

And I may add the "battered seats" might well be preserved as relics of the inquisition of the nineteenth century, for shambles and stocks were comfortable positions compared with sitting all day on the straight-back, ill-fitting benches of most district schools. As a remedy for this, the department have already done much to improve the condition of things, but let them go further still and provide plans and specifications all complete for school houses to cost from \$500 to \$1500. A book of designs is all very well, but in rural parts architects are not numerous and school architecture does not often come in the way of the country builder. Let the department insist that these plans shall be carried out according to the financial ability of the district, and that all new buildings shall conform to them both as to building and equipment, and the old ones be made to do so as speedily as possible. Let at least half an acre be laid out in school grounds, planted with trees and kept neat and attractive. Let the health and comfort of the pupil be the first consideration, and though there may be some grumbling on the part of the ratepayers, grumbling is proverbial with them, and while complaining of the department and school board, the crops and the weather will be having a rest.

Next, the teacher. This I am aware is dangerous ground, and, as I look around on these bright and intelligent faces, one would be exacting indeed who would venture to suggest any improvement in this direction. But let us analyze the subject a little. Of what is the average district school teacher composed? Of flesh and bones as we are, it is true; but how is she fitted for her work? A few years at some other district school, then a few months at the village academy, then a second or third class diploma before some local board of examiners, and she takes up the most responsible and God-given task it is possible to perform, that of training the young mind, moulding the character and shaping the destiny of the youth of the land, the future fathers and mothers of our nation, for good and ill. But alas! instead of entering upon this work with this high purpose before her, is it not too often the fact that her object in teaching is to find occupation for a few months or years, as the case may be, until *her* destiny comes along and she shall set up a school of her own. Well, I am at a loss to suggest a remedy for this. We could not wish that all lady teachers should remain in single blessedness for the sake of teaching. If such had been the law, my own home would have been deprived of one of them, but I do think that those entering upon this work should do so from a love of it and should be specially fitted and