

other university awards, or in the granting of licenses to teach. But it must be remembered that the requirements of these examinations go far to determine the curricula of the schools from which the candidates proceed. If the amount of work expected is moderate, and the questions of a nature to test the thinking powers as well as the extent of the information of the examinee, the effect upon the schools and their teachers must be beneficial. There need be no fear lest the individual characteristics of the teacher be so dominated by the outside influence of examining bodies that they will have no opportunity to assert themselves and give tone and finish to his work. But we do not deny that the future examination exerts an overmastering influence over many teachers. The work for it is repeated again and again; the memory is almost the only faculty appealed to; examination papers instead of text-books are studied; helps of all kinds are called into requisition, and the pupils are crammed for the special purpose of passing a successful examination on the prescribed books. Such a result is very unfortunate, and the pupils who are so prepared are the first to feel it. They are not long in observing that they cannot grapple with difficulties as successfully as those who have been trained on different principles, and invariably fall behind in the future race their better equipped and better disciplined classmates. This difficulty could be met successfully if, instead of examining upon prescribed books or parts of books, *subjects* were specified upon which papers would be set. If Latin, Greek, mathematics, etc., were announced as the subjects of examination, without mentioning books, but accompanied by a statement that the candidates would be expected to know each subject as thoroughly as might reasonably be demanded of matriculants, cram would be almost impossible, and a more healthful educational tone would prevail.

Moreover, great care should be taken in the selection of examiners. Scholarship ought not to be the only condition which they are expected to satisfy, but they should be men of experience as teachers—prudent, fair and prompt. Their questions ought not to be *cranky* or pursue certain grooves, but should be characterized by clearness, point, and the avoidance of all complexity. The purpose of examinations is to afford the examinees an opportunity of exhibiting their knowledge of the subjects upon which they are examined, and not to provide an occasion for the examiner to display his skill in constructing puzzling, obscure and doubtful questions. Examination is intended to discover what the pupil knows, not what he does not know.

Though we have been, in this part of the Dominion

of Canada, thus far, free from the evil of excessive examination, we can not be too watchful, lest we may, in the end, suffer from the mischief enumerated in the protest. Already written examination has—and, we think, unnecessarily—provided the basis of classification in large graded schools, and we all know the feverish excitement which is produced by its approach on the minds of nervous pupils. Surely, except in the case of the eldest scholars, an oral examination by the grading master, conjoined with the report of the teacher of the class, would be quite sufficient. An expert examiner will test the proficiency of the class, in any one subject, in half an hour, by a skillful oral examination, more satisfactorily than by a written paper, which will take hours to examine. Let us, therefore, be warned by the results of over-examination in England, lest when it has here reached such gigantic proportions, we may find it impossible to relieve education from its constriction.

N. S. SUMMER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE.

There was a good meeting of the directors of the Summer School, held in the Province building, Halifax, on January 3rd, President Eaton in the chair. The most important point of business was the definite fixing of the time and place of next summer's session, which were as follows: Time, from July 23d to Aug. 2d; place, Parrsboro, Nova Scotia. The public spirit displayed by the citizens of Parrsboro in the matter was highly creditable. At a meeting of its leading citizens it was agreed to specially prepare four good lecture rooms for the school, to pass a vote of money for chemical and physical apparatus, and to obtain board in its hotels and boarding houses at a rate not exceeding three dollars per week. Principal Craig of the Parrsboro High School was appointed local secretary.

Parrsboro is situated in the immediate vicinity of some of the most interesting and picturesque portions of the coast of the Minas Basin. Its minerals are found in all the important museums in the world; its scenery is borne away on numberless photographic plates of the tourists; the world-famed Joggins can be approached by railway from it, and the falls on the Moose river suggests further variety. Inspector Lay promises a large contingent of Cumberland teachers. There is every prospect that the third year of the school will have by great odds the largest attendance yet.

At a meeting of the executive of the Provincial Educational Association of Nova Scotia, in Halifax, on the 3rd of January, it was decided that the Association would meet at the usual time during the week preceding the teachers' examination in July. The dates will probably be July 10th and 11th; the place Truro.