

officers of the different States. Millions of dollars have been thrown away in fruitless experiments or in stolid plodding for the want of it.

Further the assistance and encouragement of the general government are needed to secure the adoption of school systems throughout the country. An ignorant people have no inward impulse to lead them to self-education. Just where education is most needed, there it is always least appreciated and valued. It is, indeed, a law of educational progress that its impulse and stimulus comes from *without*. Hence it is that Adam Smith and other writers on political economy expressly except education from the operation of the general law of supply and demand. They teach correctly that the demand for education must be awakened by external influences and agencies.

This law is illustrated by the fact that entire school systems, both in this and in other countries, have been lifted up, as it were bodily, by just such influences as a national bureau of education would exert upon the schools of the several States; and this, too, without its being invested with any official control of the school authorities therein. Indeed, the highest value of such a bureau would be its quickening and informing influence, rather than its authoritative and directive control. The true function of such a bureau is not to direct officially in the school affairs in the States, but rather to coöperate with and assist them in the great work of establishing and maintaining systems of public instruction. All experience teaches that the nearer the responsibility of supporting and directing schools is brought to those immediately benefited by them, the greater their vital power and efficiency.

One other special duty which should be intrusted to the national bureau, and which of itself will justify its creation, viz: An investigation of the management and results of the frequent munificent grants of land made by Congress for the promotion of general and special education. It is estimated that these grants, if they had been properly managed, would now present an aggregate educational fund of about five hundred millions of dollars. If your memorialists are not misinformed, Congress has no official information whatever respecting the manner in which these trusts have been managed.

In conclusion, the memorialists express their earnest belief that universal education, next to universal liberty, is a matter of deep national concern. Our experiment of republican institutions is not upon the scale of a petty municipality or State, but it covers half a continent, and embraces peoples of widely diverse interests and conditions, but who are to continue "one and inseparable." Every condition of our perpetuity and progress as a nation adds emphasis to the remark of Montesquieu, that "it is in a republican government that the *whole power of education is required*." It is an imperative necessity of the American Republic that the common school be planted on every square mile of its peopled territory, and that the instruction therein imparted be carried to the highest point of efficiency. The creation of a bureau of education by Congress would be a practical recognition of this great truth. It would impart to the cause of universal education a dignity and importance which would surely widen its influence and enhance its success. —*Ohio Educational Monthly*.

6. AUTHORITY OF BOARDS RESPECTING TEXT-BOOKS.

A board of education in Ohio took action at their last meeting to secure a uniformity of text-books in the schools of the township. The board, after a full consideration of the subject, adopted a series of readers and arithmetics to be used to the exclusion of all other books in these branches. This action is opposed by the residents of one or more of the sub-districts, who have resolved to resist the authority of the board and continue the text-book anarchy which has so long reigned in the schools. This raises the question of the power of the board to force compliance with its action. Happily, on this point the school law is plain and specific. Section seventeen says: "The said board shall have power to determine the studies to be pursued, and the school-books to be used in the several schools under their control"; and section thirteen makes it the "duty of said board to prescribe rules and regulations for the government of all the common schools within their jurisdiction." The authority conferred by these two provisions is ample. If parents refuse to supply their children with the prescribed books, the board can exclude such children from the schools; if the local directors refuse to comply with their action, the board may assume exclusive control of the school, or they may order the schoolhouse to be closed until their regulations are obeyed; if the teacher is at fault, the board may adopt a regulation forfeiting his pay or causing his dismissal.

We wish here to state that it will be impossible for the boards of education to secure uniformity of text-books in the schools under their control without subjecting some school patrons to temporary inconvenience. But shall the schools for this reason be crippled and the school funds wasted? Where is the wisdom in employing

teachers and then suffering their best efforts to fail for the want of a uniformity of books in their classes? The boards in our towns and cities cause their authority in this text-book matter to be respected, and our country schools will never be efficient until the boards know their authority and duty, and resolve to maintain the one and discharge the other. We do not counsel frequent changes in school-books, but we do urge most emphatically *uniformity*. This must be secured, if we are to have efficient schools. —*Ohio Educational Monthly*.

7. A HINT FOR OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

"Paris Gossip" in the *Nation*, Jan. 1867, says:

"The Minister of Public Instruction has just issued a circular advising the teachers of the public schools not to torment their pupils by cramming their youthful heads with grammatical rules, learned by rote, but to inculcate the principles of correct and elegant diction by the less arid methods of *dictation* and the *analysis of interesting reading lessons*, thus indoctrinating them gradually and practically into the intricacies of grammatical law, without the infliction of the headaches, penal tasks, and weariness of the flesh, to which the learned and genial Minister alludes with an evident commiseration that makes one suspect he must have suffered many things in his boyhood under the rule of pedagogues."

8. EVILS OF CHANGE OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Perhaps one of the greatest evils under which the Common School System of Upper Canada needlessly labours is that in frequently changing teachers. This must naturally work a double evil to the teacher himself and to the school. The worthy profession of school teaching is rendered precarious and uncertain, and on that account does not prove so attractive to young men of talent as it would be were something like stability given to the situation held by a teacher. The eagerness of many teachers to get into other branches of occupation need not be wondered at when the profession gives them no permanency of location or income. An injury is undoubtedly done to schools by the frequent change of teachers. The nature of the injury may be gathered from the remarks of a school superintendent in Massachusetts, who urges the retention of the same teacher for a number of terms, and claims that the plan is obviously beneficial, "for each teacher has a way of his own, and must spend about half a term in tearing away the superstructure of his predecessor and rearing another, which is perhaps not superior to the one superseded, and a great loss of time to the school is the result." The Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada deprecates most earnestly the changing of teachers without due cause. He advises that a bad teacher should be removed from the ranks as soon as possible, but a faithful and efficient teacher should be retained as a rare and valuable treasure. "No college or private school (says the Report) would be considered worthy of confidence that changed its instructors once or twice a year. Nor can any Common School prosper or be efficient under such a system." The system indeed may be held accountable for providing the number of bad and incompetent teachers whom country school trustees consider it their duty to dismiss. Only let it come to be understood that a decent and somewhat permanent livelihood is at the command of those who enter upon the task of instructing youth, and the ranks of school teachers would be worthily filled. The matter should be earnestly considered by those who are entrusted with the management of the Common School system. —*Kingston Daily News*.

III. Papers with Statistical information.

1. STATISTICS OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

The following statistics are given in the Year Book just issued by Messrs Lowe and Chamberlin:—

POPULATION.

The last census of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, was taken in 1861; that of Newfoundland in 1858. The population of these colonies was then found to be—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Upper Canada.....	725,575	670,516	1,396,091
Lower Canada.....	567,864	543,702	1,111,566
New Brunswick.....	129,948	123,099	252,047
Nova Scotia.....	165,584	165,273	330,857
P. E. Island	40,880	39,977	80,859
Newfoundland.	65,118	58,170	124,288
Total	1,694,969	1,600,737	3,295,705

Assuming the same ratio of increase between 1861 and 1867 as between the census of 1861 and that which preceded it, the number