

COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.—Above all things, let my imaginary pupil have preserved the freshness and vigor of youth in his mind as well as his body. The educational abomination of desolation of the present day is the stimulation of young people to work at high pressure by incessant competitive examinations. Some wise man (who probably was not an early riser) has said of early risers in general that they are conceited all the forenoon and stupid all the afternoon. Now, whether this is true of early risers, in the common acceptation of the word, or not, I will not pretend to say; but it is too often true of the unhappy children who are forced to rise too early in their classes. They are conceited all the forenoon of life, and stupid all <sup>1</sup>ts afternoon. The vigor and freshness, which should have been stored up for the purposes of the hard struggle for existence in practical life, have been washed out of them by precocious mental debauchery—by book-gluttony and lesson-bibbing. Their faculties are worn out by the strain put upon their callow brains, and they are demoralized by worthless childish triumphs before the real work of life begins. I have no compassion for sloth, but youth has more need for intellectual rest than age; and the cheerfulness, the tenacity of purpose, the power of work which make many a successful man what he is, must often be placed to the credit, not of his hours of industry, but to that of his hours of idleness, in boyhood. Even the hardest worker of us all, if he has to deal with anything above mere details, will do well, now and again, to let his brain lie fallow for a space. The next crop of thought will certainly be all the fuller in the ear and the weeds fewer.—*Prof Huxley.*

ERYSIPELAS CAUSED BY SEWER-GAS.—Years ago, the idea that facial erysipelas, or indeed that any variety of this dire disease, could be originated by the entrance of sewer-gas into houses, hospitals, or institutions, would have been condemned as too absurd for credence. Bitter experience, extending over a number of years, backed by the researches of Mr. Pridgin Teale and others, has, however, finally settled the question in dispute. There is now no more doubt that erysipelas is originated by sewer-gas than that typhoid fever is due more often than not to impure water. For instance, at the Old Infirmary, Lincoln, which was situated on a hill above the city, erysipelas and sewer-gas were constantly present in the wards. We remember seeing twelve or fifteen cases there some twelve years ago. At that time the hospital drains communicated with the town sewers; and as neither were ventilated or disconnected, the hospital had the benefit of the full pressure of the sewer-gas of Lincoln, because the hospital lavatories and closets occupied the highest points to which any of the sewer connections extended. At Manchester, as we showed some months ago, sewer-gas had demoralised the health of the staff, and had so increased the amount of erysipelas and pyæmia that the surgeons were afraid to perform even the smallest operation. Recently the authorities of a large London hospital proceeded to ventilate the whole of the drains and sewers in connection with their