



The Rec

Songs of a Campaign, by Leon Gellert (printed and published by Hassell, of Adelaide, in a manner worthy of its contents), is a definite achievement in Australian poetry. The publisher notes that this book was awarded the Bunday Prize for English Verse at the Adelaide University this year. This page's congratulations to the Adelaide University for possessing a prize for Australian poetry, and for having thus awarded it.

The book is made up of poetry composed by the writer on active service in Egypt, Gallipoli and (presumably wounded) in England. Leon Gellert—if that should be his real name—is thus a product of the war. The quality of these brief compositions is equal and high. The selection of so many poems for quotation is the result of an embarrassment of poetry; but we are not wantonly rifling Leon Gellert's best to make a Red Page holiday: there are many more poems in these *Songs of a Campaign* just as good. The three prefatory sonnets are good sonnets, though of an Adelaidean irregularity, with a feminine felicity of melody:—
*The birds are in the morn, the bees in noon,
The eve has song and sleep and slow
repose....*

But that is all. "The Edge of the Desert" is a mere nostalgia stranded in Egypt; but in "Songs of the Expedition, 1915," a new masculine note sounds: the poet reacts almost violently to the reality of war. Pictures are etched into his brain and remorselessly printed in sometimes strident lines; shadows fall upon him and he reflects them with a new sincerity and a perfect economy of words. He sees red; he sees death; he imagines what it is to be dead: he "watches the shrapnel break on the smashed land" and dreams of home; he learns the meaning of manhood: *These men know life—know death a little more*; and he is loth to leave Anzac with her "long-forgotten dead with sunken graves." And yet he can write of Anzac Cove in his earlier, unawakened way, in the incongruous jogging mock-meter of our bush bards—the one flaw in the collection.

But in "Songs of the Sick" he returns to reality, rivalling anything that Henley in his hospital ever did. He paints for us, with virile strokes and few, the consumptive, the epileptic, the cripple, the blind, with a moving but masculine sympathy; and in the poem "Patience," quoted earlier, he suggests a haunting picture of a wounded mind hovering on the edge of insanity. But in "Afterwards" the mood has evaporated: he slips back into his earlier manner, playing carelessly with abstractions of Love and Death, far banished from reality. The war has made him; the war has broken him. Yet what the war made of him is sufficient for us: this book is the best collection of poetry that has come out of the war to Australia—one of the best that has come out of the war to the English language.

Register 8.6.17

LONDON, June 6.

Major Lascelles, of New Zealand, has propounded a scheme by which students whose university studies have been interrupted by the war may undergo a year's intensive study at Oxford. The authorities of the latter and the Rhodes scholars trustees are favourable to the scheme which will be submitted to the overseas Governments. Major Lascelles is conferring with Cambridge.

It is reported that the group scheme for enlisting recruits up to 50 has been abandoned. Other means are contemplated, though they are not quite clear.

Advertiser 11.6.17

AN AFTERNOON CLASS IN ECONOMICS.

Owing to the desire of a number of night workers, particularly in the printing industry, for a University Tutorial Class in the day time, a class in economics will be started at the Trades Hall this afternoon, as advertised elsewhere. Mr. Herbert Heaton, M.A., will deliver a preliminary address on "The value of economic study." Twenty-five students have already enrolled.

Register 13.6.17



SURGEON-CAPT. F. L. WALL,
Military Cross.

Mr. G. L. Wall, of Messrs. Harris, Scarfe, & Company, Limited, has received a cable message apprising him that his son, Surgeon-Capt. F. L. Wall, has been awarded the Military Cross. Twenty months ago Capt. Wall joined the 6th Battalion as a medical officer at Gallipoli, and is still with that force in France. He has been on active service for two years.

Advertiser 13.6.17

CORNSACKS AND ACOUSTICS.

At the lecture delivered by Lady Galway in the Elder Hall on Tuesday evening the Chancellor of the University (Sir George Murray) apologised to the audience for the primitive nature of the carpet on the floor, which was covered from end to end with new cornsacks. The purpose, he explained, was to reduce the echoes with which the hall had been so plentifully endowed. Altogether about five tons of sacks were used; those that were not laid on the floor being stacked at the end of the hall and on the platform to assist in absorbing sound and reducing reverberation. The experiment was carried out on the recommendation of Professor Kerr Grant. The general opinion expressed at the conclusion of the lecture was that the sacks had undoubtedly improved the acoustics of the hall. One advantage of their use was in preventing any slight movement of feet or of chairs from being audible. The experiment will probably be repeated for future lectures.

