

prize list:—Bishop's prize—Rev. E. A. Harris, B.A. Binney exhibition—C. H. Fullerton. Almond Walsford testimonial—J. P. Silver. Stevenson's scholarship—A. B. Murray. McCawley scholarship—C. E. A. Simonds, T. H. Hunt.

The subject of the historical essay for the Akins' prize, was "the County of Victoria." The winner, Mr. Patterson, is a graduate of Dalhousie, and at present Principal of the High School at New Glasgow.

The Provincial Educational Association meets in annual session, at Truro, on the 15th inst. The programme of essays and addresses includes the names of Chief Superintendent Crockett, of New Brunswick; Chief Superintendent Montgomery, of Prince Edward Island; Dr. Rand, of Acadia College; Principal McKay, of Pictou; Professor Eaton, of Truro, and other gentlemen. The occasion bids fair to be one of great interest.

The closing exercise, of the Provincial Normal School, Truro, take place on the 14th inst. The attendance has been the largest of any of the thirty years during which the institution has been training the teachers of Nova Scotia.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

From our Special Correspondent.

The ninth annual meeting of the Prince County Teachers' Institute took place in Summerside on the 17th and 28th of May. Good inducements are offered to attend. Besides the professional benefits received, reduced railway fares, and two teaching days in each term, are given for the purpose, and members are not slow to avail themselves of these advantages. Though a programme of five papers was prepared, only two could be submitted—one by Miss Ramsey on *Teaching; Conscious and Unconscious*, the other by Mr. Bears, Vice-Principal Davies School, on the *Course of Study*. An impression is deepening, that the true work of the Institute is to take into consideration measures for the immediate benefit of the teaching profession, rather than indulging in vague generalities on the purpose, prospects, and necessity of "the thing called education." The need of organization among teachers is strongly felt, and, if Institutes serve to develop an *esprit-de-corps* it is conceived they will have accomplished a good work. Anything tending to advance the interests of the teacher cannot fail to have a beneficial influence on the schools. The interests of the two are identical. There is much to contend against. Young men and women obtain licenses, and they must get schools and teachers of years' standing, and of good record are crowded out of their situations. It is extremely to be regretted that *supply* follows so closely on the heels of *demand* that the teacher is sought whose services can be obtained for the least money. This gives rise to grave evils, unless security and permanence are established. It cannot reasonably be expected that a man will give his best thought and effort to that which will engage him but for a very few and uncertain years. Though nearly half the revenue of the province is applied to education much remains yet to be done. It is intolerable that teachers, under this vicious system, should be kept in uncertainty from year to year, that they have to protect themselves by being always prepared for this emergency, having continually shoes on their feet and staff in hand ready to go forth into new and untried fields. While thus preparing for the future they are only obeying a law of nature, but it is fatal as far as they are concerned to that "latest gospel—*know thy work and do it*." If the members of the Prince County Teachers Institute in any degree enable teachers with justice to themselves to do the work which lies nearest to them their meetings will not in any wise have been in vain. The officers for the ensuing year are:—A. D. Fraser, president; A. A. McLellan, secretary. The retiring officers are: A. J. McDougall, president; John A. MacPhail, secretary. J. A. M.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL.

A few weeks ago I proposed in the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL, to find a triangle whose area and three sides shall be rational, shall have the perimeter 20, and contain a greater area than the triangle whose sides are 5, 7, 8. As I have seen but two JOURNALS I do not know whether any one has attempted the case. The area for 5, 7, 8 is $10\sqrt{3}$, a surd.

Let $x=a$ sought side, $13-x$ is another, and $\sqrt{10(10-x)(10-7)(10-\sqrt{13-x})}$ =square of area; equate with $q^2(x-3)^2$, and $x=\frac{300+3q^2}{30+q^2}$. If q is 5 $x=\frac{15}{2}$.
new sides are 7, $\frac{15}{2}$, area $\frac{3}{2}\sqrt{19}$, which is greater than $10\sqrt{3}$.
Questions:—If the angles of a square be disturbed, the figure becomes a rhombus; could we ever get a rational diagonal and rational area?
JOHN IRELAND, Fergus.

COMPETITION IN EDUCATION.

To the Editor of the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I am glad to see from your article in the SCHOOL JOURNAL of July 2nd, that you disapprove of prize-giving in colleges and universities. I regret to see that you do not entirely disapprove of the practice in schools. I think it is a mistake to suppose that the higher motives of which you speak—"a sense of duty, of responsibility for the use and cultivation of God-given faculties, and the love of knowledge both for its own sake and as a power for good"—cannot be made sufficiently operative with children to enable us to dispense with such a stimulus as the desire to win a prize. You urge one danger attending prize-giving—the tendency towards dishonesty on the part of the pupil when he is asked for his record. Allow me to specify others. The competition for prizes leads usually to "cramming," and is generally fatal to the adoption of sound methods. The daily lesson takes the form of a recitation of what has been memorized, the best marks being secured by the pupil who can repeat the lesson most accurately in the very words of the textbook. Competition for prizes impairs the moral nature of the children, not merely by substituting a low motive for a high one, but by making each competitor look on the others as rivals and enemies. This species of emulation has a direct and powerful tendency to crush out every spark of generosity, and to convert even the naturally well disposed into mean-spirited and unaimable monstrosities. The prevailing feeling of the many unsuccessful pupils on exhibition day is not one of cheerful sympathy with the few prize-winners, but one of ill-concealed envy which the praises of thoughtless teachers and trustees will convert into a deep and abiding sense of injustice. If children were not so hard to spoil the bad effects of the prize-system would be more easily seen, but I cannot understand how any thoughtful and observant teacher should fail to detect them.

Closely connected with this subject is that of payment by the State according to the amount of work done, as ascertained by examinations. You quote some striking remarks in this connection from Archdeacon Farrar. Referring to certain other countries in comparison with England, he says, "Nowhere does a single penny of the States' money depend on any examination, nowhere is there a system of individual examination, nowhere is there that striving after percentages or the mechanical accuracy which causes anguish to teachers and so much weariness, nowhere are there such traces of worry and anxiety." How is it possible to secure freedom from this "worry and anxiety," if either prizes or school grants are made directly dependent on the results of either periodical examinations or daily recitations? I venture fearlessly the assertion that where the teacher and pupils are working with such competition in view the work done is not of the best character. Nothing tends more surely to substitute "cramming" for intelligent and reasonable methods of imparting instruction, and of training those faculties the education of which is the highest function of the true teacher. Knowledge acquired by rote, as it is apt to be acquired by pupils competing with other pupils, and in schools competing with other schools, is of little value even when remembered, and very little of it is carried for any length of time in the memory.
Toronto, July 6th, 1885. WM. HOUSTON.

Miscellaneous.

REFORM IN FUNERALS.

"One of the greatest reforms in modern extravagance, pomp, and show," said a prominent divine, "will, in my opinion, be made in funerals and the customs of mourning within the next generation."
"What will cause it?" interpolated a reporter.