

CORRESPONDENCE.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of THE MONTHLY :

SIR,—An attack upon any class or individual, for the exercise of a privilege, the enjoyment of which in no way conflicts with the rights or privileges of any other class or individual, can only be characterized as unwarranted ; and every person, no matter what his condition, is certainly entitled to immunity from every form of attack, when such attack does not assure great and lasting benefits, not only to the aggressor, but, as far as may be possible, to the person or persons who, in the deprivation of an imagined privilege, may deem themselves ill-used.

Now while we are prepared to allow our fellow-citizens of all creeds all privileges enjoyed by ourself, while at the expense of no man's liberty do we desire to purchase the gratification of any passion, while we regard all liberties and privileges consistent with the preservation of society as of a sacred character, and as such not only deserving but demanding our lasting respect and unswerving support, we cannot class Separate Schools among those privileges so far removed from earth and things earthly, as to defy criticism. Rather do we deem them an abuse of such unfortunate character, that in speaking of them as a danger to our social and civil status, we believe we are using language intemperate only so far as it but weakly expresses their tendency. It is not merely an abuse affecting a small community or a few individuals ; it is an abuse affecting a nation ; an abuse colouring legislation, an abuse staining a page of what the future will call history.

The necessity for a school should be its foundation, and on no other

principle should it receive the support of the state. We do not believe this can well be refuted, and, unless it is in itself argument sufficiently strong to authorize the discontinuance of state support to Separate Schools.

Can it be proven that Separate Schools supply a better education than Public Schools ? Can it be proven that a horse with one leg can worst a horse in perfect condition and perfect freedom ?

Can it be proven that a man educated in a Separate School is better fitted for the business of life than a man educated in a Public School ? Can it be proven that this country would be better governed if our law-makers patronized none but club-footed barbers ? Can it be proven that Separate Schools are supported with less cost to the ratepayers than Public Schools ?

Some of the effects of the establishment of Separate Schools have come under our own eye. In one county in Ontario there have been the following changes made, and that these changes are for the worse is the unanimous verdict of Public and Separate School supporters alike : Three Public Schools were substantially closed through the formation of Separate Schools, and two others divided in such a way that the maintenance of the four schools thus formed is a most oppressive burden to the people, and the natural outcome of this will be the keeping open of the schools, Public and Separate, for a part of the year only, and during such period as the schools may be open inferior work will be done ; for a qualified teacher will not engage at the salaries they will pay.

In the sections where the Public Schools were closed, those parents not choosing to permit their children