

Students Looking Thoughtful

THE shouts of the student cricketers and basketball girls are dying, the sough of the yo-yo is hushed, and the voice of the lecturer is loud in the land. For in 20 days the annual examination offensive begins in Adelaide. In a short but will-ing campaign from November 3 to December 5 hun-dreds of students from the University, colleges, high schools, and primary schools will stand or fall on the results of a year's hard study.

Even the lecturers will be silent for a fortnight before zero hour at the University on November 3. According to the University calendar, lectures end on Saturday week, and the students will be left in peace to "swot" for their degree and diploma exams.

The fortnight's lull is known at the 'Varsity as the "stew vac." Much midnight oil is burned in that brief spell, and those who have idled during the year make frantic efforts to "cram" for the impending tests. Sport, dances, pictures—every-thing is cut out for that vital fortnight.

Some 'Varsity students who work during the day and attend night lectures take their annual holi-days in this fortnight and sacrifice happy hours at Victor Harbor for the sake of a doubtful pass at the exams.

The degree exams at the University will last from November 3 to 16. Three-hour sessions will be held daily from 9.30 to 12.30, and from 2 to 5. The big week will be from November 7 to 12. The question papers have already been set by the professors and lecturers, and most of them are in the hands of the printers.

NO time is lost in marking the papers, and the first batch of results will probably be out before the exams are over. All the results will be completed in time for the university commemoration in December.

In the midst of the degree exams will come one at the other end of the scale—the qualifying certificate examination, which is the end-all and the be-all of the primary schoolboy's life.

Strangely enough, the Q.C. this year will be held on Armistice Day—Friday, November 11. The children will be given two minutes' respite at 11 a.m., and no doubt many of them will wish that 11 a.m. marked a cessation of hostilities for them, as it did for the war-sick armies in 1918.

Along with the University exams will come the final tests for A.M.U.A. and Mus. Bac. candidates at the Elder Conservatorium. The examiners will listen to students play and sing from November 7 to 15.

The biggest tests of all—the University public exams for the intermediate, leaving, and leaving honors certificates—will not be held until the end of November and the beginning of December. The campaign will start on the morning of November 22 with physics for all three grades, and will end on the afternoon of December 5 with German for intermediate and leaving honors candidates, and Greek and geology for leaving students.

ENTRIES for the public examinations are still being counted at the University. The regis-



trar (Mr. F. W. Eardley) thinks that there will be about the same number as last year.

Of the 2,050 candidates who were eligible for the intermediate certificate last year only 642 qualified for it; 309 out of 841 qualified for the leaving certificate; and 100 out of 214 qualified for the leaving honors.

The total number of entries for all subjects in the intermediate exam last year was 17,000, and of these 7,790 were fails and 10,119 passes.

Whether they fail or pass, most students at exam time would agree with the Old Testament writer—"Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh."

The bite of the examination bug affects students in various ways. Some revel in the chance to display the knowledge they have accumulated during the year, and wield the examination pen with as much zest as Bradman wields the willow. Others become mere bundles of nerves and are potential "fails" before they put pen to paper.

"The tension of an examination hall will at times disconcert a student so much that he cannot answer the paper half as well as he could in the classroom," said a recent editorial in the Adelaide High School Magazine.

"But the number thus affected is comparatively small," it goes on. "The examination system is possibly fairer than that recently adopted in some parts by which class work alone is taken into account, because the class work system offers wider loopholes to favoritism and prejudice.

"Another charge often laid against competitive examinations is that they are conducive to blind cramming rather than to thoughtful enquiry, and it is certainly difficult to refute this. But enterprising scholars will al-



ways make researches beyond their lectures. "The favorite complaint of dear old ladies that hard mental work is not good for growing youths has very poor grounds. There are few bad effects from work done sensibly, while the evils of idleness are manifold.

"A rather more serious effect of competitive tests is that they lead to insularity in study. Many students are unwilling to share any select tit-bits of knowledge they have gleaned, and regard any-one else's use of them as a heinous plagiarism."

WHAT do students do when their fund of knowledge has run dry, and they are left at the exam desk nibbling their pens and wishing for the weary two hours to pass! Most of these unhappy scholars turn to the desk itself for relief, and add an inscription or two to its ink-scarred surface.

Here are some of the inscriptions gleaned today from the desks at the Exhibition Building, where the University public exams are held every Decem-ber:—

"In loving memory of Lawrence Jones, who died here in cruel pain while doing French exam, 1931. Blest are the pure in heart."

