

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOW TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF THE TEACHER.

ONE of the questions most earnestly debated at the Provincial Teachers' Association for some years has been, How can the Social and Intellectual Status of the Teacher be raised to a level with that of the Learned Professions?

Let me briefly indicate one point on which the steady and united influence of the teachers ought to be exerted until it is secured, the possession of which would do much to elevate the status of the teacher, namely, the establishment of a Chair of Education in the Provincial University, or, at least, a Lectureship similar to that at Oxford and Cambridge, filled by a distinguished educationist whose lectures would embrace the history, science and art of education, with some of the city schools placed under his control in which the theory expounded in his lectures would be put into practice by skilful teachers. Let all High School and first-class teachers receive their professional training under his care.

Let the students also attend lectures of other professors on Psychology, Physiology and other subjects bearing directly or indirectly on their professional duties. Let the student complete a course of study and practical training equally liberal and as thorough as the learned professions. Then must this section of the profession occupy a position of moral weight and influence second to no other profession in the land. It is clear that until we deserve equal honour we have no right to expect it, no matter how important the function we are

called on to perform, seeing we are satisfied to perform it with less skill, culture and ability than other professions bring to bear on theirs. All these University trained teachers, participating in "the broader culture, the freer air and the higher aims" of the University, would do much to destroy the pedantry of the profession, and, receiving from this honoured source the attestation of their qualification for their profession, would do very much to elevate the social and intellectual status of the whole profession. Is it not a debt our Provincial University owes to the community to send forth from its halls men thoroughly equipped and trained in that art of which the University itself is the best exponent, and for the preservation of which it owes its very existence?

Permit me also to call the attention of my fellow-teachers to other two points on which, in my judgment, teachers would do well to bring their power and influence to bear: (1) Emphasize the recommendation of the Minister of Education embodied in his Annual Report for 1887 to County Boards, namely, "Boards should deal heroically with every candidate whose qualifications are not unmistakably high." The wisdom and need of this advice will be readily realized from the fact that out of fifty-five Model Schools twenty-five passed all the candidates, that is, out of 634 students in attendance none failed. (2) Is it not high time that the granting of permits should cease in the old and well-settled counties, seeing the supply of certificated teachers is far beyond the demand?

A. B. D.