

law upon the undue inflation of attendance elsewhere, our own school would henceforth be placed in such a position financially as to enable the Trustees to administer its affairs with greater efficiency than had heretofore been possible.—*Northern Advance*.

2. HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMINATION.

The examination for entrance into the High School was held, as we previously announced. On this occasion, the papers in the six subjects of examination, viz.: dictation, spelling, grammar, geography, arithmetic and composition, were set by the Education Office, and sent with values attached to each question, to the several High Schools of the Province. This was done with a view of obtaining uniformity of attainments among the entrants. This latter step was rendered imperative by the fact that when the examinations were left entirely in the hands of local boards of examiners, there were great varieties of attainments among those, and some were admitted for the sake of increasing the Government grant to the school, who sorely needed more public school instruction. This occurred most in the case of High and Public Schools, and in places where the trustees measured a head-master's success by, or paid him according to, the amount of public money which he obtained for the school. The Education Office now seeks to remedy such anomalies as these by rendering the entrance examinations, as far as possible, uniform, by setting the questions, assigning values to them, and insisting on all candidates being rejected who do not make fifty per cent. of the total number of marks in their papers.

It shows the desire of the Board of Examiners to abide by the regulations laid down, and the absence of any desire to crowd pupils into the High School contrary to those regulations, that the Board, under the impression that fifty per cent. of marks was required in the two papers of arithmetic and composition separately, rejected fourteen candidates who fell short (some only by a little) of this standard in these two subjects, though they had a large margin over the half of all the others. But a subsequent telegram from head-quarters stated that a note on these two papers was not to be so understood. Consequently, as the lowest had a margin of nearly twenty over the required percentage, all were admitted.—*Port Hope Times*.

3. HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.

The High School Examinations are becoming events of considerable importance—events that are looked forward to with a good deal of solicitude by candidates for admission to the school, and which are looked on by the successful ones with much satisfaction and not a little pride. To be enrolled as a student in the High School may now be looked upon as an honourable distinction, inferior only in degree to that of being a University matriculant. The regulation, adopted by the Council of Public Instruction, of sending out examination papers from the Department to all the schools in the Province, thereby establishing a uniformity in the examination of all the schools, will give great satisfaction to all such as are properly conducted. It is the only method by which anything like a correct idea of the standing of the different schools can be obtained, and while it effectually blocks up the old easy-going slipshod way, that was open to any that chose to try for admission, it at the same time, by making the admission more difficult, renders it a prize to be coveted, and when obtained, an honour to be proud of. I believe that our own examination in Woodstock has been very successful. The papers being sent from the Department in Toronto, acted as a powerful stimulant to both pupils and teachers, and they have worked with an earnestness and a success that shows how much can be accomplished when there is a definite object in view, and which will tell favourably upon the result of the examination. The Board of Examiners have not as yet, I believe, compared notes, but it is understood that there will be very few failures, while most of the pupils have answered the questions so correctly, and with such a fulness, as to place ours, without doubt, in the front rank of the schools in Ontario. The papers sent up from the Department are very fair, creditable papers, such as any High School pupil ought to be able to grapple with successfully. No one would appear to have reason to find fault with the new regulation, unless possibly the Board of Examiners might, as they are required to spend *two days* conducting the examinations, and then another day valuing the papers, for which, I believe, they receive neither fee nor even "casual advantages;" honour, perhaps, is sufficient compensation for them: or like noble patriots, they may be ready to sacrifice themselves for the public good.

A word, Mr. Editor, with regard to our High School and I have one. The change that has taken place in the old Grammar School, thin the last year or so, is something like a miracle. It is a surprise to itself. Surprised by making the discovery that it possesses city for development and expansion, which for twenty-five

years it supposed did not exist. But it has at last waked up, has caught the spirit of the age, and is fairly started upon the highway of progress and prosperity. Teaching all the branches that are necessary for matriculation at the University, with merely a nominal fee for tuition, and with an excellent staff of teachers, and a public interest excited in its behalf, it may well be expected to grow up into an institution of which the people of Woodstock and of the County will have reason to be proud.—"CHRYSLER," in *Woodstock Times*.

4. COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS IN PAKENHAM AND RAMSAY.

Competitive examinations of the public schools of the townships of Pakenham and Ramsay were held in the villages of Pakenham and Clayton respectively—the former on Wednesday, Oct. 15, the latter on Friday, Oct. 17. Pakenham sent representative pupils from five sections out of eight, and Ramsay made the handsome turn out of twelve sections out of fourteen; twenty-six intellectual combatants assembled at Pakenham, while no less than forty-five contended for the honour at Clayton. The examinations were conducted (with the exceptions of reading) exclusively in writing. This mode, though uninteresting to the spectators on these occasions, is the only one by which a correct estimate of the relative merits of competitors can be arrived at in a limited space of time. Moreover, it is very desirable that children should be habituated to written examinations, and thereby acquire that neatness, style and accuracy which are not to be gained in oral recitations. These examinations, which are being held in seven out of the twelve municipalities of the County of Lanark, if they have been participated in by the teachers, children and parents in the proper spirit, are calculated to do an immensity of good. Without discussing the great advantage of competition in the abstract, and the desirability of encouraging it in every possible way in our schools, we would merely allude now to the good results likely to accrue from the bringing together of the teachers and children to a common battle ground, there to measure swords with each other, and to test their respective prowess. If teachers are possessed of that teachable disposition so essential to the efficient discharge of the duties of their high and responsible vocation, they cannot fail to learn much at these gatherings. If we would progress, if we would enlarge our ideas, if we would keep pace with the advancement of the times, we must constantly seek opportunities to mix with others, and move outside of the narrow circle circumscribed by our own individuality. This observation most emphatically applies to the teacher. He requires to mingle with those who are pursuing the same calling in life, to compare notes with them and—what he can well do at these competitive examinations—compare results. Without attempting to criticize the work done in each subject that came up at the examination, we will confine our remarks to two heads, the first a general one—the written work—the second the subject of Reading. There is, in most of the written work exhibited at these examinations, a want of neatness and style—throwing accuracy out of the consideration altogether. Nothing is more striking than the careless, irregular and illogical manner in which the work is put down. This defect without doubt betrays a want of practice and particular instruction in this line. Nothing but frequent written examinations, written exercises and composition, will effect the desired change. With reference to the reading, it is discouraging to observe the very great rarity of good or even of fair readers. In several of the classes that have been examined at the different competitions in the country, none have been found deserving of any praise, none really deserving of a prize. This subject is not sufficiently taught. There are certain stereotyped styles prevalent—the high-pitched tone, the monotonous, the regular cadences of the voice, &c., &c., and until teachers set to work with a will to root out these evil practices, we will not have any improvement where it is so much needed.

In the Township of Pakenham, S. S. No 4, the village school carried off the greatest number of prizes, while Nos. 1 and 2 divided the honours well and came off a good second. In the Township of Ramsay, S. S. No. 10, at Bennie's Corners, took the lead, followed closely by No. 4, the Clayton school, No. 16 making a very good third.

At Clayton the children were sumptuously entertained in the school house by the people of the village. There was a large turn out of parents on both of these interesting occasions. May they be attended with much good.—*Almonte Gazette*.

5. TOWNSHIP BOARDS vs. SCHOOL SECTION BOARDS.

To the Editor "Journal of Education."

SIR,—I regret that you did not give your readers a full report of the paper read on the above subject by Mr. Jas. Turnbull, B.A., before the late meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Association.