

of custom that they will be induced to follow in the line of prescribed studies. Now we would not wish to exclude any branch of study laid down in our curriculum as useless or unimportant, much less would we imagine that we are likely to attain to great proficiency in any of them. Yet, as all that we expect in a short course of four years is to lay such a foundation in the different branches as we shall be able during a life of study to build the superstructure of a liberal education upon, we think too much time, proportionately, is spent on a few branches.

We are not quite prepared to accept the statement that "the study of the higher Algebra, Calculus, etc., are not worth the labor expended on them, to men preparing for the general callings of life," though it comes from as good an authority as Dr. Watts, and is quoted by him from Dr. George Cheyne; yet while our regular course in Mathematics is almost, if not altogether equal to that of any American College, and at the same time we fall so far short of their standing in so many other branches, does it not seem that undue prominence is given to that department? Many of the branches taught in our course are crowded into a length of time entirely insufficient to do them anything like justice. Thus the studies in our scientific department, especially those of Geology and Mineralogy are—we might say, considering the broad field which they open up—little more than begun; and this because the time allotted to them is altogether inadequate. Again the Philosophy department, which as a source of mental training may well rival any other branch of our course, is too short, and, as a consequence, too exclusive. Then, further, although we must admire the study of the classics as we have them taught, yet, while they are made a necessary study for the whole four years of the course, while at the same time provision is made for the study of modern languages, of which students cannot avail themselves to any great extent for want of time, there appears to be a slight discrepancy here also. Besides, there is that practically important study of Political

Economy, which at present is occupying the minds of the most prominent men in America, which here is so sadly in the retrograde that a mere primer is thought sufficient to study it from. Shades of Wayland, Mill and Adam Smith! What do you think of Juniors studying Political Economy from Mrs. Fawcett's Political Economy for Beginners? There are still other studies which we might mention here, which we think should have a place in our curriculum; as, for instance, that useful and attractive study of Botany, which Prof. Gray affirms, that, besides being eminently practical, also contains quite as good opportunities for the culture of the mind as any other branch of study, and yet we can learn nothing of it here.

It seems to us, therefore, that the best and only means of remedying these evils at present would be to allow some extent of electives in the course. Of these we may speak hereafter.

In making these remarks we would not be understood as wishing in any way to disparage the efforts of our instructors. On the contrary we feel safe in saying that no College Faculty in Christendom accomplish more work in proportion to their numbers, than that of Acadia. The answers to the objections urged we can therefore easily anticipate, viz., the want of funds sufficient to support such a staff of instructors as a better developed course would require. This fact we will not attempt to deny; but we nevertheless have a private impression that if a little less money had been expended during the last year on more modest buildings on the hill, while the extra amount was laid out in this direction, the future of the Institution might have been quite as bright as it will be under the present arrangement.

### Correspondence.

DEAR ATHENÆUM:

Without,—all nature is clothed in spotless, glittering white. The trees are tossing their stately white-robed branches, and each separate twig looks like a string of jewels as it