

ance of the ill-informed idler. When the questions are numerous, and the time is brief, the most ignorant can make some reply to most of them; and the best informed has time for little more. Whereas, with a few comprehensive questions, the idler very soon uses up all his scanty store of knowledge; while the diligent student finds time to prove his intelligent comprehension of the subject. Such a mode of examination baffles the "coach" and the whole system of "cram." The few questions permissible within the limits of a two hours' examination, if confined to minute details, furnish an unsatisfactory test. It is very much a matter of chance who shall answer them. One candidate has been reading half the previous night and missed them all. Another lucky fellow finds they are the very points he chanced to have got up. Yet the former may be the better informed and more diligent student.

Finally, let me add, a matriculation examination is a totally different thing, either from later University examinations for standing and degrees, or for first and second class teachers' certificates. The combination of the latter with matriculation work is cal-

culated to mislead examiners, or to perplex them in the preparation of papers adapted to such diverse purposes. The impropriety of applying the same test to a candidate for the office of teacher, and to the youth seeking to enter on the first year of a University course, is recognized in so far as different percentages are demanded in the values of their respective answers. But that is, at best, an unsatisfactory compromise. A University matriculation is designed as a test to ascertain in how far the candidate possesses the adequate preliminary training to enable him to enter successfully on the higher work of the University. If he does not, it is in his own interest, as well as in that of the University, that he should be remanded for further preparatory training. But if he has sufficient knowledge of the prescribed studies to enable him, by diligence, to keep pace with his fellow students in the higher work on which he desires to enter, it is a wrong, and may be a grave injury, to reject him merely because he has failed to unriddle some obscure grammatical problems; or to answer an unexpected question, which only required a reference to some familiar and easily accessible authority.

BOOKS AND READING.*

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WHETHER we can still say with the "Preacher" that "much study is a weariness to the flesh," we can at least use the other part of the sentence in which those words occur, and declare that "of making many books there is no end," and this with a fulness of meaning undreamt of by the author of *Ecclesiastes*. Books

seem to rush upon us in rivers, in floods, in oceans. The man who possesses the best library is constantly coming upon books, the titles of which he has never seen or even heard of, and we may doubt whether even the best informed bookseller reads all the lists and advertisements of new publications.

In such a case the pretensions of one who attempts to speak on "books

* Public Lecture at Trinity College.