

supposed everybody knew as well as ourselves has really been known to two or three only out of twenty or thirty. At other times we are startled by a spark of intelligence, or get a glimpse of knowledge, which we little expected. An odd thing has happened in this Cæsar paper. Some little while before the examination, finding that the boys would not have time to read to the end of the book, and must omit the siege of Gergovia, I told them the story of it, I knew it none too well myself, and have no faculty for story-telling; but, to my surprise, it came out in the paper that this was the only bit of the history they knew anything about. The history they had read in Cæsar they had hardly taken in at all. When the attention is fixed on the construing, the meaning of the whole seems to escape notice. To test the boys' general knowledge of the subject, I set a number of short sentences from the Cæsar, which were to be translated and explained for remembrance of the context; but very few boys could do anything with them." Now it is true that many great classical works which boys read are above their understandings; and while the readers' knowledge of the original language is small, he would probably get far more knowledge of the work from a translation than from the author's own words. Still, one of the objects in reading must always be to understand the book read, and I think the examiner should not be satisfied without convincing himself that the learners have not regarded the book merely as a collection of examples to illustrate the rules of grammar. This, then, should be one of our headings.

I have said that boys' written answers are often a revelation to a teacher. He finds that his pupils are wholly ignorant of many things which they once learnt, and were therefore supposed to know. He sees that his teaching has been defective in this or that particular, and he resolves to remedy these defects as soon as possible. But the examination comes at the end of the term, and when it is over, the teacher has, perhaps, not even energy enough left to put his impressions and resolutions into his note-book. What is the consequence? Holiday thoughts and interests partly obliterate the traces of the examination, and when, at the end of a month or six weeks, he sets to work again, he unconsciously moves along the old groove. I should strongly recommend the setting of very short papers—say of 15 or 20 minutes, or, if the form is a large one, of a 10 minutes' paper—now and then during the term. These papers would give a hint of the kind of thing going on in the boys' minds, and would often lead to important changes in the teaching. Perhaps an examination by short papers at the middle of the term would be good, and the marks might count with the marks at the final examination.

But when the number of boys examined is large, the labour of looking over examination papers becomes very severe. I have known a very rapid worker, but a thorough examiner, confess that it took him on an average 20 minutes to mark each boy's papers; and this 20 had to be multiplied by 60, so that the marking of a single set of papers took 20 hours. Inferior workers who are at all thorough will spend 10 hours in correcting the simplest 2 hours' paper set to a form of five-and-twenty. But then comes in a difficulty. The master arranges his marks beforehand; and if the paper be carefully set, he will be able to apportion the marks to the several questions with little difficulty. But how is he to keep a fixed standard in his mind? He comes fresh to the work in the morning, and we will suppose the first papers he looks over please him. He accordingly gives nearly full marks for everything that is substantially right, though there may be some small defects in form. But the next set proves very much better, and yet he cannot mark

them much higher without going beyond the maximum. Then he gets a bad paper, which, by contrast, seems to him exceedingly bad; and after a run of bad papers, in looking over which he is tempted to make each examinee suffer for his predecessor's blunders as well as his own, he comes to a middling paper, which again, by contrast, seems exceedingly good, and is marked accordingly. As hour after hour passes, he gets harder and harder to please; but then comes lunch, and possibly a walk, and on his return the examiner sits down again in a much better temper than he was in when he rose. The fortunes who are awaiting him profit considerably by the examiner's lunch and the good effect of a walk in the open air, though these things can hardly be said to give them any preferential claim on the examiner's indulgence. Some men therefore, for fear lest their standard should be altered by a break, go on continuously till the set of papers is finished; but few can work continuously from 8 to 10 hours without getting jaded, and quite unable to judge towards the close in the same spirit as at the beginning.

A fairer way would seem to be to look through the papers question by question; but when there are ten or a dozen questions set in the paper, and the number of the candidates is anything over 20, there are great practical difficulties in carrying out this plan. When I was an undergraduate, we had certain rules given us by our "coaches" for our guidance in examinations. One was, to read over the paper as soon as it was given out, to mark the questions which suited us best, and to do them first; and I see these are just the directions given in the Oxford Locals, although in the Cambridge Locals the candidates are required to keep as much as possible to the order in which the questions are set. But whether the Oxford plan is recommended by the examiners or no, it is sure to be partially adopted. A candidate is puzzled by a question, and passes it over: by-and-by he goes back to it, sees its meaning and does it. So the answers are sure to be scattered about in the papers, and if the examiner has to hunt for a particular answer in each set of papers, the inevitable loss of time and temper will seriously endanger his doing the work well. I would suggest a kind of compromise between the plan of looking each paper straight through and the plan of taking it question by question. I have said the different things the examination paper is to test may be arranged under certain heads. This will divide the "tester" (if I may invent a short name to take the place of the seven syllables involved in "examination paper")—this will divide the tester into four or five parts; and where the subject does not fall into these natural divisions, it may be divided arbitrarily. These divisions are called A, B, C, D, E, respectively. Under each heading there may be several questions—A1, A2, B1, B2, &c., &c. The examinees must put at the head of each sheet the letter they are doing, and must always begin a fresh sheet when they begin a fresh letter. This may seem a simple thing to require from them, but I must admit that no amount of written directions will secure all the candidates beginning a fresh sheet when they begin a new letter. I have found this even in the case of adults, and it will be *à fortiori* true of children. But the directions are more likely to be attended to if they are given *videlicet*.

If the papers are headed as I have described, the examiner can readily arrange them in different piles—a pile of A's, of B's, of C's, &c. The papers should have been collected in the order in which the examinees sat. It is, of course, best to prevent copying, but the next best thing is to detect it. In many examinations the order of sitting is the alphabetical; but the order of