

LC 428

- C8 F8

copy 2

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5

LC 428
C8 F8
COPY 2

THE CLERGY AND COMMON SCHOOLS.

LETTER FROM

WILLIAM CHAUNCEY FOWLER, LL. D.

[Republished from Barnard's American Journal of Education for January, 1868.]

THE
American Journal of Education.

[NATIONAL SERIES,]

No. 2.—JANUARY, 1868.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
PORTRAIT OF NATHAN BISHOP, LL. D., first Superintendent of Public Schools in Providence, R. I., and in Boston, Mass.,	209
I. THE CLERGY AND POPULAR EDUCATION,	211
Letter from William Chauncey Fowler, LL. D.,	211
II. ENGLISH PEDAGOGY—OLD AND NEW,	223
III. A NEW DISCOVERY OF THE OLD ART OF TEACHING, BY CHARLES HOOLE,	223
Part II. The English Grammar School in 1659,	225
1. The Usher's Duty,	225
2. The Master's Method,	267
3. Scholastic Discipline,	293
IV. ABRAHAM COWLEY, AND REALISTIC INSTRUCTION IN ENGLAND,	325
Memoir,	325
V. PLAN OF A PHILOSOPHICAL COLLEGE IN 1661, BY A. COWLEY,	327
The College, or Organized Society,	327
Grounds, Building, Equipment,	328
Professors, Scholars, and other Officers,	329
The School and Methods of Instruction,	331
Results of Education and Society,	333
ESSAY ON AGRICULTURE IN 1661, BY A. COWLEY,	334
Suggestion of a College of Agriculture,	336
VI. PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN SWITZERLAND,	337
CANTON OF ZURICH,	337
Territory, Population, Government, School Organization,	337
System of Public Instruction,	338
Compulsory Attendance—School Officers,	338
1. Primary Schools,	341
Elementary School—Real School—Repetition School,	343
Seminary for Teachers of Primary Schools,	345
Teachers' Certificate—Chapters—Synod—Annual Meeting of Teachers' Synod,	346
2. Secondary Schools,	351
3. Superior and Professional Schools,	354
(a) Gymnasium, Lower and Upper,	357
(b) Scientific Industrial School,	358
(c) Veterinary School,	358
(d) Agricultural School,	359
(e) University, or Faculty of Theology, Law, Medicine and Philosophy,	360
CANTONAL NORMAL SCHOOL AT KUSSNACHT,	361
CANTONAL UNIVERSITY AT ZURICH,	366
SWISS FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY AT ZURICH,	369
VII. THE PHILOSOPHY AND METHOD OF TEACHING,	381
As Taught at the State Normal School at Westfield, Mass.,	381
VIII. COEDUCATION OF THE SEXES,	385
Experience of Oberlin College from 1833 to 1868,	385
Note—Oberlin College,	400
IX. NORMAL SCHOOLS, OR SEMINARIES FOR TEACHERS,	401
Address by John S. Hart, LL. D., Principal of State Normal School, Trenton, N. J.,	401
X. AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY,	425
Proposition for a National Society,	427

☞ THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, *National Series*, Volume I., for 1867-8, edited by Henry Barnard, LL. D., U. S. Commissioner of Education, is issued quarterly at \$4.00 per annum, (four numbers,) by D. N. CAMP, *Publisher*, Hartford, Conn.

LC 428
C8 F8
copy 2

I. THE CLERGY AND POPULAR EDUCATION.

LETTER FROM PROF. WILLIAM C. FOWLER, LL. D.

DURHAM, CONN., December, 1867.

HENRY BARNARD, LL. D.:

Dear Sir:—A few weeks since I had the pleasure of receiving from you a letter, in which you ask me to communicate some facts connected with the common schools in Connecticut “as they were.” While I was endeavoring to collect these facts, I met some Gentlemen in Hartford who are active in promoting the educational interests of the Commonwealth; one of whom encouraged me to prepare for the press, some remarks which I made on a topic which came up in that interview. This I consented to do, with the purpose of uniting the two topics in one communication.

But to whom shall this communication be addressed? My mind readily turned to you as a distinguished friend and advocate of popular education who has labored long and successfully in this State and elsewhere, first as a pioneer, and then as a victorious soldier, in this good cause. I feel too assured, that you will welcome every well-meant effort for promoting the same cause, however inadequate it may be.

