

To effect these objects, two plans of examinations were established:—

1st. The examination of *teachers*, to ascertain their qualification and fitness to take part in the work of instruction.

2nd. The examination of *pupils*, to test their progress, and to afford at once to the teacher and to the pupil a satisfactory criterion of the value of the instruction received.

It is a distinctive feature of these examinations that in all cases the *Theory and Practice of Education* is an obligatory subject for each grade.

The diplomas granted by the College to teachers are of three grades, viz.: *Associate, Licentiate, Fellow*.

"The pupils' examinations were established in 1854—four years before the institution of the University Local Examinations, and two years before those instituted by the Society of Arts, both of which may justly be regarded as more or less the fruit of the efforts and example of the College of Preceptors in their efforts to improve the education of the middle classes. These examinations have been carried on half-yearly since that time, with increasing success; during the past year the number of candidates examined for certificates amounted to more than 14,000. Visiting examiners were appointed by the College for the inspection and examination of Public and Private Schools. About 3,500 schools, of both classes, scattered over the country, are now brought under the influence of the College examination."

I may here add that the higher certificates awarded by the College at the half-yearly examinations of pupils are recognized by Her Majesty's judges, and by the General Medical Council, as guarantees of a good general education; the holders of them who may intend to enter the legal and medical professions are thus exempted from the necessity of submitting to the Preliminary Literary Examinations held by the Incorporated Law Society; and by the various medical corporations of the United Kingdom. All the College certificates above the third are also recognized by the Royal Veterinary College and the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. The examinations, both of teachers and pupils, it may be remarked, are open to both sexes.

"The total number examined annually by the College at the various examinations that have been mentioned, and the pupils examined at their own schools by visiting examiners, is over 18,000—a number which, it may be observed, greatly exceeds that of the candidates who present themselves annually before any other examining body especially concerned with the improvement of the education of the middle classes."

The movement which resulted in the establishment of the College of Preceptors originated at Brighton, as I have said, in 1846; it spread rapidly, and within a year after its organization there were over 1,000 members. Unfortunately, in regard to membership, as a correspondent informs me, the very error for many years was committed which the College was founded to combat. "The promoters intended to include among the first members all persons of respectability, both male and female, who paid a yearly subscription of one guinea. But they also intended, at no distant date (a date not assigned), to subject all candidates for membership to examination. Amid the pressure of other business, and of crippled resources, the latter intention was, however, lost sight of, and it would seem also that there had been some laxity in the granting of certificates. The consequence was that A.C.P., L.C.P., and F.C.P., became involved in a common depreciation." It must be understood, however, that the College, in its documents, had always drawn a clear distinction between examined and unexamined members—a distinction which the general public could not be expected to bear in mind, or even to apprehend. The investigation of the Schools'

Enquiry Commission, together with the action of various learned bodies, for stricter conditions of membership, drew the attention of the more active members of the College to the necessity of reform, and since 1870 no one was admitted who did not comply with the following requirements:—

"I. All persons, not being under eighteen years of age, who have passed the examinations hereafter specified, or such other examination as the council shall from time to time appoint or recognize, are admissible as members of the College:

"(a) Matriculation and all higher examinations in any University in Great Britain, Ireland, or the Colonies;

"(b) Examinations for diplomas at foreign Universities.

"(c) Foreign State examinations for licenses to teach.

"(d) The Senior Local Examinations held by the Universities of Great Britain.

"(e) The examinations for first-class certificates of the College of Preceptors.

"(f) The examinations held by the Committee of Council on Education for government certificates.

"II. Candidates who shall not be able to produce certificates of having passed one or other of the above mentioned examinations, will be required to pass an examination in all subjects required for the diploma of Associate, excepting the 'Theory and Practice of Education.'"

The condition of the College to-day, I am informed, is healthful and hopeful; the strictness of the regulations has not diminished the number of applicants, and the public now have the fullest confidence in the diplomas of the College.

In 1873 the College instituted a professorship of the "Science and Art of Education" (the first established in England) as a special subject of instruction. The late Joseph Payne was appointed to the chair; he was succeeded by Rev. R. H. Quick, M.A. author of "Essays on Educational Reform," a professional treatise, which is well known to you. Mr. Meiklejohn, who was subsequently appointed to the chair of Education in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and Mr. Croom Robertson, of London University, have also filled this chair.

It may be of interest to refer for a moment to some details which, in view of our projected scheme, it will be profitable briefly to notice. The annual subscription to the College is *one guinea*. All persons engaged in education are admissible as members, subject to election by the council; but all candidates are required either to give evidence of having passed an examination satisfactory to the council before some recognized examining body, or to pass an examination at the College.

The officers of the College are practical teachers in all grades of schools, and university professors. The governing body is a council of forty-eight members, elected by the Fellows. This council elects its officers—a President, and three Vice-Presidents, a Dean, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and a Solicitor.

The sources of income for carrying on the work are:—

(1) An annual membership fee of one guinea.

(2) An examination fee of one guinea.

(3) Fees for issuing certificates and diplomas:

(a) Associate, one guinea.

(b) Licentiate, two guineas.

(c) Fellow, five guineas.

The legal registration of teachers I learn from an official communication, has long been advocated by the College. A proposal for a *Scholastic Registration Act*, analogous in its provisions to the Medical Registration Act, was brought before the public some time ago, and it continues to engage the attention of the council as a much needed reform, and a first step towards making teaching a