

# The Easley Messenger.

Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook, it shines.

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## The Easley Messenger.

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### AN ADDRESS,

Delivered To The Patrons and Pupils of The Easley High School, August 24, 1883, by Prof. C. W. Moore.

In Grecian mythology we are told of a hero who slew a dragon, the custodian of a certain fountain in Beotia. We are told also that he sowed the teeth of that dragon, and from them there sprung up a band of Grecian soldiers clad in full armour. This looks like some unmeaning story, but in ancient times it was the custom of eastern nations to illustrate important lessons by beautiful and impressive pictures called allegory. Though these fables, at first sight, appear so unreasonable, when properly understood, they often contain rich treasures of truth and knowledge. Cadmus, who is represented as being the slayer of this frightful monster; is the same name as that of the person who first introduced letters into Greece, and they, doubtless, are one and the same man. The dragon represents the ignorance, cruelty, and brutality of the first inhabitants of that country; the armed soldiers denote the descendants of the same people, in their strength and glory, after they had been elevated through the benign influence of learning, to a higher plain of moral and social standing.

Our own native land affords us a striking example of the remarkable changes that may be wrought upon a country through the agency of letters. A little more than a century ago the land that we inhabit was a desolate region, with tribes of beings scattered here and there who were but little more refined and intelligent than the wild beasts which they hunted. But now, where degradation once reigned, we see fruitful fields of waving grain, comfortable dwellings, splendid towns and cities, railroads with their trains flying from city to city, over plains, across rivers and through mountains; and the telegraph wires that enable us to talk, as if face to face with the nations that dwell beyond the mighty waters; such blessings are the fruits of educated minds; to enumerate them all would be to count the stars in the heavens and the leaves upon the trees.

You, scholars, are here to receive the blessings of education, which you may in turn transmit to mankind. You are preparing for the arduous duties of manhood and womanhood. By making the proper use of your time you will become the strong pillars of both Church

and State, the ornaments of your homes, the delight of your friends. The knowledge to be gained at school is more precious to you than gold and silver. If your parents were to send you here to gather gold and you could find little nuggets of it all over the ground; you would not be idle; you would come early and work late, in order to see how much of the precious metal you could carry home. But if you could get gold in that way you do not know how long you could keep it. What you would buy with it might be drowned by floods, swept away by storms, or burned up by fire, but the learning that you get cannot be taken away. It is said that gold will enter any gate but heaven's—*knowledge* will enter even there. You hear tell of your soul that must live forever; this soul that you hear of is nothing but your mind. Education then is the improvement of the mind or soul, and God who gave you your mind will certainly not destroy any work that you may do for its improvement. What may be the scope and power of the mind in the next existence we know not, but many of its achievements in this life we do know, and of these under the proper influence of education, and our duties in regard to the same we propose to treat.

In this progressive age you see on all sides signs of improvement. In the work-shops, on the farms, and in your houses, may be found laboring implements and machinery. Throughout all parts of the land may be seen powerful engines exhibiting phenomena of strength and velocity; mighty steamers plowing the oceans and the rivers, bringing the fruits of the soil and the products of industry from every clime beneath the sun; and the lightning of heaven flying across continents and oceans, bearing messages from one to another, all for the comfort and happiness of mankind. All of these inventions and discoveries contributing so much to our convenience and happiness are either directly or indirectly the results of education.

Furthermore, by the aid of letters, you may sit at your own fireside and become acquainted with the various countries of the earth; learn of the industries, productions, manners, customs and peculiarities of their inhabitants; nor is the mind confined to this terrestrial globe; it travels off into regions beyond the clouds, where other worlds circle in more spacious orbs; there it learns of those distant spheres, their weights, magnitudes, changes of seasons, and periods of revolution.

If you are not a friend of learning you may try to console yourself with the reflection that you do not intend to immortalize your name by developing some important truth for the aid of science; as did Galileo, Newton, Franklin or Morse; but you will not be qualified to fully comprehend and enjoy the blessings and beauties of nature without some degree of learning. Young persons often think that the only noble aim of life is to gain riches. This is very well, but wealth is not the only source of happiness. When one has gained enough to enjoy ease and comfort, he naturally anticipates some social pleasures, but how sad will be his disappointment when he finds that his want of learning unfits him for the company he desires to keep.

While knowledge is no hindrance in the way of making money, it may add ten-fold to the pleasure of its enjoyment when once acquired. Persons are too apt to believe that schooling—

particularly a high grade of it—is necessary for none but professional men; that the farmer, mechanic and common laborer can succeed just as well with a very limited knowledge of letters; such delusions are seriously damaging to the interests of the people.

