

which some of our Board teachers, perhaps not much to their own advantage, are freed—viz., the *choice* of pupil-teachers. When one sees the shy, weak-voiced, nervous, shrinking sort of girls who are sometimes put forward as candidates for pupil-teachers, or at our Normal schools, one can only wonder what sort of a future they will be able to chalk out for themselves in the teaching profession, where there is so much to jar upon sensitive nerves, where examinations of all kinds must be an intolerable burden to the shy and nervous, and where the restless spirits of the children require a steady hand to control them. I hold that we are shirking our responsibilities if we accept as pupil-teachers girls who are physically and constitutionally disqualified for the work of teaching and ruling, however well qualified they may be mentally. In accepting them we are laying up much trouble and worry for ourselves; therefore, it is our duty to test and carefully judge of a girl's capabilities in every way before we allow her to commit herself to a profession which may be a source of endless trial both to herself and us. There are plenty of girls smart and quick enough at lessons, who would never be able to influence children in the slightest degree, and if teachers and Normal schools admit in training for teachers girls who are so nervous as to lose their presence of mind under the most trifling circumstances, how are the pupil-teachers and children under them to be trained? But, having chosen them, what then? Then, indeed, the responsibility is but begun. These girls are to take us for their models during the five most critical years of their lives. Day by day our words, and acts, and tempers are impressed on minds yielding as wax; day by day there are eyes upon us, sharp enough to detect any inconsistency or weakness or falseness of character. The moody temper, the evasive answer to some question upon which our knowledge is rather vague, the shirking of some unpleasant duty, the shallow excuse for our own self-indulgence, are all noted, and are almost certain to be seen through; ay, and often destined to be re-produced with startling faithfulness in their own doings in after years. And so respect dies out, and all influence for good is at an end for want of the "example" which "teaches better than precept." But only let us look our duty to them fairly in the face. And, first of all, let us make *friends* with them, as the "bairns" say. Let us show them that we have their interests at heart, that it is a case of mutual dependency and mutual help, and that we are willing and anxious to do the very best for them we can. Do not let us leave them to struggle with unruly and impudent children as best they may; do not let us lower them in the eyes of their pupils by reprimanding them in their presence. Let them see that we observe and sympathise with all their efforts for self-improvement. Let us be watchful of their faithfulness, truthfulness and honesty, but not in a suspicious, captious way; and above all, let us be faithful in training their minds. Let us spare no efforts on our own self-improvement, if, by so doing, we can widen and deepen their knowledge. Let us not teach them grudgingly, or fitfully, but let us ever remember that upon the groundwork of knowledge which we lay depends the probable success of their whole future lives, and if we seek to do so we will find our reward, not only in their love, respect, and confidence, but in our own sense of duty performed, which is as a rainbow in the heart. There is an old proverb, quoted in most school management books, "As is the master, so is the school," which may also be read, "As is the mistress, so is the pupil-teacher"—and this is a reading of which many of us would do well to ponder. I confess that when I hear a teacher uttering a tirade against her pupil-teachers, accusing them of laziness, disobedience, or want of respect for herself, I cannot help feeling that she ought to look for the cause in her own conduct; and I think every teacher ought to be wary in uttering such complaints, as in *some* official quarters, at least, there is a pretty strong opinion female pupil-teachers are just what their mistresses make them. I do think that the gravest responsibility of our position is at present our pupil-teachers, for it affects not only the present welfare of education but the future. How earnestly, then, should we strive to be worthy friends and patterns to them, striving to guide them in all things womanly, and good, and noble, that they, in their turn, may be fit to guide and govern.

In regard to the second point which I propose to take up—viz., our position with regard to the children, I seem to have almost exhausted it in speaking of the first. Government has taken pretty good care that, for our own sakes, we will endeavor to bring them up to a certain standard in things intellectual; and many of us find that standard about all that we have time or strength to attend to. Yet, apart from standards, and payments,

and deductions—of which one hears now-a-days till one is sick of them—we may, if we be true, warm-hearted women, if our heart be entirely in our work, if we look on teaching, not as a temporary make-shift, but as our life's work, as the sphere in which we can do most good, if we make the best use of the talents God has given us—we may, I say, do a noble work in our schools, for which the next generation will call us blessed. What lessons of cheerfulness, patience, and self-control, may we not by our example instil into these fresh, young minds; what habits of forethought and economy does it not every day give us means of enforcing; what a noble field for developing a sense of honor, of self-sacrifice, and the spirit of peace-making do not our various schools afford us, and that, too, without any special time being set apart for such themes in the time-table, or any fear that a "surprise visit" will catch us encroaching on the regular work of the school. I confess that I for one have often pondered on these golden opportunities until the possibilities placed in my hands have frightened me at my own neglectfulness. But the surest way to teach these things is not by precept or lecture, or even by that much vexed question of Bible teaching, but by being ourselves learners and practisers of the virtues we wish to inculcate. And this brings me to speak of ourselves, our position and prospects at the present day. I think it is not too much to say, that the problem of both our position and prospects in the future can only be solved by ourselves. School Boards may build first-class schools throughout the length and breadth of the land, Government may give grants for every subject, from learning the alphabet to the binomial theorem; but if we, as teachers, do not improve ourselves, all the bolstering up in the world will not improve our position. The days are past when the halt and the maimed—ay, and sometimes even the imbecile—found a refuge in teaching after all other professions had failed them. Most of you will have heard the story of the old woman, who, on being asked for what profession she intended to educate her son, said, "Oh, if he get grace, we'll make him a minister; and if he dinna get grace, we'll mak him a dominie." Such slights upon the profession are, I am happy to say, fast dying out, and I think there is every symptom of teachers rousing themselves from the fatal lethargy into which so many seem unhappily to have fallen, and a broader spirit, and a higher intellectual aim seem to be animating many of us. And what does this higher intellectual aim imply to us whose Normal School days date some years back? Code after code comes upon us, each requiring a knowledge of some extra subject, or a new method of teaching an old one, and if we have not been looking carefully after our armour, we will find that it has got rusted and dented in the fray, and, if we are not wary, we will awake one day to find that our younger sisters' with their many advantages, have outrun us in the race. But this need not be, if we keep before us the important maxim that "a teacher ought always to be a learner." One means of improving ourselves is, by mixing only in good, or rather, I should say, intellectual society; for I have seen cliques of society who have thought themselves good, and yet were very far from intellectual. With the prospect opening before us at present, we may, if we have a proper respect for ourselves and our office, fit ourselves to adorn any society, however intellectual and refined. By proper respect, I, of course, do not mean that supercilious air and assumed dignity which sometimes follow on an advance in position, but that inborn self-respect which points out to us the fitness of things—that "noblesse oblige" which our responsible office ought to detail upon us. Besides, this moving in society, equal or superior to ourselves, is a corrective which we, as teachers, very much require. Our self-conceit is fostered quite sufficiently through the day by our pupils; we need it to be toned down for our own sakes when out of school. We are all too apt to get that overbearing dictatorial manner which is born of power, and only by mixing with our equals and superiors can this be kept in check. I cannot refrain from speaking in the highest terms of praise of the plan pursued with the senior students in, at least one of our Normal Schools here. At the rector's request, ladies invite them to their houses on terms of equality, just as they invite other guests, and there they see all the manners and customs of polite society, an opportunity which should, I think, be invaluable to some of our young teachers, and may save them some mortifications in after life.—*Educational News.*

The vices of the rich and great are mistaken for errors, and those of the poor and lowly for crimes.