

role of the outspoken, independent critic, that we have commended the magazine to its readers and won, in large measure, the confidence of the profession, are matters of which we may justly be permitted to boast. Our indulging in a little felicitation may seem all the more reasonable when we remember the wreck of literary ventures in Canada, and the precarious life which many of the best of them have led. But the failure of the efforts repeatedly made to sustain periodical publications in Canada makes it less difficult to form a proper estimate of the task undertaken in maintaining the CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY, and may enable those who care to do so to value our effort at its true worth.

To look back on the way we have travelled, and to recall the dangers that have menaced us, but from which we have had the fortune to escape, suggest lines of thought the consideration of a few of which for a brief while may profitably employ us.

Among the first thoughts that will occur to such of our readers as may, with us, take a glance at the past, the following are likely to suggest themselves. First, that if the magazine has been of any distinctive service to those in whose interest it was founded, it lies in the fact that it has voiced the opinion of the profession on many topics vital to its wellbeing; and secondly, that it has led the way in a fearless discussion of evils connected with teaching and the administration of the Department which, obviously, has not been without effect in either checking or removing them.

It may safely be said that there never was a time in our Canadian annals when interest in educational progress was keener and more universal. Unhappily, while this is the case, it would be difficult to point to a time when our educational affairs would less bear looking into. Neither the machinery nor the system commends itself to favour; and worst of all, as we have repeatedly affirmed, there is no competent head. The Central Committee cannot be said to be a satisfactory engine of administration, and the nominal direction is not improved by being in the

hands of a party chief. Public opinion, however, is now rapidly forming on this point, for party politics, it is well understood, pervade the whole educational atmosphere; and within and without the Bureau much of the administration is shaped by political partialities and official intrigue. Were proof of this wanting, we need point only to the discussion which followed the reading of Mr. Bryant's paper, on "A Return to the System of a Chief Superintendency," at the late meeting of the Provincial Teachers' Association. Eminently discreet in the handling of his subject as was Mr. Bryant himself, there is much in his paper of distrust and censure, which the Government cannot fail to note is the voice of the profession in regard to the administration of the Department; and his words are a practical endorsement of the criticisms of the MONTHLY, in dealing of recent years with our educational affairs. Here is a quotation from Mr. Bryant's address, as reported in one of the city journals, and the conclusions of the writer on the inefficient administration of the Department, and the want of competency and absence of harmony in the Minister's Advisory Board, coming from such a source, are not indifferently to be set aside. Says Mr. Bryant:

"By the inevitable lack on the part of the Minister of a practical acquaintance with the working of the laws and regulations which he administered, it made him dependent upon the advice of others, and this being obtained from whatever quarter he chose, it might not be disinterested, prudent, and well-considered, and so was most likely to be inharmonious with other acts and regulations previously authorized, and thus created dissatisfaction and distrust. He feared that every charge which he had expressed in general terms had been illustrated again and again in the experience of the past seven years. He feared that, in spite of ourselves, we were beginning to feel that a political interest was at least a considerable element in professional preferment. If they examined carefully the regulations of the Department which had been issued for some years past he thought they would find that they bore those marks of heterogeneous origin, inharmonious relationship, and frequently immature concoction, which he had stated must result from the institution of an executive political head practically unacquainted with