

dated the 9th of February, 1860, allowing him to resign for the reason given, and another letter from the local superintendent, dated the 14th of March, 1860, consenting to his being released from his duties as school trustee.

Mr. Glass, however, took no notice of the writ of mandamus till he made his affidavit on the 4th of February, 1861, nor Mr. Cross till he made his affidavit on the 9th of February, 1861.

Mr. Gillespie did not appear to have taken any notice of either the mandamus or the rule nisi for attachment.

Crombie appeared for the defendant Glass. O'Hare for defendant Cross.

ROBINSON, C. J., delivered the judgment of the court.

Both Cross and Glass failed to pay due obedience to the writ by returning to the court the reasons which had prevented their doing what they had been directed to do. This may have arisen from their relying on the sufficiency of reasons, and not being advised of the steps which it was still incumbent on them to take.

As to them, therefore, we may discharge the rule nisi for attachment, on their paying the costs of the application.

As to the other defendant, Gillespie, we grant the attachment. We might have ordered a preematory mandamus, when no return had been made in due time to the first; but an attachment being moved for it is proper to grant it against the member of the corporation (Gillespie) who has been guilty of the contempt of wholly disobeying the mandamus, neither doing the act, nor manifesting any readiness to do so, nor assigning any cause for not doing it.

## VI. TEXT BOOKS IN OUR SCHOOLS.

(To the Editor of the Journal of Education.)

SIR,—Having had some experience as a Common School Teacher in Upper Canada, I presume to submit the following, trusting it may be deemed worthy of space in the columns of the *Journal of Education*. We have in this Province an admirable School System—one which is perhaps unrivalled. One of the requisites for availing ourselves of the privileges of such a system, is a series of text-books, containing matter calculated to aid the teachers in developing the different faculties of the youthful mind.

It is not my intention at present, to discuss the question on the propriety of changing the whole series of books used in our Common Schools; but to confine my remarks to one particular branch, (grammar,) and the text-books treating upon this subject, in use in our Common Schools. It may be said by some that, if teachers have a thorough knowledge of this subject, they can convey it to their pupils without the aid of books; but this might be said with greater propriety concerning other branches, upon which Text-books are extant which have proved of immense benefit to both teacher and pupils. The system of teaching certain branches without the aid of books, may answer well in some schools, but not be at all suitable to others. In a school in which there are several teachers, and in which the same teacher has charge of a single division only, certain branches may be efficiently taught without the aid of books. But to apply such a system to our Common Rural Schools, in which only one teacher is engaged, would be the height of folly. Where a teacher's mind is directed to a great many classes, and a diversity of subjects, it is extremely difficult for him, without any aid, to lead a class through the regular gradations essential to a scientific knowledge of such a complicated subject.

Another advantage of text-books is, they give pupils an opportunity for study, when not under the special direction of the teacher. By the aid of a proper text-book, I feel confident a teacher might produce better results without half the labour on his part, than by endeavouring to communicate orally. The time has come when grammar must be taught in all our schools, in fact it would be hard to find a School in the Province in which it is totally neglected. In many schools it is the pride of both teacher and pupils.

It has been remarked by some that the works upon the subject are already so numerous, that another is not to be desired; but if their name were legion, I would maintain that we still need another. We have no work which has been so much as designed by the author to suit the lower as well as the more advanced classes in our schools. The popularity of Murray ended with the reign of terror; but those who succeeded were superior in little, save the fancy of their admirers.

Murray was utterly unphilosophical, and so are all his disciples. He laid down a number of rules, some of them altogether absurd, which have been but slightly improved by being rewritten by other authors. His great error was in following the rules of the Latin Grammar, which was unphilosophical when applied to the language for which it was intended. English is not Latin, and it is altogether absurd to apply the Latin Grammar to a language so different from the one for which it was intended. Again, if we go to the classical languages for our authority, we imply that the science was then in a more perfect state than in modern times. If the science was

formerly perfect, why should we be dissatisfied with those authors who have given us works which are little more than mere translations? Authors have written works for the benefit of others who never had one clear idea of the subject of which they treated.

