

"The existing doctorates of the home universities should, if possible, be maintained, and their present standard should not be lowered."

The words "if possible" in this resolution seem to give away the case, and justify the Senate in the action it has taken.

In the paragraph of the article immediately following that from which I have already quoted the writer destroys the argument as to the extreme importance of the establishment of the new degree. He says that "university professorships will be filled everywhere by men who have shown by their work and teaching that they are qualified and eager to advance knowledge in their respective subjects, and the abler students will go to the abler teachers. . . . Degrees have very little to do with the matter."

This is the heart of the matter, and is exactly what is implied in the second reason given by the Academic Council against the establishment of a new degree, namely, that "the abler students come to London on account of the facilities for study, and not primarily to get an English degree." If the writer of the article will read over again the documents in support of the *summary* of reasons given by the Academic Council for and against the establishment of the new degree, he will find in the report of the Imperial Studies Committee that emphasis is laid on "the opportunities of work under English scholars of international reputation." These opportunities are included in the facilities for study, which, in the opinion of the Academic Council, do not consist wholly of "museums, libraries, and laboratories."

It should be borne in mind that the conclusions of the Academic Council are in entire accordance with the opinion of the members of the Imperial Studies Committee, of which the chairman is Lord Bryce, and which includes many members who are not only acquainted with the academic point of view, but also able to bring to bear on this matter their varied experience of public affairs.

M. J. M. HILL.

University College, London, W.C.1, May 14.

HAVING already expressed my view in the article which is criticised by Prof. Hill, I can only add that America and Canada have asked for one thing, and the University of London, in response to their demand, has offered another. Which of the two parties is supported by the more cogent reasons for its action is a matter of opinion. Mine has been already sufficiently expressed, and I am supported by the belief that it is shared by others who are more intimate with the feelings and conditions which led to the original request from overseas.

W. A. T.

May 18.

Proposed Society of Science Students.

FOR some time past we have had in mind the desirability of the existence of a society of young scientific students for mutual help. There are no doubt many enthusiastic students of science who, like ourselves, have to rely chiefly on their own efforts for their progress in science, and we think that it would be of great advantage to them if they could co-operate in such matters as the purchase of apparatus, materials, and books, and combine for mutual help. There is no society which fully provides for these, and we have decided, after careful consideration, to endeavour to try to get into touch with some of this class of students through the columns of NATURE. Will those students who are interested in the subject please communicate with Mr. P. E. Owens, 28 Jesse Terrace, Castle Hill, Reading?

J. A. BUTLER.

P. E. OWENS.

CLOUDS AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE smoke and haze which commonly obscure the sky in large cities, and the otherwise restricted outlook, allow the town dweller inadequate opportunities for the study of clouds, but to those who live in the country, and to the observant worker in a town when spending a holiday away from his native place, the ever-varying cloud effects form quite as attractive an object of interest as the countryside itself. This being so, it might be thought that in landscape scenes artists would devote at least as much attention to the sky and the clouds above as to the hills and valleys below. That this is not the case will be painfully evident to the meteorologist, or even to the ordinary intelligent observer of Nature who visits the Royal Academy and makes but a cursory examination of its walls. Let it be granted at once that there are notable exceptions, but the conclusion cannot be resisted that to many artists the clouds form a very subsidiary part of the picture, and are put in to produce what to the artist's eye is presumably a pleasing effect, but without the least regard to natural truth.

The majority of the clouds appearing in this year's exhibition belong to the strato-cumulus or fracto-cumulus type, though, as would be expected, the hard convection cumulus, the most striking of all clouds, is not neglected. Perhaps the most remarkable feature is the almost entire neglect of high clouds of the cirrus and cirro-cumulus types, which produce some of the most beautiful effects in Nature. Cirro-cumulus is shown in one or two sunset pictures, and a not entirely successful attempt has been made in one case to depict the sun shining feebly through an alto-stratus veil; but true cirrus is almost entirely unrepresented. In "The Passing of Autumn" (91) the meteorologist may think that he detects a fragment of false cirrus showing up against a rather fine cumulus, but the remaining clouds in this picture spoil what might otherwise have been a successful cloud study. True cumulus should surely be a cloud type which would lend itself to the artist's needs without any departure from the forms provided by Nature; but in many cases these clouds are given the most grotesque and unreal shapes, which completely spoil the picture to the observant lover of the country. On the other hand, some of the most successful clouds in the exhibition appear in B. W. Leader's "The Weald of Surrey" (51) and A. R. Quinton's "The Road over the Downs, Sussex" (695), where clouds of the cumulus and strato-cumulus types are both true to Nature and blend admirably with the peaceful scenes depicted. Less peaceful, but with an equally admirable effect, is A. W. Parsons's "Rolling from the West" (196), where similar clouds are depicted over the sea. In the most prominent picture of the second gallery, "Cader Idris" (87), H. Hughes-Stanton includes clouds of the cumulus type which, in their hard outlines and rather unnatural colouring, are very jarring when inspected from any of the nearer parts of the room; but if the picture is