

NEWSPAPER DISCUSSION.—Some people object to newspaper discussion of educational questions because there is often so much in it not only of what is misleading but of what is absolute ignorance, while rare exceptions are exploited sometimes very warmly as if they are the rule. There is, however, no better way of interesting the public in the subject; no more effective manner of stimulating those who do not know the facts to begin to study them; no better device for preventing the quiet-loving educationist from getting into a smooth rut and forgetting to think. It is the duty of those discussing problems, however, to make an effort to be accurate and fully informed; otherwise it cannot fail to discredit the individual as well as the method. No teacher can be excused who writes without showing evidence of careful investigation; for teachers ought to be leaders in using methods of accurate search after truth and in making well balanced presentations of *all* the facts bearing on the point at issue

VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL OPINION.—Few persons who do not follow the course of educational discussion are likely to imagine the diversity of views which may be held even in the same province among teachers who look very much alike. One is in favor of a literary and classical education, another of a shop-keeping one, another of a scientific and manual training kind—and each may sometimes be proposing his scheme as the all sufficient one for the whole province.

One does not wish to be hampered by examination or course of study—and these are not always the wisest ones; while another in an eloquent paper before an institute argues that the Central Office should issue the lessons for every grade in the province weekly, so that no other text book need be required than this weekly journal of education.

Some wish to have the exact nature-lessons in the common schools specified in the general course of study, so that the teacher need not be harassed by having to select the suitable objects around his own school; while the great majority have an idea that the natural history of different localities is so variable that what might be best in one section might not be obtainable in another section at all,—and this idea is correct. At present the principal of every school is free to select or construct the exact system of lessons in this department to suit the schools under his charge; but some appear to have more faith in a scheme constructed by one who may be entirely unacquainted with his region.

Even on so simple a question as "What text would you recommend as more suitable than the *Vicar of Wakefield* for grade IX?" the variety of opinion is great. One is a great believer in "grammar" teaching, another would not have it even named, and so forth.

All this demonstrates the necessity of fuller intercommunication between teachers, through institutes and the educational press, which all should patronize.

ORIGIN OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS.—As in other countries this institution has already done a great deal of good. But there is nothing good which cannot by some natural or artificial process be perverted. For a history of examinations in Nova Scotia, see the Education Report for 1901, and page 84 of JOURNAL. The origin of the present system, omitted in the sketch in the report, is given in the following extracts from the minutes of the Provincial Educational Association of Nova Scotia, in the two conventions of 1889 and 1890. It is the outcome of the unanimous and persistent mandate of the teachers of the province: