

young people who are weakly by nature, the result of the excitement and overstrain of a series of examinations is often too immediately apparent.

The harmful effect of examinations upon parents and teachers is, I must admit, a little outside the present subject, but, Sir, I cannot refrain from saying just one word about it. Even as the children forget the true ends of study, so also do the parents; they look for successful results, and are heedless altogether as to whether or no a sound education is being afforded. And the teachers teach those subjects and in that way which will pay them best; they push on the most promising pupils, and neglect the dullard; and so, from beginning to end of the educational system, honest work is at a discount.

In conclusion, Sir, I will deal in few words with the assertion that examinations afford the best means of selection, not only in school and at College, but for

various public appointments. Is this a fact? I think not. Look at the army, to wit. Do we get better officers in consequence of the competition for appointments? Where is the examination in discipline, in self-control, in bodily endurance, in strength? Look again at the Civil Service of the Crown. Do examinations pick out men capable of diligence in routine work, men of tact in dealing with their fellows? No—a thousand times, no! Rather a body of men specially crammed with information which they will get rid of at the first convenient moment, just as a bricklayer's man will drop his hod the instant the dinner-bell rings! This is the much-lauded and beneficent effect of examinations as a means of selection; this is typical of their whole action in every step of the career of the young, and with this view of them before you, I am content to leave the case to the judgment of the Family Parliament.

TO OUR READERS.—*The Editor will be happy to receive the opinions of any Readers on the above Question, on either side, with a view to the publication of the most suitable and concise communications in the March Part, when the opener will exercise his right of reply upon the whole. Letters should be addressed "The Editor of 'Cassell's Family Magazine,' La Belle Sauvage Yard, London, E.C.," and in the top left-hand corner of the envelope should be written, "Family Parliament." All communications on the present Question must reach the Editor not later than January 10. The Editor cannot undertake to return any communications.*

An honorarium of £1 is. will be accorded (subject to the discretion of the Editor) to the best letter on either side of the Question; no letter to exceed 50 lines (500 words).

Next month a discussion will be opened on Question III., ARE EARLY MARRIAGES UNTHRIFTY? and the discussion on Question I. (HOME LIFE VERSUS PUBLIC LIFE FOR GIRLS) will be concluded.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION IN EAST LONDON.

BY A LOCAL SECRETARY.



THE social reformer who had ventured ten years ago to predict that the time was not far distant when University Professors would be found teaching artisans in Whitechapel would probably have been regarded as an enthusiast, even by the most optimistic of his fellows. Nevertheless, it is at this moment a fact that the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching has commenced its fifth annual session in East London, and that the meeting-place of its students is at St. Jude's Schools, in Commercial Street, Whitechapel. Having been connected with this movement since the beginning of its work in the Tower Hamlets, I have here endeavoured to set on record my four years' experience, with the hope that it may prove perhaps helpful, or if not helpful, at least interesting, to others who are engaged in similar work. Those who know East London know that it is one of the most difficult parts of the Metropolis wherein an educational campaign may be conducted with success; for assuredly it is never easy to persuade those whose energies are exhausted at the day's close by physical labour to take up with much zeal that which involves a certain amount of mental labour.

It is very much the fashion with a certain class of newspaper writers to regard the East-end as sunk in the darkness of ignorance, and to give utterance to clever, cruel, things about "the plentiful lack of wisdom" which is to be found there. They do not remember that there is very much of hard, grinding toil in the every-day life of those of whom they write. Not drones but workers are they who dwell eastward of the City—workers whose portion of the honey of the hive is small, but whose share of its labour is large enough; so large indeed, that it would have been no matter for marvel if a movement whose objects are so high as those of the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching had met with failure at its outset. But it is no record of failure that I am writing here.

When, in the early part of the year 1877, it was proposed by the Rev. S. A. Barnett, the Vicar of St. Jude's, Whitechapel—one who has laboured as few men have laboured to bring brightness and beauty into the lives and homes of those among whom his work has been cast—that an effort should be made to introduce the classes of the University Extension Society to Whitechapel, the wise men of the East shook their heads gravely and said that success was impossible. But undismayed by adverse prophecy, a

committee was formed, composed of tradesmen and workmen of the district and University men, and arrangements were made for obtaining the theatre of the Medical College, London Hospital, wherein the lectures should be held. The neighbourhood was actively canvassed by the committee and its helpers; churches, chapels, workmen's clubs, and other organisations were all given timely notice of the work in hand.

