

in his daily life. It is for this reason that I regret so much that the standard of our Normal Colleges is so low in respect of scholarship, and I trust that the proposal made again and again by some of the wisest men connected with these colleges, of uniting in some way a university course with a normal college course, will be looked on with more favour than it has hitherto received from Government. Every increase of intellectual power on the part of the teacher, is so much gain to the pupil; and the country would be infinitely benefited if all teachers were equipped with a university training and apprenticeship, before occupying the post of independent teachers. I need not say also, that such equipment is calculated in no ordinary degree to raise the character of the profession. The Edinburgh Bar has long held one of the foremost, if not the foremost, place in the professions; and one of the reasons, perhaps the main reason, was, that it exacted from all its members the culture of gentlemen. Wherever a high standard of liberal culture is exacted from every member of a profession, that profession will be sure to stand high in the opinion of all cultivated men.

These two things, then, seem to me best calculated to raise the teaching profession,—a thorough knowledge of the Science of Education, combined with the capability of applying the psychological laws to teaching, and a thorough liberal culture. They lie considerably in our own power. We may do much to give ourselves both, by earnest and faithful work; and our strongly expressed opinion, whenever we have opportunity, may pave the way for creating greater facilities to the attainment of both objects for our more fortunate successors.

The other method of elevating the profession is Government Recognition,—recognition by Government of teachers, as constituting a distinct profession. I am favourable to every effort that has been recently made in regard to this matter. I think the originators of the Scholastic Registration Association deserve our best thanks, and I consider that it is our duty to support the movement in every way. At the same time, my convictions lead me to go much further than any mere registration movement. I think the teaching profession, if it is to do its work most effectively, must not merely be recognised by Government, but must be organized by it; that the teaching profession, in fact, in some shape or other, must be the officials of the Government. In other words, education can then only be most effective and most beneficial, when there is a national system of education. And I mean, by a national system, not one which deals merely with schools for the lower classes, as if they only constituted the nation or people, but I mean one which undertakes to regulate the education of all classes of the community, from the highest to the lowest, not altogether it may be irrespective of the wealth and position of the people, but based mainly on the natural differences of intellectual power in young people. My time is too limited to enter into the subject fully: but I shall attempt briefly to prove that education cannot be satisfactory and complete, and that it is impossible to obtain the best men for teachers, unless by combination on the part of the nation; and I assume that the most accessible form of combination open to the whole nation is presented by the existing machinery of representatives and government.

I maintain first, then, that education cannot be given with the most beneficial effect, unless by systematic combination on the part of the community. The demonstration of this point is one on which you, of all men, are best able to judge, and I appeal to you fearlessly in confirmation of my opinion, for I base it on educational experience. It seems to me that for the highest purposes of education it is essential, unless in a few exceptional cases, for the most part the result of previous carelessness, that the education be given to pupils in classes. If you wish to educate certain faculties, and impress certain portions of knowledge on the mind for life, it seems to me that that can be best effected when you have a class of a certain size. It must not be too small, nor must it be too large, though in certain cases the largeness of a class is not a disadvantage, provided all the pupils are well matched. I shall take an extreme case to illustrate my position. Suppose an average teacher advertises that he intends to set up a school, but, going on the limited and exclusive system, he will not admit more than five, each to pay £100. Well, then, five come, but it so happens that the five are at quite different stages, and have minds of different capacity. Accordingly he has to arrange his pupils into five classes, one boy in each; and if he limits himself to five hours' teaching, long enough for a vigorous exercise of his intellect, each boy has one hour of the teacher. Now I say that this one hour of the boy, or two hours, or whatever he may get, will not be so beneficial to him as it would be if he formed a member of a class of twenty or thirty pupils nearly equal to him in most respects. For, first, the boy has no stimulus by measuring himself against his equals. Then the teacher has no opportunity to vary his teaching by repeating the same subject in different ways with different boys. Thirdly, no special call is made on the boy's power of voluntary attention, one of the best results of a good education, and yet necessarily totally neglected where the boy is either alone or with comparatively few. Fourthly, the boy has no chance of seeing the same subject in the various lights in which it will strike boys of different characters. He cannot profit either by the merits or defects of others. And, fifthly, he loses all the benefit of one of the most active agents in educating,—sympathy with others. I am dealing here, you will notice, not with the monetary aspect of this question, nor with the influence which companionships at school will have in after life, but simply with the question as it bears directly on the education of the pupil. And in harmony with what I have now laid down, I should maintain that the larger a school is, the

greater is the chance that the education will be thorough, provided the teaching power is kept up in proportion to the number of pupils. The larger the number of pupils in a school is, the more exactly can they be assorted into the classes perfectly suitable to them, and with greater ease can the teaching power be brought to bear on them. Now, in the vast majority of cases, when education is left to mere chance, it is impossible to get the right assortment of pupils. The classes will be too small or too large, they will be badly assorted, and difficulties in educating them to the full extent possible will be needlessly created.

