

Register of November 1899.

THE UNIVERSITY SENIOR EXAMINATION AND THE HISTORY PAPERS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I have not, like your correspondent, "Encyclopædia Britannica," tested the above paper by the work which supplies him with a *nom de plume*, but I have by Ludlow, the author named in the calendar as the textbook for the period of history. I find there are eight questions for pass and five for class. Of the eight pass questions six only may be answered; of the five class only two. As the candidate makes his own selection of what questions he will answer he seems to have a tolerably wide margin. Referring to the eight pass questions I find that Ludlow supplies an answer to every one, except to a subdivision of Question II., which, by-the-way, can be answered by any intelligent lad who can answer the next subdivision of the same question; and to a subdivision of Question VI., the answer to which can be found in the most elementary history of England. When I come to Part II., which I should designate class questions in contradistinction to pass, and which, if I understand the note at the head, are necessary to be answered for credit (although, by-the-way, only two out of five are to be answered), I find three questions (XI., XII., and XIII.) which can be answered by any one who has read and been taught the "History of the War of American Independence" as something more than a mere record of facts. As for Questions IX. and X. they are certainly more difficult, and probably could only be answered by candidates whose horizon has been enlarged by first-class historical teaching, and they may be too high for the average of those who aspire to credit at the senior examination. I should say these two are about on a par with the questions which used to be set in the Law and Modern History Schools at Oxford for passmen. If questions like these tend to raise the standard of historical teaching and reading perhaps some benefit may arise.

I am, Sir, &c.,

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—It would seem as if the University authorities are bent on reducing as far as possible the number of candidates for the Senior and Junior examinations, judging from their method of procedure. Many well-grounded complaints were made about the recent "preliminary," and the History paper of yesterday shows a lack of wisdom to which our examiners ought to be superior. The subjects Literature and History are essential to a pass (we will not presume to criticise the wisdom thereof), and therefore teachers and pupils strain their utmost to excel in the subjects, because the most brilliant passers in Greek, Latin, and mathematics count for nothing without it. A disproportionate amount of schooltime is already devoted to it, and if the standard is to be raised year by year, as of late, it will be a great detriment to our schools. This year the examiners not only set lengthy papers in Scott's "Lady of the Lake" and "Burke's Speeches," but thirty-five questions on "History of the American War," traversing not only the regions of the works specified, but ranging into the "Encyclopædia Britannica," a book by no means adapted for school use. We venture to say that our legislators, with access to libraries and their judgment of mature years, would have had enough to do to tackle the paper. What then are we to expect of scholars fifteen to eighteen years of age? Not wise opinions and reasons, for they are not old enough to have that experience that forms them. The result will probably be that teachers will, to secure passes, collect information from various sources, force them by means of notes, and cram on their pupils, who will quote them glibly enough at their examinations because they have learned them by heart, but will comprehend but little of their meaning and lower their own sense of perception by using secondhand methods. Strange to say a credit in English does not assist a pupil as a credit in any other subject would do in obtaining a first-class pass. We trust that instructors of youth will look into this matter, for our University, maintained at an enormous cost in our young colony, ought to be the wise ally of true education, and at present its assistance is by no means so valuable as it might be.

I am, Sir, &c.,

SPEJ.

Advertiser 29 November 1889.

THE SENIOR PUBLIC EXAMINATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—The questions on "The war of American independence" presented to the candidates at this year's senior public examination form a strange contrast to the excellent history series which Mr. Blackmore prepared last year. The questions last November might be taken for a model, but this time the paper was an impossible one. In Part I. of the paper candidates had to answer six out of eight questions, and in Part II. two out of five, and to do the whole eight in two hours. Please remember that instead of there being only 13 questions in all to choose from there are in all 35, several of the "questions" being split up into series, and that many of those who were expected to answer them are youths of 16, 17, or 18 years of age; and now listen to a few of the questions:—"Is there reason to believe that the abandonment of North America by France was the result of profound policy?" "Give a general outline of the political and territorial condition of the European States in 1775;" "Give an account of the campaign of 1777;" "What were the English and colonial theories of colonial rights, temp. 1763?" "Compare them with the established relations between the Crown and Parliament and the Australian colonies?" (These last two one "question.") "Give some of the main principles of the American constitution, and prove that Congress is not, like the Imperial Parliament, a sovereign Legislature?" "Show that, if the Crown and Ministers had realised in 1763 that England and its trans-Atlantic possessions constituted an empire and not a nation, the whole course of policy would have been the reverse of that pursued, and consequently the position of America might have been that of Australia at the present day?" These are a few out of the 35 questions, of which over 20 had to be answered in two hours. Why, I do not believe there is a single man in the colony who could do the paper satisfactorily in six hours, giving him the whole Parliamentary library as text books. It is all very well talking about ascertaining the "real knowledge" of candidates, but the latter have to get up a good many other subjects and cannot spend three or six months in doing nothing else but acquiring information in order to answer such a paper as this. Besides, the knowledge implied by the questions is unnecessary to 99 out of every 100 candidates, who would be much better off in every way if they did not have to cram themselves full of constitution.—I am, &c.,

A PARENT.

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ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

HIGHER PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS.

The following candidates have passed in the higher public examinations. An asterisk (*) denotes that the candidate passed with honors:—

PURE MATHEMATICS

Part I. — E. H. Haslam, R. H. Heffer, W. S. H. Heynemann, C. J. Jenner, J. Kolloche, F. J. W. Richardson. Part II.— R. F. Griffiths*, W. E. Gallagher, R. H. Heffer, T. A. LeMessurier, W. Treleaven.

PHYSICS.

Part I.—J. D. Iliffe*, C. E. T. Hamence, R. H. Heffer, W. S. H. Heynemann, J. Kolloche, W. A. Moore, F. J. W. Richardson, Part II.—W. Treleaven.

APPLIED MATHEMATICS.

G. S. Berriman, J. Dalby, R. H. Heffer, W. Treleaven.

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

T. A. LeMessurier, M. H. Lloyd, J. B. Pitcher, R. H. Palleine, W. T. Rowe, E. P. Sells, R. Sutton, A. L. Tilley, E. F. S. Tuck, A. Wyllie*.

ELEMENTARY BIOLOGY.

J. D. Iliffe, M. H. Lloyd, T. McInerney, R. H. Palleine, A. Wyllie.

GEOLOGY.

T. A. LeMessurier*, W. Howard, T. McInerney, B. S. Roach, A. E. Simpson, R. Sutton.