

years in which he has been familiar with its working. He showed by statistics the increase ten-fold of its matriculants, and pointed with justifiable pride to the high position held by its graduates in society, in the professions, and the public service. The staff of the University is about to be strengthened by the addition of two gentlemen selected by the Minister of Education, by Professor Wilson, and others in whose judgment the public are surely justified in placing confidence, as the best men that can be found to fill their relative positions.

In speaking of the present prosperous and promising condition of the University, President Wilson added one sentence which, in view of the criticism so abundantly volunteered of late by irresponsible outsiders, seems to convey a suggestion of sarcasm, as well-applied as it is delicate: "It were to be wished that Utopian reformers would allow growths so vigorous room to grow."

IMPROVEMENT OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

At several of the late Teachers' Associations papers have been read and discussions held as to the best way to "Make the School Attractive." Stress has been laid, and, we think, most deservedly, on the importance of brightening and beautifying the interior of the school building. "To little children just beginning their school life, it is well that the school room should wear a pleasant and inviting appearance; for all scholars, a few pictures, a few flowers, will rest the eye and make the task work easier by pleasant surroundings; the humanizing effect of learning to value beauty, neatness and order, for their own sake, will be a valuable lesson whose effect will make itself felt in the improved appearance of home in future years. And one most valuable effect of attention to this subject will be, not only that the constituents of school sections will be more willing to go to some little trouble and expense for the preservation of school-buildings in which they see both teachers and scholars take practical interest, but that the care and adornment of the school may be made a bond of sympathy and common subject of interest between teacher and pupils. In the spring and summer the play-ground might be surrounded, or at least bordered at the front, with a margin of flowers. These might be divided into beds, each to be assigned to the care of a partial child. In winter, painted boxes, neatly made, might contain flowering plants, each of which should be under the charge of a scholar. Not only sweeping, but window-cleaning and painting, might be undertaken in common by teachers and scholars. At a very small expense, plus a little cheerful alacrity and ready example of helpfulness, the school room might be made to wear an appearance of neatness, and even of beauty, in which the scholars would soon learn to take pride. Every such lesson has its moral value.

SUPERANNUATION OF TEACHERS.

A letter on this subject appeared in the *Globe* of Tuesday, October 19th, over the signature "Magister." He dwelt on the smallness of the pittance which the present fund promises, a

result of which is that few contribute the four dollars a year required except the male teachers in the Public Schools, who are compelled to do so by the regulations. He suggests the following amendments in the Superannuation System:

1. That the annual fee be not less than \$10 a year.
2. That the law should apply to female as well as male teachers.
3. That H. S. teachers should also come under the provisions and requirements of the fund.
4. That a fee varying from \$10 to \$50 be exacted from everyone before obtaining a third, second or first-class certificate, and also from University graduates or undergraduates before receiving certificates as head masters or assistants in high schools, the superannuation fund being increased by the amount thus raised.
5. That no part of the amounts paid be returned to a teacher who retires from the profession for other duties, unless at a certain age.
6. That after 25 or 30 years' service, a teacher should have the privilege of retiring with a superannuation allowance.
7. That the allowances should be a respectable and definite amount.
8. That some inducement should be offered to teachers to advance in the profession by giving to those who secure higher certificates or take a University course increased claims on the superannuation fund.

To make the annual payments optional would never do. As female teachers compete with male teachers, and serve to keep down salaries, they should also pay a license for their privileges.

How much attention is being attracted to this most important question, the reports of the conventions in the present issue of the *JOURNAL* will show. We invite discussion of this subject in our columns. Meanwhile we think "Magister," whose programme of reform is a much more sweeping one than any of those endorsed by the conventions of last month, has made at least one good point. It is this. Sentimental reasons ought not to prevent the Department from requiring female teachers to be under obligation to contribute to the Superannuation Fund equally with males. If ladies come forward to compete with men in the profession of teaching, they should surely do so under the same conditions. As a fact, the female teachers exclude a considerable number of male teachers from schools, which would otherwise have to pay a better salary and employ a male teacher. But, for physiological reasons, it would be fair that the female teacher should be eligible for superannuation, and at an earlier age than the male teacher.

—Our readers will see, by the circular of the Minister of Education in the Official Department of the *Journ.*, the interpretation which he gives of the 29th clause of the Amended School Act of 1879. We have frequently pointed out the fact that the clause is directly at variance with the essential portion of the school law requiring School Boards to provide adequate accommodation for the school population of the sections or municipalities which they represent. Mr. Crooks recognizes this fact, and holds that the obligation to provide accommodation still rests with School Boards, and that Councils can, not legally refuse, even by "two-thirds majorities," to grant the money required for this purpose. We would suggest to the Minister of Education the propriety of either removing the 29th clause altogether, or remodelling it so as to make a clear distinction between providing accommodation for those pupils who have no school to attend, and the erection of a new school to take the place of an old one. In the latter case it might be wise to place a check on School Boards; in the former it is unjust to do so.