Register 13.6.17

LADY GALWAY AS LECTURER

"Place of Modern Languages."

The first of a series of lectures in connection with the University of Adelaide on the development of the resources of the State by an efficient application of science to industry, and on the service of the University to that end, was given at the Elder Hall on Tuesday evening, when Lady Galway dealt with "The Place of Modern Languages." The Chancellor (Sir George Murray) presided over a large attendance. Among those present were His Excellency the Governor, the Vice-Chancellor (Professor W. Mitchell), and members of the senate and council. The Chancellor, in introducing Lady Galway, said they were pleased to see that her health had so far improved that she was able to resume some of the work to which she had devoted herself so unsparingly and from which they had derived so much profit. There was no one in Australia, and very few, perhaps, anywhere else, he concluded, so well qualified as Her Ladyship to speak on the subject of the evening. (Applause.)

—Expediency and Utilitarianism.—

Lady Galway, who was accorded an ovation, said the bridge which, by the series of lectures, was thrown across from the University to the public at large was an

indication that science and learning could and should be turned to daily use, and to practical advantage. The public profited by the advice and leadership of those who had given their life to thought and investigation. The teachers benefited by keeping in close touch with the realities of our every-day struggles and common experiences. It was pure gain to both parties, so long as they did not come to make utility the sole object of knowledge, or, at least, did not restrict that utility to material needs. At all times, and more particularly so in the course of a national crisis, such as the present one, we might discover a disposition to make expediency the supreme test and utilitarianism a kind of neutral perspective. That had a direct bearing or influence upon the wellbeing of the community, and all that had an intellectual importance became unrealized and inoperative. It was all the more necessary that there should be some who had the capacity and who exercised the faculty of pursuing truth for its own sake, or, at least, independently of any natural results. In that quest after truth, knowledge was required. There must be, first and foremost, leaders—that was, specialists—and their institutions in which these leaders could be approached by the disciples attracted to this or that branch of learning. Further, there was an outer circle of amateurs, who could not devote their time to study, but to whom contact with the intellectual activity of their age was a condition of happiness. The greater the number who shared in that curiosity, and the stronger the point of contact, the more a community could be said to be as a whole enlightened and cultivated.

—Modern Education.—

It could be confidently asserted that the point in question was the balance to be struck between the strictly utilitarian advantage of foreign languages and their importance as a factor of education in the more absolute sense. Modern education had to be considered not only from the point of view of the training itself, but from that of the success of the students under conditions of strenuous competition in all practical fields of life. There was hardly any one who would controvert the statement that in that respect foreign languages had long established a claim to closer attention. That their practical attainment was quite possible had been proved by the successful systems inaugurated in other countries, such as Belgium, America, and Japan, for instance. After all, the commercial use of languages was but one side of the question. There were the philological and literary aspects, the science of languages, so to speak, which, if it made a greater demand on the time and powers of the student, as a reward afforded him that closer insight into another people's past and present, into their character, their mode of thought, which it would be, if not impossible, at least extremely difficult to attain in any other way. Theories of education were being discussed the world over, and existing systems criticised in the light of experience of the past few years. The spirit of enquiry which was abroad had filtered through to us, and had brought them together that night in order to consider the value of foreign languages regarded from an Imperialistic point of view and possibly to devise some means of encouraging and spreading their study. That seemed to be but one turn in the revolution of thought, which might have occurred more rapidly, but must in any case have followed sooner or later upon the policy of the Entente. It was a great and stirring mission of the century which had closed which set Britain upon a high place aloof from the heat and stress of international wrangling, yet at once so powerful and so respected that by putting the weight of her word to the scale she could hope to readjust and steady the balance of power for less fortunate peoples. That was not an empty dream, but came near to being a reality. Lady Galway, in an interesting and able manner, went on to deal with the rise and influence of the English and other languages, and interspersed her remarks with apt quotations and humorous stories. The English, she continued, had found it easy to impose the task of acquiring the indispensable amount of knowledge of their own tongue on those with whom they held intercourse, and this dispensed with the effort of learning the language of their neighbours. The growth of British influence in the East certainly made a considerable number of Englishmen conversant with Asiatic thought and work and led to the establishment of chairs of Oriental languages at some of our Universities. It was only this year, however, that the Institute for Oriental Languages in London, planned some 14 years ago, had actually opened its doors.