The topic, last mentioned, is, THE PROVINCE OF THE CLERGY OF CONNECTICUT IN THE PROMOTION OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN THIS COMMONWEALTH.

These remarks and statements, will, I trust, be well received by them, inasmuch as they are in harmony with the views of the clergy of Connecticut from 1635 to the present time.

The proposition which I shall endeavor to sustain, by the following plain arguments, is this, *Ministers of the Gospel in Connecticut ought to take an active part in promoting popular education.*

My first argument in support of this proposition, is derived from *the nature of Christianity.*

It is a religion which addresses accountable beings through their intellect. Just in proportion, therefore, as you improve their intellect by culture, will you enlarge their capacity of being influenced, in their moral instincts, by the objects of divine truth in that religion. Now as christianity is a general provision for the spiritual wants of all mankind, we may be sure, that all classes of the com-

munity ought to experience so much of intellectual culture as will enable them to appreciate and appropriate the full benefit of that provision.

Other religious systems were designed, at least in some of their parts, for certain privileged orders, who should enjoy high mental culture; while the many, the *oi polloi*, were excluded from a full participation. Those systems had their esoteric or secret doctrines, which were communicated to the favored few, the initiated; and their exoteric or superficial doctrines, which were communicated to the common people, who were supposed to be incapable of comprehending those deeper doctrines.

But among christians it is not so. To the poor the Gospel is preached. To them it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom. Now in order that this preaching be effectual, in order that these mysteries be adequately comprehended, some degree of mental cultivation is necessary. Evidently, then, it is the duty of the christian minister to promote the intellectual improvement of those whom he wishes to influence by his preaching; for in so doing he is preparing them to understand and appreciate the truths and duties of the Christian religion, and to yield their conscience and their heart to Christ the author of that religion. No christian minister, therefore, is justified in standing aloof from the great cause of popular education; for, without it, the light of the Gospel will shine in darkness, and the darkness will comprehend it not.

In the early period of christian dispensation, the Clergy, the great lights of the catholic church, acted successfully on this principle; though they did not, in the existing social condition, extend it in its application, so far as we can do. They carefully guarded and preserved the learning of the times in which they lived, and, by the establishment of Institutions of learning and religion, helped to keep both, in their intimate association, alive on the earth. They carefully preserved the Greek and Roman classics, the Pandects of Justinian, the Hebrew copies of the Old Testament, and the Greek of the New Testament. Thus it happened, through them, that Classical learning could revive, and that "the public reason of the Romans" could be silently and studiously transfused into the public institutions of Europe, and the study of the Bible could become general. In many an Abbey and University, the lamp of learning, trimmed by their hands, burned brightly, illuminating a wider or a narrower circle, and sending down its cheering light to our times. Honor to whom honor is due. Let all honor be paid to the Catholic church,

as the conservator and promoter of learning and religion. When darkness covered the earth like a flood, during the mediæval centuries, that church was the ark which saved for us the learning and religion of the old world. All thanks to the bright example of her heroic missionaries; for the recorded lives of those eminent saints, who through the long centuries, bore the mingled fruits of learning and holiness, for such as "Pascal who was all reason," and for such as "Fenelon who was all love."

My second argument is derived from *the nature of Protestantism*.

The right of private judgment, in opposition to human claims to a dictatorial authority, in matters of faith, is an essential article in the protestant faith. Now this single fact, that we are to call no man master, is assumed on the ground that the followers of Christ are capable of forming, from the Bible, an opinion for themselves; and in order to form this opinion for themselves, from the study of the bible, they ought at least to be able to read the bible. For how can a man, in the exercise of the right of private judgment, form a correct judgment except on a correct basis, and how can he have a satisfactory basis in the bible, unless he understands that bible?

Besides the acknowledged advantages which they enjoyed in the Catholic church, some of the first reformers desired to enjoy this right of private judgment. They wished to escape from the heavy hand of authority by which they felt themselves humiliated. They were opposed to what was called *carbonaria fides*, "the Collier's faith," or implicit faith. A Collier being asked what he believed on a certain point, replied, "I believe as the church believes." And being asked what the church believes, he replied, "The church believes as I believe." And being asked again what he and the church believe, he replied, "The church and I believe the same thing."

Leading protestants, in opposition to this *carbonaria fides*, undertook to have a faith of their own, and to be able to state the grounds of their faith. In the language of Chillingworth, "the bible, the bible is the religion of protestants." In adopting this for their motto they virtually declared that the common people ought to be elevated to such a level in the scale of mental cultivation, that in the exercise of the right of private judgment in the formation of their opinions from the bible, they would not "wrest it to their own destruction."

