

It may fairly be questioned if the dual system of matriculation has been on the whole successful. There can be no question that the High Schools do not regard the senior test as worth much consideration. A few schools regularly send up candidates, but it cannot be said that these candidates represent the best work of which the schools are capable. While no doubt there are individual instances of senior matriculants standing well in the class lists throughout yet it is indisputable that the highest places are generally filled by candidates who began their university course at the junior examination. And we have good reason to think that many of those who began their university course with the senior matriculation if they had, in the light of experience, an opportunity to begin again would go with the majority.

We have no sympathy with those that hold that the University course should be shortened to three years, and that the work of the first year should be thrown upon the High Schools. No good argument in support of this scheme can be adduced from the anxiety of two or three of the larger schools to undertake this work. The question is not to be decided by the ambitions and resources of one or two well equipped schools. Of late years there has been quite too much ambition in this direction and it needs no elaborate demonstration to prove that increasing one's stature by walking on tip-toe is both a toilsome and ludicrous performance. Sooner or later the normal gait must be resumed; and it is well if it is discovered that vanity has not produced permanent deformity. We are abundantly satisfied that what is required to improve the scholarship of our High Schools is not so much more work as better work. No one who has had an opportunity of reading the answer papers of candidates at the University Examinations can come to any other conclusion than that much of the work in High Schools is hurried and superficial. The masters are not to blame for this. The pupils are unwilling from the well-known facility of ingress to take time for thorough

preparation, and most of them are ambitious only to make a pass. Hence the rush and the leanness.

There are also, if it be not rank heresy to say it, too much poor material in training for the Universities. The number too of young people at the various Universities is wholly out of proportion to the needs of the Province. There are too many of the most mediocre talents upon whom it is folly to spend public money and who will never lend grace to any profession. The Universities should be nurseries of talent and of sound scholarship, but as matters now are, they are swarming with multitudes that have literally been pitchforked into College by the efforts of the High School Masters.

The remedy for this unwholesome state of things is for the authorities to raise the standard at the examinations, to insist that a candidate shall know his work thoroughly as far as he goes and that too many things should not be attempted. Can there be anything more foolish than in the few short years that our boys and girls are to spend in going to school that they should be crammed with this and that and have a smattering of this and that, and yet grow up incapable of expressing themselves with force and elegance in their mother tongue nor be able even to keep the minutes of a School Board with accuracy and neatness.

We trust the masters who, we are glad to find, thanks to the efforts of their senior Representative, are to be consulted upon the propriety of the changes proposed in the new curriculum, will see their way to recommending a fixed uniform course for the schools with but few options and cast the whole weight of their increasing influence in favour of depth and not superficiality in secondary training. The existence of the High Schools, we beg leave to remind them is not justified by the number sent to the Universities, but by the thoroughness of the education given to all the pupils. And we trust also that the Senate of the University will not be misled by the vaunted capabilities and ambitions of a few—a very few—of the secondary schools.