

Educational Weekly

VOL. IV.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 26TH, 1886.

Number 84.

The Educational Weekly

Edited by T. ARNOLD HAULTAIN, M.A.

TERMS: Two Dollars per annum. Clubs of three, \$5.00. Clubs of five at \$1.60 each, or the five for \$8.00. Clubs of twenty at \$1.50 each, or the twenty for \$30.00.

New subscriptions may begin at any time during the year.

Payment, when sent by mail, should be made by post-office order or registered letter. Money sent in unregistered letters will be at the risk of the senders.

The date at the right of the name on the address label shows to what date the subscription is paid. The change of this date to a later one is a receipt for remittance.

Subscribers desiring their papers to be discontinued are requested to give the publishers timely notification.

In ordering a change of address, or the discontinuance of the paper, the name of the post-office to which the paper is sent should always be given.

Rates of advertising will be sent on application.

Business communications and communications intended for the Editor should be on separate papers.

NOTE.—Attention is directed to the fifth of the above paragraphs: that timely notification is requested from those desiring the discontinuance of the paper. Subscribers are reminded that publishers are permitted by law to charge till all arrears are cleared off.

PUBLISHED BY

THE GRIP PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO.,

TORONTO, CANADA.

JAMES V. WRIGHT, General Manager.

TORONTO, AUGUST 26, 1886.

We take the following from the *Canadian Baptist*:—Our readers may not agree with every one of its propositions; but it contains many truths admirably expressed.

Is public school teaching a profession? was one of the questions which came up indirectly at the meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Association, last week. There is a good deal involved in the question. It is not, of course, easy to define exactly what are the marks of a profession as distinct from any other occupation, yet we all know pretty well what we mean by the term.

"Teaching a profession?" we fancy many of our readers exclaiming, "why, certainly, it is one of the very first of the professions in usefulness and dignity." From one point of view the answer is incontrovertible. Teaching ranks among

the very highest professions, if we have regard to the qualifications needful to make a true teacher. The rare qualities of mind and heart; the careful and thorough culture, intellectual, moral, and social, which are indispensable to a teacher of the highest type, are at least equal to those required in any other profession, not excepting even the ministry.

When we think, again, of the important interests entrusted to the teachers of our children; the preciousness and delicacy of the material upon which it is their daily duty to operate; the close relations which these operations bear to the future well-being of society and state, we cannot deny their claims to all the influence and dignity which, by common consent, attach to the foremost of the professions. We, as parents, put into their hands our dearest and most precious possessions, realizing, if we are thoughtful, as we should be, that the future of our loved ones, for this life and the life to come, must be largely affected by the character and influence of those who have the training of their plastic natures. The State, too, in sending forth the great army of teachers to train up those who are to be its future citizens, entrusts them with a commission of the very first importance. They have vastly more to do than any other persons, parents only excepted, and, in very many cases, not even parents excepted, with determining the character of the future citizens, and so of the nation itself.

And, yet notwithstanding all this, there were teachers found to stand up in the Convention and say in effect: "We are not members of a profession. Society does not accord to us either the remuneration or the social consideration it bestows freely upon the members of the other learned professions. It is an unpleasant truth, but it is better to look disagreeable truths fair in the face."

We fear, from their own point of view, those who spoke thus were not far astray. How is it, readers of the *Baptist*, in your communities? Do the men and women whom you entrust with the sacred duty of

moulding the minds and manners and morals of your children, take rank in your estimation and that of your neighbours with your minister, or even with your lawyer or doctor? Do you give them the same social consideration? Are you willing to pay them on as liberal a scale?

Perhaps some one may say, or think, if he does not care to say, that the average public school teacher does not stand on a level intellectually and socially with the average minister, or lawyer, or doctor. If this is so, whose is the fault? Surely in view of the nature of the teacher's work, and the close and constant contact into which they are brought with your children, and we should hope with yourselves, they ought to be the peers in every respect of the members of any profession. But in this democratic country the people have ultimately the management of all such matters in their own hands. You can have just as much talent, just as much culture, just as much refinement, we had almost said—would it be very far astray?—just as much Christian manliness or womanliness in your teacher as you determine to have, are careful to insist upon and willing to pay for.

Thus the blame for any deficiencies must fall primarily upon parents and citizens themselves. Secondly it rests upon the School Trustees, the people's agents. Do your Trustees put up the positions of teachers of your children to be competed for, as has been said, in a kind of Dutch auction, and knocked down to the lowest bidders who can pass muster with the Department? Do they in their advertisements in the papers ask candidates to state salary required, hoping thus to take advantage of some poor fellow's need and save you a few cents apiece in taxes? If so, you and they are clearly those who are doing all in their power to degrade the teacher's calling far below the dignity of the profession, and to fill the school-houses with the uneducated and the incompetent, or with the time-server who is making the work a stepping-stone to what they regard as the professions.