

form opposition offered by several members to suggestions from the Government. Notice, also, the vacillating character of certain Government measures; the changes urged and privileges claimed by members in the interests of certain Societies; the clauses framed to meet the pressing but newly-discovered necessities of certain portions of the community; the cases of undue influence said to have been brought to bear on local members by interested parties, in one or two cases overruling the legitimate action of County Inspectors. How can we look at such a condition of things with satisfaction? Must we not conclude that the step taken is decidedly retrograde?

In all this I censure no one in particular. The same temptations and influence now felt by the Government and the Opposition would be felt if they were to exchange places. And little improvement need be looked for until certain safeguards are restored, among which I would place: (1) *a permanent chief officer*, one not liable to be changed with every change of Government; (2) some definite form of *representation* on what corresponds to the Council.

Until educational matters are removed from the dangers that now beset them, we may expect that every winter there will be placed on our statute-books laws so crudely framed that a good deal of the following winter's session will be given (so far as educational legislation is concerned) first to amendments, and secondly to the production of measures as hastily digested, resulting, if not checked, in what a certain writer calls "the created evils of legislation, which sap the efficiency of education."

Among the questions likely to claim your attention are the Superannuation Fund, Training and Examining of Teachers, Vacations, and the restrictions placed on trustees in raising funds for school purposes.

Taking these in the reverse order,

I shall merely offer one or two suggestions on each, leaving them with the Convention for fuller discussion.

In giving municipal councils the veto power, it is assumed that Boards of Trustees are less competent to decide as to the educational wants of the community than those elected as Councillors. It also seems to imply that the latter are, in a somewhat exclusive sense, the sole guardians of the municipal revenues. As you are aware, the Minister has yielded to the demand for a modification of this clause, and it has been slightly improved. The educational interests of every town and city were liable to be sacrificed to a policy of false economy on the part of ward politicians. The old law recognized the well-known fact that, as a matter of course, persons especially selected as school trustees are, from their position, better qualified to judge of the educational requirements of a town or city than municipal councillors. To suppose otherwise would be about as reasonable as to add to the duties of trustees that of locating and building sidewalks and bridges. Rather let each body keep to its own sphere of action, and the interests of the entire community will be best secured.

The now notorious vacation clause we regard as an evidence of hasty and ill-timed legislation, brought about to gratify a certain class, who seem to think that the services of the person who teaches their children are to be computed after the method they adopt in case of harvest hands, men ditching their farms, or breaking stone on their roads—the value being directly in proportion to the number of hours actually spent at the toil. The very general disfavour with which this clause is received will doubtless result in its repeal. It is a question whether, under the old system of legislation, such a measure could have been placed on our statute-book.