

Register 9th April 1902.

We are informed that Professor Douglas, being desirous of returning to Europe, has resigned the chair of modern history and English language and literature in the University of Adelaide. The University council, at a meeting on Tuesday afternoon, accepted the professor's resignation from the end of the current term.

Register 23rd April

A SCHOOL DIRECTOR ON TEACHING.

The keynote of the reform movement in the Victorian school system was struck by Mr. Frank Tate, the newly-appointed Director of Education, at the recent conference of the State School Teachers' Union. Mr. Tate rightly asserts that this reform agitation first sprang from the teachers themselves, and that its motto is "reality in education." Much of the educational work done under existing methods is comparable only with that most useless of operations, "dropping empty buckets into empty wells, and growing old drawing nothing up." The word reality is used with peculiar force by Carlyle to denote the special characteristics of the temperament of the hero and the peculiar nature of his work. The world always has need of an urgent call for more reality in every department of human life; but only when some strong man, like the late Mr. Hartley, or Mr. Frank Tate (who has himself chafed under the system of non-reality), happens to rise to a position of great influence is much hope of real reform presented where the old policy has prevailed. The Victorian Education Department in recent years has drifted into some such muddle as that which overtook the British War Office in its worst days. Professional men who understood their work and were ready to do it were too often treated as underlings of office-bred men, whose nearness to the fount of authority gave them undisputed power, and generally precluded them from learning much about the business which they nominally administered. Mr. Tate, as a teacher, is determined to stand in a direct personal relationship to the other teachers working for the Victorian taxpayer; and the department, which has neither soul nor body to suffer punishment for its faults, must not in future come between the instructors of the children and the responsible heads of the school system.

One great fault which The Register has found with methods in education is that they set up the memory as a kind of fetish. No boy is commended for thinking his own thoughts; but is praised in the proportion in which he may be successful in cramming into his head other people's ideas. The manly, original, thinking boy must be brought out, and the prizes which offer the best chances in life must not all be given to the children who never think out things for themselves. Mr. Tate says:—

At present there are two boys under every jacket—the active healthy boy, the tree-climbing boy, who explores nests and who could be interested so vitally in all nature-craft; but he is generally left outside the school, and inside you have the smug young lesson-learner and examination-passer, who doesn't know anything at all about these things, but who is the joy of his teacher and the best boy in the school. You often find the God-given naturalist of the next 20 or 30 years the phenomenally dull boy of the school.

Reality in education under the new Victorian syllabus will mean that boys and girls will begin their lessons with the consideration of those things which from their infancy have naturally been a joy and a wonder to them. True education commences at the home of the child and spreads gradually from that as a centre. This was the dominant idea with Mr. Hartley when he formulated the plan of teaching geography by starting with the street or road which led past the schoolhouse, and by inducing the thoughts to radiate outwards from that as a centre. Mr. Tate, in the same spirit, is preparing hints for lessons on nature study, regarding which great elasticity will be permitted, because the kind of nature learning which is stimulating to a boy living in the mallee country is different from that which is appropriate to pupils in a mining or manufacturing locality. Teachers will be materially helped in imparting reality to their lessons by occasional attendance at the "Summer School," which has for two successive years been highly successful in Melbourne, and which attracted 600 teachers during the last Christmas holidays.

South Australia has taken the lead in one movement of which Mr. Tate warmly approves. He remarks:—"It would be economical if we had our teachers trained by the University, as in Adelaide. It would pay us in every

sense. We would save on our Training College, and we would get a wider and more cultured outlook on the part of our teachers." He also announced that the Melbourne University would give scholarships to state school students in return for all money which the Government might grant to the institution during its financial straits. The scheme which will result from the deliberations of the University Commission is almost certain to include a provision for the Ministerial and permanent heads of the Education Department having seats on the council, and this innovation will be only one part of a more general plan for unifying various educational agencies and preventing the duplication of work at needless expense. A similar system of correlating the various institutions on North terrace has been suggested by The Register as a means of bringing into line the University, the Education Department, the School of Mines, and the Public Library. In other directions also the principle should be applied. For example, the local authorities ought to be induced to take a pride in the condition of their district schoolhouses and grounds. Mr. Tate speaks truly when he says that in many places the most melancholy and utterly forsaken looking building in the neighbourhood is the schoolhouse. Even the smallest repair has now usually to be a subject of circumlocutory correspondence with the central authorities, who sometimes send inspectors to report upon the matter

