

834 W. Tenth St., Los Angeles,

June 14, 1898.

Dear Friends of the R. I. Normal School:-

Miss Marble's kind request to give you a word on the happy occasion of your last assembly in the old building meets with a most hearty response. My own associations with the old building are most happy, and I look back with much pleasure to the hours spent there with so many of you. I am thankful for all that has been done in the old building for the cause of education, and for the uplifting of the teacher, and I hope that it will all be many times surpassed by the successful work done in the future in the new building. We are to grow from grace into grace, and to pass from glory to glory, and so may it be with the Rhode Island Normal School, May it continue to be a power in fitting teachers for their work, and in advancing the beneficent influence of our profession.

They tell us that it is still a question whether teaching is a profession. I presume they are correct, but if so, then the establishment of the full acknowledgment of the profession depends upon us all. When we are animated with the true professional spirit, when we have prepared ourselves for the work with truly professional zeal, we shall find our profession received as one, and remunerated as one, without further agitation.

In order to do this we must first honor our profession. We must look upon it as the highest and best work in the world, we must prepare ourselves for it to the fullest possible extent, not only by a course of professional study, but by enriching our minds and our hearts, ~~to the fullest possible extent~~ by training our powers and faculties, by every means within our power. We must honor and cooperate with all wise efforts to improve the courses of study, the methods of instruction, and the training of teachers. We must loyally support in every possible way all professional schools, and use our influence in their behalf.

We must also honor our fellow teachers. We must work with them in harmony for the best interests of the schools, we must consider them colleagues in a common work, not rivals in a struggle for the supply of the market. We must treat them in all our relations with them according to the dictates of the Golden rule, and further their interests as we would our own.

Finally we must honor our work. We must give it the best of ourselves without measure or stint. We must be faithful, earnest, thoughtful, progressive, and we must hold what we have gained not as our own, but as the property of our profession, for the good of all the schools.

Let us continue to show ourselves as loyal to the Normal School in its new building as we have been in the old, and as united in our endeavors to further the interests of education wherever our work lies. I have to thank some of you for pleasant letters and messages within the past year, and I hope you will hold me in memory as affectionately as I do you,

Very sincerely your friend,

Francis H. Lewis.