

East Carolina Teachers College

Nov. 25th, 1923.

12th Chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes

I promised you yesterday morning that I would continue my talk to you on education, and that I would deal to-day with the subject of the teacher. May I take just a minute to give you an outline of the program as prepared for educational week. On Sunday there was supposed to be services held in the different churches for God and country; Monday was American Constitution day, the great fundamental law under which all laws of this country are made guarantees to us life, liberty and justice. Tuesday was supposed to be set aside as patriotism day, a day in which we teach the children of America something about our flag; a day in which we devote a part of the time in helping those immigrants to become American citizens. Quite often a person comes to this country, and does not find any where in America a welcome hand, and then we wonder why they don't become good American citizens. Wednesday was school and teacher day. The slogan for Wednesday was to visit the schools

North Carolina is spending 20 to 25 million dollars a year in trying to improve her school system. The great bulk of that goes into school buildings. Thursday was illiteracy day. I don't remember what the percent of illiteracy in North Carolina is at present. It has been very high. I was talking to a man last night about a good native born American citizen living in this community, and he says I want to get that man in my business because he has a good brain and a good personal appearance, but I was surprised to find out that he couldn't read or write. That man's chance for making good in life was stopped because he didn't have the foundation for the making of a great education. So on Thursday we were supposed to work on the problem of meeting the demands necessary to overcome this illiteracy, and to see to it that there are no illiterates by 1927. It can be done if we will only put our hand to the task and Friday was community day, an equal chance for all children, a square deal for the country boy and girl, and Saturday is Physical Education day. That gives you the program as outlined by the National Education Association. The slogan for Saturday is a sick body makes a sick mind. Playgrounds in every community

What is the condition in this country of ours in reference to the teachers. How far are we in America from having adequately trained teachers to teach. Now it is accepted throughout the nation that a teacher is not adequately trained for work until that person takes at least two years of work beyond the standard high school course, in other words the two year normal course here prepares a person sufficiently well to be accepted in the nation as an adequately trained teacher for grade work. Holding that as a standard let me give you a few figures that will be of interest to you. In 1920 there were 667,646 teachers, three-fourths of a million almost. Of those teachers 368,282 were not adequately prepared for the job, that is 56% of our teachers in America are not properly trained for their work. Only 44% are properly equipped as teachers. Now you can begin to see why people do not look upon school teaching

as a profession, and over one-half of those people engaged in it are not prepared as they should be prepared for the work. 56 teachers out of every 100. It is worse than that in North Carolina. In 1920 there were 16852 teachers in North Carolina and 13482 of them were not adequately trained. 80% of the teaching force in North Carolina had less than a standard normal school course, only 20% out of every hundred were adequately trained for the work. With those facts before us we can see very clearly why this institution is bending every possible energy to enlarge itself to more adequately equip this college to meet the urgent needs and demands of this state for properly trained people to go to the children of our state and educate those boys and girls. It is a pretty serious problem that confronts us, and I want you as you go out from this college to go as missionaries, not to the foreign field, home missionaries, to carry to the children of our state the spirit of the real teacher, to carry to the children of our state the spirit of the real worker working for the upbuilding of the school system, working for the proper education of the boys and girls of the state. There are places scattered all about over North Carolina where the people really and truly do not know anything at all about the value of a real good school.

I read a letter yesterday written to one of the teachers of the college here by a young woman who is working in a certain community in this state, and she gave the conditions under which they are laboring. She told of the environment into which they, there are four of them, went. She told something of the ambition and desire of those four teachers for that community, and she gave the handicaps that they are laboring under, but I want to take my hat off to that young woman, she said, I am glad I came, I am not regretting it in the least, we remember the motto of our college, to serve, and she realizes that there is tremendous opportunity even in overcoming the handicaps under which they are working. That is an opportunity, and those young women are going to do a wonderful piece of work in that community. I am sure of that, but the standards of the community are away down here in comparison to what they ought to be. Now she didn't say any unkind things about the people, but I could read through the lines. I have been into such communities myself, and I know what she was talking about. Those communities need the very best there is from the very best teachers colleges that they can get. It is those places where there is that kind of opportunity that one can use his life to the greatest possible advantage. The boys and the girls of this state must be given an equal chance with the boys and girls from other states. Oh, we are better than Florida. 99 out of every 100 are not properly trained. Think of it. Just one out of a hundred, yet Florida gets more advertising than North Carolina. North Carolina is getting a good deal of advertising in the last few years. Since the last census was taken, I believe we stand from the bottom as far as training is concerned, at the top so far as being pure bred American citizens, and eighth from the bottom so far as having properly trained teachers to teach those blue blooded American citizens. I think we are much above eight now because the state has gone forward very rapidly in the last three years, and these statistics are of 1920, but there is a tremendous task before us in this state to-day, and you young women who go out from this college must go with the spirit of service to help our state bring your percent up above 20, and that percent of untrained teachers down below 80. We must go out into this good old state of ours with a determination to see to it that every boy and every girl every where in North Carolina is given the very best possible educational

opportunities. Now there will be people who will say we can't afford to pay for it. The answer to that is we cannot afford to let another generation of boys and girls come up in North Carolina

If girls come up through the course in the high school we must see to it that your younger sisters are given a better chance than you had, and we must continue to fight for that until every child every where is taught in a good school by a well trained teacher. By doing that we in North Carolina will not only be serving our state, but we will be serving our nation and we will be rendering a service to those people who live beyond the borders of the American Republic.

