

The Statement embodies the statistics of the public schools in this township for the year now closing. The chief hinderances to their success are, in part, defects in organization, imperfection of text books, want of scientific apparatus for illustrating the subjects of study, the bad location and ill construction of school houses, the lack of comfort, convenience, and attractiveness in their furniture, fixtures, and surroundings, and, with a few noble exceptions, the apathy of parents, trustees, and the entire community upon the subject of common school education. These evils all demand the most effectual means for their removal, and when that is accomplished, the impulse given to the development of mind will be incalculable. But great as these hinderances are, they sink into insignificance when compared with that of the incompetence of teachers.

Let a district secure for a series of years that inestimable blessing, a *real teacher*, a man or woman *born to teach*, one possessing that structure and discipline of mind, those tastes and habits, and that delight in the employment, which make the teacher's mind a magnet, by which to draw out and vitalize the minds of the pupils; and, whatever that district was at first, whatever its school house, its apparatus, fixtures, or books, whatever the apathy, ignorance, or stupidity of trustees, parents, or superintendent, such a teacher will make all things new. He will create such an intelligent interest in the subject of education, that the old, ill located, misshapen school house, without fixtures, apparatus, or library, with its naked walls, its rickety seats without backs, and begrimed and mutilated desks, floors, and windows, will give place, as by magic, to an edifice designed, located, finished, furnished, and surrounded as befits its high vocation.

Such teachers can be had. In this, as in everything else, create the demand, and the supply will flow to it. But the true laborer is worthy of his hire, and he knows it, and will not disgrace himself and degrade his calling by working for half price.

Who but fools or lunatics trust bunglers to build their houses, make their clothes, or even shoe their horses? But when immortal mind is to be moulded, and its character cast for time and eternity, the services of the master workman are dispensed with, to make room for the awkward fumbings of a clumsy apprentice, because he will work cheap!

Who can compute, in dollars and cents, the value of the real teacher to those developed by his training! Of course no trustees will employ such a teacher, unless they appreciate his worth. And here lies the great practical question: by what means shall the views of the community upon the subject of education become so enlarged as to create an imperative demand for educators of a high order.

A well planned system of free schools throughout the state would, under a wise and energetic supervision, accomplish more for the cause of common school education, in its influence upon all classes in this respect, than all other instrumentalities combined.

With few exceptions, this entire community would heartily cooperate in any wise system of measures to accomplish such a result. Free thought, free speech, a free press, a free government, a free gospel, and free schools rise and fall together, in indissoluble brotherhood; each member in turn pioneering the way, and beckoning onward every other.

Theodore D. Weld.