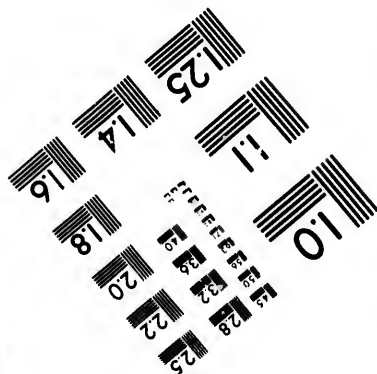
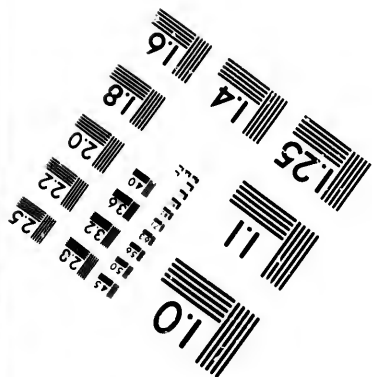
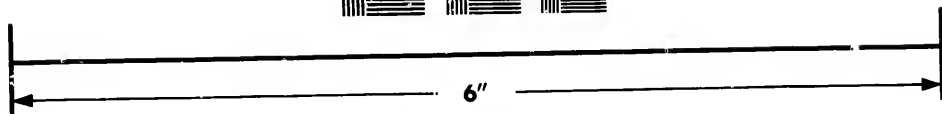
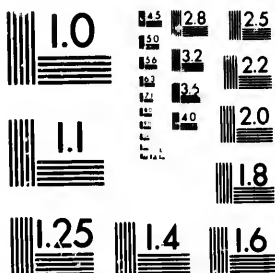


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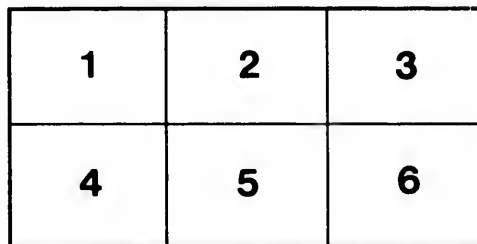
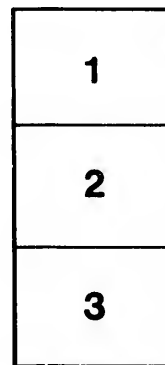
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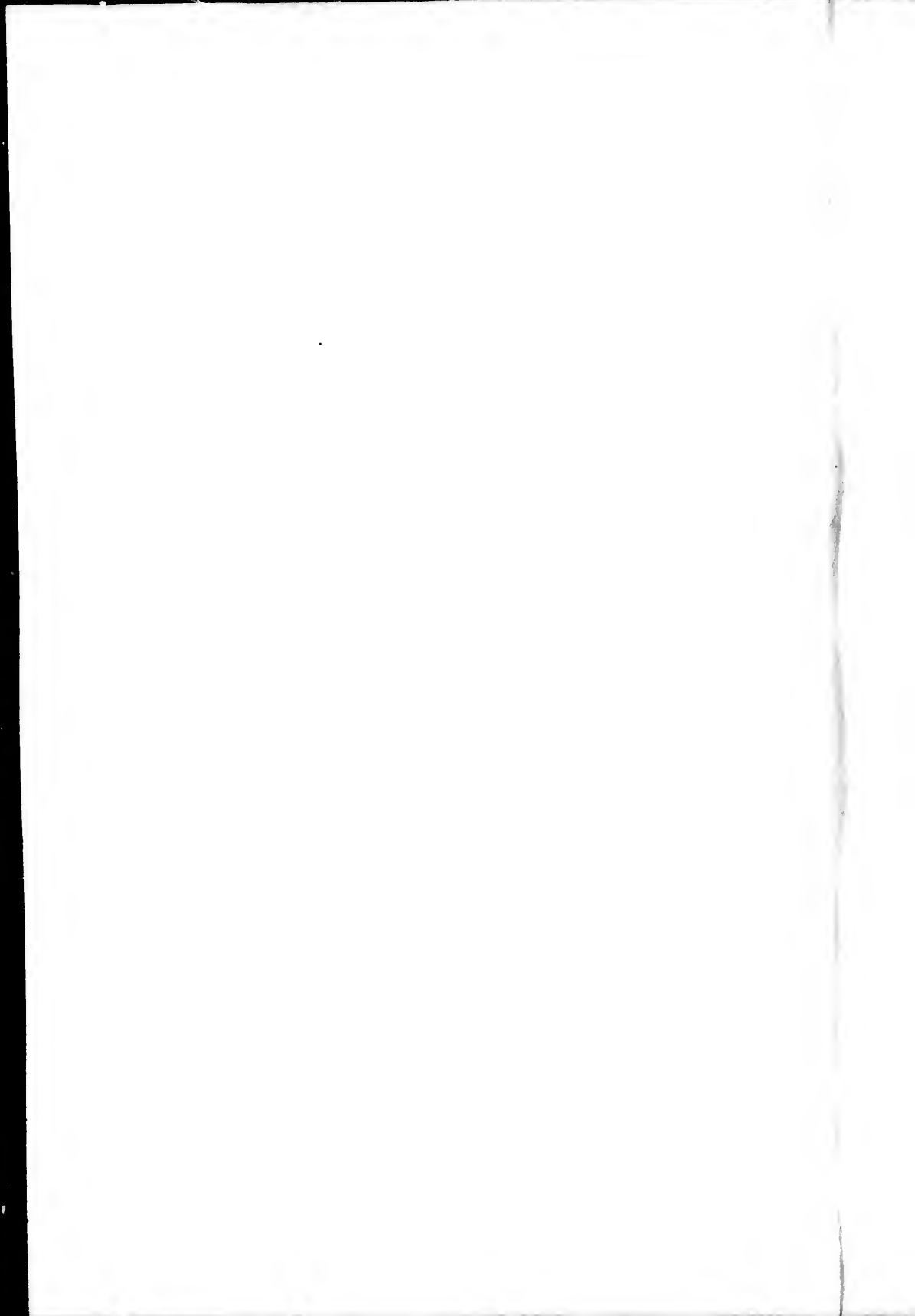
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EDUCATIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

COMPILED FROM REPORTS

OF THE

REV. J. G. D. MACKENZIE, M.A.,

INSPECTOR OF HIGH SCHOOLS.



TORONTO:
ROWSSELL & HUTCHISON.
1882.

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The following extracts from "Educational Reports and Suggestions," furnished to the Education Department by the late Mr. Mackenzie, in his capacity of High School Inspector, are published in deference to the wish of a number of High School Masters.

The contributions on the several subjects appear in the order in which they were written for the different years, the well-marked phases through which educational affairs passed during the period of the author's Inspectorship seeming to prescribe such arrangement as conducing to their better understanding and appreciation.



SECTION I.

From Report for the Year 1868.

DISCIPLINE.

