

THE WEEK.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26th, 1892.

Ninth Year.
Vol. IX., No. 13.

\$3.00 per Annum.
Single Copies, 10 Cents.

THE WEEK:

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND ART

TERMS:—One year, \$3.00; eight months, \$2.00; four months, \$1.00. Subscriptions payable in advance. Subscribers in Great Britain and Ireland supplied, postage prepaid, on terms following:—One year, 12s. stg.; half-year, 6s. stg. Remittances by P.O. order or draft should be made payable and addressed to the Publisher.

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European Agents—SMITH, AINSLIE & Co., 25 Newcastle Street, Strand, London.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
Injustice to Women Teachers	195
"Pass" and "Honour" Courses	195
The Ontario Government	195
Conditions of Female Labour	196
The Truancy Act	196
The Franchise Act	196
Judge Jette's Report	196
The Reciprocity Negotiations	196
The Irish Government Bill	197
The Starving Russians	197
PROFESSOR WORKMAN'S CASE—II	197
PARIS LETTER	198
THE FEUD. (Poem)	198
MR. GRAY'S STRANGE STORY	198
MRS. JAMESON ON SHAKESPEARE AND THE COLLIER EMENDATIONS—I.	200
A WINTER ROUNDUP	201
THE RAMBLER	201
CANADIAN HISTORY	202
FIRST GRIEF. (Poem)	202
ART NOTES	202
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	202
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	203
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	204
PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED	204
READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE	205
SCIENTIFIC AND SANITARY	206
CHESS	207

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THE virtual refusal of the Toronto Public School Board to grant the very reasonable request of the women teachers of the city for an increase in the scale of their salaries is greatly to be regretted. It is, in the first place, a denial of simple justice. In order to make this clear it is not necessary to take the ground, which many whose opinions are as well worthy of consideration as those of others are prepared to take, that the value of the service rendered is the only thing to be taken into the account in determining the question of remuneration. That is a somewhat complicated question and one in regard to which there may be room for difference of opinion. But in this case the discrepancy is so glaring that it seems impossible to defend it on any principle except that which may be pleaded in defence of the grossest oppression of the employed that has ever existed, viz., that the just price of labour is the smallest sum which the necessities of those who live by labour may compel them to accept. It is almost inconceivable that a rule under which the highest salary which a woman can get, at the maturity of her powers and after long years of experience and successful service, is less than that to which the rawest young man is entitled at the very outset of his career, can be regarded by any fairminded person as otherwise than grossly unjust. The only ground on which such discrimination could possibly be defended would be that the service rendered by the women teachers is distinctly inferior to that of men. This will not be seriously maintained by many. The observation and experience of every intelligent citizen would contradict it. Efficiency in the teaching profession depends upon the possession of mental and moral qualities and of a degree of culture and experience which are quite independent of sex. But if it were otherwise, if it could be shown that a man is invariably, or even as a rule, so superior to the woman as to justify the broad difference in the scale of salaries, the fact would be very far from a vindication of the Board's method. It would simply prove that the Board, in employing inferior teachers for the sake of the comparatively small pecuniary saving effected, were violating at the same time a fundamental educational canon and a sound principle of political economy. It is doubtful if in any case whatever it is not an economical

mistake to employ inferior workmen because they can be had for smaller wages than the competent and skilful. But, whatever may be the fact in regard to other occupations, it is demonstrable that the employment of inferior teachers for our public schools, because of their cheapness, is much more than an economic mistake, it is an educational heresy and a crime against the welfare of the children, and of the State of which they are one day to become the moulders and representatives. Surely there is not an intelligent parent in the city who would accept such a plea as that of inferiority as an excuse for the starvation salaries now forced upon the women teachers. And surely it should not be too much to expect that those who are chosen out of the body of citizens and honoured with the position of school trustees because of their supposed superior intelligence and fitness in other respects for the duties of that high position, should be the leaders and educators of their fellow-citizens in such matters, rather than behind them in appreciation of elementary educational principles. A substantial increase in the salaries of women teachers would mean an improvement in the class of candidates entering the profession, an increase in the number of those entering it as a life work, and a corresponding gain in the quality of the work done in the public schools, such as can be brought about in no other way. For all this the School Board should be held responsible. That would be a strange and unworthy parent, indeed, who would not cheerfully endorse an increase in the school rates for the sake of securing the best possible teachers for his children in the schools, even at the cost of increased economy or self-denial in some other direction. We do not know that the hint is at all necessary, but it may not be amiss to point out that better salaries for women in the profession are as desirable in the interests of the men as of the women teachers, as one of the most powerful hindrances to the elevation of the profession in point of dignity and of emolument is the small-salary competition which is forced upon the women by the present conditions.

