

*Local Examinations for Women.*

		C. I's. H. Schs. Priv.		
No. passed, 37	.....	3	24	9
Honors, 1st Class	.....	4	0	2
" " 2nd "	.....	5	0	13

We hope to be able to give our readers similar analyses of the results at Kingston and Cobourg. The above, however, may, we think, be taken as a pretty reliable exhibit of the work done in our secondary schools.

### THE LATE DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS.

SOME time ago an article appeared in this journal entitled "Departmental Reports and the Intermediate," in which strong objection was taken to the character of the English papers for the Intermediate, on the ground that too little importance had been attached to composition. The examiner has this year adopted a plan which, though somewhat unusual, cannot fail to do much to obviate the difficulty that existed. About one-third of the total value of the correct answers in Grammar and Literature has been assigned to "Literary Form." An examiner, if he knew his duty and did it, would, under any circumstances, attach considerable importance to this feature, and it is to be hoped that this has hitherto been done by the sub-examiners; but we believe that the course pursued this summer will direct more attention to the subject on the part of both teacher and pupil than has hitherto been paid to it. The objection raised against the former mode of examination has now been fairly met, and we anticipate good results from the change. But Literature and English Grammar are not the only subjects in the treatment of which good literary form is desirable. Although the necessity for this exists in varying degrees in most of the subjects of the examination, there is none in which correct modes of expression are more important than in the answers to the History paper. Indeed, on it an unusually good opportunity is presented of estimating the judgment and culture of the candidate. We should, therefore, have expected to find in marking it the same system adopted. It may have been intended that the Literary form should be an important element in estimating the values of the answers in History. The omission this year is, therefore, particularly unfortunate. It may not here be out of place to impress upon the Central Committee the necessity for uniformity of method in setting the papers and in valuing the answers. It is evident that this summer there has been no concerted action in the case of two of the examiners at

any rate. The chairman of the committee, himself a good general scholar, might attend to this matter and secure not only uniformity of method but the preparation of papers of about the same degree of difficulty in the different subjects. It is notorious that every year there is, through no fault of the candidates, a general failure in some one or other of the papers. One year it is the Arithmetic, another the Algebra, and this year the honour is equally divided between the Arithmetic and the Literature. This is unfair. We contend that the standard in all subjects should remain uniform as far as possible, and that it is impolitic to alter it without due notice being given. Everyone will admit that the Intermediate Literature paper of this year is more difficult than any that have hitherto been set, and that in avoiding "cram" work the examiner in Grammar has gone to the other extreme. The spirit that has dictated these changes is the proper one; our examinations must not run in grooves; but in the effort to do his duty in this respect the examiner often falls into the error of making his questions unusually difficult. Those remarks apply with equal force to other Intermediate papers—to the Arithmetic in particular—and the present state of matters is an additional reason for "introducing new life" into the committee. It is gratifying to know from an authoritative source that a change of this nature is desired even by the members of the committee, and we look to the Minister to afford them speedy relief. The papers for First Class C present exaggerated forms of the defects to which the present system is liable. The Algebra, Natural Philosophy, Grammar, and History papers, are objectionable, but for different reasons. The paper in Philosophy is unusually and disproportionately easy; the Algebra may be regarded as its offset. The latter paper would not have been set by an examiner who understood his business. In Mathematics, particularly when a course is prescribed, it is only proper that the questions should cover it. To set all or nearly all the questions on the first half of the subject is as bad as to set them on the last half. Our examinations are not competitive, and the Minister has given special instructions to the Departmental examiners that their duty is to find out simply what the candidate knows. This, we assert, is not done by the examiner confining himself to the more elementary part of his subject. Such a course is as unfair to the candidate who has mastered the whole of the subject as it is to the one who has not been able to make himself acquainted with the more advanced portions. The Algebra paper is objectionable on this score. Further, several of the questions require more muscle than