

CORRESPONDENCE.

EXAMINATION FEES.

To the Editor of THE MONTHLY:

DEAR SIR,—I desire through your columns to call the attention of the teaching profession to a hardship—a grave injustice, in my opinion—imposed upon many of our High School pupils, one which is particularly noticeable at this season of the year, and one which demands the attention of the Government. I refer to the *excessive fee* charged for the Departmental Non-professional Examinations, which are taken by many candidates merely as a *promotion examination*. Every head master must know that there are always some upon whom this tax falls very heavily, who have to deny themselves necessities of life in order to pay it; that others are prevented taking the examination because they are unable to raise the necessary fee. What is the object of so high a fee? It cannot be to limit the number of teachers, because a certificate of having passed one of these examinations does not qualify the holder to teach. Besides, pupils are encouraged to take these examinations as promotion examinations. In fact the Regulations almost compel them to take them if they wish to be promoted to an upper form. What, then, is the object? So far as I can see it is to swell the Government coffers. Last year these five dollar fees must have increased the consolidated revenue fund not less than eight or nine thousand dollars. But why should High School pupils be taxed to swell the Government coffers, when without this there is a large surplus?

Moreover, this fee is very unfairly divided. Of the five dollars paid three go to the Government and two to the High School Board. The

Government pays out of its three dollars \$1.25 per candidate to sub-examiners. The other expenses in connection with the examination, I imagine, would be well covered by \$1000. That would average about 20 cents per candidate, so that the Government must pocket out of that three dollars not less than \$1.50 per candidate. Of the two dollars paid to High School Boards to defray local expenses, it depends altogether on the number of candidates writing whether this can be done or not. Take an average High School where the number of candidates will not exceed twenty (some of them have considerably fewer) the Board in that case will receive \$40. They will have to pay a presiding examiner not less than \$40, and will have all the stationery expenses to provide for themselves. Again, take a large Institute where they have 100 or more candidates, it will easily be seen that such a school makes a handsome revenue out of it. Now, I ask is it fair that the smaller High Schools should be out of pocket in providing for this examination, while the larger High Schools and the Government should make money out of the scheme? How is this evil to be remedied? Let the Department be paid the whole fee, and, if economically managed, *all* the expenses of the examination—local as well as central—could be paid with a fee of three dollars per candidate without loss to anyone, and in addition to relieving our pupils of a heavy burden it would be treating all High School Boards alike.

Yours, etc.,

M. M. FENWICK.

Bowmanville, May 24, 1890.