

wards at Edinburgh University the future "Wizard" was thus epitomised by one of the leading professors: "Dunce he is, and dunce he will remain."

Another noteworthy record is that of Dr. Chalmers, who was solemnly exalted from the parish school of St. Andrews as "an incorrigible dunce." Ludwig, the famous geometrician, was also sent away from school after four years' ineffectual struggle to learn the common rules of arithmetic. The "marvellous boy" Chatterton, who died at eighteen, was considered "a dull child, incapable of improvement." The uncouth attempts of Domenichino to master the elements of drawing caused his fellow students to nickname him "the ox," and the artistic youth of Hogarth was almost equally unpromising. The same contrast is often found between the youth and the maturity of illustrious men of action. The celebrated Fabius Maximus, whose life was characterised by "greatness of mind, unalterable courage, and invincible character," was derisively styled in boyhood "the little sheep." His slowness and difficulty in learning were so great that he was looked upon by all his preceptors as "incorrigibly stupid." John Howard, the philanthropist, was another illustrious dunce, "learning

nothing in seven years." As a boy, Napoleon was esteemed at best a plodder; and, if not called an absolute dunce, it was only because his teachers hardly knew what to make of his rather grim taciturnity and love of seclusion. Southey once said that "pigs are brought up on a wiser system than boys in an ordinary school," and the records of enforced duncery too often justify the proposition. It is a little surprising to find that the Duke of Wellington's mother believed her "sheep-faced boy" to be hopelessly deficient in mental ability; and when, after a short residence at Eton, he was sent to the military college at Angers, it was only to qualify him "to become food for powder." It is vain to speculate what might have been the destiny of the "Iron Duke" under the present competitive system. Some boys of considerable latent powers are often misunderstood, simply because they instinctively rebel against a training to which the average standard of youthful ductility readily submits. Others can give themselves to learn anything that is set them, and are judged, or misjudged, accordingly. To both classes it falls to show what is really "in them" by the vitality of their own inherent powers.—*Evening Standard*.

GEOGRAPHY.

GRAVITATION.—The law of gravitation is not very readily understood by the young. Yet a child must have been wonderfully dull who did not follow Sir Robert Ball's illustrations of the different effects of gravitation in the moon and sun. "If I were in the moon," he said, "I could jump from the floor where I am speaking right up to the gallery. A game of football would be worth going to see in the moon, for a good kick

would send the ball into the next parish. A run with a pack of lunar foxhounds would be worth taking part in, for the horses would be able to jump over a haystack or over a farmer's house without disturbing a single tile of the roof. In the sun, on the other hand, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to lift one's arms or legs. Getting up early in the morning is not a very easy thing on the earth sometimes, but if we