

When the Turks took Constantinople, the comet of Halley was on one of its visits to the sun. All Christendom trembled. The Inspector of schools was approaching with his blazing train of heathen examiners. Pope Callixtus III. commanded his pupils to annex to the Ave Maria the entreaty, "Lord save us from the devil, the Turk and the comet."

I would recommend candidates for our intermediate and second-class school honours to pray—"From one half or more of the filigree subjects prescribed for our distraction, good Mr. Crooks, deliver us!" As to your first-class and High School champions, they may be left to shift for themselves. If they have escaped with whole skins and uncracked brains from the first and second examination, they may be allowed to take another bout.

In bringing my paper to a close, I think I cannot do better than transcribe, from a book written long ago by the distinguished Christopher William Hufeland, Professor in the University of Jena, the following sensible passage:—

"The powers of the mind," says this writer, "must not be exerted too early. It is a great prejudice that people imagine they cannot make a child begin to learn too soon. But it is certain that a child may begin too soon, when that period is chosen during which Nature is still employed in forming the bodily powers and organs, and has need of all her strength for that purpose. This period extends to the seventh year; and if a child be obliged at an earlier age to apply to learning, and be confined in a sitting posture, its body will be deprived of the noblest part of its powers, which must be now wasted by the business of thinking; and the consequences will be, a checking of the growth, imperfect formation of the limbs, muscular weakness, bad digestion, corrupt juices, scrofula, and a preponderance of the nervous system in the whole machine, which will become burdensome during life, by nervous affections, hypochondriasis, and evils of the like kind. Much, however, will here depend on the difference of constitution, and the greater or less vigour of mind; but I certainly request that parents and others will, in this respect, pursue a method *directly contrary to that usually followed*. If a child show an early disposition for thinking and learning, one ought, instead of straining its powers the more, as is commonly the case, to prevent it from application till a later period; for *such premature ripeness is generally a disease*, or at any rate an unnatural state, which ought rather to be checked than promoted, unless one wishes to breed up a *monster of erudition*, rather than a sound healthful man."

Truer words than those just quoted were never written. The whole of the book, which is entitled "The Art of Prolonging Life," abounds with valuable instruction. Mental precocity is "an unnatural state," and all "premature ripeness is a disease," which should be