

An Address to the Teachers' Institute of Jefferson Co., Iowa.

BY S. H. HEDRICK.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Without any special apology on my part your attention will be directed chiefly to three important things intimately connected with the work of your dignified calling as school teachers, a calling, when properly appreciated and prosecuted, places you among the benefactors of your generation, and should command the admiration and respect of those who follow after you in the march of time and in the drama of life.

I. Our first thought leads us beyond you, as teachers, and fixes our attention and interest upon those whom you are expected to instruct—the boys and girls of to-day. They are found in almost every home. They are in the shops and stores, the gardens and fields, the groves and forests, the streets and lanes of the country. Their cheerful faces are to be seen on every corner. Their feet patter in the noise of the busy streets, and their willing hearts and hands join in a good share of the toils and burdens of life. They play and swing or read and sing; and although at times they are truant and cause shame and sorrow, yet they are, in part, the sunshine of the present, and the only hope of the future.

(a) Our boys and girls of to-day were the cradled infants of yesterday, just starting on their journey up the hill of time. Then mother was the chief teacher, with father, and sometimes John and Mary as a kind of assistants. It is too often the case that the chief instructor in that case is very poorly qualified for her task; and her first assistant—the husband—falls so far below her that you can exhaust the percentage table without finding or disturbing his diminutive sphere. But the mother's instructive nature, with whatever culture she may possess, turns continually toward her darling babe; for it she toils and cares with a fond desire and expectation that it will be the boy or girl of the future. The days of infancy are as short as they are precious and tender, yet how earnestly and constantly are the means employed to rush it from infancy to boy and girlhood; and for a multitude of reasons, both just and unjust, all are made to rejoice in the day when it is placed before you, the object of your care, love and instruction as school teachers.

(b) You now begin to see the evidence of past neglect of the family on the one hand and the methodless training on the other. The sins of omission and commission of parents are clearly inscribed upon the child, to be detected and analyzed by the true teacher as by no one else, and perhaps too for the first time.

(c) But the true teachers, while condemning the parents as they may, and pitying the child, as they should, must realize that it does no good. The past work is done and can not be undone. It is only by the most earnest energetic work of the teacher and child that these defects can be to some extent corrected and overcome. The teacher comes in to deal with the present and future; often encumbered with a chaos of moral infirmities, intellectual deficiencies, and physical perversions in the child, and such is the nature of your work as it comes to you day by day in the boys and girls from the infancy of the past.

(d) Into the midst of this chaos the true teacher fearlessly casts himself, "the Van Amburgh of every day life." It is his business to grapple with all the elements of moral and mental disorder, and bid them "stand ruled." As "out of the nettled danger we pluck the flower of safety," his task is to pluck from the unweeded gardens of wayward childhood the rich fruit of a true genial man or womanhood. The marvels of chemical transmutation are tame

compared with those he is required and expected to perform. To render the froward gentle, the reckless considerate, to dignify the degraded, and spiritualize the clod, such are among the arduous requirements of the school teachers' sphere and calling. That they should often fail is inevitable; the wonder is that they should ever succeed.

METHODOLOGY.

II. *How do you teach?* Some one has very aptly said: "He who fixes upon false principles treads upon infirm ground, and so sinks; and he who fails in his deductions from right principles stumbles upon firm ground, and so falls." Let us now state and briefly notice a few recognized general principles.

1. The method of nature is to be taken as the archetype of all methods. This principle is at once fundamental and comprehensive. Everywhere in God's universe everything is governed by Supreme and inflexible law. All subjects in the realm of nature must act in harmony with her appointments and law, or suffer the consequences of every infraction of those laws. The process of mental or moral development and growth is not exempt from her rigid requirements. Nature endows the child with physical, mental and moral powers, undeveloped and feeble at first. These powers or germs in the child are only possibilities; but nature also furnishes that by which they are to be developed and strengthened, and fixes laws, only by the strict obedience of which in the employment of means appointed, these powers can be brought to their highest degree of perfection. For every thing nature has a time, an order and a method which are best adapted to the peculiar constitution of that thing; and she is imperative in her demands for a uniform observance of her plan. By a *natural method*, then, is meant one that is in perfect harmony with the innate constitution of things. Nature suggest in unmistakable terms the time and order of the development of the powers of the mind, and the matter to be used, and the method to be employed. Let him who would learn the true educative process go to nature with these questions: When? In what order? By what means? and How? and then diligently heed her reply.

