

Continued.

rites widen the scope of the Preliminary Examination it will not be long before the study of geography, history, languages, algebra, and so forth will in large measure be banished from all but the highest classes of the schools. The tendency will continue to be, as it is at present, for the attention of the pupil to be exclusively concentrated on a couple of subjects until the age of thirteen or fourteen, and then when the Preliminary Examination has been passed there will be a hasty scramble to get up a smattering of the rest of the curriculum in the short time that remains of his allotted time at school. This is not a healthy condition of affairs, and it rests with the University Council to adopt one or other of two courses for the more satisfactory guidance of the school course of study. Either the original character of the Preliminary Examination should be maintained by requiring that entry for it shall include an entry also for one of the higher tests, so that the full curriculum shall be gone through within the year, or the scope of the examination should be widened so as to make it include five or six subjects at least.

In view of the fact that the Preliminary Examination, as a test for the work of the middle class, has become so popular, the latter plan will probably be the better one to adopt. If this course be taken, however, it will be necessary to moderate the requirements now exacted for the standard in arithmetic and to introduce fewer "catchy" questions in the papers in English. In a Preliminary paper forming really a part of the Senior Public Examination no doubt tolerably stiff questions in English would be reasonable enough, the majority of the candidates being of an age to appreciate nice points of usage and of meaning. But for the bulk of those who sit for the Preliminary Examination they are out of place. For example, it is manifest that young pupils, in common even with people of much more mature years, must needs have great difficulty in explaining the difference in the meaning of the word "instinct" according as the accent is placed on the first or on the last syllable. Indeed it is exceedingly doubtful whether any recent authority can be quoted in support of the existence of any in pronunciation. Mr. G. Newman, B.A., in the little booklet entitled "Preliminary Guide," to which we called attention a day or two ago, not merely confidently asserts on the strength of an array of lexicographers that in modern usage the word has only one accent, but points out that "instinct" as a verb has long been practically obsolete. Other examples might be cited to prove that the English examination-paper of this year is open to criticism. This, however, is a matter of minor importance. The material fact which is most worthy of attention is that under existing conditions the position of the Preliminary Examination is anomalous, as it aims at accomplishing two objects and carries out neither of them satisfactorily.

The Advertiser

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1894.

Twelve applications have been received for the position of Bache Professor of English Literature at the University. No decision will be arrived at until the applications from England are received.

Register 20/9/94

THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—All teachers will thank you for your timely warning re the above. The sudden raising of the standard without any notice of warning was not wise, and if this standard is to continue as high as it is at present all children who have not exceptional reasoning facilities at an early age will be virtually excluded. Education needs encouragement, not repression, in our colony, and a Preliminary Examination should be within the reach of a child of average ability, so as to induce the majority of our schools to prepare their candidates also for the Junior and Senior University Examinations. Many of the names in the recent list represent candidates who have tried previously to pass the same examination. To add more subjects to this already unpopular examination would be "iron fryingpan to fire." A fixed fair standard is what teachers and scholars need, and if a great variation is to be made in the papers see a year's notice thereof should be given. Parents who have not had much education are apt to be unduly depressed if their children fail and to think it is not worth while to spend any more money on their intellectual training. A curious conclusion, but a frequent one.

I am, Sir, &c.,

PUZZLED.

The Register.

ADELAIDE: THURSDAY, OCT. 18, 1894.

THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

PROFESSORSHIP OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

London, October 16.

There are twenty-six applicants for the Hughes Professorship of English Literature in the University of Adelaide. From these Professor Lamb has selected for the choice of the University Council Mr. W. Mitchell, Mr. E. J. Mathew, and Mr. Joseph Solomon.