Some person once drew a picture representing the industries of the world; in one place could be seen the merchant viewing his vessels, coming and going, bearing their precious burdens of commerce, and below was written his motto: *I conduct the Commerce of the World*. In another part was the lawyer, sitting in his easy chair in his office with his books and papers about him; and his motto was: *I make and interpret laws for the people*; further on was the preacher, clad in spotless garments, and snugly housed in his comfortable parsonage, and his motto was: *I preach the gospel to the world*; and so on, all the learned professions were pictured, and some appropriate motto assigned to each. But some one completed the picture by drawing beneath the farmer, with his sun-browned face, his sleeves rolled up, and the perspiration streaming down his cheeks, while he leaned upon his spade gazing at the dignitaries above him. His motto was: *I pay for it all*.

For this subordination of the laboring classes parents are in a great measure responsible. If a boy chooses what is called a learned profession, every possible sacrifice is made to prepare him for his so styled honorable calling. If he is to become a physician, lawyer, or minister, he must be sent to school, and graduated at college; but the most industrious, and often the brightest boy in the family, who chooses to live by the sweat of his brow, is sent to the cornfield or workshop without any preparation whatever. Is it any wonder then if the laboring classes are subservient to professional men?

Again, some parents think that their daughters need but little schooling, because in ordinary life they do not fill responsible public positions. If nothing more, they are to become the wives, mothers, or in some way, the companions of educated men. Women exert upon the world a potent influence; they are the power behind the throne, and how important that that power should be restrained and directed by intelligence. They have legitimate claims to social pleasures and advantages; to deny them the privilege of social and intellectual distinction is characteristic of barbarism. Your daughters are one day to become the companions, the solace, the joy of men of learning; are they to be unqualified for this important position?

I once knew a man of some distinction who married a lady destitute of education; and every time the wife opened her mouth in company it was the signal for her husband to blush, and why? Because he continually expected her to betray her ignorance. There can be no congeniality or happiness in such a union. How sad that woman should be consigned to a fate so humiliating and despicable! The modesty and tenderness of her nature demand that she should have every advantage of social qualification. Do you love that innocent, kind and affectionate daughter whom you press to your bosom? If so, are you willing to send her out into a cold and heartless world destitute of the means of self-advancement? Do you not wish her to reign queen in that little home which will be to her a kingdom, a world;

where she shall be the areola around which the affections of friends and family may cluster? Then endow your child with the priceless boon of education, and its genial influence will be seen in the flash of intelligence that beams in her eye, and the flush of modesty that mantles her cheek; its soft music will be heard in the sweet sound of her voice, nay, in the very nestling of her robes.

You who are scholars have your duties to perform in acquiring an education, without industry there is no excellence in learning. Earnest, continued application is the pre-requisite to scholarship. It is said that Alexander the Great, when a youth, asked his teacher if he could not complete his course of study without so much labor. The philosopher replied, "there is no royal road to learning. By the rich and the poor, the old and the young, it can be attained only through the all-efficient means, *work*. Idleness in this, as in all other fields, means defeat; nowhere in nature do you find inactivity the means of accomplishing noble ends—everywhere stagnation means decay and ruin. Water too long stagnant exhales stench and miasmata; air that does not circulate becomes pregnant with poisonous gasses; so the mind that is ever inactive soon becomes more or less sordid and corrupt. The development of mind is not the work of a day or a year, but it is the result of long-tried and unflinching industry. The sturdy oak that springs from a little acorn, grows through years and years until it assumes gigantic proportions. For a hundred seasons it sheds its green robes to battle with winters storms, while the cold blast of the North whistles through its unprotected boughs, until finally it towers above its neighbors the prince of trees and the pride of the forest.

Do you have to contend with poverty and obstacles thrown in your way by your fellow man? Such has been the experience of the most useful men that ever lived. These difficulties that you have to surmount only give you opportunities for showing your manhood. Show me the youth who has but ordinary capacity with extraordinary diligence and a good purpose in view, and I will show you a man whose fortune is made. The mind that is prone to greatness, like the waters that flow from the great central plain of North America toward the oceans that wash our shores, is bound to reach its destination. Geologist tell us that in ages long since passed, volcanoes heaved mountain masses in the pathways of those waters, but gradually and steadily they rose, spreading out into beautiful lakes, shedding their mitigating influence on the surrounding country, and inviting upon their placid bosoms the ships of commerce for coming ages, until finally they scaled the cyclopean walls, and, in their seaward course, went bounding down the opposite declivities in beautiful falls and cataracts, laughing at the thunder and smoke of the fiery element that dared dispute their passage. Saul could persecute David to the mountain fastnesses around Jerusalem, but this persecution only gave the young hero opportunities for exhibiting those feats of valor and endurance which proved him to be a king and soldier, and which won for him a place in the hearts of his countrymen and on the throne of Judea.

The prison walls of England could confine the body of Bunyan, but they

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