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SAVE THE COMMON-SCHOOLS

A SERIOUS SITUATION

The resignation of teachers, both men and women, is epidemic the whole country over. Here and there the whole corps resigns, the schools close in the middle of the year, and the children are turned adrift—usually in the country regions. A third or a half of the corps resigns and the school limps along on one foot. Stories of this sort are common in North Carolina, and in every other state of the Union.

The explanation is simple: the teachers cannot live on their salaries and they flee for their lives into other callings that pay better. It is Hobson's choice. It's Take it off or knock it off, as the children say in mumble-the-peg. The teachers are taking it off.

Every calling pays better in these days of war demands for workers. And the teachers are fleeing because of bread and butter necessity—in this and every other state.

The situation is serious, and so our State Department of Public Instruction is co-operating with the various educational bodies in a campaign for better salaries and better living conditions for our common-school teachers.

Bad Enough Before

The money rewards of teachers in North Carolina when the war began are exhibited in the following table of average annual salaries constructed from figures given by Dr. V. I. Masters in his recent book *The Country Church* in the South; by M. L. Shipman in the 1915 Report of the State Labor Commissioner; and by Dr. J. Y. Joyner in the 1913-14 Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The average annual salaries are for white preachers in the South outside of cities having 25,000 inhabitants in 1906; for white common-school teachers in North Carolina, in 1913-14, and for wage earners of both races in the State in 1915, supposing that they were steadily at work throughout the year.

Public school teachers, white, rural	\$235
Public school teachers, white, city	454
Baptist preachers, white,	473
Methodist preachers, white	681
Presbyterian preachers, white	858
Automobile mechanics	469
Wood-workers	479
Blacksmiths	588
Cabinet makers	601
Carpenters	676
Engineers	789
Painters	829
Moulders	861
Electricians	939
Mechanics	961
Boiler makers	1074
Stone cutters	1095
Plasterers	1293
Brickmasons	1317
Contractors	1330
Plumbers	1408

Worse Now

During the first two years of the war, the average annual pay of our white teachers in the country was increased less than 5 per cent, and that of white city teachers less than 3 per cent. These pitiful increases average \$10.35 for the year in the first instance and \$12.70 in the second.

On the other hand the cost of living has more than doubled,—in many items of food, fuel and clothing, it has more than tripled. Which is to say, the teacher's dollar now buys from a third to a half as much as it would buy in 1914. It is exactly like cutting down the teacher's salary a half or two-thirds. Purchasing power considered, the average salary of our white public school teachers is not \$296 a year but \$148 or less.

They cannot stand it and keep soul and body together. Something must be done and quickly done or our schools will be dismantled in another six months. I love to teach, said one of them the other day, but I can't teach when continually bully-ragged by debts and bill-collectors. I've got to do something else in order to live. And she did. She's only one of many thousands in this and every other state.

It's a Local Problem

In North Carolina the counties and communities put down \$9 for every \$1 that comes out of the State treasury for common-school education; or so on an

average. Saving the schools is therefore a matter of local interest and pride, and of local willingness to bear school tax burdens,—new burdens or heavier burdens for the sake of the children.

If Alleghany, the richest county in per capita farm wealth in North Carolina, has poorer schools than Dare, our poorest county in such properties, then it is because of local unwillingness to bear tax burdens for school purposes. These two counties, by way of illustration. The same thing is, of course, true of other counties.

Our point is, that it is not a problem of state administration but of local tax levies, or mainly so. Wherefore the wisdom of Superintendent Joyner's letter to the public about ways and means of meeting this war-time emergency in our schools.

It's Go On or Go Under

What Lloyd George has just said to England, we urge upon the school communities of North Carolina. It's Go on or go under.

Barring certain counties—a score or so, some of them the richest in the state—North Carolina has done well in voting money for school support. Dare in particular: every school district in that county now levies [extra taxes for school] support.

We have done well but we must do better for our children's sake. We must indeed Go on or go under.

How to Do It

Dr. J. Y. Joyner our State Superintendent of Public Instruction tells us how to do it as follows:

1. By voting special county-wide taxes for schools under Chapter 71 of the Public Laws of 1911 and by voting special township taxes for maintenance of township high schools under section 4113 of the public school law.

2. By increasing the number of special tax school districts and voting therein special taxes for the maintenance of the district schools under section 4115 of the public school law, and by increasing the special tax for schools in special tax districts heretofore established under said section, to a maximum of 50c on the \$100, and \$1.50 on the poll, and by raising the rates in special chartered city and town schools, to a maximum of \$1.00 on the \$100, as provided by the General Assembly of 1917.

3. By increasing the district funds by private subscription, public entertainments, providing wood free, etc.

4. By increasing the budget for salaries of teachers, etc., submitted by the county board of education for necessary expenses for a four months school for the year 1918, under Chapter 33 of the Public Laws of 1913, as subsequently amended by the General Assembly, and by increasing the special county levy by the county commissioners required thereunder for the necessary expenses of the four months term.

5. By the adoption at the November election of 1918 of the constitutional amendment making it mandatory upon the county commissioners to levy a special tax to supplement the regular county and state tax for schools sufficient to provide a minimum school term of six months instead of four months, in each county.

