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CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL HAS RECEIVED

*An Honorable Mention at Paris Exhibition, 1878.
Recommended by the Minister of Education for Ontario
Recommended by the Council of Public Instruction, Quebec.
Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, New Brunswick.
Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, Nova Scotia.
Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, British Columbia.
Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, Manitoba.*

The Publishers frequently receive letters from their friends complaining of the non receipt of the JOURNAL. In explanation they would state, as subscriptions are necessarily payable in advance, the mailing clerks have instructions to discontinue the paper when a subscription expires. The clerks are, of course, unable to make any distinction in a list containing names from all parts of the United States and Canada.

INSPECTOR MARLING VERSUS MATHEMATICS.

The High School Inspectors' reports for 1879 are somewhat meagre. Dr. McLellan has no report at all; we hope the senior Inspector has not been terrified into silence by the hypercriticism of the *Mail*. Mr. Buchan's report calls for no comment. We regret to have to express the opinion that in some respects Mr. Marling's shows narrowness; it is certainly misleading in at least one important point: we refer to his attack on Mathematics.

He affirms (1) that "it is not uncommon to find fully five-eighths of the school time taken up with these subjects;" (2) that "the solution of problems is of but small educational value;" and (3) "that most of the mathematical teachers, especially University men, agree with him in his opinions."

Concerning these assertions we remark: (1) We have reasons for believing the first statement to be greatly exaggerated. Possibly there may be here and there a class composed of candidates for second class certificates, who enter a High School almost entirely ignorant of mathematics, and yet expect to be prepared for examination in from four to six months, whose members have to spend five-eighths of their school time in mathematical study. No value can be attached to a general statement based on such exceptional instances. Will Mr. Marling favor us with the name of a single High School noted for efficient mathematical teaching in which such a disproportionate attention is being paid to the subject?

(2) "The solution of problems is of but small educational value," says Mr. Marling. "In every problem which the pupil solves, the same faculties are exercised which in their higher degrees produced the greatest discoveries in Geometry," says John Stuart Mill. In a conflict of opinion between these gentlemen, we must be pardoned for agreeing with Mill.

(3) We are acquainted with several of the prominent mathematical teachers in our High Schools, and we do not know one who is "with" Mr. Marling in these assertions.

(4) Mr. Marling admits that the Intermediate Examination is acknowledged "candid and judicious educationists conversant with our school history to have wrought a change in the teaching and the learning little short of marvellous." We believe, and we are confident that most teachers will agree with our opinion, that the "marvellous" change is largely due to mathematics.

The following general observations should be kept in view in considering this question:—

1. Few teachers will say that students of average ability with good mathematical teaching require five-eighths of their school time to acquire a sufficient knowledge of mathematics to pass the Intermediate Examination.

2. It is a recognized fact among the best teachers that, owing to improved methods of teaching mathematics, students now learn a given amount of elementary mathematics in about one-half the time needed ten years ago.

3. The examiners in all the Universities declare that students in all departments come better prepared for the matriculation examination than they did ten years ago. This clearly shows that the study of mathematics has not engrossed an undue share of attention, or prevented the thorough study of other subjects.

In view of these facts, Mr. Marling surely will not expect intelligent men to accept his unsupported assertion that the study of mathematics has proved and is proving injurious to the intellectual life of the rising generation. We are free to admit, however, that while we would regard it as decidedly unwise to teach mathematics less vigorously than at present, we think there is considerable force in the suggestion made in the Legislature by Dr. McLaughlin concerning the advisability of allowing girls an option between modern languages and mathematics beyond a certain minimum course.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA.

The question of provincial aid to the higher education continues to excite considerable thought and discussion in Nova Scotia. The statutory lapse of the grants to colleges has, as it were, forced the subject on public attention.

So far as we at this distance can gather, the clearance of opinion is not upon a single line. There is first the position of the friends of the denominational colleges. Most of these are agitating simply for a renewal of the grants from the public treasury, claiming that this system of combined provincial and (we do not use the word in an odious sense) sectarian sustentation is more economical for the Province than a concentration of its patronage on a single State-supported institution, and at the same time conducive to better educational results.

This view is directly combated by those who wish to accept existing legislation as final, and who oppose the renewals of the