

ments; and added: "it gives no degree without insisting on a solid, though not, of course, extensive knowledge of the foundation and methods of science." In this statement the practical limits are sufficiently indicated; for diffuse study ranging over the ever-widening fields of science, as of letters, necessarily ends in a superficial smattering: the "shallow draughts" which intoxicate the brain with their froth and fumes! This is the danger to which the modern student is exposed. Selection is indispensable; and here I touch upon a problem for which some of our youthful educational reformers are ready with a very simple solution. The plan most favoured is that of "eclectic courses of study" arranged for the student at his own sweet will, in which he is to eliminate from the undergraduate course all that is distasteful to him; give diligent attention to whatever subjects please him best; and graduate on the requirements of a standard of his own. This charming ideal, if fully carried out, would convert the entire course of student life into one long kindergarten holiday; though, I fear, to most, with an unpleasant awakening from dreamland.

If I do not misinterpret the workings of two rival systems now in operation in the neighbouring States, Yale and Harvard are at the present time at variance on this very question. The one insists on the time-honoured idea of the undergraduate period as one in which the student "is under tutors and governors," and constrained in his own highest interests to pursue a specified course, which is no royal road of pleasant dalliance up the hill of knowledge; but rather one which incites him:—

To scorn delights and live laborious days.

The other, along with liberal pro-

visions in a wide range of studies, issues its "elective pamphlet," and leaves the choice of work to the under-graduate's own taste. I doubt if any earnest student looks back in later years with regret on the compulsory studies imposed on him; or resents the academic restrictions which compelled his adherence to a strictly defined course. The eminent preacher, Robertson, of Brighton, himself an Oxford graduate, when pressing on a young friend the advantage of a rigidly prescribed course, dwells on the lasting benefits resulting from the pursuit for three or four years of a distant but well-defined aim; and adds: "I defy any young man to create this for himself. At college I attempted this, and now I feel I was utterly, irreparably wrong. Now I would give £200 a year to have read even on a bad plan chosen for me, but steadily." In this confession I am sure not a few will join, and those most strongly who, with exceptional gifts not unwisely used in later years, look back on opportunities irretrievably lost, not by idleness, but by the evasion of distasteful studies. For be it ever remembered, it is education in its true sense, and not a mere university diploma you have in view. The academic honours and rewards which lie before you are worthy incentives to exertion; yet the very last idea to be encouraged is that which recognizes a university degree as in any sense the final goal. The honours a man wins at college will count for little afterwards if he fail to redeem the promise of his outset. They are rather memorials of talents turned to no account. He has been sent forth armed and equipped, and has failed in the battle of life; or at best, has gone down to the battle and tarried with the stuff. Severe, systematic study is of inestimable value in its moral discipline. I have had the assurance of merchants, bankers,