



# TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

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## CRITICISM OF EDUCATIONAL PAPERS.

The *Globe* and the Minister of Education are political friends, and TRUTH does not care to thrust its head between them when they engage in any political, literary, educational or other quarrel. Nevertheless when we read a criticism that is manifestly captious and unjust, in the columns of an influential journal like our contemporary the *Globe*, public justice demands that we should give our opinion upon the matter. Lately certain questions were set for candidates seeking admission from the lower grade schools to the high schools of Ontario, and the *Globe* regards them as a "five-barred gate." Now we should be the very last journal in Toronto to advocate the setting up of unattainable standards, or the placing of obstacles in the way of the youth of our Province; but we certainly cannot enter upon a crusade of censure when there is nothing, in such regard, that can honestly be criticised. The *Globe* prints the following list of questions as evidence of the stupidity and incompetency of those who set questions. It says that "comment upon them is unnecessary." This is precisely what we think:

"Make a list of the leading events in the reign of Edward I. Justify his title to be called one of the greatest of the English Sovereigns."

"Name in order the Stuart Sovereigns, stating what claim each of them had to the Crown. Describe their general character, and state what good and what bad effects resulted to their subjects from their bad qualities."

"Give an account of any three of the following, stating why they are noteworthy in history:—Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, Longfellow, and Tennyson."

"State, with reasons, what you think wrong in the conduct of Richard I, Charles II, and Walpole."

"Explain and illustrate the meanings of any four of the following:—Party Government, Responsible Government, Government by the People, The Rule of the Whig Nobles, Federal Union, The Social Condition of the People, The Habeas Corpus Act."

As a rule the persons connected with the newspaper press of Canada are men without culture or knowledge, and we have very often in the columns of this paper been pained by the cold lamentable fact. But it is positively disgraceful that a great paper like the *Globe* undoubtedly is, should allow its columns, for personal or other reasons, to be used for purposes of such criticism as this is. We all get "rusty," in time, after leaving school, but anybody who has even the slightest knowledge of English history will agree that those questions which we have reproduced are perfectly legitimate, and that they have been chosen with good taste. Very often we have seen questions set for examinations in Common and High Schools, and even in the Universities, which have been for the greater part "catch," and which would seem as if designed rather to ascertain what the student does not know than what he does know. Against this species of punning we have always protested; but the questions that we have reproduced are such as any boy or girl of

twelve or fourteen who has at all read the text-books of the common schools should be able, and are able, to make saving percentages upon.

## THE FISHERY DISPUTE.

In contrast with the insane ravings of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and the class for which it speaks, it is refreshing to find the *United States Secretary*, Mr. Bayard, capable of discussing the fishery question calmly and dispassionately. Mr. Bayard, writing to the British Minister at Washington, reviews at some length the history of the trouble, and places the responsibility for the present unfortunate state of affairs where it belongs, viz., upon the American authorities. Prior to 1866 a treaty existed between Great Britain and the United States, under which Canadians and Americans fished side by side. At the expiration of the terms of this Treaty the Americans declined to continue this friendly relation, and prohibited our citizens from fishing in American waters, and exacted a tax from us for any fish we exported to the States. Feeling aggrieved at this action, our Government placed a tax of \$1 a ton upon American vessels fishing in Canadian waters.

The next year the tax was increased to \$2, and the next year it was raised to \$3. Under this rate of taxation the relations between the United States and the Canadian fishermen were undisturbed, but in the next year and a half complications arose which resulted in the adoption of another treaty between the United States and Great Britain in 1872, which was to expire after twelve years. This latter treaty expired in 1885, and when the present Administration came into power there was no treaty or law bearing upon the subject. All of these facts, says Secretary Bayard, were well known to the country, and also that the Republican party retired from power without attempting to protect the American fishermen. As soon as the present Administration came into power the New England fishermen, or their representatives, poured into Washington with appeals for protection for their fishing interests. As Secretary of State he communicated the situation to the Senate, and proposed the appointment of a commission to arbitrate on the subject. This proposition the Republican Senate refused to consider. The appeals of the American fishermen were so loud and long that Mr. Bayard, after consultation with the British Minister, secured a concession from the Canadian authorities, under which the American fishermen were allowed to finish their season undisturbed until the present spring of the year. The whole controversy might have been avoided had the Senate acted upon the suggestion of the State Department, and consented to frame a treaty bearing upon the fisheries question.

