

success... Common Schools will never prosper without Normal Schools. As well might we expect to have coats without a tailor, and hats without a hatter, and watches without a watchmaker, and houses without carpenter or mason, as to have an adequate supply of competent teachers without Normal Schools."

The Executive Committee of the New-York State Normal School remark :

"In closing this Report, the Committee would embrace the opportunity of reiterating the expression of their confidence in the Normal School. After the lapse of another year they are happy to say that nothing has occurred to diminish their confidence in the system, but on the contrary, much has come under their observation which has served to deepen former impressions of the absolute necessity of the Normal School to give completeness and efficiency to our Common School system."

In the mean time, the Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada is about to proceed to the United States and Europe, in order to make the preliminary arrangements for procuring and introducing County, Township, City, Town, Village, and Section School Libraries throughout Upper Canada, according to the plan submitted by him in a letter addressed to the Provincial Secretary, dated 16th July, 1849, printed in the Correspondence on the School Law, (pages 55-57) lately laid before the Legislature, and also published in this *Journal* for June, pp. 88, 89; and he hopes to be able, in the course of next summer and autumn to visit each of the several Counties in Upper Canada, in order to give practical effect to the preparations for these measures for the establishment of Public Libraries, and to advance the various objects of our School system.

We confidently trust, by the Divine Blessing, that Upper Canada will yet be second to no country in America in intellectual advantages, and in the education and intelligence of its people. Some persons have viewed it as quite utopian and presumptuous for us to think of emulating the neighbouring States in our educational institutions and progress. Such persons will, perhaps, scarcely credit the fact, that in some respects little Upper Canada can already begin to compare with the great and older State of New-York in the educational doings of the people. The population of Upper Canada is *three-fourths* that of the State of New-York—the population of the former being three quarters of a million, that of the latter being three millions. Yet, during the first five sessions of the same length (five months each) in the Normal Schools, the attendance of students in Upper Canada was *two-thirds* that of the State of New-York; the average time for keeping the Common Schools open throughout the State of New-York last year was *six months*; the average time of keeping the Common Schools open throughout Upper Canada, was *nine months and a third*; the sum of money raised in the State of New-York last year for the *salaries of teachers* (including the State Fund, local assessments and Rate-bills) was not quite \$700,000; the sum of money raised by the people of Upper Canada during the same year, and for the same purpose, was upwards of \$350,000. These facts speak for themselves; and they should cheer the heart and animate the exertions of every inhabitant of Upper Canada.

PUBLIC COMPETITION FOR PROFESSORSHIPS IN COLLEGES.—A distinguishing feature of the system of Public Instruction in France and Germany, is the appointment of Professors to Colleges and all Seminaries of learning above the primary schools, by *public competition*. The professors and public teachers in these countries are indebted for their positions, not to prerogative or party, but to their own attainments, abilities and merits. The influence of this system upon the conduct and character of enterprising students, can readily be conceived; and its influence in producing the ablest professors and teachers is equally obvious. The public competitions in France, are called *Les Concours*. We find the following interesting account of them in the Paris Correspondence of the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, under date of "Paris, September 5, 1850"—presenting one of the many daily illustrations of the improvements of the age, in the circumstance of a letter written in Paris, transmitted across the Atlantic, printed in New York, sent to Canada, and reprinted here in less than four weeks. We doubt whether the writer of the following paragraphs is an impartial or competent judge of the comparative classical scholarship of English and French Professors; but his partialities do not lessen the interest of his statements. They are as follows:

"Every body has heard of the *Concours* in France, but few Americans can have a precise idea of the meaning of this singular word—so hard to translate exactly. Every professional chair in the Lyceums, as the first class colleges are called, every one in the faculties of letters, theology, law and medicine, every place of assistant in a hospital, is given at the *concours* or public competition. Different tests are adapted for different posts; but they are, with few exceptions, thorough, and result in securing the best professors in the world. When I say the best professors, I do not mean the greatest *savans*, or the men of the best general information, but those who combine accurate knowledge with a gift for imparting it agree-

ably and clearly to others. After hearing the lectures of between forty and fifty of the most learned professors in Germany, and those on the same subjects of the professors of the Sorbonne, College of France and Paris Law College, I take the difference between them to be, that the German professors have read more, have often more profound theories, and a broader philosophy of history, literary and esthetics, but that the French have more clearness, concision and eloquence, a nicer taste, more polished oratorical forms, more readiness in the use of language, and a vast superiority in the method of developments of first principles. This difference might be expected from the different modes adopted for choosing the professors.

A *concours* may last a few days only, or it may last for months. One for a chair in a medical faculty may continue for a year, the judges adjourning from time to time so as to give the candidates time to prepare their written essays.

