

a wonderful efficacy in kindness, tact, self-control, and mind-power. The teacher seldom develops these to their full extent until he has flung away his rods and committed himself to better methods—burned, as it were, his boats behind him.

THE COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS.

WE lay before our readers in this number the introductory and argumentative portion of Principal Dickson's paper, read before the Ontario Teachers' Association. The practical part, in which the scheme is outlined, has been given in a previous number. No doubt a good many of our readers heard the paper read, and took part in the discussion which followed, in Toronto. These will be glad, none the less, to have the printed paper before them for more deliberate consideration. The many who were not present at the Convention will, we hope, avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded for a full consideration of the subject. The question is one of the first importance. Its discussion has but commenced. We shall be glad if those interested will make free use of our columns. Let the *pros* and *cons* be clearly presented and fully considered. Let those who have given special thought to the subject suggest extensions or modifications of the scheme proposed, as their judgment may dictate. The whole ground should be carefully and thoughtfully reviewed during the current year, in order that when the teachers next assemble in annual convention they may be prepared for action.

WE shall not attempt to forestall general discussion at the present stage of the movement by any extended criticism of details, but a few general remarks may be in order. On one point all are, it may be assumed, agreed—the necessity for some better organization of members of the teaching profession. The interests, not only of the teachers themselves, but of national education in all its grades demand that teachers should adopt some legitimate means of bringing their influence to bear upon the Government of the day, on the one hand, and upon parents, trustees, and the general public, on the other. Teachers should have more to do—they should, in fact, have almost everything to do—in directing all educational legislation. They should have a very influential voice in all matters of school administration. They should be able to speak with authority on such matters as the determination of courses of study, of school programmes, of methods of teaching. They should practically govern the choice of text books.

ON some other points we are not so clear. We are by no means sure that it should be in the power of any such organization to say who may and who may not be permitted to practice the profession to which its members belong. Such a power is very likely to be abused; at least its possession by those who are personally interested in the matter is a temptation to abuse. The fact that lawyers and doctors already have such powers settles nothing. The previous question is in order. Ought they to have it? Many will say, No! and bring forth pretty strong arguments in support of their negative. The manner in which the College of Physicians and Surgeons, for instance,

may punish any one who, without their diploma, presumes to prescribe for a sufferer and accept fees therefor, is very like an interference with the liberty of the subject. With our present light, we do not believe the College of Preceptors should have the power to impose a penalty upon any one for teaching without a license, nor do we believe it just that the Law and Medical Colleges should have that power. If the members of these organizations cannot convince the public that their certificates are the best and surest guarantees of professional ability by other means, we do not think they should be empowered to do so by legal penalties.

SURELY no such arbitrary powers are necessary to establish the authority and influence of a properly organized College of Preceptors. If such an organization can but secure the adherence and active co-operation of the great body of teachers in the country, and especially of the great majority of the best educators, it can soon establish its influence as an educational congress, without any legal pains or penalties. And this suggests one respect in which Principal Dickson's scheme needs enlargement. It should aim at enlisting not only first class teachers and High School masters, but College and University professors and tutors. Thus and thus alone can the proposed College be made to represent the highest intelligence of the profession. The present time is a very critical one in the history of educational movements. The new is everywhere striving to cast out the old. Nothing is accepted as settled. All the time-honored courses and methods of instruction are up for discussion and revision. In our Province a system of manufacturing, publishing and authorizing text books has been adopted which has been repeatedly tried and condemned elsewhere, and which, in the opinion of many of the best educators, must, if persisted in, speedily put our whole public school system on the down grade. The machine is being elaborated, complicated, and extended, until it threatens to destroy all individuality and originality on the part of teachers, and to drive every man and woman of independent spirit out of the profession. There is thus manifestly a large place and a wide scope for the deliberations and influence of an independent educational parliament. We are not sure that such a parliament will not speak with higher authority and exert, on the whole, a more salutary influence, by preserving its independence of the State and relying wholly on intellectual and moral influences for the enforcement of its decrees.

Special.

THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS.

BY GEORGE DICKSON, M.A., PRINCIPAL OF UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

(Read before the Ontario Teachers' Association).

The consideration of the question of a grand union of all teachers of the Province into one Society, possessing the power of admitting members and of enacting by-laws for the regulation of all matters concerning the teaching profession, is now introduced for your consideration under the title of a "College of Preceptors." The designation of the proposed Union may first claim our notice; and on this point it may be said that as there is in Ontario a Law