As the maintenance of proper discipline is essential to the prosperity of the school, lying, so to speak, at the very root of the master's efficiency and the pupil's progress, I cannot do better than make that my starting-point. It gives me much satisfaction that I am able to state that my impressions on this head are most favourable. I have had the pleasure of observing, with but two or three exceptions, the utmost order and decorum; a quiet and respectful deportment, and a cheerful submission to authority on the part of the pupils, which speak well for the character of the masters, who, by their firm and discreet government, have brought about this happy state of things, and for the good spirit of the pupils, showing that the masters, as a general rule, have their schools under

perfect control, and leading to the conviction that our Grammar Schools are exerting a very salutary influence over the principles and the manners of our youth. In answer to my inquiries with reference to discipline, only two cases of special severity in the infliction of corporal punishment were reported to me, and very few suspensions. Of those where the offence was committed one day, and reparation made the very next, by adequate apology or otherwise, I have kept no record: in three instances, I regret to say, the offender did not return to the school, though the eldest of the three was only in his seventeenth year.

There are parents who would acquiesce too easily in the pupil's thus cutting himself off from the privileges of the school, and this consideration alone, even if the regulation were not so wisely explicit, would deter the master from resorting to suspension, except where other measures have failed, or where age, or other circumstances, render any other mode of treatment inapplicable. I am much gratified in being able to record the remarkable rarity of corporal punishment in our Grammar Schools, not because I have the slightest sympathy with those who entertain a morbid antipathy to corporal punishment,

which is real kindness in the end, when it takes the shape of "such discipline as would be exercised by a judicious parent in his family;" but because even justifiable frequency of punishment in this form does not seem to be required in our higher schools, where the pupils very generally appear to be animated by the good spirit which should accompany promotion to a higher sphere.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION : CLASSICS AND MATHE-
MATICS.

In estimating the work done by the Grammar Schools in Classics and Mathematics, it seems unfair that the character of those which are really what the Grammar Schools ought to be—nurseries of the Universities—should suffer by their being classed with others, which are not required in their localities for such work at all. Grammar Schools have been opened in places where there is no demand for University training, nor even for instruction in Classics and Mathematics of a lower grade than is required for matriculation; places where the wants of the community would be fully supplied by a good English education. In such places it would

be unreasonable to expect that much should be done in Classics and Mathematics. The classical part, at least, is thoroughly unpopular. Parents, at home, speak of it to their children (and with perfect truth) as a thing that is not going to help them in the least to "get on" in the world; and the pupils, at school, show themselves apt enough in taking up the parental view, evincing no taste for the study, going about it with a listless and reluctant spirit, regarding it, in short, as so much of slave-labour. Nominally, there is work done, which you would not look for in such rural, or comparatively rural, localities. You are told, for example, of a class in Cæsar. You are anxious to see how Cæsar's Commentaries are read, amid green fields and under the shade of forest trees, by boys and girls who are destined simply for the honourable occupations of farm-life. The Cæsar class is called up. A few moments suffice to show you what prospect the pupils have of profiting by the study of Latin, and to what extent they relish their work. Not one of the class can conjugate "*volo*"; startling innovations on declension are perpetrated, such as *frigus, frigi!* Equally startling liberties are taken with conjugation; whilst "*vicos quos incenderent*"

given as "*the villages which should be burnt,*" puts you in possession at once of the style of translation. You see at a glance that the whole thing is miserably unreal; that, as classical schools, such schools are wholly unnecessary, and that the sooner the new law releases them from the yoke of compulsory Latin the better. Time will show whether it will be possible or expedient to maintain all these schools even as High English Schools. In many cases, certainly, the Common School would meet the educational necessities of the locality, and the presence of the weak Grammar School, whilst it draws off nourishment from a more vigorous institution elsewhere, hinders the natural development of the Common School by assuming a portion of its work, and dividing its responsibility. Excluding from our consideration these unnecessary schools, we have a respectable residue—respectable both as to number and achievements—which are *bona fide* classical and mathematical schools, sound members of the educational system, intermediate between the Common School and the University, and, from time to time, in different degrees, recruiting the ranks of the latter.

I might furnish you with much from my own observation which would contribute to show how large a body of well-trained and accomplished scholars our Universities have sent forth—possessing sound judgment, tact and skill, and patient perseverance, as well as scholarship—for the management of our higher public schools, and which would afford proof the most satisfactory that their valuable services have largely promoted the education of the youth of our land. Defects of method may, no doubt, be here and there pointed out, arising, for the most part, from the large amount of work which the masters have to do, for the masters of our Grammar Schools are, as a general rule, overworked. Attention to Greek and Latin Grammar as a separate study is not sufficiently regarded in some of the schools, in connection with the higher classes, the pupils, in the cases to which I allude, being usually limited to such points of inflection and construction as the text of the prepared lesson may happen to suggest. Again, in some of the schools, Latin composition in prose and verse might be more actively cultivated, and carried further. I hope, moreover, soon to see the day when none of our Grammar School masters shall be so pressed for time as to be

tempted, for the sake of saving time, to adopt with the junior pupils, or with any pupils who have not reached a proficiency to justify such freedom, the practice of translation, to the exclusion of construing or taking word for word. To the too early and injudicious adoption of translation we owe such renderings amongst the lower classes as this: "*Imbecilli animi est superstitio*"—"Superstition is a weakness of the mind," whilst in the higher classes it must largely encourage the substitution of the too liberal helps in Anthon's Notes for the patient use of the grammar and the lexicon, with the delusion thence naturally arising, that mere fluency of translation is knowledge of the language.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION: ENGLISH BRANCHES.

I come now to the weak point of our Grammar Schools, the education in the Mother-tongue. Let me, at the outset, so far as the masters are concerned, do them the justice of saying that I regard the general deficiency in this respect as being, in the main, the fault of the system under which they have been working, or, more strictly,

of that feature of the system which has presented a strong temptation to the comparative neglect of English, by virtually forcing Latin upon all, and giving the masters a needlessly heavy amount of classical work, and that, to a large extent, with pupils hard to teach, because most unwilling to learn. As to unprofitable Latin and Greek, in conjunction with neglected English, I have met with that in every stage, from the boy of fourteen or fifteen who, with the chime of the Latin noun-endings ringing in his ears, wrote in his dictation "as and es" for "assignees"—to the young man in the "Anabasis," who sadly contravened the historian's estimate of the character of Cyrus, by attributing to that naturally humane prince, not the cutting down of the trees in the park of Belisys, but the cutting to pieces of the unhappy Belisys himself, the novel rendering being elucidated and confirmed by the equally novel comment, that this was a mode of punishment peculiar to the Persians. This latter incident occurred at one of our rural schools. Now, supposing there had been no classical school at this place, what would have been the effect? Either the young man, who was simply throwing away the time expended upon Greek, would never have taken

up that language at all, confining himself to his own; or, the circumstances of his case permitting, he would have been sent as a boarder to a distant school, where his Greek might have become a reality. As to reading the Mother-tongue without intelligence, I shall content myself with a single case in connection with another of our rural schools. The lines on the "*Coral Insect*," in the fifth Book, were given to a class of about a dozen, both male and female pupils, some two or three of them being young women. None of the class could give me the meaning of "*ephemeral*" — the opinion of the greater number inclining to "*numerous*"; "*tented field*" was considered to indicate "*the inhabited world*," and the allusion in the line "*o'er the whirlpool ripens the rind of gold*" was lost upon all. It was one of the too numerous cases in which English had been sacrificed, and that for a miserable quantum of Latin, of no appreciable value, for the pupils were only about the middle of Arnold's First Book; their work was utterly without life; most of their time, I make no doubt, had been grudgingly given up to an unprofitable subject in which they felt no interest, whilst that instruction in their own language, which would have been of

real service to, them had been very imperfectly imparted.

