

subjects of study. It is not a matter of indifference whether we shall occupy ourselves during the coming winter with music or painting, with French or Italian, with history or with geology, with Shakespeare or the Bible. There ought to be as deep a sense of responsibility in arranging one's plans of winter study as in deciding upon any other personal duty; and the subjects which we ought to select are those which are most necessary in the legitimate advancement of our own culture, and in fitting us for more efficient service in our chosen walk of life. Is a knowledge of architecture our most pressing present need? Then let us study architecture, even if we would prefer to spend our time with Greek or German. And the same principle of wise selection ought to run through our choice of books for the hours which are given up to relaxation rather than to study. If we *must* read novels, why spend time over the interminable trash of the inferior novels when we might be stirred to better thoughts and better deeds by the earnest fiction, of which there is no lack in our English literature at least?

SIR GEORGE YOUNG (who was in the chair), in the course of his remarks, said that the work which the College of Preceptors was doing could not but be well known to those who, like himself, were connected with education. The system which they administered had a great future before it, and was accomplishing a great work throughout the country. He knew well that this society was the pioneer of middle class examinations, and that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge took up this work, and had since considerably extended it, and that the work of the society had grown side by side with theirs, but in point of fact very considerably more important. It could not be too often

repeated that examination was the handmaid of teaching, and not *vice versa*, and he believed that the work which they did was one of examining schools regulated and controlled by those who were schoolmasters. He was very far from depreciating the labours of Universities in regard to middle class education, but he should be sorry to see a state of things in which the College of Preceptors did not exist, and the middle class examinations of the country carried on entirely by the Universities. The time had come when the scattered fragments of the University should be brought together, and be given a common standing ground, and for that purpose the convocation of the London University should be reformed, and representatives of the different bodies, such as King's College and University College, should be admitted to its councils. He had every hope of this soon being fulfilled, and looked forward to the time when London should be raised to the educational level of Oxford and Cambridge. Sir George Young then presented the prizes, and a large number of certificates was also distributed.

A SCHOOL OF FISH.—Most young readers of the *Fountain* have heard of, or read about, schools of herring, but I dare say few of them have seen such a school. At Nanaimo, British Columbia, while our steamer, the *Idaho*, was "taking coal," I first saw a school of herring. Everyone has seen these little fish, dried and smoked, packed in boxes at the grocers. Millions were visible just beneath the surface of the water in the small bay at Nanaimo, and packed seemingly as closely as you have seen them in the boxes. Little Indian girls in canoes were paddling over the "school" and catching fish—not with hooks, nor yet with nets, but with poles about six feet in length, in which nails are inserted