

LETTER FROM PROFESSOR D. F. HIGGINS, M. A.,
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IN looking over the papers handed to me at the recent examination of teachers, it seemed to me that a number of the candidates had done themselves less than justice, through some misapprehension of what was required of them, or some false estimate of the relative importance of this or that feature in their exercises. This was the more to be regretted, from the fact that many of those who suffered in this way were apparently able to do good work, if only they could have been in a position to use their resources to the best advantage. Now, it may be readily granted that the ability to make good use of one's resources is an essential element in the education of any man—perhaps especially so of the teacher—and that, therefore, those who suffered in the way mentioned did not suffer unjustly. There can be no doubt, moreover, that the instructions issued by the Superintendent are sufficiently explicit; so that no one who takes the trouble to pay attention to them need go astray. Still, in view of the peculiar circumstances in which candidates are placed—the hurry, excitement and anxiety of the occasion—it is hardly a matter of wonder that they should now and then make mistakes. In order, however, that the liability to such mistakes may be, as far as possible, diminished, I wish to point out a few of the errors that have fallen under my notice, in the hope that they may be avoided in future. Here they are:

In many of the papers the problems were not worked out—the answers to the questions alone being given. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that such a paper is worth very little, however correct the answers may be. Whoever patiently works out a problem on his slate and then transfers only the result to his paper, does himself a serious injustice.

Sometimes problems in one branch were worked according to the principles of another—examples in algebra performed by the rules of arithmetic or the reverse. Work so performed cannot count for much. The thing to be determined is the candidate's knowledge of algebra. What proof will he have given of his knowledge of algebra, if all the problems are worked by the rules of arithmetic?

Occasionally problems were worked, or propositions demonstrated that were not asked for, while those that were required were not done. Such work is worth simply nothing.

The answers to some of the questions were exceedingly indefinite, and therefore very little worth. One should not attempt to do so much as to be unable to do anything well. Quality is quite as important as quantity.

Some of the exercises were handed in on a great number of torn bits of paper—a single subject covering sometimes half-a-dozen fragments. On the other hand, a number of different subjects were sometimes huddled together on the same sheet, in such a manner as to require no little picking to separate one from the other. Such exercises, you may be sure, do not make a favorable impression on the mind of the examiner.

Some of the words were incorrectly spelled, as for example, "Arithmetic," "caquel," and many more.

Let the above suffice for fault-finding. I must in fairness say, that, though the object I had in view made it necessary for me to refer chiefly to errors, yet these were by no means characteristic of all the papers handed in, nor were they very prominent characteristics of the papers as a whole. A large proportion of the exercises were good; some of them were of a very high order.

That there should be, among so large a number, a considerable diversity in the character of the exercises, was to be expected. A more noteworthy fact, and one which, it seems to me, tells with considerable emphasis in favor of the present mode of examination, is, that there was often a marked difference between those that came from different counties. Of course, I was unable to tell from what county any particular parcel came, but that they came from counties in which the applicants entertained very different views in reference to the requirements of a given grade of licence, was sufficiently evident. If this difference corresponds, as seems probable, with the actual difference in the demands made, under the old system, by the several county boards, it is easy to see that endless confusion must have been the result.

The importance of cultivating a spirit of fraternity amongst teachers, can scarcely be over-estimated. Under the old regime, this was scarcely possible. Now that the barriers are being broken down, let teachers see to it that they use every proper means to elevate their vocation into a profession. Let us learn to respect ourselves and each other, and the world will soon learn to respect us.

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D. F. HIGGINS.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION.

THE following Statistics indicate a very rapid and extensive educational progress during the School Year 1867:—

SALARIES OF TEACHERS.

Amount paid by Government to teachers of Common Schools	- - - - -	1867	\$97,846.97
Do.	do.	1866	82,439.27
Increase	- - - - -		\$15,407.70
Amount paid by the several Counties to Trustees of Public Schools	- - - - -	1867	\$91,477.14
Do.	do.	1866	55,258.64
Increase	- - - - -		\$36,218.50
Amount raised by the various school sections towards salaries of teachers of Public Schools	- - - - -	1867	\$69,844.86
Do.	do.	1866	85,227.76
Decrease	- - - - -		\$15,382.90
Total amount paid for salaries of teachers of Public Schools	- - - - -	1867	\$263,867.97
Do.	do.	1866	235,825.67
Increase	- - - - -		\$28,042.30

SCHOOL-HOUSES' FURNITURE, ETC.

Amount paid by Government to aid poor sections in building	- - - - -	1867	\$2873.79
Do.	do.	1868	2845.29
Increase	- - - - -		\$28.50
Amount paid by Government towards supplying books, maps, and apparatus	- - - - -	1867	\$13,388.06
Do.	do.	1866	4,885.72
Increase	- - - - -		\$8,502.34
Amount paid by the various sections as Interest on money borrowed, 1867	- - - - -		\$2,625.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Amount expended by the various sections in purchase or improvement of School Grounds, 1867	- - - - -		\$22,020.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Amount expended by the various sections in repairing houses, 1867	- - - - -		\$14,875.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Amount expended by the various sections in building new houses, 1867	- - - - -		\$70,405.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Amount expended by the various sections in providing or repairing school desks, seats, &c., 1867	- - - - -		\$10,635.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Amount expended by the various sections in purchase of books, maps, and apparatus, 1867	- - - - -		\$14,421.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Fuel consumed during the year 1867	- - - - -		\$12,193.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Insurance on school buildings, 1867	- - - - -		\$2130.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Commissions to Secretary of Trustees, 1867	- - - - -		\$6,963.00
Not separately reported in 1866	- - - - -	
Miscellaneous and undetailed expenditure, 1867	- - - - -		\$25,609.00
Do	do	1866	12,890.00
Increase	- - - - -		\$12,719.00
Total amount granted by Government towards buildings, books and apparatus, &c., 1867	- - - - -		\$16,261.85
Do.	do.	1866	7,731.01
Increase	- - - - -		\$8,530.84
Total amt. expended by the various sections for all purposes, exclusive of "salaries" and "debt," 1867	- - - - -		\$181,876.00
Do.	do.	1866	91,024.31
Increase	- - - - -		\$90,851.69

TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Paid by Government	- - - - -		\$145,280.17
Paid by Counties	- - - - -		91,477.14
Raised by the various sections	- - - - -		262,912.86
Total 1867	- - - - -		\$499,670.17
" 1866	- - - - -		349,811.00
Increase	- - - - -		\$149,859.17