The contest on the subject at issue, between Luther and his allies on the one hand, and the Pope and his Cardinals on the other, was like the battle between the gods, as described by Homer, or the battle between angels, as described by Milton. There was great intellec-

tual power and great learning on both sides; and it required intellectual cultivation to judge of the merits of that controversy. Luther translated the bible; but of what use would that be, unless the people could read that translation? Luther, Melancthon and Carlostadius, all men of great learning, delivered lectures in the University of Wittemberg, which helped to enlighten the people and give currency to his doctrines. The revival of classical learning near that time contributed largely to the same effect.

In like manner the Protestant religion of England was permeated with learning, which the Episcopal church there have zealously promoted ever since they took possession of the Catholic schools and universities. Indeed, the leading protestants throughout Europe had been highly educated in the Roman Catholic schools, and were thus disposed to imitate and surpass them in the establishment of such institutions.

Accordingly, in protestant regions, schools of learning soon shone forth on the earth, thick-set as the stars in the sky above. Voetius, a learned protestant, boasted that while in the ten catholic provinces of Belgium there were only two universities, in the ten protestant provinces there were seven.

It is true that what is now understood by popular education was not then thought of as practicable. The Reformers seem not to have supposed it possible that the delights and advantages of learning could be brought down to the lowest stratum of the population. But they adopted principles and measures that are now operating in Germany in the education of the masses, and which justify the clergy here in promoting popular education by direct and efficient means.

My third argument is derived from *the nature of Puritanism*.

Besides the general principles of christianity and of protestantism, the puritans adopted the opinion that the people are capable of *self-government*, both in their civil and in their ecclesiastical polity. This opinion implied that the people should be qualified, by education, to perform the duties involved in self-government. Accordingly, as soon as their circumstances would allow, like the catholics, like the protestants, they adopted measures, both in England and in this country, to establish schools and colleges, under the direction of their learned divines. These had generally been educated in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In eleven years after the settlement of Massachusetts, they laid the foundation of Harvard College, to the support of which Connecticut annually contributed. In seventeen years, they established a system of common schools. The clergy, as is

well known, were active in establishing and sustaining these institutions in Massachusetts. As advisors, as patrons, as teachers and visitors, they exerted a controlling and salutary influence.

Without going into an induction of particulars, it is sufficient for my purpose here to say, that the whole history of the puritans shows abundantly, that they have been staunch believers in the value of local law. They have believed that a Church can govern itself better than any outside person or body can govern it; that a Town can govern itself better than a colony or a State can govern it; that the Colony can govern itself better than parliament can govern it; that a State can govern itself better than congress can govern it. But in order to this successful self-government, in these several circles of power, they have also believed that the people must be educated in the school of Christ, and at least, in common schools. On this same belief, the clergy have acted earnestly and efficiently.

Listen to the prayer made by Eliot, the Apostle John, in a synod of ministers in Boston; "Lord, for schools everywhere among us! That our schools may flourish! That every member of this assembly may go home and procure a good school to be encouraged in the town where he lives! That before we die we may be so happy as to see a good school encouraged in every plantation of the country." This was the spirit of the early ministers, and their conduct was in accordance with their spirit.

My fourth Argument is derived from *the nature of the profession* into which ministers have entered.

The object of that profession is to raise the souls of men from their earthly condition into union with the divine nature, that they may thus become the intelligent, and holy, and happy inhabitants of earth and of heaven; to raise them from the power of appetite and passion into the dominion of reason and conscience. This the minister endeavors to accomplish by commending to them the truths of God's holy word illustrated by the teachings of his providence.

In like manner it is the object of popular education to raise men in the scale of knowledge, virtue and happiness, that they become good citizens; to elevate the tastes of the young from sensuality, from the bar and the brandy saloon, from the haunts of loafers and gamblers, into the love and the pursuit of the true, the good and the beautiful. Thus the minister and the educator are largely aiming at the same thing; though the motives employed by the former are always supposed to be chiefly drawn from a higher world, and the motives employed by the latter may be chiefly drawn from

this. The christian minister has, then, every encouragement to act strenuously for the promotion of popular education, with the full belief that while he is promoting that, he is at the same time promoting the object of his own profession.

