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CONSERVATORIUM CONCERT.

The suavity of the atmosphere no doubt accounted for the attendance at the students' concert at the Conservatorium of Music on Monday evening not being as large as usual. A pleasing feature of the programme was the numbers given by the ensemble class, which Herr Kugelberg has made a special feature at the leading musical institution in the State. Under his direction five chamber items were rendered, and though the performers were youthful they displayed remarkable intelligence and taste in interpreting the writings of the great masters. The programme opened with Beethoven's trio in D major, op. 70, No. 1 (allegro vivace a con brio), by Misses Eraline Burford (piano) and Florence Cooke (violin), and Mr. H. Parsons (cello). That was followed by the string quartet in G Major (Haydn) by Messrs. William Cade, Tasman Westob, Eugene Alderman, and Harold Parsons. The movement was clearly treated, the beauties of the lovely writing being splendidly accentuated. Schumann's Sonata in D Minor, for piano and violin (allegro, allegro molto, dolce semplice, and allegro vivace), was played by Miss Maude Puddy (piano) and Miss Wendoline Pelly (violin). The two young ladies showed themselves to be thoroughly capable performers on their respective instruments, and at the close of a very difficult piece they had to respond to a recall. A string quartet (two movements, minuet and scherzo by Mr. A. H. Otto, a local composer), was played by Miss Wendoline Pelly, Messrs. Eugene Alderman and William Cade, and Herr Kugelberg for the first time, and it proved to be a pretty and agreeable composition. The first movement of Mendelssohn's trio in D Minor (molto allegro ed aritato) was also artistically rendered by Miss Kate Reinecke, Messrs. Eugene Alderman, and Harold Parsons. Misses Ada Thomas and Ethel Hantke sang Chaminade's "Nocturne Pyreneen," Miss Minna Gebhardt sang "How deep the slumber of the floods" (Lowe), and Miss Elsie Riggs gave "A summer night."

To the Editor. Sir—May I offer my respectful protest against the singularly unsuitable and feeble nature of some of the questions set in the junior literature, from the text books—Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" and Rowe and Webb's "Selections from Tennyson," part I? In a two hours' paper six questions were set, and two (III. and IV.) are given up to tedious questions in parsing and analysis. The proper answering of these would take up at least half the stipulated time, one hour. Of the remaining four questions III. is a test of memory from the prescribed pieces, and I venture to assert that, with the exception of the quotation from Ulysses, "How dull it is to pause, to make an end," the selections from a literary standpoint are amongst the poorest that could have been chosen. The junior literature syllabus this year was largely increased, and teachers and candidates alike reasonably expected that the university authorities would set questions showing more knowledge and scholarly appreciation of the texts than have been displayed. The paper in question, unfortunately, carries with it for the first time the Tennyson medal so generously donated by the Governor of the state, given I presume with the object of stimulating the study of literature by junior candidates. I can only hope that His Excellency will be satisfied to have the allocation of this coveted honour largely dominated by a knowledge of parsing and analysis.

I am, Sir, &c., CAESAR'S GHOST.

To the Editor.

Sir—With reference to the examinations this year at the Adelaide University, I trust that you will allow me an opportunity to set a paper apropos of nothing in particular.

I am, Sir, &c., A. MUSED.

Post-graduate Course for Lecturers and Professors in Medicine, House Surgeons, &c.—General Medical Knowledge.—Examiners, Faculty of Medical Students:—

