

break down or even weaken the barriers of virtue.—It is an office most honourable; and should be honourably filled. It is an office of trust, most precious and sacred. Who would ever think of committing this trust to the unworthy? Is the whole civilized world now awake to the manifest advantages of education, and bestirring itself to brighten its day? And can this be done through an incompetent, ill-trained agency?

He who fills the office of teacher should be a true man,—true to his vocation,—to his trust. And he who makes choice of this office from just motives, and with a high purpose will find in it much to meet his expectation.—To diffuse his own spirit of earnestness and love, to improve daily the working of the delicate machinery which is under his direction, may well engage his whole heart. It is an interest which grows deeper as he better understands how far it reaches. The children entrusted to him are the living materials out of which the fabric of society, for the next age is to be formed. So far as he succeeds in training them for a life of usefulness and duty, he makes an important,—a very valuable and precious contribution to the common stock of happiness, and largely shares in moulding the hearts of a people. He is, indeed, the chief benefactor who does most for the increase of wisdom, goodness and piety: for these constitute the true riches of a people; just as ignorance and vice constitute its degradation, and hinder the effective working of all useful institutions.

There are few better reformers than the intelligent, right-hearted educator. Let him have free scope, with ability and heart to use his opportunity, and he will remedy a thousand evils,—safely and certainly, without exasperation and without noise. Something like what the missionary is among the heathen is the teacher among our young and ignorant,—the encourager, expounder and instiller of truth, piety, and knowledge to those who sit in darkness, and under the shadow of undeveloped intellects. But if his work is of such vast importance to society, should not his knowledge, his experience, and his professional skill bear some correspondence to the work? To make even an elementary education any thing better than shallow and formal, a considerable amount of preparation is indispensable. He requires far more information than that which his daily duties would seem to imply. To meet the daily demands made upon his mental store, and on his skill in training and illustrating, he needs be far a-head of his scholars. If he has nothing laid up, and is not able to communicate from the fulness of his own mind and with an ample skill of experience, what can the day's lesson be but the routine of a dry and barren recitation?—Every thing taught, however simple or elemental, should be full and familiar—reaching to its root; and, if not so, how can he teach with thoroughness; how can he teach the understandings of his pupils, so as there to give an intelligent judgement, and become a working principle, giving the mind energy—expansion—and grasp? Another requisite not to be dispensed with is the constant renewal and enlargement of his information. The range of his knowledge must be always widening. Otherwise, how can he keep progress with the times? How can he keep up with the rising standard of education? The standard of education is constantly on the ascendant. It is much higher now than it was thirty years ago; and thirty years to come will find it higher than now. What is the legitimate level of a school if it be not that of the age? Nay, is it not out of the school that every advance should spring? Should the school not be a leader and true pioneer of improvement?

The power of communicating truth profitably and effectively is another high requisite in teaching. To speak with clearness and effect is a great attainment,—valuable to all, absolutely necessary to the educator. One person expresses his ideas with clearness and energy by a few pointed, well chosen words; another accumulates sentences in vain and only complicates his purpose. One by a few simple words—impressively expressed lightens up his subject to a demonstration. Another by a redundant verbiage mystifies it.

The former sends home the truth with a living effect; the latter darkens his meaning by his own explanations, and actually shuts the pupil's mind against it. Against these defects every teacher should guard. Another needful qualification is self-discipline. No treatises on education, no normal or college training, nor any system, however good, will alone suffice without this; great helps these are,—helps which cannot be dispensed with, and which should be thankfully used; but the teacher must, in a certain sense, be formed by teaching. In teaching he must consider himself every day in school schooling himself, testing his own plans and methods of instructing;—correcting what he finds wrong, supernatural or defective, or adding what is wanting. Thus every day will find him making progress, and every year a stage in

advance. And can any thing tend to give more grace and beauty to his aims, more dignity to his labours, value to his vocation, or success to his efforts?

But this is a part of my subject which requires much closer views, and more searching enquiry. It is an idea erroneous and deceptive, too much generally acted upon—that the acquisition of knowledge, a certain amount of scholarship, a readiness in answering questions, are equivalent to the power of interestingly and successfully communicating instruction, and evidences of that skill and aptness to educate and train the mind, which give energy and expansion to its powers. It is true that learning is a prerequisite; but it is just as true that educating and teaching have very marked distinctions. Learning alone cannot make an efficient educator. To be such, he must possess educative requisites. He must have and well understand that great fundamental principle the guide and regulator of all school work—method. Without it all in us and about us as teachers, is a chaos. Without it every thing we do tends to confusion. There can be no convenient and suitable arrangement; there can be no natural and orderly disposition of parts; then can be no just unity of principle in carrying out any educational principle in system, and, therefore, little true progress in teaching efforts. The true educator commences with the simplest elements, advances by consecutive and relative gradations, notes as he advances the results of every gradation on the pupil's mind, and guides himself accordingly; and as he passes from one subdivision to another, takes care that a proper and dependent connexion exists throughout—so as to form one harmonious whole.

Lessons, to make them profitable, require reasoning, description, illustration and application; and to do this efficiently his own mind should be made up how each point, and each truth is to be methodically reasoned out, described, illustrated, and its application placed in the clearest light. Method and order, however, should not be confounded. They are obviously distinct. The latter regards the arrangement of information or knowledge,—the raw material of lessons; the former has to do with the moulding and fashioning, which it receives from the hand of the teacher, to prepare it to be presented to the pupils, so as to exercise their mental powers at the right time, in the right way and in due proportion. But is it possible thus to conduct the business of school training without suitable preparation,—without earnest devotion,—without concentrating and systematising the results of his experience, and knowledge of what he teaches? But system implies more than this. It takes in that important part of professional skill—*self-education*, as this respects the scholar. The scholar's mind has to be set in motion, it has to be awakened up and set a working,—and in a methodic way too. And unless this is done, and its developing power called forth, exercised and directed in a combined and contemporaneous action with the machinery of the school,—the teacher's success must be doubtful and precarious. Self-education is an element mixing itself up with the labours of every instructor,—a power co-working with him in the discharge of every duty; and which can no more be wanting than his own attainments and teaching skill. The very guarantee of his success hangs on the willing, persevering self-efforts of his pupil. Without these he is powerless. Wherever his efforts are counteracted, and thwarted, neither system nor scholarship, teaching power nor devotedness to his work, will secure success. He may encourage and stimulate, direct and advise, but he cannot think for him. He may simplify what is abstruse, and explain what is obscure, he may lay open and make plain, what is intricate or complex, but he cannot relieve his scholar from personal application, or perform in his stead the various mental operations which enrich the mind, and constitute the very essence of education. These the learner must perform for himself. All disciplining and learning must be his own work. He can no more reap improvement by employing another than he can see with another man's eyes. One part of the art of teaching, and its grandest—from its highest to its lowest departments, from the seminary for infants to the college and the university,—is to get the learner to work for himself, to use his own powers, to become his own instructor—a *self-educator*. The teacher who aims not at this falls short of his duty, and is excluding from his system that which alone can give it life and efficiency—the self-educating process.

(To be continued.)