

"No teacher should have under his charge a greater number of pupils than he can know personally and thoroughly. He should know each character as well as he does the subject upon which he is giving instruction, and should be able to lay his hand upon its every motive spring." So says an American educational writer in a recent article. Another writer controverts the position, claiming that it is not necessary that a teacher should know each pupil intimately, and that moral development depends upon the parent rather than the teacher. Passing over many exceptions that might be taken to the last proposition, we doubt seriously whether it is possible for the teacher to achieve the highest success in the more purely intellectual part of his work, or teaching proper, without an intimate knowledge of the mental habits and traits of his respective pupils.

The *Chicago Current* of Nov. 1st, says:—"The law of supply and demand does not operate among lawyers and physicians. It should not operate among teachers but they should be paid such wages as shall insure them a comfortable, cheerful existence whether there be a hundred clamorous teachers for every vacancy, or one teacher for a hundred vacancies. The State can, as it ought, abolish the law of supply and demand 'so far as teachers are concerned.'"

Whether or not the *Current* has indicated the true remedy, there can be no doubt that the starvation salaries, decreed by the school boards, are the bane of the public school system. It is these which more than any other, or all other causes combined, degrade the work to the low level of a stepping-stone to other professions in which "the law of supply and demand does not operate."

Miss E. P. Gould, in the *Boston Journal of Education*, cites a good illustration of the way in which a necessary punishment may sometimes be made to enforce a useful lesson. A lady teacher overheard one of her boys swearing at another in words that made her blood curdle. She immediately led him into a corner of the room to remain there until the school had been duly opened. Then, before a lesson was recited, she took him out before all the scholars and, then and there, washed out his mouth with a sponge wet in pure castile soap-suds which she had prepared; after which she urged earnestly and tenderly upon the boys the duty of keeping their mouths clean. Truly an effective way of converting an act of discipline into a moral object lesson.

"How can I preserve order in my class room, while going on with my teaching?" is an ever-recurring question, especially in the case of young teachers. One of the best answers we have seen in a sentence is, "See to it that each pupil has something to do and a motive for doing it." It will, no doubt, be found much easier to furnish the work than to apply the effectual motive. In order to do this the character of the individual pupil will have to be carefully studied. The conscientious teacher will aim always to use the highest and best motives that can be made available. The child's innate love of knowledge seems to be nature's own stimulus to study, and in the hands of a skilful teacher, can often be made wonderfully effective.

A recent writer argues in favor of the voice, as opposed to the bell, as an instrument for commanding attention in the school room. Much depends, we should say, upon the kind of voice, and this depends upon the kind of man or woman behind it. The human voice is a wonderfully expressive instrument. There is in its tones and inflections an indescribable something which reveals to the shrewd urchin's ear exactly what amount of mind and will power underlies it. It is not necessarily the loud, nor the high pitched, nor the threatening tone which carries weight, but the modulation which is born of conscious strength and quiet determination. The only way to attain this quality of voice is to cultivate the mental and moral qualities of which it is the natural expression. All blustering scolding, shouting and threatening are the outcome and confession of weakness on the part of the teacher, and are soon so understood and estimated.

During his visit to England to attend the meeting of the British Association in 1883, Dr. Dawson, the Principal of McGill College, Montreal, made a thorough study of the work of higher education for women, in connection with the British Universities. He has given the results of his inquiries to the public in a recent pamphlet. These results so far show that the women distribute themselves over the honor subjects very much as their male compeers do, and are equally fond of the older classical and mathematical studies. Of forty-eight Girton students forty-seven became teachers, to one entering another profession. Sir William says that the feeling among young ladies is rather against than in favour of co-education. We have no doubt the same would be true in Canada and elsewhere, but for the very reasonable fear on the part of lady students of being put off with inferior professors and appliances.

Prof. Tyndall, in the course of a recent lecture at the Birbeck Institution, on "My Schools and Schoolmasters," referring to his own experience as a teacher in Queenwood College, Hampshire, says:—

"At Queenwood I learned, by practical experience, that two factors went to the formation of a teacher. In regard to knowledge he must of course, be master of his work. But knowledge is not all. There may be knowledge without power—the ability to inform without the ability to stimulate. Both go together in the true teacher. A power of character must underlie and enforce the work of the intellect. There are men who can so rouse and energize their pupils—so call forth their strength and the pleasure of its exercise—as to make the hardest work agreeable. Without this power it is questionable whether the teacher can even really enjoy his vocation; with it I do not know a higher, nobler, more blessed calling than that of the man who, scorning the "cramming" so prevalent in our day, converts the knowledge he imparts into a lever to lift, exercise and strengthen the growing mind committed to his care."

Those are golden words. Every teacher may profitably ponder them, and ask himself to what extent he possesses that "power of character," and what he is doing daily to cultivate it.