

has been assigned to him. The stipend of a clerk in a store is held to be quite sufficient to remunerate the country teacher, while book-keepers in business establishments receive higher salaries than those who are the head masters in our large city schools. The able and ambitious clerk looks forward to a business of his own, while the principal of an academy or high school has no further prospects of promotion within the limits of his profession. Is it to be wondered, then, that the teacher, after a short experience, abandons the business and adopts a career which affords greater scope for his energy, talent and enterprise, and offers more liberal inducements to those who adopt it?

Or, if we compare the teacher's position with that of the officers in the various departments of the public service we are struck by its inferiority. How much more generously are the officials of all grades treated by the state than the teachers are by the people? Not only are they liberally remunerated whilst engaged in active duty but they have the prospect of superannuation when age brings infirmity and its attendant disabilities. The teacher, on the other hand, has never had but a stinted allowance and is not encouraged and stimulated by the hope that provision is made for his declining years. It generally happens that when he is advanced in life younger men are preferred by school committees and he is thrown upon the world or his friends, too often neglected by the public whom he has served; or at best receives the pittance of the mendicant when his maintenance ought to be esteemed a public and pressing obligation.

As long as this is the case can it be expected that men will join a profession which has so few advantages to offer? Profession? We have used the word repeatedly, but it is really a misnomer. The few at the head who have made teaching the business of their lives cannot constitute it a profession. The vast mass of those engaged in teaching use it for their own purposes. Their heart's affections and aspirations are centered elsewhere. To them it is but a stepping-stone to something else, a mere incident in their lives, an occupation which too many regard as scarcely serious, and which, not a few, in after years, recall with impatience and strong dislike. So long as teachers feel bound, in their own interest, to make their connection with education a temporary arrangement, so long as they look elsewhere for a career, and other objects win their sympathy and rouse their ambition, so long will teaching remain an *occupation* and come short of possessing the necessary elements of a *profession*.

Do people understand or seriously consider their relation to education and the teacher of the public

schools? Do they ever realize the fact that the parent has in great measure transferred to the teacher the responsibility of training his children? He does not hesitate to entrust him with the duty of instructing them, of forming their character, directing their energies and refining their judgment; and yet we do not always discover in him a profound anxiety to procure such men as can safely have committed to them a charge of such moment. The parent appears to forget that the task of the teacher is no mere mechanical operation, requiring only ordinary intelligence, industry and reliability, but that success can only be assured to him who is gifted with the faculty of discernment of character, and is possessed of a cultured mind and a power to interest and stimulate. He has to deal with minds, not with materials; and hence the necessity for special preparation and the existence of conditions favorable to the prosecution of his enterprise. To influence estimable, thoughtful minds, the teacher must be a student himself, and must address his pupils from the fulness of his own mind and the maturity of his thought. It is only the man who is refined in mind and heart who can successfully sow the good seed in the minds of the young and cherish and direct its culture.

Such teachers are not equipped for their duties by the hurried and intermittent training of the present day. But why should we be surprised if we discover a lack of scholarship, culture and skill in many of our teachers? Can we expect to procure the services of first-class men in return for such salaries as we offer? Should we be astonished if educated and cultured men refuse to undertake the performance of a duty, delicate and involving eternal issues, for a recompense less than would be that of a skilled mechanic in these provinces or a policeman in the neighboring republic? The same law holds good in teaching as in commerce — the higher the price you offer the better an article will you obtain — the better the salary you offer the more competent the teacher you will procure.

But it has been the custom to regard the teacher — particularly the high-class teacher — as if he were different from other people, and ought to be paid by a standard not applicable in other cases. He is supposed to be a man of inexpensive habits and contented mind, whose ideas and ambition are bounded by his school, and whose tastes and sympathies are domestic and literary. There is doubtless much truth in this, but we fear that necessity rather than choice accounts for much of the self-discipline which has led to this result. The outcome is good, but we question the justice of basing an estimate of a teacher's needs upon an economic condition which is the resultant of compulsion on the one side and a philosophic sub-