

set down in the Abstract, the Inspector will allow each tender to select such of the said branches as are naturally adapted to the position of the school; such selections to be in all cases subject to the following conditions:

(a) The first four columns under "Efficiency of Teacher" must be filled in for all competitors of whatever grade.

(b) Of the subjects named in the remaining FOURTEEN columns each competing teacher may choose not less than SEVEN, or if a Primary School, not less than FIVE, on which the examination for competitive purposes shall be made.

(c) In Elementary Competing Schools the teacher shall not be at liberty to omit vocal music or linear drawing from the list of subjects of examination.

The competitions will be decided as heretofore on the general principle of *average standing*. Marks on certain more important points will however exert a double and in some cases a treble force, according to fixed rules adopted for guidance in making these decisions.\* The Inspectors will see the necessity for increasing care and faithfulness in making the report on the competition.

By order of the Council,

T. H. RAND, *Supt. of Education.*

\* The fourteen branches of scholarship are of equal force.

LETTER FROM THE REV. J. M. HENSLEY, D. D.,  
EXAMINER IN DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE.

IN making a few observations on the recent examination, as far as concerns the department of language, I cannot refrain from expressing my opinion that the change introduced into the mode of conducting the examinations has already produced beneficial results. As yet I know nothing of the decisions in the other departments, and I am, therefore, ignorant of the final results to the candidates, nor have I made any accurate comparison between the papers of last autumn and this spring; at the same time I have no hesitation in stating that in general precision, fulness, and style of execution, the papers of this spring exhibit a very decided progress.

It is well known to those who have paid any attention to the present system, that the examiners know nothing about the candidates whose papers they have to examine, they do not even know in what County they have been examined. A number on the outside of the envelope containing the papers, is the only distinguishing mark. By this method an effectual check is provided against the operation of either prejudice or partiality, feelings by which the most conscientious are liable to be influenced.

While speaking of this, it may not be out of place to mention that in the course of my inspection of the papers, my attention was arrested by the excellence of those of a number of candidates, evidently examined in one place, as was shewn by the consecutiveness of the numbers on the envelopes. Almost all of them were considerably above the average, and many of them of superior excellence. I noted the numbers at the time, and when I had looked over all the papers I requested the Superintendent of Education, for my own satisfaction, to let me know whether there was anything in the training or circumstances of these candidates which would account for this satisfactory result. He informed me that they were all pupils of the Provincial Normal School, and that they had exhibited similar superiority in the other departments. I need hardly add that it affords the best evidence of the excellence of the training imparted in that institution.

One great benefit of the present system must be the gradual elevation of teaching as a profession. So long as the licenses were confined to the respective Counties, and the examinations conducted with little or no attempt at uniformity, the position of the teacher was uncertain, and his opportunities of advancing himself exceedingly limited. Now his license is valid all over the Province, and he can avail himself of any opening that occurs for improving his position. It is to be hoped that this will be realized more and more by the whole body of teachers, and that, while they may possibly perceive defects in the present system, they will do their best to render it efficient, and thus promote the interests of the Province, as well as of their own noble profession. The influence of teachers must necessarily be very great; their position ought to be among the foremost; it rests very much with themselves to make it so.

The department of language includes Latin and Greek, English grammar, analysis of sentences, prosody and composition. Of the papers in Latin and Greek, I would observe that those in the former language were in general superior to those in the latter, both in quantity and quality. One or two of the translations from the Latin were entirely free from any serious error, and displayed a very creditable amount of scholarship. In a few instances the versions were too free, being rather paraphrases than translations; which, although admissible in an oral examination, are not desirable in a written one, where the examiner has no means of testing the accuracy of the candidate. Those who are experienced in teaching know that a free version is as often a refuge for inaccuracy, as a manifestation of scholarship. In cases where this mode of translation is adopted by the candidate, it is better to indicate, by a note or otherwise, that the original construction is clearly understood.

It is well also for candidates to remember that it is of no use to supply answers to questions not in their papers. If the examiners attached any value to such answers it would be much the same thing as allowing the candidates to examine themselves. It is obvious that if such a state of things were admitted, it would be the simplest mode for each one to prepare a number of answers, and put them down on his paper, whatever may be the questions proposed to him. Instances occur in which this has evidently been the method pursued, when the candidate not being able to answer the actual question, has thought it better to answer an imaginary one of his own.

I do not believe, however, that this will account for all the answers to questions not submitted, or for more than a moderate portion of them. I think that in very many cases, in the hurry and excitement felt on such an occasion, the candidates do not always give sufficient attention to the question, but anxious to make the most of their limited time, skim over the questions, dashing down their answers without mature consideration. This is especially the case in the *definitions* supplied in answer to questions, or, to give an example from the last examination, where it was required to give the principal parts of certain verbs as: cleave (to split), cleave (to stick), &c., several of the candidates conjugated "to split" and "to stick," as well as the words actually required.

The best plan is to give careful consideration to each question, and to endeavor to give it a thorough answer; as a few questions fully worked out, are of more value than a number answered imperfectly. On the same principle there should be a strict adherence to the forms of parsing and analysis given in the papers.

One of the points which the examiners are required to report on is the number of ordinary words mis-spelled. In my department there was a decided improvement exhibited in this respect at the last examination. Very few deserved to be reported as extremely deficient in this matter, and the majority were almost entirely free from error. It is worthy of note, however, that no word was more frequently mis-spelled than "grammar," which appeared under the forms of "gramer," or "gramar," or, still oftener, "grammer." It is perhaps as well to mention that when a word occurs more than once, it is not sufficient to spell it correctly in one place only, and incorrectly elsewhere; for the examiners have no means of knowing which way the candidate esteems the correct one. Cases have come under my notice, in which the same word has been spelt in three different ways in one exercise.

I would recommend future candidates to write their answers on each subject on separate sheets of paper, and, if possible, to write all the answers of each subject on the same sheet. More justice can be done by the examiner when he has all the answers before him in compact form, than when he has to hunt them up on six or eight little slips of paper, as is sometimes the case.

J. M. HENSLEY.

King's Col., Windsor.

POPULAR ERRORS CONCERNING EDUCATION, AND  
THEIR INFLUENCE.

BY D. NASMITH, ESQ., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

[From the Journal of Education for the Province of Quebec.]

THAT Parents have a right to interfere with School Discipline.— Let us, in approaching this subject, concede to parents that the inconceivable harm they do by their notions, conversations, and actions in this respect, is attributable to a mistaken fondness, and