

We would fain hope that some of our men of wealth, having the interests of the industrial classes at heart, may follow the good example set by John McDonald, Esq., M.P.P. for Toronto, in founding a *Bursary* in Toronto University College for the benefit of the sons of working men, and endow a Board of Arts EXAMINATION FUND for the benefit solely of the working classes. We fully appreciate the generosity of Mr. McDonald in making the endowment above referred to, and in the name of the working men return him thanks; but liberal as the act is on his part, it is not calculated directly to benefit to any appreciable extent those who are intending to follow mechanical pursuits—the sons of mechanics studying the learned professions will be benefitted, but not mechanics themselves, as instances are rare indeed of Graduates of Universities following any of the ordinary industrial occupations.

An endowment of such an Examination Fund as is above indicated would directly reach the parties for whom intended, and lead to such a course of private studies, or to connection with Mechanics' Institutes evening classes—which are now with so much benefit being organized in some localities—as would gradually elevate the character and capabilities of our artisans, and redound to the credit and prosperity of the Province.

On the subject of evening class instruction, we remark that employers ought to manifest a more decided interest therein than they have been accustomed to do. A large proportion of the youths in their employment are ignorant of the rudiments of useful knowledge, and will scarcely ever become intelligent workmen or respectable members of society, unless some attention is paid to their mental improvement. We often find such youths allured to places of improper resort, or lounging at street corners smoking or chewing, and expectorating tobacco juice to the annoyance of all respectable passers-by, while opportunities to acquire such knowledge as is needful to fit them for the proper fulfilment of their duties, as connected with their respective occupations, are entirely neglected by themselves, and paid no attention to by those whose duty and interest it is to look after their moral and intellectual welfare.

We have already said that we regret the inability on the part of the Board to give money prizes. If it was enabled to do so, no doubt but class instruction and the Board examinations would be more successfully carried out than they have heretofore been; but even if money prizes were given, the certificates obtained by the candidates would, in most cases, be of the greatest *real* value to them.

The mason, the carpenter, the painter, and many others, holding certificates in Geometry, Mensuration, &c.; the bookkeeper in the art of Bookkeeping; and the engineer or machinist in the principles and practice of mechanics, seeking employment from those not acquainted with their capabilities, will, when once the character of the examinations has become established, find these certificates a recommendation to places of trust and pecuniary profit.

In the year 1856 the number of candidates examined by the Society of Arts was 52; since that time it has been gradually increasing, and this year 1,540 papers have been worked out by 1,068 candidates. The certificates awarded were 236 first class, 479 second class, and 507 third class; papers for which no certificates were awarded, 318. The number of money prizes awarded in addition to the certificates was 55, amounting in all to upwards of £200 sterling, and varying in amount from £1 to the "Prince Consort's Prize of TWENTY-FIVE GUINEAS," given to the candidate who for four years has obtained the largest number of first class certificates. The ages of these candidates ranged from sixteen to forty-seven years—the largest number (181) being of the age of eighteen years. The number of different industrial occupations represented by the 1,068 candidates was nearly three hundred.

The following extracts from the Annual Address of the present Chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, furnishes the history of the origin of these examinations, and also of the middle-class examinations of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge:—

"In 1853, when a Committee was first appointed to inquire into the state of Industrial Education, there were but three great channels of instruction—our Universities, our middle-class boarding schools, and our national and British schools. There were no means by which the very large number of youths and young men who left school at 13 or 14 years of age, and became at once engaged in business, could test the knowledge they subsequently acquired by private study, or through which they could obtain such a public acknowledgment of their industry and their acquirements as would be practically useful to them in the race for employment and advancement in after-life. Every one who hears me—having his own experience to refer to—knows the great difficulty the young men to whom I have referred must always have had in obtaining knowledge—really sound and useful knowledge—either in the hour or two in the morning before going to business, or in the evening after business. Every one knows the temptations to be resisted, the pleasures to be sacrificed, and often the ridicule to be borne, to obtain the still greater, though not so immediate pleasure, of acquiring knowledge; and yet, until this Society