

none of these advantages, and wish distinctly to affirm before going any farther that we decidedly advocate education as likely to improve and elevate society and the masses. But let us maintain a just balance even in our insistence on principles that may tend most powerfully to the public good. In future the owner of a goat is enjoined under penalties to compass his property with 'an equilateral triangle.' No one could possibly object to being ordered to put a collar on his goat as a proof of registration, but many an owner will quail when he hears it must be in the form of an equilateral triangle. The municipal council might as fairly insist upon every goat being marched by his proprietors

across the *pons asinorum*, and made to poke his head through an isosceles triangle. In Queensland we are supposed to be so highly educated as to take this sort of thing with equanimity. The line of attainment in a country of compulsory education must be drawn somewhere, and we think it might fairly be drawn at Euclid. If we were in America, where city rings are not unknown, the corporation would lie under the imputation of having probably imported a cargo of equilateral triangles that they desired to get rid of quickly, but here we believe they are passing honest, so that it is after all only their three-cornered way of doing things."

CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

STRAY THOUGHTS ABOUT TEACHERS AND TEACHING.

By a Contributor.

I.

INDEPENDENCE.

I once heard a friend say that he had observed in the hearing of certain teachers of our public schools a certain lack of independence—a sort of cringing (I do not like the word) to those placed over them as trustees and inspectors. Imagine what this single remark involves. A lady or gentleman of, at least, some education and possessed of much of the refinement that education is certain to impart or to strengthen, is compelled to learn the arts of humouring, temporizing—I had almost said fawning. This is the position of many well-educated teachers amongst us. Ignorant members of school-boards and crotchety inspectors tyrannize in a manner that few are aware of, over the teachers, whom the votes of the electors often have imprudently placed in their power. A teacher must pass a strict examination in order to qualify himself or herself for the duties of

school-work. A board of trustees, who have full power over these teachers need not know anything. Education, as a means or an end, may be as a sealed book to a trustee yet the interests of education are placed in his hands; the teachers may be ladies and gentlemen born and bred, the trustees may be, and very often are, mere boors. A man who never put a capital letter in his life in the right place except by accident, who has no idea whatever of what is meant by refined feeling, who has plenty of money, but no appreciation of what education is intended to supply, comes forward as candidate for a place on the school-board and in a circular, ungrammatical, or written by someone else, sets forth his peculiar fitness for the duties of trustee. Of course you cannot expect much from school-boards constituted after this model, and if we meet with almost unaccountable blundering, when we expect judgment, we can only lay the blame on the facile method at present in use of forming school-boards. It is mentioned as one of the triumphs of sound principles, that under the British flag those who hold the balance of justice shall, during good behaviour, be independent even of the Crown. This was in-