

(3) There has been a failure in Canadian History. This is not surprising, and under the present arrangement it will be hard to prevent it. English, Roman, and Canadian History are all on the same paper, the English History generally counting at least two-thirds of the whole. Evidently neither teacher nor pupil has been so impolitic as to devote much attention to a subject which the Department values so little.

OPTIONAL GROUPS.

As to French, Latin, and German, the Examiners invariably remark that "Students who show a fair theoretical knowledge of Composition, are found incapable of applying the simplest rules of Syntax." The Report for July, 1878, is particularly severe. "In translating from Latin into English, keys had evidently been used, begetting a showy and shallow style of performance, which otherwise betrayed itself by ignominious failures in common concords in Latin Composition."

The Reports are not very demonstrative in regard to the Science Group. There seems, however, to be an improvement, particularly in Chemistry—the subject we should have expected to "look up" under the influence of the "Intermediate." The study of Natural Science has heretofore been advocated on the ground that it develops the powers of perception and induction. The attentive observer will fail to discover much evidence of this belief in the Chemistry papers as now constructed. A fair knowledge of the "Rule of Three" and a smattering of facts will bring the candidates through this Examination with flying colors.

A few words in conclusion, and we leave our readers to judge whether the defenders of the "Intermediate" or its opponents "are under the dominion not of ideas, but of words."

By "cramming," it is evidently necessary to explain, is meant not only "filling the mind with knowledge which is not so thoroughly assimilated as to become a permanent possession," but also filling the mind with knowledge which even when remembered, the possessor is unable to use. This, it is unnecessary to say, is by far the more objectionable feature of the defect. The case we have stated above bears us out, we think, in concluding that in both these senses, the "Intermediate" has not only not "lessened the tendency to cram," but is actually increasing it in many of the subjects of study. To summarize:—

(1) It has stimulated the study of those subjects and parts of subjects which may be mastered mainly by an effort of the memory.

(2) It has in many subjects made the possession of facts of more importance to both teacher and student than the ability to use them. In other words, it is strengthening the carrying power of the memory at the expense of other important faculties.

(3) It has deprived of their legitimate value, as a means of education and as results of education, several important subjects on the programme.

(4) It has not tended to develop certain mental habits enumerated above which it is the duty of every educational system to foster.

As our desire is to benefit education, and not simply to defend an opinion, we admit that these conclusions would be safer if based on observations extending over a longer interval than two years and a-half; but we set them, supported by the facts we have quoted and by the consensus of the High School Masters, against the mere "opinion" of three officials, who, in the face of successive modifications of the scheme, have from its very introduction maintained that the Intermediate has no injurious tendencies.