

evident medical men have an important duty to perform outside of the privilege of curing disease, if possible, once it has been developed. Thus we observe the absolute necessity of proper sanitary inspection, to stay the evils now on the increase, chiefly through an over-taxation of nerve tissue and nerve power, not in keeping with the physiological principles inculcated at the present day. From various sources it is quite evident that, within a few years, lung diseases are on the increase in school children, and, in many instances, may be attributed to over-crowding and long and exhausting confinement in a vitiated atmosphere. The lofty ceilings of our new school houses are evidence of progress, but proper ventilation must be carried to such ceilings, otherwise they will become receptacles of foul air, to vitiate the entire atmosphere of the room. Fresh air is about the most important food of the system, and nowhere more than during school life should there be a proper and well-regulated supply. It is a well-known fact that every individual poisons fifteen cubic feet of air every hour, in consequence of which thirty cubic feet should be supplied every hour. If we desire to stay the progress of epidemic diseases, there should be every effort made to limit the number of pupils to the area of class-room accommodation. Well might Dr. Thomas Rochester remark at the Medical Society meeting at New York in June, 1876, that "Education was not in all instances the blessing which it seemed unmistakably to be, for it became necessary to acquire it at too great a risk;" and, under such circumstances, he recommended that every school district should have a well-paid medical director, who should devote himself thoroughly and conscientiously to the many hygienic duties of the position. It is impossible to estimate the importance of this subject, which at present is engaging the attention of public men in every country. Dr. Bowitch, in his address at the International Medical Congress, Philadelphia, 1876, stated that over 200,000 persons are annually slaughtered in the United States by preventable diseases. What the death rate in the school children of the Dominion may be, or in those of the Province of Ontario, now numbering 496,000, between the ages of five and sixteen years, I could not offer an estimate. From personal observation, I fear that the cramming system of the present day is not likely to produce a generation equal to the one now passing away. The most useless individuals in society are those who know everything and can do nothing. Our country is rapidly developing, and we require workers; workers not converted into drones, by excessive ill-directed application in the buoyant period of youth. Let our education be directed towards the object in view, surrounded by the principles of common sense, and the outcome will be more lasting, the results more practical, and the rising generation one quite able to grapple with the varied emergencies of certainly a trying age.

DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS.

SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE HIGH SCHOOL SECTION,
TEACHERS' PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATION, BY D. C. M'HENRY, M.A.,
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The necessity for some such examinations as those now conducted by the Education Department cannot be doubted. On this point there is no great difference of opinion. Their peculiar departmental character arises from the direct oversight which the State, in this, as in every enlightened country, is giving to the cause of education; and, more particularly, from the financial aid which our several municipalities receive from the general treasury, to supplement local contributions for educational purposes.

Good schools presuppose good teachers, and good teachers must receive suitable remuneration. To determine their qualifications, there must be certain standards, to which they shall be required

to attain. And to pay them suitably, legislative aid is found necessary. Hence our examinations, and their departmental character.

Of course, the utility of these examinations depends on their adaptation to the end in view—to their *thoroughness* and *fairness*. Examinations for teachers ought to be of such a nature as to necessitate careful preparation both of the *matter* to be afterwards taught, and practice in the *best methods* of instruction.

Our examinations, professional and non-professional, are supposed to meet the general requirement of furnishing the country with a supply of properly qualified teachers.

I believe that these tests are much superior to those of former years, and that no serious objections can be urged against them.

We are not assembled, however, to sit in mute admiration of any part of our educational system, simply because it is an improvement on the past. Had that course been hitherto pursued, we might still be trudging along in the old paths, the slaves of methods long since laid aside.

With a view, therefore, to elicit opinion, and, if necessary, to secure improvement in certain particulars, I shall venture to suggest a few modifications which I think might be advantageously adopted.

And, first of all, it seems to me that while the Education Department should take a very prominent part in all matters pertaining to our schools, the present tendency is rather to ignore local interest and supersede local control by centralizing all real power in a non-representative and semi-responsible body.

It has long been deemed a fundamental principle in our educational polity that an interest can best be created and sustained by extending to the people a fair share of authority. For reasons not fully apparent, a centralizing policy seems now to prevail, the most objectionable feature of which is, as before remarked, that privilege and power withdrawn from the people are being entrusted to a select committee on which the people have no direct representation.

Probably many of the changes introduced from time to time would meet with less opposition if those most directly interested were represented on this Executive Council. All this may be said without in any way reflecting on the gentlemen selected as members of this committee. It is the *principle* adopted—superseding the former representative system—to which exception is taken.

From some cause or other, our present methods are considered unnecessarily expensive. If the accumulation, in Toronto, of work formerly done throughout the province sufficiently accounts for the present outlay, it is quite susceptible of demonstration; and the necessary information should be given. The results now obtained by our educational machinery are by very many considered incommensurate with the cost to the country.

If our High School grants, for example, are not increased in proportion to the increase of work assigned them; if, as some trustees assert, "the mill in Toronto is keeping the grist and giving them the toll;"* if, in short, there is any misappropriation of school funds, it ought to be rectified in a manner satisfactory to any reasonable demands of dissatisfied trustees and teachers.

To speak of examinations more in detail, I believe the ENTRANCE EXAMINATION would be more effectual, (i) if adjacent Public Schools were encouraged to use it more generally as a test for promotion from the fourth form; (ii) if definite instructions were given Head Masters as to their presiding, and the remuneration to be received. Any perquisites available should be secured to those who have to do the work. The Inspector, in other words, should not be burdened with the distribution of this patronage. (iii) The

*It is a pity that Mr. M'Henry should have quoted such nonsense. The method of conducting examinations introduced by Mr. Crooks largely reduced the cost of the Provincial examinations.—E.C.