

News + Opinions - 1916

There are a few things that should be done in our State to further the interest of public education. One of these is to get a clear concept of what public education should do. We must establish some definite standards. The public schools should see to it that every man, woman and child of school age should be able to read and write and make simple calculations. But this is not education. It is only ~~providing~~ the working tools necessary for one to acquire an education.

No school accomplishes its mission if it does not become a center for the development of character, for character is worth more than book facts. Character without learning is of more value than learning without character. Honesty makes for manhood, is essential in business and leads to success. The man who packs good fruit on top and inferior fruit on the bottom of the container fools himself only. He does not realize the fact that the inferior set the price paid for the superior fruit in his pack. The same idea is true all through business. Honesty pays. The schools must educate our people to see this.

There is such a thing as Community health, and the schools must carry this idea to our people. If I have a contagious or communicable disease in my family I owe it to my community to keep this disease confined to my home. Recently I knew an intelligent mother to take her child with whooping cough to a community meeting. When another mother moved her two little ones away from the sick child the former said, "Let them get whooping cough. Now is the best time for them to have it and they are bound to have it some time." The mother of the two children had never had this disease and insisted upon the protection of her children, much to the disgust of the other woman. The schools must bring the message of Community Health to all of our people.

( Education must become useful to all of our people.) Our schools must lead our people to a realization of the real aristocracy of industry. The most industrious man in North Carolina should be the best educated man in ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> State. That education that can not be used is worthless. This does not mean the elimination of the so called cultural subjects, but it does mean the practical use of culture in the lives of our people. True culture is one's ability to put himself in the other man's place. Where this is acquired by our people we will get real community co-operation.)

These are only a few things the schools should do, but we can not do these as they should be done unless we have well trained teachers—~~Teachers~~ with a sincere spirit of service, backed by an intelligent preparation for the work.

It is the duty of the next General Assembly of North Carolina to see to it that the laws necessary to put teaching upon its proper basis are passed. A bill that makes teaching a profession, recognized as such by our State, is of fundamental importance. Also, a law giving us proper graduation and certification of teachers is essential. These must come if the schools are to do the work the people have a right to expect. Let us all, teachers, people, and legislators, pull together for the best interest of the children and the people of our State.

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