

after July 1879, until the High School Masters have had an opportunity of expressing in convention their views upon the subject which is of vital importance to all of them, and in reference to which there exists among them a diversity of opinion, the Minister of Education has stated that it is not his intention at present to do more than arrange for the examinations in July 1879, and that he will be glad, before fixing a time for future examinations, to give the High School Masters an opportunity of discussing the subject in all its bearings. He however intimates that, in the best consideration he has yet given to the subject, the academic year should terminate at midsummer, and that the Annual Examinations should take place early in July. This, however, as he says, is merely his own opinion, and he will no doubt be prepared to make such arrangements as will suit the interests of the majority. For our own part, we are afraid that strong objections can be raised to holding the Intermediate in either July or December; and it seems unfortunate that the Department should persist in maintaining a system that is on all hands admittedly productive of injury to the cause of education. That the present modification will be found to work badly, so far as "payment by results" is concerned, no one who has watched the current of opinion can doubt; and this change must be regarded as the beginning of the end. Years ago, when Prof. Young wrote those reports on High School Education which showed up the defects of the system in no sparing language, the great panacea advocated was increased inspectorial power. But this has been found to be illusory, and the very elaborate scheme devised to distribute \$10,000 a year has not met with the reception due to the ingenuity of its promoters.

Uncomplimentary murmurs, often "not loud but deep," have been provoked, and it will soon be a question for discussion whether it is in the public interest to spend about \$9,000 a year, or to distribute \$10,000. Money spent on education is well-spent money; but money spent on the mere details and red-tapism of our system is badly invested.

We are glad to notice that the Minister of Education has by his action in the matter of the date of the Intermediate, recognized the propriety of obtaining the opinions of the teachers direct from themselves. By systematically adopting this course he can greatly increase his own personal popularity with the profession, and at the same time add materially to the efficiency of the Department over which he presides. There are few professions which have so many drawbacks as the teacher's, and it is as much the duty as the privilege of the Minister to increase its importance in the public estimation.

#### BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS.

*Macmillan's Copy Books*, 14 numbers, 3d. each. London: Macmillan & Co. By the courtesy of the publisher we have had a set of their English Copy Books forwarded to us, with the appropriate motto upon each, "No line which, dying, he could wish to blot." Excellent as are all the publications of this house, we cannot in the present instance, however, commend its enterprise. Indeed it must be allowed that in the matter of Copy Books, as in Atlas-Geographies, the product of this side the Atlantic is superior to that of the other. There are two radical faults in the Copy Books before us, which, in our view, condemn them at the outset, viz., these: that the paper is a species of printing rather than of writing paper, and the copy-lines and the ruling seem to be printed from metal types rather than from lithographic transfers. The effect of this, and the heavy printed ruling, is to deface the bottom formations of the copylines, and to give a smeared aspect to the page. The formation of some of the capital letters of the series, moreover, can scarcely be considered artistic. The books, however, have some features of excellence; the rules for the pupil, for instance, printed in the case of the early numbers, at the top of each page, being admirable; but we fear that American and native enterprise, in Copy Book manufacture, leave but a faint chance of the series meeting with favour on this side the Atlantic, whatever may be their reception on the other.