

THE governing body of the Battersea Polytechnic is arranging considerable developments for next session in the work of the Domestic Economy Department of the Battersea Polytechnic. An entirely new third-year course will be introduced. This course will carry forward greatly the application of science to housecraft. It will consist, in the main, of much more elaborate work both on the theoretical and practical sides in the subjects of physiology, hygiene, chemistry, physics, and biology. It is intended that special attention shall be given to the carrying forward on the scientific side of the processes which underlie the arts of cookery, laundrywork, and housewifery. It is intended, too, that students shall spend some of their time in practical research work upon the various biological and chemical processes in which so much of their work will be done.

THE report of the Hebdomadal Council of Oxford University, entitled "Principles and Methods of University Reform," has been published by the Clarendon Press. Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Chancellor of the University, contributes an introduction on behalf of the council. We hope later to deal with the important proposals contained in the report, but attention may here be directed to the question of compulsory Greek and the suggested entrance examination. The council proposes that Greek shall be no longer a compulsory subject, but that every candidate must, in order to pass Responsions, satisfy the masters of the schools in Latin and in elementary mathematics, and also either in (a) Greek or in (b) two other subjects, one, and only one, of which must be a modern language. The optional subjects include, besides modern languages, English history, elementary politics, elementary trigonometry, statics and dynamics, elementary physics and chemistry, and the general principles of geography and the geography of the British Isles and Empire. The proposal to make Greek an optional subject is, says Lord Curzon in his introduction, based "mainly on the fact that the non-Greek curriculum is now firmly established, not only in the secondary schools receiving grants from Government, but also, as an alternative course taken by many boys, in the older public schools, which supply a large proportion of the students of the University." The question of compulsory Greek has been purposely separated from that of an entrance examination. The scheme for an entrance examination framed by the council is as follows:—There will be, in substitution for Responsions, an entrance examination, conducted on behalf of the University by the Delegates for the Inspection and Examination of Schools. This examination will include three necessary subjects and optional subjects. In order to pass, a candidate must qualify in the three necessary subjects at one and the same time, and must also pass in two of the optional subjects, either when he passes in the necessary subjects or at some other time. The necessary subjects will be English, to be tested by an essay or a composition on materials supplied, e.g. précis or reproduction of a passage read aloud; Latin or Greek; elementary mathematics; two papers, (a) arithmetic and algebra, (b) geometry. The optional subjects will be practically the same as those suggested for Responsions. Referring to the entrance examination, Lord Curzon points out that, in adopting the view that school studies should be excluded from the curriculum of the University, and that all matriculated students should be required to have received a minimum standard of general education, the council believes the University will be acting in its best interests by helping to maintain a proper standard in the schools which prepare for it.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

PARIS.

Academy of Sciences, August 22.—M. Emile Picard in the chair.—The president announced the death of M. Eugène Rouché.—Paul **Sabatier** and A. **Maihe**: The catalytic preparation of the phenolic oxides and the diphenylenic oxides. The authors have applied the catalytic properties of thoria to the preparation of phenyl ether and its homologues. The thoria is maintained at a temperature of between 390° C. and 450° C., and the vapour of the phenol passed over it. The yield is good;

but if the temperature is raised another reaction, characterised by the elimination of hydrogen, takes place, the oxide of diphenylene being formed. The reaction applies to the cresols and xylenols.—J. **Guillaume**: Observations of the sun made at the Observatory of Lyons during the second quarter of 1910. Observations were possible on fifty-four days, and the results are recorded in tables showing the number of spots, the distribution of the spots in latitude, and the distribution of the faculæ in latitude.—M. **Schaumasse**: Observations of the Metcalf comet made at the Observatory of Nice with the bent equatorial of 40-cm. aperture. The comet appears as a nebulosity of the tenth magnitude, with a well-marked condensation.—Michel **Fekete**: A theorem of M. Landau.—C. **Maitézos**: The real image of Purkinje.—L. **Fondard** and F. **Gauthié**: The composition of carnations with flexible stems and rigid stems. Three American varieties of carnation with rigid stems, and one French variety with flexible stems, have been analysed, and the differences in the stiffness of the stems found to be accompanied with distinct differences in composition.—Ed. **Hesse**: *Trypanoplasma vaginalis*, a new species found as a parasite in the vagina of the leech.—E. **Roubaud**: A Bombex preying on the Glossina of Dahomey. This wasp is one of the very small number of species known to capture the mosquito.

CALCUTTA.

Asiatic Society of Bengal, August 3.—Manindra Nath **Banerjee**: A system of Indian scientific vocabulary. This paper attempts to give Sanskrit equivalents for a number of European scientific terms, mostly on the basis of phonetic resemblance. With the help of dictionaries and grammars, the Sanskrit words are made to yield the meanings warranted by their European originals.—Panchanan **Neogi** and Birendra Bhusan **Adhikary**: The preparation of phenyl-nitro-methane by the interaction of mercurous nitrite and benzyl chloride. The present work is in continuation of Rây and Neogi's work on the preparation of aliphatic nitro-compounds by the interaction of mercurous nitrite and alkyl iodides. The authors have prepared phenyl nitrite and alkyl iodides.—D. **Hooper**: *Materia Medica Animalium Indica*. A classified list of substances of the animal kingdom used in Indian medicine, with notes on their origin, history, uses, and chemical composition. The list is compiled from several works on Indian materia medica, with original observations of the author.

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