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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to
the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to
any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE Education Committee of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council take exception, in a recent report, to the tendency to an excessive amount of military drill which is observable in the public schools of the city. The Committee ask, not without force, "What are we sending our children to school for? Is it to make soldiers of them or to give them an education?" The reply will of course be that the military drill is a very healthful exercise, that it corrects faults in walk and carriage, gives erectness to the figure and grace to the movements, is a valuable aid to discipline by forming habits of prompt obedience to authority, etc. This is all very true, but it does not meet the objection. From the point of view of many of the best citizens it would be better that their children should walk with stooping shoulders and awkward gait all their lives than that they should be trained up to regard the military life as the ideal life and the professional soldier as the ideal hero. The ideas of the age are changing in regard to such points, and the labouring classes, who have always to do the chief part of the fighting, and to bear in their persons and families the brunt of the hardship and suffering which war entails, are becoming wiser. They are coming to see that the war is oftener the result of the existence of the army than the army the outcome of a necessity for national defence. But does it by any means follow that all the physical and, if you please, moral benefits of the drill cannot be had without reference to the military idea? The objectionable thing is not the forming, or marching, or other movements, but the continual holding-up of military ideals to fire the young imaginations. No thoughtful person can doubt that the seeds of the military passion thus implanted in the school have very much to do with forming the national character and begetting actual war in the future. Unhappily there are some who deem an occasional war a necessity to the manhood of a nation, and their ideas seem to have taken hold of those who have the management of our city schools. We commend the subject to the thoughtful consideration of our readers.

A SECOND good remark in respect to education was made by Dr. Watson, in an address before the Nationalist Association of Canada, a few days since. After advocating compulsory industrial education, a reform towards which we are no doubt tending, he went on to say that one thing might be done at once in our own Province—the teaching of morals in the public schools. At present there is, he averred, no systematic training of our children in the principles of gentleness, justice and truth, and he believed that a text-book could be prepared which would be universally accepted by the people of all religions. We have often urged this view, and we are glad to see it advocated before such an association. The assumption which seems to be tacitly made and accepted by most of our people that, because the denominations cannot agree on a system of religious instruction in the schools, and because the State, in the opinion of many, would be transgressing its proper bounds were it to attempt to provide for such teaching, even were a system agreed on, therefore no provision can be made for systematic moral instruction, or, rather, training, in these schools, is, it has always seemed to us, most illogical. The readiness with which this notion is acquiesced in is perhaps due in part to the fact that a former Superintendent of Education, whose influence in educational matters was deservedly great, undertook at one time to prepare a text-book for religious training which might be acceptable to all, and failed egregiously. But the two things are quite different, and the fact that Dr. Ryerson's theological catechism was found inadmissible affords no proof whatever that a thoroughly acceptable text-book for moral training might not be produced and used with the very best results. We do not hesitate to go further and affirm that distinct moral training in the schools is one of the crying wants of the age, and that, in the absence of it, our public school education is nearly destitute of that which is incomparably the most important element in all right education. We should be glad to have the opinions of those who have given thought to the subject.

THE *Montreal Gazette* explains with much clearness and ability that the question which it is proposed to refer to the Supreme Court touching the Manitoba schools difficulty is not either in form or in fact that of the constitutionality of the present school law. That, it admits, has already been affirmed by the highest judicial authority in the realm and cannot again be called in question. What the *Gazette* maintains that the judges of the Supreme Court may be asked to decide, and what it thinks it wise that they should be asked to decide, is whether in view of the decision of the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council the Governor-in-Council has the right to exercise the appellant powers specified in sub-section 2 of clause 22 of the Manitoba Act. The judgment asked from the Supreme Court would thus be made, not upon the basis of its earlier view of the legality of the Manitoba School Act, but in the light of the judgment of the highest court in the Empire. "Everyone," says the *Gazette*, "is now agreed that the Manitoba school legislation is constitutional, and the only questions which the Dominion Government have to consider are (1) its right of interference in the direction of remedial legislation and (2) the advisability of so interfering. The first proposition ought to be settled before the second is even considered, not because one or the other political party may profit or lose from the decision, but because the question is of so far-reaching and of so peculiar a character that in the interest of all parties the right of interference ought to be absolutely determined before the risk of a cleavage of the people upon religious lines is faced." As a means of postponing the final settlement of the question and thus gaining time for any temporary excitement which may have been caused to cool, such a reference might be of service. But to most impartial observers it will, we believe, seem so clear that the clauses of the Act referred to could have had no other object than to provide a way in which the Dominion Government and Legislature might proceed in case of the refusal or failure of a Province to make provision for securing the rights of minorities as demanded by the Constitution, authoritatively interpreted, that they will

