

Register 9.2.18

A GERMAN PROFESSOR.

From C. E. OWEN SMYTH, L.S.O.:—The reading public will have noted some little time back that the Adelaide University Council, under pressure, had decided to allow the printer to "omit" the names of the Austrian and German professors who had been admitted to ad eundem degrees in the Adelaide University in August of 1914, when our Empire was at war with both Germany and Austria. In writing this letter I am not criticising the action of the University, although I fancy the general public and the University Council know my views on the subject. On behalf of the Society of St. George, I was one of those who approached the council with a view to having these enemy subjects' names removed from the University Calendar, and their honorary degrees made null and void. The names have been "omitted" from the calendar; but I doubt if any action has been taken to remove their names from the University books, honorary degrees made null and void. The latter is what most loyal British subjects would like to have seen done. Professor Albrecht Penck has recently been given the choicest professional position in the Kaiser's power—viz., he has been promoted to be rector of the University of Berlin. Penck came to Australia as a guest of the Commonwealth Government to attend the gatherings of scientists held in Australia in 1914; and I have no hesitation in affirming that this man was nothing more than a spy. He is noted as being one of the smartest geographers of his time; and it has come to light—in fact, has been known for some considerable time—that before the war he was allowed, under the guise of making a report on the glaciology of the west coast of Scotland, to survey that coast thoroughly, taking the depths of the water, marking the possible landing places, and no doubt other data in connection with U-boat service in those waters, for the destruction of British shipping. He was even given a medal by one British scientific society in 1913. The results of his labour were presented to the German Admiralty, and when here in Australia he was allowed to make numerous photographs both from the sea and ashore, always in connection with the coast; and, although he was arrested at Southampton on his return to England, British scientists secured his release, and now he is enjoying the reward of his labours, owing to the easy-going British and colonial Governments. This is only one instance of hundreds of cases where educated and highly trained Germans have been allowed the free run of our country with a view of providing information to injure our Empire when the proper time arrived for the Germans to strike.

Register 20.2.18

The Parliamentary Draftsman and Assistant Crown Solicitor (Mr. A. J. Hannan, M.A., LL.B.), has obtained the permission of the Attorney-General (Hon. A. H. Peake) to enlist. Mr. Hannan has been informed that he may go into camp so soon as he shall have completed the cases he has in hand at present, and cleared up other matters with which he has been intimate in the Crown Law Department. This will occupy some weeks. Mr. Hannan joined the legal staff of the Government in 1913, as Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman, and secured the per-



MR. A. J. HANNAN, M.A., LL.B.

manent position in January of last year. He was promoted to Assistant Crown Solicitor at the end of December. Mr. Hannan, who had a noteworthy academic career, took the degrees of M.A., LL.B., at the Adelaide University, where last year he was lecturer in the theory of law and theory of legislation. He has made rapid progress in the Civil Service, and as Parliamentary Draftsman has shown efficiency and zeal. Mr. Hannan has been anxious to enlist for some time, but the circumstances have not been favourable. He is 30 years of age, and has a brother at the front.

MR. HEATON AND REPATRIATION.

E. J. Craigie writes:—Mr. Herbert Heaton considers that "those who urge taxation" as a means of financing the repatriation scheme, "show a lamentable blindness to the size of the financial burden." Furthermore, that we do "not realise that taxation can only be drawn from the stock of wealth created by the community each year." What is Mr. Baker's scheme but a system of voluntary taxation? It would have the effect of calling upon the workers to bear the biggest portion of the expense of providing for disabled soldiers, and would not be based on the principles of equity. We do realise the size of the financial burden and want it to be borne by those who have the greatest interests to protect. We know that taxation "can only be drawn from the stock of wealth created by the community each year," and we want that communal wealth to be used for communal purposes. When it proves insufficient for such needs it will be time enough to launch such schemes as Mr. Baker suggests. To-day a small privileged section of the people who toll not, neither do they spin, are collecting approximately £40,000,000 each year from the producers merely for giving them permission to use the land of Australia in production. This is a private tax now in existence, and I presume Mr. Heaton as a professor of economics, knows of it. If we transfer one-fourth of the amount from the landlord's pockets (they are getting it unjustly) and put it in the public Treasury, by the imposition of a threepenny tax on land value, a sufficient sum would be realised to defray the cost of repatriation. Such a proposal would not mean an extra day's work for the people, as Mr. Baker suggests, and it would not add to their burdens in any way. As an economist Mr. Heaton should be aware of this fact, and it should be within the scope of working class economics to urge the taking for the people of the land values, which the people have created. Mr. Baker's scheme would meet with the hearty approval of the privileged classes, as it provides an easy way of shirking their moral responsibilities. I challenge Mr. Heaton to point out anything unsound in the proposal I have put forth, and if he cannot do so the "lamentable blindness" will not be on the part of those who advocate taxation, as a basis for repatriation.