2. The ultimate object of the study should always be kept in view. Whenever and wherever the teacher disregards this principle we have truly the blind attempting to lead the blind. He is like a captain of a vessel who would put out to sea without compass and without any port in view as a destination. The objects of a study must be considered before the study can be rationally recommended to the pupil; and those objects must certainly determine the method of teaching the subject in order that the results for which the study is pursued may be secured. The *object or end* of a study should decide the *method* to be used in teaching it.

3. The means employed should be consistent with end. This principle is of general and practical import. It comprehends both the matter and method of teaching—the *what* and the *how*. A person wishing to extinguish a fire would commit an error should he throw coal oil on it, though he would be using a liquid. The physician finding his patient suffering from extreme prostration, arterial action flagging, the pulse scarcely perceptible, would be guilty of mal-practice should he administer a powerful sedative, though he would be giving a *medicine*. The inconsistency in these cases of means employed, and the end in view is quite apparent. In the first instance water might be used, but in a quantity too small to put out the flame. In the case of the sick man, the proper remedy might be used, but in an improper form or quantity. The true object of education is to secure a symmetrical devel-

opment of the powers of the individual, physical, mental and moral. The principle before us demands that both matter and method be consistent with that end. The development required is not only threefold but also symmetrical. We may select the proper matter for our purpose, and fail in our method; or we may be correct in kind and fail in quantity. This rule will be referred to again, we therefore pass now to another principle.

4. Only one thing should be taught at one time. It is not meant by this that only one study should be pursued in any given school term; but that there should be a single or superior object or point in a lesson, and all else should be utilized as means to that end. A plurality of things presented to the mind at once, in too rapid succession tends only to confuse it. The mind is so constituted that it must have time for attention to each thing separately. This varies according to the nature of the things and capacity of the mind.

5. Instruction should proceed from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract; from analysis to synthesis. The term instruction is not to be understood here in its strict meaning (instructure to build in). The primary meaning of this term can not be applied to the process of education. There is no such thing as "building in" in the educative process. This principle is correct because it announces nature's method. Learning, as a mental process may be said in common terms to consist of the following movements: curiosity (interest), attention, observation, examination, discrimination, abstraction, generalization and classification. Our knowledge may be said to consist of differences and similarities. The mind apprehends new truths only when they are brought into relation with those already known, so that the new may be compared with the old. The mind can not pass from a known truth to an unknown that has absolutely no relation to the known. Each simple truth of a new subject is unknown, till compared by the learner with what he already knows. If we present a complex truth to begin with the mind is only confused thereby; but beginning with the simple each single truth learned assists in the analysis of the complex. Every mind must make its own abstractions and generalizations, however long may be the time required. Generalization is the summing up of the knowledge, not the beginning. In the acquisition of knowledge the mind passes from analysis to synthesis, and the instruction should be such as will give it this opportunity. The teacher may synthesize, but the pupil, if he gains knowledge, must analyze. I have read the statement that "every synthesis which has not been preceded by analysis is only an imagination." Sir Wm. Hamilton says, "Synthesis without previous analysis is baseless; for synthesis receives from analysis the elements which it recomposes."

III. I come now to the *one great object* which has already been hinted at in some statements already before you. I find myself at a loss for words to express and enforce it. If I can suggest it in such a way that you will comprehend it, I trust you may never lose sight of it and that it will ever be the chief element in your answer to the question, Why you teach parents, teachers and society generally are too often mindful of the use to be made of our boys and girls. That they are the material and the only material from which *true men and women are made*; and that all means and methods are worse than wasted that do not contribute to this great end, and that failure is inscribed upon all efforts when this end is not attained.

Many parents think of the children only as consumers, to eat and wear, to drink and swear. They feed and clothe them simply as a duty in or-

der to keep them alive physically, and call them men and women when they attain so many years of age and pounds in weight. Such a living for a husband or wife or the practical duties of life, is in many respects less valuable than the wire frames on which the merchants exhibit ready made suits. The wire skeleton would be in many ways a safer and cheaper companion, because it would not drink bad whisky, and consume your labor; nor take your life, and as for clothing it would never become democratic enough to "hurrah for a change." We find again that many parents fail because they single out some profession or calling for which the boy has no capacity and think to gain success in educating him for this one thing. They keep them on the farm ten months in the year to make a farmer, or in the shop to make a mechanic, &c., others, think of some one profession, and suppose all the world was made for this one thing—a teacher, a poet, a preacher, a lawyer, or at least a doctor, yes, a doctor. "The boy is rushed into college, pitchforked through a course of Greek and Latin; crammed for examination, buys a diploma for so much money, and goes out with his blushing honors thick upon his empty head, to kill people *scientifically*, by dealing out drugs of which he knows little, for bodily deceases, of which he knows less, and this he does till his incapacity is discovered, and then he starves or steals." Little better is the teacher who studies just enough to get a certificate by the charity of the county school superintendent, and then teaches a school with no higher object than to put in the time and draw his salary. Likewise that citizen who neglects to furnish the school house with furniture, convenience and comfort, and the much needed apparatus, and wages for a true and competent teacher to aid the children up the rugged hills of progress, to an honorable fame and practical success. The potent cause of the present energetic progress, solidity and unity of our people, is said to be because the State has been dotted

