

OBJECTIVES OF OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

College Founded to Train in Self-Control, Application, and Self-Reliance. --It is the boast of the present age that never before did men possess so great facilities for the acquirement of knowledge, or manifest so general an interest in education. Yet despite this vaunted progress, there exists an unparalleled spirit of insubordination and recklessness in the raising generation; mental and moral degeneracy are well-nigh universal.

Popular education does not remedy the evil. The lax discipline in many institutions of learning has nearly destroyed their usefulness, and in some cases rendered them a curse rather than a blessing. This fact has been seen and deplored, and earnest efforts have been made to remedy the defects in our educational system.

There is urgent need of schools in which the youth may be trained to habits of self-control, application, and self-reliance, or respect for superiors and reverence for God. With such training, we might hope to see the young prepared to honor their Creator and bless their fellow men.

It was to secure these objects that our own College at Battle Creek was founded. But those who endeavor to accomplish such a work, find that their undertaking is fraught with many and grave difficulties. The evil which underlies all others, and which often counteracts the efforts of the best instructors, is to be found in the home discipline.—Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 64.

To give students a knowledge of books merely is not the purpose of the institution. Such education can be obtained at any college in the land. I was shown that it is Satan's purpose to prevent the attainment of the very object for which the college was established. Hindered by his devices, its managers reason after the manner of the world and copy its plans and imitate its customs. But in thus doing, they will not meet the mind of the Spirit of God. . . .The character must receive proper discipline for its fullest and noblest development. The students should receive at college such training as will enable them to maintain a respectable, honest, virtuous standing in society, against the demoralizing influences which are corrupting the youth.--Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 22, 23.

To Separate Youth from Influence of the World. --One of the great objects to be secured in the establishment of the college was the separation of our youth from the spirit and influence of the world, from its customs, its follies, and its idolatry. The college was to build a barrier against the immorality of the present age, which makes the world as corrupt as in the days of Noah.-- Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 59, 60.

To Guard Against Corrupting Influences. --In our institutions of learning there was to be exerted an influence that would counteract the influence of the world, and give no encouragement to indulgence in appetite, in selfish gratification of the senses, in pride, ambition, love of dress and display, love of praise and flattery, and strife for high rewards and honor as a recompense for good scholarship. All this was to be discouraged in our schools.

It would be impossible to avoid these things, and yet send them to the public schools where they would daily be brought in contact with that which would contaminate their morals. All through the world there was so great a neglect of proper home training that the children found at the public schools, for the most part, were profligate and steeped in vice.

The work that we as a people were to do in this matter, was to establish a school, and do the work that Jesus Christ, from the pillar of cloud, had directed as the work of His people,--to train and educate our children and youth to regard the commandments of God. The manifested disregard of the world for the law of God was contaminating the morals of those who professed to be keeping the law of God. --Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 286.

For This Reason We Established Our Schools.--We are under solemn, sacred covenant to God to bring up our children, not for the world, not to put their hands into the hands of the world, but to love and fear God, and to keep His commandments. We are to instruct them to work intelligently in Christ's lines, to present a noble, elevated Christian character to those with whom they associate. For this reason our schools have been established, that youth and children may be so educated as to exert an influence for God in the world.

Then shall our schools become converted to the world, and follow its customs and fashions? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

When those who have reached the years of youth and manhood see no difference between our schools and the colleges of the world, and have no preference as to which they attend, though error is taught by precept and example in the schools of the world, then there is need of closely examining the reasons that lead to such a conclusion.

Our institutions of learning may swing into worldly conformity. Step by step they may advance to the world; but they are prisoners of hope, and God will correct and enlighten them, and bring them back to their upright position of distinction from the world.

I am watching with intense interest, hoping to see our schools thoroughly imbued with the spirit of true and undefiled religion. When the students are thus imbued, they will see that there is a great work to be done in the lines in which Christ worked, and the time they have given to amusements will be given up to doing earnest missionary work. They will endeavor to do good to all about them, to lift up souls that are bowed down in discouragement, and to enlighten those who are in the darkness of error. They will put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.--Fundamentals of Christian Education, pp. 289, 290.

