

SENIOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I beg to protest against the increasing difficulty of the mathematical papers for the Senior Public Examination. The last algebra paper for that examination is a good example of this. On reference to the calendars of the Universities of Sydney, Melbourne, Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, I find that the standard for a pass in mathematics for the Senior Public (which corresponds to the matriculation of other Universities) is on the average nearly double that for those Universities. As I am not aware that the South Australian youth is more advanced in the study of mathematics than those of other places, I fail to see the need for this high standard. The consequence is that candidate for law, medicine, and arts, though they may be very good in their other subjects, are constantly failed every year on account of the high standard and the difficulty of the mathematical papers. If we must have a high standard, surely the papers ought to be easier to alleviate the difficulty of passing.

I am, Sir, &c., G. R. B.  
North Adelaide, November 28.

SENIOR EXAMINATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Kindly grant me space for a few words in reference to the time allotted to the Senior Literature Paper during Monday's examination. I venture to state that it would take the whole of the two hours assigned to the paper to answer creditably the second question. On behalf of my fellow-teachers may I request that the examiners when marking the paper will take into consideration the very short time the candidates were allowed for it? I append a list of the questions, five only of which were to be answered in the two hours.

I am, Sir, &c.,

TEACHER.

1. Sketch the characters of Dupleix, Surajah Dowlah Ormichund, Nuncomar, Junpey, Surajah Dowlah Hyder Ali, Burke.
2. Reproduce as accurately as you can Macaulay's description of Battle of Plassey, City of Benares, Impeachment of Hastings.
3. From Clive's first visit to India, dates—From Clive's second visit, dates—From Clive's third visit, dates—Fill in the blanks.
4. How does Macaulay illustrate the following statement—"The entire history of British India is an illustration of the great truth that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy."
5. On a general view of the administration of Hastings it is impossible to deny that against the great crimes by which it is blemished we have to set off great public services. Describe the "great crimes" v. "great public services."
6. Give instances of the influence of the English Bible over Macaulay's diction as shown, in his essays.
7. Indicate the most striking features in Macaulay's style.

GERMAN IN THE JUNIOR EXAMINATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Permit me to make a few remarks re the German paper at the Junior Examination this year. The textbook set was:—"Ballads of Uhland, Schiller, and Goethe," edited by C. G. H. Bielefeld, containing all the best known ballads of these authors, together with notes, plots, and biographies, compiled by the Editor. The portion to be prepared by the candidates numbered 170 pages, and would have presented considerable difficulty even to a German boy, for most of the ballads, especially the latter ones of Schiller, need a deal of intelligent and careful study, accompanied by a thorough grammatical training in the language. The average time devoted to German in the schools here amounts to three hours a week, and as the school year members 42 weeks, it means 126 hours during the year. Now, for a boy to master the translation only {it is absolutely necessary to work through the book twice at the least in class, and this brings the year's work to 340 pages in 126 lessons, being an average of about three pages per lesson. This calculation leaves grammar, composition, and unseen translation entirely out of court, so that where boys have to take up a great number of subjects it is impossible, devoting the ordinary share of time to the preparation of German, to succeed in the subject. Mr. Trechmann's paper was in every way an admirable one, for it was evidently aimed at testing the candidate's actual knowledge of German, not his cramming powers. The paper was divided into four sections—1. Four short pieces from the ballads (in German); 2. Grammar questions; 3. Unseen translation; 4. German composition. Now, when boys have a great amount of translation to prepare, and are almost forced to spend their entire time on it, I cannot understand an examiner allowing it to form but a scanty fourth of his paper; had there been say fifty pages to prepare the master and student would then have had a chance of satisfying all Mr. Trechmann's requirements. As it is the authorities have set a book manifestly beyond the reach of the candidates, and they ought in future—if the boy's knowledge of the language, not of a particular book, is to be tested—to set shorter and more straightforward



books. With a paper like Mr. Trechmann's a year's study of these ballads is practically thrown away, for a boy's whole time has been spent on the preparation of work which will only help him to do one-fourth of the paper. A shorter textbook would have given candidates an opportunity of doing unseen translation, grammar, and composition, and besides being able to satisfy in every portion of the paper they would have gained a more useful knowledge than they have acquired by being compelled to cram at the textbook only. An ill-chosen book of this sort is apt to discourage pupils from taking up the subject, and the authorities will do well to consider the wisdom of setting textbooks that are too hard and too long for the average boy of fourteen or fifteen.

