

means to enable Trustees of High Schools, as heretofore of Public Schools, to provide and pay a sufficient staff of qualified teachers) the schools are not only classified, but also the subjects taught in them. Hitherto the Grammar Schools have been considered as almost exclusively Classical Schools, and the programme of studies for them was chiefly formed with that view; but under the new Act, it is especially provided that they shall be High English Schools as well as Elementary Classical Schools, and for girls as well as for boys. When it is provided in the Act that in each High School, "provision shall be made for teaching to both male and female pupils the higher branches of an English and Commercial Education, including the Natural Sciences, with special reference to Agriculture," it was clearly intended that the lower or elementary branches of an English Education should not be taught in the High Schools, but in the Public Schools. It was also intended that all pupils to be eligible for admission to the High Schools for the study of classics, as well as for higher English, must first be grounded in the elements of a sound education in their own native language, as strongly urged by the latest Royal and Parliamentary Commissions on Education in England, but strangely overlooked hitherto, as little boys six and seven years of age have been put to the study of ancient and foreign languages, and left to grow up to manhood without ever having been formally taught their native tongue, or the essential elements of a practical English Education. This anomaly is provided against by the new Act in the future education of Canadian youth, at least so far as the Public High Schools are concerned. Accordingly the 38th Section of the new Act, which became law on the 15th of last February, provides as follows:—

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO HIGH SCHOOLS.

"38. The County, City or Town Inspector of Schools, the Chairman of the High School Board and the head master of the High School shall constitute a Board of Examiners for the admission of pupils to the High School according to the regulations and programme of examination provided according to law; and it shall be the duty of the Inspector of High Schools to see that such regulations are duly observed in the admission of pupils to the High Schools; Provided nevertheless, that the pupils already admitted as Grammar School pupils according to law, shall be held eligible without further examination for admission as pupils of the High Schools; And provided furthermore, that pupils from any part of the county in which a High School is or may be established shall be admitted to such school on the same terms as pupils within the town or village of such school."

4. In accordance with this provision of the Act, the Council of Public Instruction has prescribed, that "the subjects of examination for admission to the High Schools shall be the same as those prescribed for the *first four classes* of the Public Schools." It will be seen from the explanatory remarks preceding the programme, that some subjects of the fourth class of the Public School programme are omitted in regard to pupil candidates for the *classical course* of the High School. The examinations for admission to the High School must be *on paper*, and the examination papers with the answers are to be preserved for the examination of the High School Inspector, that he may not depend wholly on the individual examination of pupils as to whether the regulations have been duly observed in the examination and admission of pupils.

5. It is to be observed also, that though pupils are eligible for promotion from the Public to the High School, after passing a satisfactory examination in the subjects of the first four classes of the former, it is quite at the option of the parents or guardians of pupils, whether they shall enter the High School or not before they complete the whole programme of studies in the Public Schools, when they can then enter an advanced class in the High School.

6. The prescribed programme of studies for the High Schools is not intended to be obligatory before the commencement of

1872, except in as far as Boards of Trustees and Head Masters may think proper to introduce it this current half-year, and except in as far as it relates to *admission* to the High Schools—the conditions of admission of new pupils taking effect immediately. I may also remark, that as the Senate of the Toronto University contemplate (as is understood) some change in the Matriculation curriculum, it is probable some modifications of the classical course of the High Schools may be required and made before the commencement of 1872.

7. While the 34th section of the new Act provides that each Board of High School Trustees shall make provision for teaching "the Latin, Greek, French and German languages to those pupils whose parents or guardians desire it;" the same section also provides, that "the Council of Public Instruction shall have power to exempt any High School, which shall not have sufficient funds to provide the necessary qualified teachers, from the obligation to teach the German and French languages."

8. As to Collegiate Institutes, provided for by the 41st section of the new Act, I shall not be in a position to submit to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council the recognition and payment of any High School as a Collegiate Institute, until I receive the Inspector's special report, in connection with the application and statement of the Board of Trustees, as to whether the conditions of the Act are fulfilled in regard to the number of "masters teaching the subjects of the prescribed curriculum, and the average number of male pupils studying the Latin or Greek language." But in each case of satisfactory report and application, I shall recommend that the recognition of the High School as a Collegiate Institute take effect from the first of July.

9. The Legislature, at its last Session, added \$20,000 to the High School Grant, exclusive of Collegiate Institutes; and with the greatly increased powers of High School Boards of Trustees, and the improved regulations and programme, I trust the efficiency and usefulness of High Schools will be immensely promoted. I therefore conclude this circular by reminding you again of the province of High Schools as a part of our system of Public Instruction; and I cannot better do so than in the words employed by the Council of Public Instruction, in the explanatory memoranda, prefatory to the programme of the course of studies for the High Schools.

"The fundamental principle of our system of Public Instruction is, that every youth, before proceeding to the subjects of a higher English or of a classical education, shall first be grounded in the elementary subjects of a Public School education. No candidates are, therefore, eligible for admission to the High Schools except those who have manifested proficiency in the subjects of the first four classes of the Public School programme, by passing a satisfactory examination.

"The objects and duties of the High Schools are two fold:

"*First*, commencing with pupils who (whether educated in either a public or private school) are qualified as above, the High Schools are intended to complete a good English education, by educating pupils not only for commercial, manufacturing and agricultural pursuits, but for fulfilling with efficiency, honour and usefulness, the duties of Municipal Councillors, Legislators, and various public offices in the service of the country.

"The *Second* object and duty of the High Schools (commencing also with pupils qualified as above,) is to teach the languages of Greece and Rome, of Germany and France, the Mathematics, &c., so far as to prepare youth for certain professions, and especially for the Universities, where will be completed the education of men for the learned professions, and for Professorships in the Colleges, and Masterships in the Collegiate Institutes and High Schools."

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant and fellow-labourer,

E. RYERSON,
Chief Superintendent.