

## Correspondence.

### SCOPE OF VERBAL CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY.

SIR,—I very much regret having used the expression, "Education Department," as they so detestably call it." It is in bad taste, and conveys, moreover, a wrong impression. Whatever functions he may discharge, to that of a "jurist" one can certainly lay no claim, who is guilty of such a sentence as, "How we may best do our work, and what are its highest possibilities, is a question of great moment," or of such an amazing *dormital* as Jason for Absyrtus, or of the ambiguous "it" near the close. And I should be far from wishing the doubtful distinction.

Evidently you take that unfortunate remark to be meant as an objection to the adjectival use of substantives. This had not even occurred to me. The question of propriety in the use of such expressions as "Education Department" is almost as subjective as the quantitative distinction once urged between "quantity" and "quiddity." Indeed, I am not sure that "Education Department" is not the English phrase. It occurs in Herbert Spencer's "The New Toryism."

With regard to the expression, "Toronto University," it is surely as indefensible as gravely to call William Smith, Bill Smith. Such is no more its name than is "Paris University" that of the "University of Paris," or "Oxford University" that of the "University of Oxford," or, on the other hand, the "University of Harvard" that of "Harvard University."

By making that unhappy remark I fear I have almost destroyed a protest which I wished to urge very strongly against all criticism of this kind, in an educational way, on the ground that it only tends to lower the standing of the profession and to produce an evil educational effect.

We may leave out of the question any influence we are likely to exert on our authors. An educational publication is, at least, not the first thing to which they will turn for instruction or recreation. And we may admit, for the sake of argument, that such verbal and grammatical criticism has its place, though, to my mind, this is far from proven.

I have myself to acknowledge that in the appreciation and study of English literature I have derived an assistance from Latin and Greek which I cannot well over-estimate, and which I know not how else I could have obtained. The value of a knowledge of the Latin period is becoming year after year so increasingly evident to me, that I verily believe about the best guide to formal composition in English—in the matter of rhythm, in the arrangement of words and clauses, and their combination into paragraphs, is, odd as it may sound, Dr. Pott's "Hints to Latin Prose Composition."

Now, in the study of composition in Latin or in any foreign language, who has ever thought of looking for errors in his great models? And who would think of exhibiting them to his pupils as warnings. To point out such in Cicero or Livy to a boy studying their style, learning to compose, in the only way which will ever be devised—by composing—would, in my judgment, be the most pernicious method imaginable. But it would have

another evil result. It would belittle the author; and yet the greatness of his substance and the beauty of his style are sufficiently hard to bring out vividly.

Let us then grant, for the moment, that for this negative system of teaching there is a time. Compared with the higher duties of work how small a place must it occupy!

Those to whom it shall fall next summer to examine the pupils of this Province in the "literature" which they have studied, will probably see that, in the majority of cases, the most lasting impressions received of Macaulay's Essay, and the few poems of Coleridge, will be very much after the following type: Macaulay was a great writer, who once lived in India, and wrote essays for his living. His essay on Warren Hastings is the best of them all. In it we see that he never uses participles absolutely, or foreign words, or "only" in the wrong place, etc., etc. Coleridge was a great English poet, who drank a quart of laudanum each week. He ran away from Cambridge University and enlisted in a company of soldiers. He wrote the "Ancient Mariner," because he needed some money to visit the Valley of Stones. This poem is a very great one, containing some excellent rhymes but also some very bad ones, and many words which are now no longer used, etc., etc.

I trust I may be pardoned for putting this side uppermost. But in sober earnest do not our inverted methods of studying English literature show the same strange want of proportion?

W. S. MILNER.

P.S.—Having just taken up the New York *Nation* I find the most pitiable instance of this verbal, quibbling criticism that I have ever seen. It is, however, encouraging in one respect, for criticism can go no further in that direction. I refer to the communication of "W.H.B.," who is exercised over the "difference in meaning between the 'at all' pronounced as two words, and 'at-all' pronounced as one!"

W. S. M.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

[All communications for this department must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, though not necessarily for publication. Correspondents are requested to confine their questions to educational and literary subjects. Following the example of "Notes and Queries," the "Lancet," and other periodicals, the greater number of questions will be printed without answers, correspondents being invited to communicate answers, to be inserted in following issues. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

ANSWER TO Q. NO. 4:

I. 12 lbs. yarn are manufactured from  $13\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. wool.

1 lb. yarn is manufactured from  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. wool.

$\therefore B$  receives for spinning  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. wool 11c.

$\therefore B$  receives for spinning 1 lb. wool  $\frac{1}{4}$  of  $\frac{1}{4}$  =  $\frac{1}{16}$  c.

$\therefore$  Each lb. of wool  $B$  receives, pays for spinning  $35 \div \frac{1}{16} = 3\frac{7}{8}$  lbs. wool.

Or  $B$  gets 1 lb. from  $4\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. of wool, i.e.,  $1 \div 4\frac{1}{4}$  of all wool, or  $\frac{4}{18\frac{1}{4}}$  of 150 lb., =  $32\frac{2}{3}$  lbs. of wool.

II. Hence  $B$  spins  $150 - 32\frac{2}{3} = 117\frac{1}{3}$  lbs. of wool for  $A$ .

From  $117\frac{1}{3}$  lbs. wool  $A$  gets  $\frac{1}{4}$  of  $117\frac{1}{3}$  =  $102\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. of yarn.—W. S. R.

NOTE.—The question is shorter by algebra.  
W. S. R.

No. 16. Q.—At what time between 4 and 5 o'clock is the minute-hand twice as many minutes past 12 as the hour-hand?—W. B.

No. 17. Q.—What would be considered a good time table for an "ungraded" school having all classes from First to Fifth, inclusive?—W.H.J.

## Educational Intelligence.

MORE than sixty young men from Nova Scotia are this year studying in colleges or universities outside that province.

THE Vienna High School which was abolished by the Elgin Council of 1885, has been re-established by the council at its present session, and a grant of \$700 given towards its maintenance.

THE number of pupils on the Guelph Separate School rolls for the year ending 31st December, 1885, was 375. Average attendance, 218 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Aggregate number of days pupils attended school, 19,174.

MR. GEORGE WARD, B.A., late principal of Brighton High School, also of Orillia High School, has been appointed classical master of Cobourg Collegiate Institute in succession to Mr. C. C. James, who has been appointed professor of chemistry in the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph.

MITCHELL High School is in a flourishing condition though badly in need of more accommodation. At present there are two masters with 95 pupils. It has become necessary to make temporary seats and to utilize the private room of the head master, that the pupils attending may be seated.—*Mitchell Recorder*.

AT the last session of the Peterborough County Council, that part of the Finance Committee report recommending that no grant be given to either the Peterborough Collegiate Institute or the Norwood High School, was not amended. These two educational institutions will, therefore, receive no special assistance from the County.

THE following compose the teaching staff of the Barrie Model School for 1886: Principal, T. O. Steele. Assistants: Messrs. R. R. Jennison and George Henderson; and Misses L. D. Lee, E. King, E. Appelbe, E. Lee, E. C. Boys, A. Bird, A. Morris, L. Booth and J. Caldwell. The number of teachers in training last session of model school was 33, all of whom passed.

INSPECTOR MALLOCH, in his report, says of the teachers of Clinton Public and Model School: "Of the staff of teachers for the year, six of these were in the employ of your board during the year 1884, and all that I reported of them, relative to their efficiency and success, is equally applicable for the year 1885." He also speaks highly of Miss Simpson, Miss Helyer and Miss Leslie.—*Clinton New Era*.