

into a like flame; but others were not even roused from their lethargy. To understand this subject one would need to look beyond the present—to go back possibly a hundred years and make enquiries as to ancestry. Some are born inflammable material, and some are very green wood indeed. But when we consider how few students are enthusiastic in their work it may be well to look more carefully into the subject.

It is not given to all teachers to be a consuming fire, but even if they were they would, as in the case of Bovell, fail to rouse many. The spoiling process often begins with the elementary school. One gets the idea that he does not study a subject for the sake of it, but to pass examinations, "be promoted," prepare to take a place, or to go on to the University to carry on a like preparation for promotion, entering a profession or in some manner advancing himself in a way to end chiefly in material good.

So Bovell's students could not understand why they should be mightily interested in wonderful theories of life and life processes when the lecturer was not to have any opportunity to examine them, and some one else would seek to gather where Bovell had strayed. Was not passing the examination and getting into "the finals" the great object—those finals which were realities, because they led to bread and butter.

I must testify that so far as my observation went, very few of the students that sat on the rude benches of the old Toronto school had any great love for what they studied, regarded as an unfolding of nature's laws, hence Bovell might almost as well have been talking to the seats themselves in the case of a very large sprinkling, to say the very least. A system that gives a teacher no part whatever in the examination of his students has serious drawbacks.

The idea that the professor is first and last an instructor—an advanced instructor, and nothing more—still lingers, and does much harm. Hence one finds to the present day, in highly respectable colleges, the professor day after day dictating "notes" or "lecturing" in a manner which gives the students the idea that all he says is to be taken down, the nearer verbatim the better. Such teaching never inspired a single man, and it is impossible in the nature of the case that it should. For what purpose are books if a professor is to be no more than a speaking volume? How is it possible for any man by such a method to show that he is a man and not a mere talking machine? One of the bitterest recollections of a part of my college life (not at Toronto) is that of having been obliged to go through the slavery of writing daily against time, as if I were engaged in stenographic competition—while I was all the while wasting my energies in penning sentences not as valuable as those in many accessible text-books.

In not a few instances it would be a very good thing if the students could be prepared for the ripened professor by men whose educational value is much less, but who are quite able to give elementary or preliminary instruction or to "grind" on a certain portion of a good text-book. This would be economical from every point of view, and there would then be a far better chance for the really superior man to do the higher work, as professor, of guiding, inspiring, broadening, and in other ways developing the plastic individualities before him into higher types of men. In college how often is it that the letter killeth while the spirit gets no chance to quicken?

No doubt some will believe that this is beautiful ideal-

ism, but impracticable as things are constituted in this world. Yes—and just as long as people continue to believe this and to so express themselves, so long will it remain thus. I would remind those who speak in this manner that there is a faith that moves mountains, and until we get more teachers of the stamp of Bovell we must expect to turn out very few high-class men from our colleges. Indeed the same may be said of our schools. Of all our teachers, how few do we remember with pleasure or respect—how few do we remember with any distinctness at all! They may have instructed us fairly, but they inspired us not at all. If I could, I would immortalize the names of three of my school teachers: Arnoldus Miller, William Carlyle and John Buchan. Each was much more than an instructor—he was a man. But I am reminded that the limitations of space set me have been reached or exceeded.

One cannot exhaust a subject like this, but merely give utterance to a few thoughts that may find a response with some readers. In closing, I would emphasize the man rather than the instructor. It is the man that inspires. He inflames others into a love of himself and what he pursues; and better that one Crozier or one Osler be quickened than that ninety and nine human units be prepared to pass some examination. Better still if every one of this ninety and nine could be roused to be a better man than he otherwise would have been. Inspiration is inflammation.

#### THE UNDERGRADUATES' UNION.

What is the future of the Undergraduates' Union? This is a question frequently asked by many who are or have been closely associated with the Union. It may be coupled with another which is no doubt often asked by those who have expended time or money in the original undertaking, many of whom have since left the University. What is the work which the Union is doing now after an existence of three years? Is it the success that was hoped for or is it the failure that was feared?

The answer given by those who see every day the usefulness and the necessity of such an institution will probably be different from that by those who know the difficulties of keeping a club always alive and paying its way. The Union never did, and under present conditions perhaps never will, pay its way. During the three years since its institution it has been supported by drawing for its expenses upon subscriptions that were given for furnishing and improvements, and it is now for the first time that the problem is arising of how to make it a success when it is resting solely upon its own resources.

In its first years the membership fee was low and the returns was found to be insufficient; for the present year an attempt was made to remedy this by raising the fee, and what is the result? The appeal to the faculties outside of University College has not met with the response that was expected; even in University College itself the membership is comparatively low and fully one-half of the service rendered by the Union is to non-members.

This is not intended to convey the impression that the use of the house is jealously guarded by the members; on the contrary, the members are not only willing but anxious that the Union should be at the service of every student, whether he is a member or not. It is not expected that a man should be required to pay a