

these is from the pen of the Rev. A. Sutherland, D.D.; the other is anonymous. As our readers will wish to hear both sides we propose to select some of the strongest paragraphs from these opposition pamphlets, for a subsequent issue of the JOURNAL.

"The marking system, a relic and reminder of ancient methods, is gradually yielding to better incentives to study. What a pupil is forced to do, or is hired to do, adds little to his self-reliant character. To build up and strengthen the forces 'within the child' is the highest art in moral training."

As we have intimated elsewhere we think such statements as the above, from Mr. Dutton's article in the *Andover Review*, altogether too sweeping. The marking system appeals to the spirit of emulation and love of approbation. There are undoubtedly higher incentives to study, but there are likewise far lower ones. With the majority of children it is doubtful if a better stepping-stone to higher things can be found than a judicious use of the marking system, not in any sense a finality but as a means to an end. The teacher must get hold of a young mind in order to lift it up, and in order to get hold of it he must come down to its own moral level.

A writer in the *Ohio Educational Monthly* argues with considerable force in favor of Monday instead of Saturday as the "rest day" for teachers and pupils. He attributes the frequency of "blue Mondays" to the excitements of Saturday and the irregular meals of Sunday. The change would, he thinks, be of great advantage to the many pupils who have to assist their parents on Monday mornings, and also to those non-residents who have to come in from their country homes. The writer says:—

"If the rest-day came on Monday, school would be out for the week Saturday afternoon. Considerable amusement could be obtained before bed-time. Sunday would be given up entirely to rest, with no worry over lessons. On Monday the pupil would feel rested and invigorated—ready to play or work with zeal, and when evening came, could readily be induced to look over the lesson for "to-morrow morning," which is not so far off as Monday morning is from Saturday night."

Could not a still stronger case be made out in favor of having the rest in mid-week, say on Wednesday?

The injury done in many a school room by coarse, ill-natured sarcasms is incalculable. It is a cowardly, we had almost said brutal, thing for a grown man—the gentler sex we may hope are not often guilty in this respect—to take advantage of his superiority in knowledge or position, by indulging in ungenerous taunts and heartless sneers. Yet which of us has not often heard the thing done? Which of us has not to blush at the recollection of having ourselves some time been guilty of the meanness? Some children are coarse-grained by nature or inheritance. Others are unhappily, but too well used to harsh tones and epithets in their own homes. Upon such the teacher's unfeeling words may have little effect. But there are always many others, whose natures are so sensitive and whose ears are so little accustomed to any tones but those of kindly command or reproof, that to be called dunce, or blockhead, or

be made the butt of ridicule is to them positive torture. It rasps the delicate fibres of mind and heart, and leaves wounds that are often slow to heal. The timid are frightened out of all self-possession; those with small self-reliance are utterly discouraged; the high-spirited are exasperated and embittered. Many a career has been changed, many a promising youth driven from study and intellectual pursuits, many a moral nature permanently harmed, by a nickname or a jeer, from the lips of a teacher. In no sphere of life is it more necessary for the man who would do his highest duty to set a guard over the door of his lips.

GIVING BONDS AGAINST PROGRESS.

One of the worst of the many bad features of a system of Government Text-Books is the effectual barrier it interposes against the adoption of any new and improved books, no matter how excellent. Every one at all conversant with the history of educational progress knows what marvellous advancement has been made within a quarter of a century in the character of the text-books in many subjects. This has been one of the most fruitful agencies at work for the improvement of school systems. There is no reason to suppose that the end of such improvement has been reached. Far from it. We do not believe there is an intelligent teacher in Ontario to-day who does not perceive that many of the authorized text-books are still very defective. There is altogether too much tendency in certain quarters to boast of our educational work.

Perfection is yet far off. There are undoubtedly several subjects in which many of the best schools in the United States have books better adapted to the capacities of children, and better fitted to interest and instruct than our authorized works on the same subjects. It is, of course, desirable to make haste slowly and never to change standard books for the mere sake of changing. But, on the other hand, it is of the very highest importance that those responsible should have every facility and every inducement to introduce a new book whenever it is a great and manifest improvement on the old. In no other way can our schools be made to keep pace with the progress of the day. Every teacher should be encouraged to call the attention of the authorities to any new work which is a clear improvement on the old.

Now what will be the effect of the holding of copyrights and plates by the Education Department? If the copyrights are worth having they will in each case cost a handsome sum of money. The preparation of plates will involve another serious outlay. It will be therefore almost a matter of necessity that when a book is adopted by the Department it must stay adopted for a term of years. Publishers too, will demand some guarantee against speedy change. Now let the Department do its best, it will be but in accord with all experience to suppose that every year some new and improved method of treating certain subjects will be introduced. The brains of many of the best men of the age are on the stretch to accomplish this end. But no such new book, though its superiority should be ever so manifest, can be taken up by the Depart-