The minister and the school master are fellow laborers in the same field. The field is the world. When "the school master is abroad," let the minister go forth to meet him and join himself to him as a fellow laborer. Let them encourage each other and bear each other's burdens, both looking forward to "the harvest home," when they shall bring their sheaves with them.

My fifth Argument is derived from *the position occupied by the Clergy of Connecticut during more than two hundred years.*

From the early legislation of the Colonies it appears, that a reason given why schools should be supported, was, namely: that the young could in them be so taught that they would be able to "read the bible" and the "capital laws," and thus be "fitted for service in the church and commonwealth." In the order to establish a free school in 1641, in New Haven, "Our pastor, Mr. *Davenport*," is mentioned with the magistrates, as a committee "to consider what yearly allowance is meet to be given out of the common stock of the town," for the support of the school; and also, "what rules and orders are meet to be observed in and about the same." And, in 1644, the General Court ordered that a grammar school be set up and appointed, and that the "Magistrates and the Teaching Elders" be a committee to attend to that, for the same purposes as in the case of the first mentioned or common school. It appears that Governor Eaton and Mr. *Davenport* were the active men in thus establishing a system of free schools in the Colony.

And after the Colonies were united, the General Court, in 1690, ordered as follows: "This Court considering the necessary and great advantage of good literature, do *order and appoint*, that there shall be two good free schools kept in this Colony, for the schooling of all such children as shall come there after they can distinctly read the psalter, to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, the Latin and the English languages, the one at Hartford, the other at New Haven, the masters whereof shall be chosen by the magistrates and the *ministers* of the said counties, and shall be inspected and displaced by them, if they see cause." These were grammar schools, after the model of the *free*, or endowed grammar schools of England, in which the Latin and the English languages were to be taught grammatically.

While I thus notice the prominence that was given to the clergy in the establishment of free schools, it should be mentioned that by the original Constitution of Connecticut the "supreme power of the Commonwealth," was lodged in the General Court, which for a long time afterwards gave prominence to the clergy in all matters connected with education.

It should be added that the SCHOOL MASTERS were treated with great consideration from the first. They were among the few at the first, who received the title of "Mr.," and not that of "brother," or "good man." The school master stood next to the minister in the minds of the people; just as he does in Goldsmith's inimitable description in "The Deserted Village":

"And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew."

He was on familiar terms with the minister, and often derived important aid from him in the government and instruction of his school, and kept him informed as to the proficiency of individual pupils. It is a tradition, that a school master in Guilford from time to time informed the minister, the Rev. Joseph Elliott, that his son, afterwards the celebrated Jared Elliott, was not making much proficiency in his studies. On one occasion, when carrying his book to school, Jared let it fall into the water, and when standing by the fire to dry it, he let it fall into the fire. Upon being reprimanded by the master, he replied, "I believe my book is a lunatic, it is oft in the fire and oft in the water." The school master, as soon as the school was dismissed, hastened to the minister to say to him, "Jared will make a man after all."

Many of the school masters in the principal towns, one at least in each town, made teaching their principal employment through the year, namely, such as Cheever, and Tisdale, and Jones. Other intelligent men taught school in winter, and managed their farms in the summer; one of these, who was born in 1727, told me that, in this way, he taught school thirty years. Others, chiefly young men, often the flower of the town, well educated for the times, and from good families, taught school for a few winters, until they were married. Females, called school mistresses, and school dames, taught the small schools in the summer. Clergymen often taught select schools in the winter, for the older youth in their congregations.

Among these teachers there were indeed those who were but poorly qualified for their employment. Some such are described by John Trumbull, in his "*Progress of Dullness*:"

"He tries, with ease and unconcern,
 To teach what ne'er himself could learn ;
 Gives law and punishment alone,
 Judge, jury, bailiff, all in one ;
 Holds all good learning must depend
 Upon the rod's extremest end,
 Whose great electric touch is such,
 Each genius brightens at the touch.
 With threats and blows, excitements pressing,
 Drives on his lads to learn each lesson ;
 Thinks flogging cures all moral ills,
 And breaks their heads to break their wills."

