

all men may admire the courage and discipline displayed, but few will be able to find in the kind of training which leads to such results a means of the highest development of the rational powers.

ACCORDING to Mr. Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, the two chief subjects of legislation during the Session of the Imperial Parliament which commenced yesterday will be the extension of Local Government to Scotland, and the increase of the Navy. There will probably be but feeble opposition to the large appropriation which will, it is understood, be asked for the latter purpose, but, none the less, expenditure in the building and equipment of war ships must be, in these days, a peculiarly discouraging investment. If only there could be brought about, as Mr. Goschen suggests, "a disarmament of inventors," Parliament might proceed with some confidence to vote large sums of money for strengthening the navy according to the latest and most improved methods. But that being out of the question there is, we suppose, nothing to be done but to go on building and fitting out vessels at enormous cost, with full consciousness of the fact that they may be any day rendered comparatively worthless by some new application of inventive science. It might perhaps be quite as useful and more logical to wish that the inventors may make still better speed, and soon render the race of competition so expensive and hopeless that the nations will be constrained to find some more sensible and Christian means of settling their disputes than that whose chief dependence is now upon the chance of hitting upon the most efficient and terrible apparatus for destruction.

POLITICAL events are following each other in rapid succession at the French capital, and no one can foresee what new complications a day may bring forth. The defeat and resignation of M. Floquet's ministry took place sooner than might have been expected, after the vote of confidence, and their success in passing the Bill for returning to the *scrutin d'arrondissement* system of election of deputies. It must be admitted, however, that M. Floquet's weak and vacillating policy, and especially his illogical half-measures in regard to the reform of the Constitution, which is Boulanger's strong card, challenged the fate which has overtaken his Cabinet. If the Constitution needs revision,—and that the people seem to have decreed,—it is evident that the revision, to be satisfactory, must be carried out by a body of representatives specially elected for the purpose by the nation. For a tottering administration, having the confidence of but a section of a chamber elected without any reference to so serious a duty, to undertake a revision of their own motion would be suspicious, and pretty sure to be regarded as a farce. At the present moment M. Meline's attempt to form a Ministry seems to have collapsed. Whether any one upon whom President Carnot can call will be able to succeed better in patching up even a temporary Cabinet remains to be seen. The events of the next few days can hardly fail to have an important influence upon the destiny of the French Republic. As it seems certain that Boulanger is to have his chance, perhaps it may be as well if it is given him at once. Possibly to force responsibility upon him would be the readiest way of causing him to find his level.

THE advances made by Japan during the last quarter of a century in the direction of freedom and constitutional government is probably without a parallel in the history of eastern nations. Commencing with the resumption by the Mikado in 1868 of the supreme authority, of which he had previously held only the shadow, and the military chief the substance, the course of the nation has been one of steady and rapid political progression. In 1871 the feudal system was abolished and the Government became simply an absolute monarchy, the Mikado being aided by councils whose functions were mainly administrative. In 1875 a further step was taken in the creation of a Senate for legislative deliberations, and this was followed in 1881 by the constitution of a body corresponding to a Council of State, which exercised to some extent both legislative and administrative powers. Now, in fulfilment of a promise made six or seven years ago, the Mikado has issued a decree announcing a constitution. The particulars yet to hand are but meagre. It is stated, however, that a House of Peers and a House of Representatives are to be established. The members of the former are to be partly hereditary, partly elective, and partly nominated by the Mikado; those of the latter, three hundred in number, are to be elected by constituencies composed of male citizens, not less than twenty-five

years old and taxed to the extent of not less than \$25. These assemblies are to have legislative functions. They have also, though with some limitations not clearly indicated, the control of the purse, which assures the reality of their powers. With a view to the consummation now reached, several years have been spent in the study of the principal European systems, but, so far as appears, the British Parliament has supplied the main features of the model.

PRINCIPAL GRANT ON MATRICULATION.

PRINCIPAL GRANT is a man whom most persons will allow to be possessed of a large measure of "sweetness and light." His gentleness and geniality are proverbial and widely known. But Dr. Grant's sweetness "walks in the light," and so walking it discerns objects and incidents which do not strengthen its outward manifestations, however little they may affect its internal quality. "Speaking the truth in love" is a process which frequently seems characterised by the former quality a good deal more than by the latter; and we shall not wonder if such reflections arise in many minds on the perusal of the Principal's remarks on University matters at the recent meeting of the Queen's University Council at Kingston.

It may, perhaps, be remembered by the readers of THE WEEK that not very long ago we drew attention to a speech of Professor Watson's, we believe, in connection with the opening of the University year, in which he set forth, with moderation and emphasis, the defects and needs of University education in this country. Among other things mentioned he drew special attention to the subjects for matriculation, and spoke of the advisableness of a conference being held by the representatives of the various Universities with the view of devising some better kind of examination for men entering the Universities.

Principal Grant has discussed this subject at considerable length, and the importance of his utterance is unquestionable. On some points it may be necessary to suspend judgment; but on others there is no room for difference of opinion. In the first place, the Matriculation examination must almost entirely determine the standard of University education, because it declares the starting point of the teaching. A man who cannot pass that examination is declared to be disqualified for receiving the kind of instruction which is given in the institution by which the examination is held. One who does pass understands that he takes up his studies at the point indicated by the examination to which he has been subjected.