East Carolina Teachers College

Dec. 5, 1923.

Some time ago I started a series of talks to you on the different things that enter into the make-up of the spirit of the people of America, and one of those things is the public school system of this great nation of ours. The boys and girls of America are showing to-day a greater desire to go on with their education beyond the public schools and into the colleges than they have ever shown before. There is a greater interest on the part of all the people of this republic in the public schools of America than ever has been prior to this time. Oh! there are a few people in our country who are still saying that every body ought not to be educated. There are a few of those people in high educational positions who are saying that there ought to be some way of selecting and rejecting those people who want to go to college who ought not to go to college. No less a person than the *Pres.* of Columbia University takes that position. I guess he is in a pretty bad fix. He has students in Columbia University by the thousands, not hundreds, but by the thousands. Just one college in Columbia University has some times as high as 7000 students in one year, and I suppose that Dr. Butler has a feeling that he ought not to have so many folks, because every one costs him some where between \$50 and \$100 dollars over and above all they pay into it. But he is wrong just the same. A republic, a democracy, technically speaking, a government like ours made up of people selected by the voting population, and that means practically every body with ordinary intelligence, I mean those who are not insane or criminal, who are 21 years of age, have a voice in this government. Now such a government can not be an intelligent government if its citizenship is not an intelligent citizenship, and the people of America realize that as they have never realized it before. The people see that the safety of this government, the safety of our institutions, the safety of our homes is dependent upon the intelligence of our citizenship. There are a large number of students, practically all the boys and girls in this country are in school from six to ten months each year. They are in school five days in the week. They are in school at that impressionable age. They are in school at the time they are shaping and molding their character; they are in school at that time they are forming ideals, as well as gathering information. They are in school at that growing period of life when they are gathering from every source the concepts that they are going to use as grown citizens, therefore the school has a greater opportunity, so far as shaping the life of the childhood of America is concerned, than any other one thing outside of the home. I firmly believe that if I could control absolutely every teacher in America for one generation of boys and girls, and cause those teachers to teach exactly what I wanted them to teach, in exactly the way I wanted it taught, that I could make this country any thing that I wanted to make it, and that isn't showing very much intelligence on my part, because even the feeble minded William of Germany saw that, and shaped the education of the German youth for one generation, and made them just what he wanted them to be, and he was feeble minded. I hope I am not, so when it comes to making the spirit of the American people, the work of the public school and the spirit of the teachers who teach in those public schools, is one of the most important if not the most important public factor.

I was talking not long ago to a Superior Court Judge in North Carolina, and we were talking about the spirit of our people, how the spirit of the people of North Carolina has changed within the last ten years, and we were talking about the things that enter in in our state to make that change that has actually taken place, and he said to me I am convinced from my experiences on the bench that the public school is the greatest single factor in bringing about this change in our state. Well, I said, Judge I don't know whether I am going to agree with you. Of course you will expect me to agree with you, being in this work, and so we took up other phases and discussed them, other things that enter into the shaping of the life of our people, and he turned to me and said Mr. Wright in charging a jury the other day I made the statement that if you will bring before me a criminal who has been a regular attendant on the public schools until he finished the public school course, and who has been a regular attendant on Sunday School, and find him guilty I will release him. Why, I said, Judge aren't you going most too far? He said, no, as long as I have been on the bench I haven't had that person yet to come up before me as a criminal.

He has been on the bench for several years, and he told me that he hadn't that person yet to come before him a criminal; he has had dealings with them in the courts but not as a criminal. That to me was a surprise, and I began to wonder, and finally remarked to him, I said, well then, Judge we people who are working for the ~~people~~ of North Carolina are trying to put you out of business. He says, you are, and I will be glad when you put some ~~others out~~ of business, there is too much coming before the Judges of our state, the dockets every where are choked, we never clear them.

Now I stopped to mention that experience of one of the Superior Court Judges of North Carolina. to let you know that the public school is the place where we can give to the boys and girls of this republic a correct idea of their duties as citizens, and keep them on the right side of the civilization in which we live, and I have just touched a little bit on the influence of the public school in shaping the ~~influence~~ of our people.