But there were other school masters who led their pupils gently up the hillside of learning, bearing their burdens, sympathising with their difficulties, and by kind looks, kind tones, and winning ways, gaining their hearts. They did for them what Aristotle did for Alexander the great, who, in return, said, he loved him better than he did his father Philip, for the "latter was only the father of his body, but his teacher was the father of his mind." They did for them what Mr. Elmer, her teacher, did for Lady Jane Grey, who, she said, "taught me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing, while I am with him, and when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because, whatever I do else, but learning, is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me." I could mention the name of a Connecticut school master, who in 1782 taught a select school. About fifty years afterwards, a pupil in that school made a journey of many miles to see him, and thank him for his counsels and instruction, bestowed upon him when he was only eight or ten years of age.

What a beautiful letter Daniel Webster wrote to his old school master, July 20th, 1852, the last year of his life! "MASTER TAPPAN, I hear, with much pleasure, through the public press, that you continue to enjoy life, with mental faculties bright and vivid, although you have arrived at a very advanced age, and are somewhat infirm. I came to-day, from the very spot in which you taught me; and to me a most delightful spot it is. The river and the hills are as beautiful as ever. But the graves of my father and mother, and brothers and sisters, and early friends, give it to me something of the appearance of a city of the dead. But let us not repine. You have lived long, and my life is already not short; and we have both much to be thankful for. Two or three persons are still living, who, like myself, were brought up, *sub tua ferula*. They remember 'Master Tappan.'

And now, my good old master, receive a renewed tribute of affec-

tionate regard from your grateful pupil; with his wishes and prayers for your happiness, in all that remains to you of this life, and more especially, for your rich participation, hereafter, in the more durable riches of Righteousness.—Daniel Webster.” Mr. Webster was born January 18, 1782. This letter is a beautiful picture of the feelings entertained by ingenuous children, for good school masters in the last century.

For a long period the only two BOOKS in common use in district schools, were, first, the “*New England Primer*,” which was an equivalent, among the puritans here, for a small prayer book, called the “Primer” among the Roman Catholics. This, with its frontispiece of John Rogers in the flames, and his wife and nine children looking on, excited in the mind of the young child while learning its first lesson, the deepest sensibility. There was in it the beautiful cradle hymn of Watts, appealing, as it does, to the highest sentiments of our nature; and the shorter catechism, to be committed to memory and repeated every Saturday.

The other book was the “*Psalter*,” namely, the book of Psalms printed separately. This also was an equivalent for a certain Roman Catholic book so called.

Arithmetic was taught in these common schools, the teacher only having a book, and writing the sums for the pupils, and showing him how to do them. Sewing was taught by school-dames.

Writing was also taught, the teacher writing the copy and handing it to the pupil with the question, “Can you read your copy?”

At a later period, “*Dilworth’s Spelling Book, or New Guide*,” published 1740, was introduced. He was an Englishman, and died in England, 1781. His book was for a time in common use. Trumbull alludes to it thus, in 1772:

“Our master says, (I’m sure he is right,)
There’s not a lad in town so bright,
He’ll cypher bravely, write and read,
And say his catechism and creed,
And scorn to hesitate or falter,
In Primer, *Spelling Book*, or *Psalter*.”

His “*School Master’s Assistant*,” an arithmetic, was published, after his *Spelling Book* had been well received, in 1743, and was dedicated to “*The Reverend and Worthy School Masters in Great Britain and Ireland*.” School masters in Connecticut used this book in their schools. The sums given out were often cyphered at home in the evening. Classes were also taught by the master in the evening, for which a small stipend was given.

In 1784, *Webster's Spelling Book* began to replace Dilworth's, though with some opposition. "*Dilworth's Ghost*" was written to deter the people of the State from the change. Webster's book was entitled, "*The First Part of the Grammatical Institute of the English Language*." This book, I have heard him say, was introduced into the schools of Connecticut through the influence of the clergymen of Connecticut; though it was highly recommended by others. After this, the "*Second Part*" in the series, was introduced, which was published in 1790. This was a *grammar*. After this, the "*Third Part*" in the series, was introduced. It was a reading book, and was published in 1792. "*Dwight's Geography*, began to be used in the schools of Connecticut, in 1795. It was prepared by Nathaniel Dwight, a brother of Timothy Dwight. Morse's *Geography* was also used, more or less, soon after its publication.

