

PUBLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

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MODEL SCHOOLS.

Education has not fallen to the rear in the general advance of everything that betokens a high civilization. In no respect is this more observable than in the change in opinion with regard to the qualifications of teachers. The time is happily now past, when, to secure a teacher's position, failure in every other employment was more a recommendation than a hindrance. Once, the dominie's desk was regarded as a fitting refuge for the ignorant in mind, and the debilitated in body. Now, all this has changed, and for the better. Public men regard the proper training of those who are to be the instructors of the succeeding generation as a matter of paramount importance. We can adduce no stronger evidence of this than the solicitude felt by many Canadian teachers on the subject. And this is perhaps one of the most tangible proofs that advancement in educational matters is with us no mere "Will-o-the-wisp." When the Normal School was opened in Toronto, it was considered necessary to have a Model School affiliated with it, in which the students could learn the art of teaching, under competent instructors. This school, notwithstanding some defects, did good work in the past, and is doing better work in the present, in preparing young people as teachers.

We would be glad indeed if we could make the same remark of the parent institution. But truth compels us to admit that while the work of the Normal School has been properly limited to that of a purely professional character, there has been no improvement in the practical training of those who attend it. The complaints of its students about waste of time, while attending the institution, have

been both numerous and loud-spoken, so loud-spoken, indeed, that the Minister of Education is no stranger to them; but hitherto he has remained deaf to all the representations of mismanagement that have been made to him by students and others. Does it never occur to that gentleman that the time and money of students, and the vital interests of the whole community, are seriously at stake in the management of such an institution? If Mr. Crooks will not listen, then teachers will have to resort to the Legislature as the seat of appeal.

Another provincial Model School has been started at Ottawa, in connection with the Normal School there, and placed under the management of Mr. Parlow, who has made an honourable reputation for himself as an educator in the eastern part of the Province. We hope that this institution will establish even a better reputation for itself than the Toronto School has done. These provincial institutions now supplement the work of training begun in the County Model Schools. It is upon the latter that the hopes of the country for well-trained teachers must chiefly depend. So long, however, as the training given to pupil-teachers is limited to weeks instead of years, we must regard the results of their work very modestly. This question of limited training is forcing itself upon the attention of every thoughtful educator, and already there are indications that a change will be urged. Indeed, the Toronto Public School Board has already begun to make a move that promises to be of great advantage to the profession. It proposes to erect the City Public Schools into Model Schools, to let the pupil-teachers belonging to them act as assistant teachers in the junior classes, and take the place of regular teachers who may