

NORTH CAROLINA'S NEED
of
MORE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

The subject I have to discuss leads directly to the question of taxation for it presupposes the building of other state institutions. Ten years ago the State of North Carolina should have built from three to five normal schools to train teachers for our public schools. Since we did not do it then we should pay our debt to our children now. I hear the voice of -- I started to say the people, but I will not, for it is the voice of the men who like old King Saul are willing to disobey the commands of Jehovah because they fear the people. To such people the words of Samuel are still appropriate, viz.- "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

We can build if we want to, for North Carolina ranks thirty-nine possibly forty in the union when we measure it in the amount per person that we pay for public education. Seven, perhaps eight states South of us pay less; Wyoming pays three and three quarter times as much per capita as we do. I do not blame the people for this condition. I am going to take my part of it and put much of it on the rest of the profession of teaching. We- the teachers- have not seen the need or we have not been bold enough with what we saw. The State will build these when the teachers of North Carolina see the need for them and carry the message to Garcia. We spend sixty five millions for good roads and boast about it (and

we are doing right in this for gas tax is better than a mud tax.) but we will wrangle, complain, find fault, and even investigate if we are asked to spend ten millions to prepare teachers for the children who are to grow up by the side of the road. Money invested in citizenship is the best public money spent in any state.

Let us see what the facts are. "The truth shall make you free." There are 15,819 white teachers in North Carolina. 7,960 hold Elementary B certificates or lower, 3003 hold provisional Elementary certificates or lower. Fifty per cent of the white teachers hold certificates below Elementary B; about sixty per cent hold certificates below Grade C. The increase of white teachers needed each year for the past five years has been just about one thousand; 750 Elementary, 250 high school. We need for replacements annually one thousand five hundred. Total new white teachers need^{ed} each year twenty five hundred. Where are these teachers to come from? In 1923 the Class A institutions graduated 907 people, of these 470 are teaching. The Normal school graduated 180 and 158 are teaching. The Junior, that is two and three year colleges graduated 154 and 101 are teaching. The total supply of teachers from the Normal schools, two, three and four year colleges for the year 1923 is 729; this leaves 1,771 to be recruited from the home school or brought in from outside our state, allowing for a reasonable increase to come into the schools from institutions now in operation we will still need about 1,500 additional teachers annually. In other words our State should build enough two year Normal schools

to turn out annually 2,500 teachers. If each school is built large enough to accommodate 500 students, and if each student who enters studies for two full years it would just six such normal schools to meet the present pressing demand for teachers. I estimate that it would cost about a million and a half to build each school. Our State should, therefore, spend nine millions in building normal schools. This is in addition to the present building program under way for the institutions of higher learning.

I know many people in our state will think I am crazy; that I have no regard for the burden it will place upon the tax payers of our State. I realize what may be said about me for advocating this big thing. I will be told to attend to my own job. Some will say I am a fanatic. I know all of that. I also know that ignorance and superstition are our most expensive luxuries. I know that the hope of our civilization, the stability of our government, and the safety of our homes is dependent upon the education of our children. Our prosperity is in proportion to our intelligence. I know that the graduates from our high schools this year will be over one hundred per cent more than a year ago, and I know that there are not enough colleges in North Carolina to take care of these boys and girls. I know that many of these high school graduates would prepare to teach school if they had any where to go. I know that our luxury tax is much more than ^{all} our school taxes combined. The tax on tobacco alone in one year would build all the colleges we need and endow them handsomely.

I do not advocate building all of these schools at once. I would put up one a year for the next four or five years. This would enable us to properly man these schools. Selecting a faculty for a normal school is one of the most difficult jobs because the teacher in such a school has a peculiar task. She must teach not only the subject matter, but so teach the subject matter that the ones taught will know how to teach.

I am in favor of building good public school houses. We are not spending one cent too much along this line, but good school buildings will not educate our children. The school house is only the work shop. It is the teacher after all who must do the work and we must have teachers to educate young men and young women to teach or our funds spent on buildings will not bring to us the returns we have a right to expect. One of the main reasons why people object to paying school taxes is because fifty per cent of our teachers- one out of every two- are not properly prepared for the job. "Teachers are born not made". Did you ever hear that. I will admit they must be born, and I will admit there was a time when we did not know how to help a young man or a young woman to become an efficient teacher, but "them days is gone forever". We do know now how to educate a youth for ^{the} profession of teaching, just as well as we know how to educate a youth in any of the professions, such as law or medicine. There is just as much place today in our educational scheme for the teachers college and Normal school as there is for the law school or the Medical college.

We must train more teachers if we ever expect to educate the boys

and girls of North Carolina. To do this we must have more normal schools. Here is where I stand, and here is where I have stood for ten years.

In 1921 I alone went before the Appropriations Committee to beg them to build one more Normal school. I fought for one more Normal school in the report for Educational Survey, I shall fight for it until we win, for the fight is for the little children.

Some day we will hear the call of the little child; some day we will look and see the four hundred thousand little hands down in the darkness of ignorance begging us for help, and then we will send to them the trained teachers who will lead them out of darkness into light. May that day come while you and I have our armor on, and our swords drawn in defense of these innocent little ones.