Peculiar Character to be Maintained. --Professors and teachers should reflect upon the best means of maintaining the peculiar character of our college; all should highly esteem the privileges which we enjoy in having such a school and should faithfully sustain it and guard it from any breath of reproach.--Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 432.

If Religion Offends Let the Students Go Elsewhere. - - If morality and religion are to live in a school, it must be through a knowledge of God's word. Some may urge that if religious teaching is to be made prominent our schools will become unpopular; that those not of our faith will not patronize the college. Very well, then, let them go to other colleges, where they will find a system of education that suits their taste. --Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 25.

If Worldly Influences Bear Sway Sell the School and Start Another.-- This is the education so much needed at the present time. If a worldly influence is to bear sway in our school, then sell it out to worldlings and let them take the entire control; and those who have invested their means in that institution will establish another school, to be conducted, not upon the plan of popular schools, nor according to the desires of principal and teachers, but upon the plan which God has specified.

True Object to Fit Men for Service. --The true object of education is to fit men and women for service by developing and bring into active exercise all their faculties. The work at our colleges and training schools should be strengthened year by year, for in them our youth are to be prepared to go forth to serve the Lord as efficient laborers. The Lord calls upon the youth to enter our schools and quickly fit themselves for active work. Time is short. Workers for Christ are needed everywhere. Urgent inducements should be held out to those who ought now to be engaged in earnest effort for the Master.

Our schools have been established by the Lord; and if they are conducted in harmony with His purpose, the youth sent to them will be quickly prepared to engage in various branches of missionary work. Some will be trained to enter the field as missionary nurses, some as canvassers, some as evangelists, and some as gospel ministers. Some are to be prepared to take charge of the church schools, in which the children shall be taught the first principles of education. This is a very important work, demanding high ability and careful study.--Counsel to Teachers, p. 493.

Brought into Existence to Train Workers for God's Cause.--At our college young men should be educated in as careful and thorough a manner as possible that they may be prepared to labor for God. This was the object for which the institution was brought into existence. Our brethren abroad should feel an interest not only to sustain but to guard the college, that it may not be turned away from its design and be molded after other institutions of the kind. The religious interest should be constantly guarded. Time is drawing to a close. Eternity is near. The great harvest is to be gathered. What are we doing to prepare for this work?--Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 11, 12. (1882.)

Designed to Train Preachers.--The design of our college has been stated again and again, yet are so blinded by the god of this world that its real object is not understood. God designed that young men should there be drawn to Him, that they should there obtain a preparation to preach the gospel of Christ, to bring out of the exhaustless treasury of God's word things both new and old for the instruction and edification of the people. Teachers and professors should have a vivid sense of the perils of this time and the work that must be accomplished to prepare a people to stand in the day of God.--Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 12. (1882.)

Cultivated intellect is now needed in the cause of God, for novices cannot do the work acceptably. God has devised our college as an instrumentality for developing workers of whom He will not be ashamed. The height man may reach by proper culture has not hitherto been realized. We have among us more than an average of men of ability. If their talents were brought

into use, we should have twenty ministers where we now have one.--Testimonies, Vol. 4, p. 426. (1880.)

To Educate for Departments of Missionary Labor.--There is hard work to be done in dislodging error and false doctrine from the head, that Bible truth and Bible religion may find a place in the heart. It was as a means ordained of God to educate young men and women for the various departments of missionary labor that colleges were established among us.

It is God's will that they send forth not merely a few, but many laborers. But Satan, determined to overthrow this purpose, has often secured the very ones whom God would qualify for places of usefulness in His work. There are many who would work if urged into service, and who would save their souls by thus working. . . . We want men who will push the triumphs of the cross; men who will persevere under discouragements and privations; who will have the zeal and resolution and faith that are indispensable in the missionary field.--Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 390, 391. (1885)

A Distinct and Superior Work.--The teaching in our schools is not to be the same as in other colleges and seminaries. It is not to be of an inferior order; the knowledge essential to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God is to be made the all-important theme. The students are to be fitted to serve God, not only in this life, but in the future life. The Lord requires that our schools shall fit students for the kingdom to which they are bound. Thus they will be prepared to blend in the holy, happy harmony of the redeemed...--Counsel to Teachers, p. 539, 540.

