

about \$10,000 a year less than the actual revenue in order to make up this deficiency, which was now about \$30,000. It would be a good thing in itself to make up the amount, but he believed it was not worth while to starve the institution now with a view to leaving it with a good capital when it had fallen behind the times, and the public had lost confidence in it. He advocated, therefore, that the full revenue should be appropriated for the just requirements of the University, leaving the

balance to itself, until some better way was found of paying it. They should take advantage of the popular interest in the University, and of the revival of education, and should put the University in a position to do its proper work. If the expenditure of their full income would not enable them to do this thoroughly, it would at least go a great way towards that desirable end.

The Chancellor then declared Convocation closed.

CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

SOME REMARKS ON THE THREE R'S.

[The following paper will appear to many of our readers like a voice from the dead, or it will remind them of Don Quixote tilting at windmills; there are others who will heartily endorse most of what it contains, and will doubtless be prepared to support its statements by facts within their own experience. We insert it because we are desirous of keeping to our plan of allowing the fullest intelligent discussion on every educational topic, for it is only thus that correct views can be evolved.]

WHY is it that the young people taught in our public schools read and write so badly, and speak so ungrammatically? It is true they *do* learn to read and write, which of course is something, but when one considers the large sums spent on education in the Dominion the results are far from what they should be.

We hear a great deal about Algebra, Analysis, and Mathematics, but I think most people will agree that reading and writing, spelling and arithmetic come first. Arithmetic I will say nothing about, for I believe it to be on the whole well and thoroughly taught. The school teachers themselves have, for the most part, been taught at the Public and Normal Schools, where great stress is laid on such studies as Mathematics and Analysis, all good and admirable things in their place but which most certainly belong to advanced education, and are only suitable for boys whose parents intend them to spend some eight or nine years at school and college. We know that under the best school system in the world, poor people can no more expect a superior education for their

children than they can hope to drive in their carriages, simply because they require them to earn their own living at an early age instead of spending the time at school. They have therefore a right to demand that what their children do receive shall be of the very best. To read well and fluently, to speak correctly, to write a good hand which is easily read, and to cipher well, are of far more importance to a boy or girl who has his or her own way to make, than all the Algebra and Analysis in the world.

I have heard teachers talk glibly of analysis, who at the same time could not speak ten sentences without a mistake in grammar; I have seen a note, the joint composition of two schoolmasters, who were considered above the average, and one of whom is now President of a Teachers' Association, which began in the third person and ended in the first; and I have heard whispers that the spelling of another was far from being perfect. "But then," added my informant, "he is such a first-rate Latin scholar."

The lady teachers of private schools, on the contrary, but seldom lay claim to a knowledge of analysis, yet the grammar they speak and teach is faultless; it is not often they pretend to be mathematical scholars, but on the other hand, their pupils generally write well and legibly; I am afraid that algebra is unknown to most of them, but then they teach their pupils to spell correctly, to write a good letter, and to have a very fair knowledge of history and of geography. I wish to be understood as in no way referring to any but the common free schools of the country: those in the towns are better; no doubt, the higher salary attracting the more capable teachers; but why should our farmers have their children taught badly, or rather taught on a bad system?

The consequence is that children go to