

ABOUT THE TEACHER-OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

(M. L. JOHN, Laurinburg, N. C.)

This question seems to be taken most seriously by the National Education Association and allied organizations and taken as an assault upon teacher freedom, teacher rights,—even upon teaching. The oath they so bitterly oppose, and damn, is none other than the oath—in so far as the United States is concerned—that the President must and does take, followed by those relating to performance of his official duties. Every governor in the history of the country since the United States came formally into existence, has had to take the oath of allegiance to his government—the United States and his own state.

And so has every state and county official had to take the oath of allegiance before being allowed to occupy even the smallest of official positions. Every state superintendent and every county superintendent of schools in the country has had to take this oath.

Every voter in North Carolina has to take the oath of allegiance as a prerequisite to registering so he can vote in elections under our state law.

The schools teach, very properly, that it is a civic duty to vote in elections. That is, if the teacher is not "red," or pink or yellow. And if the teacher is any of the colors mentioned, the sooner that teacher is required to take the oath of allegiance the better, though the best thing would be a pink slip telling that teacher to call at the office and get what is due on salary, as his services are no longer needed.

Wow. If I were of sufficient prominence for it to make any difference with those opposition teachers who are so obsessed with their importance and their immunity from the rules of common sense and decency, there would be a howl directed towards me; but being only an attorney and one time teacher and county superintendent of schools, nothing will be heard because of anything I may say herein.

It is simple logic and common sense that the workers in any organization should give loyalty to the institution, be it educational, industrial or what not. And if they are workers (teachers) in the public state-supported schools, they should give loyalty to the State. Nobody with a grain of common sense would deny that, even if this is "argumentum ad hominem."

"The oath is nothing more or less than to 'Support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution and Laws of the State (of North Carolina) not inconsistent therewith.' This oath has been taken, by every official of the State from the Governor down to township constable, and must be taken by all who hereafter occupy those positions, unless the law shall be changed. We know of no teachers in our State common schools who oppose taking this oath; but are informed that some of the higher-ups assume they are too high-up intellectually to submit to such degradation and humiliation and slavery of mind as to take such oath.

Well, if there is no reason why they should not, then there is no argument against it. If they have what they think is any reason why they should not take it, then that is abundant reason why they should have to take it.

If they object, one can only think they must be at least tinged with 'red' or must be actually 'yellow.' They want to work for the State, and enjoy living on the tax payers of the country, and yet they are unwilling to state seriously and back it up with a solemn oath that they are loyal to the institution that employs them, and enables them to earn a living. No sane business man would willingly employ people known to be disloyal to the business; and, if other workers should be available, the relation of employer and employee would not remain longer than necessary to bring about a discharge, in a reasonable and business like manner.

"Oh, there you go," as Gracie Allen would say, "Ye gods! 'Discharge a teacher for disloyalty? Discharge a teacher for what he or she teaches in school? Never while there is a spark of liberty left. Never, never, never.'"

Well let's see about that. You are on the school board and you believe with Solomon that a birch switch is a very good dose for a disobedient boy who will not respond to any other reasoning, and you give your boy a twiggling. Next day at school his teacher teaches him that no one is ever bad, only wrongly environed, and no one should ever use force in what should be moral suasion, and that any parent who does so is ignorant and tyrannical, and disobedient to the laws of God and humanity. What would your reaction be? But she is sacrosanct, being a teacher, though you

happen to know that she is little above being addepleted, regardless of her position in the school. Now what?

Of course this is a delicate situation and one that must be handled with utmost prudence and circumspection, if one is not to hurt either the school or the pupil. It is not within my province at this time, so I let that go.

And then little Jane comes home and says that her teacher says that people ought to discard clothing and that all the little girls of the school should learn that the human body is sacred and that no part thereof is lewd or can be made lewd or obscene and that exposure of all the body is the only correct way of living. And furthermore, this thing of one man and woman living together

as husband and wife indefinitely, is all foolishness and people should learn from nature and the animals how to live together in perfect freedom,—with free love.

Well, what would you do and say if your boy and girl came home with such stuff?

Shall little Tommy, who never was right bright, and little Lucy, who was always foolish, simply because they grow up and can write A. B. after their names, maybe M. A., and possibly even Ph. D., be allowed to hold themselves sacrosanct and immune from any restrictions because they are now installed as teachers in the village school? Not even be required to promise loyalty or decency?

Well, hardly.

Nineteen states by law now require the teacher loyalty oath, Massachusetts being the last to enact such a law.

VISIT OF N. C. PRESS ASSOCIATION TO BOSTON IN 1883

(By CAPT. S. A. ASHE)

Our exhibit at the Atlanta Exposition was the first great effort made by this State to display its progress and resources. Dabney in 1881 was employed as chief of the Experimental Station and his coming was apace with the efforts of our progressive people. Our Department of Agriculture under McGhee had gone forward in the good work and the Assembly was in sympathy. It had established an Experimental Station and the State was ahead of all other states but one or two in its aims and purposes.

In 1883 Governor Jarvis strongly advocated our having an exhibit at the International Exposition at Boston, and it was decided that this should be done. Jarvis was invited to make the opening address. When he advised me of the invitation, I said, "Certainly, you must go." "Oh, no," he said, "I can't. I have not the money." I urged, saying that no other Southern Governor had been offered such an opportunity. It was not to be declined; that he must borrow the money. Eventually I persuaded him. Somewhat later he ran over the speech he had in mind to make, to me. I highly approved of it.