NATURAL SCIENCE.

Men are becoming more and more persuaded every day that instruction in Natural Science should form an element in every system of liberal education. This is not merely a popular predilection arising from the practical character of such instruction, closely connected as it is with the duties and employments of life, and the requirements of modern civilization. Some, indeed, may press the introduction of Science into education, solely on the ground of its utility; but there are others who appreciate its value as a mean of mental culture, and question the wisdom of relying, for the cultivation of the mind, upon literary training alone. Important changes, we know, have been made within a recent period in the Universities and the leading Public Schools of the mother-land, to meet this view, and to satisfy a demand which has been steadily growing in strength and popularity. These changes are certainly no weak concession to external pressure. They rather indicate that the popular judgment on this point is sound, and harmonizes with the

convictions of men who, in an eminent degree, have made the theory and practice of education a study.

EXAMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION.

Is the low measure of attainment in the English language, so painfully evinced, to be the highest measure of Common School work in that department? Is it to be the standard of admission into the High School? Will the High School realize what we have a right to expect of it, if it start from a point so low down? If the standard in English Grammar be not raised, I fear that many of our High Schools will be high in name only. I speak of English Grammar only, because that is really, as I have said, our weak point, and because I see no necessity for recommending an advance in any other subject. The standard in arithmetic is certainly low, but I see no cause for uneasiness on that head. Our Common School teachers are pretty certain to exceed that standard. The commercial spirit of the age, the excessive admiration bestowed by parents and friends upon the child who is "smart in figures," will keep them up to the mark at least, in most cases will

send them beyond it ; and Language, though comparatively of slow growth, will continue to suffer, as I am satisfied it has suffered, from the disproportionate amount of time and labour bestowed upon Arithmetic, unless the gradation between the Common School and the High School be so adjusted as to prevent it. I am quite of opinion, then, that some advance of the standard in English grammar is desirable for the protection of the High School, which ought to be, not what in rural districts the Grammar School is too often now, a forced and feeble adjunct to the weakness of the Common School, but the natural outgrowth of its strength. It is surely reasonable to expect that our High Schools, which are to be, shall have a function more exalted than that of drilling their pupils in the fifth book. Our High Schools, it seems to me, should aim at conducting their senior pupils along the higher walks of English Literature, training them to observe the beauties of our best authors, and not less to detect what is objectionable in spirit, or defective in taste, or faulty in style ; and enough should be read to excite a relish for what is true and pure and elevating in literature, with an utter distaste

for, and an instinctive recoiling from, the wretched stuff in the shape of ten-cent novels and other trashy publications, silly and trifling at the best, which are widely circulated throughout the Province. Is the High School likely to do its work effectively, if it has to commence with teaching some of the merely elementary principles of grammar? If its junior class can do no more than simply parse such a sentence as "He fiercely sought the life of his enemy"; is incapable of writing from dictation a sentence embodying any of the more difficult words of the language; and unable to apply the rules of syntax so as to know and correct any violation of those rules?

CONCLUDING REMARKS—A PLEA FOR THE CLASSICS.

The main principle of the proposed new law, by which the High Schools are to be constituted, is, beyond dispute, a sound one, that is, that there shall be no inducement, in the shape of qualifying for Government Grant, to make the study of Classics other than voluntary. Experience has proved conclusively that it is the only principle suited to the circumstances of the country, and the only one on

which the education of our youth can be judiciously and profitably carried on. Public opinion on this point is sound and just, and the people at large, when that principle shall become the law of the land, will feel as though an intolerable burden had been lifted from them. We would not seek to chill the fervour of what will be the general rejoicing; but, in the revulsion of feeling, it is just possible that the popular sentiment may be carried to an extreme, and the conclusion adopted, that the study of the classics, as an instrument of mental culture, is of little or no value at all.

Since the claims of modern languages and Science are so fully recognized in our Universities, there is no danger of our returning to the idolatrous exaltation of the Classics at the expense of other branches, but there is danger of a blind and unreasoning prejudice in the opposite direction taking possession of the popular mind. It cannot be doubted that there is a tendency towards such a prejudice in a country like ours, where professional life, for the present at least, is by no means inviting in point of remuneration, and where few have the leisure, the means, or the inclination, to pursue scholarship, for its own sake. But I trust that the strong

utilitarian bias of the age will not lead us to forget that, whilst education should unquestionably be practical, there is much in education of immense value, though that value cannot be expressed in dollars and cents; that mental culture increases intellectual power; and that there are faculties of the mind which He who gave them would have us cultivate, for the improvement of the man, even though they do not directly minister to the necessities of life. We plead earnestly in behalf of a good general education for the young. We deprecate that narrow, illiberal, and ungenerous treatment of the pupil, which aims merely at giving him what, as a man, he will need for the occupation or profession he is intended to pursue, and nothing beyond it. A man ought not to be measured merely by his profession, nor monopolized by his profession, nor clothed in the garb of his profession. We conceive that the study of the Classics ought not to be left out of any plan of general education; that it gives enlarged views; helps to lift the mind above a hard materialism, and to excite interest and sympathy in the experiences of human life; and, certainly, that course of study deserves to be held in honour, as an instrument of mental culture, which has helped for ages to

form the minds of the greatest and the best of our race. Whilst the main principle upon which the proposed new law has been framed, is, as I have said, beyond dispute, wise and just, and affords the best and the only suitable system for the education of our youth generally, we notice with satisfaction the emphatic testimony it bears to the value of classical instruction, in the provision it proposes to make for the "establishment of superior classical schools," in the shape of Collegiate Institutes. Whilst we shall look chiefly to the Universities and to our Collegiate Institutes to guide the popular taste in the right direction, and to advance the interests of superior education, we are glad to assure ourselves that effective aid may be expected from others of our Grammar Schools, which may not have resources sufficient to raise them to the dignity of Institutes, but which will go on doing a real work, and will do it all the better when they come to work under the proposed new law (should it become law) with smaller classes, animated by a better spirit. Homer makes the arming of the hero form part of his description of the battle, and justly; for if the armour be bad, or ill girt on, the warrior will be

embarrassed, and his peril increased in the fight. Our educational institutions supply us with the best of armour, and we have men amongst us well qualified to gird our youth with it, because they wear it themselves so well. We regard with thankful satisfaction what has been done in time past, even under a defective Grammar School system ; we look with hope for the much more that shall be done under an improved system in time to come.

