

revise the whole of the enactments, consolidate them with such new amendments as might be found expedient, and then give the public a rest for a few years in the matter of educational changes. We have had too many of them altogether in the past. Better sometimes leave an obvious but insignificant defect unremoved than by frequently tinkering at the law make it impossible for the great body of the public to know it, and thus render its administration uncertain and defective.

There are, however, some amendments to the Education Acts so obviously necessary in the public interest that every one who has paid any attention to their working can think of them for himself. One of these is the repeal of the well-known section which makes the amount of school expenditure discretionary to a large extent with municipal councils. This section should never have been enacted. Under the law as it was for a quarter of a century no wrong had ever been done, and great progress had been made in the material development of our public school system. It is safe to say that if the present objectionable restriction on the powers of school boards had always been in the Act, the Province would to-day be dotted over with school houses which, instead of a credit to the people would be a deep disgrace. There is no need for the restriction. Members of school boards, elected for the performance of specific duties in that capacity, are better judges of the amount the educational service of a district should cost than are the members of a municipal council elected for other purposes altogether.

A change in the time and manner of electing public school trustees in towns and cities is also greatly needed. At present they are chosen by wards, one trustee being elective for each ward each year. For this should be substituted the election of, say, one-third of the board each year by the vote of all the ratepayers in the municipality, giving each ratepayer as many votes as there are trustees to be elected, and allowing them to cast them all for one candidate, or divide them amongst several candidates at his own option. This is the plan adopted in the election of the celebrated London School Board, the result being the most efficient administrative educational corporation in the world. Under the present system the calibre of the average school trustee is apt to be extremely small; under the London system the reverse is the case. It would be impossible under our ward arrangement to secure the election of eminent educationists as members of school boards, and yet there should be some of them on these bodies if they can be induced to serve. In London it is a common thing to find men like Prof. Huxley chosen year after year by a more popular vote than our mode of election contemplates. The London School Board has always a few women amongst its members. This is a most desirable arrangement so long as we have female ratepayers, female teachers, and female pupils. Under our system a woman might as well expect election to Parliament as election to a school board.

Even if so fundamental a change does not commend itself to the minister he ought to change the date of the school election in towns and cities so as to enable the ratepayers to elect school trustees on the same day as municipal councillors. With

the dates as now fixed the public cannot be induced to take any interest in the election of school trustees. They will not turn out to vote after having voted so short a time before. Let us, if we can have no more, have at least the privilege of the ballot and the synchronizing of school and municipal elections.

Another change very urgently required is in the composition and mode of appointment of high school boards in cities and towns separated from county municipalities. At present the Municipal Council appoints two trustees each year, the board being made up of six members. It would be much better to make high school trustees, like public school trustees, elective by the people, but if this is not done the number should be increased where the population is large. There are always to be found on boards certain members who cannot be induced to take an active interest in the work of school management, and the present mode of appointment, coupled with the smallness of the number of members, is apt to throw the management into the hands of unworthy cliques. In a city of a hundred thousand people a school board of six members appointed by the Municipal Council is utterly inadequate.

There are other matters that well deserve the Minister's attention, though we cannot discuss them fully here. The inequalities in the school burdens of ratepayers in large and small sections have long called for some remedy. The most effective one, apparently, is the formation of township school boards, and as this form of administration is very desirable on other grounds it would be well to inquire whether something cannot be done to secure a more general substitution of townships for sections of townships as the school unit. Perhaps it may be found possible and advisable also to legislate for the encouragement of longer engagements between teachers and school boards, and for the erection in rural sections of residences for teachers. Any improvement that can be effected in either of these directions will be a boon to the teacher and tend to improve the working of the school system.

NORMAL MUSIC COURSE.

In our last issue we noticed a few of the many faults to be found with the First Reader. Our space this month permits of only a short notice of the Second Reader, but we shall again refer to it. This book is intended for advanced pupils attending the Grammar Schools. How far it is suitable for such a class remains to be seen. Several of the objections urged against the First Reader lie equally against this.

1. The preface announces distinctly that the music of this book is all the product of Mr. Tuft's brain. However good it may be, it is fair to suppose that a collection of the gems of children's songs, selected from many writers, would be far preferable, not only as to intrinsic excellence, but in respect of interest and variety. It is always a valid objection to the exercises written by a teacher upon the blackboard that they are in his own peculiar style, and that the pupils are in too narrow limits if they are confined to them exclusively. How much stronger the objection, when an entire book, designed to cover five years of school life, is filled with the productions of one pen.

2. Frequent disregard of the laws of form in the construction of the exercises. See Exs. 9, 15, 75, 77, 121, 210, and