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Editorials.

WHY NOT A PROVINCIAL MINIMUM?

A BILL is before the Prussian Landtag with regard to teachers' salaries, proposing a minimum annual salary of \$214 for men and of \$166 for women, to be obtained after four years probationary service. Men are to have nine triennial additions of nineteen dollars each, making the maximum \$385, and the women nine of fourteen dollars each, giving a maximum of \$292. This has aroused a number of objections, *The Teachers' Journal* of Berlin demanding a minimum salary of \$285, with additions so arranged as to double the sum in twenty-five years; also equal pay for men and women at the lower stages, and more pronounced differences in the higher ones. The just settlement of details in such legislation is, undoubtedly, very difficult. But, so far as we have seen, no objection has been made to the principle of the legal minimum. Of course, the German Government can do many things without challenge which, under our more democratic system, our governments could not ven-

ture to do. But we have not yet seen any objection which seems to us fatal urged against the principle of a *minimum* salary, or, if found necessary, several of such *minima*, for the protection of both teachers and patrons of schools in Canada? The fact that a considerable proportion of the salaries is contributed directly from the public funds makes it the paramount duty of the Government to protect the interests of parents and the general public in every practicable way.

We are still of opinion that the raising of the standard in respect both to age and educational qualifications is a reform which cannot be much longer delayed. But, so long as trustees cannot be prevented from advertising for teachers, making it a condition to "state salary required," and otherwise "beating down" applicants to the lowest figure, and so long as the supply of teachers of the lowest class is greatly in excess of the demand, there will be a crying necessity for a salary qualification on the part of the employers as well as a qualification of another kind on the part of the employed.

THE HABIT OF ACCURACY.

ACCURACY is one of the trade-marks of scholarship. A man's education has failed in a very important particular if it has failed to form and confirm in him the habit of observing closely and remembering with exactness the essential qualities of that which is for the time being the object of study, whether that object be a thought or a visible thing.

The power of accurate observation is one that can be formed only by practice. The student should remember continually that in both worlds with which he has to deal—the world of thought and the world of action—*everything is exactly what it is*. The mental image should be an exact reproduction of its essential features, not an indefinite, hazy approximation. The habit of such observation once formed is invaluable. It shows itself in everything, in pronunciation, in quotation, in description, in all making and doing.

It by no means follows that teachers and others who recognize the value of this habit, and strive to attain it, need make themselves pedantic or finical in their relations to others. The distinguished (?) school man, of whom a contemporary tells, who said that he never went to hear a certain renowned orator because he mispronounced the name Galileo, has too many counterparts, even amongst teachers, in those who are always more ready to be impressed with a mispronounced word or a grammatical solecism than with an in-

spiring thought or a solid argument. On the other hand, those who are never able to reproduce correctly the simplest proposition or quotation may take warning from the case of a recent book criticized by an exchange. This book was called "A Primer of Memory Gems, Designed Especially for Schools," and out of 260 quotations examined by the critic no less than ninety-three were inaccurately given. The story conveys its own moral.

BE MERCIFUL.

"THE merciful man is merciful to his beast," says the ancient wise man. Notwithstanding all that has been said and written on this subject, and all that is being done through the agency of humane societies, bands of mercy, etc., there is still great need that parents and teachers should teach the boys and girls, and especially the boys, under their charge, to "love mercy" to the dumb animals. Of the girls we have little fear. The influences which, for the most part, surround them, as well as the greater gentleness and tenderness which are one of the peculiar charms of the womanly nature, will generally save them from forming habits of even thoughtless cruelty. A cruel girl or woman is a monstrosity in nature. But with boys the case is different. Whether the impulse to "go out and kill something," which is said to be a characteristic trait of the Englishman, is really innate, or merely the result of surrounding influences and false teaching in early youth, there can be no doubt of its strength and prevalence. It is a noxious plant, which will, unless restrained, soon shoot, as Cowper teaches, into "luxurious growth."

There are many cruelties of a minor, yet no doubt to the poor animals of a terribly real, kind which are the result of thoughtlessness. We might instance the prevalent fashion of the tight check rein on cartilage horses. It is, we are glad to believe, on the wane, but it dies lamentably slow and hard. Cases of survival, even in the most cruelly extreme form, fall under the notice of the careful observer daily. No thoughtful person can observe the uneasy and painful tossing of the head which the horse so pinioned generally keeps up, or the touching eagerness with which he stretches his neck and lowers his head to the very ground when released, and doubt that the check rein is an instrument of torture. As a matter of taste, it distorts the neck and destroys the graceful curves which constitute one of the chief beauties of the perfect animal. And yet, through sheer want of thought,