

NOVEMBER 28, 1881.

ditions of the age in which we live. With this object in view I proceed to look at the "agenda" paper of the University Senate and the "regulations" for the examinations just published. On the threshold I am met by the statement that the propositions to be laid by the council before the senate are not for amendment but simply "for approval or rejection." I am glad I am not one of the senate, for to be gagged at the outset by the very men I had just put over my head would not be good for my digestion. Then what are the questions to which the senate is to give its monosyllabic "yea" or "nay?" I note that there are five optional subjects given, and out of these in three only will each candidate be examined, and if the same rate of marking is followed in the future that has been in the past, then the result will be as follows:— In classics he will have open to him say 200 marks; in mathematics, 200; in English, 100—500 in all. But if he take mathematics, 200; English, 100; and science, 100, he has only a chance of a maximum of 400 marks, and worse if his parents or himself elect to leave classics and mathematics alone; then his three subjects give him a possible range of 300 marks only against the 500 of the candidate who goes in for classics and mathematics together; this is handicapping with a vengeance, and applies equally to both boys and girls.

Again, the maximum age for the primary examinations is reduced from 18 to 16 years, so to the slow but plodding youth the door is shut when very likely the possibilities either mental or financial have not yet come within reach, so the boy or girl is for ever prohibited from University education. Nor is this all that the concilium propose to do to popularise higher education; they have raised the fee from 10s. 6d. to 21s.

We thus see the way the powers at the University respond to the demand of the public and the press that its portals should be thrown more widely open, and its halls made more readily accessible to the persons for whom the University exists, and by whom, as the paying public, it is greatly sustained. These men, instead of listening to the cry of the age for instruction in science and living languages, send us back to the palmy days when Oxford and Cambridge reigned without a rival, and like another Vatican seek to restore the days of Thomas Aquinas, and of the ancients.

But suppose that instead of this they could grasp the fact that, asking no favor, students of both sexes and from every school in the land are standing at the gates waiting for admittance, seeking no reduction in the standards of their curricula, but only for a wider range of subjects in accordance with their various prospects in life, might not the University, instead of making Latin and Greek practically compulsory subjects under the guise of being optional, offer to candidates some such list as this?—Greek (1), Latin (1), mathematics, algebra (1), geometry (1), modern languages (1), English (1), physical science (1), natural science (1), history (1), music (1), giving each subject the same number of marks and allowing each student, male or female, to select any five from the list.

I hope something like this or equally in accordance with what is wanted will be done, else as in other matters when we think we are defrauded of our rights we shall have to appeal from the council to our representatives in Parliament assembled—for be it known that Latin and Greek (however respectable the knowledge of the classics may be) or non-applied mathematics, we will not have thrust down our throats against our consent.—I am, &c.,

VER. SAP.

Adelaide, November 21, 1881.

NOVEMBER 29, 1881.

THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I think it is universally admitted that the administrative faculty is not always faultlessly possessed by those in power, and that every subject that is submitted for public criticism generally assumes some new aspect, and presents itself in different phases. I regret exceedingly that more criticism has not been publicly expended on the proposed changes in our University. That our University has not been an unqualified success none will deny, and it is to be sincerely hoped that the old motto *experientia docet* will be fully vindicated. About the appointment of Mr. Fletcher as lecturer in English literature, I have nothing to say further than I think the council have shown a wise discretion in reducing the salary to £500 per annum. If I remember rightly £600 per annum was first paid and no difficulty was experienced in securing competent men to fill the chairs, and I fail to see that any tangible reason was advanced to justify the exorbitant increase to £1,000. I think it is better to err on the side of economy than the other extreme, prodigality, and when it is proved that competent men cannot be obtained to fulfil the duties required at £500, then by all means increase it. A "new departure" I also object to—that is the abolition of chemistry as one of the subjects for the B.A. course, and the substitution of physiology as an optional subject only. This I consider a retrograde step, and one that is not likely to secure (quoting Dr. Stirling) "enthusiastic encouragement from those it was hoped would be its ardent supporters." Admitting that there are difficulties in the way, I think in this scientific age every student should have a knowledge of chemistry. With regard to the appointment of Dr. Stirling as lecturer in physiology, is it a step in the right direction? Dr. Stirling seems to deprecate the idea of a medical student gaining a sufficiently comprehensive knowledge of medicine and surgery here, even if a faculty of medicine were fully established; but it has been found possible to equip a medical faculty in other colonial universities, and many of their graduates are at the present time most successful practitioners, and why is the same thing not possible here? I think by far the greater part of the "machinery" necessary is at hand and only needs to be utilised. Assuming that the proposed changes may lessen the period of exile for students, is it possible to "cram" students satisfactorily in medicine, surgery, and clinical practice in the short space of two years? In British universities medical students' hospital studies commence during the first year, and continue until they graduate, consequently if they have to leave home at all an additional year or two of exile does not matter much, particularly if special facilities are within reach to gain the comprehensive knowledge desired. I think our university authorities have not yet rightly interpreted the spirit of the times.—I am, &c.,

NON SIBI, SED PATRIÆ.

Norwood, November 28, 1881.