

giving the Opposition equal credit for honesty of purpose, would it discharge its duty by meek acquiescence, or is it bound to use all the Parliamentary resources at its command to prevent the incorporation in the unwritten constitution of principles and precedents which it regards as fundamentally unsound and unjust, thus compelling the Government and its supporters to take the fullest responsibility? This seems to us to be the real question at issue.

A CABLEGRAM represents Prince Bismarck as ascribing many of the evils which afflict modern society to over-education. Disappointment and dissatisfaction in Germany, disaffection and conspiracy in Russia, are among its evil fruits, in the opinion of the great ex-Chancellor. Further, education is making pedantic theorists and visionaries, unfit for constitutional government. As Prince Bismarck no doubt believes in having the ruling classes educated, this means, we suppose, that education tends to unfit men to be subjects under constitutional government. Seeing that it also spoils them for subjects of despotic rule, as indicated in his reference to Russia, the case is a hard one indeed. There would seem to be no possibility of securing peace or good government in the future, save by putting a stop to this mischievous process of educating the masses. "What right have the common people to think, anyway?" we can almost fancy the irate ex-Chancellor exclaiming. "Have they not emperors and chancellors to think for them? Why should those who have to live by the labour of their hands have been endowed with brains at all?" But unhappily for princes of that way of thinking, the people now having got a taste of education, it would probably require some more rigid mode of repression than even the "man of iron" could devise to prevent the spread of the dangerous innovation. The long-pent waters are breaking forth, and the force of gravitation is proving irresistible. If Prince Bismarck is really saying the unwise things attributed to him by the correspondents, it was time for him to make way for a statesman less impervious to ideas. Even he was not strong enough to resist the tendencies of the age. It is worse than idle to suppose that the nations can be held forever in intellectual bondage, or that any system of government that is based upon the stolidity of ignorance can be perpetuated. To claim that universal education of itself tends to the destruction of the social order, is to libel humanity, and fly in the face of nature's great law of upward development. The men in office who find the task of ruling the State becoming more difficult as the people become more intelligent, should make way for statesmen wise enough to perceive that the régime suitable for childhood is altogether unfitted for sturdy adolescence. The cause of constitutional freedom in Germany has probably lost nothing and gained much by the exchange of a Bismarck for a Von Caprivi.

### THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

THE training schools for teachers communicate practical skill in the special work of those who educate the whole of the next generation during its most plastic stage of development, that is from the age of five to the age of thirteen years. The universities touch the intellectual and moral life of the nation at a few points of very great influence; the teachers' colleges and training schools touch it at a multitude of minor points that aggregate a vaster influence. University influence is largely indirect and reflex as regards the masses, while normal schools exercise their power almost directly by vitalising the educative force of the public school teachers who are in direct contact with the whole body of the people that will very shortly replace the present adult population of the country. Each institution has its own sphere; there is no antagonism; quite the reverse, for many of the most distinguished University graduates were first graduates of a normal college and there laid the foundation of their subsequent success in higher learning. Of the two, however, the training colleges are of greater practical necessity to the whole country. For a university training is practically the concern of the small minority who possess special advantages in the way of leisure, money, or unusual ability; but a good ordinary education is as necessary to every citizen of a civilized country as food or clothes are, and therefore a regular supply of well-trained elementary teachers is equally necessary.

Now the universities have fairly kept pace with the development of the country. They have found clever and fluent sons holding the highest positions in the country to advocate their claims on popular sympathy and support, while the Horace Manns and the Egerton Ryersons have but seldom arisen to urge the vast interests involved in the effective training of public school teachers. Rich bequests and splendid endowments have made many universities wealthy corporations, while on the other hand there is scarcely a single training college for teachers that has a really excellent outfit in the form of buildings, apparatus,

library, museum, gymnasium, laboratories, and well-appointed schools of practice. Normal schools have usually been the wards of the government and their support has been doled out to them less generously than that afforded to lunatic asylums and to criminal prisons.

