

# The Printer's Miscellany.

AN EXPONENT OF PRINTING AND ALL THE KINDRED ARTS.

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HUGH FINLAY,  
St. John, N. B., Canada.

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### The New Brunswick School Books.

The school book question came up for discussion before several of the Teachers' Institutes held throughout this Province during the past few months, but more especially before the Provincial Institute, which met in Fredericton on the 13th July. This last was the most important meeting of that body yet held, whether considered in reference to the large numbers who attended, the topics discussed, or the independent stand taken by the teachers themselves. The idea which hitherto seemed to prevail among some in official circles, that our whole school system ought to be moved from a central source, and that the teachers were mere machines in that system, was pretty thoroughly exploded at this meeting. The outspoken and vigorous character of the discussions regarding the course of study adopted, the inspectoral regulations, the text-books, etc., will do much towards raising the teaching profession in public estimation. This is as it should be. Teachers have been very much hampered and curbed in their work, and too great a strain has been brought to bear on them of late, and the system has been assuming largely a cast iron character: at least it has had this aspect to the best men and women in the profession. Perhaps the self-assertion and admiration of their own opinions, evinced by some of the leading school officials at headquarters, have had a tendency to make the teachers think so.

In reference to the school books, it may be said that a new departure has been taken, as the Institute adopted the following resolution, viz.: "That the Chief Superintendent be requested to represent to the Board of Education the advisability of having some recognized mode whereby the opinions of practical teachers on the choice of text-books may be from time to time formally submitted to the Board for consideration." It will no doubt be carried into effect, but that any sweeping changes will be made, at least for some time, is not probable. The question regarding the publishing of our text-books in our own Province, instead of by outside publishers, however, still remains in *statu quo*. With this, of course, the Institute could not deal. The Board of Education, we understand, have been moving in the matter, but as yet nothing has been done towards removing the grievance. In view of the seeming apathy that exists, both in the Government and among the people themselves, who, of all others, are most deeply interested, the difficulty does not appear to be approaching a solution. So long as they are content to allow thousands of dollars of their money to go out of the Dominion every year to help enrich foreign publishers, our own, we suppose, will have to "grin and bear it." The question is, no doubt, a very difficult one to handle, but it is one that ought to be grappled with, and that speedily; for we reiterate and assert that our school books are costing us too much, and that they, or, at least, other books equally as suitable for our schools, can be published in New Brunswick at a much cheaper rate, besides giving our own publishers, printers and bookbinders work, and retaining the money in the country.

Mr. Nelson, the head of the eminent Edinburgh publishing firm, when in this city recently, was met by several of our publishers with a view of effecting some arrangement whereby the "Royal Readers" might be printed in New Brunswick, but, it is said, he all but defied our publishers, and showed no disposition to relax his hold of the monopoly.