

conscience and heart. The press in our day has become a many-voiced schoolmaster, ever sending its lessons into the homes of the people: often doing great good, and alas! not infrequently doing much mischief. It undoubtedly exercises a mighty and increasing influence in the training of the community.

Put the educator with whom we have now to do has a somewhat different life. After the child's mother, he begins at the beginning. Ere the pulpit or the press can do much for the pupil his work is well-nigh completed. Hence it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the trust committed to him. He has to lead forth and guide the mental powers in their budding and opening processes and to furnish them with pabulum on which they may feed and grow; he has to develop the conscience into a watchful and healthy activity: he has to check, in their beginnings, all deceit, meanness, and impurity: he has to cultivate habits of industry, faithful work, truthfulness and sincerity;—he has some times to awaken and always to cherish sentiments of honour and uprightness in dealing with fellows; in fine he has to work wisely and well at the foundations of personal character. Who of us would venture to estimate the momentous interests involved in a work such as this? In the personal character of a generation of youth lies embedded the social condition of the world's people during the next age. Whether the coming generation, soon to occupy the vast arena, shall be virtuous or vicious, shall be refined and cultivated or rough and barbarous, shall be good or bad, depends largely on what is done with children at school. It is but a truism to say that men and women make the nation, and it is not much more to say that the children and youth of the present are to be the men and women of the early future, and that such future depends for its character on what our schools do in the present. In such estimate it is supposed that parental co-operation forms part of the educating power in exercise.

It is obvious that a nation's prosperity is involved in this question. The greatest difficulties with which constitutional governments have to contend, and the cause of their failure, where they do fail, is the want of high character in the people. Whenever self is more precious than principle, and electors or elected think more of personal interests than of the national welfare, corruption rolls in like a flood, the national conscience is debauched, and vice stalks forth unblushingly flaunting its vileness in the face of day. The true conservators of a nation's well-being are the faithful, conscientious and large hearted educators of its children and youth, for they work at the foundations and cast in the salt at the spring head.

And if the interests at stake in this matter are so momentous in the present life, what must be their magnitude when eternity is brought into view. Immortality invests the whole subject with ineffable grandeur; for these pupils will live for ever. The training of the present mightily affects that future, whether it shall be one of honour or disgrace, happiness or misery, life or death.

We may not dismiss from our present consideration the work of the educator without noting certain qualifications that seem to be more or less needful to success in this work. I do not dilate on the obvious qualification of accurate knowledge on such departments as the teacher undertakes to cultivate, for the reason that every one must at once perceive the need of this. The masculine form of the pronoun must also be understood throughout as including the feminine, for much of an effective education is conducted by women. Among the qualifications of an educator may be placed:

**1st. A true estimate of its nature and importance.**—We cannot surely expect any one to succeed in a profession like this, whose sole object is the making of money or even the obtaining of a livelihood. It is to be feared that it is not infrequently taken up as a last resort, other means of obtaining bread failing. Now, just as one would not look for great good from one who sought "the priest's office in Israel for a piece of silver or a morsel of bread," so in this case, it would be indeed surprising should mere mercenary motives achieve any worthy ends in the work of education. It is not meant to deny proper reference to such considerations in all our plans. On the contrary it is a most legitimate and honourable way of not only obtaining a livelihood, but also of laying up a competency. The labourer is worthy of his hire: and no labourer is more worthy than the educator. We delight to see them erecting their own establishments,—owning them, and becoming wealthy as far as is compatible with the claims of a large hearted benevolence.