The claims of the universities are not overstated even by their most enthusiastic friends; but the claims of the normal schools have rarely been stated at all. And yet the average citizen has a far greater personal interest at stake in these training schools than he has in the universities. Take Ontario for example. It has two normal schools, five training institutes, and fifty-eight county model schools which last year sent out 83 high school teachers and public school teachers of the first class, 442 public school teachers of the second class, and 1142 of the third class, besides 22 Kinder-garten teachers, making a total of 2687 teachers in one year. These figures give a glimpse of the work done by these institutions in this Province; and we may readily perceive how widely and rapidly their influence is diffused. These teachers are to-day nearly all engaged in our schools and the children of thousands of citizens have been committed to their care at the very age when children are most easily moulded for future success or failure. Thus every citizen has a personal and a very tender interest at stake in the intelligence, fidelity, and skill of these 2687 teachers, who in turn depend very much for their professional outfit on the training institutions they have attended.

Speaking for Ontario, the first and most obvious remark is that there is an enormous disproportion in the number of institutions provided for the training of the higher grades of teachers. We have only two normal schools for second class teachers and fifty-eight model schools for third class teachers. Is there much wonder that the great majority of our public school teachers are of the lowest grade? There are altogether nearly 9000 teachers in the Province, and these two normal schools even with the present short and unsatisfactory course cannot supply 450 teachers a year. If every teacher now in the schools should remain it would take these two normal schools about 20 years to train the whole staff of the Province. But there is an annual exodus of about 1000 teachers, some leaving the Province, and others entering better paid professions; thus it is not difficult to foresee that under our present arrangements the great majority of our schools must remain in charge of teachers who have only the minimum legal qualification. Translated into actual facts this means that the son and the grandson of the average citizen is to receive his public school education from the weakest teacher the State recognizes. Plainly we require to quadruple the capacity of our normal schools and send out at least 1000 second class teachers every year to keep pace with the increasing number of schools, and to overtake the shortcomings of our past management. Three new normal schools of larger capacity than the present institutions would not be more than sufficient to supply the requisite number of teachers for our public schools, and a beginning ought to be made without delay to provide better facilities for training teachers of the superior grades.

The second remark to be made is that the present courses of training are entirely too short to be of any permanent benefit to the teachers. Of the numbers previously quoted, the teachers of the lowest grade as well as the 83 of the highest received last autumn nothing more than the weak tincture of professional training that resulted from less than three months' attendance. Nominally they have passed into the ranks as trained teachers, but in reality their training was not more than fairly commenced before they were duly licensed to experiment on the pupils of our schools. Even if we suppose that each of these young persons was born with all the natural endowments of a successful teacher, it must have been impossible for them to acquire much of the spirit of their profession, or much skill in the art of teaching in a single term of ten or twelve weeks. It takes longer than that to learn the art of making a barrel; and even an empirical knowledge of the ordinary maxims of educational science cannot be gained by the most gifted student in the short space of three months. But even the teachers of the second class attended the normal schools only about five months, in other words they left these institutions almost as soon as they had fairly begun to receive permanent benefit from the training that a well-conducted normal school can certainly bestow. So it comes to pass that these fortunate persons have received life-certificates as public school teachers after a shorter course of training than is required to qualify the second engineer of a freight boat on our lakes. Need we be surprised to learn that these young people accept paltry salaries, thus dragging down the whole standard of salaries, and in a year or two drift off in the great annual exodus? If they had spent a year or two in acquiring a thorough training, would they not have imbibed along with it something of pride and delight in the work of education; would they not have been more likely to aim at still higher attainments; and not so likely to use the school-room as an intermediate step on their way to some other destination? If doctors and dentists were licensed to practice on such easy conditions, is it not certain that the ranks of these professions would be overcrowded with incompetent persons who would offer their services for whatever they could get, who would desert as soon as they could earn a few dollars more in some other occupation? The public would receive poor service for which they would pay very dearly. The parallel is perfect.

