

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE NEWS.

All reports from Societies must reach us by noon on Thursday to insure insertion.

THE CURRICULUM IN "CIVIL POLITY."

To the Editors of THE VARSITY.

SIRS,—As I have been frequently asked by students what changes I am proposing to the Senate to make in the work prescribed under the head of "Civil Polity," in the Arts curriculum, I take the liberty of requesting you to insert, for the information of all concerned, the following brief statement of the suggested alterations, and of the reasons for making them.

I need not dwell on the extremely unsatisfactory character of the present arrangement of work in "Civil Polity," the special work for the Blake Scholarship included. It is so defective as to suggest the question, whether those who, years ago, selected the text books and fixed the order of their sequence, had ever read either those or any other books on the subjects dealt with. To make the curriculum anything like what it should be, it is necessary to add greatly to the amount of work prescribed, as well as to substitute more useful treatises for some whose usefulness is now gone, and for others that never had any. But this remedy cannot be applied without creating a new graduating department of Historical and Political Science, and though the Senate, at my instance four years ago, affirmed the desirability of such a department, I have never been able to secure its consent to the change in the curriculum which the creation of such a department implies. Last year I proposed a less effective, but, as I thought, more feasible remedy for the evils complained of. This was to draw the Special Blake work within the regular curriculum of the third year, make a corresponding increase of work in the "Civil Polity" of the fourth year, improve the course by re-arrangements and substitutions, and then make it optional by allowing honour students in Mental and Moral Science to take in lieu of it English or some other one language in the third and fourth years. I am still of the opinion that this would be the best solution of the difficulty, short of creating a new department; but my proposal was side-tracked by a reference to a special committee, which never met and which has become defunct through efflux of time.

What I now propose is to make certain changes in the "civil polity" course, including the special Blake work, and as this involves a diminution rather than an increase, I cannot see why it should not be granted by the Senate. It may be said that the curriculum will soon be dealt with by a new Senate under the federation scheme, but apart from the pertinent fact that this scheme is not yet accomplished, it is quite certain that no curriculum framed by a new Senate can possibly come into force inside of two years, and it is asking too much of students to require them to spend their valuable time for even two years on such books as they have now to read. Moreover, quite a number of minor changes have been made this year in the Arts curriculum, rendering necessary the issue of a supplement, and this makes the time opportune for asking the Senate to grant other desirable concessions. The following table will give a clear idea of the changes proposed in the resolution of which I have given notice, and which will come up for discussion at the next meeting of Senate in the second week of April.

PRESENT CURRICULUM.

PROPOSED CURRICULUM.

Third Year.

PASS—Rogers, Manual of Political Economy.
HONOUR—Creasy, Rise and Progress of the English Constitution.
" Lorimer, Institutes of Law.
" Fawcett, Manual of Political Economy.

PASS—Walker, Political Economy.
HONOUR—Creasy, Rise and Progress of the English Constitution.
" Holland, Elements of Jurisprudence.
" Fawcett, Manual of Political Economy.

Fourth Year.

PASS—Smith, Wealth of Nations
" Cox, British Commonwealth.
HONOUR—Cairnes, Character and Method of Political Economy.
" Maine, Ancient Law.
" Bayne, New Analytic of Political Economy.

PASS—Jevons, Money and the Mechanism of Exchange.
" Bagehot, The English Constitution.
HONOUR—Mill, Principles of Political Economy (Laughlin's Edition).
" Maine, Ancient Law.
" Bourinot, Parliamentary Procedure and Practice in Canada (Chapters I. and XXII.)

Blake Work.

Rogers' Manual of Political Economy.
Fawcett, Manual of Political Economy.
Lorimer, Institutes of Law.
Taswell-Langmead, Eng. Constitutional History.
Broom, Constitutional Law.
Maine, Early History of Institutions.

Walker, Political Economy.
Fawcett, Manual of Political Economy.
Holland, Elements of Jurisprudence.
Taswell-Langmead, Eng. Const. History.
Dicey, Law of the Constitution.
Cooley, Constitutional Law in the United States.

