

February 18, 1903

School opened by Mr. John Webb. Let us also seeing were are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses.

If you have your lessons up to noon prepared all right you may go and skate this afternoon. (Appause.)

February 20, 1903

Mr. Webb is still sick. School opened by Son Will.

Lesson: "Jesus said unto them a prophet is not without honor," etc
Prayer.

February 23, 1903

School opened by Mr. Clark.

Lesson: "the wilderness and the desert place shall be glad," etc.
Prayer.

February, 24, 1903

School opened by Mr. Price. Lesson: "I am the true vine ye are the branches," etc.

Prayer.

February 25, 1903

School opened by Mr. John Webb.

Lesson: "The grass without^{out} the flower fadeth but the word of the Lord shall endure forever," etc.

February 26, 1903

Lesson: Paul's Shipwreck.

Mr. Webb: I wish I knew what I could say that would make life sweeter for every boy. My son if you are doing just as well as the other fellows and are satisfied with it you are just a scrub. When Thomas Jefferson was at college he studied sixteen hours a day. Thomas Jefferson had more to do with the philosophy of government in the last century than ^{any} man that preceded him.

He did away with the law of "primo-geniture." He founded the Democratic party. He did away with law which made the support of the church compulsory. (Here he gave a long discussion of the "itch-bug.")

March 2, 1903

Lesson: Better is it that thou shoulda't not vow than that thou should's't vow and not pay" etc.

Lesson:

You owe it to your parents to make a record. A boy can't afford not to build character. I like to see a boy have both intelligence and character but if he can't have both he should have character.

March 3, 1903

Lesson: "Let love be without dissimulation; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good;" etc.

Lesson.

I want to remind the boys occasionally of our rules. These rules are the result of long experience.

March 6, 1903

Mr. Webb is in Nashville.

Lesson: Wine is a mocker

March 8th, 1903

Song. "Standing on the promises of God."

Lesson: "For the kingdom of God is like unto a man going into a far country," etc. (Parable of the talents.)

What is a school for? Boys come here to get ready for some useful part in life. Some come and succeed others come and fail. I feel an intense desire for you to make the most of yourself. A man is measured by what he does. Let me tell you of a few men I've just come in contact with. I have just returned from a visit to

a young man who lives in the "Barrens". He is doing a great work. In that district where no one else is making over two hundred dollars he is making six hundred teaching a school. (Ashley Chappell) I love to see a boy doing something. The fellow that just takes hold with a bull dog grip.

Another thing I heard in that town where there are no sidewalks or other conveniences.

Lewis and Clarke planted the American flag at the mouth of the Oregon River. Meriweather Lewis was slain near where I visited the young man. In 1848 the government of Tennessee put a monument to Meriweather Clark. It is yet a wilderness. The judges had had some trouble in administering the law. Sam Holding who used to go to school to me revolutionized things down there. They couldn't run over him.

Monday, March 9, 1903.

Lesson: XIII Chapter I Corinthians.

Your Latin Exam will come next Thursday. Greek and English on Friday.

We don't deal in puzzles. I hope we haven't any teachers/^{here}who will pick the hardest passages in Latin or the hardest problems in Math.

Lesson: Psalm I.

When a man studies astronomy, botany, geology he is studying the law of God.

I have never seen an intelligent man who let whiskey and opium alone who didn't have plenty.

Prosperity and success follow the man that studies the law of God. Senator Hoar is one of the greatest men in America. He was called on at a school to make a speech. He said that the greatest thing in this world was to make a man and that making money was the least.

Money making must be made subordinate to making a man.

Lets see the other side. If you throw fruit on the ground it will lie there but my, my, my, when the chaff is thrown in the wind it blows hither and thither.

Prayer.

March 11, 1903.

The Beatitudes.

A real gentleman or a real lady is just a polite to a servant as to a queen.

The boy who isn't polite to a negro hasn't the instincts of a gentleman. Thomas Jefferson when he had been twice president of the U. S. was a slave holder. One day he and his nephew were riding and met an old negro who raised his hat. The young man didn't. As soon as they were out of earshot Thomas Jefferson said, "Don't let a negro beat you being polite."

