statistics show that for the present year the value of the wool and silver produced in California is \$21,000,000, while the agricultural produce of the same state exceeds \$31,500,000. As compared with mining, agricultural stands nearly five to one in value produced. The wheat crop of California for a single year is valued at \$33,500,000; barley at \$10,000,000; other cereals, \$4,500,000; produce of the vineyards, \$7,500,000; wool \$7,500,000; fruit, \$3,000,000; live stock, solid stock \$1,000,000; \$17,500,000; dairy produce \$4,500,000. Such are the achievements of the agriculturists of a state originally peopled by a class of adventurous and enterprising men seeking for gold!

The Enterprise of Oregon City says: From the City Assessor's report we find the tax roll for 1878, amounts to \$2,185 15 of which he returns as delinquent, \$17 50.

They All Take it.

When the system is run down to that extent that you pass sleepless nights, are nervous and irritable, have gloomy forebodings, sour stomach, sick headache and costive tongue, do not snore yours as high private in the rear rank, under General Debility, but cheer up and try White's Prairie Flower, the Great Liver Purgative, now for sale in every city and town on the Continent.

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