

society with its calls and obligations, and as citizens of a dominion, in the government of which each of them has to take an interest and a share, they can only acquit themselves to the extent of their powers when their minds have been duly disciplined, their characters moulded under the best influences, and their memories stored with the choicest thought and richest experience of past ages. It is true that the educator is of necessity compelled, in the first place, and chiefly, to remember that his pupils will have to go out into the world to earn a livelihood. His efforts must, therefore, be directed to that end. Time, energy and talent must be generously expended by him that his charge may be adequately provided with the mental equipment required for the various avocations which are open to them. But his highest conception of his duty ought not to be to send out from his school farmers, mechanics or tradesmen, but youths endowed with a disciplined intelligence, trained in habits of order, accuracy and observation, and with hearts responsive to the touch of generous emotions, and aglow with an enthusiasm for the good and the true.

Were this ideal realized we would not be compelled to listen to so much unfavorable criticism of our education. But so long as the teacher holds his present relationship to his profession (if we may call it so), so long as he enters upon his duties without thorough preparation for their discharge, and performs them mechanically, without enthusiasm and without sympathy, we cannot expect that the results will be commensurate with our desires. We grant that there are many teachers doing good work, and that the normal schools are conducted with ability, fidelity and zeal, but the conditions under which they exist and operate are not favorable to the attainment of a high degree of excellence. The normal schools have to undertake the education of the student-teachers in studies which ought to have been completed at an earlier period of their career, and thus to devote time to ordinary school-work which could be more advantageously spent in professional training. An intermittent attendance at the district school, a term at the normal school and perhaps a year at one of the high schools or academies form, unquestionably, a very limited period in which to furnish one with all that is indispensable to such a vocation as that of the teacher.

But few of our teachers propose making it their profession. It is a business to which they betake themselves for the purpose of saving money and when that object is accomplished they abandon it forever. They only regard it as an easy means by which they may assist themselves in their ambition to become

lawyers, doctors, ministers or merchants. Can they be expected, then, to exhibit a painful anxiety to make themselves accomplished teachers or to exhaust their energies in the schoolroom, when they know that their occupation is only temporary, and look forward with pleasure to the time when they can leave it? And yet we are free to confess that some of the best teaching, of which we have had experience, has been done under these circumstances. But these are not the conditions under which education can flourish. Frequent changes of teachers hastily prepared are not conducive to progress. Until steps are taken to render the teaching profession more permanent the same shortcomings will be observed, the same disinclination of able men to make it their life work.

And how is this feature of permanency to be secured? Only in one way, and that is by offering greater pecuniary inducement. The teaching profession must be able to compete, in its highest positions at any rate, with the other professions. Orators exhaust their vocabulary in extolling the advantages of education and magnifying the office of the teacher, and yet when the most distinguished in the profession are supposed to be well paid for their labor their remuneration is far short of what is earned by inferior men in the other professions. We remember hearing an eminent public man say, respecting a large public school in which the discipline and teaching were very unsatisfactory, that "We ought to have at the head of this school an accomplished and scholarly man, a man of character and force, a man endowed with great magnetic power and gifted with high executive ability, whose influence would be felt in every class-room and whose word would be law to every pupil." There are men in the profession possessed of these attributes, men of singleness of heart and devotedness of aim, willing to spend and be spent in an occupation which they love and to which they lend lustre, but we question the justice of the opinion which regards such a man well paid by a salary of eight hundred dollars a year. But men who answer to the ideal head-master above described, do not, as a rule, remain in the profession, but carry their talents into a field where they can earn thousands instead of hundreds. And it is but right that the public should learn at once, as they must sooner or later, that the efficiency of their educational system depends upon the men and women who are the teachers under it, that the steady drain on them by other professions cripples effort and retards progress, that if the moral and intellectual advancement of our country is to be assured our best teachers must be induced to remain in the profession, and that these objects can only be attained by a more generous support of the teacher.