

Apply this principle to business matters. What would be thought of a semi-annual change of clerks and book-keepers in our mercantile establishments, or of agents and overseers in our factories, or of financiers in our banks, or masters for our merchantmen, or commanders for our iron-clads, or of engineers for our railroad trains? Shrewd business men make no such blunders. Still the changes here indicated would be less disastrous than in the management of our schools. We need first, efficiency, and then permanency in the teachers of our children. But I will not argue the question further.—O. (*Supt. Report*) in the *Vermont Sch. Jour.*

### III. Correspondence of the Journal.

#### 1. ON THE EVIL OF THE FREQUENT CHANGES OF TEACHERS, AND THE REMEDY.

(To the Editor of the Journal of Education.)

That it would be greatly to the benefit of common schools were there fewer changes in the teachers employed, none will, I think, venture to dispute. All must admit that a half yearly, or yearly change, must be not only injurious to the pupils, but a pecuniary loss to the parents. Is there a teacher who can, during the first two months of his engagement, do more than prepare his scholars to receive instruction by his method, and to obtain such a knowledge of them as will enable him to educate them aright—to confirm the good and eradicate the evil. Here then is an unnecessary loss of time to the pupil, and an expense to the parents, for which nothing is received. I must of course be understood to refer to schools in which a good method of imparting instruction to, and a right principle of educating, the youthful mind had previously existed. Where this has not been the case, of course the new teacher has the opportunity of doing more real good during the early part of his engagement than at any after period, by counteracting the evil already done, and in a garden run to waste, rooting out the foul weeds, and encouraging the growth of the flowers.

But, I may be asked how can these frequent changes be avoided? If teachers do not suit, must they not be discharged, and others procured? Undoubtedly; but in how few instances comparatively is this the real cause of the change. More usually it proceeds from a desire of the teacher to better his position, even though by relinquishing his present employment he may chance to "go further and fare worse;" frequently, too, it arises from the incapacity of trustees to judge of the merit of those whom they employ. Upon the latter cause I have, at present, no intention to dwell, beyond remarking, that it will be found difficult to remove, until education is more generally diffused, and its benefits in every walk of life more universally acknowledged, with the former I have chiefly to do in these remarks.

One means of removing this, one of the most frequent causes of change, will be found in the employment of a class of men, to whom removal from place to place is irksome and disagreeable. When, however, is such a class to be found? I answer, amongst married teachers.

I know not whether the experience of others bears me out, but my own enables me to assert, that the most successful instructors and educators are to be found amongst those who are the heads of families. Far be it from me to insinuate that there are not many, very many, worthy young teachers, whose whole energies are devoted to their professional duties. Whether it be, or be not, granted, that married men are better than others as teachers, affects not the main part of my argument. That a single man will look with as much dread to a change of situation as one with a wife and family is hardly to be expected. The former, indeed, frequently delights in thus forming new acquaintances, whilst the latter dreads a removal as a cause of much inconvenience and annoyance, and frequently of considerable pecuniary loss. Let this point be granted, and it behoves all to encourage the influx of such men into the ranks of the calling. The question now naturally arises, how are such men to be allured to determine to devote themselves to this important duty, ranking next only to the duties of the minister of the Gospel.

With what object in view do, if not a majority, a very large minority of our teachers enter the profession? It is undoubtedly to procure the means of enabling them to enter some more lucrative calling. How few, how very few, determine to devote their whole lives to the charge of the youth of the land! How many will resist the temptation offered by some employment which will give them more means at their disposal to procure the luxuries of life? Indeed, not many. The cause which produces all this is the cause which excludes those whose particular interest it would be to avoid changes; it is the low rate of wages paid. This we cannot hope to be remedied at once; much has already been done during the past ten years, much more will yet be done. But there is one point for which I would ask the earnest consideration of all parents and trus-

tees. In how many of our school sections are there teachers' residences? What effect would be produced were there in every section erected a comfortable house, with a small garden attached? Would not those who, I have shown, would endeavour to avoid all change, cleave to the profession, especially if this were made an item, not to be valued and deducted from their salaries.

A word to married men, and I have done; they have advantages over others, as teachers, of which they should earnestly avail themselves. As heads of families, they have many more opportunities of becoming acquainted with the youthful mind, and adapting themselves to its wants and capacity. Their influence for good or evil is greater, inasmuch as their example is likely to be followed by many of their pupils. Their homes should be models of neatness and order, for who can tell what effect may thereby be produced upon many of their careless neighbours; particularly is this the case in rural sections. Let them, however, not expect to be at once appreciated at their full value. By, even at some sacrifice, steadily adhering to their profession, remaining if possible in the one section they will ere long become respected and valued even for what they are worth.

BENEDICT, COUNTY OF BRUCE.

#### 2. RIGHT MOTIVES IN TEACHING.

The mind of man is capable of forming a vast variety of projects, of thoughts innumerable, of designs and opinions without end, but they are invariably tinged with that motive which gave rise to them, every thought, every opinion is marked by the peculiarity of each individual mind, some may be traced to their true source, others are so garbled as to hide the true motive power, but an influence still lurks there, and aids more or less in the fulfilment of any design.

The peculiar opinions of two different persons cause them to pronounce different judgments upon the same subject, the same book is read by each, and each takes a different view of it; the opinions of men are but a reflex of the mind, and they are consequently as diverse as the various circumstances that have aided in the formation of the mind. The actions of men are no less influenced by their thoughts and opinions, than are those opinions by the circumstances that tended to the formation of them, from the motive that actuates any one in the prosecution of any enterprise, may we form a just conclusion of the result, or of the manner in which that enterprise will be carried out, and conversely from the manner in which any work is executed may we frequently judge of the motive that prompted to it, for the effectual working out of any design depends to a great extent upon the motive from which that design was engaged in; if it be a just and good one then will the work be carried on vigorously and enthusiastically, and success will commonly be the result, but if that motive be an improper one then will the work too often be slovenly, tedious and unpleasurable, frequently terminating in defeat and disgrace; and perhaps in no work in which man can engage will the motive power that prompted to that work be more observable, will more effectually tinge it than in the teaching of the young. Some works are calculated to give pleasure, even to those who take no interest in them, while engaged therein, others may be highly remunerative, which in itself will tempt many to prosecute them with vigor, even though the motive for engaging in them be the very unworthy one of remuneration only; yet will the work be looked upon more as a disagreeable task, ready to be given up at any moment, than if it had been engaged in from a good motive, in which case the circumstances connected with the work, that in themselves render that work pleasing, will but add a fresh zest, will but give a greater vigor to the full and right prosecution of it; but such, every one knows, is not the case with the work of the teacher, few things present more difficulties, few are attended with greater annoyances, more trying to the temper than the education of the young, while few occupations are more poorly remunerated, hence there is nothing in the mere routine of the work calculated to render it pleasant, therefore many, very many, are ready to say that the annoyances are so great, the trials so varied and peculiar that they could never teach a school, neither could they unless they felt most thoroughly interested in their work, then there is much connected with it to render it not only pleasing and agreeable but one of the noblest work in which man can engage.

Every one who undertakes the education of the young must be imbued with a deep, sincere philanthropy; no one can fail of seeing that crime, misery, and wretchedness are rampant throughout the whole human family, the educator must be actuated by a desire to lessen these evils; nothing will perhaps more surely do so than wide spread thorough education, it may be that the sphere in which the work of the teacher is immediately carried on, is a small one, but his influence is not confined to the school room; as the small acorn rises into the great oak, spreading its branches on all sides, scattering seed all around, so will the influence of the teacher be