To Prepare for the Crucial Hour of Decision.--The principles necessary for our youth to cultivate must be kept before them in their daily education, that when the decree shall go forth requiring all to worship the beast and his image, they may make the right decisions, and have strength to declare, without wavering, their confidence in the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, even at the very time when the law of God is made void by the religious world. Those who waver now and are tempted to follow in the wake of apostates who have departed from the faith, "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," will surely be found on the side of those who make void the law of God, unless they repent and plant their feet firmly upon the faith once delivered to the saints. . . . Prophecy and history should form a part of the studies in our schools, and all who accept positions as educators should prize more and more the revealed will of God. . . . What education can we give to the students in our schools that is so necessary as a knowledge of "What saith the Scripture"?--Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 525, 526.

A College Where the Bible Takes its Proper Place (Early Counsel).--When the Lord requires us to be distinct and peculiar, how can we crave popularity or seek to imitate the customs and practices of the world? God has declared His purpose to have one college in the land where the Bible shall have its proper place in the education of the youth. . . . It may seem that the teaching of God's word has but little effect on the minds and hearts of many students; but, if the teacher's work has been wrought in God, some lessons of divine truth will linger in the memory of the most careless. The Holy Spirit will water the seed sown, and often it will spring up after many days and bear fruit to the glory of God.

Satan is constantly seeking to divert the attention of the people from the Bible. The words of God to men, which should receive our first attention, are neglected for the utterances of human wisdom. How can He, who is infinite in power and wisdom, bear thus with the presumption and effrontery of men! . . .

In an age like ours, in which iniquity abounds and God's character and His law are alike regarded with contempt, special care must be taken to teach the youth to study, to reverence and obey the divine will as revealed to man. The fear of the Lord is fading from the minds of our youth because of their neglect of Bible study. . . . Never from cowardice or worldly policy let the word of God be placed in the background.--Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 26, 27.

Conversion of Souls Its Object. --God devised and established this college, [Battle Creek College] designing that it should be molded by high religious interests and that every year unconverted students who are sent to Battle Creek should return to their homes as soldiers of the cross of Christ.--Testimonies, Vol. 4, p. 431, 432. (1880.)

Science to be Viewed from Religious Standpoint.--I was shown that our college was designed of God to accomplish the great and good work of saving souls. It is only when brought under the full control of the Spirit of God that the talents of an individual are rendered useful to the fullest extent.

The precepts and principles of religion are the first steps in the acquisition of knowledge, and lie at the very foundation of true education. Knowledge and science must be vitalized by the Spirit of God in order to serve the noblest purposes. The Christian alone can make the right use of knowledge.

Science, in order to be fully appreciated, must be viewed from a religious standpoint. The heart which is ennobled by the grace of God can best comprehend the real value of education. . . . Knowledge is power only when united with true piety. --Testimonies, Vol. 4, p. 427.

When the Objective is Realized.--If the influence in our college is what it should be, the youth who are educated there will be enabled to discern God and glorify Him in all His works; and while engaged in cultivation the faculties which God has given them, they will be preparing to render Him more efficient service. The intellect, sanctified, will unlock the treasures of God's word and gather its precious gems to present to other minds and lead them also to search for the deep things of God. A knowledge of the riches of His grace will ennoble and elevate the human soul, and through connection with Christ it will become a partaker of the divine nature and obtain power to resist the advances of Satan.--Testimonies, Vol. 4, p. 422.

To Excel in the Highest Kind of Education.--God would not have us in any sense behind in educational work. Our colleges should be far in advance in the highest kind of education. . . . If we do not have schools for our youth, they will attend other seminaries and colleges, and will be exposed to infidel sentiments, to caviling and questionings concerning the inspiration of the Bible. . . .

The highest class of education is that which will give such knowledge and discipline as will lead to the best development of character, and will fit the soul for that life which measures with the life of God. Eternity is not to be lost out of our reckoning.

The highest education is that which will teach our children and youth the science of Christianity, which will give them an experimental knowledge of God's ways, and will impart to them the lessons that Christ gave to His disciples, of the paternal character of God. [Jer. 9:23, 24 quoted] Let us seek to follow the counsel of God in all things; for He is infinite in wisdom. Though we have come short of doing what we might have done for our youth and children in the past, let us now repent, and redeem the time.--Counsels to Teachers, pp. 45, 46.