

being, in fact, a craze for making the school a substitute for apprenticeship. But it cannot be done. *Fit faber fabricando.* It is in business that business must be learned. The plain rudiments of an English education must of course be taught, and taught well. After that the best subjects for instruction are such as will sharpen the wits. And I know nothing so suitable for this as the classics and mathematics. In unravelling a complicated sentence of a language so different in structure from his own, a boy's mind acquires flexibility and resource, and an insight into the intricacies of speed—a grasp of the import of expression, the art, in fact, of listening—the value of which will be apparent when we bear in mind that the accurate apprehension, and correct interpretation of men's language is half the business of life. And in the study of mathematics one must reason, as well as remember. There is room, no doubt, in the teaching of classics for cram. But I do not regard this as an unmitigated evil. Some reading in this much decried accomplishment is useful enough. Ability to acquire information rapidly, arrange it methodically, remember it distinctly, and apply it promptly is never thrown away. A man wants it all his life. But all cram makes Jack a dull boy. Now the learning of the classics cannot be all cram. The best part of it is not cram at all. Put a boy down with nothing but a pen and ink and a blank sheet of paper, and require him to turn a piece of English into Latin: the result will show—not the extent to which he has been crammed—but whether or no, and in what degree, his mind has been so exercised as to master the language. And so with mathematics, one who attempts to cram them will come to grief; but one who can accurately demonstrate the propositions of the first four books of Euclid can follow with precision a chain of reasoning. If he can solve some problems and deductions, he can construct reasonings for himself. And (which is the great thing in learning to reason—a thing impossible in matter about which there can be two opinions) when he is wrong, he can be made to see that he is wrong. And if he can follow the reasonings of the fifth and sixth books, why he will tread with surer steps in those more difficult and thorny paths of argument relating to the affairs of life in which men blunder so commonly and so complacently, and always think that they are right. A boy, I say, who has been taught in that way has made better preparation for success in life than one who has wasted his opportunities in the premature acquisition of a wrong way of book-keeping, and a crude priggishness about the ways of business which, when he comes to air it among men of