

## THE TEACHER OUT OF THE SCHOOL-ROOM.\*

BY C. J. ATKINSON, GLANFORD.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW TEACHERS,—What has been assigned me as the subject of my paper to-day is at least new and fresh, not a threadbare theme—one which, so far as I know, has not been taken up at any of the meetings of this or any other of our Provincial Associations. Scores of lectures are given at various places on the teacher's work in the school-room, but nothing is said about his life out of it. Candidates for the profession are instructed how to teach pupils, but not how to talk with parents; they are drilled in the best methods of developing the youthful mind that experience or originality has hit upon, but they are not told how to improve their own; they are lectured on the hygiene of the school-room, but are not advised as to their own physical development. In brief, there is so much instruction given on the one hand and so little on the other that there is left but little room for the play of original powers in the school-room, while out of it everything is left to chance. This, certainly, is not wise. A young man upon entering the teaching profession leaves home perhaps for the first time. Hitherto he has been regarded by his friends as nothing but a big boy, treated as such, called by a short form of his given name, and accustomed to converse with boys in a boyish manner. He goes into his first section as teacher and finds all this changed. No longer a boy—he is regarded as a man, with a man's duties and respon-

sibilities, and is addressed as one who should have the understanding and the aspirations of a man. This transition is a perilous and trying one. Hence the failure of many young teachers, not so much from want of ability in the school-room, but as a consequence of their mistakes out of it. If candidates had clearly pointed out to them this great change we have referred to, and were advised in connection therewith, they might be saved from many blunders and indiscretions damaging to their fame. It is upon this topic—of the teacher outside the school-room—that I am to speak, and as the first division of the subject we will take up *the teacher's intercourse with the people*. In starting in a new field of labour the young teacher should be more anxious to become popular with parents than with young people of his own age. In order that he may become so he must first win the good-will of the children, for you may be sure that the teacher whom the child hates the parent will not love. It may not always be an easy matter to get into the good graces of a man or a woman, but it is the easiest thing in the world to win the good-will of a child. A smile will do it. But then, just here, how hard it is for some people to smile! There are those upon whose faces a smile is the natural expression, while upon others it is no adornment. The latter should not be teachers; but for young men and women of pleasant manners and a gracious disposition it is, as I have said, an easy matter to win the affection of children. The best way to

\* An Address before the Wentworth Teachers' Association, May 6th, 1881.