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MATRICULATION EXAMINATIONS.

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THE subject of matriculation and matriculation examinations has been discussed of late almost *ad nauseam*, and the present writer almost regrets his promise to contribute something to the controversy, more especially when he considers how widely he differs from the general current of opinion on the subject.

There was one remark of Principal Grant's which forms the proper starting point for this discussion. He remarked that the proper requirement for a matriculant was, that he should have a preparation which would enable him to benefit by the college lectures when he entered the university. We have not his word before us, and, no doubt, he expressed himself much better than we have done; but that is the meaning of what he has said, and it is the common sense of the subject. To admit to the university a young man who can derive no benefit from its instructions is to induce him to waste his time and to encourage his parents to spend money without receiving anything in return.

If only the discussions on matriculation examinations had started from this point and had gone on in a

reasonable and intelligent manner, it is probable that we should have reached some useful results.

Instead of this, we have had discussions about the usefulness or mischievousness of supplemental examinations, apparently stimulated by the desire to keep all these things under the thumb of the Education Department, and, as far as possible, to deprive the universities of the control of their own students. In the university of Oxford, men can matriculate whenever they like, and it seems absurd to say to the Canadian universities that their matriculations must all be confined to a particular moment. The greater the liberty which is conceded to these different institutions the better. If they abuse that liberty they will very soon be found out.

But there is another side to the question. Whilst examiners are complaining of the imperfect preparation of candidates for matriculation, these candidates are declaring that the examinations are unfair and even ridiculous. We must say that, to a large extent, we agree with the candidates. It is true, the examiners are not altogether to blame. They are the