

much required. The present remuneration of the labor on which the intellectual future of Canada depends is very far behind what it ought to be. It is true that a considerable advance has taken place, especially in the Province of Ontario, in this respect during the last ten years, a result due in no small degree to the wise policy of the present Minister of Education in raising the standard of examination, and in consequence the character of the teachers. The same thing is taking place in the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where the efforts of Dr. Allison and of Dr. Rand have been energetically directed to the same object. But the average pay of the teachers is still inadequate, and it will be one of the chief objects of our paper to promote reform in this respect. Every step gained, every school put on a better footing as regards salary, every trustee who can be impressed with the conviction that the vulgar parsimony which curtails the teacher's salary is as mischievous as it is illiberal, is so much progress made. In conclusion, the proprietors of the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL respectfully invite the co-operation of teachers in writing to the columns of this paper on all subjects of professional interest. And we desire to submit it to their notice that one of the staff of editors will be present daily at the office of this journal between the hours of nine and six, and will be happy to confer on matters of educational interest with any of our readers who may honor him with a visit. We wish that the teaching profession should look on the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL not merely as a literary representative, but as a trusty champion and professional and personal friend. In which spirit we give our readers the kindest of greetings for 1881.

"PLEASE STATE SALARY REQUIRED."

Most thinking persons are aware that there are some kinds of human labor in regard to which the maxim "Buy in the cheapest market" is false political economy. In all work that is done by machines or cattle, or by those serfs of feudalism and capital who have little more free action than cattle or machines, the "cheapest market" maxim is master of the situation. Such work commands its minimum value and no more. It is at the mercy of that which is most merciless—competition.

But in all labor of which skill is an element, such as teaching, it is evident that *quality* must be considered in determining its cheapness. Teaching is good or bad, according as the interest and personal effort of the teacher is induced to make it the former and not the latter. The cheapest teaching may be, in most cases, and under proper conditions will be in all cases, that bought in the dearest market. That is to say, it is self-evident that the great city schools, which are liberal and not niggardly as a rule, as a rule purchase the best work in the profession.

Does this mean that we are to urge our school-trustee readers to make an effort to raise artificially the teachers' salaries? By no means. For it would be equally false political economy to attempt to change the balance of demand and supply. The teacher's salary will be exactly in proportion to

the value set on education, and the degree to which the trustees and the section are ambitious for their children's advancement. Let them weigh fully the fact that the teacher's services are worth more to their children in the present and the future than any other necessary for which our people, poor as a rule, pay out their hard-earned dollars. Then let them state in their advertisement what they are able to give. They will thus deal fairly with the teacher, and will deserve to secure the best labor available in the market, *at the price which they are able to give*. But there is a device very current just now which attempts to disturb the balance of demand and supply, by seeking to establish an underhand competition among teachers. It is this. At the present season, when charity and good-will are "on the cards"—the Christmas cards at least—we frequently see advertisements in the papers ending "Please state salary required." The object of this is to make teachers *underbid* each other, and thus artificially lower the market value of their labor. It is most unfair to the teachers, who are thus made to act as agents in cheapening each other's work. It is still more injurious to the true interests of the school section, by offering such a low salary, to which no one could object if no larger one could be afforded, but an *artificially* low salary, the result not of legitimate competition in open market, but of a hole-and-corner process of underselling, discreditable to all who engage in it. If trustees can only give \$200 a year, let them say so, and get the best value the profession, in open competition, offers for that price. But to attempt to gain popularity in the school section, by reducing *this* \$200 to \$150, or by securing (for a time) a teacher, the market value of whose labor is \$300 for their \$200, is sure to react injuriously on the *school* and the *scholars*—the true interests concerned—by ignoring which vulgar stinginess, like vaulting ambition, "overleaps itself."

POLITICAL EDUCATIONISTS.

It has not been the custom of this journal to lend its columns for the furtherance of any individual interests, still less for the discussion of personal quarrels. But when it has unfortunately happened that a newspaper, eminent for literary ability, has fallen so far under the influence of a clique as to attack, in season and out of season, the Minister of Education, the Central Committee, and two of the ablest and most respected of Canadian men of letters connected with education, it becomes the duty of this journal, in the interests of the teaching profession which it represents, for once to depart from its rule of not paying the compliment of notice to what is nothing more than the merest and most baseless slander. To say that the Minister of Education is incompetent or discourteous, is slander. To call the Central Committee "a ring," to talk of its "abominations," to say that it deserves only to be swept away, is slander, and slander wanting the piquancy of slang or the point of sarcasm.

The *Mail* has for the last six months been incessant in its attacks on the Education Department; it has raked up every old grievance, and built up on the shallow foundation that