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THE University Council have recently dealt with several matters of more than usual interest. It will be remembered by our readers that at a meeting of the senate which was held some weeks ago a long and elaborate scheme for the junior and senior public examinations was submitted for discussion, and after a warm debate was carried by a considerable majority. One feature of that scheme was the severance of "matriculation," which is primarily a test of fitness for entering upon a University course, from the examination which is meant to be a test of the efficiency of the teaching in the schools. The scheme referred to said nothing about matriculation except to repeal the existing statutes. It was then stated that the regulations for matriculation would appear in certain revised statutes for the several degrees, which were under the consideration of the council. The report furnished of the last meeting of the council informed our readers that that body has formulated its scheme for the arts and science course. The proposed regulations must of course come before the senate at its next meeting either for acceptance or rejection. The first regulation for the degree of B.A. states what is to be considered as "matriculation" for the arts course—"Students who in the senior public examination pass in Latin, Greek, and mathematics may be enrolled as matriculated students in arts." That regulation gives a right to candidates who have passed in those particular subjects at the senior public examination, even if they have failed in the whole examination, to enter the University as students in arts. If intending students have not presented themselves at that examination they are not shut out from the University, for the second regulation runs—"Students who have not complied with the above conditions may nevertheless be enrolled as matriculated students on satisfying the professors in the faculty of arts that they have sufficient knowledge to enable them to enter upon the first year's course." Similar regulations have been passed concerning the science course. The candidate who has passed in either Latin,

Greek, French, or German, and also in mathematics and physics, has a corresponding right to matriculate as a student in science, and as in the previous instance, the side door may be opened to any one who is sufficiently advanced to profit by the classes.

Every one will be gratified at this change. A national university should have its doors opened as wide as possible. Its aim should be to admit all who are fitted to enter upon a course of study, and to exclude rigidly those who are not fit, because their presence would only be a drag upon tuition. Without lowering the character of its teaching, and without making its degrees cheap and easy, every facility should be given to all to become students in whatever branch of learning their tastes may fit them to excel in. The University ought to aim at being as useful and as popular as possible, but should never be tempted to adopt a low standard of attainment. That this is the ambition which animates the council is especially evident from another and quite novel code of regulations which will be presented to the senate at the same time as the other amended rules. This is a scheme for a "higher public examination," which is nothing more or less than an inclined plane leading up to the giddy heights of graduation which all may venture to tread who are possessed of the requisite ambition, industry, and patience. The

University has to exercise the two distinct functions of teaching and examination. The former is unquestionably the true work of any university, and that to which its attention should be mainly directed. Its examinations should be based upon its teaching, and should serve as a test of its skill in imparting knowledge. Seeing, however, that there are many teachers and many learners in every community who are not connected with any university, the University may with dignity and grace open its examinations to all who can pass them. The London University is nothing but an examining body, and pays no attention to teaching at all. Hitherto it has been a very difficult task for any one to obtain a degree in Adelaide or Melbourne who was not a student attending lectures. It is now proposed that any one may present himself at any of the ordinary examinations whether he be attending classes or not. It is not to be compulsory on him to attempt to pass in all the subjects at once. He may take one subject this year, and one next year, and so on. The subjects of the first two years may thus be made to extend over any series of years. The candidate will obtain credit for what he passes in and no more. When he comes, however, to the third year's subjects he must brace himself for a severer test. He must pass in all the subjects proper to that year at one time.

This is a radical but very wholesome change. It opens the doors of the University to those who have but little leisure and no opportunity for entering upon the ordinary career of a student. It puts even the highest honors of the University within the reach of all who will struggle for them. It enables a man to be a student while working for his daily bread. A clergyman in the country or a schoolmaster may under this scheme devote his leisure to the work of reading for a degree. He may give as many years to the task as he likes, and may climb the inclined plane as slowly and as surely as he likes. There are many men and women with literary tastes who fail to make proper use of their abilities for want of adequate stimulus and wise guidance. The

needed incentive and direction will be afforded by this proposed scheme. The spare energies of those who have a taste for literature or science need not now be wasted by desultory and aimless reading, as they will have a definite object in view in their studies. A student who does not attend lectures is always at a disadvantage as compared with those who are able to take the ordinary course, but this disadvantage will be compensated by the length of time over which his studies may be made to extend. This is not a scheme to give cheap degrees to outsiders, for they must pass the same examinations as ordinary students. It is not intended to interfere with the relation between public schools and the University, for while there is no upward limit of age no one can take advantage of it who is under 18. We do not expect that this new departure will produce any sudden and brilliant results, but we trust that in the long run it may prove a constant and widespread stimulus to the cause of the higher education. It will be of particular value to young men who, having obtained their special professional education, are desirous of a wider culture; to the students and ministers of all denominations whose opportunities of excelling in early life have been few; to schoolmasters who wish to rise to the summit of their profession; and to ladies who have leisure for study but who cannot attend lectures. We congratulate the council on this excellent scheme, and congratulate likewise this colony on setting so excellent an example to the other colonial universities, which it is to be hoped they will speedily follow.

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