

giving effect to the circular on school textbooks issued by the Department on the 7th September last, which will be found in our issue for January. If attention be given to that announcement, and care taken by the Public School Inspectors that its provisions are carried out, the trouble will at least be largely mitigated. Coupled with this, as the *Monitor* suggests, official lists should from time to time be issued of the books authorized for use in the schools; and it would be well to indicate in some special manner the additions and substitutions made in the interval between the issues of the lists. Neither the trade nor the local school authorities, it is proper at any rate to say, should be left to find out what are the authorized books from the publishers interested in their manufacture and sale; and it should be the duty of the Inspectors of Schools, if the operations of the trade cannot be characterized by honour as well as by enterprise, to hedge the institutions under their supervision from the imposition, in this matter, of either self-interest, or easy morals.

---

WITH the beginning of the year educational work starts upon a new career under the fostering care of that part of our school government devised for local administration—the Boards of School Trustees. The heat and turmoil of elections are over, and keen or sluggish as may have been the interest awakened in the contests, we trust that good men have everywhere been returned. That this has been the case, while party wire-pulling has its meshes over the office of school trustee as over everything else, is perhaps too much to expect. We are a much governed people, and the evil deity of politics has in this machinery of our school law a fine opportunity to assert itself, and to govern the boards as the boards again govern the schools. That it takes due advantage of the opportunity but too often is the fact, and that too, with the shout of party and the triumph of augmented power. But with whatever zest politics takes hold of this added sphere of influence, and to its encroachments we fear education only too feebly resigns itself, we trust that the new year brings to our

school boards that high motive in their work that will subordinate all other influences to those that are effective only to the best and lasting interests of the schools. It is no age of high emotion, nor is it marked by any great degree of earnestness or fervour, but if any interests of the community call for intensity of feeling and impulsiveness of ardour in contributing to its highest welfare, that interest is the cause of education and with it the efficiency of the schools. To take a liberal view of the educational wants of a town, and to maintain and extend the machinery of school work, is the urgent demand of the time; and no aspect of civic life is more pleasing, or fraught with greater blessing, than the resolute endeavour of a community to broaden and deepen the foundations of the educational fabric in its midst. Looking at the liberal provision made by the legislature of the country to promote education, and the elaborate and far-reaching machinery of its operation in Ontario, a stranger would say that we are in earnest in this work, and doubtless we are. But there are many impediments to our success, chiefly in our working along the dead lines of regulation method, and in the deep trenches of a routine-system, while we should rather be throwing forward our outposts and extending the column of attack along the upper plain of progress and over the mounds of circumlocution and red-tape. In some respects, government control of education is a check rather than a gain to its progress, and the machinery necessary to its working too often chokes off the impulse to active and enthusiastic local effort. We rely too much upon what the Department may do for education. In many quarters, however, individual vitality and a hearty civic spirit give impetus to the work which the paternal system is apt to dull and enfeeble. And it is here that local school boards should find their true and proper work, to reinforce the department machinery with increased vigour and effect, and to impart that vitality to its work which will carry it on to triumph and success. Realizing this function, and zealously intent on working it out, there should be a hearty and interested co-operation with the teacher, and that cor-