The first clergymen of Connecticut were educated, many of them, at the Universities in England, and had enjoyed intercourse with the learned and polished clergymen of the Episcopal Church there. As we see them now on the canvas, in their wigs, and bands, and gowns, we are impressed with the belief that they were gentlemen. Their manners were grave, dignified and courteous, and they were regarded by the school-masters, and gentlemen, and all of the people as the models of *good manners*. Thus it long continued the case with their successors in office. In the schools in the Colony of Connecticut, it was expected that not only learning, and religion, and morality should be cultivated, but also GOOD MANNERS, in opposition to clownishness on the one hand, and rowdiness on the other. The pupils were expected to bow or courtesy, or, in other words, to make their *manners* when they entered the school, and when they left it; and when they began the recitation, and when they retired. They were taught to address the teacher with the title of "Master." They were taught to show respect to age, and station, and moral worth; to take off their hats when they met respectable persons, as the ministers and principal men were accustomed to do. This regard for *minor morals*, carried out in many particulars, prevailed in Connecticut for something like two hundred years. By thus cultivating the sentiment of politeness in the young, their hearts became better, socially, and good manners became common law.

In some of the acts of the General Court the "GOVERNMENT" of schools is spoken of as if it were as important as instruction. In those days children were expected to be *governed*, not coaxed. This government, in those times, is described as being unreasonably severe.

So it was, judged of by our own standard. But in those times there was, in many places, a high type of discipline in the church, in the family, and in the town. They or their fathers had left England in order that they might have a purer church, and how could they have a purer church without discipline? Parents, in those days, had large families; Dr. Johnson malignantly said of them, that "they multiplied with the fecundity of their own rattlesnakes." Besides, the Pilgrims had left Holland that their children might not be corrupted. Large families require stricter discipline than small ones. In the town, the whipping-post was a standing proof of the importance attached to discipline. The same doctrine prevailed in the schools, as it also did in the English schools. Ministers, too, were full believers in the doctrine, that "the rod and reproof bring wisdom." Accordingly the rod was used, and the ferule, and the block of disgrace, a sort of "stool of repentance," on which the culprit sat, until he was willing to submit to the rules of the school.

But the clergy of Connecticut exerted a MORE DIRECT INFLUENCE in favor of popular or universal education in the State. Having themselves, most of them, been trained, when young, in common schools, a large number of them became teachers in them or in select schools, during their college course or afterwards. Numbers of them, when settled, kept school in their own houses, for the young people of their congregations. Clergymen founded Yale College, and for more than one hundred and fifty years have controlled it, and presided over it. For one hundred and thirty years a large part of the students of the State, educated in it, were fitted for college by clergymen. When I concluded to go to college I applied to Dr. John Elliot to fit me for Yale. He told me that he "felt under the same obligation to lend his aid in fitting young men for college that he did to preach the Gospel."

Clergymen were on the committee for the examination of schoolmasters, and the inspection of schools. They visited the schools, at least at the commencement of the season, and at the close. In this way they became acquainted with the comparative merits of the several schools, and of the several teachers, and of the several pupils. They made the condition and importance of the schools one of their common topics in conversation, alluded to schools often in their sermons, and in their public prayers on the Sabbath, they would say, in respect to them and the college, "cast the salt of Divine Grace into these fountains, that the streams, that annually flow from them, may make glad the city and the church of our God." For a long time

the town was the parish, and the town schools were the parish schools, which the minister felt, officially, bound to foster. And in doing this they were often rewarded, even while living, with the gratitude, the love, and the confidence of three generations. And when such a one died, great lamentation was made over him. And when carried to his grave, he was mourned by the fathers, and the children, and the children's children, as one who had taught them how to think as men, how to act as Christians, and how to behave as gentlemen; as a light-bearer, who had held for them the torch of knowledge, in the meeting-house; in the school-house, and in the dwelling-house; a torch which some of them were ready to seize and hold up in turn in the church, in the school, and in the family. To these ministers, we sons of Connecticut, owe something more than gratitude; we owe them undying affection as our spiritual and educational forefathers.

In the minds of the early clergymen of Connecticut, the church and the school—the *meeting-house* for the one, and the *school-house* for the other—were closely associated. In the early settlement of a town, as soon as the meeting-house was erected, if not sooner, the school-house was built, *near* the meeting-house, the one a symbol of learning, the other of religion. When the minister was settled, the school-master was sure to follow to establish his little seminary, from which the church was to be supplied with intelligent members, and the town with intelligent inhabitants.

