

Educational Department

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Communications may be sent to any one of the above editors, as may be preferred, and will appear in the issue of which he is in charge.

The difference between the degree of success in the true art of teaching, may be illustrated in the following: A young man, intelligent, robust, healthy and muscular, is ambitious to become a blacksmith, and hastens to the shop at the village, and by inquiry learns the name and uses of all the tools used in a blacksmith shop. He visits the shop frequently to observe the workmen, and often is invited to give some assistance in blowing, striking, or tearing the worn-out shovels from the horses feet.

The thirteen weeks are spent in more, blowing, striking, and such preliminary work generally done by apprentices, which can be done by any one having the muscular strength. While the master is temporarily absent for a few days, the apprentice "runs the shop," and has succeeded in doing a few "jobs" for customers. A few times of temporary absence of the master in this way has had the effect of heightening his estimation of his own abilities and practical knowledge of his trade, and at the end of the thirteen weeks he has learned to make a set of tools, and rents a shop at the cross-roads in which his ambitious and self-conceited son may test his knowledge of blacksmithing.

The son takes possession and goes to work. The father's friends seek to encourage the son by patronizing him, but the work is not entirely satisfactory. The wheels are not properly turned, or else the iron has been burned and soon gives way. The shoes on the horses cause them to "interfere," and the axes "upset;" are so soft as not even to stand chipping hard wood. Yet this young blacksmith charges the same prices that his master did for the same work, and his family and friends insist that he is a good blacksmith, and will give him their patronage and recommendation to do so.

The truth is, however, that the young man is but a "bungler" at his trade, and only after many years of bungling will he learn to do his work properly, by knowing how to temper his metal and make his wheels, etc.—and all this for the want of the proper preparation.

How many teachers are now in our schools who have had thirteen weeks preparation in a graded school, college or normal school, and who did not think at that time they could teach quite as well as their master. How many have had their chief enlightenment by being placed in charge of a class, while the master was out? How many think because they have attended school, college, etc., at such and such a place, and been able to secure a certificate from the Superintendent, are fit to teach school? How many of those have been put in charge of schools at the cross-roads because the fond parent was a member of the School Board? How many have made bungling work of teaching, and the parents and relations knew it, and yet sustained them and recommended them as good teachers? How many fathers have occurred in Bradford County, because the teacher did not understand the temper of the immortal metal he was to hammer and mould into useful and honorable purposes? How many teachers have failed to set aright the shoe of industry, mental growth, noble aspirations and habits of study, and the respectability of many have failed for want of proper preparation for the work of teaching?

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