

MASTERLY ADDRESS MADE BY THE HON. B. D. CARTER

SOLICITOR OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT WAS ORATOR AT THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF THE BARNWELL HIGH SCHOOL THURSDAY EVENING.

(The following is in substance the address of, B. D. Carter, Solicitor of the 2nd Judicial Circuit, delivered at the graduating exercises of the Barnwell High School on the night of May 29, with no attempt, however, to use exact phraseology.)

After some introductory remarks and expression of appreciation for the honor and privilege accorded, he said in substance:

"The term education has a significant but a very broad meaning, and it is in its broadest sense to which I would most especially direct your attention tonight. I would first remind you of the personal blessings and benefits imparted to the fortunate one who acquires it, and as well to the country of his abode, from a monetary viewpoint. But the second and more important thought I would impress upon you is education in its relation to good citizenship.

"While the resultant blessings of an educated citizenship are self-evident and indelibly impressed upon the minds of all, yet the advocacy of a comprehensive educational policy of ten times arouses discussion at least

when the question of financing it arises.

"All fathers and mothers very naturally have a deep interest and ambition for the welfare and achievements of their children, more especially the boy; but however lofty the ideal craved for that boy's ultimate career, and whatever may be the station in life of parents, their first thought and consideration is that he may be prepared to earn a living, and even before the boy himself is capable of mature thought his mind naturally turns toward the matter of money-making if it turns toward anything. This is neither strange nor wrong, because the human body must be sustained and whenever you see a fellow who is earning no money by his own efforts you may safely conclude he is spending that which was earned by the honest toil of some one else. And too often we see today conspicuous examples of this kind.

"It is a time worn saying that some of our most successful business men and conspicuous figures in the financial world are or were illiterates, which is correct often time. This argument is too often resorted to, however, by the boy who is desirous of leaving school at an early age and by the parents who look at everything in the narrowest scope. But, has it ever occurred to you, how many millions of the unlearned about whom we have never heard have lived and died as miserable failures? A study of the figures offered by our foremost educators best answer such questions. For instance, it has been ascertained that of the men who have amassed great fortunes in our country, the college trained men outnumber the non-college trained by two hundred seventy seven times; that the average citizen with a high school education has about twenty times the chance of the elementary trained of attaining distinguished prominence; that the college trained man has about ten times the chance of the elementary trained and more than eight hundred times the chance of the man wholly devoid of school training. And we find also that about one out of every forty college graduates has attained sufficient prominence in this country to be ranked among conspicuous Americans, while only about one out of every thousand and non-graduates has attained such distinction.

"Considerable time might be consumed in relating facts and citing similar illustrations from which the conclusion to be drawn is irresistible—that there undoubtedly exists a close causal relation between education and wealth; that it is a fundamental principle among men and nations, generally speaking, and with but few exceptions, that earning capacity is based on an education, that knowledge is not merely power but it is money.

"However, you might ask the question, the expenditure of the vast sum of money annually appropriated by our State for education a good financial investment for our country as a whole?

"Well, you may not be able to tell me, and say that the established facts have revealed that our prosperity is dependent on the prosperity of the average man with whom he is brought into business contact. Then, if the people of the people of any community are poor every individual, every farmer, every manufacturing enterprise and every industry in that community will feel and respond to the unstable down-pulling power of their backwardness. In fact, every man who, through lack of training or by reason of any other hindering cause is producing less than he should by reason of his inefficiency, is making every other man in that community poorer. Yes, the figures of record will show that a nation is as great as it is educated; that, regardless of natural resources, wherever there is to be found adequate provision for education, there is likewise to be found successful governments, great industrial efficiency and great national wealth. And why? Because the development of natural resources and the mobilization of a country's assets is dependent upon the trained mind and the leadership of such men as grow up with an educated citizenship.

"Thus, we cannot escape the conclusion that, even if the main objective of an educated citizenship is to be weighed and measured in the medium of dollars and cents, even then the moving consideration more than warrants the effort on the part of every boy and every girl of this land to acquire not only an elementary or high school education, but a full college course; and likewise more than warrants the action on the part of our

States in their most liberal contribution towards the achievement of that end. Do not misunderstand, however. I do not mean that our people or legislative bodies should be given a license to appropriate money to the point of waste and to the extent of encouraging extravagance on the part of those who are intrusted with the expenditure thereof. But I do mean to say that appropriating money for this purpose within reasonable bounds, with proper safe-guards thrown about its expenditure—when expended in a business-like manner—is a good financial investment for our country as a whole.

"And now, as to the second and most important thought I would impress upon you tonight—education in its relation to good citizenship.


"Brief review of our country's recent history reveals a period of progressiveness gratifying to us all. With the development of our wonderful educational system, the establishment of our hundreds of colleges and great universities, from which has sprung the master minds of finance and captains of industry, with all our educative forces in action and our great natural resources at their command, we have seen commercial progress and an accumulation of wealth unparalleled in history. Our commercial growth and prosperity have been commensurate with the advancing strides in education, and generally speaking we are blessed with an enlightened citizenship. But, my friends, the regrettable fact about it all is that CRIME has kept pace with the advance of our educative forces and commensurate with our commercial growth and prosperity. Notwithstanding our enormous wealth and all of our greatness and glory, we are forced to acknowledge that behind our boasted institutions of government we are fostering wickedness and lawlessness almost inconceivable to the human mind a fact worthy of thought and serious consideration of all right thinking people and one which will eventually prove a test of the strength and wisdom of American citizenship.