Whatever happens, whatever it may cost in money and sacrifice, says he, our schools must be maintained at full efficiency for the preparation of the present generation to fill the gaps made by the red hand of war in the ranks of our young men, for service at the front if the war continues, and for efficient service at home in civic and industrial life when such service will be needed worse than ever before.

OUR KENAN PROFESSORS

The first important step in the use of the recent bequest by Mrs. Robert W. Bingham (Mary Lily Kenan) to the University of North Carolina, was taken at the annual mid-winter meeting of the Board of Trustees yesterday by the appointment to Kenan Professorships of five members of the present faculty.

The men so honored are Dr. F. P. Venable, Dr. H. V. Wilson, Maj. William Cain, Dr. Edwin Greenlaw, and Dr. Wm. deB. MacNider. The choice

A TEST OF STATESMANSHIP

Edward K. Graham

Doubling School Support

Educationally the decade that follows war will be, I believe, the richest and most fruitful in the Nation's history. Here in the South, and in North Carolina especially, we need to keep heroically foremost in our public policy the determination not to slacken, but rather to quicken our educational activities during the war. England and France under war burdens incomparably greater than ours have doubled their educational budgets. It is clearly the inevitable policy of wisdom.

Our handling of our educational affairs in the next few years will furnish once more a test of our statesmanship and give once more a clear revelation of what relative place we give education in the things worth while in commonwealth building. The necessity of war economies will show what we value in terms of what we nourish and of what we sacrifice. If schools are the first public-service institutions closed for lack of fuel; if their terms are shortened as first steps in economy; if we cease building them and yet build other things; if they cannot compete with business for the services of the few good men and women they need—we shall know in concrete terms that in time of storm we feel that they are still the first to be cast overboard, and not, as we have claimed to believe, the basis of the democracy for which we are fighting.

No Sacrifice Too Great

No sacrifice is too great to make for the schools, and no patriotism is more genuinely productive than the patriotism whose faith in the schools is so deeply rooted that no public distraction or disaster is permitted to blight them as the source of all of our reconstructive power.

My great confidence in the future of the University is based on the extraordinary need for its present and future service, and on the spirit of intelligent sympathy and cooperation that have been shown by the people in the State at large and by the faculty, alumni, and students. The days ahead of us grow out of the days that are gone; but in every phase of human activity that a University touches they are new days with a new and broader horizon. They will test the capacity of the University for leadership, not only in terms of energy, efficiency, learning, and scholarship, but in terms of renewed vision, sympathy, and high devotion.

Out of this new opportunity to serve in a great and difficult way, and aided, as it wonderfully has been, by the understanding of the State, whose highest aspiration it seeks to express, I believe that this institution will come into a new and especial greatness.—Report to the Trustees, Jan. 22, 1918.

was made on the recommendation of the faculty, endorsed by the president. The minimum salary is \$3,500 a year.

Dr. F. P. Venable, Kenan Professor of Chemistry, is widely known throughout the country as an investigator, author and teacher. He has been President of the American Chemical Society and is now a member of the board of six chemists chosen by Secretary Lane to investigate chemical problems connected with the war. He is the author of numerous books, was for fourteen years president of the University, and has been for over twenty years a successful lecturer and teacher.

Dr. H. V. Wilson (Zoology) has been for many years an acknowledged leader in the University faculty, a stimulating teacher, devoted to scientific scholarship in all its relations, an untiring and productive investigator, highly honored by his fellow scholars in the nation.

Maj. William Cain (Mathematics) for twenty-eight years Professor of Mathematics and head of the department, during which time he has, as a teacher, investigator, and author won wide recognition in the general field of mathematics, and in his special field where his work is uniquely authoritative.

Dr. Edwin Greenlaw (English Literature.) Dr. Greenlaw has been a member of the faculty for only four years, but du-

DOUBLE SCHOOL TAXES

The first thing and biggest thing we are going to say in this issue of *The Progressive Farmer* is this—that our folks in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia ought absolutely to double their school taxes during the coming year.

It may be popular to say this, or it may be unpopular. All we know is that it is the truth, and that the man who doesn't agree with this statement will agree with it before a dozen years pass.

It is no use to say we can't afford it. With cotton around 30 cents a pound and tobacco and peanuts selling at corresponding figures, it is folly to say that we can't do more for our schools than we did when cotton was 6 to 10 cents a pound and other crop-prices in keeping with these. And we ought to be ashamed of ourselves if we don't do more. The time has come when any man ought to be ashamed when he leaves home if he can't say he lives in a local tax school district—and one in which the tax is adequate. Too many districts are levying three mills when they ought to levy nine.

It's Dollars for Life

To pay a school tax is to swap dollars for life, and God shrivels the soul and blights the future of any community where the people think more of saving a little money than they do of providing life and life more abundantly for the men and women of tomorrow. We of the South have always accused our Northern friends of loving money, but we have got

to face the fact that when it comes to choosing between saving money and buying knowledge for his children the Yankee everlastingly puts us to shame.

