

- (5) Describe the origin and growth in Italy of either Epic Poetry or Satire.
- (6) Name and describe the best modern French poets. Has French metre any laws unknown to English?
- (7) Write ten lines after the manner of Chaucer describing a meal at an inn, or ten after the manner of Pope describing a ball-room.

These questions are taken from papers set more than twelve years ago, at a time when systematic training in literature was almost unknown in English schools. But it was considered, and very properly too, that the yearly examination should not only take stock of the work done in the class-room and under the direction of the schoolmaster, but also of the general advancement that the pupils had made in other matters while undergoing the process of school education.

A system such as this, in which a pupil is liable to miscellaneous questions upon miscellaneous topics has of course its weak side. It leads to superficial reading and is eminently calculated to foster that peculiarly English vice in young men, "priggishness." But the rule of rigid adherence to the text-book is equally open to the objection, that it lays a premium upon cramming, and it does not give an adequate test of the degree of expansion to which the mind of the scholar has attained. Without for a moment supposing that such questions as we have given would be suitable for Canadian school-boys, it would seem advisable that greater latitude should be given to the examiner, say, in the Associate of Arts examinations. Thus a critical paper might be added to those already set. The High School of Montreal has for many years had a Literary and Debating Society, and is now gathering together a School Library. A critical paper would be the best means of testing the amount of benefit that the scholars have reaped from these useful institutions. And, similarly, the already too long classical papers might be curtailed to admit one unseen passage of Greek, and one of Latin. A boy has studied these languages to very little effect, if he has not acquired sufficient familiarity with them to attempt an unseen passage. If he has mastered the First Book of the *Æneid*, he should find no difficulty in giving a fair translation of a judiciously selected passage from the Tenth. The same system should be extended to the work of the schools. It might not be possible to apply so readily the system of percentages and averages to papers set upon these principles. But, with conscientious teachers at the head of their classes, this might not be so great a loss after all.