

The Classical Review

JULY 1902.

THE new regulations for the Matriculation Examination of the London University, dated June 1902, are bound to affect seriously the study of the two classical languages in this country. From four to five thousand candidates enter annually for this examination and the number is continually growing. Under the expiring system English (two papers), Mathematics (two papers), Latin (two papers), General Elementary Sciences (two papers), were necessary subjects; in addition to these, one other language *or* science to be chosen from a list at the option of the candidate (one paper). The new scheme is: English (one paper), Mathematics (*two* papers as before), Latin *or* one out of a number of elementary sciences (one paper), two subjects from a list of languages and sciences, one of which must be a language if Latin be not taken (two papers). The pill is ingeniously gilded; but for all that it is clear that Latin is now only one optional language out of ten. But more is to come. Candidates and their teachers are not ignorant that the percentage of failures in Latin has been higher than in any other compulsory subject; and so the decline to be expected whenever a compulsory subject becomes an optional one, is likely to be much accentuated in the present case. Nor is this all. Latin and Greek are both to be treated as French and German; that is to say there are to be no more prepared books in classics. Now this would be quite fair and most desirable if Latin and Greek were taught as living languages: but in present circumstances it is, whether so intended or not, an undeniable handicap. Further the limitation of the translation to 'unseens' is likely to affect the teaching prejudicially. It is notorious that the number of passages of Latin and Greek which are suitable for a matriculation

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examination is relatively very small; and examiners will be forced either to set harder passages than they should with the result of obscuring their standard or passages which a considerable portion of the candidates will have seen before. Latin, it is true, is an optional subject for matriculation at the University last founded in England. But the Birmingham scheme requires two languages to be offered besides English, nor has it eliminated set books; and in a matter of this kind the action of London is incomparably more important than that of Birmingham. Let classical teachers look to it. The hand has begun to write upon the wall.

The 'Album Gratulatorium' in honour of Prof. H. v. Herwerden who, in obedience to a regulation superannuating at seventy, retires from the post which he has held with such distinction for thirty-eight years, has just appeared. Of the forty or so contributors the majority are naturally Dutch; but there are some thirteen or fourteen foreigners, amongst whom we notice the names of Bernardakis, Blass, L. Havet, Wecklein, and Weil. Five of the contributors are English.

We have received the first number of *Dissertationes Americanae* in classical Philology. These are a series of Theses for the Doctorate of Philosophy, which have been specially recommended for publication by the professors in charge at the doctor's University. This is a useful restriction which the publishers of German degree dissertations would do well to copy. The series is published by Scott Foresman and Co., Chicago, G. Fock, Leipzig and H. le Soudier, Paris. The subject of No. 1 is *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* by Dr. F. B. R. Hellems, Latin Professor in Colorado University.

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