

seldom. Hence, we often meet lecturers who cannot lecture, and professors who cannot teach. How often have there appeared men celebrated for special literary attainments, whose other deficiencies were such as to render their efforts as teachers utterly worthless and sometimes worse. Among the higher grades of the profession of teaching there must necessarily exist a certain amount of intellectuality, which usually, though not always, prevents these defects becoming so glaring as they otherwise would. Still those who have visited many of the universities and colleges that exist at the present day, need not task their recollection much to recall the criticisms of students often indicative of very strong opinions regarding the capability of their teachers to communicate knowledge. In such cases, however, the evil, where it exists, is of comparatively less moment, because the age and intelligence of the students are to some extent an antidote to the mischief; but with the teacher of the primary school whose office, though humble, is so vastly important in any system of popular instruction, the neglect on this point is too often equally general and inconceivable. In the generality of professions, the public are content in most countries to consent to the establishment of a legal guarantee of individual fitness for the exercise of such professions; but in that of the school teacher, one of the most difficult, as well as the most important, this safeguard is too often over-looked. Very many persons usually unacquainted with literature, and certainly totally inexperienced in school management and the art of teaching, undertake without reflection to decide on the merits of schools and systems, by the strength of their own judgment. The most ignorant parent will unhesitatingly remove his child from a school, because, forsooth, the teacher, who may possibly be highly accomplished in his profession, may not have called upon that child to "say as many lessons" in the day, as the parent in his wisdom may think necessary. In fact, all parties, learned and unlearned, skilled and unskilled, pass a judgment on the subject, and what is worse, act on that judgment, often so as to effect a great public injury. Now, let any intelligent teacher record his opinion on such a state of things. Has his efficiency ever been impeded, his temper galled, and his duties made a source of pain, instead of pleasure, by such a system? How often may the very estimate of his professional qualifications be based on the verdict of those to whom he knows himself superior, and who, however intelligent in other matters, are, in nine cases out of ten, quite unfit from previous inexperience to form an opinion on the subject. Is the profession of the school teacher, take even the very lowest grade, as important, or is it not, as any of the learned professions? I assert most emphatically that it is. On him mainly lies the duty of forming the character and guiding the tendencies of the bulk of a nation. Take Canada, for example, apart from the duty of the most important of all, the Minister of the Gospel, on whom rests the responsibility of training up the youth of a large proportion of the population, but on the common school teacher? Are those who attend such schools of no importance in the state? They are of the greatest. In a great degree even now, and shortly, I trust, in a much greater, they supply the elements of a most valuable portion of the community, the middle rank. In other professions the species of interference, I have alluded to would not be tolerated for an instant; none obtain an entrance into them without a legal verdict as to their fitness by persons sufficiently acquainted with the mysteries of that profession to enable them to form a correct estimate. But in school teaching, we presume that there is no mystery—all is clear and plain—you have only to sit down and teach. I ask any skilful practical teacher, whether he has not obtained his skill by years of practice and study; does not every hour's contemplation of the subject afford him additional light, and open up to him new and improved views? In fact the mere mechanism, organization, and discipline requisite for the management of a large common school are such as to require long practice, and a considerable share of tact and information.

There is much more to be said on this subject, but I have already extended these observations to too great a length, and I shall therefore hope for an opportunity of resuming them in a future number.

X.

**GREAT MEN.**—The whole history of great men, says Cousin, gives this result: that they have been taken by others, and have taken themselves for the instruments of destiny—for something fatal and irresistible—e. g. Cyrus, Alexander, Attila, Napoleon, &c.—*Am. Review, May, 1843.*

## Miscellaneous.

### THE POETRY OF POPE.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Carlisle lately delivered a Lecture on "The Poetry of Pope." A London paper remarks:—the "Poetry of Pope" was presented to the audience, in an ingenious and popular style. There was industry and art in the setting of these gemmed lines; the household familiarity of which was cited by the lecturer as a "general testimony to the reputation, if not to the merit, of the poet, Pope."

"When there has been a pleasant party of people, either in a convivial or intellectual view—I wish we might think it of our meeting this evening—we say that it has been—

'The feast of reason, and the flow of soul.'

How often are we warned—I have sometimes even heard the warning addressed to Mechanics' Institutes, that—

'A little learning is a dangerous thing.'

How often reminded,

'An honest man's the noblest work of God.'

Or, with nearly the same meaning,

'Who taught the useful science to be good.'

There is a couplet which I ought to carry in my own recollection—

'What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.'

It is an apt illustration of the offices of hospitality,

'Welcome the coming, speed the going guest.'

How familiar is the instruction,

'To look through nature, up to nature's God.'

As also the rules with reference to composition,

'The last and greatest art—the art to blot;  
'To snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.'

And then as to the best mode of conveying the instruction,

'Men must be taught as if you taught them not.'

There is the celebrated definition of wit,

'True wit is nature to advantage dressed,  
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.'

Do you want to illustrate the importance of early education? You observe,

'Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined.'

Do you wish to characterize ambition somewhat favourably? You call it,

'The glorious fault of angels, and of gods.'

Or describing a great conqueror,

'A mighty hunter, and his prey was man.'

Do you seek the safest rule for architecture or gardening?

'Consult the genius of the place in all.'

Are you tempted to say anything rather severe to your wife or daughter, when she insists on a party of pleasure, or an expensive dress? You tell her,

'That every woman is at heart a rake.'

And then, if you wish to excuse your own submission, you plead,

'If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look on her face and you'll forget them all.'

How often are we inclined to echo the truth,

'That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'

And this, too,

'That gentle dullness often loves a joke.'

Who has not felt this to be true?

'Hope springs eternal in the human breast;  
Man never is, but always to be blest.'

When an orator, or a parliamentary candidate—in which last capacity I have often appeared before some of you—wishes to rail at absolute governments, he talks of

'The monstrous faith of many made for one.'

Then there are two maxims, one in politics and one in religion, which have both been extremely found fault with, but the very amount of censure proves what alone I am now attempting to establish, not the truth or justice of Pope's words, but their great vogue and currency—

'For forms of government let fools contest;  
Whate'er is best administered is best;  
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;  
It is can't be wrong whose life is in the right.'