

plete arts and science courses for women. In other words, to our shame be it spoken, the new department is the only Ladies' College in Canada which is equipped for a full university course. Nowhere else in the Dominion can a class of young women proceed to a degree in Science, or the Arts, under the instruction of a competent staff of professors, without availing themselves of the privilege—in Toronto at least, somewhat ungraciously accorded—of attending lectures primarily adapted and intended for young men alone.

We are not discussing the vexed question of co-education. We have no words but those of commendation for the young women who have by their praiseworthy persistence compelled the opening of the doors of both Arts and Medical Colleges to the moiety of the race which they represent. We are not even expressing an opinion as to whether the fact that the courses in the existing Universities have all and always been arranged by men and for men, renders them less perfectly suited to the wants of woman's mind and life. We are simply stating the well known fact that at present the majority of young women ambitious of a University course, and the majority of the parents and guardians of such young women as well, prefer separate classes, and congratulating them that, in one institution in Canada, such classes are at last available. Nor are we greatly troubled to know that the new institution, for such it virtually is, is not perfect in all its appointments at the outset. It is the nature of living institutions to grow, when once well rooted.

The special courses, examinations and certificates, of Toronto University are a step in the right direction. We wish the movement all success. But so long as it is true, as Mr. Houston admits, that there is a deficiency in the provision for effective instruction these cannot do the work of the Specialized Colleges we have in mind. Living, whole-souled teachers, enthusiastic in their special work, and knowing how to arouse enthusiasm in their students, are the very essence of such colleges. We were not advocating the payment of such from public funds. We have large faith in the voluntary principle in higher education. Nor do we care to see all our machinery for higher education made parts of one colossal institution. We believe in variety, in competition, in freedom for the play of individuality, and the development of a natural and healthful originality in courses of study and methods of instruction. Our cry would be "save us from the country with a single set of books, and a single University College." We believe still that there is a wide gate, and a broad field before the men who shall first establish and operate efficient Specialized Colleges such as we have indicated.

GOVERNMENT BOOK-MAKING.

The deed is done. The Minister of Education has been sustained by the Legislature, and has now *carte blanche* to carry out his mischievous text-book policy. It cannot be that teachers and parents fully realize the grave nature of the educational crisis through which we are passing. By one turn of the lever the responsible hand of one man has put a stop to the

educational progress of the province. Worse than that, he has reversed the motion of the engine. He has inaugurated a policy which, if not checked, will inevitably put the whole system upon the backward and downward grade.

Why Mr. Ross should have so rashly committed himself to the project of a single set of Government-made text-books for the whole province, we cannot conjecture. The act seems little short of infatuation. The system is by no means new or original. It has been tried and found wanting in some of the most progressive states of the American Union. It has been proposed in others only to be vehemently denounced and condemned by the foremost educators. Virginia adopted it in 1874 at an expense of half a million of dollars, only to repeal it in 1877. Vermont tried the same experiment with the same costly and mischievous result. When the scheme was proposed in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maine, Missouri and other states, such eminent educationists as Hon. J. P. Wickersham, of the first-named, and Hon. Ira Divoll, of the last-named state, were unsparing in their opposition. In fact, a host of prominent educators all over the Union met the scheme in its inception and defeated it with arguments of crushing force.

We have already pointed out many but by no means all the weighty objections to the policy as now established in Ontario.

It takes the choice of text-books out of the hands of the proper authorities, and those best qualified to judge, viz:—the teachers and school boards.

It creates great monopolies under Government patronage.

It violates the fundamental laws of freedom and competition in book manufacturing.

It tends directly away from self-government and towards bureaucracy.

It discourages independent investigation and authorship amongst teachers.

It opens a wide door for official favouritism.

It paves the way for the corruption and abuse of power which almost inevitably creep into great monopolies under official control.

It makes a rapid deterioration in the character of our school books a moral certainty. No government ever did or ever can secure first-class text-books by manufacturing them.

In addition to all this have parents and teachers ever reckoned the immense cost of throwing aside the books now in use, and replacing them with the new series? We ask them to do so. The readers are already forthcoming. Geographies, grammars, history, etc., are we believe, under way. To carry out the system of Government copyright means to go through the whole series from bottom to top. There is no other way of doing it. The sum total of expense is appalling. And then it must not be forgotten that it is about as certain as reason and experience can make it, that the whole set will have to be changed again within five years. It is impossible that the books made by unskilled officials and amateurs can stand in the competition with the productions of the most learned and skilful experts in every department of literature and science. We make the prophesy, bold as it may seem, with confidence. The proof will be forthcoming from time to time, for this text-book question is incomparably the most important educational question now before the people of Ontario. Do thoughtful teachers endorse the new policy? We invite free expression of opinion.