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FAILURES AT COUNTY BOARD EXAMINATIONS.

The December County Board Examinations have given rise to a great deal of harsh criticism from different quarters, because of the unexpected failure of many who considered themselves thoroughly prepared for all the difficulties of ordinary questions. The paper principally objected to was Arithmetic. The questions were said to be *puzzling, unfair, unreasonable* &c. It is not our intention to discuss the merits of those questions as a test of any candidate's knowledge of this subject. We however publish them in another part of the TEACHER, that they may be calmly considered, and it may happen that on a second perusal they will be found not to contain so many difficulties as was at first supposed.

But laying this aside, we come to consider why so many generally fail at our County Board Examinations. The causes may be briefly stated as three—*want of thoroughness, obscurity of expression, and nervous excitement.*

Those who have taken the slightest notice of the answers given by candidates at the County Board Examinations must have seen how many were but mere approximations.

They lacked that fulness and completeness essential to a good answer; arising not from their brevity, but from the inability of the candidate to grapple with the full merits of the question. It might be evident that a certain amount of information was possessed, but in such a crude undigested shape as to be of little service. The lack of a *thorough* knowledge of the subject left the mind so hazy and beclouded that when an attempt was made to put the necessary information on paper, the mind could not, with any degree of confidence select what was essential and to the point.

It is also evident that in their preparation for the County Board, candidates are not sufficiently *precise* and self-reliant. An answer is too often only *partially* correct. Information often falls short of the mark. A point or two more, or another statement to cover the ground fully, and no one could fail to pronounce the work complete. But alas! the fountain fails. The spring gives out and that comparatively *small* link essential to completeness is wanting, and the candidate loses so many marks. To remedy this, the mind should be trained first to take a comprehensive and general view of the