

grants in any form. This class seems to include both friends and foes of the project of a central teaching university. Then again, there are the friends of the established University of Halifax, including, it would appear, some from each of the two general classes mentioned, yet in some sense forming a class by themselves. At present one of the most obscure elements of the problem is the shape in which the University, which, our readers do not require to be told, is simply a degree-conferring institution, shall emerge from the imminent legislation discussion.

The *Morning Chronicle* (Opposition) concludes a series of articles (editorial) with a suggestion that the money voted by the Province to sustain collegiate education shall be distributed among the colleges on the basis of the relative work done, the tests to be applied through the agency of the Halifax University. This suggestion, though of course our position does not enable us to judge fully of its wisdom, seems to possess an element of common sense.

For the benefit of our readers we copy the conclusion of the *Chronicle's* article :

"Now, however straitened the Province may be financially, it is evident that a certain amount of money will have to be annually expended in fostering higher education; and the proper mode of subsidising the colleges, the sensible and rational plan of encouraging them to higher efforts, is to pay them for work actually done. This can be easily effected by requiring every college desirous of participating in the distribution of the Provincial grant to send its candidates to the examinations held by the University of Halifax, the college being entitled to receive, for every candidate it passes through this by no means excessive ordeal, a certain sum, varying according to the grade of the examination. In this way the aid asserted to be required by the colleges can be obtained by them, the public will have the means of judging of the actual value of the education given at the several institutions, and will know that their money is well spent, and the University will discharge in full functions which at present it is unable to fulfil completely, owing to the peculiar position it occupies towards the colleges. This is, in brief, the scheme we propose, as the only reasonable substitute for that we prefer to all others, namely, a central teaching University, and which we propose as an alternative, because it is a step in the direction of progress, tending to uniformity in the character of the education given in our colleges, to healthy competition between them, and the only justifiable way of subsidising these institutions."

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ON THE ESTIMATES.

Like the man "just and tenacious of his purpose" described by Horace, the Minister of Education has maintained his position in spite of the sinister predictions of those who, for a purpose, have undertaken the role of educational pessimists. The Minister's speech on the Estimates consists of a plain array of facts, without disproving which it is impossible to contest the proposition that a great advance with regard to the examination and training of teachers, and the general working of the Department, has been made within the last few years, culminating in the present position of the educational system of the Province.

It is a fact that the year's expenditure of 1879 shows a diminution of \$160,000 as compared with that of 1877, and yet the year 1879 shows an increase in teachers' salaries of \$60,000. The decrease in the total is accounted for by the

fact that school accommodation has been to a great degree provided for. It is a fact that the Normal Schools of Toronto and Ottawa are turning out an annual supply of between 200 and 300 trained teachers. It is a fact that the experiment of 1877 in establishing Model Schools has been a decided success. It is a fact that the examinations of teachers have been put on a footing that ensures efficiency and precludes unfair dealing or favoritism. It is a fact that the system of County Inspectors is a marked improvement on the regime of the Township Inspectors who preceded them, and that while for the necessities of unification and fair play, the examining power was centralized, in all the administrative details the utmost de-centralization had been attained in favor of the local trustees and County Councils. It is also a fact, in the face of fictions industriously circulated to the contrary, that no member of the central committee ever wrote a text-book.

The conclusion we have drawn from these facts is one patent enough to any one who has not been, as Mr. Gibson feared had unfortunately happened to the member for East Grey, asleep for the last five years.

HOME STUDY.

The relation of home study to school instruction is one of the vexed questions apt to cause friction between the authorities of home and school. Under the old regime of teaching, home was but the complement of school, the place where were prepared the "tasks" for the hour after hour of recitation of school time. Who does not recollect with gratitude, that sweetest part of a holiday, the evening's exemption from study? Teachers ambitious of a high average of marks, and of the profit as well as the praise resulting therefrom, are perhaps given to push home study too far, and parents brought up under the same system are apt to measure the teacher's interest in pupils by the amount of book-work to be prepared at home.

On the other hand, it is urged that the hours given to school are quite sufficient for study; that recreation, the home-life, and exercise claim a share in the day on which "lessons" ought not to trench. In poorer families the help of a boy or girl is required by the parents, and the loss of that help in the afternoon or evening seems a very poor return for the effort made in sending them to school during the day.

The truth, as usual, lies probably in a middle position. All home study of new work should, as far as possible, be avoided until the body has outgrown the weakness of childhood. Till then, home study should consist of reviewing the instruction received during the day, with the single exception of going over the morning reading lesson. But for healthy, well-grown boys or girls, we have no fear that a fair amount of home study will injure their health, especially if proper attention be paid to drill and gymnastics during school hours. Far more harm is done to health, far more loss of natural sleep, overstrained nerves, and mental and bodily exhaustion are in reality caused by the premature and precocious social dissipation which even in country districts is so common among young people, whose health would be far better if they were left undisturbed at their studies. But for the younger scholars the habitual pro-