

THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MATHEMATICAL STUDY IN ITALY.

THE question where a young mathematician shall complete his studies is one of ever recurring interest. We are in the habit of referring to Emerson's *Φ B K* address as the "Intellectual declaration of independence of America" and we rejoice to feel that with those memorable words we threw off our yoke of bondage to the Old World. On further reflection, however, we admit that Pasteur's epigram may be inverted; that if a man of science has a fatherland, science itself knows none, and the wise student will always, like Mahomet, go to the mountain. He will complete his education in that country, and at that university where, for his special needs, the best subjects are best taught.

American students of mathematics, who intend to devote their lives to the subject, have generally in the past deemed it wise to spend more or less time at a European university, and though we may point with pride to the work that is being done to-day in our own graduate schools, it is safe to predict that for a long time to come, this migration will continue. Now to most Americans the words "study in Europe" and "study in Germany" are synonymous, and the reasons for this are not far to seek. The prestige of the German universities, their well deserved renown for free research and profound scholarship, and the scientific standing of those who teach there, have been, and will continue to be, the determining motives leading our students to the German Empire. And yet the whole truth has not been told when we have merely praised the German universities. Other universities have come forward in the last decades; Germany has no "corner" in science nor yet in the pursuit of scholarship, and to believe so is a sign of a sad, if all too common, intellectual provincialism. Moreover it is a highly debatable point whether our own American mathematical scholarship has not had a full measure of German influence, and whether the time is not come when we should show ourselves more ready to assimilate ideals from other lands. We should, I am sure, be no losers by having among us more teachers and students who had frequented the other European universities, nor