

estimation. Water will not rise above the level of its source. Whatever dignity belongs to a pursuit, must be given it by those engaged in it. The man, or the woman, who has no genuine love for his or her business, no real enthusiasm in it—not to say who is half ashamed of it, speaking and acting as if apologizing for it to all around—can never hope to attain a very high grade of dignity, either personal or professional. On the other hand the one who has a profound respect for his work, I care not what the nature of that work may be, who recognizes it as *his* work, loves it, is an enthusiast in it, determined to become a workman needing not to be ashamed, dignifies not only himself but his work. Ever and everywhere it is the man who dignifies or debases the work, not the work, the man. There is a sense, a broad, true sense in which every living worker is called—called by mental constitution, by early education, by circumstances—to a special sphere of labour. Happy and honoured the man or the woman who recognizes the call as the voice of God. There is nothing which strengthens, steadies, ennobles the character, like a clear, strong conviction in the soul, that one is the right man in the right place, that he is doing the very work which he is fitted to do, and which God has given him to do. The man who guides the plough, or the woman who plies the wearisome needle, strong and happy in that conviction, occupies, I verily believe, in the sight of all higher intelligences, a loftier place, and does a nobler work in the universe of God, than the philosopher in his study, or the queen on her throne, if destitute of such a conviction.

Could my mental vision be so sharpened for a few moments that I could read the consciousness of every teacher now before me, piercing, as our cousins over the line would say,

into the "true inwardness" of each, and thus learning the exact views, motives and feelings, with which each is accustomed to go about the daily task of the school-room, I wonder what results would be revealed. How many entertain an open or concealed dislike to the profession, to which they are supposed to be devoted in heart and life? How many are making it a stepping-stone to some other and in their view higher calling? How many are actuated by no worthier motive than a desire to gain, or even to honestly earn, the small remuneration it brings them? Can any one of these be expected to raise the dignity of the profession in public estimation?

How many, on the other hand, love the work for its own sake, for the sake of the influence in the realm of mind it enables them to wield, for the sake of the good it enables them to do, and throw themselves every morning with renewed energy into the work, performing it ever "as in the Great Taskmaster's eye," and in the happy consciousness of his approbation? Such and such alone are raising and will raise the profession to its true eminence, as amongst the most responsible, the most dignified, and the most ennobling of human callings.

If I can in the few moments remaining to me urge some considerations that will tend to give any teacher before me a higher conception of the dignity and the importance of the work, and so enable such a one to go back to the toil of the school-room with increased zeal, loftier aims, intenser enthusiasm, I shall have accomplished the chief purpose I have set before me in this hastily prepared paper.

And here, first of all, let us aim at gaining some clear and definite ideas as to what the teacher's true work really is. Upon this point there is