

without any special drill. In making up my paper for the written examination in geometry, before the commencement of the summer vacation, I asked for the angle between the hands of a watch for hours different from those given in Wormell, and, greatly to my surprise, and not a little to my chagrin, I found that at least one-half of the class had given incorrect answers to my questions. It is in this way that a written examination is of service in bringing before us the small points, or rather, as said at the outset, the defective points in our teaching, which might otherwise entirely escape our notice.

It is not my intention to bore you with any finely-spun metaphysical theories as to the value of written examinations as a part of school work; but, in addition to all that I have said, I will add this other idea by way of concluding this part of my subject.

While it is admitted in mental science, that the memory depends upon a mechanism, over the working of which the will-power has only an indirect control, yet the culture and discipline by which that mechanism is shaped and directed is essentially within the domain of the will-power; and since all acquirement of knowledge depends not only upon our ability to store away ideas, but also upon our power of finding and bringing to the front the ideas stored away, we see that the cultivation of an exact and ready memory is one of the most important aims of intellectual education. And I believe that the written examination, apart from all utilitarian ideas of training our pupils for other examinations, comes in as an important agent for cultivating in them the power of recalling the ideas which are stored away in their minds, and of giving a ready expression to them as the occasion may require. So far, I have treated more particularly of what I conceive to be the *educative value* of the written examinations. A moment here to the place proper. It is needless for me to say that all my remarks refer to schools above the primary (grades 1 and 2). I would not have a written examination until the end of a year's work in the Intermediate Department for the grading of class B into class A

(grade 3 into grade 4), because, during the first year of the intermediate school, they are not much better prepared for passing examinations than when in the primary school, although they are being worked up to the required standard by their slate exercises and written home-work. In grade 4, I would have two, at the end of summer and winter terms respectively. In grades 5, 6, 7 and 8, I would have one every three or four months, that is, three or four per school year; not fewer than three nor more than four. These are examinations to determine the relative standing of the pupils in their classes. Values are assigned to the questions, and the pupils are told the number of marks they make. In St. Stephen, the custom holds of making each pupil keep a copy of the whole set of questions and his marks on each subject, together with the averages of the whole class, in a book provided for the purpose. After a pupil has passed through the other grades, and has been admitted to the *High School*, he knows all about the mechanical arrangement of a paper; and if the previous work has been thorough, he now has the ability which I mentioned when speaking of the utility of examinations; *i.e.*, he now can express, concisely, and precisely his ideas concerning the different subjects. In the *High School*, the number of examinations must depend, in great measure, upon the number of pupils and general scope of work. What applies to one school may not apply to another. Experience teaches. The year's experience through which I have just passed has convinced me that, for my own school, one examination at the end of each term is sufficient. The papers can be made searching and comprehensive, and good answers will require considerable thought and scholarship on the part of the pupil; and, on the part of the teacher, nice perception and careful judgment to assign the proper values to the different answers made by different pupils to the same question. These examinations entail a large amount of work upon the teachers, and may appear to some as the spending of energy to little profit; but our duty is to work, and if