Josh Billings said that experience was a valuable teacher but that he would rather the rattlesnake would bite the other fellow.

It has been handed down the ages that a rattlesnake is deadly and I let him alone. Listen to the wisdom that has come down the ages in this book. I have never yet seen a boy inherit an estate at 21 and hold it. I've seen him make an estate and hold it. Let the experience of others be worth something to you. It's a good idea not to speak evil of people. What you don't say wont be repeated. Did you know that? I roomed with 500 people in prison. It may be hard. I slept with a gambler all the time. He knew that I conducted a prayer meeting. I didn't preach to him all the time and tell him he was going to the devil - he knew it. Some folks say that there is no hell. If there isn't I'll subscribe liberally to help build one for such fellows he was.

There was a big fellow here from Missouri. He bedeviled a little boy. The little fellow came to me for protection. That was right. He ought to have done it. I talked to the big fellow but I couldn't make any impression on him. Finally I said to the big boy "if this boy here Weakley Logwood had done the same thing that the little fellow did would you have slapped him?" He replied "Weakley Logwood had better not fool with me." I said to him, "Weakley Is just your size. If you will strike him I'll let you off. He reached over and barely touched Weakley's shoulder. It was just a sham blow. Weakley was on him in an instant, downed him and the blood flew. In a few minutes the bully yelled "Enough." I turned to Weakley and thanked him for his trouble. It takes a long time for me to educate the "black mammy" out of you. When you criticize sarcastically you are wrong.

When I was a young fellow at college dueling was common. I wouldn't accept any challenge and was called all sorts of hard names. Now you can't hold any sort of an office in this state if you have ever in any way been connected with a duel.

Prayer

March 12, 1903

(March Exams begin today.)

Lesson: XII Chapter Eccles.

I have had teachers from the North Pole to the Equator to tell me that I give you too many privileges but I wouldn't be at the head of an institution whose members I could not trust.

Today I am going to place restrictions on you. You must not speak to any one in this six-acre enclosure. If you are seen talking to anyone no matter what the subject of conversation is the presumption is that you are either giving or receiving in-

formation. Boys it seems almost impossible ever to get a boy on his feet when at your age he gets the consent of his mind to tell a lie. God will write your character slowly but surely on your face.

March 15, 1903

Sunday Afternoon

Lesson: "Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees," etc.

The final examination is very necessary. I saw a young man who had twice failed in business. He went to his cash drawer put the contents into his pocket without counting it. I asked him if he kept a cash account, he said no, and said also "I wouldn't be as suspicious as you are for anything. In less than eighteen months he was sold out again. A man must find the leaks. It is necessary to success that a man keep an accurate account of everything.

A period of examination in school is a time for a boy to take an inventory of himself. Let me show you how to take the inventory. Suppose a boy went into the Caesar class. If that boy will take down his Caesar in the morning and see how much difference there is between the first lesson you look and the last. When you see now that you are reading five or six times as much as you did at the beginning of the session, that's progress.

A boy in his Caesar year learns three or four times as much as in his Beginner year. He has the mental training. A boy comes here and enters the History class. (Here he illustrated the development.) Thucydides wrote the model History for all the world.

The faculty of your mind wonderfully improves. (Here he told of a very tiresome fellow who used to be in his debating Society at college who later became an elegant speaker. He was asked to repeat his speech in the afternoon of the same day.)

I roomed for four years with Mr. Lewis R. Wylie. He was the finest ex tempore speaker I ever heard. I roomed again with him in his old age. He would see in the paper that there was going to be a S.S. Picnic at a certain place. He would immediately get to work to prepare a speech. When he would go to the picnic there would nearly always be a speaker absent. The committee would come around to Mr. Wylie. He would object of course but at last would consent to speak the piece he had prepared. Now that was an extempore speech. Edison worked and worked and tried substances of all sorts before he found out that a silk thread would make a carbon that would last a year.

The hardest puzzle that I ever struck in my life was long division.
Monday, March 16, 1903.

Lesson: Rev. XXII Chap.