"This paper was a hard one. The ink was very good. The boy he was a failure. So his father slew him where he stood."

"Here I sit with wrinkled brow, For this paper is a fair cow."

One student started a parody on Rupert Brooke's famous sonnet:—

"If I should die, think only this of me, That one exam desk in this pond'rous hall Is cursed forever."

One student drew a picture of a tombstone with the following epitaph:—"Here rests his head upon the lap of earth the examiner who set the leaving chem. paper, 1930."

The results of the leaving honors exam will be known in December. The leaving results will be out at the end of December or early in the new year. Intermediate candidates will not know their fate until the end of January or early in February.

After the results come the "Notes by Examiners" in the public examinations manual issued by the University. Here is a typical "note" by the examiner in intermediate English last year:—

"Many of the bad spellings noted in the papers are rooted in slovenly habits of speech. Samples that seem clearly to indicate faulty pronunciation are:—

"Ashored (for assured), exhorsted, minotinous, supprizing, appertite, conspiracy, indercate, acci-dently, govonor."

The examiners' notes are read and re-read by college and high school teachers, who then begin again the yearly round of preparing their charges for the summer exam, offensive.

Conservatorium Chamber Music Recital

By Alex Burnard

It is very seldom that we have the pleasure of hearing two string quartets in the Conservatorium evening programmes. The quartet—Mr. Peter Bornstein, Miss Kathleen Meegan, Miss Sylvia Whittington, and Mr. Harold Parsons—had chosen two gems for our delectation last night. The Brahms C minor, op. 51, is remarkable for a consistently exalted expression of feeling. The first movement, while essentially abstract, is alive with a robustness of rhythm, and the players unfolded its secrets and rose to the climaxes with fine certitude of touch. The next two move-ments are strangely subdued. The Romanze was as a fleeting landscape, done for the most part in mono-chrome, velvet-rich; but the trio was rather prodigal of its colors. The undercurrent of fun was delicately in-sisted on. And so back again to the beautiful browns. The strenuous and lofty thought of the finale was vigor-ously proclaimed by the players.

It is when a great work, such as the one under discussion, is made to sound so satisfying, so clear, and so inevitable—even for a first hearing—that the spontaneity and musical in-sight of its exponents are most mani-fest. They were equally con-vincing in the Ravel gossamer-fabric. All the subtle shadings and transparency of texture of this remarkable work were brought to the light. They were unanimous in the rhythmic intricacies—especially those of the nervous finale. But it was in the luscious muted tone and harmonies of the "Tres lent" that the soul of the quartet was, as it were, crystallised. Here is the wealth of color, here each instrument in turn becomes an angelic voice to which the others seem to listen, while diffusing their own soft aura of sounds.

Miss Hilda Gill, with Mr. George Pearce at the piano, was heard to great advantage in a group of German songs: "Evening Song" and "Thy Lovely Face" of Schumann, "The Lad And The Stream" (Schubert), and "Why should we seek to hide?" (Strauss). She was at her best in the Schumann, the peace of both songs being felt with restraint and artistry.

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NEW ENTOMOLOGIST AT MUSEUM

English Scientist

The governors of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery yesterday appointed Mr. Herbert Womersley, who for two years has been carrying out research work for the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, entomologist at the Museum. He will take the place formerly held by the late Mr. A. M. Lea, and will begin duty early in 1933.

Mr. Womersley, an enthusiastic and capable worker, has attained distinction in specialised branches of his work, and has written many publi-cations on them. He is at present in Perth with his wife and family, being honorary lecturer in entomology at the University there. His ap-pointment with the pasture and field pests section of the entomological division of the Research Council was for three years, his special investiga-tions being concerned with the con-trol of lucern flea and the red legged earth mite in Western Australia.

He is an Englishman, and after four years' war service, worked at the Warrington and Bristol Museums. Study at the British Museum followed, and he took a refresher course at the Imperial College. On the voyage to Australia he spent several weeks in Cape Town studying entomological life. He is a fellow of the Entomolog-ical Society of London, and in 1929 was elected a member of the Linnean Society of London. He has been associated with a number of natural history societies, having been presi-dent of the Bristol Naturalists' As-sociation. He is 43.

Mr. Womersley holds high recom-mendations from those with whom he has worked. Dr. G. E. Nicholls, professor of biology at the Perth Uni-versity, said he was the most zealous worker he had known, and that he had made himself an authority in his own peculiarly difficult group of in-sects. He was also highly recommen-ded by the chief of the Division of Economic Entomology of the Research Council (Dr. R. J. Tillyard).