

The Canada School Journal.

VOL. VIII.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1883.

No. 67.

The Canada School Journal

IS PUBLISHED THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH AT

11 WELLINGTON ST. WEST, TORONTO, ONT., CAN.

Subscription \$1.00 per year, payable in advance.

Address—W. J. GAGE & CO., Toronto.

CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL HAS RECEIVED

*An Honorable Mention at Paris Exhibition, 1878.
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The Publishers frequently receive letters from their friends complaining of the non-receipt of the JOURNAL. In explanation they would state, as subscriptions are necessarily payable in advance, the mailing clerks have instructions to discontinue the paper when a subscription expires. The clerks are, of course, unable to make any distinction in a list containing names from all parts of the United States and Canada.

THE BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

Two letters, amongst many contributed to the daily journals on this subject and now lying before us, seem worthy of more than a passing notice. One is by Mr. Laing, the other by Mr. McMullen, both of them members of the deputation which waited on the Premier, and both of them active promoters from the first of the agitation. We shall not waste space in discussing with Mr. McMullen whether the members of the deputation are all agreed as to the status they would accord to the Bible in Schools. If they are, then Mr. Laing's statement is correct, and he has indicated clearly how far he is willing to go. In order that we may do him no injustice we give his own words, premising that the italics are ours:—

We do not ask for any change in the law. The tenth clause of the School Act provides for giving such religious instruction as parents desire to be given subject to regulations. Now, if the "whole community," or nearly so, as the JOURNAL admits is the case, desires the use of the Bible in giving religious instruction, the law, without any change, provides for the use of the Bible. Hitherto the regulations have been recommendatory; in other words, it has been left to Boards of Trustees to use the Bible or not to do so. The promoters of this movement are of opinion that under these regulations the Bible is not to any great extent used as the book for teaching morals; in fact that in the great majority of schools Bible morality is not taught. They believe that the chief reason is that Christian morality is by the present regulations treated as a secondary matter; and that as arithmetic, grammar, literature are made paramount and obligatory, parents, trustees, and teachers in many cases are satisfied when these things which are required by regulations are done, and are thus careless regarding Bible instruction. We ask for a change in the regulation, so far as to make the reading of Scripture as much a part of ordinary school work as arithmetic or grammar, and to give moral and religious education as high a place as intellectual. *We have authorized class-books; we wish the Bible made such, and the reading of it (under clause 9th of Act) as much a part of the pupil's training as reading the third or fourth book.* This change of regulation can be made without any "risk of a change in the principle of the law" or any departure from what the law permits to be done now.

If this extract correctly embodies the conjoint view taken

by the deputation then it is quite clear that what the members wanted was to have the Bible placed in the hands of the pupils as an ordinary class book, and to have the teachers required by law to explain and illustrate its text as they would that of any other text-book. This of necessity implies that the teachers must themselves make the Bible a subject of study and that they must be examined as to their acquaintance with its contents. To set men to teach what they do not know is absurd, and the Education Department cannot reasonably be expected to overlook this difficulty. We commend to all who are interested in this discussion, and especially to the clergymen of the various religious denominations, Mr. Laing's clear statement of what he wants, and Mr. McMullen's explicit admission that Mr. Laing speaks on this point the views of the deputation of which Mr. McMullen himself was chairman. It is a great thing in any discussion to get the ground cleared, and now that all parties to the controversy know what the originators of it want they can govern themselves accordingly.

We confess our inability to understand what Mr. Laing means when he says he does not want any change in the law, unless it be that he does not want any in the text of the School Act. We have been accustomed to regard the departmental regulations as a part of the school law, and quite as essentially so as the Act itself, under the authority of which they are prescribed. The deputation asked for a change in the law as it affects the status of the Bible in schools, and for a very important change. On this point we need not enlarge, for we discussed it fully in our last month's article, to which Mr. Laing's letter is intended to be a reply. We content ourselves just now, in this connection with a brief reference to his comments on one of the reasons urged against making the regulation respecting the use of the Bible mandatory instead of recommendatory. We pointed out that if the use of the Bible were made compulsory a penalty would have to be exacted for non-compliance by teachers, and that such a penalty could not be exacted. Mr. Laing admits that a penal clause would be a dead letter but denies the necessity for it. How then would any change in the wording of the regulations promote the use of the Bible in schools? A teacher finds in the regulations a command to use the Bible unless a majority of the ratepayers in the section say it shall not be used. For some reason he does not see fit to use it, and at once his course is called in question. Steps are taken to ascertain whether a majority are opposed to or in favor of its use. If the majority endorse the teacher then the Bible is kept out. If the majority go against him then nothing is gained that could not have been gained under the law as it stands, for the majority in any section can introduce the Bible now into the schools. If the proposed change is to be made in the law, therefore, it must be enforced by a penalty if anything is to be accomplished, and then Mr. Laing admits that a penalty for non-compliance could not be exacted.