

# UNIVERSITY MATRICULATION IN ONTARIO

Our topic is University Matriculation, but we cannot discuss it properly apart from the High School examinations wholly controlled by the Education Department. Many candidates take both the Matriculation and the Leaving examinations; by far the greater number take the purely Departmental examinations, and the options for the latter largely determine the options for Matriculation. University men, too, are beginning to see that, while they possess the right to prescribe the courses of study for Matriculation, no satisfactory scheme can be devised which ignores the predominating influence of the Primary and Leaving examinations. I propose, therefore, to consider in connection with the question of Matriculation, the whole system of related examinations.

FIRST, then, as to

English, History and Geography, and other subjects are obligatory at both; but, to make the Matriculation standard lower than that provided by regulation that, in these papers for pass matriculation either taken from those for the Junior Leaving Examination shall be supplemented by questions adapted to the latter class of candidates prescribed for the Matriculant only, in Natural Science, Chemistry, and Sight-Work in Mathematics. The options are also different. For the Junior Leaving Examination, French and Physics; and for the Matriculation, French and German, French and other languages, Chemistry, and German and other subjects. Chemistry.

Let us now estimate

## THE PRESENT REQUIREMENTS OF THE MATRICULATION AND JUNIOR LEAVING EXAMINATIONS.

(1) *The standards are different; that for the July Matriculation being twenty-five per cent. on each paper and forty per cent. of the total; while that for the Junior Leaving is thirty-three and one-third per cent. on each paper and fifty per cent. of the total—a distinction with a considerable difference.* The September Supplementals held by the Universities themselves, present a still lower standard for Matriculation. The percentage is nominally the same, but it is an open secret that the papers are easier and the examiners more accommodating than in July.

The following statistics, which, I believe, are substantially correct, speak for themselves:

At the examinations held last July by the Provincial Board, 500 candidates presented themselves. Notwithstanding the fact that only 170 passed, we have at present in the first years of the four chief universities about 333 students, of whom about 198 passed in July or presented *pro tanto* certificates, 65 passed a supplemental, and 70 are non-matriculants, seven of the last, however, having partially matriculated. These totals are made up as follows: In the Provincial University, about 151 passed, the July examination or presented *pro tanto* certificates, 24 passed the supplemental, and about 50 are non-matriculated. In Queen's, Trinity and Victoria, 47 passed the July examinations or presented *pro tanto* certificates, 41 passed a supplemental, and 20 have not, or have only partially, matriculated.

(2) *Not all the subjects prescribed for the Junior Leaving and Matriculation Examinations are identical, nor are all the papers the same in those subjects that are identical.*

## THE EFFECTS ON THE UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOOLS, OF THE DIFFERENCES IN EXAMINATIONS.

### FIRST, AS TO THE STANDARD.

On the High Schools, the lowering of the Matriculation Pass standard has little direct effect, the number of matriculants is small compared with that for the examinations wholly controlled by the Education Department; the latter examinations dominate the schools; and it is to them that we owe the advanced condition of education in this Province. But, on the Universities themselves, the effects of the low standard have been direct and degrading.

(1) *Mere elementary work has been substituted for the higher work now being done, in the Universities, in Mathematics, English and Modern Languages, and Science.*

Until 1890 the standard was but slightly lower than in each department. No one could pass the examination work without doing that, even with the present higher standard, and with equally difficult tests in the other departments, and July, a candidate may obtain a certificate for 25 per cent. on a paper and practically pass the examination of the subject. In this connection the testimony of High School masters of many years maintained that many matriculating students are unfit to take the work. I have besides the testimony of the University Faculties, who have testified that their time is largely wasted in compelling them to do mere elementary work, the result is a real lowering of the standard.