I don't want a teacher to take a "Math." paper until twelve o'clock unless the boy has made a hundred. I have worked at a problem for thirty-six hours and have gotten it without help. Mathematics is the only exact science that there is. I do not wonder that some fellows never get a hundred on a language for the study of language is so involute and so metaphysical. If you do not take a hundred in Math you haven't measured up to your duty.

March 17, 1903. St. Patrick's Day.

(I saw the first peach bloom this morning. This is the first sunny day we've had for about a month. R. Browning.)

I am late this A.M. and don't know what lesson he read.

My son every peice of information you get fits in somewhere.

I wish I knew what to say to touch the secret springs of a boy's soul and make him bound with a will power and enthusiasm to be something and do something.

One of the grandest things that ever occurred in the history of the world was the instance of Cortez landing at Vera Cruz and burning the boats behind him.

I wish I could say something this morning to make these boys burn the boats behind them.

The biggest thing in the world is love. If you love your parents you must do something to prove it. The boy that says he loves his mother and who had rather play mumble peg than to carry in a basket of chips for her, he does not love her.

(Here he gave an account of David's victory over Goliath.)

Holiday today boys.

Wednesday, March 18, 1903.

Lesson: "He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love" etc.
Prayer.

Is it any relief to you to feel this morning that there is no examination? It ought to be. Right at the beginning of the warm weather we have this examination covering a short period so that the books may be begun again anew.

I want to here this morning to say to the boy that never did make a success that this is the best morning in the world to make a start. It's now or never. Its only ten weeks. Won't you make the sacrifice? If you were near the Mississippi River this morning you would see the most intense anxiety on the part of those people who live there because the water is anywhere from 25 to 40 feet above them. What if a levee should break? My son, build up the weak points in your levee.

Thursday, March 19, 1903

Lesson: "For none of us liveth to himself and no one dieth to himself." etc.

Friday March 20, 1903

Lesson: "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear" etc.

Is this Friday morning? (Yes sir.)

Now I am talking to the boy that hasn't made a record. I am sorry for the rest of you. The most disappointing thing that I have to meet with in young people is that someone will say I am doing about as well as my father." My father never rode on a railroad. What do you think of that? There were only two short railroads in the world when he lived. I am just about as old as the R.R.'s of the world.

When I was a young man very few men in this country had as much as a hundred thousand dollars but now there are places that you might go to if you were worth that much and those people would turn up their noses at you.

The great masses of mankind are just the product of environment. They never rise above or even to the level of the standard in their communities.

Suppose you were born in savagery and your parents dressed in sunshine, then you would walk around and say I am dressed as well as my parents.

There was an old negro who used to live at the University of North Carolina. He was the biggest ugliest negro I ever saw. He had the greatest lung power I ever saw. A fellow would come along and say "Willie here's a dime. Smile for us." Willie would stop and on his idiotic face ^{around} would begin to creep like the rising of an early dawn then his eyes would twinkle and he would burst into a roar of laughter that could be heard three miles. You think that fellow down at the store is smiling at you because of friendship. Why that

negro could beat him at it. They both smile for the same purpose. (Here he told the story of a boy who came to him at Culleoka and wanted to go to school. Mr. Webb built a house for him and went around and watched the fellow cook his first meal. Later in life Mr. Webb ate with the fellow in Nashville when the Governor of the State and others were present.)

Here he told of the struggles of Burns, Goldsmith, Johnson and others with poverty.

(Here he told of a boy named Duckworth who caught a squirrel. That same fellow is now works for the American.)

Boys a Yankee tried to kill me one day. He had the best horse and the best sword and the best position. Boys, I wanted to be victor in that conflict. I didn't want to run. Would you boys?

I've seen boys from this school go to the Senate, the courts, to the biggest pulpits of the South but I never saw a fellow that sat foot do it.

Sunday, March 22, 1903

Song: "My faith looks up to Thee."

Lesson: "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," etc. Christ was a gentleman. Begin with his childhood and you will observe his conduct while talking to the wise men about the scriptures. Observe him on the cross speaking gently and kindly to the thief. Never under any circumstances did any utterance escape his lips that was ungentlemanly. Not one instance of selfishness was ever recorded against him. There never was a man in the history of the human race who had as much influence on the human family.

