

are not included in the syllabus of examination. This narrows the question to those who are preparing to enter college. And here, at last, one would naturally suppose we had found a class of pupils who would gladly avail themselves of the full course. These will require for their entrance examination the very branches which the others refused and which the remainder of the academic course will give them. Surely, then, this class will remain to the end? But will they? Well, when they have completed the course, they have still to pass the entrance examination, and somehow or other it is an understood thing among them that the college door swings more easily on its hinges to the children of its own particular nursery than to strangers. They do not require to push so hard. There seems to be some one inside, unseen, behind the door, who, when one of these nursery little ones approaches, oils the hinges and gives the knob a half turn, so that the weakest push of the little nurling is sufficient to effect an entrance.

But let a stranger come and he must push till his sturdy little shoulders crack. He does not know the ropes. There are here no oiled hinges, no manipulating of the handle. He has not played about in the shadow of that august portal until familiarity has grown into contempt. He is awed and loses confidence in himself. He becomes disheartened as he looks up at that great door and does credit neither to himself nor to his teacher. Under existing circumstances, then, you do not retain all, even of this class of pupils. They, as a rule, prefer to prepare for college in an academy connected with and under the supervision of the particular institution they wish to enter. They are now sure of succeeding, or they think so. An academic diploma would go far to obviate all these difficulties. It would possess a standard valuation. It would be a recognized credential certifying the possession of a definite degree of knowledge and mental training. It would be the sign manual of a juvenile order of nobility, an order whose essentials would be intellectual brawn and muscle. The youth who honestly earned it would stand head and shoulders above his fellows. He would represent an issue of the highest market value, bearing the stamp of the educational mint—a recognized legal tender, receivable everywhere. It would be something worth working hard for, because it would confer a definite status and definite privileges from an educational point of view. It would be doubly valuable, valuable to the holder and not less so to the academy granting it. An article of value passing from one to another enriches the receiver at the expense of the donor. A diploma, on the contrary, would enrich both giver and receiver, and the greater

the value set upon it the higher would be the standing and importance of the source from which it sprang. It would retain a majority of the first class of which I have spoken; for what better recommendation for scholarship, perseverance, steady habits and morality could a youth setting out to make his way in the world possibly possess? It would retain in the academy all the second class, viz.: those preparing for the business of teaching, since the possession of it *would stand for the scholastic requirements of provincial examination for license of the lower grades*. The holder of a diploma would then have only to pass an examination in the proof subjects required, and to do this attendance and classification at the normal school *should be made a necessary requirement* of teachers' licenses. It would surely keep through the full course all the third class—those preparing for college—for its possession would do away with the necessity of an entrance examination altogether. It would also do away with the preliminary examination required from those wishing to enter any of the (so called) learned professions, thus becoming a saving of time and money.

But this is only one side of the medal. The effect would be equally to the advantage of the academy granting them. It would give the academy full classes for a full term instead of half ones for a fractional term, thus increasing their efficiency and permitting them to turn out very much better work. It would give them dignity and standing proportionate to the value placed on their diplomas. It would make a suitable finish to the Nova Scotia course of study, which would then be perfected, symmetrical, beginning with Grade I and ending with the academic diploma, a structure of which it would be the completion—the "chief stone of the corner." It would benefit as well our common schools. Whether or not the majority attained it, every pupil, in all grades, would have it, as something to which he could aspire, a definite aim—a purpose—an ambition to be achieved. And an aim in our work is not to be despised. In fact the lack of definite aim in our common schools is their chief defect. Its effects cannot here be estimated, for they would penetrate far and wide that substratum of society which largely feeds our common schools, as they in turn feed the academy.

Any step, then, which increases, in any marked degree, the efficiency of our academies, must of necessity affect in an equal or greater degree the common school, and through them the whole mass of the population. The power to grant diplomas would be such a step, nay, not a step, but a stride in the right direction. Our county academies are handicapped by the collegiate academies, and will never attain their full degree of efficiency until the power to grant those diplomas is vested in them or in the Council of Public Instruction.