- 1. Describe in detail the operation of "cutting off one's hairs with a shilling." Compare and contrast it with a rough shave by a country barber.
2. Examine and comment on the statement "her heart sank into her boots." Calculate to three places of decimals the alteration in the specific gravity of the organ necessary to produce this dislocation. Describe the alteration in anatomical relations during the process, and the complications when the patient wears tight shoes.
3. What is the exact botanical significance of "want of beans?" Refer it to its natural (or unnatural) order, and investigate its connection with "being up a wattle." Explain its universal occurrence amongst students, and state what measures should be taken to remove it.
4. Describe the mechanics of the physiological process of "raising the wind." Why is this kind of respiration so laboured that it frequently necessitates "winding up?"
5. What muscles are specially called into play in the process of "making both ends meet?" At what points is it probable that contact will be made, and what difficulties will be met with by those who are short and fat?
6. Discuss the medico-legal aspects of the barbaric practice of "scratching" racehorses—whether, in view of the great suffering of those who have backed them and presumably of the animals themselves, Parliament should be asked to interfere.
7. (For ladies only.) Give a lucid account of the nervous and muscular mechanisms involved in "casting eyes at any one." Calculate the maximum velocity of the optics when one is "hard hit." Give the prognosis with all possible complications.
8. (For gents only.) Describe the operation of "cutting out another fellow." When is the operation expedient and justifiable—e.g., is it safe when he is over 6 ft.? Explain the sudden rise in temperature which always follows. Give the treatment of all complications in the patient and surgeon, such as black eyes, broken hearts, &c.

To the Editor. Sir—I am glad to see that notice has been taken of the unsatisfactory English literature papers set for the senior and junior examinations. Lord Tennyson has offered a medal for the best paper on English literature done at these two examinations. Certain plays of Shakespeare and certain poems of Tennyson, Milton, Maxwell, Herrick, and others were prescribed. For a year students have been studying these poems; and what is the result? A senior paper is set which could easily have been answered had the students never read through the poems: the required knowledge could have been obtained from a study of the notes, or from a short "crum" book of the literature of the period, except the one question dealing with the poem appointed to be learned by heart. In the junior paper one loophole was given for the real students of the poems—that requiring them to contrast the characters of Brutus and Cassius. This they eagerly seized upon as being one in which they saw a chance of showing the results of some of their study—the "study of a human soul," as Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" has been called; but in vain did the "seniors" look for such an opening. Nowhere could they possibly bring in a reference to the glorious "Ode on the Nativity," the exquisite twin poems, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," the strong personality of Shylock as the type of persecuted Israel, or the womanly tact, more than womanly intellect, and final womanly self-abnegation of Portia. But questions in plenty were set on "tests for obtaining the date of the play," the "art, social life, commerce, &c., of Venice," old English words not in use now—the latter, I grant, most necessary in the proper place, as a part of the study of the poems—on the discussions of Milton's periods of literary composition, the differences of the various kinds of sonnets, and so on. As I said before, all this could be got from a literature primer, and from the notes at the end of the appointed books. Are we, therefore, to teach our boys and girls literature only through commentators? If so, I fear we shall develop a race of priggish, would-be critics, and thereby run the risk of deserving Pope's condemnation of such who often "prove plain fools at last;" or are we to teach them to read, to learn, and to love the poems and the dramas themselves; to teach them to discover and to understand the great truths which the poets—our latter-day seers—have given to us in such rich abundance? The teaching of "notes" only on plays and poems will never make lovers of English literature; and surely the object of teaching English literature in schools should be to lay a foundation for the love of a better literature than can be found in the trashy novels and slangy poems of the present day. I am, Sir, &c., A Lover of Pure English Literature.

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Professor E. C. Stirling has brought his stay in England to a close, and has just set out overland for Genoa, to join the North-German Lloyd's steamer Neckar, which at the last moment has been put on the berth for Australia in place of a larger boat. Since his return to London from the north, where he enjoyed five weeks of unalloyed pleasure on the moors, he has applied himself to enquiries connected with his professional work in Adelaide. He has not only visited various libraries and museums in the old country and gleaned much valuable information from personal intercourse with officials and others connected with them, but has been in communication with kindred institutions on the Continent with a view to the arrangement of exchanges. While in London he took the opportunity of presenting to the British Museum a complete set of the bones of a Diprotodon Australis found at Lake Callabonna, including a skull three feet in length. These bones, which have excited much interest in scientific circles, are to be put together, and the reconstructed skeleton placed in one of the geological galleries. The public labours of the professor, from which the state is likely to derive permanent benefit, have absorbed so much of his leisure that he has had far less time than he could wish to devote to social engagements.

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RETURN OF PROFESSOR E. C. STIRLING.

TWICE ROUND THE GLOBE. Professor E. C. Stirling, Director of the Adelaide Museum, who left the state in February on a visit to America and Europe, returned by the German mail steamer Neckar on Wednesday morning. He was met on arrival by his brother, the Hon. J. L. Stirling, President of the Legislative Council; and Mr. R. Kay, of the Public Library.

