

idea of the real grandeur of their work. They must magnify their office. Let their own hearts be fired with the idea, and they will fire other hearts. There should be more of the *esprit de corps* among teachers. If a teacher does not esteem and respect himself, nobody will respect him. These associations should foster this spirit. In many places teachers are not regarded as occupying any higher position than the common wood-chopper or hod carrier. This is often their own fault. They look upon teaching as a drudge—something to be *endured* until they can make a little money and get into some other business. It is a stepping-stone to one of the professions, and they have sometimes been honest enough to avow that they taught for the "sake of the dimes," and for nothing else. Now, with this idea of the teachers' office, no one *can* succeed and no one *ought* to succeed. Next to the office of the Christian Ministry, it is the very highest in point of honor and responsibility. It is theirs to give direction to immortal minds that are to exert a mighty influence over other minds, for good or evil, through succeeding ages. They stand at the fountain-head of influence, and next to parents do more, perhaps, to form the mind and character of coming generations, than all others. They impress their own image and superscription upon their pupils. They infuse into them their own spirit. Not only what they *know*, but what they *are*, helps to educate. "Such as I have give I unto thee," may be said by them to their scholars, as truly as it was said by Peter to the lame man. They can impart nothing which they do not possess, and this they can and do impart, whether they will it or not. Their looks, the tones of their voice, their habitual temper and disposition, their habits of thinking, of feeling, and of action; their intellectual and moral traits of character, all are contributing daily to educate the young and susceptible hearts under their care, of good or evil, for stations of honor and usefulness, or infamy and disgrace. How high and responsible, then, is the vocation of the teacher. Permit me to quote a paragraph from the late work of Dr. Holland, on this point. He goes even farther than I do in his estimate of the office of the teacher. "The Christian teacher of a band of children combines the office of the preacher and parent, and has more to do in shaping the mind and morals of the community than preacher and parent united. The teacher who spends six hours a day with my child, spends three times as many as I do, and twenty-fold more time than my pastor does. I have no words to express my sense of the importance of your office, still less have I words to express my sense of the importance of having that office filled by men and women of the purest motives, the noblest enthusiasm, the finest culture, the broadest charities, and the most devoted Christian purpose. Why, sir, a teacher should be the strongest and most angelic man that breathes. No man living is entrusted with such precious material. No man living can do so much to set human lips to a noble tune. No man living needs higher qualifications for his work." And yet many communities think almost anybody will do for a teacher, and the cheapest is the best; and many teachers think they need never attend a Teachers' Institute, nor read an educational journal to fit them for their work. Oh, ignorance and shame, where is thy blush!

Another object of such associations is to fix in every teacher's mind the true idea of education. Much has been written upon this subject of late years, but still it is very imperfectly understood. Many have no higher idea of education than that of cramming the contents of certain text-books into the minds of children. They would stuff them as turkeys are stuffed for Christmas. They would pour knowledge into them as an apothecary would his medicines into bottles, and then label them as having "finished their education," and send them home. They have no idea of education as the liberal culture of all the faculties, of mind, and heart, and will, each in its due proportion, and all subordinated to the formation of right character. Some faculties need to be stimulated, and others to be repressed. The soul needs to become self-poised and self-governed—all of its powers being subjected to the control of enlightened reason and conscience. This is the high ideal of education, which should ever be held up before the mind of teachers, and such associations help to do it.

