

### The Inspector and the School.

The necessity of a careful and frequent inspection of schools is acknowledged by every one interested in educational work. In the settlement of disputes, which too often arise in districts, the tact and personal influence of the inspector usually are sufficient to adjust all differences and make things run smoothly. He finds awaiting his arrival in nearly every district some knotty problem, from trustees or teachers, which he is called upon to solve, and which frequently calls for the exercise of judgment, large experience, and considerable legal knowledge. Too often he is called upon to pay special visits to districts or to settle by correspondence points of variance. This taxes his leisure moments, so that with the making out of reports and other clerical work his position is not a sinecure.

But the most important work of the inspector is that done in contact with the teacher and the school. Here his influence is paramount to that exerted in any other direction. *The Westminster* (Toronto) puts this relation of the inspector to the teacher and the school so aptly that we quote the article:

"It is quite impossible for a teacher to deceive an alert and competent inspector, whether the latter takes the classes into his own hands or contents himself with observing the teacher's methods. The signs by which he is guided in forming a judgment are numerous, and long experience in noting them has made the task of estimation one of something like intuition.

"The inspector who finds pupils slovenly in personal attire, rude in speech or behaviour, or even brazen in look and defiant in bearing, not unjustly concludes that for some reason the influence exerted by the teacher is not of the right sort. All these defects may be primarily due to a defective home environment, but they may be, and should be, persistently and effectively corrected at school. Irregular attendance of pupils and frequent changes of teachers may obstruct the work of reform, but the experienced inspector can generally tell, as the result of a single visit to a particular school, whether the teacher is making the necessary effort to secure improvement, and why he fails if he does not succeed.

"With equal certainty he can discern from the mental condition of the pupil the character of the ordinary intellectual discipline of the school-room. The teacher who aims merely at filling his pupils with ready-made, second-hand information prepared by experts in suitable doses and done up in school manuals, betrays at once to the inspector the absurdity of his ideas and the faultiness of his methods. The memorized definition of a conventionally arranged class of things will no more deceive him than will fatal facility in determining members of a group by superficial remarks. He knows at once when a form of words denotes any real significance in the pupil's mind, and when it is simply the result of rote teaching. Above all, he can promptly detect the absence of that culture which the

practice of original observation alone can produce, and for which no adequate substitution can be found.

"The wise teacher will feel grateful to the keen sighted inspector who has the frankness to point out defects and the good sense to suggest the proper remedies. We know by observation, as well as experience, and the observation of others is often quite as helpful as our own. It is hard for a teacher to see his own defects. Having gone for a time in a rut he needs to be lifted out of it by some friendly and influential hand, if he is to escape the necessity of travelling forever in his own footsteps. Work that will not stand keen criticism and friendly suggestion is in great need of improvement."

### Pedagogy as a University Study.

Acadia University is about establishing, or re-establishing, we may say, a chair in pedagogy. Dalhousie has had a lectureship in this subject for years, and the New Brunswick University has been for some time considering the question. The increasing number of teachers seeking advancement in these institutions makes such a course exceedingly desirable. Universities had their origin largely in the desire to fit men to become teachers. For some centuries they lost sight of their first purpose. Now they are gradually coming back to their original design.

Dr. Trotter, president of Acadia, writes us as follows concerning the aim and scope of the proposed work at Acadia:

"With the opening of the second term of the college year, a course in pedagogy has been started at Acadia under the able instruction of Dr. A. W. Sawyer. The course for the present term is a provisional one, but it is expected that in June next the senate will incorporate this important department of instruction into the curriculum as a permanent provision.

"The lectures will be open to members of the junior and senior classes, and the full course, when established, will embrace an extended discussion of principles of education, and a wide study of the history of education. Dr. Sawyer's eminence in the department of psychology, and his pre-eminence as a teacher, will give exceptional value to his work in pedagogy.

"Candidates for the teaching profession, whether they are looking forward to the public school service or to teaching in other institutions, will appreciate the great advantages of a course such as this is to be. It is the hope of the authorities also that all students—young ladies, students for the ministry, and others—who are likely to be intrusted with the training of the young in the home or the church, will come to realize that pedagogy is for them, scarcely less than for teachers, a study of great value. A number of ministerial students are already registered for this work, together with a large class of prospective teachers."

I always like to see the REVIEW. It helps one to aim higher.  
M.