The third remark to be made is that the machinery already provided for training teachers is not worked to anything like its full capacity. It has proved remarkably efficient considering the bad conditions under which it has been operated. It has never been allowed the opportunity to complete more than a small part of the work it is capable of performing in raising the general standard of elementary teaching. The students have been systematically withdrawn before they have more than just begun to experience the proper effect of a good training institution. If the period of attendance were doubled the effect of the training would be almost quadrupled, for the students would acquire more practical skill in the closing months of their probation than in all the preceding part of their course. In all educational results the element of time is a very important factor, and this factor seems conspicuously lacking in all our training schools as they are now operated. The county model schools are closed the greater part of the year; the training institutes are open for a still shorter period; and the normal schools give a short course which extends over a little more than four months for each class. We are simply marking time so far as progress in elementary education is concerned, and perhaps labouring under the delusion that we are marching rapidly forward. No manufacturer would provide expensive machinery and then run it on half time; he would keep every wheel in motion night and day, and work it up to its full capacity. The expense of turning our present machinery for training teachers to better account would not be any valid objection even if it were large. But it need not be more than a trifle compared with the capital already invested in these schools. Two more masters in each of the normal schools would enable them to handle double the number of students they now accommodate, and thus carry on a primary and a senior class, as easily as they now carry on a single one. The effect would be to double the period of attendance and greatly to improve the quality of the training in many essential particulars. A master of methods and lecturer on the history of education, etc., at each of the collegiate institutes now employed as training schools would enable them to extend the term of attendance to ten months instead of ten weeks, without producing as much interference with the work of the regular staffs as now exists, and at the same time the value of the training given would be greatly enhanced. A small additional grant to each of the county model schools, sufficient to provide one assistant teacher, would enable them to pursue their work the year round. The actual experience of the city model schools in Hamilton and Toronto is quite sufficient to prove the truth of this position, and the excellence of the public schools in these cities is merely an example of what might be accomplished for the whole Province by a little intelligent liberality to the training schools.

The last observation is that there is a splendid opening in connection with these training schools for some patriotic and wealthy person to found scholarships and bursaries for the benefit of struggling students. Some large-hearted man would leave behind him an imperishable monument to his memory by devoting \$100,000 to form the nucleus of a fund to be loaned without interest for the purpose of enabling needy students to secure the best available training to fit them for thoroughly scientific work in the elementary schools of the Province. If all our teachers were put through a vigorous course of training before entering on their work, we should no longer see more than 1000 public school teachers annually leaving the school-rooms to be succeeded by 1000 raw recruits who can only by courtesy be called teachers. Let us never forget that "*the teacher is the School.*"

PROGRESS.

### LONDON LETTER.

I THINK it must have been at All Hallows the Great where, according to Dickens, the tower bells hummed as the train rushed by above the roof. For close to the graveyard blooming with yellow and red and white tulips, only for the sake, apparently, of the clerks poring over their books in the counting-house yonder, stand the black buildings of Cannon Street railway. A green square and a cheerful, set as a gem between church and river and echoing with all manner of noise and bustle from Thames street, is this small cemetery in the Whittington region. A very Life-in-Death the little court is bright with gay tulips blossoming against decaying headstones, and fresh with the fluttering leaves of the twisted figtree and strippling planes set by the gravel path and near to the vestry windows, so bright and so fresh that the contrast between church and churchyard is very great. Outside, there are flowers, sunshine, never-ending movement. Within, a hopeless, hideous melancholy had settled on the colourless aisle, the carved pulpit and altar and family pews, a melancholy of so singular a nature that nowhere will you find the like.

A year ago it was definitely arranged that as All Hallows was unhealthy no more services should be held here, so the last congregation trooped out in May, 1889 (you can tell the hymns they sang if you look at the numbered board still hanging near the choir seats), and since then the bells have been silent. To-day the air of the church is thick with the dust of the dead. Many of the crumbling pavement stones are displaced, and along your perilous way up the aisle there are chasms to clear in which lie bones, and bones, and bones. Everywhere, on the wings of the flapping oak eagle flying from the screen that runs across the centre of the church, on the ledges of the seats, on the beautiful canopied pulpit and clerk's