

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures.

SIR,—In the January number of your journal there appeared a programme of a system of Examinations, in various departments of study, of members of Mechanics' Institutes in Upper Canada, proposed to be held annually by the Board of Arts and Manufactures; the first of which was announced to take place in May of the present year.

Not having heard that such an examination has been held, and feeling somewhat curious to know whether any candidates have presented themselves from the fifty or sixty Mechanics' Institutes in this section of the Province, I take the liberty of asking you for information on the subject.

I notice in the number of the *Society of Arts Journal* for May 31st, that the examination by that Society for the present year had been concluded, and that there were thirty-six successful candidates for money prizes, and 653 for first, second and third class certificates.

The subjects for examination were nearly the same as contained in the programme of your Board, and embrace almost every branch of study of value to practical men.

In analysing the occupations of the various candidates to whom the money prizes and certificates were awarded, I find that there were 239 clerks and book-keepers, 60 teachers, 137 mechanics and manufacturers in sixty-four different branches of trade, 35 warehousemen, 28 pupils of Institutes, 8 draughtsmen, 14 chemists, 26 pupils of architects, engineers and surveyors, 24 grocers, drapers and salesmen, 7 revenue, excise and civil service officers, 7 booksellers and stationers, and 4 reporters; and the remainder were gardeners, letter-carriers, artists, dress-makers, miners, housekeepers, farmers, dentists, governesses, agents, messengers, engine drivers, timekeepers, auctioneers, merchants, police constables, and persons engaged in various other industrial pursuits.

I have no doubt but the good effected in England by the establishment of these examinations has been very extensive, as it has brought into active operation a well digested system of class education, in connection with the various mechanics' and other institutes in union with the Society; and has been the means of affording instruction annually to some thousands of the adults and youths of the industrial classes, who, being actively engaged in business, would otherwise have had no favorable opportunities of improving their minds, and fitting themselves for their several occupations.

We cannot hope to see, in our time, as complete organizations of classes by the Institutes here as in England; but still, much may be done if the efforts are only made and persisted in; and when the proposed examinations of the Board shall be successfully carried out, there is no doubt but the holders of its certificates of competency, proficiency, &c., in any particular department of study, will possess very great advantages

over their fellows, in the ready obtaining of employment at liberal rates of remuneration.

Yours, &c.,

A MEMBER T. M. I.

Toronto, June 18, 1861.

[No candidates offered themselves at the time appointed, owing, no doubt, to the comparatively short notice given by the Board of the intended examination. We are informed, however, that classes have been organized in some of the Institutes, with a view to preparing themselves for the next session.—ED. JOUR.]

Toronto, 17th May, 1861.

To the Editor of the Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures.

SIR,—I was very much pleased upon the receipt of the May number of your valuable journal, to notice a letter signed "A member T. M. I." I am right glad to see the gauntlet thus thrown down by your correspondent, for I am sure that many will unite with him in saying, "I have been anxiously looking for correspondence on the subject as each issue of the Journal has appeared, but have so far had to look in vain."

I exceedingly regret Mr. Editor that so much apathy should be found to exist among those who interest themselves in the Mechanics' Institutes of Upper Canada; evidently something needs to be done to clothe the "Dry Bones" with life, health and vigour. There is the material Sir, or I should rather say (to continue the figure) there is the body,—the question is, who shall be the first to suggest the means of imparting a healthy tone to it? There are, I doubt not, many Institutes in the Upper Province in good and successful working order, and the question naturally suggests itself how and why they are so? This question is a pertinent one, of considerable importance, inasmuch as they are the exception, instead of being, as they might and should be, the rule. I feel convinced that if we could get together the managers or leading men from the successful and from the unsuccessful Institutes, that in addition to the knowledge the one might be able to impart to the other, they would infuse such a spirit of industry and enterprise into the indolent and lethargic, as would enable them to prosecute with vigour, that with which they are connected.

My plan is then, to form for Upper Canada an union of Mechanics' Institutes, one of the objects of which should be to meet annually or oftener at some central place, in a kind of conference such as is suggested by, "Appendix E, Hand Book of Mechanics' Institutions, by W. H. J. Traice," a copy of which you have in your free Library of Reference, and should be in the possession of every Institute.

I will close by proposing two things. First. That for the benefit of all, you publish in your next number the above mentioned appendix, and Second, that if there are any institutions ready and willing to adopt the proposition as above, (that of union), that they forward to your Secretary a statement to that effect, the names of which