Absurdities have been taught for centuries gone by, which appear more difficult of conception than truth. If we wish for a philosophical system of grammar we must look forward for it, and not backwards. It must be a modern improvement. The Latin Grammar had been stereotyped long before the days of Murray, and was incapable of being adapted to modern English. Lennie, of the same school, has become unpopular. A thirst for something more philosophical has lately arisen, which is not at all likely to be quenched by the National Grammar, which appears to be universally despised and rejected. In fact I never saw it used as an authority in any school. As criticism is not my intention, I forbear to follow the list any further. My desire is to agitate the minds of those engaged in promoting the cause of education upon such an important branch of study. It is certainly time that the Schools of Upper Canada should be supplied with a suitable text-book upon a subject taught in all of them.

If the study of grammar is of no service farther than making us acquainted with a few technicalities and teaching us a few rules, the practical application of which we might otherwise learn, it is to be regretted that it is so extensively pursued. Such I believe to be the chief benefit arising from the study of it, as taught by those who follow the dictates of the majority of authors of works upon the subject. Error can never supply the place of truth. To receive absurdities in the place of philosophical ideas, must have a stupefying influence upon the mind. The great end for which the educator strives is not approached if the perception is not quickened. Information is far from being the principal advantage derived from pursuing a proper course of study.

It is a disputed point among educators at what age the study of grammar should be commenced; some recommend commencing very early, others object. Experience teaches that it cannot be applied to the understanding, till considerable mental discipline has been accomplished; and as there are other branches which may be taken up, much better calculated to develop the mental faculties at an early age, I think it imprudent to perplex children with such a difficult subject, before proper training has been accomplished. When children are far enough advanced to be taught grammar intellectually, they are capable of deriving advantage from the use of proper text-books upon the subject. I would not argue in favour of not commencing till pupils are capable of being made to understand the most difficult parts; but I believe it may be rendered distasteful by commencing too soon, or by taking it up too extensively for the comprehension. I am of opinion that it would be advantageous to have a work on the subject in two parts, the first being more simple and practical, and the second more philosophical. That something new is needed, must be beyond a doubt in the mind of every one who has visited our Common Schools extensively. There is a greater uniformity in the text-books upon almost every other subject.

The public mind is craving something new. We need something original—something boldly deviating from the authors of the old school; else it must sink to the same level.

It is a wonder to me that the subject has not been brought before some of our Teachers' Associations. The National Grammar has proved a failure,\* and still we have nothing to supply its place. The teachers of the Province are not in favour of introducing American works into our schools, and yet many of them have been driven to that expedient by their desire for a more philosophical work. Can we not have a work prepared expressly for Canadian Schools? Is it not time that the question was agitated? Must the teachers still use text-books replete with errors, and prepared for a by-gone age? There is no doubt that we might have a work practical in its nature and calculated not only to aid the teacher in instructing in the proper use of language, but also useful in assisting him to draw out the powers of the mind.

HAY, June 13th, 1861.

Yours, &c.,

A. McCULLERY.

## VII. Biographical Sketches.

### No. 14.—COUNT CAVOUR.

Camillo di' Cavour was born in Turin on the 14th day of July, 1809. His father was a large merchant, ennobled by Carlo Alberto, and left the young Cavour an ample fortune. About his twenty-fifth year Camillo paid a visit to England, whose prominent men and institutions proved so strong an attraction to a mind always

\* Our Correspondent seems to have overlooked Sullivan's Grammar, and Kirkham's Grammar, both authorized for use in our Public Schools. In regard to Robertson's Grammar, see Miller's advertisement at the end of this Journal. Mr. Lovell, the enterprising publisher, of Montreal, also publishes a Grammar by the Rev. J. G. Armstrong, M. A., Local Superintendent of West Hawkesbury.