

this, are looked upon as of the least possible importance, since they are of no practical value. The system of teaching technically known as "cramming" is severely and almost universally condemned, but what is the sense of condemning a thing on the one hand, and encouraging it on the other? To reward a school according to the number of pupils it can "cram" through the intermediate examination, and condemn it for turning its attention to the process by which this can be most successfully accomplished, is like training a retriever to bring game to you and then scolding him because he brings it. Suppose prizes were offered at Lloyd's to the vessels which carried the greatest number of passengers across the Atlantic in the shortest time, one would read with surprise of captains and engineers being reprimanded for taking a large number of passengers on board and running under a high pressure of steam. There might be officers who valued the lives and comfort of their passengers more highly than the inducements held out in the foolish and criminal arrangement, but no thanks to the arrangement. And if, in the competition which arose among vessels, and under the influence of placarded results of the numbers landed in Liverpool or New York every half-year by each vessel, owners learned to employ captains who were *successful*, only one result could be looked for. So long as the system continued in force, seafaring men would be compelled to accept the situation, no matter how much against their judgment, or else abandon their occupation.

One may hazard the statement that the present system is contrary to the judgment of many of the best teachers and of those who stand highest even under its requirements. They do what they can for their pupils, knowing all the time that they are compell-

ed to disregard their best interests. They know that the blade, carefully ground, will carry its fine edge through the four years of a University course, and in the longer conflict of life, far better than the one which has been too quickly reduced to a temporary sharpness, with the loss of temper and the presence of clumsy proportions which will cause the waste of many an hour of golden opportunity. But the cry is, "How many blades can you turn out in six months that can cut a hair?" The answer is, "As many as any other factory." And the steam is turned on, the grindstone strikes fire from the untoward steel, a turn or two on the emery wheel of examination papers, a touch on the oil-stone, and, Presto! the thing is done. No matter how many have been ruined in the process, or how the sinews of the workman who must use the tool may be strained, payment is according to the number that can shear through the Intermediate, and proportional honour to the school follows.

The effect upon the profession of teaching is not good; it is *degrading*. I use the word *technically*, although it would scarcely be wrong to use it in its ordinary moral meaning. Men who are capable of holding the position of teachers in our Collegiate Institutes and High Schools are worthy of being entrusted with the performance of their work. Thoroughly educated, many of them men who have chosen teaching as a life profession, men who have become enthusiastic in the pursuit of their departments of science or literature, men who could hold corresponding positions with honour in Rugby or Harrow. Let us fancy Dr. Arnold reduced to the necessity of holding his position on such grounds, or even of having his work estimated according to such a standard, would the efficiency of the institution be thereby advanced? There is something unpleasant in the thought of a