

physics, of chemistry, and of geology, as he needs, before he commenced his special medical studies. Moreover, he urged that a thorough study of human physiology is in itself an education broader and more comprehensive than much that passes under that name. There is no side of the intellect which it does not call into play, no region of human knowledge into which either its roots or its branches do not extend; like the Atlantic, between the old and the new worlds, its waves wash the two shores of the two worlds of matter and of mind.

"Through its waters as yet unfurrowed by the keel of any Columbus, lies the road, if such there be, from one to the other, far away from that north-west passage of mere speculation in which so many brave souls have been hopelessly frozen up. If a man could live for a thousand years he might do a number of things not practical under present conditions. Methuselah might with much propriety have taken half a century to get his doctor's degree, and might very fairly have been required to pass a practical examination upon the contents of the British Museum before commencing practice as a promising young fellow of about two hundred years or thereabouts; but the medical student had but four years to do his work, and was turned loose to save or slay, at two or three-and-twenty.

While he proposed to exclude zoology and botany from the compulsory study of the medical student, Professor Huxley would suggest their exclusion from the Universities. He thought that biological instruction should form part of the Arts curriculum, and also of the curriculum of his proposed Faculty of Science. One of the greatest wants of our times, that of proper support and encouragement for original research, would thus in some measure be provided for. In this respect, he thought, Britain, whose immense wealth and prosperity hang upon the thread of applied science, is far behind France, and infinitely behind Germany. Assuming that such a Faculty had been established, and the professional staff organized, the question arose whether the professorial system—the system of teaching in the lecture room alone, and leaving the student to find his own way when he is outside of the lecture-room—was adequate to the wants of the learners. To this question he answered emphatically, "No." There must be a laboratory work, practical work, and plenty of demonstrators. Thorough examination is indispensable, though he was almost inclined to think that the examination was a necessary evil, and his admiration for the existing system did not wax warmer as he saw more of it. "Examination, like fire, is a good servant but a bad master." No doubt a great deal is to be done by the careful selection of examiners, and by the copious introduction of practical work to remove the evils inseparable from examination, but under the best of circumstances he believed that examination will remain but an imperfect test of capacity, while it tells

next to nothing about a man's power as an investigator. There was much to be said in favour of restricting the highest degrees in each Faculty to those who have shown evidence of such original power by prosecuting a research under the eye of the professor in whose province it lies, or at any rate under conditions which should afford satisfactory proof that the work is theirs.

Coming from a man who has reached the position that Professor Huxley now fills in the world, we can scarcely close our hearts to the hope that this appeal may be heard. Few medical men but know how true is his own account of the imperfection of examinations as tests of capacity. It is, however, to be remembered that medical examinations have lately become more practical, and we are inclined that the future lies in giving more prominence to the clinical examinations of late years instituted, and regulating book work to the earlier period of education. This would be moving in a direction to attain the end sought by Professor Huxley.—*Med. Press and Circular.*

REPORTS ON LIFE ASSURANCE.

Our first report, issued last month, laid down the doctrine that the "labourer is worthy of his hire" in the Department of Life Assurance as well as in other branches of the medical art. We are almost surprised to find that this has been challenged, though in rather an unusual mode. An esteemed correspondent of *The Doctor* having drawn the attention of the actuary of a large company to our reports, has received from him a letter deprecating the view we have adopted. As it is desirable the exact defence of the non-paying offices last put forward should be understood, we quote the words addressed by this actuary to our correspondent.—He writes thus:—

"The Life Assurance Department of *The Doctor* begins very badly for assurers and assurance companies, by laying it down as a rule for the guidance of the medical profession that its members are never to fill up a form for an assurance company without a fee. Now, this is an erroneous doctrine, for it very often happens that proposers, in giving reference as to health and habits to a *private friend* name a medical man, and he in some cases won't fill up a *private friend's* report form without a fee; the result is annoyance to the proposer and the office, delay to both, and probably an ill-feeling between all the parties; for how can the doctor expect to be friends after with a gentleman for whom he refused to do such a slight service? or, how can he expect any business for which he would be entitled to payment from the office which he treated so unreasonably? Any man who can read and write can fill up a *friend's*