

AMONGST recent changes in the work for junior matriculation, resolved on by the Senate of the University of Toronto, we are glad to see that the critical reading of prose selections has been added to the requirements for pass. The addition of physical geography is also a change in the right direction. Every matriculate and second-class teacher should have done some thorough work in both these directions.

SOME complaint is being made that the bronze medal offered for competition in drawing, among the pupils of the High Schools, and Collegiate Institutes, was awarded, not to a pupil, but to a master in one of the Institutes. We do not know the exact terms on which the medal was offered and awarded, but it does seem as if allowing teachers to compete with their pupils for such honors must be, to say the least, rather discouraging to the latter.

THE press reports state that at a recent meeting of the University Senate, Mr. Kingsford gave notice that he would introduce a statute referring to the granting of pass degrees. This is mysteriously brief. Are not pass degrees already granted? Does the University grant any degrees that are not pass degrees? We do not wish to be ungrateful for small favors, but would it not be as well for the Senate to enable the press to turn on a little more light?

HAS not the Colonial Exhibition Medal and diploma business been somewhat overdone? Or can it be that the school-boys and girls of Ontario have suddenly developed such genius for art as has enabled them to throw their competitors from other colonies into the shade? If medals and diplomas have been distributed broadcast in all the colonial schools as freely as those of Ontario, their value as badges of merit must be pretty near the minimum. If, on the other hand, Ontario boys and girls have been carrying off the lion's share, it looks, to say the least, a little greedy, on their part. It is hardly fair. They should give other less favoured colonies a chance.

To what is the industry and perseverance of modern scientists, especially German scientists, not equal? An exchange tells that a German man of science has taken four heads of hair of equal weight, and proceeded to count the individual hairs. One was of the red variety, and it was found to contain 90,000 hairs. Next comes the black, with 103,000 hairs to its credit. The brown had 109,000 and the blonde 140,000. True, the round figures up to the third and fourth places are a little suspicious, but probably a process of patient generalization will discover some law to account for it. But admitting the accuracy of the count, one can hardly help asking, "What is he going to do about it?"

THE Sarnia case, discussed elsewhere in this issue, suggests one very important question not

touched upon in our article, for want of space. Is it ever wise or right to assign a task,—even ten minutes' work, if it be in the shape of study or school work—as a punishment for misdemeanor? Should not the teacher sedulously avoid everything which tends to associate the idea of study with that of pain or punishment? Time was when it was quite customary to prescribe the memorizing of so many verses of Scripture as the penalty for offence against school law. A more ready way of teaching the child to dislike the sacred volume it would be hard to devise. The principle involved is of wide application. Pupils should be led to regard mental exercise as a delight, not as a task, assuredly not as a punishment.

COMMENTING on the death of Dr. Roswell D. Hitchcock, late President of Union Theological Seminary, New York, the *Christian Union* says: "As a rule, the more successful the teacher the less eminent. Like the deep reservoirs of water in the earth, which find the roots of vegetation when all the surface soil is dry, the great teacher is a fountain to others; and he rejoices to see the currents of his own life invisible, but showing themselves in the life of those who have fed on him. Like a mint he coins a currency for other's use; and others grow famous or rich on his coinage, while he remains generally poor and comparatively unknown." There is much truth, and a very comforting kind of truth, in these remarks. Many a man and woman are toiling to-day in poverty and obscurity, who are yet wielding an influence deeper and more lasting, setting in operation trains of causes more far-reaching and beneficent, than hundreds of those who are attaining both wealth and fame.

WILL women never learn to be reasonable? What could be more ill-timed and inconsiderate than the conduct of those two young English women, Miss Ramsay, and Miss Hervey, whose names are now in every newspaper? Just at the moment when Mr. Romanes had shewn, with his usual logical precision, in the columns of the *Popular Science Monthly*, the essential inferiority of the female intellect, these two perverse representatives of the sex come to the front at the Cambridge examinations, and actually, in the face of all scientific propriety, distance all their male competitors from the great public schools. Miss Ramsay, after only four years study of Greek, was not content with winning a place at the head of the first division of the first class of the classical Tripos, but had the bad taste to stand alone in that division. The other, Miss Hervey, of Newnham College, did the selfsame thing in the Cambridge Mediæval and Modern Language Tripos. Could female perversity go further?

THE old, old, question "What is the object of life?" has at last received its quietus. Mr. Grant Allen settles it definitively and authoritatively in the July number of *The Forum*. The

question is, he tells us, from the modern evolutionary point of view, "in itself superfluous and meaningless," for it implies "the old, exploded, dogmatic fallacy that the cosmos has been constructed upon a definite plan and with a deliberate design, instead of being, as we now know it to be, the inevitable outcome of unconscious energies." That "we know it to be," settles it. It settles too several other troublesome questions, by showing that nothing, after all, matters much. Above all it tends to free the scientific philosophy of the day from whatever reproach is involved in a confession of limitation in knowledge. The professed agnosticism of modern science, if Mr. Grant Allen may be accepted as its spokesman, is evidently but a bit of over-modest shamming. It evidently knew all about the cosmos all the time, but was too bashful to say so.

THE Minister of Education is, it appears, considering whether a part of the increased lecture-room accommodation needed at University College can be most economically secured by the abolition of the residence. To some of the graduates who lived in the Residence during their university course the proposition seems vandalistic, and strong protests are being uttered. We can readily sympathize with the sentiment underlying such protests, but the question is clearly one to be settled on grounds of public utility, rather than of sentiment. It would, probably, be hard to show that it is, on general principles, any part of the duty of the State to conduct a boarding house for the convenience of a few of the students attending its university. It might, perhaps, be still harder to show, either historically or otherwise, that its attempting to do so is generally conducive to the highest interests of all concerned, the students themselves included. In the present instance the smallness of the number—about 40, we believe—who can be received in the Residence, tends very materially to weaken the force of any solid arguments that can be urged in favor of its retention. If nine-tenths of all the students in attendance must, under any circumstances, find accommodation outside the University walls, there can surely be no great hardship in requiring the remaining one-tenth to do the same.

Special Papers.

A TEACHER'S INFLUENCE.

AN address delivered before the Northumberland Teachers' Association, by Miss Lizzie Staples of Baltimore, Ontario, on June 10th, 1887:—

This subject branches in so many directions, and touches upon such a variety of objects, that, within the limit of the allotted time this morning, we can dwell upon but a few of the many thoughts its careful consideration suggests. I bring it before you, not that I may tell you something new, but that we may together concentrate our thoughts upon it, and start new trains of thought, which we may pursue to our profit.

First, let us consider what influence is. Influence is the power to move or direct—an impulsive power—in other words, the power to change. The