

CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

THE PRINCIPALSHIP OF THE
BRANTFORD BLIND ASYLUM.*To the Editor of the C. E. Monthly:*

Sir,—Webster, the great American orator and lawyer, once said with reference to the large number of mediocre men to be found in the profession of law, "There is room enough above, but they are terribly crowded down below." Now the very remark concedes that in that profession there is an "above" which legal men can aspire to and reach. Can it be said that there is any "above" to which the teachers of this Province can aspire? Many deny this, and say that there are no prizes in the teaching profession to lure a teacher on to reach the highest attainable excellence. It is true that the industrious and successful public school teacher may step from that position to a public school inspectorship or a mastership in a High School. But what prizes are open to the Masters of High Schools? We answer, very few; almost none compared with the number that are within the reach of successful men of other professions and callings. The clever and successful lawyer, besides large and increasing fees in his practice, may hope without fail to become county attorney, county court judge, vice-chancellor, one of the judges of the higher courts, chief justice, etc.;—the able and eloquent clergyman may aspire to be canon, dean, bishop, college professor, and if a popular preacher may dictate the terms on which he will consent to fill a metropolitan pulpit;—the gifted and distinguished medical man may reap in the guineas as consultation fees so far that he can afford to disregard the behests of even royalty itself; the astute and shrewd man of business may make himself opulent by numerous openings and die a millionaire. I have yet to be convinced

that the abilities, talents, energy, and education—the qualities of mind, head, and hand necessary to make a successful master of a large Public School, are of an order inferior to those which bring distinction and opulence to their owners, when devoted to the callings mentioned above. On the contrary, I am satisfied that these qualifications would have insured success and wealth, if they had been directed to any other calling, and yet, who ever heard of a teacher becoming rich or dying a millionaire?

It is no uncommon thing for us Head Masters to hear of a former pupil of twelve or ten years ago, or even less, who has gone into law, or medicine, a scientific or business life, making his \$1,500, \$1,800, \$2,000, and more a year, while we who gave them their start, go on plodding year after year for a paltry \$1,000 or \$1,200, which is moreover often begrudged us by the portion of the community for whom we work.

The topmost height to which a High School Master, whose career has been attended with marked success, can hope to attain is limited to the three High School inspectorships and the principalship of the three or four public institutions of a semi-educational character under the immediate care of the Government. I allude of course to the Agricultural College at Guelph, the Asylum for the Blind at Brantford, the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Belleville, and the Reformatory at Penetanguishene.

I contend that the principalships of these Government institutions are, and ought to be, prizes to which High School Masters may reasonably aspire; for by adopting the profession of teaching they devote themselves to the service of the country, and thereby sacrifice, as I have shewn, their future prospects of advancement and gain. By the