The Romans dated everything from the founding of Rome. The Greeks from the Olympic Games. The Jews from the Flood, the carrying away into Babylon. Now everything in a civilized country dates its literature from the birth of Christ.

Monday, March 23, 1903

School opened by Mr. Clark.

Lesson: "A good name is better than precious ointment," etc.

Boys have a great many things to learn. I have known boys to lose their lives at this season of the year just because a warm day came ^{and} they took off their flannels too soon.

The time is soon coming for games. I want the boys to play.

A large number of boys here attend the Methodist Church. Boys don't dead beat it at church. This is the week for the quarterly meeting of the Methodist Church. Pay your part and you'll feel better. Self respect is a grand feeling. I wouldn't dead beat it on the Lord for church service.

Tuesday, March 24, 1903. (Frost this morning.)

School opened by Mr. Price.

Lesson: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ," etc.

Prayer

I talked to you yesterday about your flannels. As soon as I got down town and I saw that a snow storm was raging in Missouri^a/state adjoining ours. Boys you will need a fire for a month yet. You can't do your work well unless your body is comfortable. When I was a boy I visited my cousins at the University of North Carolina. I saw there one of the old professors who was one of the profoundest thinkers in the U.S. at that time. Every morning that old man eighty years of age would work two or three hours in his garden. He had a large family and he raised an abundance of vegetables for them and for others.

Every now and then I hear some fellow talking about the old times

"before the war" when Southern people didn't have to work. Its an awful slander. Before the War everybody had to work. The son of a rich man who owned large numbers of slaves had to dig a stump every Saturday if he overslept himself during the week. People were taught in those days that it was honorable to work. When God put man here he put him in the Garden of Eden and put him to work. That's the best way in the world to make a man. I am sorry when I see that you boys have hired negroes to clean off your ball ground. The "Man with the hoe" that teaches that work dwarfs a man is a sad mistake.

Dr. Kirkland told me that he was in La. riding along the delta talking about Webb School. A fellow was ploughing along with the negroes. He said "hello did you say something about the Webb School? I was up there four or five days but I couldn't stand that old cuss." But said the Chancellor he was ploughing with negroes. Boys its no disgrace to work with the hands but when your labor does not command a bigger price than a negroes then it is a disgrace.

When I was a young teacher there was a little boy came to school to me. His sister, brother, and grandmother came to me in succession and said "Wess can't learn Mathematics." I made up my mind that that boy could learn Mathematics. I made him add, add, and add. I made him stick for about two months to the four processes until he could add, multiply, divide, subtract glibly. "Wess, I said, you've learned all that anybody in the world can do."

Boys, a man that can't learn Mathematics is an idiot. You tell him I said so. That boy left our school the head of his classes in Mathematics. He went to the Vanderbilt University. He got fifty dollars in gold for being the best mathematician in the University.

Whenever a boy gets it into his head that he can't do a thing, he's a failure.

God makes so many seeds that if every acorn made a tree, In ten years one tree would exhaust the fertility of the soil. I wonder if its that way with boys. I don't want you to be a wicked man. I want you to be a Christian.

You can take an old pair of trousers and stuff them with sawdust. that thing would cuss, chew, smoke or drink. My son, don't be a stuffed pair of breeches. Don't be a bag of sawdust. The price of success is industry, its energy.

Pike's Peak or bust!

A boy finished our course. He came to me and said, "I have \$700. What must I do with it?" Said I, "Spend every cent of it in the University. He smiled a far away smile and walked away. I called him back and said, "Newt, you are not going to the University?" No sir. "Promise me," said I that in four years you will come back and tell me what you have done. The time passed by, Newt came with a sad face. He still had his \$700 dollars, no more. He went to the University then and when he died ten years later his brother inherited twenty thousand dollars from his estate. You can't run around with these little "Fly about" dancing girls and be a student. You can't fill your stomach with candies and be a student. If I were to give a holiday today to the boys that know their speeches. I tell you the fellows that know their speeches would be lonesome. Let's get a move on us. Let's deny ourselves these things that thwart our purposes.

