

WHETHER your pupils have some years, or but a few months, to spend at school, create and nourish by all means in your power a taste for English literature. If you fritter away the time devoted to English in analysis and parsing, you prepare to give your pupils facility in tearing a sentence to tatters. Will that enable them to compose a good business letter, to express themselves clearly and intelligently on general topics, or enjoy good literature? Will not such a training make your pupils vain pretenders to knowledge rather than real students? Give your pupils good literature, encourage them to read it and talk about it, and you have done something for them that will be a life-long profit and pleasure.

POLITICIANS AND SCHOOL BOARDS.

The *St. John Sun*, commenting upon a recent article in the *REVIEW*, on politicians serving upon school boards, concludes that the evil which arises from such appointments must be confined to Nova Scotia, because St. John has had no more efficient and faithful school trustees than Senator Boyd and Mr. J. V. Ellis, who, while serving in that capacity, were identified with politics. The *REVIEW* entirely agrees with the *Sun* in its estimate of the services of both gentlemen mentioned, and hopes and believes that that type of trustee is by no means extinct, either in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia. Were it not so, the outlook for the future of our schools would be gloomy indeed.

Yet the evil pointed out exists in some localities in both provinces. The *Sun* rightly concludes that the danger is greatest from ward, and, we may add, municipal politicians, and thinks it may be advisable that school boards "should contain at least a fair minority of members" not interested in politics.

Why not a majority? Politicians themselves when serving upon school boards, and who have been desirous of conscientiously performing their duties, have been greatly embarrassed on some occasions by the pressure which has been brought to bear upon them. What better evidence could be offered of this than the restrictions which have been placed upon appointments in some cases. One case is known in which a school board enacted that no native of the place should receive an appointment as teacher. Other cases are well known where inefficient teachers have secured positions, not so much through the trustees as through the exertions of friends who have had political influence with members of the board, and log rolling has done the rest.

That some politicians have been trustees has benefited the cause of education, but that the office should

be sought for the patronage it gives is bad, and will soon bring our system to the level existing at present in some parts of the United States, where reform in this respect is now being demanded by all parties.

THE BATHURST SCHOOLS.

The Bathurst school difficulty, which has been lately doing service as a political football, has in consequence come to be regarded with suspicion by all who take further interest in the matter. There have been many additions to the controversy during the past month, most of which have neither been dignified nor entertaining. A further grievance has been alleged, in that the trustees of Bathurst, town and village, have impaired the efficiency of the schools there by discontinuing the grammar and superior schools. The superior school has taken the place of the grammar school, and a first-class female teacher is to take the place of a first-class male teacher in what was the superior school. The Bathurst trustees have been heard from, and they urge as a reason for the change that the attendance at these schools does not warrant the expense of their continuance. The Bathurst trustees have not been the only boards in the province who have concluded to abolish this class of schools, but it would seem, outside of sectarian accusations as to the motive, that they should rather seek to make the schools more efficient in order to increase the attendance.

It is a poor advertisement for any town or progressive village to curtail its school expenditure. It seems especially inopportune for Bathurst to do so while the present sectarian charges against the conduct of its schools are being made, but the Bathurst trustees, while their motives may have been fair, have not shown themselves to be the possessors of a very great amount of tact. The friends of the free schools need not be alarmed at the action of any board in attempting to lower the standard of its schools. If it appears to the inspector that the schools, as conducted, are not suitable to the needs of the district, he can require the trustees to render them so — on pain of forfeiting their provincial grants. This has been done, and no doubt will be done in Bathurst if it seems necessary. The Bathurst trustees state further that while the majority of the trustees are Roman Catholics, the Protestants have one member, and the secretary is a Protestant. They also employ as teachers an equal number of Protestants and Roman Catholics. It must be borne in mind that the rate-payers are largely Roman Catholic in Bathurst, and while our free school system is non-sectarian, and that fact should not enter into the conduct of the