

tageous?" The only answer is: The School Law of the Province has arranged the classification. It has been thought out by master minds, and they have come to the conclusion, or seem to have come to the conclusion, that all children are alike in their mental capacities, or at least ought to be. Upon this supposition they have supplied you with a classification which is to be your guide, and they require you as a good and faithful teacher so to govern yourself that the Inspector, when asked if your school is conducted according to law, may be enabled truthfully to answer "YES."

From a small beginning, such as we find in every new country, our school system has, in the short space of about 30 years, grown into an immense organization, sending its ramifications into every hamlet in the land, and vieing in importance with our most essential legislative machinery. Nor has this increase in educational powers and appliances been unattended by an increase in educational expenses; direct intercourse between the humble teacher and the lofty intellectual magnate being scarcely admissible; a whole series of intermediate paid officers has been interpolated between these two extreme terms of our school system.

There is no doubt that there are a great many features in our present system with regard to which we have reason to feel proud. The immense strides we have made in the remarkably short time already mentioned, especially when compared with the tardy progress in the same direction, of many older countries, the position in which our educational system is believed to stand at the present time, and the efficiency it is generally believed to possess, are things upon which we have reason to congratulate ourselves. But it appears to me that our educational system has been overdone—that there have been too many changes made from time to time without sufficient cause and without sufficient experience of any one characteristic upon which to ground a trustworthy conclusion as to its success or failure. We are, in fact, bearing testimony to the correctness of the remark made by Mr. Bowring, in a late lecture

at the Royal Institution, that "the science of education is in advance of the art," and in which he urged that, like medicine, pedagogics should be made a science of observation upon the result obtained. This, I believe, has not been done, and it occurs to me very forcibly that the advantages of our present school system over that of 20 or 25 years ago are to a great extent, counterbalanced by the greater cost to the country of carrying out a system as rigid in its nature as a military code, and burdened with an array of scarcely necessary paraphernalia. This running of an educational system at high-pressure can be likened to nothing better than the present prevailing desire of crossing the ocean in less and still less time, but it is an admitted fact that to double the speed of a vessel is to double the danger and quadruple the expense, and yet in this particular of speed one line of vessels tries to outstrip others regardless of consequences.

It may be argued that a good educational system is one of the bulwarks of a free people, and that no amount of elaboration is too much which tends to increase its efficiency among the masses. The whole of this I fully and promptly admit, but the question still remains as to what is the most efficient school system and how it is to be attained. Now it is because I do not think that our present school regulations are as well adapted to the wants of the communities which they affect as they might be, and as all of us would like them to be, that I take this opportunity of pointing out what I consider to be faults in them.

Let us consider first, then, the qualification of teachers, i.e., the legal qualification. Every person who has had any particular connection with school matters during several years past must be aware that there has been a constant tendency to raise what is called the standard of qualification. Some years ago we had our old-fashioned Boards of Examiners, composed of men, some of whom might be bare enough in the literary qualification of an examiner of teachers, but who had common sense to aid them when literature failed, and sufficient breadth of