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J. E. WELLS, M.A. Editor.

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Editorial Notes.

FROM the returns brought down by the Minister of Education since the opening of the Session, it appears that out of about 7,800 Public school teachers in the Province not less than 6,900 are members of the Institutes. These annual or semi-annual meetings of members of the profession ought to have, and no doubt do have, a very beneficial influence in stimulating professional enthusiasm, awakening thought, and suggesting new and improved methods of teaching and government.

THE Ontario Government is publishing the "Toronto University Studies in Political Science," edited by Professor Ashley. We have not yet seen the volume, but the first essay of the series is, we understand, a paper on "The Ontario Township," by J. McEvoy, a member of the Political Economy class. Professor Ashley says: "These studies, like those carried on in the Universities of Germany, France and the United States, are made in the belief that the State can be studied in the same spirit that the biologist brings to the observation of animal organism, or the mathematician to the manipulation of numbers—that is, with absolute impartiality and truthfulness." This means, we presume, that the principles of the inductive philosophy are to be rigidly applied to the study of Canadian institutions and problems. Why not? The only scientific mode of studying Political Economy, or anything else, is first to carefully observe, and collect the *data*, and then to study, classify and generalize. We are glad to learn that Professor Ashley is taking hold of the subject in this spirit, instead of bringing cut and dried theories, and trying to fit the facts to them—the too common method.

OUR thanks are due to Professor Fletcher and Mr. Shannon, of Queen's University, for the explanations which they have kindly sent in reply to the editorial note in our last number. We are glad to receive the corrections with regard to the character of the mis-called Preparatory Department, and the date of its establishment. It is certainly to be regretted that students in the advanced years of a University course should be obliged to give a portion of time and energy to the study of the elementary facts and principles that should have been mastered in the preparatory course. We quite agree with our correspondents, that such preparatory classes are, to a certain extent, inevitable so long as students are admitted to University classes without Matriculation, and Senior or

advanced Matriculation is permitted. At the same time, the practice must react injuriously both on the Intermediate or High schools, and on the work of the Universities. It is, in the nature of things, impossible that the Sophomore or Junior can read his advanced Classics with full profit and enjoyment, while he is so imperfectly acquainted with the grammar and structure of the language as to need elementary drill; nor can he give time to the latter, save at the expense of the proper work of his year. The subject is a difficult one, and demands fuller consideration than can be given in a hasty note.

THE last number of the *Popular Science Monthly* has an article upon "Public Schools as Affecting Vice and Crime," by Benjamin Reece, which is worthy of serious thought. It is an attack upon the doctrine that the "instruction of our Public schools serves to ennoble the emotions and to moderate the passions, to regenerate the viciously-inclined and to correct and subdue the tendency to crime." The attack is sustained by a most formidable array of facts and figures. For example, it is shown that though educational facilities have been largely increased in the last forty years, the ratio of prisoners to the population has increased. In 1850 there was one prisoner in every 3,422 inhabitants, in 1860 one in 1,647, in 1870 one in 1,021 and in 1880 one in 837. Commenting upon the above and similar statistics, a thoughtful writer in the *Toronto Globe* shows their real significance as follows:

"At the first glance these statistics appear to indicate the startling fact that education is actually a source of crime. But a closer examination does not bear out this view. It is shown that saloons, wealth, education, crime and insanity appear to grow together. But there is no warrant for putting down education as the cause of all the rest. The fact is that the different elements act and re-act upon one another. Education is, no doubt, one of the causes of the accumulation of wealth. Wealth is one of the causes of a liberal provision for education; it may also have some part in the greater consumption of liquor and the greater number or saloons. The saloons must surely be charged with a large proportion of the insanity and crime. Mr. Reece says that where the extremes of poverty and wealth prevail, as in the Eastern States, there is found a maximum of moral and mental derangement, and that where wealth is more evenly distributed there is less insanity and crime. It would surely be more reasonable to lay the blame of the prevalency of insanity and crime upon luxury and poverty than to lay it upon education."

The real lesson to be learned is not less education but better education, more attention to the moulding of character and the training of the moral as well as the intellectual nature.