over with school houses, so may it ever be, and may every citizen, teacher and child ever realize that the quality should keep step with the quantity. May our estimate of true man and womanhood become such as the divine pattern requires; and then may the efforts of parents, teachers, of church and state count it as the end of all study, the consummation of all efforts, to work all together, ever looking to the great end of educating and developing the full capacity of every child into the highest degree of true man and womanhood. We may do less, but we cannot do more. We should ever remember that any and all influence which withholds means or stands in the way of this grand objects or in any way cripples and neutralizes the means to this end is a fraud and an imposition upon the present, and a robber and murderer upon the future of our state, our country, and our race. As teachers, negligence on your part, or abuse of man's method and object is almost if not altogether excusable. The future good demands of you to eliminate the errors of the past and develop faster, and perpetuate those powerful influences that shall forever and forever stand as a monument to your loyal industry, purity of purpose, and skillful energetic efforts, and a crown of glory and honor worthy to be worn by those true men and women who are an honor to as well as honored by this dignified profession. The raw material goes through many hands in the shops, and many influences are brought to bear upon it from the strokes of skilled workman before it becomes a useful and ornamental article, there are certain important points in the process when size, shape, temper and polish are given, and any failure here remains a defect and entails loss and disaster in its future

utility. So in developing man and womanhood from the raw material of infancy and childhood, there are many influences brought to bear and changes effected, and too often at the first there are careless, unskillful hands dealing with it; but remember the school teachers are in the responsible place where shape, temper and polish are stamped upon the articles that the future will demand—true men and women—and for such there is always room. From the nature and object of your work let us turn to you, "What manner of persons ought you to be?" In thought, in holy conversation in wisdom, in watchfulness and in godly example!

As Whittier says:

"An angle of patience sent calm,
Our feverish brow with cooling palm,
To lay the storm of hope and fear
And reconcile life's smile and tear,
The throbs of wonder pride to still
And make our own our Father's will."

In conclusion, then, I commend you all as teachers to him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and prudence, the leader of all bodies, the teacher of all teachers, the ruler of all nations, and Savior of men—Jesus of Nazareth. Hear and obey him, and let us all hope that the great work in which you occupy so important a position, will go onward and upward till all the influence from the cradle to the grave may lie in having with his divine will and lit up our race to that eminence where,

"No longer hosts encountering hosts,
Shall crowds of slain deplore;
They'll hang the trumpet in the hall,
And study war no more,"—
And finally, to the immortal joys of heaven.

What If You Don't Like It?

The *N. Y. Independent* speaks thus plainly to those who find fault with the work of revising the New Testament: "The great mass of complaints against the new Revision reduce themselves to this; I don't like it; it does not please me; it disagrees with my taste and opinions; the old version conveyed a pleasanter or a deeper sense; in fact, I don't like it."

But what if you don't like it? what difference does that make? The Bible was not written to please you, but to instruct you. The business of the revisers was not to bring out a translation that should be accommodated to your likings, but one that should be accommodated to God's Greek text. If it suitably translates the Greek text, their work is properly done and that is an end of it. It may not suit you; but why should it? Paul's beautiful hymn in praise of charity, as given in our old English version, may seem to you much more beautiful than Paul's Greek hymn in praise of love; but that question was not before the revisers. Their business was not to select the most beautiful ideas, but discover Paul's ideas and put them into English.

There is just one question for you to ask, and that is not, Does the new translation please my taste or my theology? but, Is it correct? Does it represent God's word in the Greek? The fact is that a great part of the complaints against the Revision is directed squarely against the Bible. It is will-worship, a pride and conceit of the will that prefers what we think God ought to have written above what he actually did write, that sits in judgment on God and his revelation.

—The University at Cambridge, England, by an immense majority of its senate—89 to 12—has opened its regular examinations to women students, granting them the same honors and degrees as to young men. The women can now have not simply the certificates of Girton College, but the coveted parchment of one of the venerable universities of England. It will awaken new enthusiasm and pride among the young men to preserve college honors from being snatched from them by these alert, temperant and diligent sisters.