

Tuesday Messrs. Sutherland and Pattullo saw him and having explained fully the present status of the high school, as to its staff, equipment, and general efficiency, the Minister at once promised that if the staff was found to be complete, as required by the Act, when the inspector next visited the school, and if the board pledged itself to meet the requirements as to a gymnasium and fence, the school would be raised to the rank of a collegiate institute, and to rank as such from the September opening.

WHILE the boys in the Gore School, London township, were playing, on the 22nd October, young Eitelbert Stricknell, aged nine years, ran after Herbert Smith, aged thirteen. Smith had a knife in his hand, and it is alleged struck back at Stricknell to keep him off. Stricknell received a blow in the arm from the knife, which cut right through close to one of the large arteries, the point of the knife coming out on the other side. Mr. E. B. Stricknell, father of the boy, caused a warrant to be issued for young Smith, and the case came before Squire Peters. The defence was that it was an accident, and the Magistrate took that view of the case and dismissed the charge.

THE bursar of University College has received from a liberal donor, who withholds his name, the handsome gift of \$2,000 to found a scholarship, the interest of which is to be annually awarded for the special encouragement of the study of the Natural Sciences, and as such to be given to a student in actual attendance at the college who shall manifest the greatest ability in the diligent pursuit of that department of knowledge. The donor further adds: "It is also my wish that this scholarship shall bear the name of the 'Daniel Wilson' scholarship, and so be associated with the name of one whose example will furnish an honorable incentive to the young men of Canada to follow his steps." It is to be hoped that this example of liberality will also prove an incentive to other wealthy citizens to follow the steps of this generous patron of higher education.

MR. H. GENOCHIO writes to the *Globe* (London, Eng.) giving the result of an interesting experiment at Battersea Park-road Board School, under Mr. J. Kaali, the master of the evening classes: "We had the material in a class of over 200 youths, who had just left school and were entering into the struggle for life. So we put the suggestion to them, and they accepted it at once. We charged 1d. for membership, 1d. per month's subscriptions, and 3d. for a 6d. bath ticket. We started with nine swimmers out of ninety members. We have met twenty-six times, with an average attendance of fifty. We have closed the session with fifty-five swimmers, each of whom will have a certificate issued to him, signed by a member of the School Board and the swimming master. As an encouragement we have collected over £20 worth of prizes, which were competed for last Wednesday night. Now, sir, that we in Battersea have proved that such a movement can be made a success, will any one, I ask, in other parts of the metropolis take up this humane work of encouraging the art of natation among the London school-boys?" Mr. Genochio's experiment is not by any means the first, even in recent years. Many of our readers could show equally successful efforts, but comparison of details is always beneficial, and we trust others will enter upon the same path when they see how easily it can be done.

Correspondence.

AGRICULTURE IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY.

SIR,—It pleases me to see that you have received an awakening on agricultural education. The writer in the *Week* whom you quote, is right in saying that agriculture is the important industry of the Dominion; he should have added that it is rapidly becoming more and more so.

The impression is too prevalent that farming is merely a mechanical operation; in truth, its intellectual branches are just as profound as those of any other profession. But there have been illustrious men in arts, medicine and law. Where are our agricultural celebrities? This is what dampens the ardour of our ambitious youths.

It is not well enough known that intellectual agriculture is only half a century old, and it is too well known that medicine dates at least as far back as Æsculapius, and so on with the other professions. The past quarter of a century has produced more men of mark in agriculture than all the other professions combined. Almost any schoolboy can give you a dissertation on Luther and Harvey, but what does he know about Liebig, Laves, or Vrelcker? His education forces him "to live and move" in the past. If his highest ambition is to become a Moses or a Powderly, he need not now step out of the field of agriculture. Farming being also a business, as well as a science and an art, there lies here, too, a broad field for business talent; and I should add that as a manufacturer the farmer also takes the lead. His is the business of gathering the raw material, and manufacturing it into finished articles for consumption. It is easier to learn how to exercise the greatest economy in turning a fleece into a coat than a dang hill into a fleece. The only real difference which I can see between the agricultural profession and the others is that there is money in the calisthenics and gymnastics of the former, as well as in its intellectual pursuits.

But agriculture will never have tone until these truths are rigidly enforced.

Commercial business is extensively taught: why should there be such a howl against the introduction of agricultural business?

The question, in its extreme simplicity, stands thus: The teacher may explain to his class that 2 yds. cloth and 3 lbs. sugar cannot be added together—this is mathematics; but he must not say that 2 bush. wheat and 3 lbs. nitrate of soda cannot be summed up—this is agriculture. The pupil may calculate the interest on a business note, but he must not meddle with the interest on a farm mortgage. Tell the pupil by all means that he constantly breathes free oxygen—this is hygiene; but for heaven's sake keep it a profound secret that the same element, in certain forms of combination, is found in every morsel he eats, and that the plants get their oxygen from the soil—this is agriculture. Tell him that Canada is in North America: this is geography; but he must never know how it got there, or what it came from—this is agriculture. Give him nitre and sulphuric acid in a retort, and show him how to make aqua fortis—this is chemistry; but don't tell him that

Nature's laboratory, the soil, manufactures this article for plant food, and that it forms the basis of farming—this is agriculture. If the professions are not to be taught in our public schools, tell me, Mr. Editor, where you intend to send the school teacher to acquire the rudiments of his profession. Because a large majority of our citizens are farmers, do you maintain that this fact makes a wrong principle right.

Many practical farmers insist that they don't want agriculture to be taught in schools, that their children get enough of it on the farm, and that they don't want to make "book-farmers" of their boys. Every attempt made to legislate prejudice out of the popular mind has proved a failure. The placing of Tanner's "First Principles of Agriculture" on the optional list of studies was a great blunder. Indeed, any work written for British farmers cannot possibly be suitable for our public schools, and it will have the drawback of poisoning our farmers' minds against agricultural studies. Besides, a book written in a style avowedly to avoid the technicalities of the subject cannot enter into the "first principles of agriculture." To comprehend the technical terms is to know the first principles, and this is the scope of public school education. After-reading will accomplish the rest; to destroy the utility of the press is to undermine its freedom.

I can clearly see what should be done, but how to do it under existing circumstances is another question.

W. A. MACDONALD.

London, Ont.

To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY.

SIR,—As you have kindly solicited an expression of opinion in regard to the overcrowding of professions, I will venture one or two suggestions relating to farmers' sons, from a farmer's standpoint, supposing human nature is much the same in the country as in the town, and that ambition, and the desire to improve one's condition, is equally indulged in.

While it is lamentable that so many of our best youths are induced to abandon agricultural pursuits, I cannot see a remedy in constantly raising the standard, and rendering more difficult the acquisition of the professions. As farmers' sons are comparatively as resolute in grappling with difficulties as others, and although their energies are often taxed, so that there is little left for the prosecution of it when acquired, still the competition goes on. So, instead of trying to keep everything out of reach of our ambitious youth, and producing complete restlessness, let us raise the standard of the farming community. Instead of being obliged to send our boys and girls, just entering their teens, to city or town to advance their education, and be allured by the apparent ease and refinement of city life, let us have efficient schools in the country, where our children shall have less difficulty in sharing the advantages of higher education, intellectual culture, and social refinement, and more time from farm drudgery at their disposal, to accomplish which farmers must not help to maintain so many monopolies, political dignitaries and professional men, and still endure an unlimited competition in their toilsome productions.

S. K. BROWN.

Pickering.