

it. Now, with the educator one of these high ends is the developing and training of the minds of youth, and storing them with suitable and useful knowledge, and his efforts to do this, must, I am confident, be not a little strengthened, and himself more encouragingly stimulated in the discharge of duty, in union with his fellow teachers.

3rd. *Self-culture* also greatly benefits by association. And who more needs self-culture than the teacher? Almost all his labours demand intellectual activity, and are best and most efficiently carried on by those who most invigorate their minds and store it with truths. It is mind, after all that does the work of the world; so that the more there is of mind—combined with skill and intelligence, the more work will be accomplished. A man, in proportion as he is intelligent, makes a given force accomplish a greater task, makes skill take the place of muscles, and, with less labour, gives a better product. Make men intelligent and they will become inventive—they find shorter processes. Their knowledge turned to account by a well-trained mind, enables them to work with more skill by applying more skill to the work; and their minds, rich in inventions, are ever on the stretch to improve and to test—extend or abridge, every process, and every mode of working. And who needs more than the teacher that intelligence and that inventive practical skill, which enables the possessor to do all this? To educate a child perfectly require profounder thought, greater wisdom, more knowledge of the developing mind, and a deeper insight into the working of its powers, than to govern a state; and for this plain reason, that the interests of the latter, and of its wants, are more superficial, coarser, and more obvious than the spiritual capacities, the growth of thought and feeling, and the subtle laws of the mind, which must all be studied and comprehended before the work of education can be thoroughly performed. And yet to all conditions of life this greatest work on earth is equally committed by God. What plainer proof need we, that a higher culture than has yet been dreamed of, is needed by our whole race?—But the teacher has not only to study the laws of the mind—its powers—mode of development—and their associated workings; he has the still as, if not more, difficult task to study, and as far as possible, master—viz.: how most suitably and effectively to deal with the expanding—tender—and plastic mind of youth; and the different ways by which it is to be most suitably and advantageously trained, knowledge communicated, truths explained and principles unfolded and illustrated. And all this supposes much study, much reading and research, and a vast deal of self-culture. Thus to prepare himself for his arduous work, associating occasionally with others engaged in the same work, and equally emulous to possess higher qualifications, offers many advantages. By the collision of bodies light is struck out. When mind meets mind, bent on the same pursuit—having the same end in view, how seldom happens it that no farther or no new light is thrown on the subject of enquiring? Each mind throws its own ray thereon, and all the rays thus concentrated must make more distinct and manifest—and draw out to view more clearly, its nature and peculiar characteristics. Let but teacher meet teacher earnestly desirous to improve and to be improved, and most assuredly his object will be gained: he will both improve himself, and help to improve others.—Where there is a free, an open and an unrestrained interchange of thought, the knowledge and experience and professional skill of each will become the common stock of all: and thoughts thus stocked, never fail to multiply,—multiply with a proper and more suitable character, and just because the products of minds congenial—stamped with the same professional characteristics.

Suffer me then to put the question—is it desirable that something be done (and too much in my opinion cannot be done), to raise the character of our teachers in intelligence and teaching skill? There is no escape from education. Everywhere around us, abroad and at home, in the school and out of the school, it ceaselessly advances. Shall we fall in and keep up with the moving current, or shall we allow ourselves to lag behind? “I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say,”—surely the latter cannot be your wish: and if not, I would press upon your consideration the subject of a teacher's union.

4th. Again, union among teachers gives them a new-elevated and more advantageous position. They cease to be strangers to each other. They come to know each other's state, difficulties or troubles: and so have it in their power to counsel, advise or encourage each other. United, they can secure and preserve a more commanding position in society,—assist their rights and resist encroachments on these, more advantageously.

Without some bond of union, teachers can scarcely be said to form a class of subjects. They stand separate and alone,—as

much strangers to each other as if their vocation were totally distinct—the individual objects of animadversion—criticism—or censure, and too weak, because standing alone, to rebut the slanderer, or confute the busy intermeddler.

5th. Advantage of a union among teachers is, that in a united capacity they are better able to resist opposition and remove different hindrances in carrying out improvements in conducting schools and in teaching.—Alone and singly, educators have done wonders in improving our race, advancing civilization, giving an onward impulse to society, preparing the human mind for pushing on in making improvements and discoveries in arts and sciences, and, best of all, giving men's minds a godly mould and cast—preparing them for their eternal onward progression. But unitedly, I am satisfied, they might have done more—much more. “Two are better than one;” “and a threefold cord is not quickly broken,” says Solomon.—The question is settled, that unity is strength in advancing any cause. Thirty years ago, a living writer of the greatest fame, said: “This is the age of societies.” Since then their number has been greatly increased. What scheme is in our day prosecuted without a unity of effort? What cause is carried on to ameliorate or improve man's condition, make inroads on vice, ignorance and barbarism, or widen the basis and give more stability to the foundations of truth upon which to rest, without united action? And none needs more funded agency than the Educator? His work lies at the very root of improvement; but in carrying it on he has to contend with opponents, and opposing causes, and is often in danger without unity of effort, and the support and backing of the enlightened and philanthropic to succumb to the difficulty of his task. By such aid and united action, his hands cannot but be strengthened and himself cheered on. To meet opposition he has his phalanx; in dealing with what is difficult or arduous, he has his council of brotherhood; encompassed by the perplexities of parental ignorance, any notions, or utopian schemes, he has at his command the advice and experience of those who may have been or are similarly placed and on whose counsel he can rely; or should he be earnest in seeing the brightness of education—still brightening,—thus united, he has the example and sees the co-working of men possessing the same honest convictions of his own mind.

Speaking generally of the subject of professional organization, I would view it under two aspects,—the one of the work, and the other of the worker. First, then, let us inquire, a little farther, how the *work* of education calls for the organized co-operation of those engaged in it. Let us take a hasty view of the domain over which teachers are made overseers, and looking abroad upon the objects of their charge, see we not, as it written on each one by its Creator,—“Take this child and train it for me.”—To what condition would the helplessness of infancy give place in the absence of all mental and moral training, it is hardly possible to say. We may have a faint idea—and but a faint one of what no training would do; and of what evil training does do, we know more than what is sufficient to make the mind sad and sombre. But let a succession of generations be left at the mercy of either; let ignorance, without check or control, play its part in deteriorating humanity; and let the corrupting influence of evil training, have a full dominant sway, sad and rapid would be the downward progress of man. How soon would a moral chaos rage around, in the vortexes of which all goodness and beauty would be swallowed up and lost. With man, progress is a universal condition. There is no standing still. Where onwards and upwards are not his advances—they are backwards and downwards. It has been so since Adam was driven from Eden. Nations have run the circle of crime and suffering; have lived unhappily, ignominiously and passed away ingloriously. Others have succeeded them, but to run the same fatal circle, and to reach the same inglorious goal. As with nations so with individuals; only they have played a briefer part. This part of man's history is a melancholy picture,—yet it is a true one. Long—long hath the current of vice and ignorance flowed on bearing along with it the whole of that nobility of soul which the Creator engrafted on his nature.—Now what is the educator's object? Is it not to stem and as much as possible, dry up this pestiferous azotic stream? Is it not to turn upon it one bearing health and life—and itself an element of sanity and incorruptibility? Every truth lodged in the youthful mind, every Bible precept worked into the heart becomes a stemmer to the tide of ignorance and vice. And just in proportion as the work successfully goes on, so will the current of man's misery and degradation ebb and its flow lessen. And is there not in this single idea something that should deepen the sense of the moral importance of your labours—something that calls to unity of effort in this paramount work—that thus linked together by kindred affections, and kindred