

line or feminine caddishness—has a perfect right to come into play.

There is, however, a circumstance to be considered in this matter, to which our correspondent evidently alludes when he says, that "I fail to see why they (the teachers) should be expected to do what other ladies and gentlemen would possibly shrink from doing," though it does not seem clear what is specially referred to, whether it be "the making a holiday show of themselves" in some civic gathering or procession, or in appearing with the school children in any extra-official or quasi-professional duty. In either case, we can readily understand the feeling which would prompt the sensitive teacher to abstain from the performance of the duty; for, as a rule, teachers are not so well paid that they might be expected cheerfully to perform extra and often irksome services, nor is their recognized status in the community such as to make them feel easy in appearing professionally in public while the community continues to rank them in a less well-assured position than the members of other professions. This, unfortunately, is a mistake which the public is slow to remedy, though school trustees and the teachers themselves are somewhat responsible for it. We sincerely wish the injustice could be removed, for nothing would be more helpful to the cause of education, and give to, and retain in, its service a better class of labourers than to exalt the status of the teaching profession, and to extend to those engaged in its high and responsible duties a fitting appreciative recognition of what the community ever owes to it. In this connection we can scarcely assure ourselves that the assembling of the schools, and the tricking out of the children, to do duty in civic parades, however laudable their object, tends to enhance civic reverence for the schoolmaster's work, or is likely to elevate his status in the eyes of the people. On occasions, doubtless, the children are themselves gratified. They get a holiday and a day's release from school-routine, and they are happy. In these days of over-cramming and much school-inspection, we often wish further grace in this respect were extended to them, and that they

had more breaks in the monotony of school-life, though we would wish them other gratification than that of lining the public streets in company with the fire-brigade and the hose-reels, and the giddy delight of risking their young lives on corporation scaffolding. From such duty, however, we can well understand the self-respecting teacher desiring to disengage himself, and our sympathy but too readily goes out to the young ladies at present under the reprimand of the Toronto School Board, and to those with them who wish to see the teachers of the country treated with dignity, gentlemanly consideration, and respect.

While we have said this, however, there is just the danger, on the other hand, of encouraging a disregard of constituted authority, and of weakening the claims of school discipline in the case of those who should be the first to respect and maintain them. Wantonly to set these claims at defiance, and, from mere fractiousness and caprice, to place oneself heedlessly out of accord with one's professional brethren, is to manifest a spirit and demeanour we of course can have nothing to say in support of. But caprice and priggishness—supposing that these were the actuating motives in the case referred to—are not indictable offences, particularly when indulged in on neutral ground and where their exhibition cannot be legitimately controlled by official power. And it is just here where the Toronto School Board, in our opinion, erred, in committing itself to the exercise of a discipline which it had no right to enforce. We have, perhaps, said more on the subject than the occasion called for, but the case which has come up, in its blurring of the lines that distinguish the region of official authority from the domain of private right, seemed to call for the lengthened remarks we have made. In any further discussion of the subject, the case would be strengthened for the independent teacher by dwelling on the undesirableness of the schools being used to furnish material for civic pageants. If School Boards will not take this view of the matter, we trust that teachers will be allowed the exercise of their judgment in being a party to them.

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