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RECENT EDUCATIONAL SPEECHES IN ENGLAND.

(Fourth series, continued from page 35.)

VII.—MOST REV. DR. THOMPSON, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

At a late distribution of prizes, and certificates awarded to students at the Oxford, Cambridge and Durham University, middle class examination, and those of the Society of Arts, of the West Riding of Yorkshire, held in Leeds, His Grace the Archbishop of York delivered an address, from which we make the following extracts:—

THE ADVANTAGES OF COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.

A great deal has been said on the subject of competitive examinations. Some people have a kind of fear of examinations. That fear, I confess, I cannot share; for it seems to me a thing most obvious that when a person has been teaching and another taught, both should have their teaching and their reception of knowledge fairly tested by some third person competent to form an opinion between the two. Is there anything unfair in that towards the educator? Not at all. Now, put the strongest case. At the first examination at Oxford several schools sent up boys for competition, and every boy was rejected; and rejected from a want of knowledge of the most elementary subjects—a knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, and the rudiments of geography. Was it wrong as regards the interest of the educator to expose thoroughly the mistaken track which he was following? On the contrary nothing could be kinder. Now, as regards the pupils, I am sure that the pupil, and every one interested in the pupil, ought to encourage institutions of this kind to the very utmost. There is no parent, or hardly any parent, competent to judge

of himself whether the education his son is receiving is a real education or a mockery of it; and in that respect even now there is a great deal to learn, for I find recorded, even this year that out of 100 candidates no less than 40 failed to obtain the certificates which they sought—40 per cent. of failures. Surely this shows distinctly that teachers and pupils have not brought themselves yet into harmony with the examination, not yet learnt what is required of them, and the consequence is that instead of 5 or 10 per cent. of failures, arising from accident, nervousness and miscalculations, we have the enormous number of nearly one-half. So much for the failures; now for the successes. It is a good thing for the pupil, surely, if he has great merit, that that merit should be found out. I have myself seen, as head of a College in Oxford, men come to the University to be matriculated there, and they have told me that their reason for coming there was that they had obtained a first class in the local examinations; and so their friends told them it was worth their while to train for a learned profession, and their course of life had been changed accordingly. That is what examinations do for us. They tell us what we are.

WHAT A SCHOOL EXAMINATION REALLY DOES FOR US.

There is no magic about an examination. There is nothing on the one hand to be feared, and on the other there is no great change to be hoped for from the examination; but by an examination we do exactly what a merchant or tradesman does when he adds up his books and ascertains exactly how the matter stands; and so, my friends, I rejoice to think that this institution, and all similar institutions in the country, are putting to flight a great deal of well meant quackery in the way of education, and are enabling parents and pupils to know whether they are receiving just that commodity which they hope to receive when they send a son to school to be educated. Every teacher who is worth anything, every master who has a school well educated, delights to be inspected. The highest schools in the country court inspection, send to Oxford and Cambridge for examiners, and have their classes one by one before them, and then it is seen whether they are going on well, and they are not afraid of criticism; and surely every parent is deeply concerned that there should be a fair system of inspection throughout the country, and that they may know exactly what that which goes under the name of "education" really is. The Grammar School takes pains to get inspected, independent of the testing that is constantly going on,—namely, the testing of the youths they send up to the University