

should hardly have known, was the author of his noblest deeds. And if Cicero could make this confession, how many more of inferior genius could make similar acknowledgements with yet greater propriety? Indeed, however narrow our observation may have been, instances must have come to our knowledge of great power proceeding from those who dwelt in obscurity, even as the earth is heaved and tossed and cleft asunder, by invisible forces of which we know almost nothing.

Of this hidden power of the teacher for good,—and, let it be remembered, it may be for evil likewise,—we give a single illustration. We once knew a teacher who, in the judgment of those best acquainted with him, possessed the rarest intellectual powers, which he had cultivated with long and varied discipline. For him it was a pastime to read in the mother tongue of Plato and Plutarch, the deep philosophy of one, and the lofty morality of the other. There is hardly any field of knowledge to which he was a stranger. He seemed to be at home on the classic page, among the higher mathematical studies, or while engaged in unfolding those subtle distinctions which underlie that sublimest of all sciences,—the science of the human soul. And no mind truly awake could listen long to his “wide and large discourse of reason,” and not feel something of that awe-inspiring reverence, which the presence of the highest forms of intellectual greatness seldom fails to awaken. And yet he was known comparatively to but few. His personal influence over the world at large was but small. The masses were alike ignorant of his worth and his greatness. With a modesty equal to his unusual attainments, he shrank from display; and having no desire of authorship, and passing away from us in the meridian of his days, but few of the results of his profound investigations will go down to posterity on the printed page. But will he have lived in vain? Far otherwise; for deep in hundreds of young and noble hearts, made yet nobler by his sublime teachings, were treasured up the living thoughts his “winged words” bore thither, and there will they be cherished in undying remembrance. Love for Truth and Honor and Duty was inspired in minds that are to influence men from high places of authority and trust; from the pulpit, the bar and the halls of legislation. Through his pupils will his influence be transmitted to other minds, and thus has he set in motion a tide of healthful agencies that will ebb and flow to the end of time. Not far from the quiet waters of a New England lake, stands a massive granite shaft erected to his memory by his loving pupils. It bears no flaunting eulogy upon its tablets. It rises in solid yet simple grandeur, an apt symbol of his life, whose name, with the day of his birth and of his death only, is cut in relief upon the solid stone. As we stood, not many months ago, beside that monument, with sentiments akin to those of the pilgrim who has reached some long sought distant shrine, we could but feel how fitly it illustrated the enduring influence of him whose ashes are reposing at its base.

Let it not be supposed that the importance or the responsibilities of the teacher's calling are confined to the higher walks of the profession; or that they belong exclusively to those chiefly engaged in finishing the work. The instructor, at every stage of his business, is concerned with intellectual and moral development; and we are yet to be informed that the earliest part of this business is fraught with less important consequences than that of any later period. Of how little value is elegance of finish, or beauty of exterior ornament, to that edifice, whose foundation was laid at first in the treacherous sand! Or, to use a better analogy, of what avail is any effort to remove an unsightly crook in the sturdy tree, which commenced while yet the tree was a tender shrub? We know not how soon the infant soul begins to receive from the world without its shapings and tendencies. But we do know, that after this time has arrived, its earliest are its most impressive periods. It is then, that little causes, as we call them, produce great results. A word, a look, a tone, a tear, a smile, every one does its work. Sunny and joyous tempers have sprung into life under the genial influence of a constantly cheerful countenance and voice. At this period too, harsh and irritable dispositions are bred amid strife, in an atmosphere of moroseness and ill humor. Thus early does the die give the enduring stamp. A very few years suffice to give full vigor to those elements which expand into a Cowper or a Byron; a Washington or a Bonaparte. “The boy is father of the man,” says a poet; and most true it is, that the human character receives its form in childhood. Let no one, then, touch the young soul, that wondrous birth of heaven, with a careless or unpractised hand. Whoso does this does it at his peril.

Thus in whatever view we regard the teacher's vocation, whether in its relations to this or the future life; in its connection with the earlier or later periods of intellectual development; in its immediate results upon the pupil, or its more remote effects, ever going forth from him as a central source; in each and all these views, we find abundant evidence of its peculiar excellence and responsibility as a calling. The teacher is thus seen to be a *fashioner of human souls, moulding them measurably into his own likeness.*

This character of his work indicates, at once, what that of the instructor should be. He owes it most sacredly to his noble employment, that he be no intellectual saggard. Unrefined manners, an unculti-

vated mind, or an easy conscience, have no business here. They are not the fitting appointments for this most elevated work. The teacher has chosen an office most responsible and most honorable. Let him do it honor, then, by his own manly character and his faithful labors. But this he will fail to do, unless he is ever diligent in work of self-improvement.