August and September are the months of vacation in the different colleges, and are of course devoted to the *concours* for different chairs to be given in the University. These all open on the same day. At ten in the forenoon of the day appointed by the Minister, one may see collected in the court of the old Sorbonne, and on the little square in front of the chapel of that venerable institution, several hundred pale-faced gentlemen, all bearded like parades, and dressed in seedy coats and hats once respectable. These are the *savans* of the Lyceums, come up to Paris to pass their vacations in the excitement of disputation and the anxieties of a prolonged *concours*. The Minister has offered chairs of the natural sciences, mathematics, history, geography, philosophy, rhetoric, Latin and Greek, German, and, last of all, English; and for each place there are perhaps twenty candidates. The contests between the candidates take place before the public. Some of the halls are crowded, and others deserted by every body except the candidates and the judges, who, by the way, are generally chosen from among the most distinguished scholars in France.

The Latin and Greek *concours* show the perfection to which the study of these languages is carried in France. Who would not be struck with astonishment on hearing men discuss knotty questions in the tongues of ancient Rome and Athens, or at seeing them sit down under the eyes of the judges to spin out Latin verses as long as one of the books of the *Aeneid*, without making a single error in quantity? The French scholars are said to be vastly superior to the English in the classical studies, and I cannot doubt this after what I have seen. The same praise cannot be given to them as it regards the modern languages. Their own language being so beautiful, containing so rich a literature and spoken by the better classes throughout Europe, they have few inducements to study the languages of their neighbors. The English is more generally known than any other, on account of the growing intercourse between the two countries. Hence it happens that the majority of the judges named for the German *concours* are natives of Germany, France not affording a sufficient number of persons distinguished for their knowledge of the language of Goethe and Schiller; while the three judges of the English *concours* are all Frenchmen, who speak English after the usual amusing manner of the citizens of the "*grande nation*." One of them, the presiding judge, is a member of the Institute, and an excellent mathematician; another is an associate editor of the *Journal des Debats*, charged with the articles of that paper on Germany, England and America; and the third is M. Eichhoff, professor in the faculty of letters at Lyons, and one of the most profound philologists in Europe. His work on the "*Analogies of European and Indian languages*" is one of great research and ability, and has already been translated into the principal tongues of Europe. He speaks English with great purity, but with a French accent.

To give our readers a correct idea of what is done at a *concours*, I select the English one for description. Forty-two candidates were admitted to compete for the five professorships offered. Ten of this number declined before the *concours* began. The rest assembled on the 21st of August, in a hall of the Sorbonne. The first trial was a written translation of two pages of an English author into French, to be done in the presence of the judges and of the other candidates, and within five hours; the second was a translation of the same number of pages of a French author into English; the third, a critical dissertation in French on the play of Hamlet; and the fourth a moral essay, in English, on solitude. Each of these trials occupied a day, and at the end of them the intermission of a week took place, to give time to the judges to examine and decide on the merits of the different compositions. Those of the candidates who had written the best, were reserved to the number of sixteen; the others were rejected. After this thinning of the ranks, the oral trials were commenced.

These are of two kinds; first, the oral translation of English and French authors drawn by lot from a list of nine in each language, published nine months beforehand by the Minister; and secondly, the lecture on a grammatical subject also drawn by lot. In each of these the candidate has an antagonist whose business it is to expose his errors, and display his own superior knowledge of the author and of the English, French, Greek and Latin languages. Questions are put not only on construction, but on the philosophy and formation of language, on etymology, on the history of literature, on the principles of criticism,—in short, on all subjects from comparative philology down to technical grammar. The same war of cross-questions is kept up on the closing trial of the lecture, which is delivered in English. When the antagonists do not press each other with sufficient vigor, the judges interfere with questions of their own. When all the trials are concluded, the judges declare the *concours* ended, and take several days to compare notes and decide on the comparative merit of the candidates. The decision is published in the *Moniteur*, the official Government organ.

All the other *concours* are conducted on the same general principle, and I believe no system has been devised which is better calculated, under competent judges, to secure ability in teachers. It is in this way that all the professors are chosen for the numerous colleges under the control of the state. Every member of the vast university of France has passed through the gate of the *concours*. The reputation of most of the great doctors and surgeons of France is owing, in a great measure, to the long and careful preparation necessary to carry them safely through the series of *concours* which lie between a young man and high station in the medical faculty. Several of the world-renowned treatises on surgery, and other branches of medical science, published at Paris were written as essays for the *concours*. The introduction of this institution into America is practicable to a certain extent, and might tend to elevate not only the standard of classical learning, but that of medical science."