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Editorials.

N a recent address to university students, Hon. G. W. Ross deplores the use on their part of so many slang phrases and inaccurate expressions. No one who has heard the ex-premier speak can doubt for a moment that he is thoroughly in earnest in what he says on the subject, and that his own language qualifies him to make remarks on that of others. There are few men in public life in Canada, among them Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who can compare with Dr. Ross, for felicity of expression and precision in diction. Combined with these qualities is an ease in speech which at once relieves any strain on the listener and commands his attention.

The emphasis of his speech, however, was not put on the importance of accurate enunciation in public address, but upon the need for improvement in everyday conversation. We believe that this touches upon one of the great defects in Canadian education, from home-life through public and high schools to our universities. Correct speaking ought to be one acquisition, at least, of the university graduate.

Yet, our general conversation deservedly comes under censure. We are content with such a slip-shod, indistinct, unfinished speech that makes us at times nearly unintelligible even to some of our own people. Form, as a rule, is not a thing that is emphasized at Queen's, but form in speech, is a factor that no amount of brilliance of idea, or importance of subject, will altogether set aside as unnecessary. Perhaps the trend of our life is one of the chief causes of our deficiencies in these respects. There is a certain air of haste, a mildly reckless desire to be doing something and to be done with it, without the balance which considers the importance of doing a thing well. As a result perhaps we are poor speakers, and naturally enough, poor listeners. It is very doubtful if we gain anything by our haste, or if we are able to overtake as much work with as great ease as the educated classes of the United Kingdom for example. Many business men of Kingston could give examples daily, of arrangements going wrong through inaccurate and careless expres-