be quite unable to see any place for such a reference as that advocated by the *Gazette*. To assume even the possibility that these clauses might be so interpreted as to give the Dominion authorities the right to enforce remedial legislation not demanded by the Provincial Constitution, and especially remedial legislation designed and adapted, as it must clearly be in the case under consideration, to nullify and override Provincial legislation which is admittedly constitutional, is to hint at an exercise of Federal authority which would be the source of a far more serious danger to the stability of the Confederation than any dissatisfaction created by any Act of the Manitoba Legislature within its constitutional powers could be. Is it not, then, clear that the *Gazette's* first question is not a question at all?

WHETHER looked at from a political or from an ethical view-point, the situation with reference to the Manitoba school question is beset with difficulty. That the Constitution of the Province does not provide for the perpetuation of Separate schools is now certain. But it is scarcely less certain that it was the intention of the original framers of that Constitution to secure their perpetuation. Such being the case, it would seem at first thought that the Provincial authorities should, as honourable men, be guided by the intention, rather than by the letter, of their charter. It would seem equally clear that the enacting authorities, or their lawful successors in the Dominion Government and Parliament, should strive by all legitimate means, coercion being out of their power, to induce the Provincial authorities to respect that intention. But here a variety of considerations present themselves to modify or reverse these conclusions. There is first the fundamental question of the justice and the wisdom of the intention of the framers of the Constitution, if the above assumption in regard to such intention be correct. In regard to this it may be urged with great force that neither a few Red River priests and half-breeds on the one hand, nor the Dominion Government and Parliament on the other, had any right to bind upon the necks of the millions of free and intelligent citizens who should in after days take up their abodes in the new Provinces of the North-West, the burden of an institution which is alien to the spirit of our civilization, and that the assumed condition upon which they based this objectionable legislation, the only condition which could give it even a shadow of justification, having been found to be non-existent, it is perfectly just and right that the bad legislation based upon that condition should fall with it to the ground. Another circumstance which should carry great weight in regard to both the political and the ethical question is the fact that the expectation of the framers of the Constitution that the new Province would be peopled to a very great extent by members and adherents of the Roman Catholic Church has utterly failed of realization. Hence the chief reason which no doubt influenced the framers of the Constitution in inserting the clause which has now become the source of so much trouble is non-existent. That this is a consideration of great importance is evident from the fact, which we venture to say will hardly be disputed, that were the Constitution for the Province now being framed, it would be utterly impossible to obtain the insertion of a clause making the maintenance of a system of separate and denominational schools compulsory. Closely connected with the foregoing remarks is another, which it seems to us should make the path of present wisdom and duty pretty clear. No one who has observed the feeling and spirit of the great majority of the people of Manitoba can doubt that had the decision of the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council agreed with that of the Canadian Supreme Court, and the obligation of Manitoba to provide for Roman Catholic Separate schools been affirmed, the matter would by no means have been settled. The fact would have been the signal for either a determined resistance to any action the Federal authorities might have felt constrained to take in the matter, or for the beginning of a determined agitation for such a change in the Constitution as would free them from the obligation. Thus there would have been no rest, and should remedial legislation of any kind be now passed there would be no rest, short of the same