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## THE WEEK:

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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.

BEFORE this paper is in the hands of its readers the annual Toronto Exhibition will have been formally opened by his Honour, the Lieutenant Governor. This display of the productions and resources of the city and Province is naturally an affair of great interest to the citizens. Thanks to the ability and zeal with which it has been managed, its success in the past has been wonderful. Year by year the sphere of its operations has been enlarged, until we may say, without disparagement of any similar enterprise, that it has come to have not only a Provincial, but almost a Canadian significance. If the expectations of its able and efficient managers are realized, it will this year surpass the results of all former efforts in the variety and richness of the display of the products of Canadian enterprise and industry. The enlargement of the space available in buildings and grounds will no doubt be found to have contributed materially to this result. It is unnecessary, at this stage, to dwell upon the great educational value of such an exhibition of the best the country is able to produce in every line of legitimate enterprise and industry, nor upon the beneficial influence it can scarcely fail to have in stimulating the multitudes who spend a few days in studying these productions to higher ambitions and more strenuous efforts. We have only to express our best wishes for the success of the Exhibition in every respect, and to add a perhaps tardy word of appreciation of the service rendered to city and country by President Withrow and his energetic associates, to whose untiring efforts the remarkable development of this yearly display is so largely due.

AN excellent opportunity has been given the Canadian Government for calling the attention of the Government and people of the United States to some facts in connection with the canal-tolls matter which they might be the better for being reminded of. Mr. J. W. Foster, President Harrison's Secretary of State, and the chief agent of the Washington Administration, at least since Mr. Blaine's retirement, in negotiations touching Canadian affairs, has written an elaborate official communication to Mr. Herbert, of the British legation at Washington, in relation to the observance of the provisions of the Wash-

ington Treaty. In this letter Mr. Foster affirms that immediately after the conclusion of the treaty, "the United States took steps to carry out the stipulations of article 27, and without unreasonable delay both the canals of the National and State Governments, representing a vast system, constructed at a very great expense, were thrown open to the use of Canadian commerce without any charge whatever." We see no reason to doubt that Mr. Foster makes these statements in good faith, and that he really believes that the failure to carry out the canal provisions of the treaty in spirit if not in letter, has been wholly on the part of Canada. But whether they believe him to be sincere or not, the Canadian Government should lose no time in putting before him and the American public, through the proper diplomatic channel, a clear and concise statement of the complaints which they feel that they have a right to make on behalf of Canada. The American Secretary's statements and implications can hardly be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is to be hoped that the rejoinder may be prompt and forcible, and at the same time couched in terms no less moderate and friendly than those of Mr. Foster's document. Such a reply, not by way of defence of the rebate system, but as a polite refutation of Mr. Foster's allegations and a frank arraignment of the Washington Government for its failure to carry out the manifest intention of the framers of the treaty in respect to the New York canals, would surely be opportune, and might do much good in preparing the way to a better understanding.

THE facts given in the article under the heading, "Does Our Education Educate?" in our last number, challenge the thoughtful consideration of every intelligent Canadian. Let no one suppose that Mr. Turnock's experience is exceptional. We have no doubt that almost every solecism he instances could be paralleled by many of those among our readers who may at any time have had a similar duty to perform. Mr. Turnock has done a service in putting the facts so well before the public. No attitude of mind is more inimical to true progress than self-complacency. Our much bepraised educational system is not yet producing, nor is it at present capable of producing, anything like ideal results. We are not sure that we may not have in that well-worn word "system" itself a hint of one fruitful cause of such disappointing facts as those unveiled by our correspondent. The very rigidity of the system tends to make such failures possible, if not inevitable. In saying this we are not decrying "system" or denying that rigidity may be to a certain extent necessary. It may be the less of two evils. But how can the system have the effect indicated? In various ways. In the first place, it tends to destroy individuality and spontaneity in the profession, and to foster dull, mechanical uniformity. This is, we think, too evident to need illustration or argument. In the second place it tends to shut out of the profession a class of men and women of culture and refinement—just the kind of teachers whose influence would do much to counteract the lack of good taste and perception of what is proper and appropriate which was so strikingly displayed in some of the documents described. There are, we dare say, many of this class, of both sexes, who would be glad to teach, and would have been eligible under former conditions, who are now barred out. They would fail to solve the mathematical and other puzzles which from time to time appear in the examination papers. One result of the system has been to replace all such with a class of teachers who have been trained for the profession, or rather who have been helped into it by the shortest possible cut, by dint of special cramming for the examinations, but who are necessarily destitute of the culture possessed by many to whom these examinations would prove an insuperable barrier. Of course, mere general culture cannot supply the place of accurate and specific scholarship any more than text-book acquaintance with Algebra and Euclid can atone for the lack of literary culture. What is needed is some means by which a fair admixture of both may be secured. Can any one think the culture less essential than the scholarship in the training of young minds?