But, secondly, I do not think that education can be complete without a national system. I shall explain what I mean. Some people hold the *Cam* doctrine in regard to education. They think that the parents should see to the education of their children, and that nobody has any further concern or interest in the matter. Sometimes they go the length of modifying their doctrine a little, and think that perhaps very poor parents should be assisted in educating their children, and that children who have no parents, or merely nominal parents, should also be educated at the public expense. I go a great deal further than this. I maintain that in a community each citizen is bound to feel an interest in all his fellow-citizens, and that all are associated together in a close communion, in consequence of which real good does not come to one without affecting all. For instance, I may not be a proprietor of land, but nevertheless it is a benefit to me that the land should be cultivated to the utmost, and so I have an interest also in the prosperity of our manufacturers. If I have thus an interest in our material prosperity, assuredly I ought to have a greater interest in our spiritual prosperity. Now there is continually born into the country a vast amount of spiritual force. Is it not right that every encouragement should be given to the thorough cultivation of this spiritual power? This spiritual power does not belong to one class exclusively. It appears among rich and poor. The primary duty of cultivating this power rests on the parents, but when the parents are unable, and yet willing, unquestionably it is at once the duty and privilege of the community to present the highly gifted student with the means of prosecuting his studies. Now this is impossible without something like a national system in one shape or another. If education is to be left to mere adventure, class schools rise up on every hand, one set for people that can afford so much, another set for people that cannot give so much, and so down through varying shades. The country is divided into infinitesimal factions from its earliest days, and class feels irritated against class because there is no intercommunion, and no rising from a lower to a higher through education, whatever be the intellectual power of the pupil. The result of such a system must inevitably be a violent outburst of the lower classes, led by men of great but uncultured intellectual power. Happily this is far from being the case in our country. We have in our universities national institutions which are so framed that they are open to all, even the poorest, provided they have talent enough for it. But in our city schools we have gone far from the old Scottish opinion and sentiment. Class schools of every kind have been set up, one set of our people has been systematically trained to look down on another, and hence un-national rivalries and contests. And the one cure for this is, that our schools shall be organized on the same principles as our universities, that they shall be open to all, and fit for all who are fit for them.

And, thirdly, it is impossible that teachers can have their proper position, or, in other words, that the best men can be procured for the teaching profession, unless some national system be adopted. In regard to this matter, there prevail in many quarters opinions which are totally repugnant to common sense. A considerable number look on education as an article of trade, and they imagine that it should be left to regulate itself by the laws of free trade. It is amazing that people should ever imagine such a thing as this, for fact and reason alike present the most palpable contradictions to it. If it were an article of trade, how is it that its price varies to such an extent over this country, that in some places you will get an hour of Latin for 2s. 6d., in others for 7s. 6d., in others for sums varying from one pound to ten pounds, and that frequently the hour's Latin for the ten pounds is the worst teaching of the whole. Here surely is a curious fact for political economists, a proof at any rate that the matter does not regulate itself in a very satisfactory manner. But when you look at the nature of education, then the free trade theory appears in tenfold absurdity. First of all, every one knows that it is of the greatest consequence to make an ample supply of education where there is no demand for it, the want of a demand being the surest sign that there is a strong need for it. Secondly, the educator feels that he is bound by moral obligation to educate, whenever he has the power, without price. Say, for instance, that a poor boy of uncommon powers is presented to me. Now, in regard to such a boy, I would at once feel it my duty and my privilege to educate him to the utmost, if it were within my power to do so, though he should never pay me a farthing. Thirdly, a teacher has only a certain limited amount of educative power within him, which he cannot delegate to others. He can teach only a certain number, and only for a certain portion of the day effectively. So that really the teacher has none of the chances of trade. He cannot give his teaching power to assistants. It is the man himself that educates. There is no such thing, then, as capital in education. Of course some may tell me that men have made first rate commercial speculations in the teaching line. But I simply answer that, so long as the public wish to deceive themselves, and to act foolishly, men may make a thriving speculation out of anything, whether it be spirit-rapping, or learning