

WE give in this number, by request, some specimens of the Professional Examination Papers, set at the Training Institutes last December.

WE have received a letter subscribed "A Ped." The writer has forgotten the old journalistic rule which requires that the correspondent must furnish the Editor with his real name and address as a condition of publication. For this and other reasons we have not published the letter, but one of its points, if correct, seems well taken. The writer says, referring to the Junior Matriculation questions in History, published in last issue: "The questions set in History are not based on the portions set apart for study. By the curriculum of 1888 the course prescribed is William III. to George III., both included. Now turn to questions four, five, six and seven, and notice to what extent my observations are correct. What is the benefit in issuing a limit of studies if the poor student cannot depend on the certainty of the course set apart being followed?"

OUR thanks are due to Mr. R. W. Strannon, of Queen's College, Kingston, for his communication, which will be found in another column, removing our misapprehension as to the action of the Council of Queen's touching the mission of Dr. Knight and Mr. A. P. McGregor to the High School Section of the Ontario Teachers' Association. The resolution, as now reported in full, is thoroughly courteous, and will, we have no doubt, be accepted by those to whom it is addressed in the spirit in which it is offered, and render any further reference to the affair quite unnecessary. In fact we had understood that satisfactory explanations had already been made and accepted, and hence were a little surprised at what seemed to be the tone of the Council's resolution. We regret that the condensed report which we copied from the *Whig* should have led us to misconstrue, to some extent, the nature and spirit of the Council's action.

THE teachers of Oxford County raised two or three important questions at their Convention, as will be seen by the report of their proceedings. The resolution passed almost unanimously, recommending that the issue of non professional third-class certificates be discontinued, is supported by so many and so cogent reasons, that it can hardly fail to command the serious attention of the Education Department. Youth and immaturity are no reproach to their possessors, but they are serious disqualifications for the duties and responsibilities of the teaching profession. We may, we believe, say without fear of contradiction, that they constitute the most serious defect in the working of the Public School system of Ontario. It was stated in the course of the discussion that the large majority of the teachers in question work for less than \$300 each per annum, and many for less than \$250. This fact, for fact we suppose it must be, is eloquent in favor of a change. Nothing could more

effectually degrade the profession and drive out of it teachers of maturity and culture, than the acceptance of such a scale of remuneration by many of its members.

WHEN we commented briefly upon "Headmaster's" complaint in our last number, touching the inconvenience of the time at which the First A and B examinations are held, it did not occur to us that the dates referred to are fixed by the University, else we certainly should not have said that there could be no great difficulty in changing the time of the examination. We are still of the opinion that, as the examinations for certificates are taken mainly by teachers, to many of whom the difficulty of obtaining leave of absence is a very serious one, it is important that those examinations should be held during term. We cannot think that throwing up an engagement and taking a three months holiday is so easy or practicable as "Another Headmaster" implies. At the same time we agree with him that in other respects the present arrangement is a good one, and that to go back to the Departmental Examinations would be a retrograde movement. Probably, in most cases, if the trustee boards had to choose between the resignation of a good headmaster, and making arrangements to give him leave of absence to attend the examination, they would choose the latter. The statement made by "Another Headmaster" in respect to the demand for trained teachers of the grades in question, must be very stimulating to those ambitious of rising higher.

INSPECTOR JOHNSON, in his address at the late meeting of the Teachers' Institute in Gananoque, made certain explanations touching the place and use of district certificates which should be borne carefully in mind by all concerned. We quote his words as reported in the *Gananoque Journal*:

"In the first place, I would have you bear in mind that district certificates are granted solely and wholly for the benefit of poor sections, and that it was never the intention of the Legislature to make such certificates legal qualifications to teach in a section able to pay a regularly qualified teacher—that is, a teacher holding a provincial certificate. It is also to be noticed that this certificate is, as its name implies, of inferior geographical value; thus such a certificate granted by a Board of Examiners for this county has no legal value in any other county. The county Board of Examiners has full control over such certificates, can limit them to such sections as are not able to pay wages sufficient to secure the services of a second or third class teacher. In this county such certificates are limited by the county Board of Examiners to sections having an assessed value of not more than \$40,000. The fairness of such a system must be evident to every one. The district certificate is only for the section of low assessed value; whether the section contains many or few children within school age has nothing to do with the question; the only question to be answered is, can the section pay a regularly qualified teacher? If it can, then the district certificated teacher has no right there as a qualified teacher."

