

will see that their wishes were anticipated and forestalled. We feel sure that they will agree with us that the work could not have been put in better hands

The incident at Dutton, mentioned in a paragraph taken from the *St. Thomas Journal*, in our Notes and News column, is worthy of being reflected on by the users of the rod in schools. There is nothing to show that there was anything specially reprehensible in the mode of administering the chastisement, or that it was excessive in degree, granting the propriety of corporal punishment in schools. But the spectacle of a teacher engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with a refractory pupil can not have been an edifying one to the school, and the memory must be humiliating to the teacher. Surely there is some better way of upholding the teacher's authority than that which degrades him into a wielder of the cat, engaged in a trial of strength with a schoolboy.

The free school idea is taking firm hold of the public mind in England. The adoption of this system is but a question of time, and probably of a very short time. It is curious and, to dwellers on this side of the Atlantic, wonderful, to see the objections that are raised and the quarters from which they come. Probably the strongest opposition, and that which will hold out the longest, is that of those who should be the warmest supporters of the movement, the friends of the Church schools. These rightly foresee in free schools the end of the system which enables them to teach the creed and the catechism of a sect under the patronage of the State and with the money of the whole people, many of whom do not subscribe to the creed or the catechism. But they wrongly conceive that the abolition of compulsory fees will be the death-blow to voluntarism in education. There will always be ample room and a noble work for voluntary institutions.

There are, it is true, weighty theoretical objections against the principle of free schools and State education, but these objections cannot be urged in a country where the Government pays immense sums for the support of higher education in colleges and universities. There is not an argument that can be urged in favor of State support of such institutions which does not apply with treble force to primary schools. If it is duty or good policy to foster secondary education at public expense, it must be far more duty and good policy to raise the masses out of the slough of ignorance and superstition, and there is surely more ground for a charge of unfairness or tyranny against a system of compulsory education with compulsory exaction of fees than without it. If the best interests of the Kingdom demand that the primary education of the whole people be made compulsory, it is surely but reasonable that the kingdom, *i. e.*, the whole people, should provide the funds. For our own part, we have always been inclined to regard the whole system of State education as a temporary arrangement necessary at a certain stage, no doubt a prolonged stage, of national progress, but destined eventually to be superseded by the higher and juster order, in which every parent will see to the education of his own children. All voluntary schools are but a step in this

direction, and the enforcement of universal education will do much to hasten the consummation by making the appreciation of education universal. We can hardly conceive of parents able to read and write who could suffer their children to grow up utterly illiterate.

A TYRANNICAL RULE.

Paragraph No. 10, under the head of Inspector's Duties in the New Regulations of the Ontario Education Department, reads as follows :

"To see that no unauthorized text-books are used in the schools. No books should be placed in the hands of the pupils, except those authorized for their use. Under the disguise of recommending certain works for 'home study,' many unauthorized text books are introduced into the school. This should be prevented by the Inspector in the exercise of his authority as an officer of the Education Department."

If the object were to drive every teacher of high intelligence and spirit out of the profession and to reduce those that remain to the rank of automatons, moving only as the strings are pulled at the Education Office, it would be hard to devise a rule better adapted for the purpose. To forbid the use of any but the authorized books in the schools is bad enough. The tendency is to leave both teacher and pupils "cabinéd, cribbed, confined." It is like requiring one who should be free as an athlete to work in a strait jacket. We believe the day will come in the history of education when the statement that such a regulation was once made and enforced by the highest authority will be received with incredulity, or placed in the category of curiosities in the history of educational development. And yet there are certain arguments of some degree of plausibility to be urged in support of such a rule, as applied to the books actually used in the school-room. But when the system is extended beyond the walls of the school-house, when the Inspector is called upon to carry a kind of espionage into the very homes of the children, we can only wonder that a three-fold rebellion is not provoked—a rebellion of inspectors, of teachers, and of parents. Such a stretch of authority is degrading to the inspectorate, takes away the last vestige of intellectual liberty from the teaching profession, and trenches upon the rights of free citizenship.

But, to put the matter on lower and more practical grounds, we can think of few restrictions more injurious to good teaching than this which virtually forbids teachers to recommend any side help or book of reference. There is no practice more stimulating to the intelligence of the pupil at any stage than that of comparing authors and methods. There is no mental habit that deserves to be more carefully fostered than this very habit of research which is the outgrowth of the practice in question, and which this regulation seems designed to repress. And no better method can be devised for teaching the young to be the slaves of one-sided authorities—and every author is more or less one-sided—than to compel them to take all their earlier facts and impressions in the various subjects of study, from a single authority in each.

The regulation, moreover, deprives both teacher and pupil of legitimate and often much-needed assistance. A very simple