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CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL HAS RECEIVED

*An Honorable Mention at Paris Exhibition, 1878.
Recommended by the Minister of Education for Ontario.
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The Publishers frequently receive letters from their friends complaining of the non-receipt of the JOURNAL. In explanation they would state, as subscriptions are necessarily payable in advance, the mailing clerks have instructions to discontinue the paper when a subscription expires. The clerks are, of course, unable to make any distinction in a list containing names from all parts of the United States and Canada.

THE QUALIFICATION OF HIGH SCHOOL MASTERS

A few years ago the sole qualification required of a candidate for the head mastership of a grammar school was the possession of a degree from some British or Canadian University. In those days any undergraduate of such a university was legally qualified to become an assistant master in a grammar school. Of late years something has been done by the Education Department in the way of prescribing a certain amount of preliminary experience of a professional kind as a condition of being allowed to teach in a high school, and in the recently published regulations a further step has been taken in the same direction. These require that in order to become a head master a candidate must not only have graduated in some university in Her Majesty's dominions, but must also be able to show either that he has taught successfully for two years as an assistant or that he is in possession of a first class public school teacher's professional certificate. In order to qualify as an assistant master a candidate must now be (1) the holder of a first class public school teacher's certificate, or (2) a graduate with a first class professional certificate, or (3) a fourth year undergraduate with the latter certificate, or (4) the holder of a special certificate which will be valid only for the school in respect of which it may be granted. To put the matter briefly, each high school teacher must first have been a public school teacher or must have attended one of the Normal Schools.

While opinions may vary as to the precise test of professional qualification that is most expedient there can hardly be two opinions as to the necessity of requiring high school masters to know something about the art of teaching before they are allowed to take charge of either a class or a school. It is not easy to understand why professional experience was not sooner required of candidates for high school positions

when the tests for public school certificates were each year becoming more and more stringent. Surely high school work is at least as important as public school work, apart altogether from the consideration that most of our public school teachers now get their non-professional training in high schools. While attending these institutions young teachers in training are unconsciously forming themselves on the teaching models presented for their imitation, and if the head master or his assistant is inexperienced or unskillful how can the result be anything but injurious to the intending teacher who comes into daily contact with them?

There are some, no doubt, who will argue against the enforcement of the above requirement on the ground that no graduate of a university should be subjected to the humiliation of having to pass a session at a Normal School. But it should be borne in mind that none of our colleges as yet possess chairs of pedagogy, and that there is therefore no humiliation in an intending high school teacher getting his professional training at the only institutions where such a training can be procured. It is a choice between getting it there and being allowed to acquire the necessary skill by dint of dearly purchased experience—dearly purchased so far at least as the pupils are concerned.

Others will say that it is not a good thing to prevent undergraduates, who are compelled to earn money to pay their college expenses, from teaching as assistants in order to obtain the means of completing their own education. The obvious reply is that such students should not be placed in a position to educate themselves at the expense of boys and girls whose time is just as precious as their own. The country can better dispense with one of its many graduates than it can afford to see the youth of any locality losing precious time at school.

The only question in reality is whether, other things being equal, a teacher with a professional training is better than one without it. If there is a second question it is whether such a requirement is not likely to so diminish the supply of teachers as to greatly increase the cost of maintaining high schools. Of that there is now no fear. The supply will always be equal to the demand, provided that teachers now qualified are allowed to remain so, in accordance with the usual practice of the Department. The interests of the impecunious student should have no place in the consideration of the question. If he is very anxious to finish his college course and is made of the right stuff he will find a way of getting to the end of it and will be all the better for the struggle. In any case the interests of hundreds of young people of both sexes cannot be made subservient to his in a matter of such vital importance. We are assuming, of course, that a man will be all the better a teacher, whatever his scholarship or natural aptitude may be, for having had a professional training—an assumption so reasonable that no one is likely to call it in question. It is now deemed necessary to have a professional training for divinity, law, medi-