

present, Canada rejects Commercial Union, and in the near future the electorate is, we think, likely to confirm the rejection which the House of Commons has pronounced.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Among the many Blue Books issued by both the Dominion and the Ontario Governments, which have been heaped upon us for some weeks past, there is perhaps none which better merits looking into than the Report of the Ontario Minister of Education on the subject of technical education. In December last we gave some particulars of the important conference then held with manufacturers and others on the subject, a fairly full account of which appears, with much other information, in the pamphlet before us. Accounts are given of the principal technological colleges in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York, to wit: the Boston Institute, Stevens' Institute, Lehigh, Cornell, and Columbia. Assuredly, the provision made in these for instruction is generous and their equipment full. None of them will compare, in external effect, with the University of Toronto, says Mr. Ross, but they are all much superior in internal arrangements, having workshops with lathes, planers, and forges, carpenter's benches, and smelting furnaces.

At the New York School of Mines, where mining engineering and assaying are taught, the various processes by which ores are prepared for the market are illustrated by machinery and other devices. The study of chemistry in its relation to the arts and manufactures is prominent there, and the dyeing of textiles is taken up practically in the laboratory. Describing Lehigh University, the Minister shows how it came to be founded by Hon. Asa Packer in the midst of the great mining district of Pennsylvania, "in order to afford the young men of the Lehigh Valley a complete technical education for those professions which had developed the peculiar resources of the surrounding region." Something of the sort is needed amongst ourselves in the light of recent exploration and discoveries in Ontario mining regions, and the growing interest in and slow development of our mining industries.

Among the subjects handled at Columbia College we find: strength and properties of materials, drawing, practical mining, which involves ore-testing and assaying, sanitary engineering, improvement of rivers and harbors, surveying, mill work and machinery, applied chemistry, with respect to timber and its preservation as well as to food and drink, specifications and working drawings for contractors. These practical subjects we cull from a list extending over two-score pages. Some idea may be formed of the scale upon which the Boston School of Technology is conducted when it is stated that the faculty consists of 27 professors or assistants and 48 instructors in technical subjects, and that there is a series of laboratories, drawing rooms, etc., mainly devoted to designing and work in the mechanic arts. There are two instructors in forging, two in wood-work, two in machine tool work and

foundry work, and the lectures are upon such subjects as the making of fertilizers, the maintenance of railways, the distribution of electrical power. The Stevens' Institute is mainly intended for giving instructions in mechanical engineering and scientific investigation connected with the arts, and is well furnished therefor.

It was with a desire to so equip the Ontario School of Practical Science as to make it worthy to rank among these great seminaries of practical learning that the Ontario Minister of Education made a tour to the institutions we have named, and also, like a practical man as he is, consulted the men in Canada who know what sort of technical institutions our young men need. Having learned what is required, and how well supplied our American neighbors are with schools to give the technical knowledge so much needed on this continent to-day, it is greatly to be desired that a generous appropriation shall be made by the present Legislature for so broadly necessary a purpose as the proper equipment of the Ontario school, whose buildings and appliances are, on the testimony of Sir Daniel Wilson, entirely inadequate.

MONEY BORROWED ON MORTGAGE.

The impression still prevails in some quarters in Ontario—not being confined to the Province of Quebec, where its existence was made manifest about this time last year—that money borrowed on mortgage is a serious detriment to the country, and that mortgage loan companies are ogres, financial "blood-suckers," draining the purse of the farmer and giving him nothing in return. We still occasionally see this sort of twaddle in print. A recent instance is found in a two-column article of the *West Durham News* last week. The writer declares that "the sweating the borrower gets from these companies so that they can make enormous profits is a debilitating process which, in too many cases, while food for the lenders, is death to the borrowers." In proof of his position the writer referred to cites two companies, the Canada Permanent Loan and Savings Company—to whose "enormous profits" he objects—and the Ontario Industrial Loan Company, which made 21 per cent. net profit last year.

There is, it should be observed, a wide difference between the methods of these two organizations. The company last named is one which buys and sells city lands, and its profits are mainly the result of increase in the value of property and of judicious management in buying lands in large quantities, cutting it up, and selling it in small lots. This is a business entirely distinct from a loan company business, and the large profit made in a single year, as also those of the Land Security Company and some others, is the accident of the unusual rise in value of suburban lands around Toronto. The *West Durham* critic professes to defend the farmer from the debilitating effect of the "enormous profits" made by the Canada Permanent. Here we suspect he mixes up the rate of dividend paid to the lenders of the money with the rate of interest paid

by the borrowers of the money. Possibly he would have it believed (assuredly some people do believe it) that because a company can pay 12 per cent. dividend on its capital, it therefore charges 12 per cent. to its borrowers. But we will acquit the *West Durham* critic of such ignorance or prejudice as this, and would merely remind him that the profits he objects to as made by the very successful company named are only 7.92 per cent. yearly upon the money of its proprietors, i. e., the capital, reserve and contingent funds, not such "enormous profits" after all. And he must know, or can easily find out, that the average rate of interest paid by farmers upon fresh loans to day, all the country over, is not over 6½ per cent.—no "debilitating" rate. That farmers used to pay high rates in bygone years, and that building society regulations and fines were in those days exacting and grinding to some, may be true; we are not concerned to defend them. But it is pernicious nonsense to write about "hardships" and "burdens" imposed upon the farmers by these lending companies now, and about land-holders being "eaten up" by them. These very concerns have been the salvation of many a holder of real estate and have proved a positive blessing to thousands of farmers, enabling him to clear, to seed, to develop his farm and stock it; in short, have put him on the high road to success and wealth.

There are some other statements made by this writer that we cannot leave unchallenged. When he says that rates are charged in Ontario on instalment mortgages spread over ten years amounting to 80 per cent. in the tenth year, he states what is untrue. By an interest table, which any one can consult, the rate paid by a borrower, in even such an unlikely case as he puts, is under 12 per cent. And we think he talks nonsense when he suggests that money can be borrowed in the United States at 5 per cent. and loaned here at a good profit. It is not worth while to consider his petty remarks with respect to a recent movement of loan companies to lessen charges upon instruments such as mortgages. He is evidently not inspired by any real regard for borrowers.

LOAN COMPANIES' REPORTS.

The affairs of the Hamilton Provident and Loan Company continue to be managed with care and discretion, and by the last report the year's operations have resulted very satisfactorily. The company has been fortunate enough to place in the British market its 4 per cent. debenture stock to the amount of of \$378,000, and it has effected a saving in the annual interest upon not only this but a larger sum. It has now \$1,200,000 borrowed on debentures or debenture stock; something under \$1,000,000 in deposits; say \$1,840,000 in share capital and reserved funds; while the net value of its loans is \$3,442,000. During last year, the Hamilton Provident found repayments exceptionally good. It received \$825,000 in this way and made \$751,000 of fresh loans. Its interest earnings were