

and commerce, as well as in every profession, it is all that we have before mentioned, forced to the white heat of enthusiasm, that wins the victory. And it is so in our profession as well. Other things being equal, the enthusiastic teacher is the successful teacher. To stir this up nothing is equal to well-conducted meetings such as this. Well do our politicians understand this truth, and we may profitably borrow a page from their practice in this respect.

But association, sympathy, professional honour, enthusiasm, belong to the region of that intangible something we call feeling—that something which is as powerful and as evasive on being searched for as life itself. But in the region of the tangible, that which may be seen, can be duly weighed and measured, our aims are just as clearly defined. The first I would mention is *obtaining a voice in the regulation of our schools and school system*. There is no man knows a business so well as he who is engaged in it. And as teachers we know or should know our own work best. We can have no interest antagonistic to the welfare of the community; indeed our success depends upon that welfare. Therefore we have not only a right to a voice, but it is to the interests of our schools and their patrons that we should have such a voice in the regulation of our school machinery. For the last ten years we have exercised such an influence, and that power is ever on the increase, owing simply to the increased efficiency, more complete representation, and more thorough affiliation of our teachers' associations.

In the second place, we meet for the purpose of *intellectual improvement*. In our several stations we can, through the universal medium of books, improve our time and train our intellects, but it requires something more than that to fully educate a man. Compare our farming community with our merchants or even with our mechanics. The best of them read as much and think as deeply, but they lack that concentration of thought, that readiness of speech, which can only be acquired in the contact daily and hourly of man with man. This indeed in many cases is the only education worth the name—the education of circumstances. Therefore do we need to meet frequently together as those engaged in the same profession, and our meetings, if rightly conducted, cannot but tend to sharpen our intellects, educate our faculties, concentrate our energies—in a word, throw us with a great impetus forward in the path of intellectual improvement.

In the third place, such associations tend to the *mutual improvement of character*. As teachers, we are apt in our own little world to act the part of autocrats. And such is the independence of action and belief, that too soon we delude ourselves into the opinion of our own partial infallibility. With none to contradict our orders, we are prone to consider our own *ipse dixit* as part of that sum and substance of eternal life. We are confirmed in our errors, and our character is developed in the direction of our foibles from constant repetition, just as the right arm of a man becomes powerful from continual use. Our character is apt to become dogmatic, to be full of straight lines and right angles, to partake more of the nature of the crystal than of the polished sphere. Such meetings as the present serve to wear off the edges and angles, to polish to smoothness the surface, to erase the idiosyncracies and foibles, and to teach us lessons of self-knowledge, all of which must tend to improvement of character.

And lastly, I would mention the *inter-communication of technical knowledge*. The distinction between technical and general education is in our day becoming more clearly recognized. In a lecture delivered in December, 1877, before the Institute Union, Professor Huxley defines technical education as "that sort of education which is specially adapted for the needs of men whose business in life it is to pursue some kind of handicraft." His definition you

will see is defective, for our work requires a technical education too, and our work is scarcely a handicraft. Yet it requires careful and skilful handling, for it is the manipulation of brains. There are modes of instruction and methods of teaching more approved than others, and in associations such as this, those of us whose experience is the greatest, should be ever ready to communicate to those of our followers who are but entering the profession. The importance of this technical, aside from the general knowledge, has long been recognised in our school system by the presence of Normal Schools, and has more recently been brought into special prominence by the establishment in almost every county of Model Schools. But even after entering on their life work, teachers will find in the lectures, the essays, the instruction, the descriptions of different modes of teaching, and the discussion of our respective systems in teachers' associations, a valuable aid in the acquirement of that technical knowledge and skill which in our profession, as in every profession in life, are absolutely indispensable to success.

### NECESSITY FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT IN TEACHERS.

BY MARY HELEN LORING, FREDERICTON.

A teacher should never consider his education complete. We are apt to think, when we have mastered those subjects necessary to obtain a license, that we have done our duty to ourselves and others, and that our education is finished; but in reality we have then only learned enough to show us, if we are thoughtful persons, how meagre our supply of knowledge really is.

It is humiliating to state—but it is a fact nevertheless—that comparatively few of our teachers are well acquainted with any branch of knowledge outside of those required by law; and some even consider themselves remarkably clever to have gained this required amount of information. This is really degrading. One who only learns what he is forced to learn in order to gain a livelihood is certainly unworthy of the name of teacher.

One of these persons will pass the Board, receive his license, and go into the country to teach. Probably the education of those with whom he comes in contact is less extensive than his own; he is looked up to as a person of extraordinary learning; and by-and-by begins to regard himself in this light; and as the intellect must ever be ascending or descending, he gradually sinks to the level of those by whom he is surrounded.

He has passed his examination, and so he does not take the trouble to master those subjects which may, from time to time, be added to the syllabus; he does not endeavor to acquaint himself with the views of contemporary educationists, or to have any of his own; and so he performs his work, day after day, in a mechanical manner; and by-and-by getting behind the times, he is spoken of as one of the "old teachers," and is obliged to go farther and farther back into the country to make room for the "new teachers," and to reduce his salary in order to secure any situation.

Now, if he had been a genuine teacher, the fact of his being one long in the service would only add to his qualifications, and he would never be classed as one of the "old teachers;" but not only has he fallen behind the times, he has even lost the professional knowledge with which he began.

There are several reasons why many teachers fail to become educated persons. With some it is total inattention to study; but there are those who even pretend to set apart a portion of each day to study, and yet who never make any advancement. This, in a great many cases, is because they take their allotted time for study