CLOSELY connected with the subject of the preceding paragraph are other causes incident to a young country and colonial conditions. Every one knows that the social environment in childhood and youth is a most potent factor in determining educational results. Not one in ten of Canadian teachers, it is safe to say, has had the great advantage of being brought up amidst people of education and refinement. The great majority have thus been deprived of that unconscious training which is by no means the least important element in education. This means much more than a merely negative loss. It means the formation of faulty habits of manner, thought and speech, which the utmost diligence in after life can never wholly eradicate. Then, the young men and women who enter the teaching profession under such disadvantages are not, as a rule, translated into social circles which afford them the best opportunities for overcoming these deficiencies. In many cases they do not even become conscious of them, and so continue to lack the essential condition of all successful effort in self-improvement. They may rarely have occasion to use the pen—perhaps the most potent of all educational instruments—to the extent of writing even a business letter. Hence the stiff penmanship and glaring defects in form and style. In this respect they fail to receive a valuable species of training which is enjoyed even by the clerk in a business house. Add to all this the fact that the level of the profession is prevented from rising so rapidly as it otherwise might, by the constant loss, through a kind of natural selection, of many of its most promising members, who are drafted off into other professions.

NOTWITHSTANDING these facts, we are glad to believe that a marked improvement is taking place in the quality of teachers and teaching in Ontario. In one respect, at least, the standard of preparation and qualification has been very materially advanced within the last few years. The reading of English literature has been given a much more prominent place than hitherto. This is a change which cannot fail to have a most salutary effect, not only upon the students in training, but upon the teachers who have to oversee this reading. But there is room for still further improvement in this direction. The goal should be a state of things in which the pupil, from the day he enters the primary department until the very end of his school career, be that in high school or college, shall be brought into acquaintance with good literature so continuously and under such conditions in respect to its intelligent study, that he or she can hardly fail to become possessed of some genuine taste for it, even before the third-class-teacher stage is reached. Need we doubt that this is quite possible of attainment, under right conditions and influences? This of itself would go far to make such productions as Mr. Turnock describes impossible. Again, it surely is not too much to say that the Education Department should be able to prevent the giving of certificates to candidates so lacking in cultivated good sense and in knowledge of English as most of the candidates whose applications are described must have been. Why should it not, for instance, be made an invariable condition of the granting of even a third-class license, to say nothing of seconds and firsts and university degrees, that the candidate must prove himself able to write a letter and an essay on a given theme, with substantial correctness in form, and some moderate degree of merit in style and thought. We have no doubt that this test faithfully applied would be far more valuable, from the most practical point of view, than any degree of readiness in solving problems or reproducing text-book facts. As for the rest, it is clear that parents and the public have duties to perform which cannot be delegated even to teachers, before we can hope to see the profession approximate to any ideal standard. Largely increased remuneration and more cordial social recognition are among the most potent of influences to this end.

RESPONSIBLE government is still in a somewhat rudimentary stage in the North-West Territory. It is, consequently, somewhat difficult to understand the causes of the dead-lock in the Legislative Assembly, or to appor-