

THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

The following article, from the *Canadian Baptist*, may be read in connection with the excellent paper that appeared in our last under the above heading.

Is public school teaching a profession? was one of the questions which came up indirectly at the meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Association last week. There is a good deal involved in the question. It is not, of course, easy to define exactly what are the marks of a profession as distinct from any other occupation, yet we all know pretty well what we mean by the term.

"Teaching a profession" we fancy many of our readers exclaiming, "why, certainly, it is one of the very first of the professions in usefulness and dignity." From one point of view the answer is incontrovertible. Teaching ranks among the very highest professions, if we have regard to the qualifications needful to make a true teacher. The rare qualities of mind and heart, the careful and thorough culture, intellectual, moral, and social, which are indispensable to a teacher of the highest type, are at least equal to those required in any other profession, not excepting even the ministry.

When we think, again, of the important interests entrusted to the teachers of our children; the preciousness and delicacy of the material upon which it is their daily duty to operate; the close relations which these operations bear to the future well being of society and state, we cannot deny their claims to all the influence and dignity which, by common consent, attach to the foremost of the professions. We, as parents, put into their hands our dearest and most precious possessions, realizing, if we are thoughtful, as we should be, that the future of our loved ones, for this life and the life to come, must be largely affected by the character and influence of those who have the training of their plastic natures. The State, too, in sending forth the great army of teachers to train up those who are to be its future citizens, entrusts them with a commission of the very first importance. They have vastly more to do than any other persons, parents only excepted, and, in very many cases, not even parents excepted, with determining the character of the future citizens, and so of the nation itself.

And, yet notwithstanding all this, there were teachers found to stand up in the Convention and say in effect: "We are not members of a profession Society does not accord to us either the remuneration or the social consideration it bestows freely upon the members of the other learned professions. It is an unpleasant truth, but it is better to look disagreeable truths fair in the face."

We fear, from their own point of view, those who spoke thus were not far astray. How is it, readers of the *Baptist*, in your communities? Do the men and women whom you entrust with the sacred duty of moulding the minds and manners and morals of your children, take rank in your estimation and that of your neighbours with your minister, or even with your lawyer or doctor? Do you give them the same social consideration? Are you willing to pay them on as liberal a scale?

Perhaps some one may say, or think, if he does not care to say, that the average public school teacher does not stand on a level intellectually and socially with the average minister, or lawyer, or doctor. If this is so, whose is the fault? Surely in view of the nature of the teacher's work, and the close and constant contact into which they are brought with your children, and we should hope with yourselves, they ought to be the peers in every respect of the members of any profession. But in this democratic country the people have ultimately the management of all such matters in their own hands. You can have just as much talent, just as much culture, just as much refinement, we had almost said—would it be very far astray?—just as much Christian manliness or womanliness in your teacher as you determine to have, are careful to insist upon and willing to pay for.

Thus the blame for any deficiencies must fall primarily upon parents and citizens themselves. Secondly it rests upon the School Trustees, the

people's agents. Do your trustees put up the positions of teachers of your children to be competed for, as has been said, in a kind of Dutch auction, and knocked down to the lowest bidder who can pass muster with the Department? Do they in their advertisements in the papers ask candidates to state salary required, hoping thus to take advantage of some poor fellow's need and save you a few cents apiece in taxes? If so, you and they are clearly those who are doing all in their power to degrade the teacher's calling far below the dignity of the profession, and to fill the school houses with the uneducated and the incompetent, or with the time-server who is making the work a stepping stone to what they regard as the professions.

A SHAKSPERIAN READING.

[A. LARSEN, COPENHAGEN, JAN., 1886.]

In 'Macbeth,' Act I sc vi, Banquo, in describing the pleasant situation of Macbeth's castle, says (according to the reading now universally accepted)

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here.

The reading of the folios is *mansionry*, the correction to *mansionry* being due to Theobald. Pope in his second edition proposed *mansionry*, which was adopted by Haumer only of all editors old or modern, indeed, as far as I have seen, they have, one and all, considered it altogether below their notice. Now this is to me perfectly astonishing. The original reading being evidently a misprint, a correction was inevitable. Two are proposed, the one no more violent than the other (omitting a letter in the one case, inserting one in the other), the one (*mansionry*) gives us a well known word and a most excellent meaning, the other a word which is no word at all, a word never seen or heard before or since, but simply coined for the occasion, and badly coined, indeed, a word, in my opinion, next to impossible. I am very much mistaken if the whole language affords one single instance of a word being formed by adding the termination *ry* to another word ending in *sion*. The choice between these two readings, then, one would think, could not be doubtful. And yet the fact is that *mansionry* has been almost unanimously preferred by editors to *mansionry*. How is this to be accounted for? The only explanation I can think is that none of these editors has ever seen, or taken particular notice of, a swallow's nest, otherwise they would have known that it really is "masonry" and, moreover, that this is a striking peculiarity, distinguishing the swallow's nest from those of most other birds.

