

true is it of a group of individuals pursuing the same calling? Is there any better reason why fruit growers' associations, or dairy-mens' associations, or bee-keepers' conventions, should exist, than that teachers may meet to benefit by each other's experience? Not until teaching is an exact instead of an experimental science can we dispense with such meetings.

They direct attention to improved methods of discipline.—As the tendency of all mechanical contrivances is to accomplish desired results with the greatest economy of force, so the tendency of all good discipline is to secure right conduct with the least display of power. There is an endless variety in human character, and anyone who has the responsibility of working for eternity in shaping the character of youth needs all the help he can secure from those engaged like himself. No matter how exact the science of education may become, there will still be need of mutual help in developing the character of our school children by the discipline that will secure the highest result with the least exercise of physical force. One of the few principles that seems to be recognized as bearing on this matter is that the discipline that leads the child to control its own actions is that which is best fitted for developing the man into a self-governing being.

They tend to more extensive and accurate knowledge of the subjects taught.—There is no assembly of teachers where we do not find specialists who are masters of certain subjects, though they may be deficient in others, while there may be many who are deficient in every subject. Opportunity is afforded to the former class to enlarge upon their pet subjects, and to the latter class to reap benefit from them, without the tedious labour of sowing, and to perfect their knowledge by their learning and experience. They find out their own defects, and go back to their labours with the sad though profitable reflection that there are many much abler teachers than themselves. They come to the meeting a good exemplification of the poet's words,
 "Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much."
 They leave it, proving that

"Wisdom is humble that she knows no more."

They tend to mutual improvement.—A number of intelligent men and women cannot be five minutes together before they begin to react upon one another. Each one's experience becomes the property of all. Peculiarities of mind disappear by the friction accompanying frequent intercourse. This pruning of unsightly branches tends to more vigorous growth of what remains. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." And what better opportunity can arise for this than a well-conducted teachers' meeting?

They develop a professional spirit.—The lack of this has been a great drawback to the advancement of teaching as a profession. It can never receive proper recognition until its members shew that it deserves it; and this, few of them have any desire to do. The *esprit de corps* that is growing up amongst teachers it will be their own fault if they do not foster; for they have an invaluable auxiliary in the local associations. The more it grows, the more important will the profession of teaching become; for it, like any other calling, is just what its members make it. The teacher who whines that his social position is not sufficiently recognized, will never have it recognized by whining; it is an unmistakable way of telling the world that he is not the man to whom to accord any higher position.

We have said this much to justify teachers' meetings, without forgetting that they have serious faults. The chief one is the lack of business-like management that often prevails. The members are dilatory in starting the business of the meeting, and when it is started there is too often a vast amount of time wasted in discussing unimportant subjects, to the neglect of more serious business. Even the Provincial Association is not free from this fault; we remember a good part of an afternoon's sitting wasted in discussing the meaning of a few lines from Cowper. Teachers must remember that they are not in their own school-rooms, where the consideration of even irrelevant trifles must have some place in the training of the young, but in a meeting of persons who have assembled for mutual help in the serious business of