D. A. 20.2.18

REPATRIATION

MR. BAKER'S SCHEME.

PROFESSOR HEATON'S COM-
MENDATION.

From Herbert Heaton, University of Adelaide:—It is to be hoped that the novel suggestion made recently by Mr. C. R. Baker will not be allowed to be submerged by any considerations, political or otherwise. The principle underlying the proposal has been blessed by many, but numerous criticisms have been raised. Those criticisms are to the effect either that the scheme is good in theory but impossible in practice, or that the work should be financed by taxation. Those who urge taxation show a lamentable blindness to the size of the financial burden which is being piled upon the nation's shoulders. It is not realised that taxation can be drawn only from the stock of wealth created by the community each year. Were Australia not to spend another penny on the war our taxes, State and Federal, will be quite heavy enough in the years which lie ahead. And if we add to this the fact that prices and the cost of living will probably remain high for some years after the war, it becomes evident that we should refrain whenever possible from adding to Government expenditure and consequent higher taxation.

When all is said and done, we are not a wealthy country. In 1915 our net annual income was estimated at £200,000,000. This is a small amount on which to live and from which to draw supplies for the expenses of government and the interest of our national debt. Hence the need to meet as many new demands as possible—not by drawing on existing wealth or income, but by producing new wealth. Therein lay the chief value of Mr. Baker's suggestions. The work is to be done, and if we can do it without going into further indebtedness we relieve ourselves of so much financial burden during the lean years to come. But the proposal calls for support on other grounds. It offers a field for voluntary commercial effort of the kind with which we are far too little acquainted in Australia. For decades we have been saying "Let the Government do it," and have thus not merely failed to get things done, but have at the same time destroyed that faculty for voluntary corporate effort which is the chief feature of real national virility.

If only we can carry through this scheme of one day's work, without any lead from Parliaments or Ministries, we shall have learnt a lesson in co-operation—a lesson which will be of untold value. Other nations, especially Russia, know what this means. In 1915, when the Russian armies were being driven back, because the Government failed to supply them with food and munitions, the people of that country arose in their strength, organised munitions committees, and, without any assistance from the officials in Petrograd, supplied the armies with the necessary equipment for the Brussiloff offensive of 1916.

Finally, it is urged the proposal is impracticable. Why? Have we not in this State, and in others sufficient organising ability to devise means whereby the idea can be translated into practice? We need some central body in each State to take charge of the general arrangements. But the details for each industry could well be thrashed out by existing sectional organisations. Labor is organised in trade unions, each of which might deal with the minutiae of its own special trade. Capital is equally organised in associations, federations, or other bodies, and each of these could draw up some agreement as to the way in which capital should contribute its quota. If Good Friday is too near to allow the scheme to be worked out sufficiently fully by then, could not the day's work be given on the first public holiday after Easter? The only question left to be answered is, who will take the initiative? The State Premier is probably too busy. Will the Mayor of Adelaide set the ball rolling by calling a conference of all who are willing to help?

Daily Herald. 13.3.18.

EDUCATING WORKERS

OPPOSITION IS EXPRESSED TO
UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION.

"The Working Class and Education" was the subject of addresses delivered at Unity Hall, Melbourne, under the auspices of the Victorian Labor College, on Sunday night.

The speakers, Mr. M. Blackburn, the Rev. F. H. Sinclair, and Mr. W. P. Earsman, defined the objects of the college, which is under the control of affiliated trade unions, and emphasised its antagonism to the Workers' Educational Association and University influence on working class movements. The Victorian Labor College, it was stated, was doing what the Central Labor College was doing in England. It was teaching history, economics, and literature, with working class interests in view.

