

Men?" Are our teachers, ladies and gentlemen, generally of this kind? And, if not, ought they to be so? To the first I answer, No! To the second I answer, Yes. Men do not, as a rule, like to have the truth spoken concerning themselves, women still less so; in fact, we all have our sins and cherish our little failings. We are willing enough indeed, to confess in a general way that we have faults as others have, but beyond that we care not to go; we would rather not descend to particulars. Human nature is frail and erring, but it is also self-deceiving, it commits an evil deed and sins again by drawing a curtain over it to hide it from the eyes of men. But may not one of ourselves enter into judgment with us and open up unto us our failings. He may, but even he must do it tenderly. If he will apply the knife, he must handle it cautiously. If he will administer reproof he must just sweeten the bitter draught by acceptable words. No argument is required to prove the great importance of the profession of teaching to the highest interests of the community; and of the high moral standing which it occupies—the most useful man being in the long run the greatest man. Of all men then, the successful teacher is a great man. Still he is but man. He has failings, peculiarities and deficiencies as other men, and like the rest of his race he dislikes to have his faults told to him. There are some, indeed, who hold that this is the weakest point of the teacher's character. By such men, a schoolmaster has been looked upon as a little embodiment of self-sufficiency. "There struts a perfect man," we can hear them say in bitter mockery. There may in certain cases be truth in the assertion that teachers are self-important. Accustomed to rule and bear no rival near their throne, and finding none equal among those in school, they may sometimes forget to lay aside their school-face when they go out into the world. There are few however of this class, I am convinced, amongst us. Permit me then to be the friend, the one of yourselves, who will give sweet counsel in words of kindness, reproving without holding up to ridicule, speaking the whole truth in a spirit of gentleness and love. Who will do this in answering the question, are our teachers literary men? Before he deserves to be called literary, a man must have done more than obtained a mere smat-

tering of Latin and Greek. These are of great importance, indispensable as a foundation, but further than that they do not go. He only can lay claim to that title who has acquired a considerably extensive knowledge of the literature of his country past and present. Neither will the mere fact that he has read a certain number of books give him the right to a niche, however humble, in the great temple of letters. He cannot be said to know a country who has merely passed over its surface led by the swift impulse of almighty steam, but he who has threaded its intricacies, studied its features, examined its prominent beauties—and retains a lively intelligent remembrance of its points of interest. In like manner he is the truly literary man who has not only read extensively but who has in some degree made himself master of what he has read, who has learned to decide upon the genius and merits of different authors and to appreciate what is best in each. In short it is not dallying with the muses that will make a man literary. We must have reaped a harvest, rich, golden and abundant. The text must have been refined, the intellect strengthened, the judgment sharpened. The rude block of nature must have been polished by contact with minds of a higher order and must have become more graceful by that contact than it could have been without it. Let it not be said that we set up too high a standard. We do not expect or wish to see teachers become walking encyclopedias. We ask no more than what is within the reach of almost every teacher. So after all we look to the tendency more than to the amount of progress, to the direction of the text more than to the attainment made in that direction. The print may be scanty, but if it be of the right kind, we would accept it as sufficient to establish a rightful claim to the fair epithet—literary. Now, do teachers in general work up to this standard? Are there many who do? Not many, we are assured. Why, then, are there so few? Simply because the course of study through which teachers have to pass in order to obtain a certificate even of the highest class is comparatively limited one. Now, do not, I beseech you, imagine that I disparage in the slightest your noble efforts to obtain those distinctions now mentioned. They have in many cases within my own knowledge been obtained

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