I submit, then, that Pope's reading ought to be reinstated, and the quasi-word *mansionry* once for all dismissed from the English dictionary.—*The Bookman*.

GREATEST LAKE IN AMERICA.

Capt. C. E. Dutton, of the U. S. geological survey, has been recently engaged in making a study of Crater Lake in Oregon, and the latest advices received from him show that he has discovered probably the deepest body of fresh water in the country. Leaving Ashland, Oregon, on the 7th of July, his party, escorted by ten soldiers provided through the courtesy of the general commanding the military department of the Columbia, reached the brink of the wall of the lake on the 13th, having brought with them boats so mounted on the running gear of wagons as to bear transportation over a hundred miles of mountain road without injury. The boats bore the transportation without strain or damage, and preparations were at once begun for lowering them nine hundred feet to the water. The steepness of the wall was very great, being at the place selected about 41° or 42°, and the descent partly over talus, above covered with snow, and rocky broken ledges lower down. The boats entered the water quite unharmed. The process of sheathing them, rigging the tackle, and lowering them occupied four days. A couple of days were occupied in making journeys

around the walls of the lakes by boat,—the only possible way,—and in examining the rocks and structures of the wall in its various parts. Next followed a series of soundings. The depth of the lake considerably exceeded the captain's anticipations, though the absence of anything like a talus near the water line already indicated deep water around the entire shore. The depths range from 853 to 1,000 feet, so far as the soundings show, and it is quite possible and probable that depths both greater and shallower may be found. The average depth is about 1,400 feet. The descent from the water's edge is precipitous; at four or five hundred yards from shore, depths of fifteen to eighteen hundred feet are found all around the margin. The greatest depths will probably exceed two thousand feet, for it is not probable that the lowest point has been touched. The soundings already made indicate it as being the deepest body of fresh water in the country.—*Science*.

NEW BRUNSWICK'S EXHIBIT.

The Canadian Educational Court at the Colonial Exhibition is to the visitors a striking evidence of the Dominion's intellectual development. Ontario's fine display of education appliances is admirably situated at the end of the Canadian machinery annex—by-the-by, the only country that has machinery in motion. Off the Ontario Court, and at the end of the New Zealand section, is the Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick school display, and a fine exhibit it is—books, maps, drawing, needle-work, and models—thus illustrating the actual work done in the schools. Each of these provinces has a commissioner in attendance to give to visitors any information they may require, and to take care of the objects and otherwise do what he can to give Canada and her universities, colleges and schools all possible prominence. In this respect, the Dominion is very well served, because she has at South Kensington intelligent and energetic men; which is saying a good deal, inasmuch as it is not only in the Intercolonial display of objects that there is a keen competition, but also in the effort to give them prominence, and in this matter Canada, by her several representatives, is excellently attended. Her press room, in which there are a large number of Canadian journals, is well patronized by the visitors, and on the walls there is a good collection of photographs illustrative of the towns, buildings, and scenery of New Brunswick. This Province has also a magnificent trophy of forestry to show the quality and use of her various kinds of timber, as well as the feathered and four-footed game still so abundant. In this unique structure there is, first, the different kind of logs with their bark on, secondly, the rough planks, with the leaf and flower of each tree; then the saplings, and above them the polished boards to show the use they could be put to in manufacture; and the edifice is crowned with birds and animals, the structure, as a whole, attracting a good deal of public attention.—*Canadian Gazette (London, Eng.)*

INFLUENCE OF BAD BOOKS.—Bad books and vicious literature are to be found everywhere. The first leaves of the most atrocious and sentimental fiction published are scattered broadcast in the vicinity of our school houses. These sheets are distributed purely in the business interests of those who reap profit by engendering morbid and depraved appetites for the perusal of murderous adventures, pistol and fainting episodes, monstrous and impossible incidents of love, lust, and so called virtue. The demoralizing influence of bad literature is difficult to exaggerate. Its effects upon the young mind are disastrous in the extreme, destroying all relish for the business of the school, and sapping and weakening the purpose or energy required to perform the most common duties of life. How often teachers point out to me inefficient and ambitionless boys or girls, with the sad explanation, "he or she is a novel reader." The remark simply but significantly explains the listlessness and stupidity of youths who have become so unfortunate as to fall into this horrible net. The ability to read, as one says, is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The child who plucks from this tree only to partake of the knowledge of evil is lost indeed.—*New England Journal of Education*.