

where there is not the desire to remain for a full course at a high school, it would be more profitable to remain at a good public school, and continue and perfect those branches of study that would be of real value in the various occupations of life.

But you may ask here, is it not desirable for those who purpose taking a full high school and university course to begin the study of classics at an earlier age than that at which most would be able to finish the work of the fifth class. This is a debatable question, but we incline to the belief that they should, and we think that any difficulty in the way might be overcome by township boards of trustees making provision in two or more schools in each township where the elements of classics might be taught. In graded schools there should be no difficulty.

Let us now look how this early drain on our public schools affects more particularly the country sections. When the more advanced pupils leave for the high school the senior classes are practically broken up. Here a hardship very often occurs. A and B, who are in good circumstances, are at the high school. C and D, who could attend in their own section, but cannot afford to pay for board and other expenses incident upon attending a high school, are practically excluded from further school advantages. If you say the gain in the one case balances the loss in the other, we answer No, for had a good class been maintained in the public school the advantages to A and B, for a year at least, would be equal to what they are in the high school. Then there is another element we must not overlook here, namely, the loss of home influence to those who leave the parental roof too young. We wish to emphasize the fact that this moral side of the question should not be lost sight of. It appears to us reasonable that the public school course should last until the pupil of average ability could safely be trusted away from home. There are parents who send their unmanageable boys away to school at a distance for the purpose of getting rid of them for the time being. This, however, is not as it should be, neither is it an argument against the ground we have taken.

The usual result of such a case as we have been supposing, when the higher classes in the public schools have been broken up, is, that the trustees in their wisdom begin to consider that a cheaper teacher will answer their section just as well. The efficient teacher is then discharged on the score of poverty, and the cheaper one, and in nearly every case the inferior one, is installed in office. Soon a good many ratepayers will suddenly discover that the sections are too large—that the schoolhouse is too far away for such small children—that it would be better to have smaller sections and the cheaper teachers, forgetting that in the long run they pay more for the education of their children—that the quality of the education is not so good as in a larger school with a better teacher. Almost any inspector can tell you that a small school is rarely a good one.

Again, this is perhaps not the worst feature of the system. The more the standing of the public schools is reduced, the greater the number of good teachers who leave the profession. So in this way under this system the profession is constantly liable to lose its best members.

Our argument, then, from what has been said, if, that the Entrance Examinations, if continued, should, in the interest alike of the pupils and of the teaching profession, be placed at the end of the fifth class.

### THE STUDY OF ENGLISH.

BY WILLIAM HOUSTON, M. A.

Mr. Houston's address on the "Study of English" was largely devoted to the illustration and enforcement of the assertion that the present methods in schools, colleges, and universities are highly defective, as we have been occupied in teaching and studying about English rather than in teaching and studying English. Instead of acquiring an intelligent and useful acquaintance with the structure of the language we cram treatises on formal grammar; instead of acquiring by dint of wisely-directed practice facility in composition, we try to become good writers by mastering treatises on rhetoric; and instead of obtaining our ideas of the works of classical authors from a perusal of these works themselves we accept the estimates given of them by the writers of encyclopedic histories of English literature. The result is a painful deficiency in ordinary speech and writing, and many inexcusable defects even in the works of authors of high reputation. After dwelling briefly on the import-

ance of "English" in a system of education Mr. Houston proceeded to define the term as including (1) the right use of the language, spoken as well as written; (2) capacity to appreciate literature rather than actual acquaintance with literary works; (3) the formal science of language as dealt with in grammar, and the related sciences of logic and rhetoric; and (4) philology, including the constituent elements of the language, its history, and its relations to other dialects, languages, and groups of languages. In connection with the first of these topics the lecturer advocated constant practice, under judicious guidance, of both composition and analysis, leaving the theory to be picked up incidentally, at least until after the entrance to the high school or to the upper classes of the public school. He advocated also greater attention to orthoepy instead of devoting so much to orthography, and to the banishment from school and neighborhood of all prevailing errors of speech. The study of literature he defined as an attempt (1) to comprehend the author's meaning, (2) to enter into his spirit, and (3) to appreciate his work as an artist. This study should be commenced as soon as the child begins to read, and even before, the memory being stored with beautiful gems of poetry, which has a strong fascination for even very young children. The proper use of literature in our schools is prevented partly by the nature of the department and university examinations, partly by the use of excerpts of texts at the entrance examination. Mr. Houston then described briefly how such a poem as Longfellow's "Evangeline" should be taken up in a public school. It should first be read through aloud by the class without any attempt at explanation by the teacher except in answer to questions, and this should be repeated several times in order to enable the pupils to get for themselves as much as possible of the benefit to be obtained by mastering it. The poem should next be read through in order to afford the teacher an opportunity of ascertaining by judicious questioning the extent to which the pupils have been individually impressed with beauties of form, cadence, rhyme, onomatopoeic passages and the more obvious figures of speech. It should then be read for the purpose of calling attention to grammatical and philological difficulties, to metrical structure, poetical licence, etc. The object of the matter may then be taken up, and his fidelity to historical truth may be investigated in the light of Varinon's "Montcalm and Wolfe." "Evangeline" may then be compared with other poems by the same author—with "Miles Standish" in point of form, with "Hiawatha" in absence of rhyme, and with the rhymed poems of Longfellow, passages and brief poems being memorized. Lastly, a brief study may be made of the author's life and work. The folly of taking up the formal science of grammar and theology at too early a stage and in the ordinary way were next illustrated, the lecturer paying, in closing, a high tribute to philology as a subject of education.

### Educational Notes and News.

#### DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS.

We print the following complete list of candidates who passed the non-professional examinations in July:—

ALEXANDRIA.—Second Class, Grade B—K. McLennan, T. Sturrock. Third Class—M. J. Munroe, A. McDonald.

ALMONTE.—Third Class—M. A. McCoy, M. Raleigh, E. Thompson, J. Ballantyne, S. J. Drummond, W. J. James, J. W. Kemp, W. D. McLaren, W. J. Thorn, J. Ellis, A. A. Lang, A. Young, A. Ruttle. Second Class—W. D. McIntosh, Grade A; A. Hayden, A. W. J. Bolton, Grade B; C. Stewart, B; M. A. Boyle, B.

ARNSFORD.—Third Class—K. E. Halpenney, J. Russell, L. C. Slack, F. A. Mohr, M. A. Lester. Second Class—C. H. Kenny, Grade A.

ALYMER.—Third Class—M. Baker, J. A. Ingram, J. F. Martin, M. McCord, M. Pound, H. McIntyre, G. F. Smith, E. Brown, E. Wickett. Second Class—J. Baker, Grade A; F. D. Class, A; R. Hill, B; C. E. Jay, B; E. Killmer, A; W. E. Killmer, B; J. B. Ogilvie, B; D. N. Stickney, B; J. Trotter, B; L. Gray, B; N. Inglis, A; G. Fowler, B; G. W. Wallace, B; E. Farr, B; L. Livingstone, B.

BARRIE.—Third Class—A. E. Dymont, A. W. Crow, J. A. McLean, N. Campbell, J. G. McKeo, E. Little, H. I. Sneath, G. A. Rix, F. C. Whitelock, J. A. Colwell, A. E. Anderson, M. Curtis,