

AMONGST THE REVIEWS.



NDER the title of "The Sacrifice of Education to Examination" the *Nineteenth Century* for November contains a contribution which is destined to exercise some influence on the future of education in Great Britain and Ireland.

It is divided into four parts. The first consists of a petition followed by an array of names of personages occupying high social and political places; there are professors, tutors, and fellows of Oxford, Cambridge, London and many other colleges in England and Scotland, members of Parliament, lawyers, doctors, civil servants and men of many grades and positions. Amongst the professors are found the names of Max Müller, Edward Freeman and Frederick Harrison; John Bright, Justin McCarthy, T. P. O'Connor, with others, represent the members of Parliament. The petition is addressed to the Government and the colleges calling their attention to the present state of examinations. Messrs. Freeman, Müller, and Harrison in the three other parts explain their reasons for subscribing to the petition. By competition for scholarships and prizes, they claim education tends to be of the same type while the health and progress of society depend on the continual difference and the novelty of ideas. Examinations are prepared by a methodical cramming; this strengthens the rote faculties to the neglect of the rational faculties, cultivates quick superficiality, and power of cleverly skimming a subject, fixes a belief in artifices and formulated answers. In Oxford and Cambridge young men imagine that all this work has but one object—the examination. No time is allowed to look right or left; all their moments are occupied with preparation for the dread examination. The lazy majority are benefited by the existing state of affairs but the really clever and ambitious boys are systematically deadened. The remedy proposed is to have fewer examinations and to have the teachers examiners. Let excellence in studies be attained by love of them rather than

through the inducements held forth by prizes and scholarship.

In the same review Mr. Gladstone treats the question of "Elizabeth and the Church." His closing words are: "Nothing can be further from the ideal than the English Church has been in its practical development. Perhaps even in its ideal it is assailable enough. . . . That this nation is what it is and this Church what it is may without praise or blame but only in acknowledgement of the fact, be owned due to Queen Elizabeth as much as to any human being that has ever in this island enjoyed or suffered the stern and bracing experience of life." This article deserves an extended criticism. In it we see traces that the cold ritual and doctrines of the English Church do not satisfy the heart and intellect of the great English statesman.

"The Fast Set at Harvard" in the *North American Review* betrays a terrible state of affairs at that seat of learning. Extravagance in expenses, gambling, debaucheries, drunkenness seem to be very prevalent. Poker and betting are universal; while neglect of studies is only one of the lesser evils. We trust that the Faculty of Harvard will make some reforms which seem to be much needed.

Gail Hamilton in the same magazine vindicates the right of Catholics in the United States to protest against the teaching of anything contrary to their religious doctrines. Public schools depend on love and lasting loyalty of all the people and then are violated by teachers who insult the feelings and convictions of their Catholic pupils.

Those who would wish to have a correct idea of the present state of the Irish Land Question should read "the Irish Land Question and Statistics" in the *Contemporary Review* by Archbishop Walsh. Mr. Gladstone, so the genial editor of the London *Star* informs us, was much impressed by it and intends to weigh its contents in his future actions in the House of Commons.

Mr. Radcliffe Cook, M.P., gives a very light and interesting account of oratory in the House of Commons. "The duty of