

LOW ESTIMATE OF THE DUTIES OF THE PROFESSION BY TEACHERS THEMSELVES.

It is a serious but not uncommon mistake to suppose that a degree of knowledge, but slightly superior to the amount you are required to impart, will be sufficient to enable you to teach successfully—you you must stand on a far higher level, or those whom you instruct will, in some way or other, discover your deficiencies, and, finding you wanting, will not give you credit for the knowledge you do possess. It is often supposed, also, that little or no training can be requisite for teaching such simple subjects as are taught to the juvenile classes in Common Schools, reading, arithmetic, &c., but, in fact, the truth is quite the reverse—the more simple the subject—the more difficult to teach. It is a far harder task to interest a large class of little children in an ordinary reading lesson, to keep alive their attention, to preserve order and convey ideas, than it is to instruct a larger number of elder and more advanced pupils. In the latter case the subject is generally itself engaging, and the pupils better know the necessity for attention; while, therefore, a *senior* class demands more *knowledge*, a *junior* one requires more *tact* on the part of the teacher. No degree of knowledge or skill, however, will enable any man to teach successfully who goes to his work each day without any previous preparation or arrangements. An habitual neglect of this will assuredly cause such a loss of time, and introduce such uncertainty and confusion into a School as cannot be counterbalanced by any literary or other qualifications of the master.

PRACTICAL DUTY OF EACH MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION.

While we are all desirous of making good instruction accessible to every child in the community, let us act like practical men; and, instead of imagining that we are competent to legislate on school matters, instead of contenting ourselves with *talking* about school systems, let each do the duty that lies nearest—endeavour in earnest to bring his own school to the highest state of efficiency. If we do this we shall not only be more happy ourselves from the consciousness that we are not hirelings, but we shall more really serve the cause of education, than by any amount of learned deliberation on school questions. I wish you all to look upon this Association as a thing altogether secondary to that which it is meant to promote, the improvement of your several schools. The educational system of this province, commencing with the Common Schools and culminating in a noble University is very complete as a whole. Here and there a defect may be pointed out, but the general desire, I repeat, is good, and grand, and time and experience, enabling the master builders to correct and to enlarge, will gradually remove whatever faults there may yet be in the conception. It remains, however, for us, the workmen, to carry out the plans into thoroughly successful execution; and it must ever be remembered that if the welfare of a community is promoted by the diffusion of education, then the Common Schools of the Province, which educate more than nineteen-twentieths of its inhabitants, are far more connected with the progress of the country than either the Grammar Schools, or the University itself. And you, gentlemen, are each responsible to your fellow-men and to your God, for the due discharge of an office, the importance of which cannot be over-estimated.

5. MR. ANGUS MCKINNON.

(Common School Teacher in the County of York.)

POSITION AND DUTIES OF COMMON SCHOOL TEACHERS.

From a recent essay before the Teachers' Association of the County of York we make the following extracts in regard to the office of teacher: The question now may be asked, What are the benefits derived from *this office*? or, in other words, what is the end of teaching? The answer is beautifully given in the words "To bring forth all the powers of the mind and body for the discharge of the duties of this life and the life to come." God, in his infinite wisdom, appointed the Levites the temporal and spiritual instructors of the children of Israel. As then, so also in our day, it is still highly necessary that some, at least, devote their time and energies to the diffusion of knowledge and the improvement of society. It is to the culture of the mind we owe all our God-like pre-eminence. What little perfection man may possess, is acquired and not inherited. We may inherit the means wherewith to acquire knowledge, but never knowledge itself. If our mental powers are not cultivated, thorns and briars will soon spring up to choke what good there is in us. Let the work of improving man mentally and morally be discontinued, and the decomposition of society would speedily follow—the bulwarks of liberty and civilization, one after another, would totter and fall—the props of all our institutions, civil and religious, would gradually decay—those grand and stupendous monuments of science and of art, that occupied ages in building, would soon moulder to dust. Let teachers, too, bear this in mind, and *value* their calling, and much more will be done to elevate man than has