Only those perhaps who have experience in University teaching will fully understand what this means; but it must be clear to any one who will take the trouble to think on the subject that it makes all the difference in the world whether those introductory examinations are properly conducted or not. A young man who enters a University without the requisite preparation is simply going to waste his time and probably, to some extent, the time of others as well. He is making believe to get a University education which he is not getting. He is helping to lower the tone of teaching in the University, as well as the tone of his fellow students, and their estimate of the work which they have to do. Even if, by means of coaching and cramming, he manages at last to get a degree, he has got no real education, that is to say, no fitness for the business of life.

One example may be made of this kind of thing, and one which is intelligible to any one will suffice. It is asserted by Professors of Classics in our Universities that young men enter their classes without even a knowledge of Latin Grammar. It is quite possible to read English books and understand them without much knowledge of grammar. It is impossible in the same way to read Latin books. It is a well known maxim—You must understand an English sentence before you can parse it; but you must parse a Latin sentence before you can understand it. As a consequence these poor fellows have no resource but in translations—"cribs," as they are called; and we can understand the heartless work of picking out the Latin word and fitting it to the English one which corresponds with it in the translation. And this is called education! Of course it is not education in any sense of the word. It is indeed difficult to imagine any process much less helpful to the development of the intelligence, much more destructive of true mental and moral culture.

"The worst of all shams," says Principal Grant, "must be a sham or pretentious University; and if there is pretentiousness at the beginning it is likely to be found all through the course." Precisely so; and the illustration

just given falls exactly under the principle thus stated. But the importance of Matriculation is seen not merely in its effect on the Universities, but equally in its determining the kind of education given in the High Schools. Of course there are many educated in these schools who never proceed to the University. But one principal work which they are bound to have in view is the preparation for the University Matriculation; and gradually they will get to know what is then and there expected of them. If careful, accurate work is expected they will provide it. If a quantity of crude, careless, inaccurate work will suffice, that article will be furnished. We have already expressed our fear that until our demands in the way of quantity are reduced, we cannot reasonably expect much improvement in quality.

Principal Grant plainly tells us that our Matriculation standard is lower than it is in England, America, or Australia. He finds it reasonable that it should be lower than in Germany, perhaps than it is in England and America; but he sees no reason why it should be below Australia. We are not quite sure that we can quite go here with the learned Principal. Whether Australia is richer than Canada, or has more enthusiasm for education, we do not know. But it is certain that the Professors in Australian Universities are much more highly paid than they are in this country; and this difference tells in many ways: it is both cause and effect.

But the Principal is not contented with pointing out the evil. He is further bent upon discovering the cause and clearing himself and his own University. One of the causes of the present undesirable state of things is the diversity of the Matriculation examinations. "In consequence," the Principal remarks, "High School masters were worried and their time was wasted. Out of four candidates for Matriculation, one might be preparing for Toronto, one for Queen's, one for Trinity, and one for Victoria. The teacher then had four classes on his hands where he ought to have had one. The only advantage of this chaos was that each of the boys could go home and say that he was at the head of the class." Principal Grant declares his inability to understand any benefit that could result from such a system, although he seems to imply that it gave one University an opportunity of underselling the others.

It was the complaint of "friends of the Provincial University" that it was impossible for them to raise their standard because of "the low standard in the other Universities." Principal Grant's answer to this complaint seems very complete. He induced the Senate of Queen's to accept the Toronto matriculation. But every kind of difficulty seems to have been thrown in his way. We will mention some of these difficulties, although we shall abstain from commenting upon them until we can hear what the friends of the University of Toronto have to say in reply. In the meantime we may remark that some of these facts are very wonderful; for, whatever the reply may be, we are quite sure that Principal Grant has not misrepresented the facts.

In the first place he states that the percentage required at Queen's is higher than that demanded by the University of Toronto. In the second place (we are not giving the points in the same order as the Principal does) the Senate of Queen's addressed a communication to the University of Toronto proposing to have a common Matriculation Examination, and did not even receive an answer to their proposal. He also states that actual difficulties have been thrown in the way of the other Universities obtaining the programme of the University of Toronto. And further, that, when the three other Universities arranged to have a common Matriculation, instead of being aided by the Education department, they were practically discouraged and hindered.

We have put these facts in their barest form; but it would be well for those who are interested in the subject—everyone ought to feel an interest in it—to read the whole of Principal Grant's able and outspoken address. We confess to having ourselves read it with something of despondency and heart-sinking. It is hardly credible that a great school of learning like the University of Toronto, supported by public funds, and therefore independent in a sense which cannot be predicated of the other Universities which have been established and are maintained by those who represent their principles—it is hardly credible that this great University, instead of leading the way in raising the character of our higher education, should be discouraging the efforts of the other Universities in that direction. We do not say that this is so; but we say that this is the natural meaning of the statements of Dr. Grant; and we must wait to hear the reply of the friends of the University of Toronto, before we can decide whether they are susceptible of another explanation.