

EDITORIAL NOTES.

ENGLISH SCHOOLS AND HER
MAJESTY'S INSPECTORS.

FROM our recent English professional Exchanges there would seem to be a great outcry at present in the Government Schools against that distinguished class of educational workmen known as Her Majesty's Inspectors. The greater number of that body, it is admitted, are men of culture, and estimable gentlemen. Not a few, it would seem, however, are neither the one nor the other—their "University culture," it is asserted, being "the veriest veneer, not even able to sustain the weight of good manners." This charge, in brief, covers the whole ground of complaint, though the specific offences are many and heinous. In the main, ignorance and want of experience as practical schoolmasters, are said to have led the offending inspectors into trouble, though the loudest complaints come from teachers who have been the victims of their arbitrary conduct and boorish manners. So outrageously have some of these gentlemen acted, in their personal contact with the profession, that they can scarcely be said to have taken their manners from the Court, though they plume themselves upon their official "H. M." rank, and give themselves airs as representing "My Lords" of the Educational Council. It will be understood, of course, that the officials who have been conducting themselves so offensively are not many in number, though they are sufficiently numerous to have incited to rebellion not a few masters and school-boards in various parts of the Kingdom. To enumerate the charges in detail would be to take up too much of our space, though did we do so, it would doubtless be considered "spicy,"

if hardly profitable, reading. A few, however, may be given, which include "favouritism of the worst and most pernicious character," "flagrant breaches of gentlemanly courtesy," together with vagaries of all sorts, and a variety of other indictments, such as criminally underrating certain schools, and spitefully procuring the dismissal of teachers, or the suspending of their certificates, without just or reasonable cause. In one instance, a complainant speaks of a certain Inspector as resorting to "bullying and catchy tricks." Another says, "in ten years' experience as a teacher I have never met with such an Inspector, and with such an Inspector I never hope to meet again on this side of heaven!" Still another remarks, "the unknown dread of this annual farce (inspection) had quite as much, if not more, to do with the lamentable results in my school at the last inspection. I have verified this incontestably, because when another inspected the extra subjects, some days subsequently, the children were overheard to say that they would not be afraid to answer him (Inspector); and, I must admit, they satisfied me immensely by their bright and eager answering." From such accounts the statement is not to be wondered at that large numbers of the profession are disheartened in their work, and that they despair of the future. Some of the "hotspurs" are, however, shewing fight, and with the school-boards at their back, are, in a lively way, "going for" the patronage system which has foisted these obnoxious gentlemen into the inspectorate. The result will be looked for with a keen interest by more than the educationists of the mother country.