

Every man, we know, has his own modes of influence, and a man of drier character would fail if he aped the enthusiasm of an Arnold; but each, in his way, should aim more than our masters now do at the education of sentiment.

It was remarked at the commencement that the standard of the schoolmaster, and with it, naturally, his estimation has been already raised. This is owing far less to vague talk and interest in society respecting education than to two or three positive movements. The first of these movements, in the case of the middle classes, was the institution of the proprietary school, by which a large portion of the education of the country was thrown into the hands of men themselves liberally educated, appointed according to the value of testimonials, generally of a highly respectable character. The gentry of many neighbourhoods were tired of being imposed upon by school speculators of whose attainments they had no guarantee; many of these parents, too, may have smarted at the recollection of having in their youth been entrusted to impostors, and were so determined to secure something better for their children. The idea might almost seem to have been taken from the younger Pliny, who, in one of his letters, speaks of a search made by the Roman patricians in his neighbourhood, for some good schoolmaster whom they might establish in common for the instruction of their boys. The offer of a liberal salary brought, of course, many competitors, and good men were generally chosen. Some of these schools have thoroughly succeeded; some have swelled into colleges. In nearly all there have been occasional disputes—in some, ruinous ones—between the gentleman proprietors and the masters who would not submit to interference and dictation. Still, unquestionably, the

movement, on the whole, has been a most advantageous one, and many a man, mercantile or professional, now in middle life, owes to it an education ten times better than his father had a chance of receiving.

The next practical movement in advance has been the establishment of the "middle class" and "competitive examinations." We can say of the former with certainty, as to one, at least, of their original suggestions, that they were got up in no mere *dilettante* or fidgety spirit, but from a felt necessity, and with a full consciousness that many difficulties might occur in the execution of the plan. University examiners were worried, and the extent of school impostures shown by the miserable specimens presenting themselves for examination, of whom, even at the first examination, two out of eight, on a daily average, at least, were plucked at Oxford and two more were often fairly pluckable. Nearly fresh from school as they were, nothing could account for this but permitted idleness or villanously bad instruction. Besides these, there was a numerous class to be accounted for of well-disposed young men, who, feeling themselves too weakly prepared for fair rivalry, dawdled through college in some unaccountable way, equally without dissipation and without distinction. Now, when men were imprudently sent to college in this state by schoolmasters who would be ready, if challenged, to lay the whole blame on university idleness, it was fairly argued that boys must be still more miserably neglected who were destined to be turned out into life without any public trial at all. It was for the protection of parents, then, that these trials were suggested, with certain conditions, more or less perfectly carried out, for the further protection of the schoolmaster as well, such as the following:—That no boy should be exposed to any middle-