

New Brunswick Journal of Education.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., AUGUST 10, 1886.

TO TEACHERS.

As we intimated last week, we are sending the JOURNAL to every teacher in this Province whose address we have been enabled to secure. This entails a heavy expense, as the issue is large, amounting to 1500 copies. The number of teachers who have subscribed is large; but we are not satisfied with this. The small price asked for the JOURNAL should be the means of placing it in the hands of every teacher in the Province. We ask, then, those teachers who are receiving the paper to notify us of their intention to have the paper sent permanently to their address. In a few cases we are mailing copies addressed to "teacher." Will those who receive them at once inform us of the proper address and have their names enrolled as *bona fide* subscribers. If postage stamps must be sent in payment of subscriptions try, if possible, to send one cent stamps. In all cases give the name of the county. Our friends who read this will also confer a favor by informing us of the schools that may be vacant in their neighborhood, with any changes of address of teachers that have occurred since the opening of the present term. It is better, as we have before advised, for two teachers, or for the teacher and the trustees of a district to join together in remitting a double subscription—one dollar—which can be easily and safely sent in a registered letter.

TALK WITH TEACHERS.

A correspondent writes: "I find THE JOURNAL an excellent paper, and hope soon to send an article to it, if it would be acceptable."

[It would be acceptable. Short articles on school work, or on any subject that will be of interest and profit to teachers, will be gladly received.]

Another teacher, whom we have not the pleasure of knowing personally, says: "I cannot see how any of our teachers, who expect to become good ones, can be remiss in subscribing."

[Excellent advice, which should be acted upon without delay by all live teachers.]

Our teachers should read. Instead of spending time in fretting or worrying, they should read, study, think. First of all, they should read a good live educational paper, such as THE JOURNAL is, and expects to be. Next they should patronize the local paper. If a daily, so much the better. The daily or weekly newspaper is the history of the world for the day or week that is just passed. Then, if possible, take such periodicals as the *Century*, *Harper*, or *Science*, each of which is sure to contain articles on education and kindred topics that will enable teachers to keep fully abreast of the times.

I know of nothing more helpful to a teacher in her work than a well conducted educational journal. Such journals are filled with the best thought of the ablest and most learned, as well as the most practical teachers in the land. No teacher can read them without deriving from them a great amount of just the kind of information she needs to help her in her work, and I cannot understand how any teacher can consent to deprive herself of such invaluable assistance. I believe that no other city can make a better showing in regard to this matter of professional reading than ours, as there are only two teachers in our entire corps who do not subscribe for and read at least one educational journal, and most of the teachers read more than one.—*Edward B. Neely, Supt. St. Joseph Schools.*

THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

BY J. V. ELLIS, M. P. P.

[Read before the Educational Institute, June 28th.]

Requests made to me orally and by letter, that I would occupy six minutes of time in an address before you was, no doubt, an intimation that for a longer period you would not be interested. However, the short notice given me by your committee that I was wanted for six minutes will have the desired effect. I have not had time to prepare anything longer than a six minutes' paper; and the readiest fluency would not justify speech, without thought, in such a body as this is.

