

Three or four more of the letters we have recently printed uphold the view expressed by us. The writers leave the realms of poetry and descend to plain matter of fact. They even cite instances, which is very hard upon Mr. Chapple and "Didaskalos." The former's answer to one definite charge of "cramming" appears elsewhere, but it is not a denial. The letter, written by "Theoretikos," deals mainly with a comparison between the matriculation examinations in the Adelaide and London Universities. This is chiefly a personal matter between himself and Mr. Leary, and we would prefer not to meddle. Indeed, we have already incurred the proverbial penalty meted out to the third party, for "Theoretikos" has something hard to say about us as well as about Mr. Leary. We have no wish to chop logic with our correspondent, and would content ourselves with pointing out, in the first place, that we did not try to play off the "familiar trick of critics" with which he charges us. When an English graduate talks of "Oxford" he does not mean the city; when he is writing about the matriculation examination he does not mean examination for honours. In the same way, when we spoke of "Adelaide" and "London" we referred to the Universities, not to the cities. The cities of Adelaide and London may be contrasted, but for the purposes of argument there can be no comparison between them. There is some cheerful hair-splitting, too, about "the easy curriculum." We should judge it impossible to convince "Theoretikos" that he is in the wrong if it were not for that part of his letter in which he shows that he has begun to grasp the fundamental difference between an English and our own University. Oxford aims at educating those who come to her; Adelaide should go out to meet her constituents. It is because she does not sufficiently perform this duty that we press for a reform. To repeat—the matriculation examination here is too hard; schools keep it too much in view in their systems of education; it induces cramming, and there is a

great danger lest through its means—  
indirectly of course—the rising generation  
should go out into the world with a  
smattering of many things and a thorough  
knowledge of nothing.

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### UNIVERSITY REFORM.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—No one could have experienced greater pleasure than myself in reading the well-written article on "Reform in the University" in your issue of 28th. It was, however, only to be expected that those teachers in our public schools who, perhaps, are really trying to benefit their pupils should feel annoyed at some of the statements contained therein. It sometimes happens that although individuals may be striving to do their duty, still they make sad blunders, and, what is worse, in consequence of their zeal, are unable to perceive them. I have no doubt your correspondents Mr. Chapple and "Didaskalos" are honestly trying to do good, but it is just possible they are making mistakes. Mr. Chapple writes, "Healthy rivalry is a most powerful incentive to excellence;" and this is true to a certain extent. In the desire to stand well in the matriculation-list the student may overwork, and most of us know what involves. A gentleman of my acquaintance is now suffering from the effects of overstudy in his student days. Your correspondent alludes to the ease with which boys who come from the top places in the Model schools in two or three years pass the

matriculation examination. It is worthy of notice that throughout his letter he carefully avoids any reference to men wishing to pass. He either forgets or ignores the fact that the University is not intended simply to show how many boys can get through every year, but to educate all, whether men or boys. He is afraid that if the examination is reduced the boys would pass sooner and leave school earlier. It certainly would be a very great pity if the boys were to do this; but does it necessarily follow because Mr. Chapple thinks it will? Some boys might, but I maintain that more would find their way into the University, and instead of the Professors having to lament over the forsaken they would rejoice in the prosperous and well-filled University. As to the letter of "Didaskalos," I need say little. He is evidently very much annoyed, and does not scruple to show it. But when he says that "the books chosen from year to year, together with the necessary drill in grammar, syntax, and prose composition, furnish abundant material for exercising the minds of the pupil" I for one quite agree with him. It is refreshing to find one of those opposed to the desired reform giving his testimony to the fact that the number of subjects is too great.

I am, Sir, &c., ONE OUTSIDE.

May 29,

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—My eyes have been opened for the first time by the publication in this morning's paper of a notorious set of questions on geography given at the Adelaide University. I think if you had no other evidence before you than that paper (but, doubtless, in your large experience you have seen many others of a similar kind), it alone would justify your strictures on the school system as now pursued. Mr. Chapple and "Didaskalos" seem to me to be absurdly indignant at a journalist presuming to criticise boldly and fearlessly the scholastic system in vogue, in which the public are deeply interested. I have no doubt that a few more papers like the one given this morning would do more to open people's eyes than a ton weight of special pleadings. Mr. Chapple seems to have let the cat out of the bag in saying "If the standard were reduced boys would pass sooner and leave school earlier." The schoolmasters then seem interested in making the standard higher and higher, simply because the boys will stay longer and longer. He also says that the best students from Adelaide University have not obtained honours at the London University, even after four years' good study subsequently to matriculating here. Mr. Chapple gives this as an instance that the standard here is not too high. Another reason may be given (and probably the correct one), and supporting your view, Mr. Editor, that the training they got here in preparing for matriculation and the "three years' good hard work at the University (Adelaide)" was not education at all, but cramming, enfeebling rather than strengthening the minds of the students. The question I now wish to put is this. Did Mr. Chapple, "Didaskalos," and the other five teachers having a place on Council or Senate raise their indignant voices against the above-named paper, and such like it? If they did not they appear to me to have failed in their duty, and to have acquiesced in the system of oppression. Did they when such

a paper was set remove their pupils from such an examination and say, as probably a Gladstone or a General Gordon would have done—"I object to such a farce as that; it is not an examination; it is cruelty to our boys?" If they had done so a sensible public would have backed them up in their action, and a better condition of affairs might have resulted; or did they rather prefer a little ephemeral honour in the chance of their boys beating some other boys? A little practical Christianity in the remonstrance indicated above would outweigh a thousand times the theoretical cant about "high aims," "noble purposes," "Cathedrals," and "heavenly music." No matter what becomes of the steed after the race so long as he wins the Derby. If raising the standard of education higher and higher (and such is the object of the University, it is said) is exemplified in such papers as the one given the sooner this vast University bubble, the standard capacity of which is increasing year by year, is pricked the better it will be for this community. A few more of your well-directed shafts, and it must collapse.—I am, Sir, &c.,

PATERFAMILIAS.