

themselves many matters which are now presented to the modern student cut and dried, ready to be stored, if possible, in the memory, to be produced in the same dry form in the examination room, but which fail to obtain effectual entrance into the intelligence. I have heard of a schoolboy who succeeded in the prodigious feat of learning by heart the whole of the first book of Euclid, without having any idea of its meaning; and I have seen answers to some of our own examination questions which have raised a suspicion of a similar process of assimilation of pages of the Text-Book. Many of the failures of our examinees arise from hurry and imperfect preparation, and too mechanical and exclusive attention to the special subjects in the syllabus; and it would be well if a longer time and slower pace were adopted, so as to allow of opportunity for the training of the intellect by general reading and the study of subjects not directly connected with the examination.

To some of you it may perhaps appear little short of ridiculous that I should recommend as a preparation for our examinations that a student should take up the study of history or general literature, but I am quite sure that the deliberate study of some apparently remote subject not under the forced draught with which the technical subjects are studied, but deliberately, quietly, and with no examination end in view, would so invigorate and brace the mental powers that the technical subjects would be more easily and completely mastered. I would especially recommend the study of the great masters of English prose, as of the greatest practical utility, not only by way of storing the mind with useful information, but as inducing clearness of thought and lucidity of expression, qualities often conspicuously absent from business documents, and not invariably found even in contributions to our own transactions."

Mr. Ralph Price Hardy in proposing a vote of thanks to the President paid him very high compliments on his eminent abilities and distinguished career. He eloquently endorsed the protest against "cramming" and exclusive devotion to professional studies. Mr. Hardy said: "I desire to impress upon the members—that never should they suffer themselves to sink to the unfruitful level of *mere problem solvers*, nor ever indolently rest in the lush lands of being skilled algebraists in their own special department, however important each of those attainments might be in its proper place."

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THE YUKON TELEGRAPH.—Owing to difficulties with the Yukon telegraph poles and wires in the Yukon from storms and snow, it has been decided to place an insulated cable on the surface of the ground as is done in wild regions in Africa.

### LIFE INSURANCE IN JAPAN.

The methods of conducting life insurance in Japan are about the same in many respects as in Canada, with the exception of canvassing. Agents who desire to interview a Japanese with a view to selling insurance remove their boots upon entering their house or place of business and get down upon his marrow bones, the Jap does the same. They then discuss insurance in a kneeling posture.

There are several native companies operating in Japan, a few of them fairly good, solid institutions. Competition is very keen. As a rule, the native companies charge lower rates than foreign companies.

The insurance department in Japan is, we are informed, very exacting in its requirements.

The Canadian Companies operating there are the Manufacturers and the Sun Life. The latter company does an exclusively endowment business there, and reports Japan as being their most prosperous agency. It is under the supervision of Dr. Macaulay. The New York Life and the Equitable also have an agency there, as well as the Standard Life and other English companies.

Wealth is not so well distributed in Japan as it is in Canada. This is somewhat a disadvantage for the agents.

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### INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS AS TO FOREIGN FIRE COMPANIES.

Invidious comparisons as to the respective strength of different fire insurance companies are doubly disagreeable; they are irritating to those reflected upon, and embarrassing to their defenders. This form of attack cannot be met without those who repel it committing the very same offence which they have to condemn as invidious comparisons call for a reply on the same lines. In the one case, however, there is the reprehensible offence of a wilful breach of propriety, of fairness and far too often a disregard of truth, while in the case of the repellent there is the justification of self defence. When we read in an advertisement that American fire companies are the largest because the assets of one of them is over ten million dollars, which it is clearly stated can only be said of one foreign company, we are surprised at a highly respectable, substantial company publishing so invidious, so unfair a statement. It is surely a matter of common knowledge to all engaged in fire insurance that there are British companies operating in the United States and Canada whose assets amount to an enormously larger sum than \$10,000,000. There are 11 British fire companies operating in the States and Canada, the average of whose assets is \$25,700,000. This fact is not stated in order in any way to disparage