

It must be admitted that the Public School system is inflexible, as at present organized. It is true that there is more or less incompetence on the part of teachers. What then? Is not this true of all systems intended for general application and of all persons who attempt to administer them? Yet is not the system immensely better than nothing? Is it not indispensable? Can the keenest critic devise a substitute? We think not.

Let the general public understand, once for all, that we have no more intelligent, keen, bright, practical profession in the community than the fraternity of teachers! Is the system unadaptable to individual cases? No one ascertains the fact quite so soon as the teacher himself. And no one is quite so ready to apply an exceptional remedy to an exceptional case as the teacher whose very proximity gives him even a better opportunity than is enjoyed by the child's parent to discover a need of it. It is true, also, that teachers as a class, are rather better informed of their own defects than the persons who criticize them. The general public rants about them, but the average teacher mourns over them and tries to remedy them. Hence these conventions of teachers, with annual, semi-annual, or quarterly sessions. By whom are teachers as a class or the system itself more severely criticized than in the discussions of these gatherings—or more intelligently or by more competent persons? The critic who drops into these conventions finds himself a child. His immense knowledge in the way of defects and failures in teaching proves to be ignorance itself.

The most important educational need of the times is that the teacher and his constituency should be brought together, face to face, and brought into friendly, harmonious relations. The teacher needs the co-operation and aid not simply of the parent and

guardian, but of the general public. If he does his work well, to the best possible advantage, he does not serve the parent alone, but the entire community. One good, intelligent, honest, faithful, devoted teacher does more for the community in which he lives and for society than a whole police force can do. He does more for the protection of the citizen and of his property from molestation or outrage. One public school teacher who is faithful in discharging his professional obligations, is doing more for the country and its present and future welfare than a thousand professional politicians. Who does not know this? It follows, then, that the general public—the people of the community in mass—should be the fast friends and the earnest, industrious helpers of the fraternity of teachers. They should consult them—not *in-sult* them—associate with them, talk with them, ascertain their most pressing needs, and do what they can, individually and in a general way, to meet them.

We must give our people some credit for doing something in the way of school visitation, but they should do more of it; we must give them credit for kind feelings towards the schools, but it should find more frequent expression. The critic fires himself off and makes himself known, but the person who has no fault to find has nothing to say—and says it. We are well aware that the masses are proud of the public schools, but this pride and general interest are only manifested once a year, at commencements. These manifestations should be oftener made, to the encouragement and strengthening of the teacher, who has a right to criticize his critics for their shortcomings. Yet, with full justification and right, he is wiser than to do it. He usually suffers in silence and strives to attain a general state of personal and professional excellence that will place him beyond the reach of