

special technical knowledge can be readily acquired. That is but the veneer: the mainspring of character and intelligence is to be sought elsewhere. "I would rather," said a successful science teacher the other day—"I would rather my boys knew the tale of Troy than the component parts of the atmosphere." "Greek," to quote a *Times* article a few days ago, "is the key to the noblest thoughts that have moved mankind, the influence of which is still felt in every department of mental activity." Noble thought precedes noble action, and the educator's part is to endeavor to produce the noble thought.

Sir John Gorst has finally solved the educational problem which so many of us have been troubling our heads about. "Why is educational progress so slow?" "Because," says Sir John, "the administration, the Government (and mind you he is a member of the Government) of our country is in the hands of an aristocratic party, which holds its position by the will and favor of an ignorant democracy, which it therefore desires to keep in ignorance. Which of Mr. Marchand's colleagues would dare kick against the New Education Bill as high as that, or how would the Ontario Government classify a supporter of Sir John's cynicism? Freedom of speech has not been crushed out by partyism yet in the old country.

The last word has not been said about examinations, though no one has so far suggested something that would take their place. This time it is *Secondary Education* that has its opinion to express:

The complaint is not infrequently heard that the youth of the present generation are being examined to death. There is much truth in the charge, and many evils follow in the train of over-examination. The time

has come when some protest should be made against the various forms of abuse in this direction. It is not only the undue value set by the public on the mechanical test which separates the bright from the dull, but the intense rivalry that is set up between pupil and pupil, school and school, teacher and teacher, that needs healthy correction. Examining bodies vie with each other to make their schemes attractive, while the endeavor to maintain the value of their diplomas leads to constant and frequent elevation of standard until more satisfaction is felt in the numbers who fail than in those who pass. Examiners more than ever seek to find out rather what the pupils do not know than what they do know. We have even heard of high examining bodies excusing themselves for setting questions impossible of solution on the ground that it was desirable to find whether this would be discovered. "Fail all you can" were the instructions given to one examiner appointed by one of our universities. We have heard it asserted that to fail heavily is a kindness to the pupils thus thrown back. Surely these are wrong principles. To deal thus with the long, toilsome, and oftentimes expensive work of the struggling and ambitious student for the sake of teaching him a lesson is the height of callousness.

The objects of examinations are twofold: (1) To test the thoroughness and range of mental training; and (2) to gauge the capacity of the brain. If these objects were kept in view, the vagaries of examiners would be less frequently apparent. We consider that an examining body should formulate its schemes as it thinks well, fix its standard at discretion, but, having done that, it is only fair to keep in view the objects of the examination.

Examiners have their whims and idiosyncrasies. One likes to show off