

We may reasonably say of the High school at Cobourg that "it would naturally take up a very considerable portion of the youth of the town," in its work of preparing students for the University. But what does the remark mean when applied to a university that is doing a noble work in higher education and whose students are drawn from every quarter of Ontario, not to say of the Dominion? Mr. Blake says he wished merely to account for the fact that as compared with the western portion of Ontario, the eastern supplied the University of Toronto with comparatively few students. Then the inference plainly is that if "Victoria College at Cobourg" did not "take up a very considerable portion of the youth of the town," there would be a much larger attendance of students from the east at the Provincial University. But how a town of 5,000 inhabitants could so materially affect the attendance of the University, the "deponent sayeth not." The assumption speaks volumes for Cobourg; but not much for the rest of eastern Ontario. The fact is that, as a contemporary remarks, Mr. Blake's speech was hardly worthy of his acknowledged ability. He spoke, it would seem, on a subject on which he was not thoroughly conversant; a "brief," we suppose, was put into his hands and he did his best with it. Under the circumstances it was, perhaps, hardly fair that all his little slips of tongue should be

"Observ'd,
Set in a note-book, learned and conn'd by rote,
To cast into his teeth."

—At the recent examination for matriculation in the University of Toronto there were no less than 141 candidates for honours in the various departments. There were 11 candidates for honours in classics only; 26 for honours in mathematics only, and 38 for honours in "moderns." There were 9 candidates for honours in classics and mathematics; 6 for honours in classics and "moderns," and 24 for honours in mathematics and "moderns." There were no fewer than 27 for honours in the three departments, classics, mathematics and "moderns." It will be observed that of the 141 candidates for honours, 86 wrote for honours in mathematics, and that of these 86, 33 were candidates for honours in one additional department, and 27 were candidates for honours in two additional departments. It thus appears that of the 86 candidates for honours in mathematics, sixty had prepared the honour-work in at least one additional department. It would seem to be a fair inference from these figures that, notwithstanding the allegations of certain fault-finders, the students of the High School are not over-weighted with a disproportionate amount of mathematics. If it be true, as some have alleged, that the greater part of the student's school life is devoted to the study of mathematics, he plainly must make excellent use of the remaining and smaller part. It is not improbable that the logical discipline resulting from the study of this subject enables the student to master, with greater facility, the honour-work prescribed in any other department.

—In Mr. Blake's now famous convocation speech he expressed a fear that there was a tendency to give mathematics an undue prominence in the high schools of the country. This fear arose, it appears, from the alarming fact that, according to the Report of the

Minister of Education, there are "nearly 100 per cent, of the pupils in these schools studying mathematics, while not more than 50 or 60 per cent. are learning classics." But perhaps Mr. Blake's feeling of regret will be greatly toned down when he learns that every pupil learning arithmetic is classed among those studying "mathematics." We should like Mr. Blake to explain his argument in this connection. Does he regret that so many pupils are learning arithmetic in comparison with the number in Greek and Latin? Would he reverse the order of things, and have 100 per cent. in classics and only 50 or 60 per cent. in arithmetic? In fact this statement and inference afford another example of the fact that Mr. Blake had not thoroughly mastered his brief. He seems to have been furnished with certain conclusions, and left to search for the necessary premises. It must be confessed that he has not been very successful in his search.

—"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." The *Montreal Daily Star* says that it is not generally known that a dangerous gas is evolved from ice. We admit our ignorance.

—"In the higher classes of our public schools it is thought necessary that a lad who is destined to be a mechanic should be drilled in Latin and Euclid."—*The Toronto Mail*, July 22.

Will *The Mail* have the goodness to substantiate this statement?

—"Ohio is going to have a Medical Commission appointed to enquire into the conditions under which scholars in public schools work. The two points most insisted on by those urging an investigation are the alarming increase of myopia, or defective sight, and the impaired nervous condition of the pupils who have passed through all the stages of public school education. These troubles are not confined to Ohio, but prevail in Ontario. One of the reasons is the attempt to teach too many subjects."—*The Mail*, July 22.

Far more important in this connection than the number of studies is the number of school hours. In nearly every town in the Northern States and Canada hosts of little children are compelled to sit still for five or six hours every school day in a vitiated atmosphere. During the very period of their lives when they should be placed in conditions favourable to the development of healthy bodies they are subjected to the reverse. The evil is not so seriously felt in the country parts, because there the attendance is less regular, and abundant fresh air and exercise counteract the ill effects of long school hours. But we have need of a medical commission to open the eyes of our urban population to the injury that is unintentionally being done in their midst.

—Mr. Sylvanus Phillips, B.A., who for the past two years has filled with integrity, efficiency and zeal, the Mathematical Mastership of Whitby Collegiate Institute, has been appointed to the more onerous and responsible position of Head Master of Elora High School. We sincerely wish him every success and prosperity in his new sphere. Previous to his departure the pupils of the Institute presented him with a handsome and valuable silver ice-pitcher, accompanied with an address, in which the kindest feelings and best wishes were expressed.