

of hickory or rock-maple, do anything that will start the perspiration, and you will soon cease to have your brain chambers lined with black. Try it, melancholy teacher.

The *Chicago Current* says there is some demand for a return to the old-fashioned system of oral spelling in the schools. Such a demand could be made only by those who mistake parrot-like repetition for mental progress. It could be acceptable only to foggyish and lazy teachers who find the setting of long columns of words to be conned by rote, an easy way of keeping the children employed. The only natural, easy, and right way to teach spelling is to teach it by writing. As a matter of fact, spelling belongs only to writing. He who does no writing has no need of spelling. He who writes must learn to spell by the eye. To be able to spell orally all the words in Webster's Dictionary would afford no guarantee of correct orthography in a letter or article.

The recent quashing of a by-law in Beeton has put the teachers of that village in a somewhat awkward position. The effect of the quashing, unless the appeal which is being taken is successful, will be to invalidate the election of one-half the trustees by whom the teachers were engaged. The *Beeton World* sums up the situation as follows.—“Two questions arise: First, Does the quashing of the by-law invalidating the election of the trustees render the agreements between the teachers and trustees null and void? and secondly, would the teachers by closing the school discharge themselves or render themselves in any way liable for non-fulfilment of their agreements?” So far the teachers have gone on with their work, confiding, no doubt, in the honor of the good people of the village or town, as the case may be, for the question of incorporation or non-incorporation is the one involved in the appeal. Their confidence, we feel sure, will, in any event, be justified. Meanwhile the situation points the moral we were stating a few weeks since. Teachers' engagements should be permanent, terminable only for cause or after notice, and not dependent upon the accidents or whims of trustees.

The *Globe* of a recent date had an article on “Soldiering and School Boys,” with the spirit of which we cordially agree. We have, in a previous issue, pointed out the evil tendencies of thus cultivating the war instinct, which, whether inherited or otherwise, is already much too strong in the Anglo-Saxons. If it be true, as the *Globe* says, that “in our own young and professedly Christian country we are striving more and more to indoctrinate even the little boys at school with the idea that the war spirit is a noble one, and that soldiering is the finest and first of all occupations,” we are doing the children a great moral wrong. To equip school-boys with mock muskets and other paraphernalia of war and put them through military evolutions is to familiarize their young imaginations with scenes of violence and carnage. Facts are every day coming to light in the United States which show the powerful and ruinous effects wrought upon youthful character, through the imagination, by pernicious literature. To fill the young mind with low and

false ideals is to poison the fountain of morals at its source, and the fighting ideal is generally a low and false one. Surely all the physical benefits to be derived from drill and gymnastics are attainable without contaminating their young imaginations with the pernicious mimicry of guns and swords and sham fights, and butchery of imaginary foes.

Akin to the demoralizing influence of military mimicries, and scarcely less mischievous, is the tacit encouragement given in so many of the English and, we fear, in some of the Canadian schools to the unmanly practice of boxing. The ability to strike hard from the shoulder, on which the average Englishman prides himself, may help to make him an object of dread to less pugilistic races, but its effect upon character, individual or national, can be only bad. It fosters the arrogance which is one of the most disagreeable of British traits. It debases the moral sense by implying that questions of right and wrong can be settled by brute force, or by physical agility or endurance. It stimulates the degrading passion of anger by encouraging its frequent indulgence. It sets up a low and false standard of true manliness. It perverts the true notion of British “fair play,” of which we are so fond of boasting. And, worst of all, it tends to lessen moral courage in at least an equal ratio with its development of physical courage. It often makes a noble-spirited youth more afraid of being thought a coward than of becoming a bully, or violating his highest notion of right. Alas! for the moral influence of the school when bullies tyrannize on the playground, when little disputes are settled by fist-cuffs, and the weight of public opinion is on the side of the boy who would rather do wrong than suffer wrong.

While we are on this topic of false *versus* true courage, or brute force as a substitute for justice, we can scarcely be unmindful of another practice which is all too common in both the United States and Canada, and which is even more cowardly and contemptible than the one last named. We refer to the carrying of revolvers and other concealed weapons. We have a good law on the subject in Canada, but there is reason to fear it is not well enforced. True, the practice does not, it may be hoped, prevail to any great extent amongst school-boys and students, but there is no place where it can be so effectually combated as in the schools. The teacher must be deficient in mental and moral force who cannot evoke in his boys the spirit which is above attempting to secure in any way an unfair advantage. The man who is afraid to go abroad amongst his fellow-men without deadly weapons in his pockets must have either a very craven spirit or a very guilty conscience. There are many impulses in most boys which will enable them to feel this when it is properly pointed out to them. The character of the typical Canadian in the next generation is being moulded to-day in the schools, and the teachers in a large measure the national character-builders. Would that they could be successful in sending forth into the busy world of Canadian life a generation of high-minded, large-hearted, noble souled men, afraid to do wrong and afraid of nothing else. In the keeping of such a race of men the rights of the nation, as well as of the individual, will be safe.