"In all matters affecting the working classes," Mr. Earsman said, "the universities have been prepared to take sides with the class opposed to the working class. The Workers' Educational Association is supposed to be non-partisan and impartial, but it is not. It has been, and is dangerous to the working classes. Its influence on them is that of - which will sap their brains and cause their teeth to fall out."

Mr. Earsman said that he resented the pretensions of university professors to become the intellectual leaders of working class movements. Referring to "The Herald's" report on Monday last, of Professor Meredith Atkinson's speech, at a meeting of the Workers' Educational Association, he maintained that education in such subjects as economics and history was always propagandist. If the workers had listened to the universities there would have been no trade unions.

The Victorian Labor College, other speakers declared, was a recognition of the necessity for the workers to organise in the educational as they had done in the industrial and political fields. It was not out to foster the aims and ambitions of individuals, as Ruskin Labor College had done, or with the idea of giving the working classes any general culture, but with the idea of fitting them to do better work for the class to which they belonged.

INGENIOUS STUDENTS.

The manual of the Public Examinations Board of the University of Adelaide for the current year has been published. It contains the syllabus for this year, with the examination papers, the full pass lists, and the reports of the examiners for 1917. The examiners, in referring to the primary English, state that the results were satisfactory, the average of marks gained being higher than last year and the number of failures smaller. The map drawing was not good. Ireland and Kangaroo Island were made to look like two potatoes. History showed an advance, and praise is given to some of the papers in Greek, Latin, and Algebra. The junior papers are less favorably criticised, and in regard to history it is said—"A large percentage of the failures could not have passed the primary examination." France was sometimes placed (in the maps) to the north-west of England, and the Straits of Dover between England and Ireland. Spelling, too, was very loose. "At last there was a great Monk in England called General Monk. Up to this time he lived in a monastery," wrote one aspirant in respect to the restoration of Charles II. Captain Cook was said to have landed at Glenelg and Governor Hindmarsh at Port Adelaide, "where he planted the old gum tree to commemorate his landing." The variation in the length of day and night was explained in many ingenious ways. "The earth not being completely round," said one youth, "will take longer to pass the sun at one point than another, and so we get the difference in the length of day and night." In the senior history papers there were some quaint statements, such as, "Cranmer was Pope." "Cranmer was burnt by Elizabeth because he disliked play-writers," and

"There was a rebellion in Ireland to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne, but most of the people favored Charles, who was in France." The papers generally, however, in the various subjects of the examination were well answered. In the higher public examination an enthusiastic Australian declared that "the capture of the Emden has rid the sea of wandering parasites." Of Charles James Fox it was stated, "As a young man he was introduced to every form of vice that had ever been in existence." Some of the candidates in the junior commercial examination gave weird replies to questions on the geography paper. One student said, "The Darling escarpment is a scheme used by the Government of New South Wales of making a breakwater along the River Darling, the same as they have at Glenelg." In two cases the Murray was made to run from Lake Alexandrina to Morgan, and into New South Wales. Another genius said, "At Murray Bridge there are granite foundaries."

Register 14.3.18

"A SCATHING CRITICISM."

The attention of Professor Daruley Naylor, of the Adelaide University, was directed to the scathing article contributed to Science Progress by Dr. C. Mercier, and published in part in The Register on March 12, on the old controversial topic of the value of Greek and Latin in the ordinary schools' programme. He replied as follows:—"The contributions of Dr. Mercier are often entertaining; but a dogmatic noise from under the lion's skin will frighten nobody, however much it may encourage his scientific brethren. The paragraph contained in your issue of March 12 is entitled 'A Scathing Criticism,' and, no doubt, Dr. C. Mercier would himself so describe it. An impartial critic might, perhaps, prefer to call it 'petulant invective.' The writer accuses classical men of confusing assertions with facts, and yet his paragraph consists of nothing but assertions, without an atom of evidence in support of them. Dr. Mercier is one of our new English scholars. I feel sure that he has heard of the split infinitive, and that he is acquainted with the half-dozen shibboleths which, to-day, are supposed to stamp a writer as master of the English language. He has plainly discovered the difficulties which beset us in the use of our relative pronoun. How hard it is to overcome these difficulties is illustrated by Dr. Mercier himself when he is unable to avoid so harsh a collocation as 'one of the chief reasons that is always alleged.' He accuses classical men of introducing Latin idioms into their English. This fault, too, is to be found even among the elect; for, once again, Dr. Mercier illustrates his own comment by writing 'other things equal.' Nay, he has gone a step further than the ignorant classic, for he has copied the Latin idiom verbatim, omitting the word 'being,' which, as a rule, is inserted in this phrase. Dr. Mercier also accuses the classical name of nebulosity. To be clear is by no means easy in English; but if we are to obtain

