

A rigid system of marking, as the result of daily class examination, is bad, nothing could be worse; for, of course, the reports, with which the teachers in many centres are pestered and overwhelmed, are founded upon these markings.

Let us examine some of the direct results of this periodical, often hourly, marking of lessons.

The teacher's time is wasted. Valuable moments are filched from instruction, to be frittered away in recording the standing of pupils, and this at the close of every lesson. A teacher's office is to teach, not to do second-class official work. Let the public thoroughly understand this.

This system of marking, necessitates payment by results, a thing bad in itself, worse in its effects. It handicaps the slow and the quick, the plodding and the superficial, the naturally dull and the naturally bright. It is pitting lame men against athletes in the arena of the class-room. What will be the inevitable result to the lame men? The slow pupils, that is the lame, acquire bad mental methods, there is no thoroughness; in the strife for marks they have to make a showing or be forever lost, hence, their work is hurried, superficial, ill-understood, ill-digested, in the worst sense of the word. This superficiality, engendered in the class-room, follows the unhappy subject like a shadow into his after life and into business. The natural consequence is, that in business, as in the school-room, he is a failure. Failure means discontent. Discontent begets unhappiness. Unhappiness leads to looseness, drunkenness, despair, ruin, suicide.

According to the present system of tuition, there is too much pencil work on slate or paper, as mere examination, too little teaching. It is extremely doubtful, whether, in some centres, more especially in the upper forms, there is any teaching at all in the true sense of the word. Lessons are assigned in the schoolroom. They are pre-

pared at home. Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock midnight, sees the pupils at their tasks; the strong, the weak, the callous, the nervous, now with a headache, now with disgust at their hearts, now in tears—children who should be in the sunshine by day and in their beds by nine o'clock at latest. The next morning finds them at their desks in the school-room. Examination begins. Scribble, scribble, scribble! Slates or paper; nothing oral, nothing of interest, nothing by way of supplement from the overseering, enlightened mind. There is no time. The examined scribble for bare life. "Facts, facts, facts, sirs," are wanted. No matter what the hand-writing is like, no matter what the spelling is like, no matter what the style of composition is like. Facts, facts are the all in all, the "open sesame" to the outer and healthful sunlight of knowledge and culture.

As a natural consequence, the spelling, the writing, and the composition are, in many cases, execrable. The examination over, the marking begins; that over, another slate or paper recitation is in order. So on through the weary hours. And the teacher, instead of being a mentally expanding agent, illustrative, explanatory, critical, is a mere pedagogic recording-machine, inscribing hourly on his registering tablets the number of marks obtained by his class of puppets in their automatic dance of intellectual death.

Many have no chance of ever arriving at anything like distinction in this march or jig of stultification by honest means, so, as all is fair in love and war, and this system of marking and instruction is a species of war—brains and predilection against time, cram, and common-sense—why, they do what others do in love and war, they cheat and lie. They have memoranda snugly concealed in secret nooks, books under desks, etc., etc., etc. Doubtless thumb-nails and wrist-bands do other duties than their natural ones. Lying becomes the rule, not the exception,