

the mind rationally, and according to natural laws of development, ought certainly to be the best judge of the means afforded him for that purpose. If the gradations in our readers are not sufficiently easy—if the matter is too complex or the style too labored and stiff—none can so soon see the effect of this as the teacher, and none so competent to substitute something else better adapted for its designed purpose.

It is admitted on all hands that some change should be effected in the matter of text books. Our readers are not what they ought to be. They neither serve for historical nor literary purposes. In fact, many of them are so thoroughly distasteful both to teachers and scholars, that it requires more than ordinary self-denial either to teach, or to study them. There is no reason then why a change should be much longer delayed. Every day spent in working with bad implements of labor is time partially wasted. The objection to our readers apply equally to our Geography, Grammar, and Canadian History. The latter is so particularly bad, that nothing but the direct necessity would ever induce any pupil to read it even once. With such a text book we must forever despair of instructing young Canadians even in the rudiments of Canadian History.

We would like very much to see the Provincial Association take up the text book question with some vigor. The Department cannot be expected to move much faster than it is urged by public pressure from without. It has in former years paid considerable deference to the opinion of the Association. If the representation is large, and the Association as influential in point of numbers and talent as it ought to be, there is do doubt but its suggestions will be regarded as the matured opinions of the country expressed by those most anxious to advance its educational interests.

*2nd. Programme of Studies.*—There is no

doubt but the "Programme of studies" arranged by the Council of Public Instruction five years ago, needs revision. The schools of Ontario are of two kinds—rural and town or city schools. While in its leading features the course of study in each should be similar, yet such is the difference in the circumstances of the two classes of pupils attending these schools that the same course of study, may not suit both equally as well. The attendance at rural schools is more irregular and fluctuating, the education which the majority of farmers seek for their children is less varied, and the time more limited during which they allow their children to attend school. It is of considerable importance that the greater part of that time should be devoted to essential branches. Besides, greater elasticity is required in a programme for rural schools than is now allowed. It is absolutely impossible to get many of the larger boys who attend school only the winter months to take up every subject in the curriculum. They simply wish to improve their knowledge in a few subjects—they cannot afford the time to take a full course—it is not desirable in their case that they should do so. Then why not make provision, for such exceptional cases, subject of course to the will of the Inspector or Trustees.

*3rd. County Institutes.*—It has long been the desire of the Chief Superintendent to establish County Institutes. No person who feels the necessity for a closer bond of union between teachers and for a higher standard of professional skill, but will admit their importance. They have been already tried in several States of the neighboring Republic with marked success. Their establishment in Ontario would, we have no doubt, be an era in our educational history. In the absence of better facilities for training teachers, they would to a certain extent compensate for the deficiency existing in this respect. Were this subject