

demoralizing associations of party politics. It is our intention to keep record of the course taken on this subject by our contemporaries. In contrast to the judicious criticism of the *Thornbury Standard*, is the too intrepid utterance of the *Lindsay Post*, a case of "editors rushing in where trustees fear to tread," which has brought on the Lindsay suite no less than four libel suits at \$5,000 each. A great deal worse than the *Lindsay Post*, which at least has the courage of its opinions, is the *St. Mary's Journal*, whose editor points against the poor teachers who have no libel suit remedy to resort to, an attack worse than any libel, on that most vulnerable point, the pocket. The *St. Mary's Journal* actually censures the good town of Mitchell for paying "too good salaries to teachers!" The *Journal* imputes it as blame to the Mitchell trustees that only two of the Mitchell teachers are paid less than \$200 a year." The editor of the *St. Mary's Journal* seems to set a particularly small value on education. He might remember that it was a cheap school system that produced Mr. Squeers and Dotheboys Hall.

The *Bowmanville Statesman* of November 19th has a good leading article on the present condition of the Public and High Schools of that town. It has some rather trenchant criticism of the work done by the Kingston High Schools, which, according to the *Statesman*, is inferior to that of the Bowmanville institutions. If this be so, better things ought to be expected from a High School which has liberal money grants, and the respectable city population of Kingston to draw on for support.

SHOULD ABSENTEES BE SUSPENDED?

The Supreme Court in the United States has reversed a decision of a Circuit Court against the Jefferson City School Board, which had suspended a scholar absent for six half days in four consecutive weeks. The Court disposed of the fallacy that truancy is injurious only to the truant, and of the equally fallacious assumption that a right to be absent results from the right to be present in school. Every child has a right to attend the school. "This is true; but this right of attending school necessarily requires, when the school is joined, and whilst such attendance continues, a submission to the regulations of the school. Suppose rule 11 be inverted, and instead of reading as it now stands, should read thus: 'Any pupil is at liberty to go a fishing during school hours, and be absent a half a day or a whole day, and as many days as he pleases, provided he conducts himself decently when in attendance on school.'"

NIGHT SCHOOLS AND MECHANICS' INSTITUTES.—We are glad to see, by the large posters inviting attention to the subject, that night schools are being established in Toronto during the winter. These will supplement the day work of the public schools, and do something not only to supply educational facilities for those who cannot attend during the day, but for those, no inconsiderable class, for whom there is not room in the existing school buildings. It were to be wished that the Mechanics' Institutes, now that this work is to be taken off

their hands, would turn their energies into the direction of industrial classes. A vast field of usefulness is there open for them.—*Exchange*.

—The Right Hon. A. Mundella, M.P., the Minister of Education in Great Britain, is fulfilling the arduous duties of his position in a way that merits the approval of all parties. He has lately travelled in Europe with a view of investigating the best systems of education. The following remarks, taken from an address recently made before the Mechanics' Institute, at Kingsley (Yorkshire), will be of interest to our readers. He said:

They had now direct compulsion established for the whole of the United Kingdom, and although the Act did not come into operation until the 1st of January, it had been adopted already by the whole population of England and Wales within one million. He had no doubt, without the least pressure from the Education Department, that on the 1st January, 1881, the whole population of England and Wales would be under compulsion. (Cheers.) If there was any complaint of the hardship of the Education Act, it arose when the child came of age to work and could not pass the necessary standard.

The factory employers and parents present should bear in mind that British children had a shorter school life allowed them than any other children in Europe, where there was anything like a compulsory system. In Switzerland, no child could leave school to work until he was thirteen years of age; in Bavaria, also, the age was thirteen. In Prussia the half-time system began at twelve years, continued to fourteen years, and then it was compulsory, if required, for two or three years longer, if necessary up to seventeen years, for six or eight hours a week; it might be in the night, but it must be continued until the standard was passed. It was most important to economise before everything the short school life of the English child.

Alluding to the controversy on the subject of voluntary and Board schools, he said he prayed that that might all come to an end. (Hear, hear.) There was enough for good men to do, to whatever sect or party they might belong, in rescuing the rising generation, without maintaining a bitter feud about which should do the work which had to be done. It was all the Masters' work; and he served best who served in the best spirit and threw his best energy into the work.

He wished that the School Boards should, as far as was consistent with the Acts of Parliament, have perfect freedom, and that they should be responsible rather more to the ratepayers, and rather less to the Education Department. It was for the ratepayers chiefly to decide how far the School Boards should carry out their various schemes.

In our School Board reports of Keighley and Huddersfield next week we shall give longer extracts from the right hon. gentleman's speeches.

—When on the point of going to press, rumours have reached us that several suits are being instituted against the Hamilton Collegiate Institute for non-fulfilment of promises as to money payment—promises put forward in the advertisements of the Hamilton Institute, to which allusion has been made in our leading articles. We have received a number of letters from teachers on this subject which are too late for this issue, but will be published in the February number of the *SCHOOL JOURNAL*. One such letter from a teacher we print in the present issue, and we are in a position to state that the editors of this paper have during the last few days received visits from High School teachers of the highest respectability, who have afforded us fresh information on this subject which it will be our painful but inevitable duty to lay before our readers.