

under many discouragements and after much honest and earnest labor; but still after all does the possession of those distinctions entitle us to be called literary? I trow not. Let us pass with a swift gleam of thought over the vast range of modern literature—not only that embodied in the English tongue, but that of the modern nationalities of Europe, of the German, French, Italian, Spanish and other peoples. Let us bring before our dazzled eyes Goethe and Schiller, Moliere and Voltaire, Dante and Petrarch, Cervantes and Caldevis. How many of us have read the works of these mighty giants of literature even in translations? Tracing our steps up the stream of time till we reach the period when English and German, French and Italian, Spanish and Portuguese were not; when the language of Cicero and Virgil, Horace and Livy was the form of speech of men of mind. Alas how meagre is our acquaintance with these giants of old, and with the even greater giants of Greek drama, of Greek eloquence, of Greek epic poetry. Passing all these then in review before the mind and humbly bowing the knee in awe and reverence as the matinee forms glide before us in shadowy outline we are compelled after all to confess that hitherto we have been but as children picking up here and there a pebble on the shore of the great sea of knowledge, in a word that as a class our teachers are not entitled to be called literary. Having stated our conviction, a conviction formed from a large induction of parts, that teachers are not in general literary, we come to the question—"Ought they to be so? What advantages would be gained if they were more distinguished as men of letters than they are?" In the first place I am sure it would greatly tend to raise their position in the eyes of the world. The teachers of Canada have been long spoken of as being a down-trodden, abject race, unable, or if able, careless to assert their dignity and importance. Contented with obscurity, when they ought to have had, and might have had if they had claimed it, a much higher standing. This accusation is in a great part true, much more in the past, however, than now. A change has begun to be wrought with regard to this matter. Teachers begin to see that to be properly esteemed, their real importance must be known. To show their

importance they must exhibit their strength—to be strong they must be united. Individual effort they see will not do. It is a mere expenditure of force without any result upon the elevation of the mass, but continued efforts with and common aims and common interests will eventually command a higher social standing. On the other hand men are now showing themselves more willing to listen to the claims of the teacher. The blessings of education were never so highly esteemed as now, and the dispensers of those blessings are receiving at the hands of the public a greater appreciation. The teacher, however, has himself much to blame for the comparative lowness of his own standing. He has not in the past approved himself worthy of a much higher place. He has not as a general thing kept pace with the advancement of the times. He has been moving, but his fellows have been moving faster. We do not at present speak of his professional attainments, his merely scholastic knowledge is in general not deficient; we speak now of the teacher as a man and a member of society, viewed in that light he has not generally progressed, other classes have acquired as much general knowledge and a better acquaintance with literature than he. That higher literary attainment will do much to elevate the teacher in the estimation of men can hardly be doubted. "Knowledge is power" it is said, it is also honor, being always regarded with honor. Literary acquirements have everywhere become the great passport to distinction. The noble lord and the humble worker, whether at desk or in the field, may be seen treading the same path. The community of letters is essentially republican, and presents no barrier to the admission within its pale of true merit, in whatever class it may be found. Lord Dufferin is a citizen of this grand republic, not because he is a lord or Governor-General of Canada, but because he is an author of repute, and able to express his thoughts by pen and tongue in terse and vigorous English, and Sangster, the poet of Canada, native born, inspired with the divine afflatus, although as humble toiler in a Government office, not only treads the outer court of the temple of "letters," but even ministers at her inmost shrine; and you teachers, ladies and gentlemen, if you but present a well-founded