

The O. A. C. Review.

The Dignity of a Calling is Its Utility

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EDITORIAL.

BY an Act of the Ontario Legislature, every County and every Territorial District in the Province may have the privilege of having during all College terms one student in attendance, and receiving instruction at the College, without payment of any tuition fee. In looking over the last annual report, we notice that thirty-three counties availed themselves of the privilege last year. Thus we see that while a few were fortunate in receiving the nomination, the greater number of equally good students were compelled to attend under additional expense without receiving a corresponding benefit. This arrangement has caused us to do a little thinking about tuition fees in general, and those in connection with our course here in particular. The following will indicate the trend of our thoughts.

Our public schools are free because it is in the interests of the people to see that every child is educated. The High School Boards are permitted to charge a fee not exceeding one dollar per month. We suppose the reason they are allowed to charge a fee is because the education obtained fits a person to fill positions which carry with them certain advantages. As one advances through the different institutions of learning, however, the fees become heavier in proportion as the advantages accruing to the student take upon themselves greater value. This, we take it, is the basis upon which all tuition fees should be levied in public institutions.

Upon this basis, then, there would be no fees charged during the course for a diploma at this College. An associate cannot go back to his farm and charge his neighbors a fixed rate for the use of the ideas gained here, as many other College graduates can. Every idea which he applies upon his farm can be copied by those around him without let or hindrance. Take for illustration the following: A student spends two years at the O. A. C. and then goes back to his farm; he adopts methods which are more successful than those of his neighbors; his friends as a rule, will keep pace with him; in fact they see and adopt any method which is profitable with him. They also reap the benefits of any experimenting which may be done without the disappointments and losses of the experimenter. Thus we see, that owing to the nature of the work which this course fits one to do, a person cannot help sharing the benefits with his neighbors, let him be as selfish as he may.

In order to estimate the personal benefits derived from a course here, let us take for comparison the case of two boys of equal ability. Suppose that after passing the Entrance, one goes to High School, the other to the O. A. C. At the end of two years, one has passed the Primary

Examination, the other has obtained an Associate Diploma. One has paid twenty dollars in tuition fees; the other has paid forty. Suppose, further, that after completing their courses, these boys are without capital. One after attending Model School, the expenses of which can be defrayed by the earnings of the summer's work, is qualified to teach school, for which he will receive three hundred dollars per annum; the other is qualified to do good work on a farm for which he receives one hundred and fifty dollars with board. One works two hundred and sixteen days of, let us say, eight hours a day, which allows him more time for preparation than is devoted to it by many teachers; the other works three hundred and six days of twelve hours a day, this gives him more than the usual number of holidays not to say anything of chores on Sundays. One has time for study and recreation; the other has little of either. One has opportunities of speedy advancement; the other must be content with slender hopes of possessing a farm at some time in the dim future. One feels that his position is due to his certificate; the other feels that his diploma is without intrinsic value to him. This, of course, is a one-sided comparison, but we want to illustrate but one thing, namely, that as a diploma carries with it no personal advantages to the recipient, there should be no tuition fee charged for it.

It is very desirable that more students, of the proper class, should attend this College. Expense is an important factor with a frugal farmer's son and here the tuition fee has an influence. The expenses of a course here seem to be light when compared, in the usual way, with those of other Colleges, but the matter is seen in a different light when the comparison is made as above indicated. The fact that fees are charged, enters into the consideration when young men are estimating the cost of attendance here, and it is certain that many times it is the means of turning the balance against the interests of the College and also those of the country. The abolition of fees would result in a larger attendance, while it would not diminish the revenue to any great extent, provided those only who are eligible for county nomination are exempt from the tax.

The Government has provided buildings, equipment and everything necessary to the pursuit of a thorough course of study, yet only a small number have been tempted to take the course. The abolition of fees would be sound in principle, wise under existing conditions, and would tend to the production of very desirable results.

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An apology is due our subscribers for the late appearance of this month's paper, but, owing to the fact that several of our staff have recently been putting forth their final effort to graduate, we were unable to go to press at an earlier date.