SECTION II.

From Report for the Year 1869.

MINUTE OF COUNCIL RELATIVE TO THE ADMISSION OF GIRLS.

A brief notice may be bestowed on the effect produced by the Minute of the Council of Public Instruction, sanctioning the admission of girls on the same footing as boys, as a concession to public opinion. Whilst the adoption of such a regulation could not be avoided, we cannot but deplore the influence it has exerted on the education of our girls. The Chief Superintendent wisely advised at the time, as the passing of a new law was appar-

ently so near at hand, that no change in the course of instruction should be made, but the inducement to augment the financial resources of the schools was too strong, and so the privilege was eagerly seized upon, whilst the advice was generally disregarded. The "new-born rage for Latin" burst forth with redoubled vehemence, and large numbers of girls were promptly herded into Arnold, or the Introductory Book. The phrase "qualifying Latin" is well understood at present in the schools, and, I need hardly say, is not taken to mean qualifying for higher stages of classical study, for advanced intellectual culture, or for the active duties of life. There is no doubt that girls can learn Latin, and learn it to good purpose too; in Horace I have a distinct recollection of one girl, in particular, who gave me the second ode of the First Book with an accuracy and spirit which left nothing to be desired; but this merciless and sweeping conscription, if I may so term it, what is it but mischievous and cruel? And how much longer are we to endure a system, which specially rewards some of our poorest schools with the increased grant of money, in proportion to the relentless energy

with which unhappy girl-conscripts are pressed into the Introductory Book, incapable, the while, of speaking and writing their own language correctly. The remedy, it is to be hoped, will not be deferred much longer; meanwhile the Inspector and masters must do what they can to recommend the non-classical course with its appropriate entrance examination.

STANDARD OF ADMISSION.

In my last report I gave it as my opinion that the standard of admission into the High School ought not to be, in English, so low as it is now for entrance into the Grammar School, in the case of those who are to take the classical course. Extended acquaintance with our public schools has strengthened my convictions on this head; for, in spite of my persistent efforts in the direction of increased culture of the Mother-tongue, I have but little improvement on the whole to record. My view of the matter is simply this, that the natural development of the Common School is checked by not having a point in English acquirement sufficiently advanced to aim at, and that tuition in the English language is often characterized by compara-

tive want of life and good system, whilst an unreasonable amount of time and effort is expended not only on Arithmetic, but even on Algebra and Geometry, which make a show, and are admired much on the principle of "*omne ignotum pro mag-nifico.*" It is to be feared, on the other hand, that the High School will not generally accomplish what we hope to get from it in Science and the higher branches of English Literature, when the starting point is so low. It will be objected by those who are apt to identify the extension of superior education with the rapid multiplication of High Schools, that to raise the standard of admission would unduly restrict the number of High Schools; but I answer that the country would gain nothing more in time to come from feeble and superfluous High Schools, than it does from its feeble and superfluous Grammar Schools now; that the High School is not a benefit till the High School is required; and that we are doing a positive wrong to the Common School, when we establish a High School, merely because its numbers will be smaller and the school more select, or for any other reason apart from the natural development of the educational system. It is idle to expect the vigor-

ous High School to spring from the dwarfed Common School ; and we cannot regard the mere multiplication of High Schools as being necessarily the extension of superior education. We must see to it that each member of the system is in a healthy condition, and performing its proper functions, and that the education which precedes that of the High School is not cut short by an untimely stroke. I should be satisfied on the whole with the standard prescribed for the "non-classical course," except that I should be willing to accept a somewhat lower proficiency in Arithmetic, if that were necessary in order to reach a higher point in English Grammar ; and in regard to this latter subject, I would have the standard stated in such terms as should imply ability, not merely to analyze and parse any ordinary sentence, but to apply the more simple rules of grammatical construction so as to correct any violations of those rules. What we want is, in plain terms, this, that candidates for admission into the High School should be reasonably capable of speaking and writing their own language without contradicting some of the simplest principles of grammar. I do not mean, of course, that they should be expert in composition, but that they

should be able to satisfy the examiner that they are capable of distinguishing what is not grammar from what is grammar. In point of fact, I feel satisfied that I am not aiming at any degree of knowledge of English Grammar higher than has been contemplated by the Council of Public Instruction, in prescribing the standard for non-classical pupils, but much depends upon the method taken to ascertain and to ensure that knowledge of English Grammar; and whilst I should be one of the last to depreciate analysis in its bearing upon intelligent reading, I can testify from experience that in some of the schools the study of grammatical construction has been largely sacrificed to it; and I can well understand the complaint made by an able Superintendent of Schools in Massachusetts, though expressed, perhaps, in terms rather harsh, that pupils are met with "glibly repeating an unintelligible jargon of analysis after months of wearisome study, and expressing in most ungrammatical sentences such principles of grammar as their memories can retain." Most of the analysis I have met with in our Grammar Schools has been of a respectable order; to none of it, certainly, could I apply so caustic a description as "unintel-

ligible jargon ;" but the unfortunate conjunction, noticed by this Superintendent, of ignorance of grammatical construction with a certain dexterity at analysis, I have more than once encountered, and I very much deplore it. The truth is, there is an amount of one-sidedness in teaching which is simply amazing.

In the Appendix to the Rev. James Fraser's Report, there is a collection of "questions recently (1863) submitted to the candidates for admission to the Providence High School." The paper in Arithmetic I should consider to be too difficult. That in Grammar is fair enough. As to orthography, the highest flight of my ambition has not gone beyond such words as "spectres," "assignees," "hypocrites," and yet I fear that not a few of our Canadian youth, distressed by my relentless persistency, have come to regard me as a sort of persecutor ; we may imagine, then, what the sense of persecution would be were the "open sesame" of the Providence High School to be adopted in all its fulness here, and such trial-words as the following propounded, some of them terrible to the eye and to vocal organs simply excruciating, "zephyr," "synchronical," "buoyancy," "idiosyn-

crasy," "peripneumony," "phylactery," and so on, through a grim array of some fifty words, more or less appalling in shape and sound. But then, we are told, "the Providence schools have a high character for the accuracy of their spelling." I hope the time may soon come when, under our improved system, the same praise may be justly challenged by us. I am sorry to give it as my opinion, that just now, we are more remote from it than it is pleasant to confess. I have no hesitation, then, in declaring it to be my strong conviction that the standard, as to English Grammar, ought to be raised in the case of those pupils who are to learn only the English branches in the High School, or to add one or more of the other modern languages to the study of their own; but what of those who are to study Classics, and of those, especially, who are to enter the University? There is a difficulty here which we must not attempt to conceal. I imagine that, if the standard be raised, as I propose, few pupils would be admitted to the High School under thirteen, an age very suitable for a higher English course with Science; but would it be advisable to defer beginning Latin until that age? There are some men

of sound judgment and experience, who think that no time is lost by waiting till that age has been reached ; that, the faculties being more mature, the physical frame better developed, and so much having been done in English, the progress would be more rapid, and that the boy who commenced at thirteen, would be, at the age of sixteen, in as good a position as if he had commenced at ten. I will not attempt to dispute the soundness of that view, though I must confess that my own practice and experience do not recommend it to me.

