

ligation in the schoolmaster's position, if we accept the very highest, from which even the merchant, in his transactions, is comparatively free, or at least feels himself so; or the professional man, who receives his fee for some distinct single exercise of his craft; the *quid pro quo* is more measurable and distinct in the exchange of goods for money, and money for goods, than where the moral is paid for by the material, the uncertain by the certain, and where not one parent in twenty feels quite sure that he has got his money's worth for his money. However well the schoolmaster may feel that he has earned and over-earned the payment, his consciousness of the parent's uncertainty often acts disagreeably on his own mind, and, indeed, is one of the almost inevitable pains of his position. Then, again, whatever Bacon, Wotton, and the rest may have said, men, and especially proud men, desire to mix with and to struggle with their coevals, and dislike the idea of perpetual engagement with the immature—a feeling at which no one can wonder; and thus it is that, though education is a topic popular and fashionable, in which some of our social and political leaders really feel, and all affect, interest—on which our statesmen from the Premier downwards, give amateur lectures all over the country during parliamentary recesses—yet, however great the appetite for talking about education, its duties and responsibilities, its practice is about the very last employment to which most of the lecturers would resort. It is much the same with the man of letters; he likes to view his scholarship as a grace, not as a stock-in-trade; and, if he is ever a schoolmaster, it is generally his necessities that make him so; school labours interfere with his insatiable yearning for endless self-instruction. He, indeed, often scatters throughout his

works invaluable hints on the disposition of youth, on its capacities, its tempers, its training. Scarcely an English moralist can be mentioned who has not done so—hints, many of them, never picked up by the drudging, but often unreading, schoolmasters for whose guidance they were intended. Look at La Bruyère, Rousseau, De Staël, Jean Paul, Lamartine, Souvestre, and a host of others, by whose golden sentences on youth and its discipline the majority, even of our upper teachers, seem never to have been made one whit the wiser; for it is only here and there a man who, after the toils of the day over print and paper, has energy to labour on, on his own account, or courage to withdraw from his fireside enjoyments for any purpose of private study. And here it may be observed that, as a high appreciation of the advance of other minds can scarcely be conceived to exist without an intense desire of the improvement of one's own, so every schoolmaster of a really high order makes a sacrifice for which it is impossible to make a compensation approaching to adequacy. Even the pleasure of seeing his pupils advance, one by one, far on paths of honour is not always without a certain sadness, such as one may be expected to feel who is ever giving passports to a land of promise and beauty into which he himself is never destined to enter.

Another reason of prejudice against the schoolmaster and his office, not much in itself, because often shared by him with the members of some other professions, but considerable when added to the sum of objections, is that he is generally poor—without capital, except his education; or with a very small capital. We know upon how many minds in England this is likely to tell, and there is no denying the fact or averting its consequences upon the vulgar estimate of the schoolmaster's profession. We simply state