

upon some theme more or less removed from the sphere of your daily work. There is something too professional about the spectacle of one who is himself a teacher talking to teachers about teaching. We teachers are too much a class by ourselves, and it is almost a pity, from one point of view at least, that the outside world should imagine that we can never come together without wanting to discuss problems of child study, the proper grading of subjects and classes, the reform of the school curriculum, or some other of the multifarious conundrums about which educational authorities are always loudly disputing, while all the time the school mill goes slowly grinding on. But this is the President's address, and as such it must embody a kind of pedagogical stock-taking, noting the points in which progress is being made, and drawing upon these for reflections which may help to encourage teachers in their onerous but at the same time honourable calling,—without failing to mention matters in regard to which improvement is still to be sought. For we must remember that we are responsible not only to ourselves as educational experts, but also to that wider body of outside critics who know—or pretend to know—whether we are really producing what we claim to produce in our schools, and who do not generally hesitate to state their opinions.

Four or five years' apprenticeship as a member of the Protestant Committee has helped to make me tolerably familiar with the machinery of our educational government. It has also enabled me to realize more strongly than ever that all the efforts of official administration are liable to be frustrated unless they are seconded by intelligent effort on the part of those on whom the working of the system really depends, the school commissioners, the inspectors, the teachers, and last but not least the pupils themselves. The machinery is all well enough in its way; but we must look inside the machinery; we must invoke the aid of the spirit within the wheels. And here it is mainly to the teachers that our sympathies go out, especially to the teachers in rural districts, those who for a mere pittance undertake from year to year what Wordsworth calls "the pains and faithful care of unambitious schools." We all know—college-bred men no less than others—their trials and difficulties, and the hard conditions they have to face, conditions more discouraging,