

federation, that the result depends almost entirely upon the final action of Victoria. Upon the whole the indications are that the friends of the latter will decide in favor of federation.

It is always encouraging to us to hear that our efforts to furnish the teachers of the Dominion with a thoroughly practical and helpful paper meet the approval of intelligent patrons. This is what one occupying an important position in an Ontario institution writes anent the number for June 11th:

"Allow me to state my warm appreciation of last week's JOURNAL. It is full of matter which is vastly interesting, and worth gold to the practical teacher. In my opinion last week's number alone is worth the subscription."

We reprint in another column an article by a Western Superintendent on "The Ungrammatical Speech of Teachers." Much of the article is inapplicable, we hope, to the average Canadian teacher. Some of the solecisms and murders described are so flagrant that it is hard to conceive how any one guilty of them could manage to come into possession of a teacher's certificate. But there are others, such, for example, as the use of the word "can" for "may," which are without doubt quite too common. We learn our native language by the ear and by imitation. Early habits of speech are deep-rooted, and it is no reproach to say that very many members of the profession amongst us had not in childhood the privilege of associating only with those whose utterances were models of correctness and elegance. It is very desirable for the sake of our good mother tongue that no pains should be spared in correcting gross errors and teaching pupils to avoid them. Language lessons both oral and written should have a large place on every school programme. If a good deal of the time often spent in learning dry grammatical formulas was devoted to practical exercise in the use of language, it would be better for all concerned.

#### THE NEW TRAINING INSTITUTES.

We are sorry to see it announced that the Education Department has "all but completed arrangements for opening training institutes for assistant masters of High Schools, and for first-class teachers," and that consequently it will be necessary "for graduates who wish to teach in a High School to take a course at one of those institutes, before they can legally be employed as teachers." This is demonstrably making progress backwards. At a time when teaching is coming to be recognized more and more as a science, worthy of the highest rank in the curricula of the best universities, and demanding the undivided attention of the ablest professors, the Ontario Department of Education is treating it as a mere perfunctory art which may be taught as an appendage to the arduous and exhaustive duties of High School masters. It is far from a reproach to those masters to say that the management and discipline of a High School, in addition to the large amount of difficult teaching which usually falls to their lot, are enough to exhaust the energies of the ablest in the Province. In like manner the man, no matter what his ability and scholarship, who studies aright the philosophy of teaching, and prepares himself to give competent instruction in its practice, will have little time left for managing a High School, or teaching a dozen

of its classes. The absurdity of supposing that any one High School master can perform at once both these arduous and incompatible duties with any tolerable degree of efficiency, is unreasonable and absurd. To ask, or even permit, any one to attempt it is a blunder, which no Minister of Education should perpetrate. If pedagogy is not worth being taught as a science, by a specialist devoting his whole time and brains to the work, it is not worth being taught at all.

If the aim is simply to give the graduate who is preparing to teach, a little preliminary practice in his profession, the game is not worth the candle. It is merely requiring him to waste a few weeks of months of time. The practice he would have in the same space of time as actual master or assistant, under the full responsibilities of office, would be of much greater assistance and value. He might just as well experiment on the one set of pupils as the other. To say that he will be improved by observing the practice of a successful teacher is puerile, for almost every graduate has already passed through an efficient High School, and had the advantage of a full course of Collegiate instruction to boot.

Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well. These cheap economies usually turn out wasteful extravagances. A few months under the instruction of one or more able professors, who had made the science and art of teaching a study, and whose whole energies were devoted to the work of normal training would doubtless be of great value to young men preparing to teach. The same amount of time spent under the nominal instruction of those whose thoughts and energies are wholly pre-occupied with other exhausting duties, will prove a simple waste of time and money.

#### THE COUNTRY COLLEGE.

It has of late become fashionable in certain educated circles to disparage the Country Colleges as "one-horse" affairs, rather impeding than promoting the grand march of University education. The opinion is often freely expressed in high quarters amongst us in Ontario, that the Province is not able to sustain more than one University, and it is more than hinted that if in some way all the independent colleges could be merged into one great central teaching institution the cause of higher education would be greatly benefitted. To this view we most decidedly demur. While we are inclined to think that important advantages would be gained by a real federation of Ontario Colleges, on such equal terms as would stimulate the life and growth of each, we should consider the destruction or absorption of any one of the Arts Colleges as an educational calamity.

The Country Colleges are essentially an American institution. While many of them, by their undue pretensions and indiscriminate bestowal of degrees and titles have exposed themselves to deserved ridicule, it is nevertheless, we believe, true, that they have done a work for education in the United States such as would never have been accomplished by a few great central institutions. They have raised the level of intelligence, created a thirst for higher education, woven bonds of good fellowship, and laid the foundations of high moral character all over the union.