

Advertised 5/4/94.

The examination for the Elder Scholarship at the London Royal College of Music was concluded on Wednesday. The board of examiners decided to recommend to the University Council that Mr. Henry M. H. Kennedy, a tenor singer, be awarded the scholarship.

The Register.

ADELAIDE: THURSDAY, APRIL 5, 1894.

UNIVERSITIES ANCIENT AND MODERN.

Last night, whilst listening to the rendering of University songs, no doubt many of Dr. Bevan's hearers formed the conclusion that undergraduates of the olden time were a very merry crowd. It is indisputable that student life has from time immemorial been noted for the bisterous fun which imparted variety to it, even if it did not contribute greatly to the furtherance of the main objects of a University training. But the public should not forget to look at the other side of the picture. Just as the average society novel gives a one-sided view of life by constantly showing men and women engaged in killing time or doing worse, and neglects to portray them at their ordinary serious avocations of the day, so there are many biographies of University-bred men which make much of their frolics when at College, but say little or nothing about the hard work which they had to undergo to get their degrees and win their honours. The exuberances of University life ought properly to be looked upon as a process resembling that which is often figuratively and aptly described as letting off steam. The youthful mind, which throughout the week has been cribbed, cabined, and confined in studying Greek fables or the differential calculus or the configuration of bones and muscles in the human frame, may well be excused if in its leisure moments it behaves with the harmless levity of the boy rather than with the gravity and sedateness of the man of learning. Such levity, indeed, if indulged in in moderation, is far more worthy of commendation than condemnation, inasmuch as it serves as a wholesome relaxation from the strain of study. Companionship in merry-making has played a much more prominent part in cementing lifelong friendships than association in the severer duties of the classroom, and the recollection of participation in the rollicking amusements of University days does wonders in the way of endearing to the student the memory of his Alma Mater. The increased audience which Dr. Bevan had when he lectured on the vocal pleantries of University life on Wednesday night, as compared with the assemblage on Tuesday evening, is a striking illustration of the fact that the majority of people in the present day are far more concerned to know how the students live and make merry than what studies engage their attention when they have the fear of a professional wiggling before their eyes. Carlyle in his "Sartor Resartus" gives us a curious and interesting glimpse into the social life of German students in the past century and the beginning of the present one. Heavy and ponderous were the jokes that stirred the loud laughter of the assembled company as the air grew

denser and denser with the clouds of tobacco-smoke and the mild beer disappeared by the gallon. At these gatherings the favourite song almost invariably was that rambling and inconsequential Latin ditty, with its refrain of

"Let us therefore rejoice," which, among other things, calls for the Latin equivalent of three cheers for the ladies and the Professors and three groans for the devil.

The ancient Universities, during the days of the world's intellectual darkness, performed a grand service to humanity by keeping alight the lamp of learning. The glimmer which that lamp emitted was at times too feeble to illuminate more than a very small fraction of the vast area over which darkness brooded. But at least it was always rendered possible for those who wished to further the cause of higher education to light a torch and carry it afield. Dr. Bevan's description of the peripatetic Professor of old academic days may serve to convey some conception of the way in which centres of learning were at one time scattered at great distances like oases in an African desert or "sinks" on a Western Australian gold-field. Any man who was especially eminent in his own particular line was always sure of a welcome and of large and attentive classes if he went abroad and visited a foreign University. May there not in this old-time usage be some profitable lesson for us in Australia? Are our Australian Universities sufficiently imbued with that fraternal feeling of enthusiasm in the cause of learning to encourage their teachers to exchange professorial chairs or to establish federal Boards of Examiners? We will not ask whether they are at present prepared to imitate the example of the University of Bologna and to admit ladies as lecturers on abstruse subjects. The time may, however, come when, in the selection of the best teacher of some academic study, it may be clearly apparent that a lady is the best exponent of the subject to be taught, and then it is to be hoped that even the example of ancient Bologna will be imitated.

As a contrast to the constitutions of the old Universities it may be mentioned that marked progress has been made in an important and far-reaching reform in London by the completion of its report by what is known as the Gresham Committee for the formation of the present London University and many of the teaching Colleges into an institution really worthy of the world's metropolis. The governing body of the proposed University would be selected from a very wide area, and on it such institutions would be represented as the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, the Society of Apothecaries, the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Law Society, the Royal Agricultural Society, the Corporation, and the Mercers' Company. On the other hand a considerable amount of conservatism has been shown in selecting the groups of subjects over which the various faculties would preside. These would be simply, as heretofore, art, science, medicine, law, and theology. Objection has been taken to this scheme on the ground that it makes no attempt to divert modern studies into such modern channels as the commercial and civic relations of life. The idea of the critic would seem to be that modern requirements demand a more utilitarian course of study than any of the Universities prescribe. But to follow this line of objection is to miss the fundamental meaning of the