In the course of an interview, Professor Stirling said:—"The University Council and Board of Governors of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery, having, after nearly 20 years' service in both institutions, granted me an extended leave of absence, I left Sydney early in February of this year by the Alameda, one of the Oceanic Steamship Company's boats. At Honolulu I disembarked for the purpose of seeing something of the Hawaiian Islands—a group interesting alike for its abundant evidences of volcanic origin and action, for the insular nature of its fauna and flora, and for the history of its indigenous inhabitants. The group has recently been annexed by the United States, of which it now constitutes a territory, with the territorial system of government.

—American Activity.—Almost everywhere throughout the islands are increasing evidences of American activity, particularly in regard to the growth of sugarcane, for which the decomposed lava beds offer a peculiarly fitting soil. For this purpose much beautiful native forest and bush have been cleared, the less interesting and beautiful but very profitable cane crops taking their place. Every year adds to the number of acres so cleared and planted, and I fear it will not be long before the tropical beauty of most of the islands has vanished. From the travellers' point of view, also, the disappearance of the native royal family, with the opera bouffe kind of pageantry with which it surrounded itself, is also something of a loss. Most of the labour in the canefields is done by Portuguese and Japanese, and latterly a good many Porto Ricans have been imported for the same purpose. Formerly a good deal of coffee, which enjoyed a high reputation, was grown, but much of the coffee land has been replaced by the all-permeating sugarcane. Though the whole group is entirely of volcanic origin, the chief interest in this respect centres round the island of Hawaii—the most southerly member of the group—Honolulu, the capital, being situated on Oahu, one of the more northerly islands.

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UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor. Sir—I thoroughly agree with the strictures contained in your correspondents' letters upon the character of the questions asked in the junior history and literature papers. As to the former, I should like to call attention to question 8, which reads:—"What were the causes of England's prosperity in the days of Pitt?" A youthful candidate went up to a begowned gentleman and asked him which Pitt was meant. He says, "The man must have been a wag, because he looked at the question and said, 'I should advise you to write about William Pitt.'" This did not satisfy the youngster, for he asked whether he should write on Pitt the younger or Pitt the elder. To this question he could get no answer but a smile, so had to go back to his seat and leave question 8 severely alone. It was the duty of the gentleman he sought information from to find out and announce to the whole room what the examiners meant by their ambiguous question. In future may we expect such questions as these:—"Write what you know about King Henry." "Give a character sketch of Richard's favourites." "What were the chief political changes in the reign of King George." "Who was Smith?" and so on. The examiners in this instance cannot plead that they did not know there were two Pitts who made their mark in English history. I am, Sir, &c., PITIFUL.

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UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor. Sir—An indignant protest was voiced in your columns by several correspondents against the character of the history paper set at the primary examination held last September. "History repeats itself," and an illustration of that fact is afforded in the paper set before candidates at the junior last Monday. The questions are altogether too general; and, when one considers that they are supposed to be based on Gardiner's "Outline of English History," one can only marvel at the want of commonsense displayed by the board of examiners in approving such "posers" as suitable for boys and girls of 14 and 15. Then, too, the English literature paper is most disappointing. In view of the fact that Lord Tennyson is offering a medal to the candidate securing highest marks in that subject it is surely deplorable that the questions put should fairly test the candidate's knowledge of the works set. Yet out of six questions, two are purely and simply questions of grammar (parsing and analysis), while the remaining four could be answered by any one possessing only a slight acquaintance with the text-books. It is manifestly unfair to those who have made a special and exhaustive study of the subject that their time, so far as the Tennyson medal is concerned, has been completely thrown away. It now appears quite possible for that distinction to be won by superior skill (too often merely mechanical) in parsing and analysis, which, however desirable in their proper place, should occupy only a subordinate position in relation to English literature. It would be interesting to know Lord Tennyson's views on this point. In any case the absurdity remains that the examiner has put to the test (1) in four questions a candidate's knowledge of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" and ten of Tennyson's poems. I am, Sir, &c., REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM.