

demand. Holding the view, which cannot be successfully controverted, that the school system is not a district, village, town, city or county system, but a State institution, maintained and controlled by the State for general purposes, and administered through local officers and agents, only for convenience; and because that is the American plan for the administration of affairs, it follows that it is the business of the State to pursue a course which will result in the greatest number of teachers who are specially qualified for the service, and discriminate in their favor when filling positions.

It is not only proper, but it is entirely feasible to do so. Before candidates have commenced teaching they will willingly pursue a required course of instruction and training, if it is afterward to prove of any advantage to them. Why does not the legislature pass a bill, providing that after January 1, 1894, no teacher should be employed in any city or village, having a superintendent of schools, who had not completed a high school course, and had at least a year of training in a normal school or a training class? There is but one reason and that is, because the opportunities for professional training are not generally available when they ought to be. This principle is being uniformly and invariably observed in Cleveland and some other large cities, where the circumstances are certainly trying and the obstacles are great and innumerable. It is entirely feasible. If we are to have good schools everywhere it must have more general recognition, and if teaching is to be classed with professional employments it must be upheld and enforced by every one who would make it so. This then is the next step, namely, that all teachers must be liberally educated and then specially and professionally trained and that no others shall be employed so long as such are available.

PUBLIC TREATMENT OF TEACHERS.

Teachers are *quasi* public officers. They are in the public service, carrying on the public business for the attainment of a public end. They are employed by and are amenable to public officers. Their social and professional standing is largely determined by the treatment which the public accords to them. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. Individuals sometimes possess the qualities which are stronger than circumstances and which enable them to break through the barriers which encompass them. But the great mass will occupy just such relative position as merit compels, or as public sentiment, regulated by public law, accords to it. The merits of the teaching force, the right to increased social and professional respect, will be likely to advance as there is opportunity and incentive. When the public encourages more liberal attainments, by rewarding them as similar attainments in other lines of mental activity are rewarded; when it makes it advantageous to men and women to devote their lives to this employment, by making employment permanent during competency and good behavior, not by the grace of a board or a committee, but by right, there will be a teaching profession which will not suffer seriously in contrast with the other professions.

I once asked a school superintendent of twenty years' standing in one place, how he managed to hold his place so long. He facetiously replied: "When I have managed to be elected one year I immediately set about seeing where the votes are coming from to elect me the next year." All are not driven to this; many would not resort to it if they could, but the extent to which school officers have to be coddled and are coddled by teachers, in order to maintain their situations, is enough to materially interfere with