

either perform operations in these or he cannot, and his power to do so is ascertainable by a simple test. If he can perform them well he has acquired accomplishments of permanent value. He may have been unskilfully taught, but he cannot have been "crammed." If, however, a scholar is permitted to attempt in two months, work which ought to occupy a year, it is the ten months' slackness, and not the two months' exceptional effort which constitutes the evil. Besides, it is good for us all through life to be able to put special energy into our work, on emergency. We are required to do it in after life when we willingly "scorn delights, and live laborious days," for the achievement of one object of strong desire, or the solution of one practical problem. Nature is very kind to young people, and restores their energies to their proper balance very soon; and she will do it quite as readily with the intellectual as with the physical powers. For one authentic case of permanent injury to the health of a schoolboy or girl from too much mental exercise, there are twenty examples of scholars who suffer from idleness or inaction.

Granted that special pressure of this kind is an evil, it can easily be avoided by taking these two or three precautions:

1. Do not prepare your pupils for more than one external examination.

2. Look the requirements well in the face a good year before-hand, and arrange your work so that a small but distinct portion of it may be prepared every day. Refuse to allow any pupil to present himself unless he has had time and opportunity to do his work well.

3. Do not let any part of the preparation be considered exceptional, but incorporate the whole of it as far as possible into the programme of your school.

4. Do not cut up the organization

of the school, and waste your own teaching power by letting the pupils choose their own alternatives. Select for them such subjects as, having regard to your own tastes and to the qualifications of your teaching staff, you feel to be most appropriate.

5. It is a good plan to hold a fortnightly or monthly examination in writing, extending over the principal subjects of study, and conducted under the same conditions as are observed in public examinations. Besides this, it is well to give much more frequently a single question in each subject, to be answered fully in writing. Some of these answers should be read aloud, defects pointed out, and a model answer given before the class.

These private examinations afford an excellent training in the discipline of self-possession and self-mastery. They habituate the scholars to that fluency and nervousness caused by the silence, the printed paper, the isolation, the utter impossibility of getting a friendly hint, which are liable to prevent them from doing themselves justice in a public examination.

For school purposes it is well often to extend the time for examination, and to allow the use of books. Some of the best efforts in after life are made under these conditions, and the art of using authorities is one which every school ought to teach. This form of exercise is valuable where you do not want to test memory, but the power of using all the resources at one's disposal. So a teacher may wisely say now and then, "Here is a question which wants a little thinking, I will give you two days to answer it, and you may get the answer how and where you like."

If you have to examine a number of persons, not your own pupils, it is always well to give more questions than can be answered, and to require the student to choose a limited num-