

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,
ONTARIO.

JULY EXAMINATIONS, 1881.

First Class Teachers—Grade C.

COMPOSITION.

Give the sense of *either* of these passages in your own words, using the simplest English you can find, and giving the preference to short sentences:—

(1) "Reader, the ages differ greatly, even infinitely, from one another. Considerable tracts of ages there have been, by far the majority indeed, wherein the men, unfortunate mortals, were a set of mimetic creatures rather than men; without heart-insight as to this universe, and its heights, and abysses; without conviction or belief of their own regarding it at all;—who walked merely by hearsays, traditionary cants, black and white surplises, and inane confusions;—whose whole existence accordingly was a grievance; nothing *original* in it, nothing genuine or sincere but this only, their greediness of appetite and their faculty of digestion. Such unhappy ages, too numerous here below, the genius of mankind indignantly seizes, as disgraceful to the family, and with Rhadamanthine ruthlessness—annihilates; tumbles large masses of them swiftly into eternal night. These are the unheroic ages; which cannot serve, on the general field of existence, except as *dust*, as inorganic manure. The memory of such ages fades away forever out of the minds of all men. Why should any memory of *them* continue? The fashion of them has passed away; and as for genuine substance, they never had any. To no heart of a man any more can these ages become lovely. What melodious living heart will search into *their* records, will sing of them, or celebrate them? Even torpid Dryasdust is forced to give over at last, all creatures declining to hear him on that subject; whereupon ensues composure and silence, and Oblivion has her own."—*Carlyle's Cromwell, Introduction, chap. V., p. 71.*

(2) Upon the whole, men do not hitherto appear to be happily inclined and fitted for

the sciences, either by their own industry, or the authority of others, especially as there is little dependence to be had upon the common demonstrations and experiments; whilst the structure of the universe renders it a labyrinth to the understanding; where the paths are not only everywhere doubtful, but the appearance of things and their signs deceitful; and the wreaths and knots of nature intricately turned and twisted: through all which we are only to be conducted by the uncertain light of the senses, that sometimes shines, and sometimes hides its head; and by collections of experiments and particular facts, in which no guides can be trusted, as wanting direction themselves, and adding to the errors of the rest. In this melancholy state of things, one might be apt to despair both of the understanding left to itself, and of all fortuitous helps; as of a state irremediable by the utmost efforts of the human genius, or the often-repeated chance of trial. The only clue and method is to begin all anew, and direct our steps in a certain order, from the very first perceptions of the senses. Yet I must not be understood to say that nothing has been done in former ages, for the ancients have shewn themselves worthy of admiration in everything which concerned either wit or abstract reflection; but, as in former ages, when men at sea, directing their course solely by the observation of the stars, might coast along the shores of the continent, but could not trust themselves to the wide ocean, or discover new worlds, until the use of the compass was known: even so the present discoveries referring to matters immediately under the jurisdiction of the senses, are such as might easily result from experience and discussion; but before we enter the remote and hidden parts of nature, it is requisite that a better and more perfect application of the human mind should be introduced. This, however, is not to be understood as if nothing had been effected by the immense labours of so many past ages; as the ancients have performed surprisingly in subjects that required abstract meditation, and force of genius. But as navigation was imperfect before the use of the