

of the Teachers' Training Colleges of England, forcibly pointed out. But when the 1500 who used to come up annually for examination a few years ago swelled into 3500 each year, the examination fever reached into recesses never before approached.

The pupils of well-to-do families who attended to social and other functions to a greater extent than the poorer were handicapped in the race for certificates. All who used to be promoted from grade to grade on account of the influence of their parents came now before the just impersonal judgment of the Provincial Examiner and are found wanting. When the parents looked into the education of their children who failed they detected the defects which the examiners discovered to them.

Then followed the attack on the school, on the system, and on the poor teacher, who all along had not influence enough to prevent the premature promotion of these well-to-do pupils probably from the lowest grade upwards. Before the day of examination the ostrich had its head buried in the sand and saw nothing wrong. After the examination, although the school had been doing on the whole twice as much superior work as formerly, it is denounced on the discovery of an unpleasant truth.

The critics of the schools are correct. Very much defective work has been discovered, thanks to the examination system. But there is also more good high school work done to-day than there was ten years ago, and very much less inferior work than in the days of the solitary public examination, so-called.

Now, many of our high school teachers are not very strong, and there are often several causes over which the Principal has no control, which may prevent the success of his pupils at examination on certain occasions.

Then there is the tendency to lose sight of the object of education in the puerile notion of just winning a certificate; and all our teachers are evidently not yet able to effectively direct this sentiment.

Some again lose sight of the general conditions of the province, and are in agony endeavouring to reduce the amount of the prescription, to make the examination easier, forgetting that if such were done, the good schools would still farther leave them behind in the general results if their pupils were not indeed left with only half the amount of work they could do.

In fact there are many teachers at the present day who are receiving into their classes not only pupils who should never have been promoted with so defective an elementary education, but often persons who are too young; and in their abysmal ignorance of the general conditions through the province, are still asking for the reduction of prescription on the much abused plea "less work and better done"; when they should be doing more elementary work in lower grades.

AGE AND EXAMINATION.—Taking the average ages of students in the County Academies of the Province, we find that at the beginning of the grade IX course the age is about 15 years and 2 months, at the beginning of grade X, 16 years and 6 months, and at the beginning of grade XI, 17 years and 7 months. In other words, this means that the County Academy Entrance Examination is taken by pupils on the average at about 15 years of age, grade IX examination after they are 16, and so forth. In order to prevent the uprush of immature candidates, some think it would be advisable to fix an age limit, say one year below the average. In such an event no one should be admitted to the grade IX examination until he is 14 years old. Now some come at 13, and even at 12. Yet from such schools come complaints of the excessive amount of the course of study. With every reduction of the standard there will be, of course, a corresponding increase of the number who will try to pass. And with this increasing number