

of Popular Education depends upon the fitness of the educator. Write it as an axiom never to be forgotten—"As is the Master, so will be the School." Scatter over the land men of inferior stamp, who will treat children as so much stock in trade, and who form their estimate of their mission by the amount of profit they are likely to realise—men without high purpose, without sympathy, without heart—and a generation of these men of earth, men of hard machinery, will rise up and mock every hope of practical Christianity. According to our view of the aim of education, so will be our estimate of the educator. The day has gone by when men thought the mission of a schoolmaster was to beat the rebellious will into submission, to teach the barest elements of mechanical instruction, or to keep a herd of children out of harm's way. But men are beginning to realise the fact that there is in every infant mind, immured in every alley, the germ of a spirit that can hold converse with the spiritual world, and will outlive the destruction of this material universe; that there are there the first rudiments of mental greatness and moral grandeur, which need but the blessing of God to make them expand into possessions more beautiful, more precious, than all the most exquisite creations of mechanical skill. It is upon such material as this, that the educator has to work; and if the workman is to be estimated by his work, what manner of men, I ask, should our workmen be? What keen sympathies, what a sense of the beautiful, what love of justice, what devotion to truth, what perfection of morality, what mental endowments, what grace of the spirit, what bond of perfectness, what love and knowledge of Christ, the Great Teacher!

It seems to me that it is impossible to overrate the qualifications of the educator. I do not speak of acquired so much as of natural qualifications. So far I have thought more of that mental and moral greatness which shall early enlist the sympathies of the child on the side of his own higher attribute, and so force upon his young and pliant nature an early faith in good, which, in later years, the rough world may not wholly obliterate. But while natural qualities are the most indispensable—for which no acquirements can be possibly substituted—I do not mean that the latter are unimportant. These acquirements should be solid and special. If education includes the physical, the educator should know on what conditions the state of health depends. If education includes the mental and the moral, he should know the laws of mental science and of moral—the ignorance of which has stunted and distorted the growth of so many millions of our once promising peasantry. And if education includes the spiritual part of man, he should be thoroughly conversant with Holy Scripture, and at the same time deeply penetrated with its spirit—not that he may arm his youthful scholars with texts to serve no higher purpose than warlike missiles, but that he may teach them to love and worship Truth at its purest sources, and to slake their ardent thirst for pleasure at the Fountain of Religion.

Above all—the educator must be the perfect example to his school. I do not mean perfect in God's eye, nor do I mean perfect in men's eyes absolutely; but perfect in his children's. Of what earthly use can be all our brilliant gallery-lessons on humanity, when the quick-sighted scholars can observe the teacher conceited to the very shape of his boots? on holiness, when they see him to be a companion of bad men? on truthfulness, when they know that at every recurring examination he can palm a cheat upon the world by a system of deceitful cramming? I again repeat the Prussian adage, "as is the master, so will be the school." Every school possesses its peculiar and distinctive character, and that character is the character of the master. And how can it be otherwise? A child is an imitative and an inquisitive animal; and, except when he is eating and sleeping, is almost entirely in the presence of his master. Think how readily a child takes impressions, and how prone he is to be affected by any influence, good or bad—how accessible his heart, and how easily its affections are moved—and how should we be surprised that the whole future senior life is in the keeping of its teacher, to whom it apprentices to guide its first tottering footsteps, and to cast its die for moral weal or woe to its dying hour!

There is no particular on which there is a greater necessity to lay stress than this—the moral training of our schools—both for its own intrinsic value and because of the habit of under-estimating it. There has been great improvement in many departments of education. Better schoolhouses have been built, more skillful teachers have been prepared, superior class-books have been published; but I fear I must not say that moral training has advanced with equal steps. The school is not sufficiently formed after the model of a home, and the schoolmaster after that of a parent. The old boast of the master is that he stands in the place of a parent—and so he should; but what parent would work all day long with a stick in hand, under a mistaken notion of supporting his authority? God has furnished him with another and far better instrument, and that instrument is love. The teacher must employ it too, and just in so far as he does will he deserve the honorable appellation of a moral trainer. Nor is it a suitable weapon with the good and gentle of the children only—but its omnipotence will be felt among the self-willed and refractory. Nay, I doubt whether there is any spirit of childhood so utterly hardened that it will not,

