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Character.

THE Young Man, in his folly, was prone to talk about psychometry, and soul measurement, and how to size up character at first sight—as young men will. But now he is not so stiff-necked and loose tongued about it. And this is why: The Young Man, who worked for a Great Newspaper, was sent out to write up a Railway Strike. And the Young Man, with a cigar and a note-book, went among the Strikers, and learned how they, in their destitution, were eating the very Dust of the Earth. And then, for the sake of the Other Side, the Young Man ventured before the General Manager of that Railroad—gaunt, taciturn, hawk-eyed, and square-jawed. The very words of him were razor-edged. And the Young Man knew why the strike didn't end. And he remembered the hollow-cheeked women and the starving children just beyond the forest of idle semaphores and telegraph poles before the Manager's window, and he said to himself: "This hawk-eyed, square-jawed Thing is not a Man, but a Lower Animal, and Loathsome, and his soul is rotten through and through, and, before God, I hate him." And the Young Man went among the Strikers again, to count the day's deaths. And the next day being God's day (and the wires being cut) the Young Man left the hideous Place of Blackened Chimneys, and wandered through the open country, and found himself in a Great Cemetery. And he idled about the white grave-stones and the grass-covered mounds. But suddenly he came upon a Man, kneeling down over a little child's grave, planting, with great care and tenderness, seven little geraniums. And the Man looked up; and it was the Thing with the hawk-eyes and square-jaw. And the Young Man sat down on the grass and thought it over for a long time. And now he is not so stiff-necked. I know, because I was the Young Man.

ARTHUR J. STRINGER.

On University Examinations

Periodically there arises in every Anglo-Saxon community, among other Protestant booms, a boom of protests against school and college examinations. One such boom appears to be active just now.

The protests are based on the length of examinations and the consequent strain upon health; or upon the cramming to which examinations minister; or, as in our own case, upon the havoc which examinations play with the best month of the year; or, on the importance which they lend to the mere accidents of education; a chance sickness in May—and University statistics will prove that May is the sickliest month of the year in Toronto—injures the prospects of a life-time; or, if loftier ground be taken on the introduction of the principle of competition—vicious even in trade—into the serener life of thought.

In fact the only point of view from which protests against examinations are not clamorous seems to be the point of view of the examiners. And yet if all the inevitable shortcomings of sublunary education are to be discussed, the examiners too have a case.

To spend one's May, especially when one is growing older, and watching therefore with ever greater apprecia-

tion the procession of the seasons, and above all the incoming of the pomp of summer, to spend one's May in the reading of examination papers in indeed a hard lot. To be chained to one's desk just when nature is returning to her play, for the reading of some hundreds of papers, all answering the same questions and answering them not; all or nearly all fulfilled of vain verbiage and pretentious or platitudinarian padding; to realize afresh each May that the undergraduate still thinks, and will always think, that he will be heard for his much writing, that he is still convinced that in the multitude of pages there is safety, that he has still faith in the old ruse of Shilleto, and when asked for the binomial theorem, is still confident to answer that any adequate account of the binomial theorem must be prefaced by a brief description (in six pages) of the common pump; to endure all this when the first amusement of it has worn off is to be pierced with as many arrows as St. Sebastian; great weariness it is, and some envy too of Oxford and Cambridge, where the weary are solaced with four hundred dollars over and above our common solace of a good conscience. However this is the examiner's, not the public's point of view; and I do not attach much importance to it; indeed I only refer to it because it is less stale and tedious than the ordinary points of view.

To return to these, and first to clear the ground of protests merely metaphysical, some persons, as I have said, object to examinations because they are more or less competitive. What can be said of this objection except