

it is to commence the work of life and the practical business of self-education, in which incomparably more is to be learned than the routine of book-study can ever teach. In view of this it is a pity that the commencement exercises are allowed to run as much as they do to speeches and clothes. The speeches are too often vapid soarings into the sentimental, or profound delvings into the unfathomable. Not one in ten of them deals with anything which shews fitness for the coming battle of life. Most of them are simply bits of display, and are placed on dress parade just as are the costumes of the young ladies who graduate. It is a reflection on the lack of ingenuity of our educators that modern progress has not devised some way of relief from the flood of commencement-day speeches. It seems not to occur to the gentlemen and ladies in charge of the exercises that there are other ways besides speech-making for the exhibition of the talent of their graduating young men and misses. In whatever branch of life-work these young people are to engage, only a minority of them will be speech-makers. To place them on platforms to show off their speech-making abilities is, in most cases, as unnecessary as it is unjust. Particularly in case of the graduating girls, not one in fifty of those who graduate is to enter a profession which calls for the habitual making of speeches. We want relief from those monotonous commencement exercises. Let the girl who would give us an essay on the moon rather display her skill in making before the audience a pan of the whitest and lightest milk-biscuits that ever graced a supper table. Let another who was going to read a prodigious treatise on certain Greek poets about whom she knows but little, and for whom the audience care nothing at all, shew her skill in making a large pot of really excellent coffee. If this beverage is handed around and approved, the girl who makes it will be remembered when essays and treatises and Greek salutations and Latin valedictories have faded out of recollection. It may be said that the schools do not teach housekeeping. So much the worse for the schools. Not one girl in a

hundred can make coffee that is fit to drink, and though some girls may be able to compass the mysteries of fancy chocolate cake in seven layers, with six varieties of jelly between, yet the pies they make are atrocities of indigestible cookery. If it is objected that these works are too practical, and that the girls will always have servants to do such things for them, let a few of the graduates try their fair hands at stenography in presence of the audience. Give a girl pencil and paper and let her take down the remarks of some grave and reverend old director who addresses the assemblage. When he is done let her read aloud what she has written. The field for ingenious novelty is so large that the clinging to the programme of weak, washy floods of everlasting speech seems but a painfully plodding devotion to ancient precedent. Give us something fresh.—*Philadelphia Times*.

DRILL COMPETITION IN THE LONDON BOARD SCHOOLS.

THE annual drill competition for the challenge banner awarded by the Society of Arts took place lately in the grounds of Lambeth Palace. There was but a small muster of scholars—about 400—and they were from ten schools only, the sparseness of the attendance being accounted for by the fact that there is no public fund available to defray the small expenditure necessarily incurred in bringing the children from distant localities to the place of inspection, and which has to be defrayed by voluntary contribution. Amongst those present were Sir Charles Reed, the Chairman of the London School Board; the Rev. J. Rodgers, vice-chairman; Mrs. Westlake and Mrs. Miller, members of the Board, Mr. Macgregor (Rob Roy), Sir Edwin Chadwick, and others who took an interest in the proceedings. The boys were under the command of Major Sheffield, the superintendent of drill-instructors in the employment of the Board. The boys first marched past in open column, then countermarched and returned in quarter column. Then they marched past again in