

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Journal of Education:

## ELOCUTION IN OUR SCHOOLS.

As I have paid particular attention to the study of Elocution, I feel that I may, with propriety, call your attention to this important, but neglected, branch of education. Of all the departments of learning, there is none which is more important, and yet in the public schools, academies and colleges of this Province, good reading is certainly the exception and not the rule. Nor will this state of things ever be removed until our teachers are themselves made acquainted with the principles upon which this art depends. It is one of the anomalies of education, that in an art, so essential, the learner should be left almost without assistance. The series of readers, in present use, contains no instruction whatever upon the subject, and certainly those who maintain that we should conform wholly to nature should know what nature is; what it prescribes; what it excludes.

It appears to me that in an age like the present, when there is so much to be read, and when the public speaker wields an influence so potent, no effort should be spared, in our public schools, to foster and develop the talent for a clear and beautiful style of reading and speaking. In order to effect this, I would suggest that the Normal School should give special attention to the study of Elocution, so that in future teachers from that institution may be able to teach rhetorical reading on correct principles. And that we may meet the large numbers of teachers (many of whom are children) who, through lack of training and technical knowledge, fail to secure good reading, it would be well to have Inspectors who should be able to take classes and drill them in presence of their teachers, thus giving practical examples, (kindly and respectfully done). The Inspectors might also gather the teachers together, from time to time, and drill them upon reading and other subjects, such as the most approved methods of teaching. How much good might thus be done!

P. S.—I would suggest that we have a number of the best English Readers to select from. We want *uniformity*, but not so much of it as to crush out all life and originality that may be in us.

(For the Journal of Education.)

MR. EDITOR,—

Much eloquence has been poured forth, many elaborate and exhaustive arguments constructed, and volumes of every shade of literary merit written to prove that the teachers' vocation is a high and holy one: and no one thoughtful person will deny his assent to the proposition. Indeed language can scarcely portray and certainly cannot overstate the weighty responsibility of those who undertake the instruction of the young. This great truth, however, like many others, is rather in danger in spite of its frequent reiteration, and perhaps in some measure because of it, to fall on careless ears and indifferent minds, and many who are quite willing enough to magnify their office, and thus burn incense at the shrine of their own vanity, do not, judging from their conduct, feel it incumbent on them to add to the dignity of their calling, by any special efforts of their own. Teachers must remember that the *status* of any profession depends upon the worthiness of its aims, the demand for its services, the talent and efficiency of its members, its public spirit, freedom from bigotry, and above all on a genuine *esprit-de-corps*, which ensures coherence and permanency.

He who finds within himself no strivings after a nobler manhood, no resolution, at any cost, to lay aside those petty meanesses that make humanity so contemptible—no absorbing desire to do something for the welfare of those around him—so that their chances of success, in the hard struggle of life, may be more assured, in a word, he who has not enkindled within him such a fire of enthusiasm as shall burn up ignoble pride, moral cowardice and unworthy motives should never become a teacher,

for success depends quite as much upon moral qualities as intellectual attainments.

The Government has given us an admirable system of Free Schools, and all that legislation can accomplish at present has been done,—commodious school houses with appropriate furniture and apparatus, a good supply of books and liberal grants. But much yet remains for us to do, and it will be well for us to remember, that, important as all these things are, they are but the body, the shell, the mere husk, and that many eminent teachers who never had these advantages, have nevertheless deserved so well of their kind, that any failure on our part will be all the more glaring and unpardonable. Now it is a sad fact that hitherto, teaching, as a profession in this Province, has not occupied so honorable a position as it should have done, but from henceforth let teachers vie with each other in their efforts to ennoble it. How is this to be done? We think principally by attention to two things: the *strictest observance of professional etiquette*, and *systematic organization*. If teachers will cultivate a kindly sympathetic disposition towards each other, if they will stifle that mean jealousy which often incites to petty intrigue, if they will be tender of each other's reputation, if they will honorably avoid encroachments on the right and privileges of their fellows, if they will frown down the contemptible practice of underbidding each other, and of going into sections which are supplied and endeavoring to supplant those already occupying the ground by appealing to those whose avarice and ignorance only enquire: "What is the lowest sum for which we can get a teacher?" and not, what are the services of a competent teacher really worth to us? In a word, if teachers will *strictly observe professional etiquette*, they will do much towards securing a higher *status*. We would not insinuate that there are many teachers who would act in this unworthy manner, but the few who would be guilty of this impropriety should be frowned down as morally unfit to have the training of youthful minds.

A word on *organization*. The establishment of the Convention was a step in the right direction, but this alone is not sufficient. Let institutes be formed in every county for mutual encouragement and instruction, and the discussion of all those interesting educational questions which are constantly arising. We should recommend that careful reports be kept of all such meetings, and the publication of an account of such as were particularly interesting, thus from time to time adding valuable items to our educational literature. These organizations, while pleasant to all, would be invaluable to the young and inexperienced. Those who have never attended these meetings have no idea how pleasant they may be made.

A TEACHER,  
Yarmouth.

## "STAND LIKE THE ANVIL..."

BY BISHOP DOANE.

"Stand like the anvil" when the stroke  
Of stalwart men falls fierce and fast;  
Forms but more deeply root the oak  
Whose brawny arms embrace the blast.

"Stand like the anvil!", when the sparks  
Fly far and wide, a fiery shower;  
Virtue and truth must still be marks  
Where malice proves its want of power.

"Stand like the anvil!" when the bar  
Lies red and glowing on its breast:  
Duty shall be life's leading star,  
And conscious innocence its rest.

"Stand like the anvil!" noise and heat  
Are born of earth and die with time;  
The soul, like God, its source and seat,  
Is solemn, still, serene, sublime.