

Normal Schools not only affect, materially and beneficially, the common School education of a country, but all its educational institutions, whether Academic or Collegiate. And if the intelligence, the industry, the refinement, the virtue, and the happiness of any nation are, as we know them to be, inseparably connected with its state of education,—if these rise or fall just as its educational institutions prosper or decline, then it is clear that Normal Schools possess an importance and value incalculably great. But to be more particular.

1. Normal Schools are of benefit because they supply the place where young men and women of requisite qualification may acquire the science and art of teaching.

There are to be found in every country talented and promising young persons, possessed of a natural aptness for teaching, and eagerly desirous to be engaged in the work. By diligence and perseverance, they obtain a pretty extensive knowledge of the branches usually taught in common Schools; they pass with credit the examination entitling them to teach and to draw a certain amount from the public funds, and they start a School in apparently propitious circumstances. But scarcely have they commenced operations when they find themselves literally encompassed with difficulties, and they are now thoroughly persuaded that something more is necessary for a Teacher than a bare knowledge of the branches requiring to be taught, even a knowledge of the best method of organizing, governing, and managing a School. Some become at the very outset disheartened, and, as soon as they conveniently can, retire from the employment altogether. Others resolutely hold on, and, after a series of experiments which are annually made at the expense of no ordinary amount of pain and drudgery, as well as oftentimes at the expense of the health, faculties, and affections of the children placed under their charge, they succeed in establishing their claim to respectability, if not to efficiency, in teaching. Now Normal Schools are designed as they are fitted for the obviating of these very difficulties,—and thereby enabling such individuals to commence at once the real work of teaching, instead of going through a process of painful and, oftentimes, of fruitless experimenting.

2. Normal Schools open an honorable and useful profession to the deserving and industrious young females of the population.

It is now, we believe, generally admitted by experienced educationists that female Teachers are more successful than male, at least, in primary Schools, that is, in Schools composed of children, from five to eight or nine years of age. Their moral influence is greater. The temperament, the mental constitution, and the moral impress of the males, are oftentimes not of that order which fit them for enduring the disciplinarian perplexities of the School-room. They accordingly require much more physical force in preserving order, and not unfrequently contract the habit of speaking harshly to maintain their dignity and authority. Female teachers, on the other hand, go into the School-room

with a natural fitness, both mental and moral, which enable them to control the tempers and the affections of the young, and to win from them the homage of kind and respectful deportment and attention. But the intellectual influence of female Teachers is not a whit less. Young men generally address the understanding, and oftentimes by their sternness and commanding tone, shut the hearts of their pupils to the important truths they communicate. Female Teachers, on the other hand, ply the affections as well as the understanding of their scholars; or rather, through the influence of the affections they get to the understandings of their pupils. And when we consider that Normal Schools are admirably fitted for the improvement of females, for qualifying them for such an honorable position in society, and for such a field of usefulness, we are furnished with another substantial proof of their value.

3. Normal Schools send forth, as a body, the best qualified Teachers.

We are far from saying that there are no qualified Teachers but those who emanate from Normal Schools;—such an assertion were altogether at variance with the past history of education, and even with the very existence of Normal Schools themselves. If teaching in the highest and most comprehensive sense of the term requires a peculiar aptness of mind, an innate enthusiastic ardour for the employment, those who possess such speciality of gift will arrive at proficiency in the art, and that altogether irrespective of Normal Schools. And such individuals have existed and will continue to exist. What then we mean to assert is this, that those Teachers trained at efficient Normal Schools, are, as a body, better qualified than those who have not enjoyed such an opportunity. This is a position which no sound educationist, no man of intelligence who has observed the workings of Normal Schools in those countries, where they have been for a lengthened period in operation, will venture to call in question. And this is not mere conjecture. It may be verified and ratified by a thousand facts; and what more substantial than the fact that not one Normal School has yet been able to meet the applications made to it for Teachers. What a testimony this to the universally admitted benefit of Normal Schools!

4. Normal Schools tend largely to make teaching a permanent employment.

It is an undeniable fact that many, too many, of those who betake themselves to teaching, do so, not as a calling, a mission, or a business for life, but as a kind of stepping-stone to a more elevated position, or to a more lucrative situation, or, it may be, as a kind of *dernier resort* because of their failure in every other pursuit. And when the opportunity presents itself, when a situation more congenial to their likings or more remunerative in its prospects offers, they abandon their calling without the least compunction or regret. And is not the effect of such a course detrimental to the cause of education,—does it not lower and degrade the profession? Now we know no remedy better fitted for the removal of this evil than Normal Schools. By attendance at these Seminaries such will