

not on the Education Department, but on the Trustees and local Inspector.

The second point is sought to be provided for by legislative action in lowering the price of a number of those text-books for which the demand is greatest, while excellence of mechanical form, in paper, print, and binding, is to be secured by subjecting not only every text-book, but also every separate edition, to the supervision of an officer of the Department. As we have said, the Minister is undertaking a very difficult task, and we most cordially wish him success. Inspection by an officer of the Education Department is what no publisher ought to object to. Nay, he ought, rather, to be glad of it; but it is at least to be hoped that the person appointed to inspect will be one practically acquainted with the business details of the publishing trade, and thus competent for the duty assigned him.

As to the prices of text-books, attempts have been made in nearly every State in the American Union to regulate the cost of text-books by legislation, the latest being in the State of Minnesota, where signal failure elicits the following trenchant criticism from the current number of *Barnes' Educational Monthly*, a leading journal among our professional exchanges, published in New York:

"Some years ago the legislature of Minnesota was persuaded to give to a local dealer a contract to supply all the public schools of the State with text-books, for the term of fifteen years, at certain fixed and apparently low prices. Armed with his 'law,' which specified the contractor by name as well as the prices, but not the books, this gentleman visited the leading publishers, and sought by offering them 'a monopoly' to secure terms that would enable him to supply the books at the extraordinary rates proposed. Naturally the reputable publishers of the best works declined his overtures for the simple business reason that there could be no equivalent in such an arrangement for valuable copyrights. At last, however, he succeeded in securing a 'cheap' series, which we forbear to characterize except by the result. The only relief for the people of Minnesota from the operation of this remarkable 'contract' was provided in the law itself. Some opponent of the measure had contrived to insert a section by which the whole matter was required to be submitted to a popular vote in 1880. Meanwhile Mr. Contractor, confident in the shibboleth of 'cheap school books,' scattered his wares through the State. They have had a fair trial of over two years, but at the general election in November, 1880, the sovereign people arose in their might, and overthrew law, contract, contractor, and 'cheap books' together by a decisive majority. *Moral*—In this free country don't attempt to 'govern too much.' Let the law of demand and supply regulate the prices of books as of other articles of merchandise. While the present terrible competition between publishers exists, there is little danger that our schools will be overcharged."

Those best acquainted with the working of our education system, know well the zeal for the public service of the present Minister, the many important improvements he has effected, his progressive and energetic spirit, of which these very regulations are the outcome. But of the chronic grumbling which is the vice of free institutions and responsible government, none is more irrepressible than that against the Education Department, and this on subjects which the Minister has, by his own act, put from under his control, and into local hands. Has "Sonny" torn his Second Reader, it is the Minister of Education who is to answer for it; or does "Sissy" need a newer and better manual of Algebra to replace the old one which is past its usefulness, it is always the Education Department which is "grinding the faces of the poor," notwithstanding the fact that, as we have already pointed out, the

Trustees and Inspector are the persons responsible for any changes made. The Minister can well afford to laugh at the criticisms of Incompetence and Folly, even when Folly is used as a political tool by Cunning.

PAY AND POSITION—THE PROSPECT.

Whenever the "History of Modern Progress" may be written, not the least interesting phase in its evolution will be the gradual rise in social estimation of the callings which have reference to culture and education. The original aristocratic professions were those of the Warrior and the Priest. To these were added in the course of time Physic and Law; Physic as a sort of outlying province of Divinity, the healer of the body being allowed to bear some inferior relation to the physician of the soul; and Law, whose "costs" and "damages" were seen to bear a very respectable analogy to those of war.

Minor distinctions, those of surgeon and physician, attorney and barrister—like that between alligator and crocodile—did not amount to difference of species. But all other callings, though much more directly related to art and culture, were long under the ban of "society." The general feeling of the English upper class of his time was expressed by the boorish king who avowed his distaste for "boets and bainters." Things had not much improved when in George the Third's time general astonishment was expressed that Sir Joshua Reynolds, "a mere painter," could be a member of Parliament; or when the noblest representative of English literature was sneered at by a stupid Scotch laird as "a Dominie, wha keepit a school an' ca'd it an Academy."

The absence of an aristocracy and of its inevitable accompaniment, a social hierarchy of caste, on this continent, has already changed all this. The aristocracy of Money may pay to that of Rank the unrecognized homage of its awkward imitation, but no lord and no millionaire can command the public respect of all classes as can a great writer, or inventor, or scientific thinker, or artist. Has the rise in social position of the teacher kept pace with that of the merchant, the man of letters, or the artist?

In answer to this question, it may fairly be said that the social position of the teacher has risen in this country, and that this is due in no small degree to the elevation of the professional standard carried out during the last few years by the Minister of Education in Ontario, and by the Chief Superintendents in the sister provinces. The fact that a vast Governmental machinery exists for the purpose of organizing the teachers of the Province, gives the profession dignity in the eyes of those who least value culture.

But as society is constituted with us, no profession can command social position when remuneration is below the average income of other kinds of skilled labour. It is felt that the inferior physical and mental types will gravitate to such a profession, and that the better class will avoid it, or use it as a stepping stone to something else. But, without counting such prizes as the High Schools, and some of our town and city schools, which are fairly within the reach of the average