clearness one of the first desiderata (pardon a Latin word) is the avoidance of such expressions as lead the reader on a false scent. When Dr. Mercier put before me the words 'The public school and university,' I imagine that 'school' and 'university' are nouns. What is my disgust to read after 'university' the monosyllable 'man,' and to be compelled to revise my impressions and to turn 'school' and 'university' into adjectives! Dr. Mercier desires clearness. Let him, therefore, prefer 'The man who has been at public school and university' or some such form of expression; and let him discourage the habit, which is growing all too fast in our language, of making one word do the work of any part of speech that happens to be convenient. If we persist in this habit our language will pay the serious penalty of becoming as obscure as Chinese. It is bad enough that the vagaries of our spelling and pronunciation are such that no foreigners and few Englishmen can master them in a lifetime. For the science student who confuses invective with criticism, the following words from a recent article by Mr. A. D. Godby may be quoted:—'Students of natural science are beginning to see that the reason why they have been comparatively little in demand for administrative posts is not to be sought in mere jealousy or conservatism, but in the simple fact that many of them have not been trained in the art of making themselves intelligible.'

Register 16.3.18

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK!

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Dr. Mercier, Professor Naylor, and—Another!

[By our Special Reporter.]

Classical literary criticism is a sport of treacherous felicity! Some learned competitors, who have set out to attack their apparently vulnerable adversaries, have found at the end of the game that they have received most of the bumps! It is a refreshing diversion for the lay public in these eternal war days to see them in the combat of controversy over such an august issue, for instance, as the application of Greek and Latin to the ordinary schools' programme, and the propriety of using nouns as adjectives! Some days ago The Register innocently threw down a gauntlet by republishing an article (which had appeared in Science Progress) by an eminent authority, Dr. C. Mercier, a man of undaunted courage. Professor Darnley Naylor, of the Adelaide University, accepted the challenge with a long and somewhat cynical rejoinder. Since the publication of his remarks last Thursday, I have been searching Adelaide for another bold combatant who would enter the ring, and deal with Professor Naylor—it's fine to see the classical men with the gloves on! Many had been entertained by the debate in the newspaper, but were afraid to talk. It was not until Friday that I found one. I knew he was well qualified for the task, and that his disposition had the necessary fighting quality. Professionally, this well-known critic has a mind which is naturally of the legal order, and in actual life he is a mixture of the mystic and the man of affairs.

—The Argument.—

"Have you seen Mercier's article?" I asked.

"Yes; I read it with great interest and profit."

"And the criticisms by Professor Darnley Naylor?"

"Yes, those, too. And now at the start, let us understand the points about which Dr. Mercier and Professor Darnley Naylor are writing and arguing. They are, I gather, that the teaching of Latin and Greek in the schools and universities does not give men a mastery of the English tongue; that the men taught in these institutions do not know the difference between a fact and an assertion; and that classical education is an affair, not of facts, but of words. Well, 40 years ago Spencer said as much. Men like Chesterfield did not see why there should be much, if any, difference between facts and assertions, except that sometimes words have power to move while facts have not. 'The matter mattereth naught, but the manner meaneth much.' Or, as the Frenchman said, 'Truly the facts are all wrong, but—consider the style.' On the other hand, the sense of a writer may be fairly clear, while the style will not bear examination. Matthew Arnold proffered a passage of Addison's as classical English, perfect in lucidity, measure, and propriety. Spencer analysed it, and contended that, while Addison's meaning could not be missed, the half dozen lines contained mixed figures, re-