hitherto been accomplished. "If you do not value your profession, others will not do it for you;" this is an important truth that should be deeply impressed upon the mind of every teacher. Did every instructor of youth feel the truth and force of what has been said, the cause of education would progress much more rapidly, and be attended with far greater success. Lukewarmness is a crime too prevalent, and is productive of much mischief; it amounts to actual robbery. Parents and guardians are thus robbed of their money—robbed because the careless teacher renders no adequate service for the money he receives; and, what is more criminal still, he knowingly robs the *time* of the youth under his care—time, infinitely more precious than any of their lifetime; for now is the season in which their characters are to be moulded and their destiny fixed with a greater or less degree of certainty. The future history of this country—a country whose mineral and forest wealth is inexhaustible, and whose soil is as rich as could be desired—a country possessing all the material elements of an opulent and mighty nation—its future history, I say, lays, [? lies] to an almost incredible extent, in the hands of the teachers of the present generation. The manner in which they now discharge their duties will be fully illustrated in the characters of those who are to be the rulers and possessors of this fine country, on a day not far distant. Let this be borne in mind, and new life and vigour will be infused into our schools. Canada, then, will rise in the scale of knowledge and greatness to that point which destiny indicates for her sons. Let this thought inspire our hearts and stimulate us to redoubled effort, that knowledge may be sown broadcast over the land, until every man, woman, and child enjoys the benefits of a liberal education. Nothing gives more satisfaction to the faithful teacher, than to see knowledge increasing and the light of science shining around him. It cheers his heart, lightens his toil, and propels him on his mission of benevolence. The consciousness of making men wise, causes him to double his diligence. Fortunate are they who have a teacher who earnestly and unremittingly labors to advance his pupils—ineestimable is the fruit of his toil.—*Markham Paper*.

II. Biographical Sketches.

No. 24.—JOSEPH LOCKE, ESQ., M.P.

Our great engineers are falling fast. We have lost this year Brunel and Stephenson, and death has this week struck down Mr. Joseph Locke, the Member for Honiton, whose name has been intimately associated with every great railway undertaking of the last thirty years, and who was an excellent as well as an able man. He died in Scotland suddenly and unexpectedly, to the great grief of his numerous friends. Mr. Locke was born in 1805, and was the junior of the two distinguished engineers who have preceded him to the house of clay. Connected with the school of engineers, of which the elder Stephenson was the founder, Mr. Locke has made a princely fortune by his profession, and has risen to a social position higher, perhaps, than any civil engineer of his day. His private fortune is little less than a million sterling. Twenty years back it was well known that his pecuniary affluence was in advance of that of any member of his profession. He started life with the advantages of a good education, and with an amount of mathematical knowledge which materially advanced his subsequent career. He was George Stephenson's favorite pupil, and superintended, under his eye, the Liverpool and Manchester line of railway, the success of which has given such an impetus to the modern mode of travelling. In Parliament Mr. Locke's career was creditable but unostentatious. He spoke occasionally, and always with tact and judgment, and his votes were invariably in favor of progress and reform. On the death of Mr. Robert Stephenson he was elected President of the Institution of Civil Engineers. For his railway services in France, King Louis Philippe decorated him with the Cross of the Legion of Honour. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Society, and has passed from the world respected and regretted by all who knew him, having left the world largely his debtor.—*English Paper*.

No. 25.—RIGHT HON. JAMES WILSON.

The London News announces the death of the Right Hon. James Wilson. The event is said to have occurred at Calcutta on the 11th of August. The disorder is believed to have been cholera. Mr. Wilson, who was editor of the London *Economist*, entered Parliament in 1847, and soon after he was appointed by Lord John Russell to one of the Joint Secretaryships of the Board of Control. In 1852 Mr. Wilson was made one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, a post that he filled until 1858. In 1859 he was appointed Vice-President of the Board of Trade, but was soon afterwards promoted to the post of Finance Minister of the Supreme Council of India, in