In my memory there is recollection of reports which I have read of discussions either here or in the county institutes, in which teachers laboriously wrestled with the question how their status—meaning by that all that the word implies—could be advanced. It seemed to me a somewhat amusing, and not wholly wise, proceeding. At a convention of editors the prevailing idea would be that the greatest men on earth had assembled, and their proverbial poverty in worldly lucre would never affect the high value they place upon themselves. I have attended conventions of medical men when the prevailing sentiment seemed to be one of pity for the remainder of the human race; and in a clerical convention there is always one leading idea, that is that the saints are taking counsel together, and that all that there is of earth rightfully belongs to them. Why, then, do not teachers on this matter of their status act instead of talk; assume, instead of complain or lament. To assert or to confess that their social standing, their rank or station is not as good as that of all other persons in the community is an admission of inferiority. In America there is no distinction of rank or station. One man is as good as another, but the other man may contest or deny the fact if the first man is doubtful about it. In this age and over all this broad continent men of learning and intellect are the great kings of thought, and they wear their crowns if they manfully place them on their own heads by the royal right that they are entitled. If they are entitled, and come forward boldly to take their seats on their thrones, who disputes with, or questions them? On the contrary there is disposition everywhere to pay tribute to well-deserved merit, and to bestow honors where honors are worthily won. Too often, indeed, are they bestowed upon some persistent seeker, even when not worthily won. There is better authority than mine for the statement that by taking thought of his stature man can add nothing to it. Apply the idea in this to the stature of man in his society or social conditions. In fact, I do not think it is wise or necessary to admit that there is any profession, trade or calling in this country in any way inferior to any other. I have often observed that in the United States there is an almost entire absence of anything of this kind. Enter any convention or representative body, and you will find there the predominant feeling that that body is the particular one for which the world was created and the harmony of the spheres established. There may be something of selfishness in this, but it is an exhibition of magnificent self-reliance and independence. In your profession the ablest men and women have, I believe, the highest confidence and esteem which the communities in which they live can bestow upon them. Every position which they can take, not incompatible with their professional work, is as free to them as to others. What more is there?

Doubtless there is a difficulty of a practical nature on one point, which may seem to some to be the whole matter, and that is the difficulty of getting the people to understand the importance of properly paying teachers. In school districts where the

Trustees are chosen because their chief qualification is that they are close and niggardly, the people will very likely look with a feeling akin to contempt upon a profession which does not condemn its meanness, and which even ministers to it, by consent. How can this be remedied? Is not the remedy with yourselves? I do not recommend either boycotts or strikes, but I think that teachers should place on their services a value below which no one of them should work. The Province fixes a rate of allowance for teachers according to their class, and there might be a professional understanding which would have the force of agreement that no teacher should take up the burden of work at less than some agreed upon advance on this allowance. To enforce any rule of this nature, your teachers must be competent, and there must be harmony and unanimity among you. I feel confident that as time goes on the Provincial grants to teachers will be reduced, gradually, of course, but substantially, nevertheless. This is because of that necessity which, seemingly, has no law. The people think their representatives in the Legislature are applying the public money to other purposes. There is, therefore, the greater necessity why you should force upon them knowledge of the fact that they must provide liberally, out of their private means, for the teacher who takes upon himself the burden of instructing the young, who, in time, are to come into the possession of the public property and wealth thus created for them. This knowledge should be put before the people in the more practical way, by a kind of object lesson, in which the payment of good salaries should be enforced. The public money is now being used for works which, it is alleged, must have a great effect in advancing the mutual condition of the people, particularly in rural districts. If this is the result, the people must not be allowed to plead poverty as a reason for not properly remunerating teachers. And it should be your case not to allow them. You have a profession of which, many fine and even eloquent things might be said, in the way of sentiment, but as it is an indispensable profession, it is not necessary in order to advance its interests, to talk sentiment. In fact I believe that the people everywhere will do what is right if they are shown what is right. You are entitled to receive the just reward of a laborious life. Do your duty to yourselves, and the people will be compelled to do their duty to you.

I do not know that I have occupied six minutes, but I have opened up a subject that will take more than six minutes to settle.

Probably the teaching profession may feel the effects of "over-crowding," a phrase which is now common as regards many professions. But, if there is "over-crowding," it is an evil which suggests that there may be many who are incompetent. Devise some scheme by which the incompetent shall be competitors with you and against you no longer, and you will have done much to give your profession standing. No matter how much we may object to the ordinary "strike" we must sympathize with every movement whose clear object is to purify and elevate a noble calling.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

Westmorland County Teachers' Institute will meet in Memorial Hall, at Sackville, on Thursday, 16th Sept. A public meeting will be held in the evening in Oulton Hall. The Chief Superintendent of Education and several of the faculty of Mt. Allison College will speak. An exhibit of manual work from the school of the county will be held. Teachers are invited to contribute collections of objects used in illustrating lessons, and samples of apparatus and contrivances designed or invented by teachers. Prizes will be given for the best manual work.