The reasons for the particular changes proposed may be very briefly stated. Rogers' Manual never was a good text-book, and it is now completely out of date. Many of the statements made in it have become quite incorrect and misleading, and they are not even corrected in later editions. Walker is, by common consent, the foremost living writer on Economical questions in the English language. His book is the best Elementary text-book on the subject I know of in any language, especially for Canadian Colleges. It is the work of an American of the school of John Stuart Mill, whose special treatise on parts of the subject have won for him a high place in the esteem of English teachers. Creasy's and Fawcett's works are good and useful, but Lorimer's should never have been prescribed as part of so limited a course. It is, even from the point of view of those who believe in a "Law of Nature," a bad text-book, but the chief objection to it is that it gives no idea whatever of the nature of jurisprudence as that term is understood in all English-speaking communities. We have in Canada two systems of law—the Roman Civil Law in Quebec, and the English Common Law in the other Provinces. For students of either of these great systems, Holland's "Elements" would be very useful; Lorimer's serves no useful purpose whatever in relation to the legal system of this or of any other country.

Adam Smith's work can never be ignored by any student of Political Economy, but it is entirely unsuited for becoming part of a limited course, especially for pass. It began a revolution in the Science, but the revolution did not end with it, and it is absurd to use as a text book in one of the most progressive of the sciences a work more than a century old. For one who has gone over the whole ground of Political Economy in such a manual as Walker's, the currency question is, for many reasons, the most interesting and important, and Jevons' book—one of the International Scientific Series—is, on the whole, the best for our purposes that has yet appeared. Cox's "British Commonwealth" is a curious mixture of a discussion of political principles with a description of political institutions, but both are alike antiquated, and, moreover, the book is, and has long been, out of print. Cox himself produced a more elaborate one to supersede it nearly twenty-five years ago, and anyone who takes his idea of British institutions from our text-book will be as effectually misled as if he were to depend on the Union Act of 1840 for a knowledge of the political institutions of the Dominion of Canada. Bagehot's work is just what is needed for the place. It gives a correct view of the principles underlying the constitutional machinery—principles which remain comparatively unchanged amidst all the changes of the machinery itself. Cairnes' treatise on method is still a most valuable work, and if it is to be kept on the course I would suggest that it be substituted for Fawcett's Manual. Mills' great work—the greatest that has appeared in England since Smith's time—ought to be on the course, and Professor Laughlin, of Harvard, has made it much more useful than it formerly was for the Canadian student, by doing even more for it than McCullough and Rogers have done for Smith's "Wealth of Nations." He has modernized it and supplied many useful illustrations of Mills' positions from the economic conditions of this continent. Maine's great work is the best book on the historical treatment of jurisprudence, and it should remain where it is. Strange to say, there is no such book as Bayne's "New Analytic," so far as I can find out. It would be interesting to know who originally proposed it, and still more interesting to know on what grounds its presence on the curriculum for ten years or more can be defended. Such treatment of a great subject by the Senate seems to me little sort of scandalous. My proposal is to put in the vacant place a short treatise on the history and law of the Canadian Constitution, prepared by Mr. Bourinot, clerk of the Canadian House of Commons, as an introduction to his valuable work on Parliamentary Procedure. Both Mr. Bourinot and his publishers intimated to me some time ago their willingness to have this introduction republished in separate form if there should appear to be a reasonable prospect of a remunerative circulation for the book, and such a prospect would be opened up by its adoption as a text-book in Canadian Universities. I may add, that years ago, the late Chief-Justice Moss, then Vice-Chancellor of the University, gave me as his reason for the non-introduction of this subject into the curriculum the fact that there was not then in existence a good text-book; any one who takes the trouble to read Mr. Bourinot's work will see that this objection is no longer valid.

For the special Blake work, I suggest only two changes—the substitution of Dicey's "Introduction to the Law of the Constitution" for Brown's "Constitutional Law," and of Cooley's "Constitutional