IN WHOSE HANDS IS THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS INTO
THE PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOLS TO BE PLACED ?

Hitherto the authority to admit pupils into the Grammar Schools has been in the hands of the Grammar School Inspector, admissions by the masters being provisional only, and subject to his confirmation. It has been proposed to make an important change in this respect, and, under the new law, to assign to the several County Superintendents of Common Schools the function of promoting to the High Schools. I may not be acquainted with all the reasons on which this change

is based ; but the main object in view, and the chief advantage which is expected to be gained, is, doubtless, that the Inspector of High Schools, who, as Grammar School Inspector, has now more than he can attend to, will be relieved of a portion of his work, and that the most elementary, which, in some instances, consumes a large amount of time, and will thus be enabled to do more towards examining the proper work, and determining the status of the school. Whilst I deeply regret the Inspector's inability, under the severe pressure of his work, to do that work so as to fully satisfy himself, and to render his inspection that guarantee of efficiency which it ought to be ; and whilst I consider it most desirable, and, indeed, of urgent necessity, that relief should be afforded in some shape or other, I feel myself constrained to say, in the interest of the schools, that I fear it will operate prejudicially to both Common and High Schools, if the Inspector or Inspectors of the latter are to have nothing to say to promotions from the former. As to the inconvenience which pertains to the system at present in force, viz. : that the Inspector's work is excessive, and that the proposed change would, in many instances materially

reduce that work, I venture to submit, if the admission of pupils be properly, as I cannot but think it is, a function of his office, then the true remedy is to be found, not in alienating that function, but in appointing at least one additional Inspector. Let but one additional Inspector be appointed, and each will be in a position to discharge his duties with fair efficiency. The examination and admission of pupils is, it is true, elementary work, but it is very important work. It fixes the goal of the lower school, and the starting-point of the higher. It virtually decides whether the Common School has done its part, and in what condition the High School ought to accept those who are to be the recipients of the higher instruction it has to communicate. If the authority to admit be entrusted to one man, uniformity, which, in itself, is a great thing, will be the result; in the hands of many, we shall have, if not different standards, yet different applications of the same standard. I do not think it is enough to say that the High School will be simply a step from the highest class of the Common School, the work of which will be strictly defined; for, though you define the work never so strictly, it seems to me

that there will be different views as to what constitutes the accomplishment of that work. Nearly equal as the County Superintendents may be in attainments, they will differ, at least, in judgment and temperament: some will be strict and scrupulous; others will be indulgent, and more readily influenced by the natural desire that the schools of their respective counties may compare favourably with those of other counties in point of numbers and proportion of Legislative grant. This very apportionment, moreover, of the Legislative grant will cause the inevitable diversity to be more keenly felt.

But what affects me most, as being, in my judgment, most prejudicial to the interests of the schools, is the check which the proposed change will put upon the efforts of the High School Inspector to elevate and improve that all-important education of our youth in the grammar and literature of their Mother-tongue, which has been so much neglected. With the entrance examinations in his hands, he will have it in his power at once to protect the High School, and to stimulate its natural tributary and fountain of supply, the Common School, the teachers of which will be led to consider, with some interest and anxiety, what

he expects, and to adapt themselves to the one uniform measure and style of proficiency which he exacts in his interpretation and application of the prescribed standard. It is no weak argument, I think, in favour of the view which I am led to take of this matter, that it is the view taken by our Grammar School masters without, I believe, a single exception. But there is one difficulty which, I confess, presents itself to my mind as arising out of the present method. Boys and girls, whether fit or not for the Inspector, are pushed forward into the Grammar School at the stated periods, and in the numerous cases in which they are not fit, the task of getting them ready is thrown upon the Grammar School master. From the moment at which they enter the school, until the Inspector makes his visit, unless ample time for the preparatory process has been allowed by a late visit, these new recruits are objects of special interest, the *spes gregis*, almost, for the time being, inasmuch as on the fate of each depends so much of government money; and thus the master is tempted to bestow less attention on the more advanced pupils, and to neglect, in some measure, his proper work, in order to undertake work with

which it was never intended he should have anything to do. I cannot say that I have often met with this anomaly to such an extent as to do serious harm to the Grammar School, but I have had this extra labour assigned more than once as the cause of imperfection and failure in the regular Grammar School work. It certainly would be well to make this state of things impossible for the future; and I do not see how that can be done without the intervention of the County Superintendents. But why take the preliminary examination altogether out of the High School Inspector's hands, if there be any prospect of his work being curtailed by the appointment of an additional Inspector? Why should not the County Superintendents designate those whom they consider fit for promotion, and the High School Inspector admit?

NECESSITY FOR ENLARGED PROVISION FOR
INSPECTION.

In your "Special Report," published in 1868, you declare your conviction that "inspection," in the very satisfactory form in which it exists in Holland, "is the life, the soul of the Dutch system, as it

must be of any efficient system of public instruction." Entertaining so strongly as you do this conviction, you cannot but be anxious—as indeed I know you are—to do all in your power towards extending and improving the necessarily imperfect system of inspection which is all that the Grammar Schools of Ontario at present enjoy. You have recommended, and will doubtless be seconded by the Legislature of the Province in establishing, a greatly improved system of inspection for the Common Schools, a provision, in fact, so far beyond the present notoriously inefficient one that we may hope it will have a most marked influence in raising our Common Schools. I should be glad to cherish the hope that the improvement thus attempted, and likely to be carried out, in connection with our elementary schools, will be extended to our High Schools, so that every chance, under circumstances the most favourable, may be given them to do their work well, and to make up for the shortcomings of the past; and perhaps it may be well now, when we are on the eve of material changes, to follow up the efforts made in this direction by my predecessor, and to bring the subject again before the public mind. A feeble voice here and there

has been raised in England against State inspection on the ground, which there is no sufficient evidence to sustain, that such inspection is not liked generally by parents, and that it discourages men from seeking the mastership of schools subject to such inspection. These statements rest upon the smallest basis imaginable. That parents should object to that supervision of the schools by competent and independent officers which is one of the best possible guarantees that their children will be well taught, is incomprehensible, as it is certainly very far from being the fact. That men who wish to obtain schools, but feel that they are not qualified to raise a school to that status which a government inspector would be justified (all circumstances of position and material being considered) in requiring, is much more easily understood; that there are some men amongst the 101 Head Masters of our Grammar Schools who may meet the Inspector at his official visit with that courtesy which I have not failed to receive in a single instance, but would much prefer, notwithstanding, being left to themselves, I cannot deny; but of this I am firmly persuaded, that a large proportion of our masters desire nothing more earnestly than that the system

