

Register December 23 1886

SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.

[Masters' and Examiners' Reports, Prize-lists, and other formal matter included in the subjoined notices are charged for as advertisements.]

ADVANCED SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

The annual speech-day and breaking-up in connection with the Advanced School for Girls was celebrated at the Y.M.C.A. Hall, Gawler-place, on Wednesday, December 22. There was a large attendance of the parents and friends of the scholars, and the Minister of Education (Hon. Dr. Cockburn) presided, Mr. J. A. Hartley, B.A., B.Sc., also being present. After an overture by one of the young ladies,

The CHAIRMAN said he was very glad to see such a good attendance at such an inconvenient hour, because it showed the deep hold the Advanced School for girls had on the affections of the people. The attendance contained the best possible refutation to those who would endeavour to abolish the Advanced School in one act. (Applause.) He might say at once that the Government prized too highly anything connected with the higher education of women to allow such a step to be accomplished. (Applause.) He believed no Government would hold office in South Australia that would permit such a thing. (Hear, hear.) He could hardly say why there should be any ill-will against the Advanced School for Girls. It was a most unassuming institution. A stranger in Adelaide might walk up and down Franklin-street looking for the school and not be able to find it. As the exterior was unassuming so in the school were the classes conducted without any desire for display or any striving after effect. Although the Advanced School for Girls was conducted so quietly the public were at liberty at any time to know what went on within its walls, and once a year—an occasion such as that—the school invited the fullest enquiry and stood open for public criticism. (Applause.) Those who in the past had had any knowledge of the school would not be surprised to hear that in the past year it had sustained its reputation. The pupils of the school had done credit to themselves, credit to their teachers, and credit to their school. In fact they had done more than that; they might be said to have stood forth as the champions of their sex. (Applause.) As witness to that he asked any one to look at the results of the University Examinations—the matriculation and junior—the latter especially, as had been truly said by one of the daily papers, “the junior examination this year was a field-day for the girls.” (Applause.) In the matriculation examination the second place of honour fell to a lady, and although that lady was not connected with the Advanced School he was sure that the young ladies of the school, and all the competitors in the examinations would tender to Miss Mary Fowler their warmest congratulations as a member of the sex. While the Advanced School for Girls did not secure the highest place, it had the honour of placing two in the first class, one in the second class, and two in the third. The position occupied by the school in the

matriculation examination was exceedingly creditable to the girls and the sex. In the junior examination they had carried all before them, and unless the boys in the secondary schools were very careful they would find their laurels taken from them and placed on fairer brows. In the first class at the junior examination nine were pupils of the school, and the first, second, and third places were also secured by pupils of the school. Altogether the school had secured in the junior examination passes amounting to 60 per cent., while the boys, who used to be looked upon as superior intellectually, had only 45 per cent. of passes. At a time like the present, when the position of women, socially and politically, was so much the object of discussion, facts like these were worth much more than passing interest. They proved conclusively, in his opinion, that with equal advantages woman was at least not inferior to man even in intellectual power. It had long been acknowledged that women had their own special excellencies, but as a rule man had arrogated to himself a superior position intellectually. Now, that position stood tottering. Women had not only proved superior to man in many respects, but threatened to prove intellectually superior. On the platform that man had chosen for himself they were showing that they were quite equal to him. The fact that in the past men had had their own way, and had been able to hold women in subjection was no proof of the inferiority of the latter sex. No doubt many of them were aware that it was a law of nature that the strongest and most enduring forces were the most gentle in their action. Let any one look at the mechanical force and its wonderful power, yet it was nothing compared with the wonderful force of electricity. As many of the pupils knew, there was a difference in electricity, of which there were two kinds. The one noisy and boisterous, the other exceedingly quiet and gentle. There was static and dynamic. Static electricity never conducted any operation without a great deal of noise, but dynamic quietly exercised its force without any noise whatever. Great as was the power of the static it was nothing as compared with the voltaic force which sent

those messages round the world. Then there was another force—gravitation—the strongest and most enduring in nature, yet the most gentle. He thought he had said enough on that point to show that the strongest and most enduring forces in nature were those which were most gentle in their operations. That might lead them to believe that gentle woman would in time prove herself quite equal to man, (despite the latter's superior physical force, and meet him on equal terms so far as intellect was concerned, he did not want it to be understood for one moment that he thought examinations and intellectual attainments the *ne plus ultra*, the end of all things. They were merely a means to an end, a shibboleth or sort of password, which it was necessary for any one to have who was going to take an active part in the world, as some would, all being unable to devote themselves to the duties of home life. There were many sources of employment which hitherto had only been open to men that women were proving themselves quite fitted for, and the result of the examination so far as the Advanced School for Girls was concerned showed the public that in intellectual power man was in no way superior to woman. He was exceedingly pleased at the result of the examinations, and congratulated Miss George and her assistants on the result. (Cheers.)

A glee by the pupils, "Men of Harlech," was rendered with pleasing precision.

Mr. HARTLEY read the Head Mistress's report as follows:—

This is the first occasion on which it has been my duty to present a report of this school, and I do so now with pleasure and thankfulness that the year, begun with much anxiety, has passed so pleasantly and concluded so well. During the year the school has been fairly prosperous. Our numbers are not quite as high as they were last Christmas, yet during the second and third quarters of the year they were higher than ever before. This quarter they are somewhat lower. We have 121 pupils on the roll, with an average attendance of 110.3 for the three months. The work of the school has been much the same as in former years, except that we have introduced Latin and mathematics into the fourth class, these subjects having been previously taught only in the fifth. At Easter the school suffered a loss through the resignation of Miss Thornber, who had been connected with it for so long, but her place has been ably filled by Miss Jacob, so that we were able to send up 24 girls for the junior examination, 16 of whom belonged to the upper fourth class and eight to the lower fourth, Miss Maughan's class. Twenty of these passed—six in the first class, five in the second, and nine in the third. In the matriculation also we obtained five passes, two of these being in the first class. One candidate was unsuccessful. I have much pleasure in recording these results, particularly as we compete this time rather more on common ground with the boys; for though we have not added Greek to our curriculum, yet our two first-class matric. girls passed in Latin, and the nine of our girls who took the highest places in the junior all passed in mathematics. It may excite some remark that the number of prizes is comparatively small; it must be remembered, however, that each prize represents a percentage of 80 in the upper and 75 in the lower classes. This will show that each prize represents good hard work on the part of the successful competitor. The enlarged premises have proved very convenient and given us much more space. In conclusion, I wish to thank all the teachers for their hearty co-operation, to which much of the year's success is due, and to wish them and the pupils a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

An excellent programme, including English, German, and French songs, a violin solo by a pupil, and pianoforte solos were rendered in a manner reflecting the utmost credit on the school.

Mr. HARTLEY, the Inspector - General of Schools, then addressed those present. He attributed the marked success of the girls to their having more patience as a rule than boys and the superior excellence of the teaching. He did not favour the teaching of Greek to girls of tender years, and contended that the preparation of the girls to undertake the duties of home life and assist other women as they could in the world was of more consequence than passing University examinations. (Hear, hear.) He remarked that at the examination for bursaries the boys always beat the girls, and said some alteration should be made in the system of prizes for the girls. Any pupils having two school certificates would be given a prize. After another selection by the pupils the proceedings terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.