But we object to this as *the governing motive*. That should spring out of a true estimate of the nature and importance of their work. Every young mind and heart enshrined in those bodies which occupy the seats in their establishment, is there for development and culture. No one but God can foresee the future of the being whose loving, or yearning, or merry eyes look out upon you: but you have it directly in your power to mould that future. No two boys or girls are alike. Some are sufficiently similar to admit of classification so as to afford

opportunity to generalize the training process, but there will always be *differentia* to require special attention. It would be out of place to enlarge upon or to illustrate these points; their mention is all that is now appropriate. He, however, who appreciates the nature and importance of his work will study so as to know the general character and specialities of every child under his care and will conscientiously adapt his measures to each case. It is matter for gratulation that the old-fashioned birch or fates for every delinquent, without regard to characteristics of the pupil or the circumstances of his delinquency, has gone out, and is among the things that were; but discipline and punishment may not safely go out, only they must be adapted to each case needing them. A true estimate of the work to be done and of its vast importance, will awaken much thought and inquiry and will elevate at all points the character of the labourer.

**2nd. Skill and tact.**—It is quite possible, as we all know, to have treasured up stores of knowledge and yet to be ill prepared to communicate it to others. Many most scholarly men are wretched teachers; and not a few others who can communicate with facility, have no administrative ability. I am reminded of contrasts on these points supplied by classes in the University of Glasgow when I was a student. The Greek and Logic classes were presided over by Educators who were thoroughly furnished, were admirable in communication, and whose administrative ability was such that large assemblies of from ten hundred to ten hundred and fifty students were kept in perfect order. The class in mathematics on the contrary was taught by a professor, who while possessed of thoroughly accurate knowledge, failed to interest the students and equally failed to keep order. Hence it became a place of play rather than of work. It is so in schools. There are teachers who are in such sense educators that they have all under control: and the controlling power is not *dread*, but respect and love. Admitting that there are natural aptitudes in some, greater than are found in others, I cannot help thinking that much might be done in the matter of acquisition. Surely we may learn skill and tact. The physician does so, and especially the surgeon. One of the designs of our efficient Normal School system is to train up good workers in the department of education. There will always be certain original diversities arising partly from physical and partly from psychological causes, but every one fitted at all for the post of an educator, may become fairly skilful. Indeed it is mainly the application to the work in all its departments of good sound common sense!

**3rd. Enthusiasm.**—It need hardly be said in this presence that obtrusiveness, fussiness, noise, bustle are not meant, but a genuine, quiet, yet deep enthusiasm. I suppose this is more or less needful to success in any business in which men and women engage; to the educator it is of vast moment. Not only does it inspire himself with the energy, the courage, the perseverance ever seriously taxed but always necessary, it also infuses the same element of power into the breasts of pupils. One has often occasion to mark the influence of this element of an educator's character upon the plastic materials upon which he has to work. Pupils are borne along, putting forth unwonted exertions to improve, animated, they do not know how or why, by the enthusiasm of their teacher. With all their persistent requirements, strict discipline, and determination to be obeyed, such instructors are always favourites with their young charge. The very excitement is a pleasure, and the consciousness of progress and of acquired power is ever gratifying. Wayward as youth often are, they are cheered and stimulated by the conviction that they are making advances. They do not love to stand still, they often rashly repudiate the slow, and hence real progress gladdens them. And they love the teacher who aids in this.

I suppose the enthusiasm of an educator will depend very much, not only on the intensity of his temperament, but also on the depth of his convictions regarding the nobleness and importance of his work, and on his hopefulness as to the result. The desponding cannot be energetic—the downcast knows nothing of enthusiasm. Hence it must be admitted that devout confidence in God is a wonderful stimulus in the matter of a true enthusiasm. He who works hard, believes firmly, trusts God, and feels sure of His blessing, ever cherishes the hopefulness which helps his enthusiasm in the performance of duty.

In turning now to *the claims of the Educator*, one is brought at once into contact with a state of matters much to be deplored, namely: the fact, that the popular estimate of education is altogether unequal to its real importance. This defective estimate appears both in respect to education itself and to the educator. So far in favour of education all the community go cheerfully; reading, writing and arithmetic are needful to getting a livelihood; but how little beyond this do many regard as useful! They who advance a step higher often grudge the time and expense of a good sound culture. Perhaps in many instances one might be satisfied with whatever can be effectively done up to fourteen or fifteen years of age, for then a large proportion of our youth must begin their apprenticeship to some chosen business: but how much is often lost for want of a thorough appreciation of the importance of