AN interesting discussion has for some time been going on in the newspapers and in educational circles, touching the so-called "pass" and "honour" courses of the University of Toronto. The question is not only interesting but highly important. For some reason the "pass" course has long since come to have associated with it an idea of inferiority which should by no means belong to it. It has come to be regarded in university circles as an easy path to a university degree, and so suited only for intellectual weaklings, or for students wanting in the noble ambition and manly pluck necessary to success in the "honour" courses. This is, from an educational point of view, much to be regretted. Most educators will agree that, as a preparation for the actual work of life, as well as on the higher ground of an all-round, symmetrical culture, a good general course, embracing a tolerably thorough grounding in the principles of each of the great departments of ordinary university work, is preferable to a proficiency in one or two departments that can be attained only by the comparative neglect of other subjects equally essential to a liberal education. So far as we can discover, the disparagement of the broader course in connection with Toronto University is due partly to defects in the subjects and arrangement of the "pass" course hitherto prescribed, but chiefly to the low standard of attainment insisted on for students of this course. Be that as it may, certain of the less conservative members of the University Senate, backed by other educators equally impressed with the need of reform in this particular, have been striving for years, with very indifferent success, to raise the standard in the "pass" course, and to do away with the notion of inferiority connoted by that term. In order to this they wisely propose, as a necessary preliminary, that the words "general" and "special" should be substituted for those hitherto used, both as a means of ridding the former of the old association and as more correctly distinguishing the two courses. It is also proposed, as a *sine qua non* of the much needed reform, that the general course be carefully revised, amended and extended so far as may be necessary to make it complete and symmetrical. But that which is rightly insisted on as the one indispensable condition of

raising this course to its proper level, as on a par with any of the special courses, is the rigorous application of at least a fifty per cent. standard in the examinations, instead of the ridiculously low standard of thirty-three per cent., to which the original twenty-five, deemed sufficient until recently, has, we believe, been advanced. If it be true as we have seen somewhere stated that even with the present low standard fifty per cent. of the "pass" candidates fail, the fact is but an additional proof of the low level to which the general course has been allowed to fall. The need of such changes as those proposed is so obvious that it is surprising that there should have been any difficulty in securing them, much more that a seemingly active opposition should have been offered. Certainly the tendency to specialization does not need to be stimulated by exceptional inducements or discriminations, nor, so long as the honour work is not superadded to that of the general courses, but substituted for a part of it, can the superiority of the "honour" courses be regarded as self-evident. We do not see how any thoughtful educator can doubt that the true interests of higher education will be best served by raising the general course to a par with the special courses, thus making it equally attractive to clever and ambitious students.

HOW far are the friends of the present Ontario Government justified in claiming that it stands forth as at least one shining exception to the rule in Canadian politics, that a long lease of power leads to maladministration and corruption, under the party system. Mr. Mowat has now been for about twenty years at the head of affairs in Ontario. It is claimed that during all that period no corrupt transaction can be brought home to the Government of which he has been leader; that the legislation of the period has been uniformly courageous yet sound and cautious, and that the administration of the finances has been able and economical. Certain it is that, in comparison, or as we might say, in contrast with the state of affairs that has come to light at Ottawa and at Quebec, the conduct of public affairs in this Province has been admirable. Comparison of its financial condition with that of any of its sister Provinces at the present moment also points to a similar conclusion, though the justice of such a conclusion is strenuously denied by hostile financial critics. But of that in another connection. For the present we confine our attention to the question of purity of administration. The Administration has not certainly been free from serious imputations upon its honour, though these are fewer and less grave than those constantly hurled against the Ottawa and Quebec Governments. The gravest, so far as we can remember, have almost invariably been connected in some way with the licensing system, and the relations between the Government and the license holders. The imputations are of two kinds, relating respectively to alleged undue influence in compelling license-holders to vote for the Government and in compelling them to contribute freely to the party funds. These charges have often been made and have never been very satisfactorily answered, possibly because of the difficulty of proving a negative, or indeed proving anything when the only persons who are in a position to testify are dependent for their means of support upon the good-will of the Government. Still it does not argue very great faith in the genuineness of the charges, on the part of the Opposition, that they have never, we believe, demanded a committee of investigation. The strongest and most direct charge yet made was that formulated a few weeks since by the *Empire* newspaper and since reiterated over the signature of the person upon whom undue pressure for a contribution to the party election funds is said to have been put. The statements made are certainly direct and strong and the answer given by the *Globe* cannot be said to have been wholly satisfactory. If conscious of innocence the Government will, we should think, rather court investigation by a competent committee, and if the *Empire* and those for whom it speaks are in earnest they can scarcely refrain from demanding a committee of investigation. To refuse such a demand would be considered almost a confession of guilt on the part of the Government. It can hardly afford, in any case, to let such accusations go unanswered, and all those