

Miscellaneous.

TEACHERS' WAGES.

BY S. S. RANDALL, ESQ.

One great and serious obstacle to the advancement of sound education among us, consists, beyond all question, in the meagre and scanty compensation which is accorded, under a false view of economy, to those who are disposed to devote themselves to the business of teaching, as a profession. It is believed that there is no calling, within the comprehensive circle of social civilization, above that of the common day-laborer, which promises less, in a pecuniary point of view, than that of the instructor of youth—none which offers less substantial inducements to genius, talent and worth. And yet we apprehend, few will be found so destitute of judgment and candor, as to allege that in all the requisites of character, ability, mental culture, persevering effort, time, study and knowledge, the teacher in any respect, if suitably qualified for his profession, falls behind the great body of those who fill up the ranks and participate in the rich rewards of the other and more favoured classes of society.

It is, at least, a little singular that in this respect the march of modern civilization has fallen far behind that of ancient times. ADAM SMITH tells us, and history confirms the assertion, that prior to the invention of the art of printing, in the fifteenth century, the sole employment by which a man of letters could avail himself of his talents was that of a public or private teacher—by the verbal communication to others of the curious and useful knowledge he might have acquired. ISOCRATES, in his celebrated discourse against the Sophists, reproaches the teachers of his own time with inconsistency, in that "they make the most magnificent promises to their scholars, and undertake to teach them to be wise, to be happy and to be just, and in return for so important a service they stipulate for the paltry reward of *four or five minas*," (between \$80 and \$100). "They who teach wisdom," he continues, "ought certainly to be wise themselves; but if any man were to *sell such a bargain, for such a price*, he would be convicted of the most evident folly." ISOCRATES himself, we are informed, demanded ten minas, or about \$150 from each of those persons who attended his course of lectures on Rhetoric at Athens. He must have made, therefore, from the hundred pupils who we are assured participated in the benefits of his teaching during a single season, the comfortable sum of at least *fifteen thousand dollars*. Indeed PLUTARCH expressly informs us that a thousand minas was his usual income for teaching. Many other eminent teachers in those times appear to have acquired great fortunes. GORGIAS, we are told, made a present to the temple of Delphi, of his own statue, (probably not the size of life, as the mines of California were then unknown,) in solid gold. His way of living, as well as that of HIPPIAS and PYTHAGORAS, two other eminent teachers of that day, is represented by PLATO as splendid even to ostentation. PLATO himself is said to have lived with a good deal of magnificence. ARISTOTLE, after having been tutor to ALEXANDER, and most munificently rewarded both by his illustrious pupil and his father, PHILIP of Macedon, thought it worth while, notwithstanding, to return to Athens, in order to resume teaching. The most eminent among the scientific men of this golden age, of literature, appear always to have enjoyed a degree of consideration much superior to any of the like profession in more modern times. The Athenians sent CAVNEADES, the Academic, and DIOGENES, the Stoic, upon a solemn embassy to Rome.

These particulars, gathered principally from ADAM SMITH's well known work on the Wealth of Nations, sufficiently indicate not only the high consideration with which the instruction of youth was regarded among the most civilized nations of antiquity, but the opinion of this philosophic statesman, of the short-sighted penuriousness which characterizes our modern times, in this respect. The average amount of compensation received by the *best qualified* male teachers in our public and private elementary institutions of learning would not, we apprehend, reach five hundred dollars per annum; and if a man, with a family to provide for, educate and support, can succeed in obtaining twice this sum for devoting himself assiduously and entirely to the instruction of young gentlemen and ladies in our higher institutions, he does well. Is this the

case in any other profession? Where is the lawyer, the physician, the divine, the legislator, the architect, the artist, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, thoroughly trained to his calling and capable of excelling in it, who will be satisfied with such a compensation? Is it not high time that more elevated conceptions of the dignity and importance of the teacher's calling were beginning to prevail? The labourer, in this, the most responsible department of human exertion, is surely worthy of his hire; and ungrudgingly, fairly, liberally, should it be meted out to him.

DEPORTMENT IN THE TEACHER.

When we take into consideration the almost unlimited influence which the Teacher may, and almost unconsciously does exert, over his pupils, especially in his general bearing and manners, we cannot but feel the reality of the truth, that he teaches by example no less than by precept. One great aim of education is to improve and refine the manners. The man who has improved his intellectual powers in the most eminent degree, but who is unable to discharge properly his social duties, may still be considered as wanting one of the most essential parts of a good education. The chain that should bind him in close affinity to his fellow-mortals, his friends, neighbours, and associates, has one broken link, and, after all, he is little better than a blank in society. If his manners are repulsive and disagreeable, instead of being courted and admired, he is disliked and shunned. The position of such an individual is far from being enviable. Obligated, almost of necessity, to debar himself from the pleasures of social intercourse, he cannot be happy himself, nor can he be the means of rendering others happy. True education leads to entirely different results. The teacher is its minister. He is commissioned to educate the rising generation in the true sense of the term; to educate the people intellectually, morally, physically, and socially; and in the discharge of his arduous and responsible trust, he should be careful not to omit that most important article in his commission,—the improvement of his pupils' manners.

What, then, constitutes proper deportment in a Teacher? By the Teacher's deportment, is meant his manners, or general behaviour, both in and out of the school-room. It certainly should be manly on all occasions; never haughty or arbitrary. Calmness and decision should be predominant qualities in his mental constitution. No passion should ever be permitted to manifest itself, at least, in the presence of his pupils. In short, he should always be pleasant, kind, and affable. Whenever and wherever the instructor meets a pupil out of the school-room, whether he be young or old, rich or poor, worthy or unworthy, he should always extend to him the hand of friendship, and treat him with kindness. His language should be guarded and becoming. His address should be courteous and dignified toward all with whom he may chance to meet; and his influence will be in proportion to the means used in acquiring it. No harsh disputations, conflicting with local, party, or sectarian prejudices, should be engaged in. But rather let coolness, impartiality, and moderation, characterize the Teacher's conversation. The good effects of such a course cannot for a moment be questioned. The power of example is immense, whether it be good or bad. If the Teacher's example in deportment be such as stated above, its effects will be most beneficial for the time being, and will exercise a controlling influence through untold years of the future. The pupil will remember, even to the latest day of his earthly existence, the kindness of his instructor; it will cling to his memory in every situation in life. Even the vilest of the vile, were it possible to suppose that such had received good instruction, cannot fail to hold in affectionate remembrance the kind and courteous Teacher. But, on the other hand, a savage severity in the Teacher, coarseness, and roughness of manners, the indulgence in pernicious habits, produce entirely different, but equally momentous results. The Teacher who is profane, intemperate, coarse, or uncourteous, may expect, in most cases, to find his pupils imitating his example. If the Teacher is impolite, the pupils will most assuredly be so. If the Teacher is intemperate, unjust, unkind, he is every day sowing the same noxious principles in the tender minds of those committed to his care.

Therefore, Teacher, be just, kind, and courteous to your pupils, and they, in turn, will render justice, kindness, and courtesy unto you.—*Maine Common School Advocate*.