

perhaps taking a bent that it will keep for life, is both gratifying and rewarding. In what other profession or occupation have you such noble work? With the exception of the preaching of the blessed word, there is no position in life where you can have higher aims or purer motives. But you may say, Does society generally hold it in this light? Is not the teacher's task an ill-requited and ill-remunerated one? There may be, and there is no doubt truth in this objection; but I venture to say that, in the opinion of all those whose opinion is worth respecting, it holds the esteem it ought to hold. Besides, if a profession is in itself eminently respectable, its not being fully recognized, or fully remunerated, is merely a temporary drawback, and its essential worth will inevitably place it, in the long run, in its right place in the social fabric. It is better to belong to a profession that is lightly esteemed, but is destined to obtain the highest repute, than to belong to one of high estimation, with little ground for its being so. In our own day, the position and emoluments of the schoolmaster have been immensely enhanced, and we have by no means come to the end. In foreign countries, the schoolmaster of even an elementary school is a man of acknowledged respectability. I lately took up a French A-B-C book, whose author had been decorated by the cross of the legion of honour for what by some may be considered his humble authorship. The French Government thereby acknowledge that the man who writes an excellent primer, stands on the same level in the useful social scale with one who storms a battery, or who administers law or medicine. The old maxim that to be respected you must be yourself respectable, holds in our profession with great force; and if you are respectable, you will have little cause to complain of want of respect.

I am one of those who consider that there are only two requisites for a teacher,—to know what he has to teach, and to be possessed of common sense. This last is considered essential to the successful dealing with our fellow-men, and I do not see that it can be otherwise in our dealings with the younger members of our race. To know when to cajole or to threaten, when to induce or to force, when to denounce or to praise, when to stand firm or to give way, when to pity or to punish, and when to be patient or to resent, is pretty much what makes the successful men of the world, and the same discernment cannot fail in our dealings with the young. To fancy, as some practically do, that they have a divine right to teach, independent of their personal merits and sensible behaviour, is to occupy a ridiculous and impossible position. The Normal Schools give the knowledge you require, and most valuable hints as to the best and easiest way of communicating it, but they cannot make you sensible, if you are not so already. A man who is not as careful, as just, as reasonable, and as kind in his dealings with the most inconsiderable of his pupils as he is with his fellow-man, will not make a good teacher. Without the requisite knowledge and attainments, the would-be teacher is an empiric; without the requisite common sense, he is a bungler.

But common sense, as applied to teaching, is a very vague term, and under it might be included all kinds of possibles. One or two instances taken from practice may illustrate what this common sense is. I would not, for instance, have any arrangement in a class or school that was not in itself reasonable, and commended itself to the pupils themselves. They observe it, because they think it proper and right, as well as commanded by the teacher. The course of study is manifestly entirely at the judgment of the master, and pupils will have no hesitation in implicitly following what he requires; it is only in parts of it that they can discover the design of the instructor. But what I refer to is the regulations for carrying out this course, the length of the lessons, and the injunctions as to order, which are quite within their judgment. Nowhere is the distinction between the real master and the would-be-one more palpable than in the absence of endless petty and really ineffectual regulations. The order is perfect, and yet scarcely a word is said about it. The half-order man legislates as follows: "No speaking," and then he frames a long list

of punishments according to the frequency of the offence; "No trifling with pencils and knives, or other things, and then an equally complicated arrangement; "You must look at me, or a stated misfortune will befall you; If you laugh, I'll flog you," and such like regulations, which one would think, from the result, were intended more to suggest than to cure the evils complained of. Then follows a long list of expostulations: "Did I not tell you so and so? if you do it again, I'll punish you." In the midst of a perfect uproar, the loud but ineffectual deliverance is given, "The next boy I find speaking, I'll do so and so to him," but the noise is thereby not a whit abated. Now, common sense would tell us that if a master has earnestly impressed his class with the importance of the work, and of his determination to do it, all these petty rules might be dispensed with. Boys are as good judges as the master as to what will hinder it, and will, without specification, avoid all such. The mention of them is almost a confession that the master expects them, and cannot prevent them, and that as the spirit of order is wanting, he will endeavour to make up by the letter of it. The power to impress a class with the necessity, pleasure, or importance of work, is the *sine qua non* of a teacher, and if he lacks it, he has manifestly mistaken his profession, for no amount of regulation and expostulation, or even of flogging, will supply its place.

Judging from my recollection of myself when I began teaching I should say that young teachers have an exaggerated notion of their own importance and dignity. They are always falling foul of this bit of mischief and that bit of carelessness, as an indignity specially aimed at them, and they must resent it with a high hand. The somewhat undignified, but very expressive phrase, "Grin and bear it," does not enter into their philosophy, but to each offence, real or imaginary, must be meted out its condign punishment. I can fancy such a scene as this in my early experience. A boy might say somewhat ill-naturedly, "It is not fair," at which I flared up and asked, "Do you know who I am? How dare you speak in that way? I'll teach you, sir, to show proper respect?" Observe the word sir, it is a grand monosyllable when a man is in the heroics. The end of the matter was that I vented my superfluous energy on his unfortunate palms, and after all he may have been right. Now if I had to deal with such a case, I should smile and ask how he thought so, listen patiently to what he said, shew him how it was fair if it was so, or apologise and rectify matters if it was not. I venture to say, that though the latter treatment is not so heroic, it is much more sensible, and the expression is less likely to occur again, from improvement on both sides. The fact is, that the less of such fiery dignity the master has, the safer is the dignity that he really has. If the boys have to deal with a man who asks nothing but would be given to the most unpretending, rebellion is impossible and unreasonable, and can excite no sympathy among their companions. A good-natured laugh, or a smart repartee, can do more to maintain a teacher's real dignity and usefulness, than getting into high-flown heroics. By such treatment of even genuine impudence, he shews himself a man far above the weakness and frivolity of the young; whereas, when he is thin-skinned, he places himself on the same platform.

I would say, also, that the young teacher is apt to punish too much and too severely; he has yet to learn that things will come right if he will only wait a bit. Understanding everything clearly himself, and giving what he considers a perfectly clear explanation of the various difficulties, he is apt to regard the boy who does not pick them up at once, as guilty of culpable stupidity and negligence. Now, such an accusation should be entertained with the greatest caution. It is not until you have given explanation after explanation, and illustration, that you can reasonably act on it. The fairness of such conduct is illustrated by what we find among those of larger growth. I remember when I was attending the late Dr. George Wilson's classes, a story illustrating this was told by that distinguished professor. He had been delivering a lecture on the diamond at the Philosophical Institution, which was illustrated, as all his lectures were, with a