and thus multiply the necessary cost by two or three. Mr. Tate asserts that if Australian systems were beginning again the right plan would be to keep the central departments from having anything to do with schoolhouses, and to throw that responsibility on the local bodies. Reason and commonsense support this view. In South Australia, if some reality were imparted to the status of boards of advice by connecting them closely with the corporations or district councils, and fostering pride in the schoolhouses as municipal or district buildings, a great improvement on existing conditions would result. On this, as on several other topics, Mr. Tate spoke words of practical prudence; but the chief value of his address to the teachers of Victoria lay in the ringing note of enthusiasm which it uttered in favour of reality in education and sympathy with the growing manhood or womanhood of the pupil, struggling to develop itself on the natural lines laid down by an all-wise Providence:—

If you take a wisely ordered primary education system you will find that it must give an all-round development. It must include the training of the imagination—we need more imagination in life; the training of the eye and hand—we need a handy people; and such a training on the intellectual side as will fit men to stand on their own feet and think their own thoughts. And, best of all, we need a training on the moral side which will turn out self-respecting, God-fearing men, biased toward doing right.

Advertiser 29th April

CONSERVATORIUM CONCERT.

Adhering to the principle which has governed the selection of numbers at the Adelaide Conservatorium of Music ever since the establishment of that institution, the director, in arranging the programme for the chamber music concert held on Monday night, introduced several works new to Adelaide. To musicians and the music-loving public any concert at the Conservatorium is a welcome event. The students' roll contains the names of some excellent vocalists and instrumentalists, and the staff is eminently capable of treating faithfully the most elaborate and technical works. The principle of introducing new works in addition to giving masterly interpretations of better-known compositions cannot be too highly commended, for not only is public knowledge thereby extended and the musical taste of the people improved, but to musical societies and individual performers many gems are introduced which might otherwise remain undiscovered. The performers on Monday night were—Violin, Herr H. Reinicke; cello, Herr H. Kugelberg; pianoforte, Mr. Bryceon Treharne; vocalist, Miss Gub. Hack, A.R.C.M. These members of the staff were assisted by Mrs. Ennis (violin), and Mr. Eugene Alderman, Elder scholar (viola). The programme was headed by Saint Saëns' sonata for piano and cello (op. 32). The opening movement, allegro, succeeded by a charming andante tranquillo, which contains a number of specimens of the skill of the composer in elaborate writing. In the concluding allegro-moderato both performers had opportunities of showing their skill, of which they availed themselves to the full. A quintet for piano and strings (op. 5) by Christian Sinding, a romantic but daring modern Norwegian writer, was one of the most popular items of the evening. The universality of the passion it voices carries its message to every heart. Its rich harmonies seem to reflect the masses of color to be found only in the land of the midnight sun, its plaintive passages to echo the sighing of the wind amongst the pines, and its themes retell for modern ears the deeds, hopes, and disappointments of a nation of giants. The work contains four numbers—allegro ma non troppo, andante, intermezzo, and finale—tutti vivace. The programme was headed by Saint Saëns' sonata for piano and cello (op. 32). The opening movement, allegro, succeeded by a charming andante tranquillo, which contains a number of specimens of the skill of the composer in elaborate writing. In the concluding allegro-moderato both performers had opportunities of showing their skill, of which they availed themselves to the full. A quintet for piano and strings (op. 5) by Christian Sinding, a romantic but daring modern Norwegian writer, was one of the most popular items of the evening. The universality of the passion it voices carries its message to every heart. Its rich harmonies seem to reflect the masses of color to be found only in the land of the midnight sun, its plaintive passages to echo the sighing of the wind amongst the pines, and its themes retell for modern ears the deeds, hopes, and disappointments of a nation of giants. The work contains four numbers—allegro ma non troppo, andante, intermezzo, and finale—tutti vivace.