

Schools is superior (in methods employed) to that in many high Schools. The inference is quite natural, that as these Public Schools have advanced from the position they occupied years ago, when many of them were in the hands of untrained teachers, so in like manner would the teaching of our High Schools advance if none but experienced teachers taught in them. And this is precisely the result sought by the Regulation we are considering.

Doubtless some will say that we have many excellent teachers who never received a professional training of any sort. This no one can deny; but they have risen to eminence only after years of experimenting, whereas, if previously trained, they would have much sooner attained this eminence and avoided the more serious errors characteristic of such experimenting. The children upon whom their early trials were made are children no longer; they are beyond the reach of those who would now be glad to correct the mistakes of early teachings. They have gone forth, too many, alas, to bear for life the impress left by unskilled hands. Every honest teacher, in thoughtful moments, with the scenes of his first efforts and facts such as I have referred to before his mind, cannot fail to find cause for serious reflection. And the question arises—cannot this first chapter be omitted hereafter? Why not have this *trial-teaching* at a time when such errors can be detected, criticised, and corrected?

Specific training is as much needed for teachers as for physicians. Careful preparation and varied experience are as valuable in the school-room as in the sick room; and he who knowingly employs an incompetent person in the first case cannot consistently refuse to do so in the second. Let us, therefore, do all in our power to give proper form and full effect to any measure which will likely place well-trained teachers in every High School in Ontario.

The proposal to apprentice untried assistants to head masters is absurd. To begin with, head masters have enough to attend to, without nursing a number of inexperienced teachers, even supposing the former capable of the task, and the latter of a teachable spirit. There are schools where for years some such system has prevailed. They have been made a kind of practising ground for raw recruits, who put in their experimenting drill for two or three years, and then retire, to make room for a new set. Inspectors may complain of frequent changes of teachers; parents may protest against the unsettled and disturbing character of the teaching; trustees may grow impatient of being called on to accept resignations and make appointments; and head masters, the drill sergeants, even may grow weary and disheartened under special burdens; but until the door is closed to untrained teachers, the solemn farce will continue. Who can suggest any other remedy? Young men who have not taught must learn how to teach in some way, either after they are appointed as assistants or before. In the name of common sense, why not *before*—imperatively before?

The blundering of substitutes for regular telegraph operators is amusing and insignificant compared with the operations of educational empirics. The former they rectify by "repeats," but repetition with the latter generally repeats the mischief. No; instead of making head masters responsible for the troubles and failures of inefficient assistants, let these come to their classes prepared like men to do their work efficiently and bear their own responsibilities.

THE COURSE OF TRAINING REQUIRED.

Since we have our County Model School and Provincial Normal Schools, if a Model High School could be established, it would give symmetry to the system. This was Dr. Ryerson's idea twenty years ago. The nearest approach to it was the proposal to utilize Upper Canada College for the purpose. In favor of a Model High School much might be said. Theoretically it is just what is needed.

With a carefully selected staff of teachers, a good supply of pupils, a central locality, suitable accommodations, and a liberal endowment, such a school ought to prove successful; provided, of course, that by wise legislation it be made the one entrance through which all must pass who begin to teach in High Schools. That there are practical difficulties in the way is not disputed; that they are insuperable perhaps few are prepared to believe.

If Upper Canada College could be transformed into such a school—not merely utilized for the purpose—it would have the two-fold advantage of furnishing an acceptable *raison d'être* for the continued existence of that institution, and, on the score of economy, of rendering unnecessary the erection of new buildings. Probably such a transformation was not intended by the Minister of Education in his proposal. At all events, this plan is now laid aside for the recent Regulation—a course of lectures on professional subjects at the Education Department.

This enterprise seems to be waiting, like many others, until "the requisite funds are supplied by the Legislative Assembly." It is to be regretted that fuller information has not been furnished concerning this proposed special session. Much opposition and prejudice might have been prevented, and general confidence gained for the proposal. As it is, we are left mostly to conjecture, and can only pronounce opinion conditionally. I think to be acceptable the scheme should at least meet the following requirements:—

1. A thoroughly efficient staff of lecturers.
2. The professional course to be supplemented by practical work with model classes in certain High School subjects.
3. A thorough test in theory and practice before the granting of diplomas.
4. No direct connection with any university.
5. Such a gradual enforcement of the Regulation as will cause no serious inconvenience to present teachers.

Such an arrangement would doubtless command the confidence of teachers, and soon win its way to general favor.

Whatever plan may be adopted, the training required presupposes academic training and builds upon it. If it be found that this order cannot be observed, the literary and the professional preparation may go hand-in-hand, following the German method, where lectures on pedagogy and didactics are delivered in certain universities, sometimes by professors who have made these subjects an exclusive specialty; in most cases, however, by lecturers on philosophy, who adopt this method of giving variety to their work. In several of the English universities courses of lectures are given by able men on special aspects of the subject, and one or two permanent professorships have been established. In France and Italy also such lectures are given; coming nearer home, we find them at Harvard, Ann Arbor, and other American universities. Nor should this be thought strange, for a university is historically a teacher of teachers, as the old title, "doctor," plainly indicates.

If, therefore, a Model High School cannot be established, and if the special course be found inadequate, we can at least have theoretical pedagogy, or didactics, well taught in our universities. At present they furnish nothing sufficiently definite to meet this requirement, though the necessity for such a provision has been admitted. Probably the only obstacles would be the difficulty of securing suitable men as regular lecturers, and the lack of funds to pay them.

Such a lecturer should himself be an experienced teacher, thoroughly familiar with our school system. He should also have seen and studied with care the best schools of various grades in other lands; be competent clearly to impart a knowledge of the history of education, and show a perfect familiarity with ethics and psychology. This at least would be expected in an ideal lecturer—