

PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

Mr. Forster, in a speech lately delivered on this subject in London, estimates that not more than 50,000 out of 350,000 pupils attend schools that can afford any guarantee of efficiency. The remedy he suggests is a system of registration for competent teachers who are employed in Secondary Schools, and the establishment of an Educational Council composed of members of the Universities, nominees of the Crown, and representatives of the teaching profession, whose duty it should be to supervise all matters connected with Secondary Education. His plan in fact resembles, in its main features, the one contained in Dr. Lyon Playfair's bill lately before the House of Commons. Mr. Forster believes however that no changes should be made without consulting the feeling of the teachers and sympathizing with it. That he is prepared to do both the following extract from his speech will show. "The idea of an Educational Council, fairly constituted, with a just representation of teachers upon it, taking stock every year of the state of education, making suggestions for its improvement, and superintending a scheme for the training of teachers, had taken much hold of the public mind and the professional mind, and with all that the teachers had become more and more possessed of the desire of not being content until the teaching profession was put on a level with the other great professions in society. Why ought not the profession of teaching to have as much high honour and public regard, and be as much a distinguished profession, as that of either law or medicine? If we looked at the work which its members were doing for society, at the responsibility of that work, at the difficulty of doing it well, at the obligation under which they were putting so-

ciety in general, they at least stood as high as the men whom we sent for when we were ill, or the men to whom we resorted when we wished to go to law with our neighbours."

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION IN IRELAND.

The condition of the Irish National School Teachers for the last few years has been far from satisfactory. There has been a gradual decrease in salaries without any prospect of relief. At length when the Government found that persons of the right stamp were beginning to shun the profession, owing to the indifferent salaries paid, it came to their relief and during the recent meeting of Parliament had a bill passed to provide pensions for those who remained in the profession.

A sum not to exceed one million three hundred thousand pounds is to be set apart from the funds remaining from the disestablishment of the Irish Church for this purpose. The interest on this amount, supplemented by contributions from the teachers themselves, will amount to £46,000. Teachers of all grades in employment at the time of the passing of the act have the option of becoming subscribers to the pension fund within five years; but those who become teachers after the passing of the act have no option. The amount of the quarterly premium is to be deducted from the salaries,—the amount varying with the class to which the teacher belongs and the age at which he enters the profession. Thus a man entering the profession at 20 years of age pays annually 11s. 4d., if he is a third-class teacher; at 30 years of age he pays 18s. 8d., and at 40 he pays £1 12s. 4d. If he is a second-class teacher and enters the profession at any of the above ages he pays respectively 15s. 2d., £1 4s. 8d., and £2 2s. 8d. If he is a first-class teacher and enters the profession at any of the