

pounded by a member of that class, although there was no dearth of University men at the meeting.

Moreover, the vast majority of the labor riots and the civic commotions that have arisen in the past, while doubtless primarily due to the commercial depression of the time, nevertheless owe their immediate occurrence to the gross ignorance of their participants. The truth is not new that the stability of a state depends chiefly on the enlightenment of its citizens. And on what is the task of enlightenment mainly thrown? Clearly on the schools, academies and other parts of the educational machinery of which the university may well be styled the flywheel. For it is the University that in reality regulates the efficiency and progress of the inferior halls of learning. They are obliged to work on the lines laid down by the University with respect to its first examinations. Their standard is fixed for them and they are placed in the estimation of the community according to the success of their representatives in the annual contest. Suppose, then, that political economy was put down on the list of prescribed subjects. There would be a large number that would acquire a knowledge of the outlines of the science even though they failed to complete their course. Those, on the other hand, who devoted themselves to a conscientious four years' study would prove no mean antagonists to the false-hearted demagogue or the fallacious doctrine that might cross their path in after life.

There is another and perhaps a more important consideration. As the country grows older the percentage of university men in the *personelle* of the government increases. Hence the reciprocal benefit of university to government and of government to university. If the university instil broad and generous views into the minds of her alumni she will receive innumerable benefits from them during their tenure of office; if, on the other hand, she annually hatches forth a brood of illiberal and unpractical men, she will have much to be thankful for if they do not sacrifice her in their striving for unworthy ends, not to talk of their hastening to her support in her hour of need. Verily in this matter as she sows so shall she reap.

We think that we have said enough to demonstrate the importance as well as the correctness of our position on the subject. Indeed, we may be told that our pains have been gratuitous; we may be told that in theory, at least, no one would think of questioning either the importance or the cogency of the arguments adduced. But we may be assured that, practically, there are serious difficulties in the way. As thus: Where are the funds to come from with which we may found a chair? Surely it were no sin to harbor the thought that the Province, which is generous enough in the interests of education to engage the services of a proficient in Ethiopian and Targumic, may some day see fit to do the like for Political Economy. Even supposing the answer to be for all time "No funds," we maintain that the science is one which perhaps will do fairly well without the guidance of a professor. And, indeed, in these days the necessity for lecturers is not so pressing as formerly. Their most useful function now is to direct their hearers where to look for their information. They are no longer the supreme authorities on their subjects, but are mere guides on the paths to knowledge. It so happens in the case of Political Economy that the standard authorities and text books may be counted on the fingers. Put these, judiciously graded, on the curriculum and, unless the professor were a man of wide reputation, his utility would be anything but apparent. Moreover, whoever he may be, his mind would likely be so biased in favour of certain views that he would be the object of much hostility and would almost infallibly be decried as the source of false doctrines.

There might, perhaps, be another objection urged, and it is the only remaining one that we can conjure up worthy of consideration. It is that were the subject to be broached to our local legislators—for their sanction is a necessity—such is the length to which party hostility has gone that it might prove such a bone of contention that serious injury would result from the contest to the

University. One objector might whisper that the Government would be accused by its opponents of using the University for propagandizing in its own interest and that the Ministers would be cowed by the arraignment into silence and inaction. Did things come to such a pass, pusillanimous indeed would the Ministers be were they to stay their hand, dismayed by the howls and gibes of opposition; despicable in the extreme the opposition impelled by so sordid an idea; and, if the like considerations clogged the wheels of progress, worse than a nullity the Senate.

G. H.

THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM.

It is to be regretted that a more lively interest in the subject of English has not been awakened among the graduates and undergraduates of Toronto University. The new curriculum submitted by Mr. Houston, which appeared in October numbers of the VARSITY, should certainly have led to an intelligent and general discussion of the principles in accordance with which a collegiate course in English should be arranged.

No one who has carefully considered Mr. Houston's scheme can fail to recognize that it is based upon well-defined principles:—(1) Every undergraduate must spend a fair portion of each year in the serious study of our language and literature; (2) Every special student of English must become acquainted with the language and literature in all their periods, from a scientific as well as from a practical point of view; (3) the student must study the literature and language themselves instead of reading and hearing about them; and (4) he must have constant practice in the careful expression of his own thoughts. To these broad underlying principles it would seem that everybody must assent, and gratefully acknowledge, therefore, that Mr. Houston's draft is a great advance on the old curriculum: but still the main difficulties present themselves when one attempts to lay down more specific principles for the detailed arrangement of work in the various years of the course, and here Mr. Houston's plan does not seem to be sufficiently definite, though doubtless it would seem more satisfactory if we might have a brief explanation of its basis of arrangement.

If it may not be thought presumptuous on my part, I will endeavor here, independently of Mr. Houston's proposed scheme, though in perfect harmony with his general principles, to outline a plan for the distribution of work in the four years of the undergraduate course, and if space permit, for the arrangement of a post-graduate course of two or three years also.

Whatever scheme may be proposed, it must never be forgotten that there can be no education without a lively interest—thought's awakener—on the part of the student.

Professors and instructors, particularly those who have been subjected to German influences, are prone to think that their sole duty is to present their subject as a scientific whole, and that whether the student is interested or not is a matter which the student himself must look after. Forgetting that classification and general theory are utterly worthless from an educational point of view unless preceded by a practical acquaintance with the individual facts classified and upon which the theory is based, they fancy that to disregard chronological order or strictly scientific classification, for the mere purpose of awakening interest, is to degrade their subject. My readers, however, are not so minded, and they will readily concede that if facts are the blocks for the rearing of noble structures, interest is the cement which binds them together and without which there can be no solidity; that every true object of study—linguistic, scientific or literary—presents phases which are intensely interesting to the beginner if the teacher will only take pains to recognize them as he is in duty bound to do; and further, that the professor's first duty is not to present a perfect treatment of his subject, but to awaken in his students an intelligent and heartfelt interest in that subject, after which they may be safely