Our State Press Association had agreed to hold its annual meeting at this time at the Boston Exposition. I, as a member, found myself journeying toward Boston along with my associates. We went from Norfolk by sea and Henry London and I suffered greatly from seasickness, otherwise it was a delightful trip.

In Boston we were treated with much consideration. It was indeed a great exposition, but the welcome accorded to the Press to our minds eclipsed the wonders of the Exposition. A supper was given us by the city authorities and the next day carriages, having been provided for all members, we were driven for six hours from one historic point to another.

At the hour appointed on the second day, an officer of the State Government made an admirable address of welcome representing the Governor of the State. Then Governor Jarvis was called on and he made that excellent speech which he had carefully prepared. President Henry A. London of the North Carolina Press Association responded on behalf of his fraternity. Mayor Palmer spoke for the City of Boston, dwelling on the magnitude and value of the resources of North Carolina. Mr. Edward Atkinson pointed out the immense variety of climate and products to be found within the compass of the Southern State. Pleasing, eloquent and witty speeches followed, by Captain Ashe of Raleigh, Hon. George A. Marden, Captain Lamb of Elizabeth City, N. C., Curtis Guild of the Commercial Bulletin, William B. Smart of the Post, Col. Charles H. Taylor of the Globe, F. W. Griffin, Secretary of the American Exposition, Stephen O'Meara of the Journal, Rev. Minot J. Savage of the Church of the Trinity, Godfrey Morse of the Common Council, E. C. Carrigan of the Board of Education, John Oxtan of the Herald, D. B. Cashman, Superintendent of Water Inspection, Col. Polk, of Raleigh, N. C., and Col. Pardee, of the American Exposition. Letters were read by Secretary E. J. Griffiths of the Associated Press from Governor Butler, Hon. George D. Robinson, ex-Governor John D. Long and Wendell Phillips, in which regret was expressed at inability to be present.

After this formal reception our Press Association divided itself into small parties to visit particular points and industries. Major Hall, of Fayetteville, some others and I went to Lynn to see the shoe factory. It was a delightful trip and experience. I inquired what had become of the sailors of Salem and other fishing ports, who in the winter made shoes on shore; and was told that

all of that was out of date and they had moved out to Ohio and the west.

Many of the visiting members of the press went into various parts of the State and were much interested. I visited the old graveyard in Boston and saw the tombs of the ancestors of some of our North Carolina patriots of my acquaintance. I was astonished at the sentiment the Boston people had treasured; their preservations of the memorials of the past, and I was awakened to their kindness and politeness to strangers—all at variance with the ideas I had formed of them.

One day the Association was to visit the schools and then call on the Governor, Ben Butler, of Civil War notoriety. Mr. Joseph Ballister, who lived at Newton but was employed in the city, saying that he knew I did not care to meet Ben Butler, asked me to go with him and see the town. We went to Faneuil Hall, to the Meeting House, the old capitol and some of the other famous places, among them Harvard and Vassar House where Longfellow had resided, and Washington had his headquarters, built by the Vassar family, one of whom had been the leader in making the settlement of the Cape Fear in 1663.

Shortly before our departure for Boston, Mr. Walter Hines Page came to Raleigh, and began the publication of a weekly newspaper. Mr. Page, a native of Wake county, had finished his education at Berlin in Germany. Coming to America he had been the editor of the Atlantic Magazine at Boston. After some years he returned to Raleigh. Here his arrival was met with pleasure. What he hoped for was culture and literary excellence. We needed just the aid he was equipped to give the State. When in Boston the Guilles, a firm publishing the Financial Weekly at Boston, gave a dinner to our Press Association. It was a costly entertainment. Many distinguished guests attended. Before entering the dining rooms I was with the two Mr. Guilles in their private room, and one of them spoke of Mr. Page, his friend, who had gone to North Carolina to establish a paper and take over the State. He remarked that Mr. Page had mentioned that there was already a paper where he was to locate, but he would soon run it out, etc. Then presently he inquired in what town I resided. I replied, "Raleigh." He was somewhat taken back but said he hoped Mr. Page would not do me any damage. I said, "He is publishing a local paper—a literary newspaper. There is no conflict, for mine is a daily newspaper." Having divulged Mr. Page's avowed purpose in locating at Raleigh, Mr. Guilles was much troubled.

A reception was held from half past five to six o'clock preceding the dinner and then the company numbering sixty in all marched into the large dining hall. It was the same hall where a week earlier the Lord Chief Justice of England had been entertained by the State Authorities. That in itself was a pleasure. The Guilles brothers who took us in charge and gave us that banquet were men of the highest character and later one of them became Governor of Massachusetts. At dinner I sat with the older brother and it was the finest entertainment I ever attended.

After Governor Jarvis had spoken in the Hall, the Organized Union Army Representative, similar to our U. C. V., invited him to take supper with them, say about fifty members attending. Jarvis accepted, and they called on him to make a speech. He did as requested. It appealed to their hearts. They at once talked of Jarvis for Vice-President; and then a few days later when there was a State Union Army meeting for Connecticut, at Hartford, they took Jarvis and carried him down there and presented him to the

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