Such associations also afford a mental tonic to the teacher. He needs to have his mind quickened by coming in contact with other minds, and here he has the opportunity. As steel gives edge to steel by friction, so does mind to mind. He meets those of large and liberal culture in other professions, as well as in his own, and he is aroused to make higher attainments. By confining himself to the dull routine of his text books, the teacher is in danger of dwarfing his mind. He goes over the same thing year after year, until he loses all interest in it. He has sucked all the juice out of his oranges, and nothing remains but the seeds and rind. The flowers that were once beautiful and fragrant, are but dried specimens. His mind is in danger of becoming as dry as his text books, its stores of knowledge all desiccated, its enthusiasm all gone, and he converted into a walking mummy. To guard against this, he must

bring his mind in contact with other active and vigorous minds, either through books or oral discussion; and thus he will keep his own mind fresh and vigorous, and full of the fire of enthusiasm. He will be not the plodding pedantic pedagogue, but the *inspirer* of youth and the *infuser* of new truths and emotions. After all, this is the highest function of the teacher, to arouse and set in motion the young minds under his care to gain knowledge for themselves. To do this, he should be constantly acquiring new truths. Cicero says that no kind of knowledge is useless to the orator. The same may be said of the teacher. He can use all the facts of science and literature with which his mind is stored for the benefit of his scholars. Then he will appear to them to be what he really is, greater than all their text-books, and he will inspire them with that reverence and respect which is such an auxiliary in the work of governing a school. Some teachers make it a rule to read regularly some larger work on the subject of their daily lessons. Others peruse works of history, or devote their attention to the acquisition of some new branch of science. No professional man should confine himself exclusively to works on his own profession. He cramps his intellect by so doing, and disqualifies himself for the largest measure of success in his own peculiar calling.

Another advantage that ought to accrue from these associations, is to arouse the teacher to the importance of attaining to a higher standard of moral excellence. Quintilian lays it down as one of the qualifications of the orator, that he *must be a good man*. Much more important is it for the teacher. He ought to be a model and pattern of every virtue. He must be what he would have his pupils be. If a teacher would have his pupils avoid all bad habits, he must avoid them himself. If he would have them form right habits, he must set them the example. If he would have them truthful, he must speak and act the truth. If he would have them patriotic, he must be patriotic. If he would have them avoid profanity and intemperance, he must avoid them. The colonel must be the bravest and best man in his regiment, if he would have it win glory on the battle-field. He must say "come boys," and not "go boys," and lead them into the thickest of the fight. So must the faithful teacher lead his pupils into the fields of virtue, where nobler garlands are to be won by conquest over self and sin.

I have thus briefly hinted at some of the advantages of such associations as the one in which we are met. The best way to secure these advantages is, doubtless, that which practical common sense has induced us to adopt. Particular topics are assigned to individuals for essays or reports on themes connected with the general subject of education. Months are given for investigating and writing on these topics. Then the reports are read and time taken for a free and full discussion. Where it is possible, it is always desirable to have the assistance of some distinguished educator from abroad to give lectures and make suggestions, and participate in the discussions. Most valuable hints may thus be obtained, and a great impulse given in the right direction to those who are engaged in the great work of training up the young, into whose hands the destinies of this vast nation are so soon to be placed. Never has there been a time, since the foundation of our government, when so great responsibilities devolved upon all who, in any way, help to form the public sentiment of the nation. Never has there been a time when greater fidelity was required on the part of the teachers of our youth. Never has there been a time when it was such a grand privilege to live and labor for the regeneration of our nation.

"We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime."

We are receiving such a baptism of blood and fire as no nation has ever received before. We are making history during these passing days that will be read with the most thrilling interest when all the present generations of men shall have passed away. Now, we are actors in these scenes. Let us act well our part in the several stations we are called to fill. Let all the ends we aim at be our country's, our God's, and truth's; and let us each do what in us lies to make the succeeding ages wiser and better than the ages that have gone before. Let us inspire our dear youth with the love of learning, love of truth, love of the right and the good, love of all mankind and, above all, love to Him who endowed them with their noble capacities, and will hold them accountable for their right cultivation and use.—*Ohio Educational Monthly*.

TERMS: For a single copy of the *Journal of Education*, \$1 per annum, back vols., neatly stitched, supplied on the same terms. All subscriptions to commence with the January Number, and payment in advance must in all cases accompany the order. Single numbers, 10 cents each.

All communications to be addressed to J. GEORGE HODGINS, LL.B.,
Education Office, Toronto