

position of these animals in the classified series?" "Oh, sir," replied the innocent Smith, "my opinions exactly coincide with those just expressed so lucidly and clearly by Mr. Johnston!"

There are examiners, and examiners, of course; some stern, others mild and encouraging; some who try to discover what a student knows, and others whose aim appears to be rather that of elucidating the ignorance of the candidates who appear before them. But to the end of time, there will be humour mixed with the grave concerns of testing knowledge, which

is, for both sides, a hard enough task. The student who, when asked by a stern examiner what he would recommend in order to produce copious perspiration in a patient, replied, "I'd make him try to pass an examination before you, sir!" had a keen sense of humour, which it is to be hoped the examiner appreciated. His answer was in keeping with the question which has been argued by us and by others, whether the whole subject of examinations, as at present conducted, should not be thoroughly overhauled and revised.—*Chambers' Journal.*

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## PRECOCIOUS MENTAL DEVELOPMENT.

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THE great tendency of the age is to encourage and foster the precocious development of the intellectual powers. To make the school-boy intelligent and learned beyond his years, is the favourite problem of both parents and teachers, and too frequently do they accomplish it. School boards, with all their enlightened wisdom, are the ready victims of the same fatal ambition, and hence many schools have imposed on them a curriculum of study which cannot be mastered by the pupils within the required time unless at the expense of the harmonious and healthful growth of the intellectual powers. Long and careful observation of the effects of this prevalent and growing evil, has induced me to direct the attention of the educators of the State and the friends of a pure humanity to this subject. The future status of our race—physically, intel-

lectually, morally—depends on the educational theories which are reduced to practice in the school-room. Here a mistake may prove fatal, and at no time in the life of our children, is it so important that their instructors be guided by enlightened reason and true philosophy.

Judging from the large number of primary text-books, designed to reduce the principles of the more abstruse sciences to the easy comprehension of the minds of children, and the readiness with which they are introduced in some of the most popular schools, I am compelled to arrive at the conclusion:

That many of the leading instructors of youth suppose it to be the great end of education to communicate facts—to pour into the mind, as into a vast reservoir, a large amount of information—to burden it with knowledge, as one would burden a