

trate the want of common sense to which I have referred. (1.) "Pitt, one of the best primers England has seen; Gladstone, Disraeli, Fox, and Sheridan." (2.) "Sir G. Grey, W. Fox, Pilchard, Carl Crombie, Murray Fisher." (3.) "Shakespeare, Chaucer, Wm. Spenser (Faerie Queane), and Dickens." (4.) "From his earliest years Pitt was afflicted with the gout." (5.) "Pitt led a chequered life; he was troubled with rheumatics." (6.) "Laud, better known as Stafford." The following are portions of answers given to a question which afforded an opportunity of showing any knowledge the candidates possessed with regard to Milton, the Septennial Act, Glencoe, Laud, the Rump, and the South Sea Bubble. "Milton was a poet, under William the Fourth. A very good poet, and was liked very much by his friends." "Milton, a great poet, translated the Bible." "Milton was a philosopher, who did much to increase our knowledge of the laws of nature, notably gravitation." "Milton also wrote Agonistes and Samson; was married twice and was not loveable to either of his wives." "The Septennial Act was passed once in seven years;" "elected members every five years;" "was that parliament should be closed seven years;" "was an Act drawn up to prevent any sovereign from keeping the meanest subject in prison without bringing them to a fair trial. No more beautiful and perhaps useful lives would be allowed to pine and waste away in damp dungeons," and so on. "Glencoe, a Scottish chieftain who rose in rebellion against the Protestants, and wanted to have Presbyterianism established in Scotland." "They rose up in the middle of the Knight, and began their work of Blood." "Archbishop Laud, Minister of St. Andrews, and who was murdered by Balfour Burleigh"—"a Royalist general"—"an archbishop. He did much good in promoting Puritanism." "The Rump, so called from the Whigs and Tories having had quarrels"—"so called from one of its members." "The (South) Sea Bubble is spoken of in history as being similar to a waterspout. . . . Ships have been known to meet this strange sea-bubble, and of course journeys upward with it unless it is foreseen; and, if so, the seamen discharge fire-arms into it to break or burst. . . . Ships have been carried many miles overland by it. In fact, everything is, as it were, sucked into it." It would be easy to multiply instances not less absurd. I have quoted these, because I think they show—first, the necessity of having children taught history so far as to render them incapable of making such blunders; and, secondly, the value of an examination in history, for the purpose of preventing those who can make them from becoming school-teachers. It is, perhaps, necessary to add that many of the successful candidates passed well in history, as they did also in other subjects, and gave evidence of great ability and considerable attainments.

The examiner in arithmetic reports that "the greater number of the candidates for class D did their work . . . in fairly good style, and the results show an improvement on those obtained last year;" but that of the candidates for class E "a large proportion . . . possess so very meagre an acquaintance with the commonest rules of arithmetic as to make it clear that they ought not to have presented themselves at an examination for the classification of teachers." The examiner in geography says: "It appears to me that candidates come up in large numbers for class E, who can never have the smallest hope of passing." The same examiner complains of the "lamentable ignorance" of most of the candidates for class D, with respect to such matters as the variations of the length of the day, the changes in the seasons, the theories of the tides, currents, and winds, and the construction of maps. I agree with him in thinking that it is not too much to expect that candidates for class D will be able to answer questions which are treated with sufficient fulness in a shilling text-book (Grove's Geography, in Macmillan's Science Primer series).

The great importance of the subject must be my excuse for making a long extract from the report of the examiner in school-management and the art of teaching:—

"The results of the examination are on the whole comparatively low, only fourteen candidates taking over 70 per cent. But for the time wasted on unnecessary work, in connection with registration and time-tables, in many cases the results would have been higher. Instead of simply completing the extract from the register and giving the results required, some candidates made out a new form, copied all the attendances, and put on paper the calculations; which might have been done mentally with greater accuracy; while others added to these the directions given in the registers for finding averages, &c. In connection with time-tables, junior assistants in large schools attempted, from a partial knowledge of the organization, to give the time-table of the whole school in which they are engaged; and other candidates, taking the alternatives offered, wasted their time in drawing and filling up separate forms for each class. Many candidates with considerable experience in teaching and fairly read in the subject were placed at considerable disadvantage evidently from want of practice in committing their thoughts to paper.

"In some districts the range of reading on school management is very limited. It would not be too much to expect, and it would certainly be of great advantage to teachers and their schools, were three or four of the best works on this subject not only read, but freely used as books of reference. To our young teachers in isolated country schools this is absolutely necessary, and many candidates apparently in charge of such schools would have been saved from failure by the practice.

"It may be worthy of note that, in answering the section on registration, while many were nearly correct, only 70 were absolutely so. Taking the average of the weekly averages was an error common to many who shewed the method of finding results.

"In the time-tables for the schools with the teacher unassisted, arithmetic was frequently left untaught, being set down for desk work, while the teacher was engaged at some other subject demanding his whole attention."

I desire to call attention to the fact that one hundred persons who sent in their names for examination failed to present themselves, and thus caused a great deal of useless trouble and expense. The setting of papers, the printing, the clerical work, the arrangement of the time-table, and the choice of rooms for examination, are matters affected by the numbers of the candidates entered. Perhaps it would be well to exact a fee from every person giving notice of intention to come up for examination.

In conclusion, I venture to recommend that in future the examination be held in January instead of in March. There were good reasons for believing that the later date would be found most suitable; but as the result of two years' experience, I am now of opinion that, having regard to the times of opening and closing the sessions of colleges and normal schools, the month of January is the best time for the annual examination.

I append a file of the examination papers.

I have, &c.,

WM. JAMES HABENS,
Inspector-General of Schools.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.