

Tibbs and Kirby were distinguished for mathematics in their university careers; Mr. Francis, though eminently an "all round" man, and more distinguished at the University for English than for mathematics, was, like the other two, specially commended for his teaching of mathematics by the examiners. But these three were equally commended for their general work—a fact which supports what I have said as to the greater importance of teaching power than of special attainments. They are very useful in that work, and I should be unwilling to spare them from it, and they, I believe, unwilling to give it up. One or two of the others I consider non-mathematical, and do not employ on mathematics. The rest, if we exclude the masters for French and natural science, are no more specialists in any other subject than in mathematics, but are quite competent to take work up to a reasonable standard in two or three.

*Excess of Explanation as likely as Defect.*—I hope that the due mean is observed in this matter in the school; but I have no doubt that, to meet the case of the duller boys, more explanation is given than is necessary, or even desirable, for the brighter, who would be mentally more robust if induced to help themselves more. The danger is a common one of modern education, and will continue to exist so long as many parents continue to believe that if a boy does not get on the fault is always the master's, nothing being allowed for natural defects, want of encouragement at home, and the like.

*Home Work in certain Subjects said to be Unnecessary.*—As regards algebra and arithmetic, I consider that it is good for a boy, when he has had sufficient explanation and practice under the master's eye, to be called upon to perform similar work at home as a test of the extent to which he has profited by these, and to foster self-reliance. Knowledge—if it be knowledge—which is unavailable without a prompter at hand is of little value. I am, however, willing to try the experiment. Indeed, long since some masters declared their preference for no home work in these subjects, and I have allowed them to have their way. As regards analysis of sentences, it is evident that the examiners are determined to wage war upon it on every opportunity.

*Suggestion that Outside Examiners should merely test Efficiency of School, not settle Prizes and Promotions.*—The suggestion is in accordance with the general, though not universal, practice in English schools, except that the examination of the highest Forms, on the result of which the chief prizes and scholarships depend, is usually conducted by the outside examiners.

*Commencement of School Year in September.*—This came about in the following way: In 1882 the examination was held in August on my recommendation. I made that recommendation firstly and chiefly because it was found impossible to get the results of an examination by outside examiners, who were expected to place every boy in time for the distribution of prizes to take place before Christmas, the examination being held in December; also, because in December the best boys are likely to be engaged with university examinations, because boys are often withdrawn just before December, and because I was told that the weather in that month was frequently unfavourable. The school year was, however, still considered as ending with the calendar year until 1884, in which year the Board of Education, without consulting us, though partly, I understand, with the idea that it would suit our convenience, commenced to send up its scholars in September. To find room for these boys it is necessary that promotions should be made not only in the lower Forms—in which, unfortunately, they are necessary in every term—but also in the higher. In that year a good many parents conformed to the change thus rendered necessary, and possibly all would in time have done so had not the Board of Education subsequently decided that at the Girls' High School the school year should, nominally at least, begin in February. If the suggestion of the examiners as to the awarding of prizes, &c., by masters be adopted the difficulty as to getting in the results of the examination will be removed. If the Board of Education would also resume the practice of sending up its scholars in February the return to a school year corresponding with the civil year would certainly be advantageous. I may also remark that the district scholars who have come up in September will find themselves without scholarships during the term preceding the examination for University scholarships—a very awkward arrangement.

*Improved System of District Scholarships.*—I hope much from the direct effects of the change, and at least as much from its indirect effect in encouraging parents who intend to send their sons to a secondary school to do so at a reasonably early age, instead of keeping them dawdling on at a primary school until there is no time left in which they can make a good use of the advantages offered by a secondary school. But the effects of the change will manifest themselves only gradually, and, so far as the competition for university scholarships is concerned, the school will not feel the benefit until the scholars and others who will join toward the end of this year are ready to compete—that is, in five years or more.

*Conclusion.*—I long ago stated my conviction that this school was not producing, and, under existing circumstances, could not produce, the results which, under fair conditions, might be expected from a richly-endowed secondary school. Neither the generally favourable report of the examiners nor the recent successes of the scholars have shaken that conviction; for I know by what persistent efforts these successes, such as they are, have been brought about, and how much greater results the same efforts would have produced under reasonable conditions. A very large proportion of the "zeal and ability" (the words are not my own) expended upon the school has been wasted. The main causes I have already stated. Some may, I hope, be considered as exceptional and unlikely to recur, such as the frequent changes in the staff—though with the present meagre scale of salaries it is unlikely that able men will stay long, or that, if they do stay, they will be contented. But other causes, such as the late joining, unprepared condition, and early leaving of boys, the failure of many—I, of course, do not say all—parents to urge on the boys and support the masters, the constant carpings at the school, and the play given to unworthy animosities, appear to be chronic. As long as these continue, as long as the school is misused as it has been misused, so long will its public usefulness be minimised, so long will it be prevented from doing its proper work in the proper way, and so long will the position of my colleagues, and specially of myself, be one of incessant worry and exhausting labour, producing very inadequate results, and earning, no doubt, the silent apprecia-