Educational Thought.

CHILDREN are very much what their teachers make them. I find plenty of deleterious and detestable influences at work, but there are influences of journalism in one place, in another influences of politicians, in some places both the one and the other; they are not influences of teachers. The influence of the elementary teacher, so far as my observation extends, is for good; it helps morality and virtue. I do not give the teacher too much praise for this—the child in his hands so appeals to his conscience, his responsibility is so direct and palpable. But the fact is none the less consoling, and the fact is, I believe, as I have stated it.—*Matthew Arnold*.

ALL this talk about bad memories is mere nonsense. A bad memory is exceedingly rare in young people. Nearly every boy has a fair memory for things that he is interested in, be it the performances of his favorite cricketers, or the contents of his favorite novels, or whatever else. The real evil is, not that learners cannot remember what they read, but that they never grasp the meaning of what they are reading about. It is not that they soon forget, say, the chapter of history they have been reading, but that they never, even at the moment of shutting up the book, had any clear idea of what it was all about. The fault is not in the memory, it is in the understanding. The learner has not realized what he has been reading about.—*Mainwaring Brown*.

THE book as a friend is a living soul. It is the thought and experience of a noble nature crystallized and endowed with an earthly immortality. It is the touch of a vanished soul. It is a voice come back from the unseen world. Words are immortal because a soul lives in them. A good book is immortal because it is an incarnate soul. In the presence of a great book I am in the presence of a great nature. He is an artist; and he lends me his eyes with which to look into Nature and read her mysteries. He is a poet; and I, too, am a poet in his companionship, and endowed with his insight. He is a novelist; and as I sit with him my heart throbs with his profound sympathies. He is an historian, and I live in another epoch; or a philosopher, and his broad horizon opens before me, and I am on the top of an exceeding high mountain, and all the kingdoms of Nature and all truth are in a panorama before me.—*Lyman Abbott*.

BOYS know as quickly when a teacher is unnerved as when a ball battery is demoralized. There is no Normal school science, no training school art, no psychological wisdom that is of any avail under such circumstances. The teacher who pins his faith to his philosophy in September is very apt to come to grief. Well-trained teachers complain bitterly that they cannot get a good school at once, and propound the worm-eaten "chestnut," "How is one to get experience if no one will let him have a chance to try?" If one lacks the nerve to hold the school in his hands, it is of no avail that he has a fine education or a professional spirit. It is not enough that one has self-possession. He must also have training and professional zeal; but he must have the power to stand before the school in perfect command of himself and his class. In short, he must not get "rattled." Keep yourself well in leadership the first month, and the chances are you will remain the master of the situation till July.—*Journal of Education*.

THE central aim in all the so-called "new methods" of teaching reading is to cultivate the thought and understanding. The mental side of reading is placed before the oral expression. Great attention is given to the thought-seizing power of the mind through the eye, so that thoughts are seen on the printed pages as wholes, just as they are received through the ear. The "internal digestion" of what is read is deemed of greater consequence than "delivery." In short, silent reading is cultivated by every variety of means until the pupil can rapidly scan the printed page, and by a sort of alchemy of mind, tell in his own language what he has gathered. Can there be mental exercise better than this to give flexibility of thought and fluency of expression? And when we add to this kind of teaching a solicitous care on the part of teachers regarding the kind of reading which the pupils choose to fill up their leisure hours, I am sure a good work has been begun.—*Samuel T. Dutton*.