

various springs and motives by which the child may be roused to the most vigorous use of all its faculties."*

Nevertheless, some of his most enthusiastic admirers confessed to me that they could not assent to his doctrine, that "to teach, whether by word or action, is the highest function on earth," unless young men and women, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two, are the pupils, instead of children between four and sixteen. They expressed their misgivings and fears that the business of the schoolmaster, who is to teach reading and writing and the elements of knowledge, must check the development of the mind, if not tend to narrow its powers. As the real friends of progress, they had come reluctantly to this conclusion; but they admitted that to despond at present would be premature. The experiment of promoting the teacher of every school to that rank in society which the importance of his duties entitles him to hold, and of training him in his art, has never yet been tried.

We have yet to learn what may be the effect of encouraging men of superior energy and talent, who have a natural taste for the calling, to fit themselves for the profession. It must doubtless entail, like every other liberal calling, such as the legal, medical, clerical, military, or mercantile, a certain amount of drudgery and routine of business; but, like all these departments, it may afford a field for the enlargement of the mind, if they who exercise it enjoy, in a like degree, access to the best society, can exchange thoughts with the most cultivated minds in their district, and have leisure allowed them for self-culture, together with a reasonable hope, if they distinguish themselves, of being promoted to posts of honor and emolument, not in other professions, such as the clerical, but in their own. The high schools of Boston, supported by the state, are now so well managed, that some of my friends, who would grudge no expense to engage for their sons the best instructors, send their boys to them as superior to any of the private establishments supported by the rich at great cost. The idea has been recently agitated of providing similar free-schools and colleges for girls, because they

* Glasgow Ed., vol i. p. 391.