

McGill University—Faculty of Applied Science.—We would call the attention of our readers to the announcement of the Faculty of Applied Science for season 1886-87, which we mail with the Record. It contains a detailed statement of the courses of study in Civil, Mechanical and Mining Engineering, as well as in Practical Chemistry. Each of these is specially designed to meet the requirements of students who may desire to become engineers in any branch of the profession, surveyors, practical chemists, &c., or to enter active business life. During the past year the work of the Faculty has been rendered more efficient by additions to the professorial staff and by extensive improvements in the laboratory, which is now fully equipped and is one of the best on the continent. An important and valuable provision has also been made for the delivery of fortnightly lectures by leading Canadian engineers and others on professional subjects of current interest.

CORRESPONDENCE.

READING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL RECORD:—

SIR,—As a teacher of a District Elementary School, in spite of careful attention to the matter, I obtain very poor results in that most important branch of school work, viz., Reading. I find that you, also, in a former number of the RECORD refer to the poor reading of the District schools. I imagine the reason may be traced to the fact that the parents of children attending the rural schools are in most cases unprovided at their homes with interesting books suitable for boys and girls to read. Such being the case, the scholars are without material on which to practice their knowledge of reading acquired in school, and are incapable of estimating the benefits and the amusements to be derived from an ability to read well. I have an average daily attendance at my school of between 60 and 70 scholars, and on asking all those to hold up their hands who had read any story book, of whatsoever kind, but not a school book, right through,—a very small number, indeed, held up their hands. Let any other teacher ask the same question; the result may prove interesting.

As a remedy for such a state of things I offer the following suggestion, which, if you think worth while publishing, might be elaborated by more capable persons into some practicable scheme.

Let each board of school commissioners subscribe a sum proportionate to the number of children in their district, towards the formation of a central library, and let the secretary, or curator, of such library send to each elementary school, a certain number of books in proportion to the children attending. Let the rules and regulations be such as apply to our large circulating libraries in England, with a change of books two or three times a year. Have the books marked A, B, C, D, etc., each class being especially adapted to readers I. II. III., etc. Such a set of books, with library rules printed on inside of cover, distributed by the teacher, would supply the deficiency of material above referred to.

Again, supposing a scholar knows of an interesting story, marked B, but is unable to obtain it, because he is in reader I; then this would be an incentive to work up his reader and get into section B, so as to secure the coveted book.