Wednesday, March 25, 1903 Frost this morning.

Lesson: "Behold I shall send my messenger and he shall come before me," etc. "Will a man rob God."

Prayer.

Thursday, March 26, 1903 Heavy Frost this A.M.

The finest book of literature in the world is this book. It stands preeminent. When during that period in French History the people abolished the seventh day and estavlished every tenth day as a rest day, Franklin was in France, etc. Its a very sad thing if you can't be thrilled by the words of this book. Listen: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," not shall have eternal life but he's got it right now. Boys you cant afford to ignore this book.

Prayer.

Friday, March 27, 1903

Lesson: "Belshazzar's Feast."

My son, I read this lesson for the last paragraph that it contains. "Let thy gifts be to thyself." etc. The king tried to bribe Daniel. The spirit of gift receiving is a terrible spirit to get into, my man.

The Societies will now retire to their rooms and elect Public Debaters.

Platonic Society	Ø	Browning	14
Cast the following:	Ø	Wallace	14
	Ø	Bryan	1
	Ø	Simpson	1
	Ø		
Hamilton Society	Ø	Redmond	12
Cast the following:	Ø	Proctor	11
	Ø	Colville	3
	Ø		

Years ago there was a fellow that wanted to be a public debater. He made a machine among the little fellows and got himself elected public debater by a crowd of little fellows that had hardly heard him. That happened right here in this school.

Extempore speeches are all bosh.

Two hundred years ago boys were not admitted to Universities until he could repeat the Aeneid twelve books verbatim, et punctuation

et literatim. Where I went to school there was only one Greek Dictionary. It lay on a table with its back nailed down. When a fellow wanted to know the meaning of a word he had to go to that Dictionary and then he found the definition in Latin. Then he had to go to his Latin Dictionary to get the English definition. Yet men in those hard conditions made great scholars.

Whenever you see a picture of a battle of Gettysburg with General Meade the Captain of the Yankee forces riding at the head of the army, that's a freak of the imagination for General Meade was eight miles from the firing line where he ought to have been.

March 30, 1903 Monday

Lesson: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth."

Life is the main thing. Food and clothing just protect the life. Therefore they are less than the life.

Prayer.

Letters keep coming in from parents saying that their sons do not write well and that they misspelled words. Teachers have all these boys English Dictionary? Yes sir. Then I want you to use them. Whenever there comes into my mind the slightest doubt about the spelling of a word, I stop and look it up. That is the only way to learn how. You will never have elegant phraseology unless you memorize beautiful passages of poetry and prose. Now I want every boy to learn at least one speech and I hope it will be a grand piece of literature. Maybe the question arises in some boy's mind "Does it pay?"

You might put the finest horse in the world in hay to his backbone and he won't make a shock of hay.

The most intelligent of the domestic animals, the dog, will not make any provision for a day.

When you won't make provision for the future you are not one whit above the animals. Seventeen years ago when I started this school at Bell Buckle I made this same talk to the boys.

Clyde Thach went to school to me. He wanted to study law. People asked me if he wasn't making a mistake. They said "Law is crowded." They told me that when I was a boy. Now he stands right at the top. He is known all over the South. There were other fellows here at the same time who had the same teachers, same opportunities and everything that are now still walking around looking for a job. The U. S. government gave me a free passage, free board and everything to Conn.

I pledge you my word that when they crowded us on that ship there wasn't room to squat much less sit down and then when we put out to sea each fellow had to pay his tribute to Neptune. Yes sir. Right down the other fellows' back. We couldn't help it. They put us on a barren island without one sprig of green. They showed us some lumber piles and said "Make yourselves comfortable." My son, if you could see the face of the fellows who have only muscle to put on the market.

William Clary was here at the same time with Clyde Thach. Tomorrow night he graduates as President of his class in the wealthiest University south of the Ohio River. Did it pay those boys? Some of the boys that were here at the same time are now in the penitentiary.

Another boy used to live here at the same time. He used to be out before the other boys were awake peddling vegetables. He graduated at Cleveland O. He is now in charge of the telephone system in Philadelphia. Walter Beachboard is now in a fine position. Did it pay?