of inspection should be the most efficient they can have, as well as that the reports sent in to the department by the Inspector might be made to tell with direct and decided effect on their own reasonable hopes of advancement, and on the prosperity of the schools. These men feel that they are doing their work honestly and well, and what they particularly desire is, that their work, in its every branch, may be thoroughly inspected by a man able to judge of it, and disposed to do them justice; so that, far from shrinking from government inspection, they cordially invite it, and are glad to have it as comprehensive and as searching as it can be rendered. But one inspector, from whom two visits each year are exacted, cannot do justice to 101 schools; no matter how vigorously a man may throw his energies into the work, such inspection cannot be efficient. No doubt a salutary impression may be made upon a school even by that inspection, but a comprehensive and accurate estimate of all the work done in each school is simply impossible; and, as to payment for results — a principle which has been adopted with good effect in England — that, of course, is out of the question. And yet I am convinced that our schools will not

give us full satisfaction until that principle has been adopted, in conjunction with average attendance, as the basis on which the apportionment of the legislative grant is made. Numbers are no infallible criterion either of the comparative usefulness of a school or of the ability with which it is conducted. There are schools on our list with the same, or nearly the same average, which yet differ widely in the attainments, and skill, and energy of the men at their head, and in the comparative value of the work they are doing for the country at large. I have looked over the returns for the latter half of 1869, and I find that our Grammar Schools, with reference to average attendance, may be divided into six classes. In regard to the first two classes, which stand highest in numbers, I do not know that the present mode of apportionment involves any very sensible injustice; but in every one of the other four classes, there is wide diversity of merit and usefulness, and yet the schools in each of these classes receive the same, or nearly the same, appropriation of government money. Amongst those of the third class, for example, we have Goderich, Trenton, Newmarket, Streetsville, Brantford, and L'Orignal, standing pretty much on the

same footing as to average, and yet, if we were to estimate the status of each by examination of work done, the diversity, in some instances, would be rather startling. In the lowest class of all—lowest, that is, as to numbers—the disparity is particularly striking; and if Metcalfe, Elora, Cornwall, Collingwood, Richmond, Milton, and Fergus, in this class, were brought into the arena of competitive examination, they would find themselves engaged in a contest with very unequal capacities for winning the prize. I do not forget that the proposed High School Bill, should it become law, will go a great way towards rectifying this unfair and disheartening state of things, by abolishing “bogus-latin” pupils, and prescribing a real standard and course of study for all; but more than this is required. There should be a provision ensuring special reward for special ability, fidelity, and success. Besides this, the stimulus of honourable rivalry is as good for schools as for individuals, and no more stimulating application of public money can be imagined than this payment for results achieved.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

I have now, Reverend Sir, completed my annual task, and if I have written at greater length than I prescribed to myself in my previous Report, I trust you will be ready to excuse me, making allowances, as I am sure you will do, for the special interest and anxiety which, in common with many an earnest man, I cannot but feel at the present crisis of educational affairs. As to the past, I have been candid in my statement of facts, and I can say that I have done my best to get the fullest and most accurate information I had it in my power to obtain. As to the future, I have made no suggestions, except on points so intimately connected with my experience, and so vitally associated with the discharge of an Inspector's duties, that I felt I could not overlook them. Whilst I have spoken strongly, as feeling strongly, on some of these points, I have striven at all times to avoid the language of dogmatic pertinacity, and I trust I have not been led away in aught from the truth by undue reliance on my own opinions. The work of a Grammar School Inspector, in making up his report just now, is, in

many respects, an ungracious task, since the public interests require that every effort should be made to strongly point out the injurious results of an unsound principle, which has not only diverted our superior schools from the fulfilment of their true mission, but has also hindered the natural development of that noble fabric, of which we have reason to be proud, our Common School system. Thus situated, the Inspector may well seem, at times, to have a morbid appetite for the evil, and to close his eyes to the good.

I cherish, therefore, with a good deal of satisfaction, the hope that the introduction of a better system will place the Inspector in a more pleasant position, giving him less of fault-finding, and more of evidence to sustain the Roman orator's eulogy of the high and holy work of training the youthful mind: "*Quod munus reipublicæ afferre majus meliusve possumus, quam si docemus atque erudimus juventutem!*"*

* "What greater or better offering can we bring to the State than the teaching and training of the youth!"

SECTION III.

From Report for the Year 1870.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FURNITURE.

The High School Boards of Trustees are now invested with full power to raise all the money they need for the legitimate expenses of the schools. They are no longer in the humiliating and helpless position they occupied in cases where the School Boards were not united. They are not to wait, henceforward, cap in hand, on Municipal Councils, and sue for that which they have now a legal, as they had always a moral, right to demand. Sundry shortcomings — perhaps inevitable under the old *regime* — towards which a merciful and wise forbearance has been exercised, should be rectified now as speedily as possible, and every effort made to conform strictly to the explicit regulations set forth by the Council of Public Instruction.

Some of our High School buildings are—as to two or three of them—so entirely unsuitable; as to the rest, so unattractive, and even forbidding in appearance—so absurdly out of keeping with the appellation “High School”—that, in my judgment, they

should be tolerated not one moment longer than the time that may be required for the erection of better. The new arrangements for inspection, which have been so happily accomplished, have given me a colleague who will have opportunity for criticising these structures, which an acquaintance of three years has not endeared to my own eye or hear^t, and if he, as well as myself, should pronounce against them, I trust they will soon be made to disappear. We wish to feel respect, not only for the learning to be had at our High Schools, but for the temple in which that learning is enshrined. We desire to see, in every case, an edifice which shall appeal, with more or less of the charms of external beauty, to the eye and mind of the young; and, as to internal arrangements, I shall not be satisfied till I see every school-room so furnished as to lead the young minds in it to place a higher value on the knowledge they are incited to acquire, when they observe and instinctively appreciate, as they will not fail to do, the pains taken to maintain a proper convenience, seemliness, and grace, in everything associated with the acquisition of that knowledge. All, in the matter of building and furniture, may not hope to

rival Toronto, Hamilton, or Galt, and others of like stamp; all are not called upon to aim at the stately and the ornate; but even the comparatively small and feeble section ought to do its best to make everything neat, commodious, and wholesome; health of body provided for by sufficient space and purity of air; culture of mind promoted by exhibiting education with nothing shabby or sordid in her attire, but in fair and comely garb. With adequate means of raising money, let us hope that we have seen the last of superannuated wood and sickly paint, of huge, cumbrous desks, and diminutive blackboards. Of all the appliances made use of in the work of the school there is, probably, none more serviceable than the BLACKBOARD, not only employed by the master in giving instruction to his pupils, but capable also of being so managed, as to put the pupils in the way of instructing one another, simply by subjecting the work of any member of the class to the criticism of the rest. The effect of such an exercise is excellent. Corrections made by the master are too often received with an equanimity and a composure which give but poor promise of the pupil's performance when the same points come up again; errors, on the

other hand, pointed out by a school-fellow inflict a deeper wound on self-esteem, and are seldom repeated. It is easy to understand that, whilst a class is thus engaged at the black-board, an amount of vigilance and keen interest is developed, which no alertness or remonstrance on the master's part will excite; the apathy that so terribly chills the master's heart is dispelled; and the whole class, for the time, are on the *qui vive*. I have always set a special value, moreover, on the black-board as contributing to the life and freedom of independent teaching, the teaching of the individual man which brings mind into contact with mind so much much more effectually than Text-books can do. There is no doubt in some minds an impatient endurance of the Text-book, with a vehement propensity for launching out into a crude originality more gratifying to themselves than improving to those whom they are set to teach; but, bad as this is, it is worse to resolve the whole of education into memorizing Text-books; worse to bind the young mind to such a servile adherence to the Text-book, as represses effectually all mental activity and independence of thought.

