

is a very vague term. In former years a special period was appointed for study, and this would seem to be by far the most sensible way of proceeding. In Latin, Greek, French, and German easier tests are applied, but by a simple alteration, which might well escape notice, a higher degree of efficiency is required. In former years the passages for translation from English into any of these languages were translated from the prose authors selected for the examination or from specified portions of the same. Now there is no such limitation, and "in preparing for composition in Latin, Greek, French, and German, candidates are recommended to pay special attention to the vocabulary and idioms of the prose work set for translating." This recommendation will discourage cramming, and lead the way to a more thorough knowledge of the construction. In the senior examination history forms an integral part in the Latin, Greek, and French divisions, so that candidates will now be expected to know something about the events which they translate into English with more or less correctness. The schoolboy who gets up his Xenophon thinks more about "thence he marched two parasangs" than about the history which he is reading, and many of them would be utterly at a loss to explain who Xenophon was, and how it came to pass that Cyrus was traversing so many stadia. Perhaps in order to make up for the inclusion of ancient history in the senior examination it is excluded from the second year's course for an arts degree, but this omission will doubtless be supplied by the lecturer. On the whole it is plain that what with the revised regulations for matriculation, the greater value attached to ancient history and English literature, and the implied recognition of the worth of classics as an educational agent, the new rules are an important step in advance. We may regret that the University Senate will be prevented from suggesting alterations, but nevertheless we are glad to think that they are an improvement in many particulars on those which preceded them.

THE ABOLITION OF THE ADVANCED SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Though it is very late in the Parliamentary session, it is not too late I trust for hon. members to perform an act of justice and expediency before they break up finally. Again and again it has been shown conclusively that the Advanced School for Girls is a vexatious interference with private respectable girls' schools. Were it part of a general and impartial measure like the State-school system I should leave it alone, but there is only one such school, and it is for girls belonging to a certain class. The returns lately obtained by Mr. Bagster from the Education Department prove that it has not done what was promised when a too yielding and trustful Parliament granted money for its establishment, and more, that there was not even an honest attempt made to do what was promised. Mr. J. A. Hartley, the Inspector-General, himself testifies, to his own shame and to the confusion of the department over which he practically rules supreme, that not a single girl has been prepared in the school for a University course. That a number of girls passed certain examinations was but an apparent success, for the State schools had obtained a higher number of passes previously. And this seeming success of the Advanced School was obtained by collusion with the University Council, who lowered the standard of the matriculation examination for girls to meet the case apparently of this school. And, again, an alteration is this year about to be accomplished through similar collusive action with Mr. Hartley, to whom most improperly the task of making the changes was chiefly committed by the University Council—most improperly I repeat, seeing that he was a person interested in directing the changes so as to benefit what is virtually his own school, regardless of the evil effects upon the general education of the colony.

I have recently conferred with several members of Parliament, who all with marvellous unanimity condemn the school. I now write for the purpose of asking—Ought not the school to be closed at the end of this year? Its revenue of £1,600 or £2,000 is just so much taken from the support of some hundreds of persons who are engaged more or less directly in the higher education of girls, and I have reason to believe that there are good girls' schools, well conducted, with efficient staffs of teachers, now and for some time past scarcely meeting their expenses. The Government school for girls is a dearer school in some respects. It will be but an act of justice to the proprietors of private schools, to the pupils and their parents, and to the people of this country to abolish this school, which has been beyond controversy proved to be both a failure and a fraud. Against its establishment Sir R. D. Ross, Messrs. Downer, Krichauff, Gilbert, Moody, and others spoke seven years ago, and their opposition has

been justified by its career. Is it too much to expect that some members of Parliament should move for the closing of the school and obtain a division without discussion upon the question? Such a proceeding need not take more than a few minutes, and surely the forms and rules of the House will admit of it or of some similar course. I trust that hon. members who have condescended to read thus far will be roused to the performance of an act of bare justice which has been too long delayed. It is not needful to expatiate upon the painfully straitened circumstances of the colony as an additional reason for the action which I urge upon our legislators. My appeal is a test by which their true spirit may be ascertained, and their response in comparatively so small a matter may be an omen for good or for evil to this country in the near future. I, at least, shall regard it as such; but really it now matters little to me personally how they may decide to treat this school.

I am, Sir, &c.,

WILLIAM HOPKINS.