sooner or later, yield to the influence of a love which refuses to be discouraged or wearied out. The great idea of Christianity is love—it is God's own weapon for subduing the alienation of the human heart. The Great Teacher was a living exponent of its power, and every other teacher must adopt the same method. What is that obedience worth which is based on fear? Depend upon it no fruits are worth the gathering in any single school where the heart remains a wilderness. But where love rules, every other humanity will follow; love not only gives birth to every virtue, but it compacts them harmoniously together. That is a beautiful definition of the Apostle from meditation on which I write, "Love is the bond of perfectness." What a bond between child and child, and between children and teacher. If in the home-circle the loving husband is the house-band, so in the school-life the loving teacher should be the school-band. Without love, he may speak and teach the living words of God's truth; but they will have no life for the children. If he "speak with the tongue of angels, and have not charity, he becomes as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal." He cannot in any sense employ the language of his Master, "I he words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life."

I pass to another view of the mission of the elementary schoolmaster. He has a social mission. To him the country looks to disseminate right principles of social duty. A man that lives a life of animal drudgery, that subsists from hand to mouth—dwarfed in mind, stunted in moral growth, spending the hours of his leisure in animal gratification—what should he know of his duty to his neighbor or to the State, when he knows not his real duty to himself? It is the province of the schoolmaster to enforce provident habits, to explain the consequences, moral and physical, of self-indulgence—the ruinous effects of drinking habits—the pleasure and self-respect of laying up a little property; and he may safely appeal to a lawful ambition of self-advancement in the world. It belongs to the schoolmaster to teach the first rudiments of our British constitution, that he may contrast its privileges and securities with those of governments, and that he may, if future events allow it, prepare the population for an extension of the elective franchise, and for the discharge of that high social duty of appointing their own representatives in the council of the nation. It belongs to the schoolmaster to disarm the people of unreasoning prejudices, which often rise up to imperil, at different crises of the national history, their own prosperity and that of the country. To what but to an universal ignorance of first principles is owing that constant collision between capital and labor—not only ignorance of the benefits of machinery and improved art, but of the rights of labor, whether regarded in relation to the workman himself, the master, or the body of his fellow-operatives? To what but to a low intelligence is owing that rising in arms against the hoarding of corn in the face of short harvests, and the consequent rising of the price of bread, which very increase of price is the only security against the rapid exhaustion of our stocks, and the consequent horrors of famine, before another yield of harvest?

So much for the mission of the teacher. The more we think of it, the more we shall feel how high and holy it is. In every child you admit into your school, the parent expects you to send back a better man, the State a more exemplary citizen, the Church a holier disciple. I wish now to make a few remarks upon your duties to others, towards whom you will stand in official relations. And first, your duty to the parent. Instead of honoring you, it is possible they may slight you, or insult you, and you will need more than human forbearance to sustain you. Be careful, above all things, to give no occasion of offence, that your office be not blamed. Form questionable characters, contract questionable habits, or even carry yourself morosely towards parents; and what is the consequence? Parents and neighbours will talk and slander; boys and girls will listen and carry away the estimate they have heard; and then must fall the fruits of all your rich studied lessons of moral beauty, and perish the last vestige of your moral authority. Depend upon it, if you would live in the affections of your children, you must also live in the esteem of their parents. And then there is your duty to the ministers of religion.

But in order to become a moral trainer, the first step a teacher should take must be to overhaul the present expedients of his school government. Does he rule his little empire by the law of love or of fear? Does he secure order, obedience, and industry, by infusing the spirit of work from a lawful desire to please others, or honest love of approbation, and from the principle of duty; or does he force results, if not by a rod of iron, by the rod of hard and elastic wood? I am no advocate for weak discipline, properly so called; but I do not call that discipline which subdues the spirit of a child, instead of forming his pliant character. There are a thousand arguments against the rod. It is a very easy expedient—an irresistible argument—which the worst master who has but a man's strength can employ. I cannot but think, however, that it is occasionally placed upon the wrong pair of shoulders, when I see a boy punished for indolence or indifference, for which the want of tact and skill in the master is alone to be blamed. The master cannot interest his class—the boy is inattentive. The master is the cause, the boy is the effect; the effect is punished, and the cause escapes. Depend upon it that the teacher who avails him-