

### A Better Education.

No one disputes that the education of children now is better than that received by their parents and grandparents. And yet it is claimed that the education of to-day is a training for intellectual, professional or mercantile life rather than for farming and other industrial pursuits. If children are better educated than their grandparents they should become better workers, not only in the professions, but in every vocation where honest labor is demanded. If our education leads students to respect one class of toilers and despise another there is something wrong in their training. And yet it has that tendency if we cultivate the intellect and neglect the eye, the hand and the muscles. We need a sensible and better defined study of our surroundings, a liberal course in manual training and drawing, in short, a firmer and closer correlation of intellectual training with *doing* things scientifically and accurately. Improved methods of farming, dairying, poultry-raising, market gardening, fruit culture and other pursuits, are attracting young men and women; and many of these occupations are as suitable for energetic and capable women as for men. Are our schools leading the way in this better education for the development of home industries?

### Lectures to Teachers.

A course of free lectures, instituted in Montreal three years ago, has been very successful, and might be instituted in other centres throughout Canada. The object sought is to diffuse among teachers, in the most attractive manner, by means of abundant stereopticon views, a broader knowledge of the geography, physical aspects, and great natural resources of Canada, with other subjects of interest and value to instructors. These lectures are also open to the public, and the result must be to arouse a broader intelligence and stimulate the desire to know more about our own country. These lectures are available for use in other places, and may be obtained and used under certain conditions on application to Prof. D. P. Penhallow, McGill University, Montreal.

Rev. J. de Soyres, rector of St. John's church, St. John, is reviving the University Extension lectures which were, in former seasons, a source of such interest in the city. Two courses of lectures are now being delivered in the school house of that church, one by G. U. Hay on the Life and Relations of Plants, and the other by Rev. W. O. Raymond on the History of New Brunswick. These will be finished before the Christmas vacation, after which it is expected that lecturers from the University of New Brunswick will continue the course through the winter months.

For the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW.]

### Some Notes on a Recent Examination Paper.

By JOHN WADDELL, D. SC., PH. D.

Examinations, properly carried out, should have an educative value besides being a test of knowledge, and the examinee should endeavor to learn something from each examination. It is customary to decry the examining system, and certainly examinations have a numbing influence if the examinee devotes himself to cramming into his brain undigested facts and distorted theories in the hopes that he may be asked something that he knows on the great day of trial. But if the student studies with a view to learning the subject, the fact that he has in prospect an examination in which he will be expected to set forth his knowledge in a clear manner is a stimulus to accuracy and clearness of ideas. A teacher finds that when he has to explain something to a class of pupils his own ideas are frequently made much more clear, and that little points, formerly overlooked, have to be attended to, so that while teaching others he teaches himself. In the same way the prospective examinee has an incentive to accurate thought since he has to present his ideas to the consideration of an examiner almost as exacting in his requirements as the average pupil.

The great difficulty in regard to examinations is, that the candidate is liable to learn those parts of the subject that he thinks are likely to be asked, without reference to the relationships that these bear to other parts; and the examiner should endeavor as far as possible to set a paper that will discourage such action on the part of the examinee. Questions involving only formulae and definitions test accuracy of statement, but hardly accuracy of idea, because memory exercised in learning off by rote the words of a definition is little more valuable than memory exercised in learning a column of the dictionary. The examinee, however, more frequently than he thinks, reveals whether he repeats words like a parrot or grasps the idea involved.

I propose in this article to discuss some of the questions on the examination paper in Physics for Grade B in Nova Scotia; but first I wish to make a few observations about the papers in general.

If examinations are to develop clearness of thought and accuracy of expression, it is evident that accuracy in reading the questions is a first requisite, and care in reading the instructions is almost equally necessary. Many of the papers in the Nova Scotia examinations contained alternative questions; in the Botany paper, for instance, the examinee was asked to describe either the shield fern, *or* the cinnamon fern, *or* the club moss, *or* the hair cap moss. In the Physics paper only five out of eight questions were to be answered. Not unfrequently the little word *or* was overlooked, and in many cases the warning that five questions only were to be attempted was unheeded. A little care on the part of the examinee would have been of great advantage. Six or seven questions answered instead of five leaves too little time for each, and the candidate should not trust to the examiner picking out the best five, nor should he hope that the marks of six or more would be added.