

Do you wish to club the REVIEW with a paper that will give you the news of the week from Canada, the Empire and throughout the world, with other matter that will enable you to give an interest to your lessons on history, geography, literature, and especially to Canadian affairs and events? See the announcement elsewhere in this number.

THE need of a good dictionary is one so frequently felt by teachers that the prospect of obtaining one at a moderate figure will be warmly welcomed by many, who have not been able to afford the investment heretofore. The Standard Dictionary is known wherever English is spoken. By thousands it is considered the most complete English dictionary in the world, and by all it is admitted the equal of any ever published. The Publishers' Syndicate, Limited, of Toronto, makes in this issue a special and limited offer of this great work, in two volumes, at low figures, lower indeed, than ever before quoted. The announcement will repay perusal and careful consideration.

LORD ROBERTS' appeal to the people of the British empire not to give intoxicating drinks to the returning soldiers should be read in every school in Canada, and posted in large letters in every community. "I am proud," the commander-in-chief says, "to be able to record with the most absolute truth that the conduct of the army throughout has been exemplary. Not a single case of serious crime has been brought to my notice. The men bore themselves like heroes on the battlefield, and like gentlemen on all other occasions." Lord Roberts adds that he makes this appeal to the people because the giving of intoxicants to the soldiers when they were leaving for South Africa caused distressing and discreditable scenes; and the return home, it must be added, has caused, in too many cases, equally distressing and discreditable scenes.

#### Examiners and Examinations.

Dr. Waddell's criticisms in another column on the answers to questions in the recent examinations on botany, in Nova Scotia, should lead teachers to examine more closely their plans of teaching this and other natural science subjects. As he clearly points out, there can be no skill in comparison, no definite results in training, without accuracy of observation. It is this lack of definite results in training that has caused the study of botany, and indeed of all natural science subjects, to be spoken of slightly when compared with other subjects in the school course. But there is no subject that affords more opportunity to cultivate accuracy of observation, and the development of the reasoning powers, than does botany, or for that matter, any subject of natural science. That better results are not obtained is not the fault of the subject, but rather the way it is presented. The lack of training on the part of teachers, insufficient time, want of system in teaching such lessons, are formidable obstacles, but they can be surmounted.

Every teacher should attend to the careful preparation of a good plan of outline lessons; presenting points in such a way as to secure pupils' interest and create a desire to do original work; lead the pupil along step by step with clearly defined ends in view, instead of loose and disjointed lessons which begin and end nowhere; be satisfied to do a little at a time and thoroughly; avoid the error that looking at an object is examining it. If we add to this a desire to inspire children with a love of nature, a desire to have them possess a more intimate knowledge of it, the use of a few good books as reference, then we shall obtain better results from the study of botany and other branches of natural science.

We are glad that Dr. Waddell has taken teachers into his confidence and has shown them a better way to do things. Now, who will follow his example? We would like to ask the examiners in English, mathematics, history, classics, how the pupils of our public schools stand after a training of eight or ten years. Is the teaching as unsatisfactory in these subjects as it is in botany? If so, should not the defects be pointed out and a better way suggested? The REVIEW would be glad to give space for their suggestions. Teachers, if they are pursuing wrong or faulty methods, would like to be set right; and who is more capable of doing this than the examiners? They know, or should know, whether the essentials of any subject have been grasped by the students. They know whether our educational system, with its elaborate courses of study, fails to train; whether we are attempting too much or too little in fitting students for their life work. Let us then have honest criticisms and clearly defined suggestions from a class of educational workers who have it in their power to a great extent to make more efficient schools. Take us into your confidence, gentlemen, say the teachers and pupils, and we will be glad to work with you for better results.

Are examinations really necessary? Do they serve any useful purpose in our educational system? Are the results commensurate with the worry, danger, excitement, and the cramming process too frequently incidental to their preparation, especially among backward and delicate children? These questions we shall not discuss here. The written examination is a part of our educational machinery. It is with us, probably to stay. Properly used it is an undoubted advantage. But there should be fewer subjects for examination, abundance of time given to students to think and write, questions chosen that will discourage mere cram and memorizing, and finally there should be means of communication