

issued by the Senate of Toronto University and subsequently adopted by Trinity and Queen's Universities differs in several important particulars from that now in force. We are not going to discuss here the wisdom or unwisdom of these changes, though we may say in passing that in our opinion they are not all improvements and that there are sins of omission—notably the failure to insist on 50 per cent of the total, as well as of commission.

The most important of these changes is that dividing the examination into two parts, "of which I. shall be taken before II. and in a different year." As this, in connection with other alterations and additions, will necessitate a revision of the Departmental regulations regarding the High School course of study and the requirements for the Primary and Leaving Examinations, it is manifestly too soon to attempt to forecast in detail the effects of the changes in the teaching in the schools. One probable, and, we presume, intended result will certainly, however, be to ensure more systematic, careful, and thorough teaching and preparation of the subjects prescribed for Part II.

Among these subjects is English Composition, and probably in none of them is there, on the whole, more need of improvement in this direction. In saying this we are quite aware that things are vastly better than when we were in our teens, and that, thanks to the introduction of more sensible and attractive methods of teaching, 'Composition hour' or 'day' is not now so generally looked forward to, as it was in our school and college days, with dislike and fear. Nevertheless, with all the advance that has been made, we are safe in saying that the results of composition teaching, as judged by the composition of the average Matriculant or Junior Leaving candidate, to say nothing of the Primaries, are,

to put it mildly, very far from being all that can be desired, or that it seems reasonable to hope for.

For this disappointing fact many reasons may be assigned, but teachers and examiners will probably agree with us that the three chief contributing causes are, (1) want of time in schools, with our present overloaded programmes and time-tables, (2) failure on the part of teachers, and still more on the part of students, to appreciate the importance of the subject and the need not merely of teaching but even more, of abundant practice, and (3) the need, especially on the part of younger and less experienced teachers, of fuller direction and more detailed assistance in the choice and treatment of models and methods.

The division of the Matriculation Examination, will, it is hoped, go far towards meeting the first difficulty. The removal of the second rests, we believe, mainly with the Senate and the examiners. If the former will restore the "50 per cent. of the total" test, and the latter will do their duty firmly and conscientiously, students (and, if need be, teachers) will soon learn that an examination on composition has to be prepared for as carefully as one in any other subject, and teachers will not be so often troubled with students shirking or asking to be excused from the composition class on the plea, "I want the time for Algebra (or something else); I guess I'll take my chance on composition, I can hardly get plucked on that."

As for the third cause we assigned, the need will in future be all the greater in consequence of another change made by the Senate. For many years it has been the custom to specify two prose works for each examination, to be read by the candidates, with the encouraging intimation that some of the subjects for com-