NEW PROGRAMME—ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE.

The new Programme for High Schools is now before the country in provisional form, and subject to such modification as, after trial, may be deemed desirable. It may be necessary to make alterations in the details of its arrangement; for no scheme of study can well be pronounced satisfactory, in all its parts, before it has been put to the test of actual experiment; but, as to its general principles, it will be cordially welcomed as making wise and suitable provision for the educational wants of the country.

After its experience of compulsory Latin and neglected English, the country will be well pleased to find, at the very head of the Programme, the culture of the Mother-tongue. It has been the fashion till within the last few years to assert, as a truth not to be gainsayed, that no basis of education admitting of a sound and perfect superstructure could possibly be laid but in the Ancient Classics. For ages, our language, with all its beauty and strength; our literature, with its unsurpassed wealth of intellectual treasure, were made

to move in the train of classical learning, like some wretched captive, much in the style of the old Roman triumph. Whilst we fully recognize the true value of the Classics, we affirm that to vindicate their just claims it is by no means necessary to do dishonour to the Mother-tongue. It is not a very cheering sketch, the position of some three-fourths of the pupils of our Grammar Schools; *in* school, excursions hither and thither through an Introductory Book, which too often introduced to nothing, or, at best, a nibbling at the edges of Cæsar or Virgil, with grateful acceptance of Anthon's liberal aids, but with little appreciation of the spirit of the author, or comprehension of the language; *out of* school, sensational novels of the lowest class devoured — wonderful ten-cent publications, with covers highly emblematic of the trash within. This mockery of education has been summarily disposed of. Under the better system which we have obtained at last, the minds of our youth will be guided to a higher literature and a purer taste. No doubt a good deal of special care and effort in this department will be required of our High School Masters, the more so as we stand much in need of School Editions of English Classics,

annotated as we have the Ancient Classics, and with notes prepared, not only to answer the purpose of mere illustration, but with a view to the application of received laws and principles of criticism to the beauties or blemishes of the text.

CONCLUDING REMARKS. ERRORS OF THE OLD SYSTEM.
TRUE VALUE OF CLASSICAL STUDY.

You have good cause for saying, Reverend Sir, that "the School Act of 1871 has laid the foundation of a new era in the Public School education of our country." That era has opened upon us with the most favourable auspices. Not only have the errors of the past been rectified; not only has a new system been constructed on sounder principles; there is, besides, the general prevalence of more correct views on education to guarantee to that system a fair trial, and to encourage the men whose special duty it will be to carry it out. Except in very few minds, which still cling to the old routine, prejudice has been dispelled, and a light has dawned which could no longer be resisted; since the failure of the system built on the blind worship of the Classics has been

so notorious and so complete, that scarcely a single voice is raised to defend it. There is many a man of my own day who will remember how the case stood in school some thirty years ago, when Latin and Greek bore absolute sway; when Mathematics, indeed, but Mathematics alone, were permitted to move along with them, *patri passu*; when Science was imparted in homœopathic proportions, whilst Mythology was administered in the strongest doses; when Philology, which forms a study so valuable and so attractive now, was unknown; when the boy had to work so hard at dead languages that he could only manage at best to catch, in passing, a few faint glimpses of that region of surpassing beauty, the structure and literature of his own living Mother-tongue.

It was deemed a hopeless quest then to seek respectable scholarship outside the charmed circle of classic lore; nay, it was almost held a sort of heresy to doubt that the agonies of *Ona genus, As in presenti*, and the rest (and what agonies they were, many a luckless youth could tell!) were indispensable to literary parturition, and versifying in those days was carried on with as much vigour as though the highest aim that could be offered to a boy's ambition was to

become a Latin poet. But the worst feature of all was the accumulation of lumber on the brain in the shape of "fables and endless genealogies" of Heathen Mythology, the feats of memory accomplished in this line being at times prodigious. Every facility was afforded for indoctrinating the young mind in everything that concerned the "impure rabble of the Heathen Baalim." It is true, the worst of the strange stories clustering around Olympus were not detailed in the class-room, but then the subject itself was made so much of, and the book that formed the repository of much treasure, the schoolboy's *vade mecum*—Lempriere's Classical Dictionary—was so constantly in request, that it was too much to expect that the young student should take from it only the comparatively harmless, and shun that which it was taint to touch; and so a prurient curiosity was too easily excited by glimpses of scenes which ought to have been religiously kept back from the young mind, which soon learned to search for legends, not all like that of Eros and Psyche, with its deep and sweet lesson of the soul's passage through earthly passion and misfortune to celestial felicity. When from the mass of Heathen fable, laboriously committed to memory in schools in bygone days, we deduct just

what is required to illustrate the text that is being read, there still remains a large amount worthless, or nearly so, for the purpose of true education. This has been, happily, swept away, and so necessary does that cleansing of the educational temple seem to us now, that we can only contemplate with simple amazement the fact, that so much time could ever have been given to such a subject, when in History, and Science, and Language, we find that a life-time is all too short to occupy the mind with what is instructive and improving, fresh and pure, beautiful and true; with better conceptions of what education is, with a deep impression that it means a real quickening of the minds of the people. The generations to come are not at all likely to repeat the blunder of their forefathers. There is but little danger of Sapphics ever again driving out Science, or of legend monopolizing what is due to language. There is danger, however, on the other hand, that public opinion may be carried too far by the impulse which is now acting upon it, and that Science—so to speak—may be made to avenge herself on the Ancient Classics for the wrong they have done her.

The present Bishop of Manchester tells us that, whilst engaged in looking into the School System

of the United States, he frequently heard the complaint, and that from some of the best educationists in the country, that the Physical Sciences were crowding out not only the Greek and Latin Classics, but even Mathematics and English Literature. The protection of the last two subjects of study was wholly in the hands of our authorities, and they have extended full protection to them in the Programme they have issued. In regard to the study of the Classics, it was not within their power to do so much; they have set forth a Classical Course, but it will depend upon the temper of the public mind whether many or few embrace it. Let us hope that our good Classical Schools which shall do real work will be well supported, and that the Classics properly studied will not be allowed to fall into a disrepute which they by no means deserve. We may have erred in the past, in oppressing the memory with a mass of worthless fiction; we may have made a mistake in bestowing so large an amount of time on the vehement effort to rival Horatian Alcaics, when matters far more serious were crying aloud to us from the corners of the streets; but we can make no mistake in assuring ourselves that to the young student a

mine of rich treasure has been presented when the literature of the old Greeks and Romans is really thrown open to him; that he has realized a positive gain of no small value when he has truly mastered an Oration of Cicero, a Book of the *Æneid*, or the Odes of Horace; and that his mind has been most certainly brought into invigorating contact with influences which deserve to be called, in the highest sense, Education, when it has learned to enjoy the world of beauty spread before it in the lofty thought and the noble diction of the Grecian Drama. Education, like wisdom, "is justified of all her children"; and in her family, where there is no sacrifice of practical fitness to favourite theory, there is no antagonism either.

