Ex uno disce omnes. We have, we hope, said enough to indicate how ex-tremely useful these catalogues may be to the mathematician, and that is our sole excuse for giving space to a notice of what lies so markedly outside the category of " trade catalogues." We have alluded to the wide reading of the compiler. His own comments are often of the raciest, but we regret to note that on one occasion he allowed himself to be carried away by his patriotic feelings and to make an atrocious remark about a most distinguished living writer. That, however, was not in No. 773, and the momentary lapse must not prevent us from assuring our readers that in these catalogues they will find amusement and instruction for the odd half-hour, and many a useful hint for their more serious undertakings.

CORRESPONDENCE.

23rd November, 1920.

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette.*

Sir,

So much is it a matter of course that questions in mathematics are pre-sented without superfluous data that the advice, " You will know you are wrong if you haven't made use of all you are told," is always accepted as sound. But neither in real life nor in constructive research are the data relevant to each particular problem specified in this convenient way, and I wonder sometimes if there would not be educational value in examples in which the student had to select as well as to use material.

It is true that occasionally the faculty of selection has to be exercised on method, but (i) it is usually to illustrate a given method that an example is set, (ii) if no one method is indicated the student is in fact more concerned to find one tool than to choose between two, (iii) the resemblance between choosing a method and ignoring a hypothesis is somewhat superficial.

Nor is practice in rejection out of place in the training of a specialist in mathematics. Economy is a considerable factor in mathematical elegance, and the elimination of unnecessary assumptions is a recognisable motive in the generalisations of algebra and in the construction of non-euclidean geometries no less than in the most recent developments of formal logic.

Perhaps some of your readers can bring to this subject the light of actual experience or of pedagogical theory. At the risk of an accusation of cowardice, I confess that I am not disposed to advocate either the setting of questions with *insufficient* data or an addition to the horrors of the examination room.—Yours, etc.   E. H. NEVILLE.

THE LIBRARY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

THE Library is now at 9 Brunswick Square, W.C., the new premises of the Teachers' Guild.

The Librarian will gladly receive and acknowledge in the *Gazette* any donation of ancient or modern works on mathematical subjects.

Please note Librarian's change of address:—C. E. Williams, M.A., 30 Carlton Hill, St. John's Wood, London, N.W. 8.