

**THE TEACHERS.** The teachers of the schools in southeastern Nebraska convene at Nebraska City, April 4th, 1901, and their association will remain in session three days. The officers are: W. A. Clark, president; Ruth Davis, secretary; A. R. Staller, treasurer; and the executive committee is composed of Allen C. Fling and C. C. Danforth. To the members of this important and useful association THE CONSERVATIVE extends a sincere and respectful welcome. The teachers of Nebraska's youth are potential in forming the ethical and intellectual character of the state. The government of the commonwealth for 1945, A. D., will be almost wholly managed by the school pupils and university students of this day.

The best citizens of Nebraska City ought to cheerfully extend their hospitality to the good men and women who are intrusted with the mental and moral development of young human beings. And THE CONSERVATIVE asks that every possible attention be given to these teachers during their sojourn in this town. Illustrative of the fact that this regard for teachers on the part of THE CONSERVATIVE is not new and not ephemeral, the ensuing excerpts from remarks made by its editor in September, 1871—thirty years ago—upon the opening and dedication of the State University at Lincoln, are placed in evidence:

"The office to which attaches, in a republican form of government, the greatest responsibilities is that of the parent. The greatest influence upon the republic is wielded from that position and wielded, too, by woman, enjoying alone the God-given right of the highest, gravest, and most holy office—MOTHER.

"The queens of England form not one-tenth so much the laws of that country direct, not one-tenth so much its industries and prosperities, mental and material, as do the mothers—our American queens—in molding the mental and moral character of their sons and daughters of the United States.

Next after this office in influence of enduring and self-perpetuating character, in dignity and grave responsibility, comes the office of the American teacher. His it is to labor during life in the diffusion of knowledge, the spread of intelligence among the people, who are the government. He who could for a generation stop the schools of this republic, close up the avenues to learning, and drive the teachers into banishment, would have effectually subverted the government of the people.

"The education—universal education—of Americans is the blood and breath

and the bone and sinew and soul of the republic. The office of those men and women whose duty it is to breathe the life of knowledge, the vitality of education, into a self-governing people of forty millions of souls is worthy of the highest consideration of every thinker in all this broad and beautiful land. The teacher makes his mental mark upon an individual pupil today: tomorrow that pupil, himself a teacher, re-writes on a hundred human minds the influence and character of that first instructor.

"In two generations, the ideas, the mental habits and characteristics of a single teacher in a primary school, will have seized upon and permeated a million of sentient beings. This result is inevitable. It is as certain that the intellectual and moral character of the teacher shall make its impress upon the mind of the pupil as that the sunlight shall write your correct image in the camera and make it your photograph. The office of teacher reaches forward into the remotest future, and, handling the viewless machinery of mind, forms governments and molds civilizations yet unborn.

"The architect plans and constructs temples and palaces in solid masonry and with iron and with wood rears aloft our public edifices—monuments to his own skill, and a reflex of the intellectuality of the age in which he lives. This beautiful and symmetrical building is his work. Long may it stand, usefully may it flourish for generations. We call his office one of gravity and responsibility yet it is only the grouping, mapping together, in form and true proportion, of such rough and perishable things as brick and mortar.

"But the teacher who within these walls plans the mental strength of the people, who maps here the young and vigorous intellect of this young and vigorous state, is the architect who carves out of individual minds, skilled in knowledge and adapted each to its place, the temples of good government and of civil and religious liberty. These edifices will crumble and their very dust be carried away by the winds. But the architecture of the mentality of the commonwealth, which here shall have been given solidity and symmetry, shall endure forever and ever. It will influence and ornament the ages to come, and finally become a part of the imperishable structures of the 'house not made with hands, which fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens.' The profession of the teacher is fraught with responsibilities and interwoven with duties of such dignity that it spans the valley and shadow of death as with

a bridge which crosses up to the judgment seat of God himself. Those who adopt it should be pure men and women, realizing the magnitude of the eternal responsibilities which it entails. Far-reaching as to the last mortal that shall be born upon the earth, high-aspiring as the pearly gates beyond the stars, the influence of the teacher is co-existent with mind itself.

"Two hundred and forty years before the Christian era Cato discoursed upon the exalted position of the teacher, and amid his manifold duties as censor of Rome 'took upon himself the office of schoolmaster to his own son, though he had a slave named Chilo who was a good grammarian and taught several other children.' But the noble Roman tells us that he did not choose that his son should be reprimanded by a slave or that he should be indebted to so mean a person for his education. He was therefore (says Plutarch) himself his preceptor in grammar and in law and wrote histories for him with his own hands, in large characters, that without stirring out of his father's house, he might gain a knowledge of the great actions of the ancient Romans and of the customs of his country.

"Surely we in the nineteenth century should be able to see, in our light, clearly the dignity of that office which Cato so revered and honored, by accepting, even in the dim light of the misty morning time of human knowledge, before yet the letters of the alphabet had begun their tireless labors of sowing thoughts broadcast up and down the mental fallow-fields of all the world. The sculptor who wakes from formless sleep in the solid marble the statue or exact image of the poet, the philosopher, or the statesman, attains fame, and such as Powers and Mills and Randolph Rogers among Americans we cherish with national pride. Their works stand pre-eminent among the adornments of the national capital, and there Columbus the discoverer, Washington the founder, Jackson the defender, Lincoln the protector breathe again in their marble counterfeits.

"The work of the statuary approximates what men call immortality more nearly than any other materialistic labor. Phidias, the Athenian sculptor, whose sublime conceptions were wrought in the ornaments of the Parthenon, and many of which are at this day preserved among the marbles of the British museum, achieved perhaps the most lasting fame of any of the ancient statuaries. He lived and executed its works more than two thousand years ago, and this is longevity even for marble men. But the American teacher, even in our common schools, is a sculptor whose works in

**The Dignity of Teaching.**

**Far Reaching.**

**Time.**

**Eternity.**

**Sculpture.**