SECTION IV.

From Report for the Year 1871.

CLASSICS AND ENGLISH.

The heavy yoke of compulsory Latin having been taken from the necks of our youthful population, on the memorable 15th of February, 1871, there was, of course, a numerous exodus from the

region of "qualifying" Classics, the girls, especially, effecting a speedy migration into the more congenial English sphere. Yet the abandonment of classical study has been by no means so general as might have been anticipated, under more or less of violent reaction after unnatural constraint. Perhaps the greater difficulties of the English course, with its much larger quantum of Science, have saved some copies of the Introductory Book and Reader from being consigned to dust and oblivion; but we may hope that those who have taken the classical course, when free to do otherwise, mean work, and will, many of them, do work which shall help to redeem the Ancient Classics in this Province from any unmerited prejudice that may still exist against them. A powerful stimulus is about to be applied in every department, the stimulus of merit recognized and rewarded; of inefficiency and failure visited with pecuniary loss. On the Classics, as on every other subject, this must exert a quickening influence. Masters will be inspired with an honourable emulation; and even pupils may be brought to feel that upon their personal exertions depend, in large measure, the prestige and the very resources of their school.

Classes will be kept more on the *qui vive*; the blunders they make will have a special gravity, and call for special vigilance on the master's part. Even in rural parts we may hope that no toleration will be extended, as we know, unhappily, that toleration has been extended, to such specimens of Virgilian astronomy as "(Jupiter) fastening the stars over the kingdoms of Lybia"—"*Lybiæ defixit lumina regnis*;" and even, if in rural parts, Latin should die out, we shall not be greatly afflicted if we can only get the Mother-tongue to thrive. Already there has been improvement in quarters where laxity was the order of the day—more of thoroughness and accuracy—more of accidence, less of Anthon. Still there are weak points. We should be glad to see Grammar, for example, more systematically studied as an independent subject, not limited to what is suggested by the text that is being read. We are not of those who consider versifying one of the highest exercises of the human intellect, and have no desire to perpetuate here the undue attention which, under the old training, was usually given to it; but we cannot refrain from expressing our great regret that the faculty of writing Latin prose is possessed in so small a

degree by the pupils of our High Schools. As a general rule, even Arnold's book is by no means mastered; but little, for the most part, is done in it, and that little not well done; whilst the attempt to deal with a translated extract from Cicero, the translation being extremely literal, has proved, with very few exceptions, a failure.

FRENCH.

By far the greater proportion of those pupils who have taken up French are girls. It is gratifying to observe this growing taste amongst our girls for a graceful and elegant language, so peculiarly a woman's study and accomplishment as French is. It is to be hoped that such works as the "History of Charles XII.," and Corneille's tragedy, "Horace," will come to the aid of a high and pure English literature, in fortifying the minds of our young women against the many publications of the day that are calculated to turn the heads of young people, and to destroy the charities and joys of the Christian home. We do not doubt that the French which is acquired at our High Schools by the more advanced pupils will be turned to good account, though we cannot refrain from adding, that it would be none the worse for greater attention to purity of accent.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO THE HIGH SCHOOLS.

The experience of years has taught on this head lessons of great value, from which our educational authorities have not failed to profit; and so distinct and positive has this teaching been, that there is perhaps no feature of our school system in which we are more directly led to safe and sound conclusions. The utter inefficiency of the old Grammar School arrangements in this respect, with their low standard of attainment, and their very imperfect mode of examination, was so notorious, and the mischief done to both classes of schools so great, that every one was brought at last to feel that the evil was one that was eating the very life out of our schools. It was felt that the starting-point had been fixed so deplorably low that no goal of high attainment would be reached; and that nothing short of a radical change in conducting the examinations for admission would save the education of the country. Professor Young's strong sketches left no doubt as to the real state of things, and very suggestive were they of the sort of educational chaos into which the country was being brought. It is well that we should keep his picture before

us, with all its associations of unworthy manoeuvring to combine the maximum of money with the minimum of education, both that we may the better appreciate our deliverance from such a state of real degradation (for it was nothing else), and be led to watch more anxiously any efforts, if haply such should be made, to check and turn back the upward movement which the new School Law has so happily initiated. In connection with this low standard—parsing a single sentence in English being practically the only test—we may mention one fact that shows, amongst many others, how terribly, in the days of which we are speaking, things were unhinged, and out of course. As soon as the new School Act became law, the Inspector received instructions from the Department to apply with greater strictness the old method and standard, until they should be superseded by the new. Just one change was made, but that was found all-sufficient: the parsing, instead of being given orally, was exacted in writing. The effect was most remarkable. About one-half of the candidates presented to the Inspector as fit subjects for High School tuition were found, to a lamentable extent, incapable of spelling correctly in writing—whatever

they may have been able to do orally—words certainly not amongst the most difficult in the English language, more particularly those very terms of Grammar which were almost every day in their mouths. Much harm, unfortunately, had already been done, but how much more would have been done but for the salutary interposition of the Inspector between the High School, with its coveted legislative grant, and the pushing tendency of the local authorities! At last came the system under which we have been working for a twelve-month — a Board of Examiners attached to each school, whose admissions are made final on approval by the Inspector, who is “to see that the regulations and programme of examination provided according to law are duly observed,” and, therefore, not vitiated by the admission of pupils who do not come up to the prescribed standard. It is plain enough that this is a vast improvement on the old plan, yet far from perfection; for one thing it wants, and without that it will never command public confidence—uniformity. It is felt that, though it protects the High School from many an unfit pupil that would have crept in under the “simple parsing” system, it, nevertheless, works unequally, and with all the care the

Inspector can exercise, it must work unequally, so great is the disparity between the different sets of questions, as put by different Examining Boards. There is, it is true, the expedient of exacting a higher percentage where the questions are easier, and this has been resorted to in some cases, but the proceeding is viewed with so much disfavour, and is so much regarded as an arbitrary act of the Inspector, that we have no high opinion of it as a remedy. There is but one course which can be considered fair to all, and that is, providing the same examination for all, subject always, of course, to that indispensable safeguard, revision by the Inspectors. That course, we are glad to see, has been adopted by the Department, under whose instructions questions for the entrance examinations have been prepared by the High School Inspectors, to be submitted to all the schools. This will excite general satisfaction, as a most commendable move in the direction of uniformity, and, we may hope, will quite dispel that feeling of uneasiness to which its absence has given birth.

