

is, but form distorted opinions from the exaggerated and sensational reports of the newspapers.

IN a letter to the *Mail* and the *Telegram* the other day, Mr. G. R. R. Cockburn, under the guise of "suggestions" to Mr. Houston, made a fierce onslaught upon the scheme of reform in the English course of the University, which the latter gentleman brought before the Senate and the university public recently. A part of this scheme is embodied in the draft for a new curriculum in English which we published a short time since, and it is against this part of the scheme that Mr. Cockburn appears at first-sight to direct his principal attack. But if in reality he had only wished to show the defects of the draft, one would think he would have published his communication in the journal which had contained the draft. Readers of his strictures would then have been able to judge of their fairness by comparison with the matter criticized. But criticism of the draft does not appear to have been his entire intention. The letter opens with the assertion that the draft proposed "differs but little in its essential elements from the course which has been in operation for many years, and is so far worthy of our approval." This sentence has a general tone of inspiration in it with which we are not entirely unfamiliar. It is not the first time in the history of the University and College that an attempt has been made to obstruct the advance of reform by an idle and futile appeal to the past. The main source of this critic's indignation, then, appears to lie in the fact that a lay member of the Senate should wish to re-organize a course of study which meets with the approbation of Mr. Cockburn and his friends; a course, moreover, rendered sacred by the dust of past ages settling and resting upon it. Nevertheless, and in spite of the critic's assertion, there is a very considerable difference between the old course and the one which Mr. Houston proposes to substitute for it, as any unprejudiced person can easily see. The alleged course of English in Toronto University and University College has hitherto been a deceit and a delusion. We showed last week how little importance was attached to this subject by the low relative value of the marks assigned to it in examinations, and by the fact that the solitary instructor who was at last provided for this course, has been overburdened with the charge of Italian as well. Those who have graduated from Toronto University with any especial enthusiasm for the study of English, cannot be said to have gained it from the education received in that department here. As an additional illustration of the past misdirection of this course, we may mention that certain members of the Senate will not hear of a living author being represented on the curriculum, however justly famous he may be, and that in spite of the unprecedented growth of literature in the United States, American authors are entirely ignored upon our course. Mr. Houston asks the Senate to effect certain reforms which he and his constituents, the graduates of Toronto University, think urgently necessary to the future welfare of their common *Alma Mater*. He is very far from claiming that his draft curriculum is perfect, and he has both publicly and privately asked for suggestions in the preparation of it. He will doubtless answer Mr. Cockburn's objections for himself. But whatever defects there may be in the proposed curriculum they are very far from furnishing a respectable pretext for an attack upon the main intention of the reform. It might also be said here that Mr. Houston's relations to the Senate are of a quite different nature to what those of his critic were. The latter owed his seat to the political accident that gave the institution under his control representation on the Senate, the former, as well as Messrs. Kingsford, Miller, and Embree, were elected to their positions by our own graduates, for the express purpose of effecting reforms, and galvanizing into vigorous life that asphyxiated body of which Mr. Cockburn was a member. If this gentleman sneers at Mr. Houston's activity in the Senate, we must infer his own inactivity there, and it will now be in order for some one to tell us of a single beneficial measure brought into operation by him.

Leading Article.

FEDERALISM IN GOVERNMENT.

AT a recent meeting of the Young Men's Liberal Club of this city, Mr. William Houston, Provincial Librarian, delivered an address on "The Federal Principle in Government," which was a good practical illustration of the topical method of studying history. After pointing out the close connection that exists between the present and the past, between politics and history, the lecturer briefly described the inductive and deductive methods of treating his theme, preferring the former if time were available, but adopting the latter because so much ground had to be covered in a single address. The subject was then discussed under four divisions, (1) the definition of federal government, (2) the origin of federal government, (3) historical examples of federal government, and (4) the future of federal government.

The definition adopted by the lecturer was substantially that given by Freeman in his unfinished history of federal government, where he divides all states into three classes: (1) small states, in which all citizens take part directly in making and executing the laws; (2) large states, in which the work of legislation is carried on by representatives elected by the people, but the community is undivided; and (3) federal states, the government of which is intermediate between that of a small and that of a large state. A federal state is a large state in its international relations, but is made up of a number of smaller ones in its relations to its own citizens. Of federal governments there are two kinds, for which we have no distinguishing names in English, but which are called in German respectively "Staatenbund" and "Bundesstaat." The Staatenbund is a state in which the central government deals directly only with the governments of the various subdivisions and not with the individual citizens. The United States of America were from 1776 to 1787 a Staatenbund. A Bundesstaat is a state in which the central government deals directly with the individual citizen in some of the relations which always obtain between subject and sovereign. The United States of America is now a Bundesstaat, as the Federal Government not only collects taxes, but exercises other kinds of control by means of a system of courts of law and in other ways. It is impossible to say which of these forms is best. With respect to these and all other types of government it may be said that the one which best serves its purpose is best. Often a certain kind of government is the only one possible, and that is *ipso facto* the best kind. The historical method of studying the science of politics is the best corrective of any tendency to doctrinairism.

It is a mistake to suppose that, ingenious as the federal form of government is, any man or any body of men ever preconceived or invented it. The first federation was in some measure a political necessity, adopted not because it was theoretically the best, but because it was the only device practically possible; and the same remark applies to all subsequent federations. The American colonies, for well-known and perfectly intelligible reasons, could not coalesce in 1776 more completely than they did. Only with great difficulty were they brought ten years later into the closer union which still endures. The Arcadian league was constructed as a counterpoise to the influence of Sparta in the Peloponnesus. The Achaean league was intended to check the growing power of Macedonia. The Dutch league was forced into existence by the aggressions of Spain. The Swiss league is due to the instinct of self-preservation which pervades a number of small Alpine communities surrounded by large and powerful states. The league of Austria-Hungary is the outcome of the battle of Sadowa, and was resorted to as the only possible means of preventing the dissolution of the Austrian empire. The United States of America grew out of the common resistance made by the separate colonies to the unjustifi-