With the type of the old Connecticut school-house, which replaced the one constructed of logs, and its slender appointments, many are acquainted, as some such are still standing. There was the large chimney, often on the north end, with its large fire-place, before which the children could warm themselves when they came in, or after shivering on the outer circle of benches. On one side of the chimney was a small entry, and on the other, was a small apartment for the hats, or buff caps, and bonnets, and which served the purpose of a prison, in which were confined disobedient and refractory children. Long benches, without backs, on which the children sat, and thus learned to sustain themselves.

Having been confined in the school from nine o'clock until about eleven, and from one until about three, they, at the notice of the master, hastened to the play-ground fresh from the "constraint that sweetens liberty." Here they contended with each other in feats of agility and strength. They were encouraged to wrestle and to run well, because they might have to wrestle with the Indians in battle,

or to run with them, for escape or for capture. Accordingly some of them emulated the strength of Jacob, who wrestled with the Angel, and some, the fleetness of Asahel, who "was as light of foot as a wild roe."

And when, perchance, some well-known person was passing, the word would come out from some of them, that parson—or squire—or doctor—or deacon—was coming. Immediately they would leave their play for a moment, take off their hats, or caps, and then resume their play. This ready act of civility, they would pay with a conscious sense of politeness,—with a "proud submission," which raised them in their own estimation. They had been taught in the church, in the family, and the school, to respect what is respectable, and to "do their duties to superiors, inferiors and equals."

It should be added that in the settlement of the country towns, before the districts were weakened by being divided, the schools were often large. "The boys came to school in the winter, the only season in which schools were usually open, from distances of several miles, wading through the snow, or running upon the crust, with their curly heads of hair often whitened with frost from their own breath."

VISITATION DAY, in the spring, when the inspectors visited the schools, was a great day in the district. The minister and some of the principal men were present. The school-master was in his glory, now that others had come to magnify his office. Many of the parents were present. The inspectors were interested to behold the "*spem gregis*," the hope of the church and the town. The psalter was read by the older children, and the primer by the younger ones. The writing books and the arithmetic books were handed round. In later times, lessons in spelling from the spelling book were put out. The catechism was recited. The inspectors made their remarks, particularly the minister, upon the proficiency of the school, the manners, the morals, the religion. A prayer was then made by the clergyman in which these several topics were alluded to.

It should be added that a prayer was made by the school-master in a portion of the schools, at nine o'clock, when the school came together in the morning, and at four. In other schools, a prayer was made only at four, when the school was dismissed.

On this subject, listen to the language of President Timothy Dwight: "Of learning and the general diffusion of useful knowledge, the clergy as individuals, have, beyond any other class of men, been the promoters. To this, their own knowledge, the general



nature of their office, and their comparative leisure from the busy occupations of life, almost necessarily lead. In the foundation and the regulation of no small number of our schools, they are directly concerned as principals. To our college they gave birth, continuance, a considerable proportion of its property, and the whole system of its government and instruction. They have supported and educated more scholars of charity, than the whole community besides; nor is there at this time, unless I am deceived, a single school of consideration in the State, in which they have not a principal agency."

Thus the meeting-house was the center of illumination for the town, and the school-house was the center of illumination for the district. The lights in both were steady, irradiating the whole surface of the State, like the lights which on some evenings illumine all the northern sky. This was before the cunning artificers of the press sent up their fireworks to dazzle by their glare and mislead. It was the influence of these steady lights that made Connecticut THE LAND OF STEADY HABITS; a model commonwealth, where, from the cultivation of the arts and sciences, from the general diffusion of knowledge, the people have in the exercise of the right of private judgment, pursued a wise policy in their public acts, and in the administration of their own private and local affairs.

It would exceed my limits to show forth the great results of the educational efforts of the clergy of Connecticut. These would have to be sought not only in the territorial limits of the State, but throughout our broad country, wherever the emigrating sons and daughters of Connecticut have fixed their habitation.

Thus, my dear sir, have I endeavored, briefly to show, that the ministers of the gospel ought to take a prominent part in popular education; from the nature of the Christian religion; from the nature of Protestantism; from the nature of Puritanism; from the nature of their own profession; from the position long occupied by clergymen. In doing this, they ought to be encouraged by the towns, as they were formerly.

How they should do this, I do not presume to say. Each of them has his own gift; each his own circumstances. They have that wisdom in the selection of means, which is profitable to direct.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM C. FOWLER.

P. S.—Your very valuable Report of 1853, when you were Superintendent of Common Schools in Connecticut, renders it unnecessary that I should enlarge my statements on certain topics of interest.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 327 814