"We all know that sin and crime grow best beneath the shadow of ignorance; that where ignorance reigns supreme the germs of vice and wickedness are to be found in most abundance; that while the light of education tends to expel the shadows cast by ignorance, history teaches us that unless each study has for its chief end and aim the strengthening of lofty ideals, moral uprightness and sterling character, the school or institution which teaches and imparts the knowledge has lost its bearing and sees not the mark at which it aims. Then, while the purposes of our schools and colleges are many, I submit that the real end of all education is good citizenship. For the study and mastering of all the texts, arts and sciences are but a means intended to reach the applications of principles to human life and, in the last analysis, the life of every man must be measured by his contributions to society, which means his worth as a citizen.

"Under the laws of our country the right of citizenship may be vested in two ways, as we all know, but there is but one way we may prove our worthiness of the right vested, and that is by answering to the call of responsibility and performing the duties which that position demands. I do not mean to say that those who are always ready to give up have a higher citizenship than those who are prepared to stand up for their rights. I shall not speak against anything that tends to promote and elevate our civil and moral standards, whose traditional tendency is adverse to lead out of harmony with the principles of our democratic form of government and American ideals. And the recognized fact too is that this class is not confined to the unlearned but include, as well some of the noble highly trained who afford some of our most conspicuous examples of notorious criminals.

"From what cause does this condition exist? Is there anything radically wrong with our educational institutions? Is there anything wrong with our educational system or in our methods of instruction? In so far as the courses of study relate to scholarship, I say no, but that it may be traced to the teaching and study—or rather to the lack of teaching and study which is not to be found incorporated in the curriculum of any school or institution, is not to be found between the covers of any text book, but is ever present in the mind of the American citizen who is worthy of his citizenship. And I mean by this the teaching of right and wrong, regard for the rights of others, obedience to and respect for law, love of country, loyalty to government and reverence for the flag which guarantees to us freedom of thought and action in times of peace and protects and shields us against all perils in times of war.

"Thus we see, notwithstanding all of our wonderful achievements for which we have a just pride, there



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still lies before us a broad field for labor. And that the boys and girls, the youth of our land, may bear the call and respond to the echo before it is too late, their minds must be trained and developed, but not only as scholars in literature, in the arts and sciences, but in the principles and knowledge of all that pertains to our moral uprightness, in the growth and developing of a law-abiding, liberty-loving, contented and happy people.

"While the task of impressing these principles upon the minds of our children rests heavily upon the shoulders of our teachers in the class room, the duty rests with equal weight upon the parents in the home. Yes, this teaching must begin at the knees of father and mother, because home life and parental training are all-powerful formative agencies in character building—for when the mind is in its embryonic stage the power of intellectual assimilation is most perfect and the ability to retain impressions greatest. We would remember that the initial stamp of right or wrong begotten of the teaching and social environment in which it was engendered holds it ever after true to its ideal. Then, God forbid that we fathers and mothers should ever, by neglect, lack of interest or by example, sow seeds of destruction about the foundation stone upon which rests the future manhood and womanhood of our country.

"And now, a word to you young ladies and young gentlemen of the graduating class, personally. Tonight belongs to you one of the happiest events in your lives—Commencement. But which does not mean the same to you as the term conveyed in the former years of your happy childhood, but which marks the end of the first link and the beginning of the second in life's great chain. Guided by the skilled and patient hand of faith and kind teachers and encouraged by the wise counsel and sympathetic advice of devoted fathers and mothers for these many years, all to the end that you may be the better prepared to cope with your competitors in life's battles. You may have been thus rewarded and I expect, for none that these exercises tonight will not bring to an end the educational career of either of you, but that you all may have the privilege and advantages of a full college course.

"But whether or not this night brings to an end your academic training, I would impress upon you the fact that the time I mean at hand when you shall be expected to lay aside all childish trappings and discard all frivolities and assume the responsibilities of real men and women. You are among the more fortunate ones and since you are, if you would prove yourselves worthy of the vested right of citizenship in this great and free country, permit me to say to you as a closing word: Have due respect for old age, all humanity, however humble it may be; never be too proud or ashamed to be seen in old clothes doing honest though menial work; be not comforted by the discomforts of others; be careful in your criticisms and liberal in your praise; choose your friends from those who would bring out the very best there is in you and hold to them to an end but not as a means, be ever ready to build up but never to tear down and destroy; yield not to the evils and temptations that only gratify selfish and insatiable desires, but ever stand ready, willing and respond to the call of duty wherever and whenever the call may come. I congratulate you upon the completion of your work in this school and wish for you unbounded success in all of your undertakings and that you may grow into noble men and women—that your town, county and State may be proud to claim you as their own."



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