

READING.

It is an admissible fact that reading is sadly neglected in most of our country schools. The error was long since set forth, that the higher the book the pupil is in, the better reader he is. False theory. There is no more truth in the supposition than there is wisdom in the thought that history is the highest grade of elocution. Parents, blinded by this "high reader" error, are ever ready for the announcement that their child is ready for a higher look and witness, with approval, his promotion. The result is readily seen. The child becomes a mere caller of words, not a reader. Are the teachers to blame? I answer for all they are not. Parents, you and only you are to blame. Blinded by the common error, you send your little ten years old with the fifth reader his brother a year older with Barnes' History and expect us to teach them. We cannot, not that we are incompetent but because the children are far above their standard. Surrounded with books far above the child's understanding, the object of your indignation if we turn him back, subjected to much criticism, if we do not place him a step higher during the term we teach, I ask you in plain words, "Are we to blame that your children are poor readers?" The average pupil has never heard of modulation, cannot even define reading, and articulation, much abused articulation, the very essence of good reading has been neglected,—his highest ambition, his only aim, a higher book—a fourth, a fifth, a sixth reader, a history, and he is a finished reader. Nonsense! Parents, strike the scales from your eyes, help us; we need your assistance. Buy us charts; let us say what books the children shall have. Let us teach them that the number of the book does not make the reader. Help us to show them that history is not the finished touch of reading. Sanction our turning the history and sixth reader classes back to the third reader and letting them read that lovely lesson, "Coals of Fire," or the second reader and read "Red Shoes." Far better readers they would be, pronouncing and articulating well in the third reader, than reading like the average pupil reads in a higher book. What would the author of Don Tulano think to hear the average scholar murdering that rare production? Does Mrs. Browning weep for "Little Ellie"? Does Tennyson shed tears over "Dora"? Are we teachers wrong to think? Oh, little immature minds why are you here, why are you reading the production of a mighty author the poetry of a grand poetess, the golden verses of a Laureate? When we of riper years can scarcely understand them. But the decree has gone forth (can it be withdrawn) that the book makes the reader? Parents, would that with the golden key of justice I could open your eyes to see the absurdity of this error. Really have you ever thought on the subject? Do your children read at home? Have them then to read the capture of Stony Point, see for yourselves their capabilities and judge accordingly. Do you know that your children do not know the grammatical pauses? No! I will tell you then plainly they do not. They have had no time to learn them, so eager have they been to get in a higher book that all the essentials of good reading have been neglected. If newspapers cannot be introduced into our schools, if some method cannot be found whereby reading can be simplified, I ask in favor of parents in ungraded country schools, ask it with the deepest regard for your feelings, will you help us?

Mr. Ezra Meeker, of Puyallup, W. T., a man for whose judgement we have the highest respect, thinks that it is possible to cure the agricultural stagnation of the times by legislation. A higher and more general protection is, in general terms, the plan proposed in his letter printed in Monday's Oregonian. Perhaps an application of protection would help out the particular industry, that of making sugar from beets, which Mr. Meeker employs as an illustration, but we cannot believe that agriculture, generally speaking, has anything to gain from protection. And for this reason,—that protection advances the cost of nearly everything the farmer has to buy and adds not a mill to the price of what he has to sell. Protection, by keeping up an artificial price for iron and articles made in whole or in part of iron, adds a large percent to the cost of farm machinery. Every article, from a garden rake to a threshing machine, is the dearest for protection. The freight rate on machinery from the place of manufacture to the field (a large item in a remote country like our own) is greater for protection, because protection adds to the cost of railroad. The same circumstance adds to the freight rate on farm products from the field to the place of market. Protection adds to the cost of the clothing worn by the farmer, to the furniture in his house, to much of the food on his table and to the books he reads. Protection makes the farmer pay an artificial price on the wire that binds his sheaves and the bags that holds his harvest. On the other hand, protection does not advance the price of any product he has to sell. Protection may help iron men furniture men and sugar growers, but it does not help the farmer, certainly not the farmer of Oregon and Washington who must buy in a protected market three thousand miles away and sell in a free market fifteen thousand miles away.—Oregonian.

DOUGLAS W. TAYLOR, of this city, has been appointed surveyor-general of Oregon to succeed Judge Tolman, who has held the position for eight years. The appointment is in all respects a fit one and will give general satisfaction. Mr. Taylor was the single Democrat elected last month to represent this county in the legislature. If he accepts the surveyor-generalship he will have to resign his legislative office, and in this event a special election must be held to choose a representative in his place.—Oregonian.

JIM BLAINE'S alleged "great speech" at Portland, Me., on "Home Rule," some few weeks ago did not have a very magnetic effect on the English voters—that is, if we are to judge by the returns. Blaine has the happy faculty of "putting his foot in it" whenever he opens his mouth.—World.

SALEM is playing her cards for a boom. The bridge has become a settled fact, the state fair will follow in due time and a strong effort is being made to have a woolen mill and fruit cannery started there. We hope these efforts will succeed. What benefits Salem in the way of manufacture will benefit the entire state. Location does not matter so much, but let us have industries.—Evening Telegram, Portland.

Gov. Steneman's call for an extra session of the California legislature, was due in a great measure to a memorial by more than two-thirds of the members of both houses of the legislature.

PROTECTION DOES NOT HELP THE FARMER

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NOTICE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT. In the County Court of the State of Oregon and for the County of Douglas.

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