Look at the Facts

Look at the facts. The North Atlantic States spend \$50.55 per year on schools per child; the South Atlantic States \$18.91—not 40 per cent as much. The North Central states spend \$44.15 per child; the South Central States \$19.01—not half as much. North Dakota, a rural State, is spending \$64 a year per child; wild Idaho \$55, and even Mormon Utah \$52, while Virginia spends \$19, North Carolina only \$12, South Carolina only \$11, and Georgia \$13. Nor can we say we are doing as well in proportion to wealth, for while North Dakota spends on schools 44 cents a year for each \$100 of her wealth, Idaho 49, and Utah 51, Virginia and North Carolina spend only 28 cents a year per \$100 of wealth, South Carolina 27 cents, and Georgia 29.

The Carolinas, Virginia and Georgia therefore might double the amount they are spending for schools and even then not spend as much as some other States are spending.

Let us now highly resolve that we will sanctify the greater prosperity God has given us by giving twice as much from it for unfolding the powers of the children He has given us and for furthering the eternal purpose of Him who said: "I am come that ye might have life and life more abundantly."—Clarence Poe.

ring this comparatively brief time he has made notable contributions to the development of the University through a vigorous, scholarly and continuing interest in every side of its life: as administrative head of the English department, as editor of *Studies in Philology*, and an interested and an inspiring teacher, as a sympathetic interpreter of the University spirit in contemporary affairs.

Dr. Wm. deB. MacNider (Pharmacology) is a representative of the younger faculty group recognized by his colleagues for his completely devoted and inspiring service to his profession. As an original and unremitting investigator he has achieved distinguished recognition in the country at large as one of the most productive men in his field.

SCHOOL SUPERVISION PAYS

Mr. L. C. Brogden, State Supervisor of Elementary Schools, spoke to the North Carolina Club last night on County School Supervisors. Mr. Brogden thoroughly convinced the Club that the fundamental need of common-school education in North Carolina is more intensive supervision by competent supervisors, especially in the country districts.

At present a county school superintendent in this state has the task of supervising, on an average, 120 teachers in 78 schools widely scattered over 487 square miles, and only 117 days in which to make his round of visits. He visits each school once a year on an average, and the length of his visit averages two hours! All of which means that country school supervision is clearly inadequate. And because this is so the country child gets a minimum advantage out of even the small amount of money that is now being expended for his education. The rural school population is four-fifths of our total school population which makes adequate school supervision a state-wide and not a local concern merely.

City and Country

A survey of 7 typical counties in 1916 showed that the city schools in those counties were far more adequately supervised than the rural schools. The seven county superintendents had on the average 15 times as many schools and twice as many teachers scattered over an area 80 times as large as the city superintendents in those counties. The cities employed 19 supervisors while the counties had none, and the country teachers, not being so well trained, needed supervision far more than the city teachers. The cities were spending for supervision 14 cents out of each dollar of school fund while the counties were spending only 2 1-2 cents for the same purpose. Manifestly the country teacher and the country child are neglected. The rural teacher who teaches seven grades needs the aid of

a supervisor far more than the city teacher with one grade.

Rural supervision in North Carolina was begun in 1911 and today 13 counties employ supervisors. These supervisors are devoting their entire time to increasing the efficiency of the teachers; making rural schools minister more directly to the every-day needs of country children; making the schools meet more adequately the cultural and recreational needs and interests of the children; and making country schools effective community centers.

Where We Stand

Forty states of the Union employ assistant county superintendents, the number varying from one in one or more states to 500 district supervisors in Ohio. In these 40 states, 18 out of each 100 counties have assistant superintendents or supervisors, while North Carolina has only 13—or 5 fewer per 100 counties.

There is an imperative need for at least one rural supervisor in each county and most counties could well afford several. Wake has two. The property we possess is sufficiently adequate to raise the funds necessary to employ them. The benefits are sure, for the worth of supervisors has been proved wherever they have been employed.

WILSON DOES IT

"Coon's way" is one of the popular characterizations of that picturesque insurgent, Professor Charles L. Coon, who presides over the whole Wilson county and city schools and runs them in Coon's Way.

The votary of the Wilson school champion will say "it's Coon's way" when Professor Coon doesn't please her and Coon's way will be pleaded in bar of anger when the Wilson man says things that others dare not say. Coon's way has become a proverb and Wilson has been segregated into a district which is now known as Coondom.

It isn't half a bad place in which to live. Within a few days Coon's way has become a winning way. January 18 the county voted a local tax of thirty cents, making all of the 48 school districts local tax instead of 18. This will give Wilson a uniform term of seven months and to those who teach the schools fairly good salaries.

That is county Wilson. Town Wilson seeing old rus distend herself voted \$150,000 in bonds for schools. This is the latest from Coondom. It is Coon's way with substance.

The story is passed along and presented in lieu of weekly comment on the school teacher pauper. If every county in North Carolina will do something like it, the burden of writing into fundamental law the six months' school will be lessened and North Carolina individual will be one month ahead of North Carolina corporate. Of all Coon's ways, this is preeminently the most winning, and that's not discounting any of the many.—State Journal.