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ADDRESS—

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TORONTO, JANUARY 21, 1886.

MR. MILNER, in his essay on the "Culture of the Imagination," animadverts rather strongly upon those who use such expressions as "Education Department," "Toronto University," and so on, where a noun which, in the expanded phrase, is governed by "of," and so is a part of an adjective phrase (we are tripping, we suppose—should we say *adjectival* phrase?) is made to stand before another noun and alone do the duty of an adjective. With due respect to purists—and let us be thankful that there are such, for we newspaper men (there we are again! *newspaporial* men, we have heard said, but we prefer our own old solecism to that one) should go sadly astray were it not for their restraining and correcting hands—with due respect to purists, we say, we rather like these expressions and fancy they are not wholly barbarous. We ourselves always say "education system," and the corresponding concept is to us something quite different from that of "educational system," or even of "system of education." These latter expressions are, in our mind, nearly identical—

the first of them, however, being usually restricted to the processes of education, the latter usually so, but not always; but "education system" is always used to denote an organized system of instruction as it is administered by a government.

THE use of nouns for adjectives, though properly enough objected to by grammarians, is the commonest thing in conversation and by no means rare in the writings of the very best authors. Given a noun, and a necessity for using an adjective corresponding to it, there is no way, no general way, of forming the adjective, and the result is that the noun form is used for the adjective. People are not content to use the roundabout, but undoubtedly more grammatical, phraseology of the adjectival phrase. For example, in Mr. Milner's essay, he, with all the rest of the world, says, "business men," though in no dictionary will he find "business" defined as an adjective; and though, too, "men of business" is a perfectly grammatical expression, whose meaning is the precise one needed. So, too, he says, "schoolroom jars," and "map geography," and "schoolroom journeys," and "laboratory work;" yet none of the words used here as adjectives are to be found defined as adjectives, and in every case moreover a correct, though longer, phrase can be easily formed. So, too, in the very sentence in which Mr. Milner somewhat unthinkingly, it seems to us, derides the expressions, "Education Department," and "Toronto University," and even calls them "detestable," he says "newspaper phraseology," for the "phraseology of newspapers," or "phraseology of editors." "Newspaper" is not to be found defined as an adjective and its use as such is just as objectionable as the use of "education" as an adjective.

THE truth is that these "flat" constructions, as they are called, are indigenous to our English speech, and indeed to all Teutonic languages, while the "phrasal" forms of construction, of which "Department of Education" is an example, are foreign—being borrowed from the French. We say "war department," the French, "department of war," and the Germans, "war's department," a flexional form. We say "education department," the French, "department of education," and the Germans, if we remember rightly, "education's department." But the Germans very often drop the inflectional termination, and run their

words together, and so make compounds where we use constructions; for example, where we say "railway carriage"—a "flat" construction—two words—they say "eisenbahnwagen," literally, "ironroadwagon"; and where we say "part of the world" they say "welttheil," literally, "worldpart." With them the tendency is to form compounds, with us the tendency is to use "flat" constructions, that is, un-united compounds; e.g., Browning's "sphere music" for "music of the spheres." With us a flat construction must come into very common use before it becomes a compound word written with a hyphen; and again, this compound word remains for a long time in a state of transition or "probation" before finally the hyphen is dropped and it is fully admitted into the language as one word. For example, "schoolmaster," now universally written as one word, was once "school master," and even now in most dictionaries it is given as "school-master." We repeat, the tendency in English is to discard "phrasal" constructions and to use "flat" syntax, but in Germany the flat syntax has been discarded for compound words which are often of eight or ten syllables. We may say, moreover, that the tendency to use flat constructions instead of phrasal forms, that is, such forms as "Education Department" instead of "Department of Education" is somewhat stronger on this continent than in England; for there is a disposition among American authors to form new and unusual flat constructions, but it must be acknowledged that these constructions are in full accordance with the genius of the language.

VERY great and general regret is felt that President Cleveland did not, in his message at the opening of Congress, refer to the alarming illiteracy of the poor people of the Southern States, both white and negro, and urge upon Congress the necessity of its bestirring itself to protect the nation from the danger of its densely ignorant voting population, whose vast number is fearfully ominous to the national weal. In fourteen States there are more than 3,530,000 over ten years of age who cannot read or write, and more than 3,000,000 children who are destitute of all school advantages. It is argued that the nation should consider these its wards, and provide them at least with some little means of instruction.