

cine, and dentistry, callings in which practical skill is the great desideratum, and surely it is not asking too much to require those who are about to undertake the most difficult of all callings—that of a teacher—to have some professional outfit.

THE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

The Ontario normal schools are elevated by the new Departmental regulations into a position of greater responsibility than that which they have heretofore occupied. Henceforth they are to become the professional training-schools for high as well as public school teachers, and to be made more distinctively than ever before pedagogic institutions. It is obvious that if there is to be a profession of teachers the entrance to it must be through some professional training, and that training can best be acquired in this Province at one or other of the provincial normal schools.

The change in the status, and to some extent in the functions of these schools, rendered it absolutely necessary that the system pursued in them should be uniform. Teachers trained in one of the institutions should, in a general way at least, have the same professional views and be ready to pursue the same practical methods as those trained in the other. To secure this it was necessary to place them under individual control, and for the post of "Director" the Government have wisely selected Dr. McLellan. His previous career has been well calculated to fit him for the new duties entrusted to him. He was for many years a successful teacher in different parts of Ontario and in Nova Scotia. For more than ten years he has filled with equal success the difficult position of inspector of high schools. During that time he has been assiduous in his efforts to inculcate more intelligent methods by addressing teachers' institutes, and many a young teacher has been in this way helped over difficulties and inspired with enthusiasm for his work. The appointment is a most fitting one and we have no doubt that events will prove it so and justify the Minister's choice.

We are not amongst those who believe that little or no good work has been done in the normal schools in the past. On the contrary we know that in an unostentatious way they have been accomplishing a great deal—how much it is difficult to accurately estimate. But under the new arrangements still better results may fairly be expected and for these all educationists will earnestly look.

THE EFFECTS OF A CASTIGATION.

In language less objectionable than that of last month, and with a manner which may very properly be described as subdued, the *Educational Monthly* replies to our remarks on its recent coarse and malicious attack on the Minister of Education. We have no desire to repeat the castigation especially as the one already administered has had so salutary an effect. We are disposed rather to call attention to some of the admissions made while our contemporary was still suffering under a keen sense of well-deserved punishment. The following reads very much like an apology to Mr. Crooks, dictated by unfeeling

and hard-headed proprietors, with business interests to subserve, to an editor who would like to repeat the language of last month or even out-do it:—

We have had no thought of upsetting the Government of the Province, of conducting any crusade against it, or of importing into our educational affairs any political feeling, or of writing against its head with partisan acerbity.

Of course there was acerbity in the language applied, but it was not "partisan" acerbity. It was absolutely necessary in the interest of education to describe the Minister of Education as "anomalously compounded of capriciousness and political partisanship;" as "dominated by his official importance" and having his "volition controlled by political bias or professional intrigue;" and as characterized by a "wordy flatulence" which is "only equalled by his pretentious ignorance." All this and a good deal more was said about the Minister without even a tincture of "partisan acerbity." The readers of the *Monthly* will be glad to learn that all political "influences" and "prejudices" are kept at "a long arm's length from education and educational affairs" in that sanctum. Long may it be so.

The *Monthly* feels aggrieved at any reflections on its language, as if they were attempts to curtail its liberty of criticism. We would be the very last to seek to deprive any one of his freedom in this respect, but it is the misfortune of some people that they can never learn to distinguish between civility and subserviency, and that they feel it necessary to use coarse language in order to be forcible. While we have often differed from the policy of the Minister we have never found it necessary to abuse him in language which would be out of place in the mouth of a magistrate addressing a pickpocket.

TEXT-BOOKS AND OTHER SCHOOL-BOOKS.

The following extract from an article in a paper published in the western part of this Province furnishes an excellent specimen of the loose talk so extensively indulged in with respect to school books:—

"'Marmion' with notes is to-day absolutely worthless in the market. Ten days ago they were going off like very hot cakes at a dollar apiece. Fifty cents each would be a very good price for them, if there was no mismanagement about the business. We hope Mr. Crooks will give his best personal attention to this whole book question without delay. Steps should be taken to secure some permanence in text-books and to have them supplied at one half present prices. The idea, too, of allowing the irresponsible authorities of Toronto University to decide what text-books the thousands of high school pupils are to use, seeing that only one or two per cent of them ever enter that University, is simply preposterous."

It is clear that the writer of this paragraph has made no effort to understand the question he undertakes to discuss. If English texts are to be studied at all there can surely be no objection to allowing publishers at their own risk to get out annotated editions of them. In many schools there are no reference libraries, and an edition of the prescribed text with full explanatory notes is to teachers and pupils so unfortunately situated a real boon. They are under no compulsion to buy such an edition. The text of "Marmion," without any notes, could be furnished for a mere trifle, but how many would pay ten cents for it when they could buy a well annotated edition