Mr. Bayard says he proposes that his countrymen shall know all the facts in the case, so they may place responsibility where it properly belongs. He asserts with great earnestness that the Republican party

in Congress has used every means in its power to obstruct the present Administration in carrying out the desires of the people, and yet certain men stand up in the halls of Congress and elsewhere, shouting themselves hoarse in their accusations against the courage and dignity of the Administration. These very men, he says, who yell the loudest for the Government to send United States war vessels into British waters to redress these alleged wrongs and insults to American citizens, would be among the first to drop down on their marrow bones and plead for mercy in the event of a war between the United States and a foreign power. He also charges them with inconsistency in their efforts to seek protection for American seamen and American industries. Many supplies used aboard the vessels are purchased in Canada simply because both man and material can be obtained cheaper than in the United States. Mr. Bayard says the fisheries question can only be settled by a treaty, and that fact will be recognized sooner or later, and the people of the country will also see that the present Administration is not slow to protect the rights of American citizens.

Dr. Wiggins, our Ottawa wiseacre, predicts an amazing storm for September. There is such a congregation of talent at Ottawa that when a prophecy or a statement of any kind comes from that city of saw-dust and political corruption, we ought to take off our hats. In the civil service there are about three clerks for each one needed; consequently there is this output of intelligence and prognostication during the long idle hours of the day. The chief occupation of the Ottawa civil service clerk is to read the local papers; and when this is done he sits at his desk and engages in some work of literature or prophecy. Dr. Wiggins, with all his nonsense, is one of the best men in the public service; but, for all his cleverness he knows no more about storms three months ahead than the printer's devil in the office of TRUTH. The late respected Mr. Verner is said to have got his clue to coming bad weather from the queer carryings-on of insects, vermin, and such like contemptible organized life. Now the writer himself, though by no means a civil-service weather prophet, used to be able once upon a time to predict a storm half a day ahead. The neighbourhood in which he lived lay along the front of the Atlantic ocean, and it boasted scores of lithe, long, whiffing hogs. Now it came to pass that when indigo clouds began to gather in any given portion of the sky that these same hogs would at once begin to gather the dried kelp along the beach, and lie away with mouthfuls of same to their sty. They knew, of course, that the storm was coming, and were making their beds. Not one of them, however, as far as the writer knows, ever got a position in the civil service. We may inform Wiggins and other "literary men" at Ottawa that a good way to calculate a storm is through the agency of swallows. For when a storm is at hand there is

usually a depression in the lower strata of the atmosphere; in this strata are numbers of insects. The swallow and the swift, which latter bird we may inform Dr. Wiggins and the rest of the Ottawa litterateurs is the nearest possible relation to the swallow, feeds while upon the wing. The insect being low in the air before a storm, the swallow naturally enough, before the tempest, flies low to catch him. Ergo, as our esteemed old friend Cloero would say, a "Signum" or sign of a storm is the low flying of swallows. Dr. Wiggins pretends that he can see coming bad weather in the stars. This is why so many of his hurricanes got out of reckoning and never turned up. We cordially commend himself and the other brilliant writers at Ottawa to the pigs and swallows.

The *Alexandria Glengarrion*, published by Mr. O. J. Stillwell, is one of the most successful country weeklies in Canada. Established a little over a year since, it was for a time scarcely known outside the village in which it was issued. Since the present energetic publisher assumed control its progress has been quite extraordinary, and it now, both in circulation and influence, ranks among the first of the local newspapers of the Dominion. Mr. Stillwell well deserves the success which his enterprise and energy have brought him, and the town of Alexandria is to be congratulated upon possessing so zealous and able an exponent of its interests.

If we are to believe the tidings recently come to us from Quebec, certain social matters in that quaint old city require immediate attention. The *Daily Telegraph* says that things are coming to a disgraceful state in the wholesale traffic of innocent girls for immoral purposes between Quebec and Chicago, and it is said that a number of "servant" girls were induced to go to Chicago through the offer of very high wages. They say that they are credibly informed that a Chicago firm has sent one married girl to Quebec to begin operations. To kidnap another "girl" of the same ilk, established that within the walls of the city has ended in a young city. The city is not able to handle the city, not able to handle the city, not able to handle the city.