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Editorial Comments.



THE advance which has been made in education during the last few years may almost be considered one of the marvels of the age. Methods of study have been completely changed, and time-honored courses have had to fall back before the onward march of subjects which insist on investigation. Questions of the greatest importance of a political and social nature, involving as they do the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the State, have created a department of study in the leading universities which has been most aptly called Political Science. This from its very nature requires a systematic study of History. In this respect if in no other we ought to be thankful that the study of History is at last receiving the attention which is its due. This is particularly true of America where too little attention has been paid to the history of the various portions of the continent. In the United States many of the local Historical Societies have done excellent work, but there are many more sections where really nothing has been done. The interest of all classes has been as remarkable as the success which has been the result of the systematic study of these subjects in the leading American universities.

For a number of years this subject, or Political Economy as it was then called, had practically no place on the University curriculum. The student in Philosophy had to read certain works but with little benefit to himself, since his reading lacked that direction which is necessary to success. The demand for instruction and the increasing importance of the subject in a measure compelled the authorities of the University to move in the direction of improving the state of affairs which had existed too long. As is well known the outcome was the appointment of a professor who by his energy and enthusiasm has won for the Department of Political Science a foremost place among the courses of study pursued at the University. No one, we think, will find fault with the state of affairs, but every one loyal to the true interests of the University and the advancement of education in general must be heartily glad at the success which has attended this department since its re-organization. Still there is one point in which many feel that an injustice is done to a large number of students, and to which we wish to draw attention.

Practically the course of study pursued in Political Science is the same as that in Law. There is no objection to that, but an honor student in Political Science on completing his course successfully wins his degree of B.A., and on pursuing his reading for another year may write for the degree of LL.B., the natural outcome of the course in Law. The only conclusion which one can make is that the course in Political Science is both an Arts and a Law course, whereas it ought to be either the one or the other.

Herein lies the injustice. A student taking a course in Physics, Classics, Moderns or any other of the courses except Political Science, in the natural course of events takes his degree in Arts; but should he desire to take Law he must begin an entirely new course, and cannot take his LL.B. in less than three years of the most careful study, while his fellow-student in Political Science goes up for examination in one year after graduation in Arts. In the former case the student takes seven years at least to win two degrees, which the student in the latter case gains in five with infinitely less labor, and yet goes forth the equal in the eyes of the world of one who is a much more educated and scholarly man. Why should this be?

In the University there should be no such preference nor premium in one department over others. The solution is by no means difficult, and could be brought about by suppressing Political Science as an Arts course and in making it the Law course as in effect it is. Let the degree of LL.B. be for Law what the degree of B.A. is in Arts, and if the degree of LL.B. is held to be a higher one than B.A. let the standard of matriculation remain as it is. At present it would almost seem that the prospect of both degrees in five years is an inducement to ambitious students to take Political Science instead of some other course for which they are better prepared. No doubt students in that depart will object, but surely their own common sense will let them see that the present arrangements are not in the best interests of the University. The matter is one worthy the attention of the authorities and will likely prove provocative of discussion, but when many are debarred from a privilege which comparatively few enjoy it is necessary for the general good that such matters be discussed.

We would like, as a free institution, to raise our plaintive supplications against the practice of introducing scathing references to our articles into University lectures at most only remotely connected with the subjects under discussion. We are far from advancing the monstrous supposition that these criticisms may sometimes be uncalled for, that the position of the writer may have been misrepresented, that the article in question may have been misunderstood. We bow to the rod; but we object, on general principles, to being tied up before the castigation is administered. There seems to be a certain unfairness in attacking the undoubtedly ill-informed and impertinent *journalist* where the reverent and awe-stricken *student* is unable to defend himself. Consider the feelings of the unfortunate sub-editor, haplessly present, transfixed by the professorial eye, deprived of all right to answer or explain, sitting there to be scathed, and vainly endeavoring with his Homer to hide his blushes and to evade the admiring glances of his companions. Truly it is a sight to have moved the heart of the Hyrcanian bear, had such an animal ever existed. Gentlemen of the Faculty, have mercy; spare us! As individuals, we are poor, we are ignorant, we are depraved, we are unworthy of your notice, we are but as the abject and miserable dust of the earth before your feet, but are we not a newspaper and a brother?