On the evening of October 15, 1877, a public meeting was held at St. Mary's School-room in Whitechapel, where addresses were delivered by Dr. Carpenter, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., the late Leonard A. Montefiore, and others, and the result was for the first year one hundred students; these were of both sexes, about one-third of the number being artisans. It was felt by those who had been engaged in the work that here was a good beginning. The classes were four in number—that on Physiology, by Mr. J. McCarthy, attracting the largest number of students; that on History, by Mr. S. R. Gardiner, Professor of Modern History at King's College, London, standing next; the other two classes being Political Economy, and Electricity and Magnetism.

In the second year, 1878-9, three classes only were carried on, that on Electricity being discontinued. Professor Gardiner's class, which in the previous session had numbered twenty-six, was now increased to forty-two, while the two other classes had increased likewise. The committee had by this time arrived at the conclusion that a lower fee was necessary, in order to place the education given within the reach of a larger number of people; and in the term following, the fees, which had hitherto been five shillings for a class of twelve lectures, were reduced to three shillings for twelve lectures, or five shillings for a double course of twenty-four, the result being that the class on Physiology registered 102 students; that on English History, by Professor Gardiner, sixty; while a class on English Literature, which had this term been started, numbered forty-six. The class on Political Economy owed much to the self-sacrificing energy of its first teacher, Mr. James Bonar, and, although in point of numbers it did not stand so high as the English History class, it can claim the credit of having founded in East London an "Adam Smith Society," which meets in St. Jude's Schools for the study of the works of that great economist, Mr. Bonar being its president. There is also a Shakespere Society, but its numbers at present are small.

The London Society for the Extension of University Teaching has centres in many parts of the Metropolis. I cannot tell what their experience of the movement may have been, but I shall venture to offer a few suggestions to the various committees with reference to this work. They will, I know, forgive me if I tell them that which they have found out for themselves already, and, in any case, will hardly be sorry to know that the experience of other workers in the cause of education is in agreement with their own.

The first consideration is to secure a good working

committee, and good working secretaries. Ornamental members are useful in their way, but the most important members are those who will work, and who know how to set about the work they have to do. Sincere and earnest philanthropy should always command our reverence; but, unless it is supplemented by a little worldly wisdom, it will not always command success. A good leader is indispensable. The Tower Hamlets Committee have had the best of leaders in their chairman, the Rev. S. A. Barnett; and were no less fortunate during his absence from England in finding his place filled by the Rev. Brooke Lambert. Some tact is required in the very necessary, if somewhat expensive business of advertising. As long a notice as possible should always be given of classes. Having obtained the students, it will help the work greatly if a social feeling is brought about among them by such methods as that of a *conversazione*, or gatherings of a like nature. But above all and before all, it is necessary that those concerned in the movement should *work*. No scheme will work itself; it needs always strong and persistent personal effort to command success.

In a neighbourhood like East London the fees must be low, but expenses are always high, the area to be covered by advertisements being large. It is, moreover, proved here as elsewhere that however valuable may be the influence of the higher education, the time has not yet come for it to pay its own expenses; it needs some measure of support from outside. In a wealthy community like London this need should not exist long; such a work should command support on all sides. The Tower Hamlets Committee have had much up-hill labour, but they are not discouraged thereby. In looking back over what has been done in the past, I cannot but feel that we are the pioneers in a great work: a work which must produce good fruit in the years to come. The English Universities, in spite of the exclusiveness which is all but inseparable from ancient institutions, have ever been the centre of all that is highest and best in the intellectual life of Englishmen; but until to-day they have been but for a favoured few.

To me there is no grander or more inspiring thought than that which seems to lie behind this University Extension scheme. It bears within it the solution of many of the problems which vex the minds of those who are full of apprehension as to England's future. If it be true that the future of a race lies in its intellectual and moral development, then is that future assured for us if this movement goes on. One whose life's work was brief but noble, uttered at the beginning of our career some words of hope which will form a fitting conclusion to what I have written here:—"These are complex and great events to anticipate from comparatively small beginnings, but we believe time, and no distant time, will show that we are indulging in no vague or impossible dream. And in the confident hope that its success will be lasting, and worthy and beneficent, we wish the University Extension Scheme God speed."

FREDERICK ROGERS.