

In our opinion the solution of the problem is to be found just now in the local examination system of the Provincial University, and if the Senate of that institution is only alive to its true interests, it will promptly extend the system. We need not enter into any details of such a scheme, for every High School master understands what is meant, and every member of the Senate should be able to do so. At present the University of Toronto sends out to any locality desiring them, the regular papers of the junior matriculation, and of the first and the second year examination. The subjects are arranged in groups any one or more of which the candidate may take. These local examinations were instituted for women only. What is wanted now is (1) to throw them open to both sexes, and (2) to accept as fully matriculated all candidates who pass in all the subjects of any examination at one time. As the expense of these local examinations is borne by the locality asking for it the Senate can go on with the work of expanding the system without fear of financial burdens.

The Chancellor on commencement day congratulated Toronto University on the large increase in the number of its matriculants during the past few years. Perhaps he was not aware of the true cause of this increase—namely the assimilation of the junior matriculation to the High School intermediate work. This assimilation was chiefly due to the presence at that time in the Senate of Dr. McLellan, who as High School Inspector and member of the central committee was in a position to see the need of a *modus vivendi* between the University and the Education Department and of suggesting the true remedy for the defect then existing in the system. We have no hesitation in predicting, if the local examination system is expanded as indicated above, a much more rapid increase in the number of matriculants. If no greater percentage of them pass than have been in the habit of passing the intermediate the halls of the University will be crowded to repletion. The Senate should not be backward in trying an experiment which will cost so little and has in it such great possibilities.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

We have received a copy of an admirable lecture by the Hon. Donald Ferguson, Provincial Secretary of P.E.I. It is marked by strong common sense and does not assume the extravagant positions taken by many writers and speakers who discourse on agricultural education. It is admitted that agriculture cannot supersede reading, writing and arithmetic, and that the elements of agriculture could only be imparted to the pupils in the advanced grades. "The object of education," says the lecturer, "is two-fold—the training of intellect and the giving of facilities—and the best system of education is that which turns out in the fields of the world the most skilful workmen, supplied with the best tools. . . . While it may be admitted that the curriculum of our schools is well adapted for the training of mind, it may well be asked if the education imparted in our higher schools should not partake of a more practical character." The improvements suggested may be gleaned from the following :

"We can give more time and more prominence to the sciences relating to agriculture in the Prince of Wales College, so that all our teachers may in future be qualified to pass an examination in the elements of agriculture before obtaining a license. We can offer an inducement to teachers already licensed, so that they can come in for examination in this branch of education. We can, by rigid inspection, provide that the text-book on agriculture already prescribed by the Board of Education is thoroughly taught to the pupils in the advanced grades of our schools. When we have done this it will be found in agriculture, as in general education, that a good elementary instruction, for the masses is, after all, far more important than higher attainment placed only within the reach of a few. To make great progress in this direction teachers must *all* be qualified to handle an elementary text book, and the use of it in our public schools must be made compulsory.

I regard all higher education in our Province as virtually technical. We have no class in the Dominion of Canada which it is desirable to train for a life of literary leisure. At the plough, on the deck, in the workshop, in the learned professions, in the halls of legislation, Canada presents a life of earnest, self-denying work, as the noblest career for every one of her sons. The practical idea should, therefore, permeate every lesson of the school, until master and pupil catch the inspiration.

One of the most hopeful signs of the times in which we live is to be found in the very general movement now going on in different countries to place farming on a scientific basis by instructing the farming population in the principles of their profession."

This lecture will be found a valuable contribution to the question of practical education.

REPORTS OF CASES.

E. Test, M.D. of Richmond Normal School says: I have a case or two in illustration,—

In my earliest days of district-school teaching, I had in my school at the same time two of the dullest boys at their books that one locality is likely to produce. They could read blunderingly in the Third Reader, but would not progress in the general work of the school. But I soon found that one of them was quite skilful in making pictures on his slate. I at once utilized his talent for drawing. I set him to drawing geometrical figures and taught him how to find their surfaces and volumes, and soon had him interested in numbers. I had him copy maps, and then draw the same from memory till he became one of the best geographers in school. By copying the likenesses of the famous persons named in his United States history, he became interested in their lives and learned many important facts of history. In short, in two winters he passed from a very dull boy to a fair average in all his studies, and to special excellence in some.

The other boy referred to, proved to have a special capacity for numbers—was, in fact, a sort of "mathematical fool." Everything which could be connected by figures he was able to learn and remember, and thus soon lost his reputation as a dunce.

My experience with these two boys has been very valuable to me, though I have not always been able to achieve equally marked success in the same length of time.