

all rules for the guidance of officers in every particular emanates ; without whose consent, approbation and sanction, not even a newspaper or a book can be bought and paid for out of the Legislative Grant ; which will assume all judgment in the selection of reading matter, apparatus, Museums, and various other things, and the prices to be paid therefor, and the management of Evening Classes, appointment of teachers, and salaries payable to them—a Central Department which regularly issues its mandates, orders, rules and regulations, list of penalties in store for those who refuse to obey, and its decisions or judgments, against which there is no appeal ; thereby degrading the office of a Director of a Mechanics' Institute to a mere machine or menial servant, considered only fit to do mere drudgery work and to carry out the behests of that Department, but treated as being totally incapable of judging as to what is best and most suitable for the promotion of the objects for which Mechanics' Institutes were established.

While at the present time the office of Director of a Mechanics' Institute is a highly honorable one, requiring energy, talent, judgment, education, tact, and ability of considerable magnitude in order to qualify him fully for the various duties connected with that office, it may be added that the office requires leisure time for the performance of its duties.

And since that "Report" states that the officers of Mechanics' Institutes are usually selected from the most respectable and influential representatives of our people, and that the Mechanics' Institutes, as a rule, are under the management of gentlemen of influence and wealth, and possessing enterprise, education and intelligence, the question may well be asked : Why degrade a large number of men holding a highly honorable position in society, and ably filling the same, to that of a mere machine or a menial servant, because there are a few men to whom the same office has been entrusted and who are found wanting ? Is not this rather a retrograde step instead of progress ? To establish such a law would in principle be precisely the same as if Great Britain, having first given one of her colonies a representative government and released the same from the position of a Crown Colony, would, because some of the inhabitants thereof had proven themselves to be yet unfit for self-government, deprive that colony of the boon presented to her and again declare her a Crown Colony. Great Britain has again recently declared that she never will do such an act, and that wherever a colony which once has obtained self-government finds in its midst such an ungovernable element, other means than that retrograde step must be devised to conquer that element.

At the present time, under the present law, the principle of self-government in the management of Mechanics' Institutes is clearly manifested ; and as already pointed out, there is ample machinery provided by the statute for due supervision if that machinery is only properly set in motion by the Department upon which that duty devolves.