

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Journal of Education.

NEW YORK, November, 1871.

As a warm friend of Educational progress in Nova Scotia, I hailed with genuine delight the appearance of an article in the October number of the JOURNAL, advocating the establishment of a Provincial College. The idea of a College, where young people of all denominations can receive such a thorough education as will fully prepare them to shoulder the manifold tasks and duties of an active life, ought to be dear to all patriotic and well-meaning Nova Scotians.

Having in view the hearty approval which such a scheme ought and no doubt will command, I venture to offer a few remarks and suggestions, which, I trust, will be kindly received.

There are several conditions which are essential to the success of all similar institutions. First of all, no sectarian differences, must be allowed to interfere with the admission of a student; otherwise, its highest aim, that of being a College for "the people," would be lost.

Further, the attendance must be large, so as to enable the directors to secure the services of able and talented instructors and to establish such a scale of tuition charges as will place the advantages of their teachings within the reach of people of moderate means. Any public institution, which can be used only by wealthy people, is not in harmony with the requirements of the age and the laws of the universe.

One of the greatest impediments in the way of a "popular" system of higher schools has been their "exclusiveness" and the fact of their management by men who have not so much the welfare of Education as the "financial success" of the trust in view. It is their manifest duty, of course, to manage the moneys of the institution with judicious tact and economy, but often this degenerates into a greedy strife for large incomes and the position of an influential corporation. This necessitates high prices of admission; consequently they labor for the "few," at the expense of the "many."

With special reference to Nova Scotia, it may be premature at this juncture, to discuss the relative merits of the different systems now in operation. But it can, nevertheless, not be denied that a word of friendly advice should never be rejected. In our era of advanced civilization, when steam and telegraph render the intercourse between the different nations of the globe daily more intimate, the number of branches of knowledge required for constituting what is called a "scholar," gradually grows larger. In fact, one can hardly be considered "up to time" without having more or less knowledge of foreign languages, natural philosophy, and different studies, requiring deep thought, in addition to the several branches of a moderate or high education. In Nova Scotia, the necessity of a good system of instruction in foreign languages will, ere long, become imperative. The ultimate prospect of a larger share of the great tide of immigration, which has, thus far, mainly poured into the United States and built up that great republic; the increasing commercial relations with French speaking Canada, as a natural result of Confederation; in fact, the tendency of the age will render the knowledge of French and German exceedingly useful and desirable.

The great ambition of young men and women is to commence a business of their own and to build up their fortunes by the persistent application and exercise of their general store of knowledge. Hence, a Provincial College must provide a genuine "business education." In regard to this, I would offer a few suggestions concerning a certain system, which, in my humble opinion, would be very acceptable. It was the writer's good fortune, a short time ago, to be introduced to that eminent educationist and gentleman, Professor Silas S. Packard, of New York. The Professor very kindly conducted us through his immense establishment, on the corner of Broadway and Eleventh street, and explained to us the working of his system. One could not fail to admire the tact, skill and regularity with which his score of assistants discharged their several duties. The room contained more than two hundred students, ranging from twelve

to eighteen years, constituting the advanced classes of the College, and being trained for the various business duties of city life.

In order to provide for a student what may be called a "substantial business education" he must be made to feel as if he is actually a merchant already. He must conduct a miniature business house; must grasp, fairly grasp, the subject and handle it in all its details.

"You will perceive," observed the Professor, "that every pupil has a desk of his own; each desk is named after a certain city in America or other parts of the globe.

"For instance, here we have Portland, there Boston, yonder Liverpool. Every scholar has a full set of books, such as Ledger, Cash Book, &c., and keeps his Bank account. A post office is attached to the College. Now, as an instance, yonder scholar, supposed to be a hard ware dealer, resident of Boston, sends an order by letter to his correspondent in Pittsburgh, which letter goes through the post office, and is thence forwarded to its destination, which may be at the very elbow of the writer. In this wise, the students go through all the experiences of commercial life, get a deep insight into all its intricate calculations, and by being brought fairly face to face with the subject of their studies when leaving college, are fully prepared to take their station in the world's great battle for money and riches."

Professor Packard's system is, however, but one among the many, but it must be stated that the most practical minds of this eminently "business country" acknowledge its superiority.

For fear of trespassing upon your patience, I conclude for the present. Let all friends of education put their shoulders to the wheel, with a will. The object in view is a noble one, worthy of a country's best efforts, and calculated to shower incalculable blessings upon our many fellow-laborers in the great struggle for progress and prosperity.

J. W. G.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

MR. EDITOR :

I send you two articles, extracted from American papers, one in favor of, and the other opposed to, the making attendance at schools compulsory. Your readers will be able to judge for themselves of the merits of the two systems. Parents should so feel the advantages conferred by education, and by the training of the schools as to foster and inculcate in their children the desire to receive all the benefit to be derived from a faithful attendance at school. There would then be little need of compulsion. If parents do their duty in this matter, Government interference may well be dispensed with.

In Nova Scotia, we trust, that these parents who do not feel the value of education, and will not take the pains to see that their children avail themselves of the advantages conferred by our schools will ever be the rare exception. We have little fear that the discussion of the question of compulsory education will have any practical interest for our people. It is, however, always well to be posted on both sides of an argument.

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Pro.

Those who believe that the compulsory education of all classes of our population is of vital importance for the future stability and success of our Government have the pleasure of knowing that their views are strongly endorsed by a most competent authority—A. J. Mundella, Esquire, of Sheffield, England. This gentleman, who is also a member of Parliament, is at home a leader in all that pertains to advancing the interests of the working classes, and has recently given considerable

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Contra.

There has been nothing in the action of the French people since the close of the late war which promises so well for the future, as their willingness to learn of their enemy. They have re-organized their army on the Prussian plan, and borrowed something of Prussian ideas even in civic and social matters. Above all, they have learned that German schools have done quite as much as needle-guns to make Germany what she is, and with true French promptitude they have set about the task