I am, Sir, &c.,

E. L. HEINEMANN,

B.A., Oxon.

*Register 2/12/90.*

## ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

### ORDINARY M.B. AND CH.B. EXAMINATIONS.

The following is a list of the successful candidates for the M.B. and Ch.B. Examinations:—

FIRST YEAR.—First class, Frank Sandland Hone\*; second class, George Alfred Fisher; third class, Alfred Watkins Fletcher.

\* To be recommended for Sir Thomas Elder's prize in physiology.

SECOND YEAR.—First class, none; second class, Arthur Murray Cudmore, John Bernard Gunson, Henry Offly Irwin, John L. Sangster; third class, Cecil Corbin, Arthur Goode, Edward Ernest Moule, Alfred Edward James Russell.

THIRD YEAR.—First class, Wentworth Rowland Cavenagh; second class, Patrick Francis Shanahan; third class, Alexander Edward Gibbes.

FOURTH YEAR.—First class, Cecil Silas Mead, Henry Arthur Powell; second class, Henry O'Halloran Giles; third class, Laura Margaret Fowler, Leonard Llewellyn Seabrook.

FIFTH YEAR.—First class, William Alfred Virce\*; second class, Alexander Mathieson Morgan; third class, none.

\* Will be recommended to the Council for the Everard Scholarship.

### EXAMS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Has the reign of terror reappeared? To children I verily believe it has. I hear of nothing but exams. on all sides. Monthly, half-yearly, preliminary, junior, senior, senior public, art, music, &c., &c., and as a family man my hair is turning grey over them. My boys and girls consult the *Register* every morning to see who has passed. Ah! I know how much joy and how much disappointment are summed up in that column of passes; with what fluttering hearts the paper is taken up, and with what relief or depression it is laid down again. I see how their eyes scan the list, and with what joy they see their own and their companions' names among the fortunate ones. But there is all the same deep murmuring at the pressure they have to bear, and I sympathize with them. If exams. proceed at the pace they are now doing it will be good-by to everything else in their young lives. They will have nothing else to do, nothing to speak about, and nothing to think about but exams. I have looked over the papers of recent University exams., and I affirm intelligently and without the slightest bias that while these exams. are increasing in number they are also advancing in severity. I am sure I am quite within the mark when I say that the senior examination papers of three or four years ago are, to all intents, in intensity the junior exams. of to-day. In the *Register* of Monday there is an intelligent letter by Mr. Heinemann on the difficulties that beset the path of boys in German, and an utter lack of appreciation of boys' work by the gentleman who set the papers in that language. Another correspondent points out the manifest increasing difficulty of the senior mathematical papers, while a third shows the equal want of proportionateness in the papers set in English literature. This is evidence of the truth of my assertion that these exams. are yearly being intensified. People outside University walls are not all fools any more than all who are inside are all Solons. Now is there any reason why these exams. should take the course I have stated? Is there any physiological or psychological reason for it? Certainly the lads of to-day are not more robust than their predecessors. There may be a psychological reason, but it does not lie in the boys, but in the gentlemen who set the papers. They have become so familiar with their subjects that they have lost consciousness of that period in their development when they were boys themselves. The boys and girls of to-day are but the average boys and girls of twenty years ago, or if there be an advance the increment is inappreciable. Why this pressure, then? If there be no physiological reason for it. is it not time to reconsider