

Drawing is still a new subject, when viewed as an imperative one, although it has been fifteen years now on our Course of Study. The "Scientific" subjects on the whole appear to be the least scientifically taught. In Botany, for instance, the questions were framed with the view of giving best chances to the practical student and giving as few mnemonical hints as possible to suggest memorized answers from the book. So with the other "Science" papers. Still there appears to be too much of pure memory work, especially in the answers on Chemistry and Physics, according to the Provincial Examiner.

It may be to the advantage of both teachers and students to take them into our confidence in this matter. We therefore quote a lengthy extract from the report of Professor MacGregor to the Department, as indicating generally the lines on which it may be expected both questions and valuations may be made at the next examination :

"I write, in accordance with your instructions, to draw your attention to a serious defect in the answering of candidates at the late examinations, viz : Answering by quotation (more or less accurate) from the text-book, indicating a serious defect in the preparation for the examination, viz : preparation by memorizing the text-book.

Unfortunately it did not occur to me, until it was too late, to keep a record of the number of cases of obvious answering by rote, but the number of cases was so great that I am safe in saying that very extensively candidates have evidently prepared themselves largely by committing portions of the text-book to memory. While this remark applies to all grades it is more particularly applicable to the lower grades, and while it applies to all subjects, it is more particularly applicable to such subjects as Physics and Chemistry, in which it is especially difficult to frame questions which do not admit of such answers.

The fact that a correct answer is given in the words of the text-book does not, of course, show that the subject matter has not been understood, though it leaves a doubt in the mind of the examiner and does show that the candidate has been trusting too much to his book. But an answer consisting of a quotation in which slips occur which make the quotation nonsense, or of one containing obviously irrelevant matter, shows that the candidate is trusting to memory altogether.

The great bulk of the answers by quotations are of this nature. For example in describing the preparation of Chlorine one candidate says : "Put into a t. t. 5g of fine granular Mn So and 10c c. Hcl. Apply heat carefully and collect the gas by downward displacement. Do not inhale the gas. If you have accidentally done so inhale alcohol from a handkerchief. Note the color of the gas and compare its weight with that of air,"—an attempt to give in slightly condensed form the statement of Williams' Introduction, page 98. That this candidate was giving a mere parrot answer is shewn, (1) by his substitution of MnSo for MnO, (2) by his pretending to know the relative qualities of the two substances which should be mixed, (3) by his fear lest the examiner should inhale the gas and his kindly offer of information useful in the event of his doing so, (4) by his command to the examiner to note color and weight of the gas