

prevails largely in the leading European universities, and which leads to most encouraging results.

Such are some of the aspects under which the study of French may be considered. There is much more that might be discussed did space permit; but, granted that French is a useful

subject of study, which probably no one doubts in these days, those who teach it must remember that if their teaching is to be a success, they must take care to have an ideal sufficiently high to avoid the failure of those who can succeed in killing even a living language.

## THE PROBATION OF THE TEACHER.

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IT is a little too late in the day for any one to think of advancing arguments in favour of a Normal School training for those who propose to assume the charge of a school for a longer or shorter period of their lives; and more particularly is this the case when one is addressing a constituency like Ontario, where the Normal School system introduced by Dr. Ryerson has been further developed by the organization of Model Schools in every section of the country. But all the provinces of Canada are not so far advanced in this respect as is the province of Ontario. They have their Normal Schools, it is true, but some of them still suffer their elementary schools to remain in the hands of untrained teachers; and as *THE MONTHLY*, in its extending influence, finds its way now to every province of our common country, it may not appear altogether out of place, while reference is being made in its columns to the probation of the teacher, to reassert how necessary it is that every teacher should pass through a period of preliminary training for the work he proposes to undertake.

The Normal School is the first pledge of the New Education; and those who have witnessed how time and energy are often wasted in school by a young teacher from lack of skill

and experience need not go far to find the strongest argument in favour of such an institution. A machinist has to serve an apprenticeship of five or six years before he can be legally recognized as being competent to build a machine, or to take charge of it when it has been built; and, however some of us may shrug our shoulders at argument by analogy and its uncertainties, we cannot, in this instance, escape the inference that a preliminary professional training is much more necessary for those who have to deal, not with machines, but with human organisms—with those complex mental activities which are ever provoking in the child mental development or retarding it. The argument is conclusive even when no greater complexity of skill is demanded of the teacher than the mere tact to conduct a school with the usual attention to discipline and order; and who will say that it does not become irresistible when the responsibility of mind acting upon mind during the process of school-work is duly taken into consideration? Yet no argument, however strong, is unassailable. Even at the present time in some parts of Canada, men are to be found declaiming against Normal Schools and their expense. These men maintain that there is no necessity for such institu-