

for the old parish school was of the Domsic kind, in which the curriculum ran from the alphabet to Virgil and Xenophon. The *Montreal Witness*, in recommending the centralizing idea, says that such a machinery of reliable intercommunication between different parts of the country would, no doubt, develop in many ways towards the lessening of the isolation of our rural population. It might easily, for instance, become a daily mail delivery and a parcel post, if not a passenger service.

The question of compulsory education is recommending itself to many of the elements of our population, but we can never have compulsory education in all our Canadian provinces until there is free education, and at present it would be folly to put a measure on the statute book that could not be enforced in districts where there are no schools or the very poorest of schools. The *Montreal Herald* once undertook to show the character of the country schools in many parts of the Province of Quebec, and, though the Hon. Mr. Marchand has been in power for over two years, yet there are still hundreds of the schools which the *Herald's* commissioner examined that are hardly yet in a condition to be approved of by the respectable farmer as a place which his children should be forced to attend, and until their condition is improved the advocacy of a compulsory school system must be held in abeyance in that province at least. And, not to be too invidious, the outlying sections of Ontario, as well as of the other provinces, are perhaps not so much further ahead of Quebec in the condition of their schools to warrant an application of the compulsory principle even to them.

Still it is well to have the enunciation of that principle placed before us now and again, notwithstanding its impracticability as a people's question

just yet. And the *Witness* puts the matter in a careful way when it says: "Popular government demands education. The public has a right that the children should be educated. This is the duty of the parents as much as it is their duty to feed the children. They have no more claim on the State to teach their children than to clothe them. The State gets, as we know, into all sorts of trouble when it attempts to do the parents' duty. We only quarrel on broad lines as yet, as between Roman Catholic and Protestant. But, as we become more and more interested in the all-important subject of education, we shall have more and more conscientious difficulties and differences. All that the State has a right to do is to demand that the children be educated. In the abstract it has no right to take the parents' money by force and take the children from the parents and educate them as it chooses. This is at best a crude and temporary device rendered necessary by an imperfect condition of society, just as the device of a State Church once satisfied the religious demands of peoples, but no longer does so. Still, if the State demands that the children shall be educated, it seems necessary that for the most of them it must provide the education. We have, however, always begun at what is logically the wrong end. Instead of first requiring the education and then providing it where that cannot be otherwise done, we provide it and do not require it at all. This last omission is the weak point."

An editorial on the cares which beset our teachers and the local influences which work against their becoming permanent citizens in any community has its corroboration in an article from the pen of a Kansas school superintendent, and his article convinces, cannot but convince us all, that there is need for a great moral reform somewhere. As Mr. Cowdrick