

**THE LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,
AT BATH, MR. AUGUST,
1855, INCLUDING THE JOURNAL OF
PROCEEDINGS, AND A LIST OF THE
OFFICERS. 26TH ANNUAL MEETING**

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING.

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

BATH, ME., AUGUST 21, 1855.

THE Institute assembled at 11 o'clock, A. M., in the Universalist Church, and was called to order by the President, THOMAS SHERWIN, Esq., of Boston.

On motion of Nathan Metcalf, of Boston, Messrs. Newton and West, of Bath, were appointed a Committee to aid in seating the audience.

The President then addressed the Association, as follows:—

“Gentlemen of the American Institute of Instruction:—
We meet to-day in behalf of the most important subject that can occupy the human mind. It is a subject of vital interest in matters of legislation, and one which should be held most precious in the eyes of every parent, every true patriot, every sincere philanthropist, every Christian. Education is the basis of success in all material interests. It alone, in some form or other, enables man to provide for his physical wants and conveniences; it alone transforms him from a brute, possessed indeed of intellectual and moral powers yet undeveloped, into a being that embraces in his affections the whole animated creation, that makes the willing powers of

nature do his bidding, points the optic tube unerringly to the hitherto unseen planet, and with the eye of faith looks forward to a glorious immortality. Indeed, may we not say that the great aim and object of our present existence is education? It would be essential to the best interests of man, were this his only state of being; but in view of his future existence, its value becomes incalculable.

“For our own improvement, and for the promotion of the best interests of physical, intellectual, and moral culture, we are now assembled. The present is the twenty-sixth anniversary of this Institute, and, although we think we have done something for the cause to which we consecrate our efforts, much yet remains to be done. Are we all intellectually qualified to do our work in the best manner? Do we thoroughly comprehend the subjects which we profess to teach, or is our knowledge limited to a passable acquaintance with our text-books, and those perhaps replete with errors? Is our own education so comprehensive, and is our judgment so matured by observation and experience, that we can duly estimate the relative value of the different branches of learning, the bearing which they have upon each other, and the tendency which each has to develop the mind in fair and harmonious proportions? Are we really conversant with the curious and subtle mechanism of the human understanding and the human heart? Have we a just estimation of the paramount value which should be assigned to moral education? Are we really aware that each of us should be, in some measure, a teacher of the gospel; a quiet emissary of Him who said ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not’? Are we in our own private lives, and in all our relations with our pupils, what a good and intelligent parent would have his children become? Have we that hold of the heart strings and purse strings of the community which is essential to the perfect performance of

our work? In short, are we all capable, are we all honest, are we all devoted to the sacred trust committed to our care?

“Unless we can return a favorable response to these and other questions of a similar import, our Institute, and we as individuals, have yet much work in prospect. The great business of education is a stern reality. It admits of no compromise with evil, no sacrifice of duty. It is sublime, boundless as the human capabilities. It by no means, however, excludes the amenities of life; on the contrary, the sunshine of joyousness should ever pervade the teacher's heart, and throw a halo of light over the scenes and occupations of duty; and even in the dark hours of weariness and of disappointment, the rainbow hues of hope should ever announce the passing away of the sombre cloud.

“One object of our meeting is, to cultivate social feelings among teachers and between ourselves and others who may sympathize with us. I am confident that, in this respect, some good will result from this re-union.

“Gentlemen of the Institute, and others here assembled, I welcome you to our anniversary, and I trust that the occasion will be one of improvement and of pleasure to us all.”

Rev. S. F. Dike, Superintendent of Schools in Bath, then said:—

“It gives me great pleasure to rise this morning, in behalf of the school committee and others connected with the cause of education, to welcome this Institute, for the first time, to the city of Bath. We live, it is true, on a ‘rock-bound coast;’ our soil is unproductive, but this may be a stimulus to enterprise and energy. Whether it be so in our case or not, it is not for me to say. We cordially open our homes and our hearts to those who have come among us, and we trust we shall make this a pleasant meeting to the members