

clever devices become more complicate and laborious than the subject itself which is taught by them. I give one example, and that only, of what I mean. There is a book recently published, called a Latin Grammar, in which the Latin language is tried to be taught for I presume teaching is the aim of the composer—by rules which are, to my mind, much harder to learn than the language. To make these rules facile, they are illustrated by doggerel verses so atrociously bad that they make the flesh creep to listen to them. They would have knocked all the verse out of Shakespeare himself had he been tortured with them. The object, I am told, is "short-cut." To enable many facts to be taught in a short time, it is requisite to artificialise the mind with foreign matters, in order to make it take in more; therefore so much brick rubbish is used on which to lay an unsound foundation for an edifice that is not intended to stand beyond the majority of its owner, but which is fully expected then to fall to the ground or to remain a useless ruin. So the minds of grown-up men are filled with the ruined edifices of learning, shapeless, empty and valueless.

To the errors which are thus cultivated by the crush of education in early life, and which breed a dislike for education in after-life, there is added, in our modern systems, another error that of making learning, which should be as quiet as a mill stream, competitively furious. I confess I stand daily appalled at the injury to mental and physical life which I see being penetrated in this way under the name of learning. Thirty years ago matters were getting bad, now they are getting hopeless. At that time one sex, at all events, was safe from the insanity. Women were saved from competitive mental strain, so that the progenies that were to come and replenish the earth were born with promise of safety from mental degeneration, on the maternal side at least. Now, however, women are racing with men, in strife to find out who shall become mentally enfeebled and crippled first. The picture looks terrible indeed.

The picture is terrible, and for the future would be positively calamitous, but for one gleam of hope which, as I will show by-and-by, is cast over it. At this time we look fairly and honestly round to find a great many men still playing an active part in the affairs of this world, writing useful and amusing books, conducting great organs of public opinion, making discoveries in science of the most extraordinary kind, composing songs, and, in a word, keeping alight the intellectual fire. Who are these men? Read their lives, and you will find that they are, I had almost said without an exception, men who in their early career have been under no competitive pressure, free men, whose brains at the period of maturity are not filled with ruined edifices or whitened sepulchres holding dead men's bones. This, you will say, is satisfactory so far. It is. But then comes the solemn question:—Who are to follow these? We look at the past history of men, and see that heretofore the men have always come. We look at the present, and are obliged to say: Yes, but in the future where shall they come from? The dearth has commenced in earnest, even at this time. How shall it be removed?

In the upper and middle classes the dearth cannot but remain while the current method of encouraging mental death by competitive strife is the fashionable proceeding. War-cries in learning, as in every other effort, have but one end—desolation, desolation! I am going to say a bold saying—bold because it is based on natural fact. I can find numbers of men who, having been born with good natural parts, have been turned into practical imbeciles by severe competitive strain; but I challenge the production of even one man of pre-eminent and advanced power who has been brought out in complete and sustained and acknowledged mastery of intellect by the competitive plan. "Glamis has murdered sleep"—competition has murdered mind. There is one university which more than all others is the offender, the exemplar in this regard. It is not a teacher; it is a destroyer of teaching. I do not call in question its good intentions, but I oppose its pride and declare its blindness; and I want you who are engaged in education to protest against the ruin of your good work which it and all who go with it are inflicting so determinately.

I said I would light up this subject with one gleam of hope for the future. I take that gleam from the Board schools; it is kept in them, and I trust it will always. If the Board schools will only maintain a moderate system of education; if they will simply be content to lay the foundations for the development of such men as Shakespeare, Priestly, Fergusson, John Hunter, James Watt, Humphrey Davy, Michael Faraday, William Cobbett, Turner, Flaxman, Richard Cobden, Charles Dickens, George Stevenson, David Livingstone, and others of such sort, all of whom would almost surely have been men-

tally abolished by the competitive ordeal, they will do a work which will be more than national, a work world-wide and lasting as time.

Haply, too, in the success of their undertaking, the Board schools may, by force of results, bring back to reason the erring crew who would cram all learning into the human mind in the first quarter of its existence, and leave it stranded there. It is a sad look-out for the now governing classes, one million in twenty-four millions, if this lesson be not soon learned. For knowledge alone is power, and knowledge with wisdom combined is victory and governance.

In this suggestion for the future, no thought is conveyed of placing the Board schools in opposition to the higher-class schools and the Universities. The higher-class schools and the Universities of these islands have played, in the past, a part second to none elsewhere. They have had their princes of knowledge, their Newtons, their Halleys, their Hamiltons, their Harveys—their hundreds of great scholars, poets, philosophers—all that is mentally noble, as their own. My argument is, that these great ones were theirs when they were content to cultivate industry, to nurse genius, and even to fan into life what might at first seem feeble and unpromising mental effort;—but that the like of these can no longer be theirs, if they continue to care less for the true culture than for the apparent, and only apparent, results of culture, and if, instead of sustaining the weak, they strive to become powerful by crushing and killing in their early life the strong as well as the weak by the like impatient pressure.

I had intended to touch on education as it should be modified according to seasons of the year, and on one or two other equally important topics, but my time is up, and I therefore content myself with offering, as the essence of my discourse, the following propositions:—

1. To secure health through education, it is requisite that a more systematic and scientific study of the psychology of the subject should be undertaken, and that class studies should be divided in regard to the mental aptitudes of the scholar.

2. Parents should expect teachers to exercise a fair and discriminating judgment as to the particular capacities of children under their care, and should be influenced by such judgment in the direction of educational work. The teacher should become, in short, like a second parent to the scholar.

3. Much greater care should be taken in observing the influence of special physical peculiarities of body and hereditaries on educational progress, while the influence of education on such peculiarities and hereditaries should be carefully learned and determined. By this means two useful purposes would be secured; education would be made to conduce to physical health, and physical health to education.

4. All extreme competitive strains in learning should be discountenanced, as efforts calculated to defeat their own object, and to produce mental as well as physical degeneration.

5. In school-work, the Swiss system of teaching should be more closely followed; that is to say, very quick and precocious children should be directed rather than forced and encouraged, while dull and feeble children should receive the chief attention and care of the teacher.

6. Education should be so carried out as to make the whole of the life of men and women a continued process of learning, varied, at different ages, according to the changing capacities, faculties, and aptitudes for the different subjects included under the head of knowledge useful and universal.

Practical Department.

SUBJECTS FOR THE NON-PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION, 1882.

I. For Second and Third-class Certificates.

INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION.

English Literature.—Cowper's Task, Book III, Goldsmith's Deserted Village, Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley.

Ancient Languages.—(a) *Latin:* The Accidence and the Principal Rules of Syntax and Prosody; Exercises, Caesar, Bellum Britannicum (B. G., Book IV. cc. 20—36; Book V. cc. 8—29); Cicero pro Archia, and Virgil, Æneid, Book II., 1—317; Learning by