—Our Friends and Rivals.—

In order to serve our country to advantage we must endeavour to understand as fully as possible the character, the aims, and the aspirations of our friends and rivals. Travel and reading presented themselves to that end, and in both cases some measure of acquaintance with foreign

languages considerably shortened the road. If languages were to be taught effectively, it would be necessary to emphasize the importance and value of their literary aspect, for they were not discussing the use of a kind of verbal shorthand, but of a means of exchange of thought and information. A language without higher aims than commercial utility had no future. A mode of speech which was not likely to produce original thought was foredoomed. The question of foreign languages was for us in Australia one of exceptional difficulty. We had no immediate neighbours who would automatically encourage our efforts in that line. The overwhelmingly greater part of our enterprise lay within the confines of our Empire, or else brought us into contact with the great Republic across the seas, whose speech was sister tongue to ours. In addition we are of a stock said to have little linguistic aptitude. Yet we knew and realized that the days were over when any one nation could command the markets of the world. We were forging ahead in a sea of competition, and it was the pressure we had felt about us which had brought to the forefront the problem now under consideration. East and west we must hold our own against highly organized and scientific communities. We could not afford that the intelligence of our race should not be as fully and perfectly equipped as the present advance of knowledge and science of the world would allow.

—Place of University.—

The barometer of our national condition in that respect, concluded Lady Galway, was the status of our universities. They gave the tone and marked the pace. On their freedom, equipment, development, and vitality our common intellectual future depended. Pressing hard upon the heels of our university system was modern technical education. Its object was avowedly different, but for all that of vital importance. It acted as a kind of middleman, bringing the discoveries of science within reach of those whose business it was to turn our natural wealth to best account. To flourish, language must be taught from a two-fold point of view—from the chair of the university, by one who would be spokesman for the very best and highest, which the thought and literature of a strange people could give us, and in the school, by one who could impart that much knowledge as would enable us to transact current business, and get into personal contact with our customers in commerce and industry, and facilitate generally the conducting of public and private affairs. The war had forced us to look ahead. A great and progressive Eastern nation was taking over a large portion of the trade which had been in the hands of our present foes. Could we let the new relationship grow up so one-sided that we could not extend a friendly visitor the courtesy of a few words? Could we be content to remain so out of touch with a powerful Ally or neighbour that we would only know about his concerns what he would have the desire, or find occasion, to translate for our use? Was not a chair of Oriental Languages one of the pillars of our country's growing edifice. Her own impression was that for us French should have priority over all rivals. On account of trade relations which might be further extended, it might be argued that Dutch would be of exceptional value. Then there was Russian. If she had succeeded in pleading for a greater interest in living tongues, the principle should apply to them generally. It must remain for individuals and for groups to make their choice according to their inclination or their need. Whether we would arrive at the conclusion that languages might with advantage, or must of necessity, be taken up in this country, she did not know, nor would it be for her to say. It was already a sign of grace that the question should be under serious consideration. We were heirs to a proud tradition, and shared with all the ages that had gone before the honour and responsibility of parenthood of generations yet unborn. To that end we must be increasingly on the watch. There was no standing still on the path of progress. If the teaching of languages was to be established from a university point of view, many questions remained to be considered by competent judges relating to the preparatory course in the higher schools, the possibility of a chair of modern languages being one day added to that body, and perhaps, easiest and most efficient of all, the founding of travelling scholarships, which would give a chosen few an opportunity of practice in the country itself. If a chair were ever contemplated it would be wise, she thought, to aim at the highest standard obtainable. We hoped to develop and to prosper in stimulating rivalry with growing nations, to understand, and if possible, to appreciate them, and in our turn to be respected by the people of our day and have a record of undiminished strivings and honourable achievement in the annals of history. (Prolonged applause).

On the motion of Professor G. C. Henderson, seconded by Professor Burnley Naylor Lady Galway was accorded a vote of thanks by acclamation for her address.