

sion, sometimes vehement, and involved enough for a county or provincial legislative body, the amount to be assessed on the section next year is voted.

The free school course of study is of a normal length of twelve years, eight of which are covered in the first eight "grades," called "common" school grades, and four in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, called the "high" school grades. As the twelfth year work is of university grade, students from the high schools generally enter the universities from the eleventh grade, except in a few non-university towns where there is a strong staff of high school teachers.

A county academy is the high school in each county which, in view of its engagement to provide for and admit free all qualified students from the county, receives a special grant called the academic grant, and is either \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500 or \$1,720 per annum, according to its equipment and work done.

In 1893, the normal term of a teacher's engagement in a section was changed from six months to one year, the Provincial Normal School, with which the Provincial School of Agriculture is affiliated, was made a purely training or professional school, including with its course of practice in teaching, manual training in wood work, physical, chemical and biological experimentation, drawing, vocal music, elocution, with a review and amplification of previous high school course, which the candidates must have passed before admission. In the same year the high school system was organized into the form of a provincial university certificates known respectively as those of grade D, C, B, and A (classical) or A (scientific), being granted by a Provincial Board of Examiners on the courses respectively of the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth years. A peculiarity of

these certificates is their containing on the margin the value of each examination paper, so that they can be used in lieu of the entrance examinations of all colleges or other institutions, even those having the most diverse standards, providing the certificate in point shows the percentage mark on each particular subject required by the institution in point. Thus has been solved the problem of the affiliation of the public school system with all the different colleges and organizations in the province requiring a scholarship test for admission.

#### THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTY.

While the course of study makes instruction in "moral and patriotic duties" and "hygiene and temperance" imperative on every teacher, and while the "Compulsory Attendance" clauses of the law require the attendance of pupils from seven to twelve years of age in the rural sections adopting them, and from six to thirteen years of age in the incorporated towns adopting them, there has never been any serious difficulty with respect to religious instruction. Although not referred to in the Course of Study, a regulation of the Council of Public Instruction assumes that "devotional exercises" may be conducted in any school so long as no parent or guardian objects thereto in writing. If the objection be made, the exercises may be so modified as to give no offence within regular school hours. But if no such modification can be made, the exercises may be held immediately before the opening of the secular work of the school, or after its close. The trustees, who may well be assumed to understand the local conditions of their section, have therefore, under the law, very large powers for regulating such exercises where the people wish them limited, first by the provision that no