

# The Educational Journal

CONSOLIDATING

"The Educational Weekly" and "The Canada School Journal."

Subscription, \$1.50 a year  
in Advance.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 15, 1895.

Vol. VIII.  
No. 19.

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## Editorial Notes.

MAY we once more remind the secretaries of the Teachers' Institutes that they will do us a special favor by giving us as early notice as possible of the dates and places of meeting of their respective Institutes?

To the many among our subscribers who have remitted since the beginning of the year, our best thanks are hereby tendered. To those who have failed to respond, we beg leave to appeal again, by way of reminder. Please look at your label. Expenses are heavy; times are hard; and every dollar is needed to enable us to keep the paper up to the mark.

MR. HAMBLI, Chairman of the Toronto School Board, whose address is referred to elsewhere, is of opinion, as many good authorities have long been, that there is altogether too much of the machine in our schools, that the Inspectors are too much restricted by regulations, and that the restriction is transmitted through them to teachers, and from teacher to pupils. He is no doubt right, from the pedagogical point of view, about the restrictions. We doubt whether he attributes it to the true cause. A chief cause is, we take it, the disproportion between the number of teachers and that of pupils. When the teaching staffs are so increased,

or the classes so subdivided, that no one teacher shall have more than twenty to thirty pupils to look after, there will be room for some individual teaching. But so long as teachers have to deal with classes of fifty or sixty, there can be little but routine teaching. Rigid adherence to routine becomes, in fact, a practical necessity.

IN our "Hints and Helps" department will be found five very suggestive and cleverly put questions, asked by a correspondent of an educational exchange, under the heading, "Some Unsolved Problems." Perhaps the writer was incorrect in using the adjective "unsolved." Probably there are many among our readers who have solved for themselves and their schools one, or more, or all of them. We are sure, however, that there must be many who have not done so, and who would be grateful for the help of those who have. We shall gladly make room for brief chapters from the personal experiences of any teachers who have found satisfactory solutions to any one or more of the problems.

WHAT is the attitude of the Canadian Public School towards the pugilistic method of settling difficulties between schoolboys? In most English—if we may judge from the pictures given us in books dealing with English school life—and in many American schools the practice of fisticuffs on the playground is hardly discouraged, sometimes covertly or openly encouraged. The boy who shrinks from avenging an insult or settling a difficulty in the pugilistic ring is branded as a coward and loses caste. It can hardly be necessary to point out the two crushing objections to a practice so essentially barbarian, viz., that it is no criterion of the right or wrong of the dispute, since there is no necessary relation between the justice of a boy's or a man's cause and his physical strength and fistic prowess; and that the passions aroused and the impulses obeyed are essentially unchristian, unmanly, brutish. And yet have we not known even Christian parents—fathers, let us say, to be accu-

rate—who prided themselves on the ability of their boys to "stand up for their rights," and "take care of number one," as they say? Of course, courage and endurance are virtues to be desired and cultivated, but not at the expense of the higher sentiments, not to say the moral law.

WE give our readers, as our special article in this number, an interesting paper on a living educational question, by John Millar, Esq., B.A., Deputy Minister of Education. The question of the proper relation of the State to secondary and university education, in a democratic country, is one upon which, no doubt, wide differences of opinion exist among our readers. Some will, perhaps, doubt the conclusiveness of the arguments drawn from improvements in education, in the arts and sciences, and in society generally, during the last quarter-century. They may even doubt that the relations between cause and effect are such as the article assumes, on the ground that *post hoc* does not necessarily mean *propter hoc*; that the fact that one thing has followed another, or taken place simultaneously with another, does not necessarily prove that the one is the cause of the other. Both events may be due to some third cause, different from either. All must admit that there is a limit to the extent to which a government, or even a legislature, is justifiable in using money derived from taxation of the whole people for the support of institutions whose advantages cannot, in the nature of the case, be directly beneficial to more than a comparatively few individuals. It may be shown that all such institutions are indirectly beneficial to the whole community, but this is equally true of every successful private business enterprise. It may also possibly be a question whether the history of voluntaryism, as compared with that of State aid, in higher education, does not give some color at least to the contention that such institutions will flourish better and more widely when left to the enthusiasm of private educational philanthropists than when taken under the wing of the State. The subject is worthy of further thought and discussion. Meanwhile, all will read Mr. Millar's timely paper with interest and pleasure, as a thoughtful and valuable contribution to the discussion.