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RECENT EDUCATIONAL SPEECHES IN ENGLAND.

I. RIGHT HON. LORD PALMERSTON.

At a recent distribution to the successful candidates of the Oxford Middle-class Examination Certificates, at Southampton, Lord Palmerston remarked as follows: "There is nothing, perhaps, more remarkable in the progress of the country than the advance which of late years has been made in the diffusion and in the quality of education. The advance which England has made in population, in wealth, in everything that constitutes in common opinion the greatness of a country, is well known and most extraordinary. But we should, indeed, have been wanting in our duties as a nation if we had not accompanied that progress in wealth and population by a corresponding progress in the development of the intellectual faculties of the people. (Cheers.) The advancement of education has for many years past been an object of the most earnest solicitude to almost all the public men who have risen to eminence in this country. We are glad to see that the Universities have started forth in that honourable career; and it is peculiarly gratifying to me, a member of the University of Cambridge, to be permitted to distribute certificates arising out of examinations by the sister University of Oxford. (Cheers.) There was a time, now long gone by, when envious critics, who wanted to run down the Universities of the land, said they might be likened to hulks moored in a rapid current, where they served only to mark the rapidity of the stream. That has long since ceased to be a true representation of our Universities. They have

improved the course, the object, and the direction of their studies, and they may now fearlessly vie with the academical institutions of any country in the world. (Cheers.)

COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS AND CRAMMING.

Certain objections have been made to the system of competitive examinations. Some people say it leads to cramming. It often happens that when mankind seize upon a word they imagine that word to be an argument, and go about repeating it, thinking they have arrived at some great and irresistible conclusion. So, when they pronounce the word "cramming," they think they have utterly discredited the system to which that word is by them applied. Some people seem to imagine that the human mind is like a bottle, and that when you have filled it with anything you pour it out again and it becomes as empty as it was before. That is not the nature of the human mind. The boy who has been crammed, to use the popular word, has, in point of fact, learned a great deal, and that learning has accomplished two objects. In the first place the boy has exercised the faculties of his mind in being crammed, and in the next place there remains in his mind a great portion of the knowledge so acquired, and which probably forms the basis of future attainment in different branches of education. (Hear.) Let nobody, therefore, run away with the notion that competitive examinations are not of great and infinite value, because there are men who instruct the candidates in those branches of knowledge respecting which the examinations have to take place. Depend upon it that the boy who is crammed, if he is crammed successfully, not only may succeed in the examination for which he is preparing, but is from that time forward more intellectual, better informed, and more disposed to push further the knowledge which by that cramming he has acquired. (Cheers.) It is also said that you are teaching young men a great variety of things which will be of no use to them in the career which they are destined to pursue, and that you are pandering to their vanity by making them believe they are wiser than they really are. These objections, also, are in my opinion utterly futile. As to vanity and conceit, those are most vain and conceited who know the least. (Hear, hear.) The more a man knows, the more he acquires a conviction of the extent of that which he does not know. (Hear, hear.) A man ought to know a great deal to acquire a knowledge of the immensity of his ignorance. (Cheers.) There was a very sharp, shrewd gentleman, well-known in former times, named Mr. Harvey Coombe. He was conversing one day with a friend, of whose attainments he had