We have said that self-culture has reference to external habits, the mind, and the heart. Some more specific consideration of each of these will be pertinent to the subject.

If the foregoing views are correct, the external manners of the teacher are not of minor consequence. Pupils continually copy the teacher, and usually go further than he, if he is addicted to coarseness of any kind. If they are well bred at home, they will probably disrespect him; if not, they will most likely become confirmed in their own rudeness by his example. Some regard for dress, even, is most important. We are, we confess, no great admirers of those who are careless in this respect; and still less do we respect those who affect oddity or indifference here. We do not think we could even sympathize with a modern Diogenes. While we should despise a fop, we should feel an almost equal degree of disgust with one who purposely or otherwise should play the philosopher in rags. And worse than any where else is this in the teacher. He needs to be scrupulous in regard to his person, his dress, and his manners, as well as in his pronunciation and his use of language. Fifty, a hundred, and perhaps more pupils are accustomed to see him some hours every day. They become familiar with all his habits, even the most minute. If he is careless in his dress, eccentric in his manners, coarse, low, or worse in his words, some of his pupils, it is to be hoped, would appreciate such qualifications; but a greater number probably would become his copyists. We shall not be understood as advocating finical exactness; an undue preciseness which is among the worst species of affectation, and not, if our recollection serves us, entirely unknown to the profession. But we would express most decidedly the belief, that no one destitute of refinement and courtesy, whatever else he may have, is fit to be a teacher. The school-room should be a place, the very atmosphere of which is pervaded by the spirit of true politeness.

*Progressive intellectual culture* is, if possible, yet more essential to the true teacher. He must always be a learner. To be willing to stand here is to be willing to go backward. And yet the temptation to stand still is as great as the yielding to it is fatal. This may be seen at a glance. The teacher spends hours every day in immediate mental contact with those who are perhaps greatly his inferiors in age and knowledge. He is by his position constantly a superior. This continued relation, and the consequent feeling which must accompany it, tend to work out at length an overbearing spirit, conceited and pedantic. Hence has sprung that peculiar genius, born of Ignorance and Conceit, known in all times as the genuine pedagogue, and deservedly the butt of ridicule and satire from the time of Solomon downward. We account for the odium that falls upon his luckless head, on the principle that the caricature of anything is disagreeable, just in proportion as the thing caricatured is really excellent and noble. The pedant is the true teacher in caricature; hence he becomes the object of unmitigated disgust.

There is, we say, in teaching, such a tendency. This tendency brings with it no necessity, however. It can be easily resisted. To do this successfully the teacher must grow intellectually; and this growth implies an ever-widening sphere of knowledge. A higher standard of education, indeed, is now demanded by public opinion, in common school teachers, than formerly. The time has happily gone by when the candidate would answer, provided by dint of digging, he could keep in advance of his classes. A considerable degree of culture is now required—we hope the demand will be greatly increased—in every one who takes charge of a school of any kind. And we doubt not that a teacher may, for a time, be tolerably useful, even if his education is chiefly limited to the studies he has occasion to teach. But if he stop long here; if he make the bare demands of the school-room the limit of his attainments, his mind will contract his self-conceit dilate, and pedantry will grow thriftily on its proper soil. Now, in order to forestall such a result, the teacher needs some constant intellectual employment, calculated to enlarge and discipline his mental powers. In deciding what his employment shall be, every one, of course, would consult his own preferences. There are, however, many branches of knowledge essential to the highest usefulness of the teacher, and also in themselves most valuable acquisitions, which are not usually required as qualifications in a large class of instructors. A knowledge of Intellectual Philosophy, for example, is not required by Committees and school laws, in order to teach primary and grammar schools. And yet, if the brief views of teaching we have given are near the truth, how unfit is any one to teach even such school, who is ignorant of the powers of the mind and the laws of its action? As unfit, in truth, as he to build a temple, who is ignorant of the first rudiments of architecture.

Highly useful, also, to the teacher, is some knowledge of the classical