

purpose. We limit him to certain subjects. He is not allowed to teach classics or even moderns in the Public School. He is required to teach according to a certain programme, neither more nor less. Is not this cramping his energies? Now if, in the public interest, he is "cribbed, cabined, and confined" in these respects, why not limit him in the choice of text-books also, *if it can be shown to be for the public advantage?*"

Sir Lyon Playfair, in his Presidential address to the British Association at Aberdeen, severely reproached the British Government, for not aiding more liberally the secondary and higher education of the country. He put in a strong plea, not only for more State aid to colleges and universities, but also for bringing the secondary and higher education more immediately under State control, by the appointment of a Minister of Education. With all respect to the learned President's scientific attainments, we doubt if enlightened public opinion will follow his lead in the domain of political economy. If we mistake not, the trend of modern liberal thinking is in the direction of more voluntarism rather than more State control and support of higher education. In regard to the second point, the making the Superintendent of Education a Cabinet Minister, the *Educational Times* deals trenchantly with Sir Lyon's appeal to the example of France and Germany. It quotes M. Jules Simon to show that whatever may have been the cause of the intellectual sterility of France during the Napoleonic regime it could not have been due to the want of connection between the higher education and the State. The organic Decree of 1808 created a chief with absolute authority over all educational institutions, public and private. "It was an intellectual despotism side by side with a political and administrative despotism." The *Times* adds.

"It is not to France alone that we need look to find evidence that a Minister of Instruction may possibly use his authority to extend his own power and to crush out all ideas that conflict with his own. It was the Cultus-Minister of Prussia, Raumer, who, suspecting Froebel of socialism and irreligion, issued an edict forbidding the establishment of schools after Friedrich and Karl Froebel's principles;—uncle and nephew included in one condemnation, although it was only in respect of the latter that there could have been any foundation for the suspicion of the Minister."

Are these the historical models after which the educational system of Ontario is being moulded?

#### DON'T RING SO MUCH

Some teachers make their call-bell an intolerable nuisance. They strike it for classes to rise, to pass, to sit, to turn, &c. When possible, adopt signals that promote silence. An upward movement of the finger may bring pupils to their feet; a side movement may tell them to pass; a downward movement, to sit; and so on through the whole day. Eye signals are preferable to ear signals.—*School Education.*

#### THE TEACHER OUT OF SCHOOL.

The teacher in school affords a fruitful scheme for educational journals, and one that we suppose will not soon be exhausted. The great business of a teacher is, of course to teach, and to teach in the very best manner. And the great business of a teachers' journal is to afford the teacher the best possible hints

and helps in becoming what every individual teacher should aim at becoming—a thorough master of his profession. But, in addition to being an educator of the young, the teacher is also a man or a woman, or, as perhaps we should say, in conformity with the current fashion in speech, a gentleman or a lady. We see no reason why every teacher should not eventually become a gentleman or a lady in the highest and best sense of the term, that is to say, a man or a woman of the highest mental culture and the highest moral character. We are well aware that Public School teachers in Canada often begin their professional life without having enjoyed the highest advantages, either educational or social. But, it after ten, or fifteen, or twenty years of service in a profession which holds out so many opportunities and inducements for self-improvement, the teacher does not at least approach the standard indicated, it must be largely his own fault.

In the first place, there are very few occupations which afford so much time for self-improvement as that of teaching. In most cases the industrious teacher can secure some hours every day and a large part of one day every week for his own purposes. We are well aware that this statement needs many modifications. The popular idea that the position of the schoolmaster or schoolmistress is a very easy one because of the shortness of the hours of labor is very erroneous. The teacher who has done his whole duty for five or six hours in the school-room has done a hard day's work, and has not much nervous energy to spare at its close. Especially is this the case when, as in most country schools, the two hard duties of instruction and government have to be carried on at the same time. The comparative shortness of the work day and the yearly vacations alone render the mental strain of such a work endurable. Those who have tried both will testify that they have often found their energies more completely exhausted, their sense of fatigue greater, at the close of a six-hour day's work in the school than at the close of a ten-hour day's work in the harvest field or at the mechanic's bench.

Happily, however, the truest rest is not necessarily cessation from labor. With the mind, as with the body, a change of employment is often the best remedy for fatigue. A couple of hours spent in a brisk walk in the open air, or in a leisurely stroll in some inviting field, will generally prove a most effective restorer of tired nature. Nor need such walk or stroll be barren of higher results than mere recuperation of exhausted powers. To the open eye and ear Nature addresses a varied language, and her teachings are always full of interest and profit. One may have a keen eye for the beauties of landscape. Another may delight in the study of plants, or birds, or insects, or mineral specimens, or geological formations. There is no good reason why almost every teacher should not be an amateur artist or scientist in some special department. The opportunities afforded by these hours of recreation for social intercourse should not be overlooked. Kindly and sympathetic intercommunication with the minds and hearts of others is one of the best means of self-improvement as well as one of the highest of human duties.