What put me to thinking was that I got a letter. The handwriting was familiar. That fellow sat foot in his classes. He is now in Chicago. His firm wrote me. He has applied for a place as a canvasser for books. That's the toughest job I ever saw.

O my boy, when a father feels that his boys are failures, his life is a failure. The people of N. C. are going to have a big meeting to unveil a statue in memory of W. T. Quakenbush. It was the poorest community I have ever seen and the Quakenbushes were the most ignorant people in it. One day one of the little Quakenbush boys got in a lot where there was a jackass. The animal pawed him until ~~his~~ one leg had to be amputated. I went around and made up money to board him and I taught him until he was through Caesar. I left N.C. then but before I left I went to Col. William Bingham, the author of this Latin Grammar. Col. Bingham took him, he finished B's course and then went to the University of Virginia. Then he went back and taught for Bingham and afterward he founded a school of his own. Now the people of that section are going to erect a statue to his memory.

How many times I have seen that man pat that empty trouser leg and say "Thank God for the jackass." He had rather have lost both legs than to have been a fool.

I have never yet seen a boy inherit an estate and hold it.

Have I said anything this morning that will stimulate any boy who is discouraged? If I have I have accomplished my purpose.

If Goliath, Saul, and David were to enter one of these modern Universities that run athletics, Goliath would make eenter rush and next day would dine with the Chancellor. Saul would be half-back and he'd dine with the Chancellor and little David would have to go to the mess hall where they eat Armour's butter.

But in the middle life David would command the respect of the world by his learning and the Chancellor would wish he had known David. Goliath would be in rags and Saul fill a suicide's grave.

I plead with you, I beg you, I entreat you to go to work on that English and Mathematics. Don't think that you are smart because you can't learn Math. You are a stark fool.

The Webb School is mentioned in the Princeton catalogue, and it has been for years. I have had a fellow from Boston where they ^{have} their million dollar school house come down here and when he saw this little \$2000 school house he was depressed. But when he knew that boys from this school have led Lehigh, West Point, and nearly everywhere else, he generally left his boy.

When you go to college make a record. Don't fool away your time with college side issues alone such as college papers etc.

March 31, 1903 Tuesday

Lesson: "Judge not that ye be not judged" etc.

My son this means right now in this life. If you say hard things about people they will say them about you. If you begin to censure and blame and find fault, the world will turn upon you to see if you are perfection.

Prayer.

I want to call the attention of the boys that went to Murfreesboro last night to hear Bob Taylor. Bob has been to my house and he has told me a few things. He said "I didn't have but one thing to put on the market." So he started a country paper to try to sell his fun and he came near starving to death.

He was nominated by the Democrats for Congress in a section where there was 7000 or more Republicans in majority. He started around on his canvass with his fiddle. Bob was so agreeable that the old Republicans voted for him just to compliment his fiddling and to the surprise of everybody he was elected. It was the biggest joke ever perpetrated since the world began.

When Bob's term as Governor of the state expired he was a pauper. He was in debt. He began to lecture for benevolent organizations etc. When he saw how the multitudes thronged to hear him, he began to charge people.

I stuck to him 'till² got up to a hundred dollars a night and then I dropped him. There was a time when I got him free. Now he gets \$2500 a year.

The point I want to impress upon you is the necessity of having something to put on the market.

Suppose you were out west and didn't have a cent. If you could play a fiddle there are people that would give you a meal.

Goldsmith, the author of the "Vicar of Wakefield" fluted himself all over France.

Now you are in the Klondike and can't even fiddle. Now then, what are you going to do?

My son, if you have nothing to put on the market and some misfortune happens to you what are you going to do. My boy I haven't talked to you about eternal issue and everlasting life this morning but just about this life.

Lets go out into this world with something to put on the market. You went last night to hear a man that don't know law, medicine, or anything of that kind but he does know poetry, music, and wit and by that he has been able to educate his children and care for his family.

Thursday, April 2, 1903

Lesson. Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that has befallen you.

"If the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear" etc.

Prayer.

Boys don't change your underclothing til May. I've seen boys lose their lives because they changed their underclothing too soon.