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THE POET'S ART.

South Australia abounds in societies and mutual improvement classes, at which literary subjects are discussed. Members of these will be interested to read some of the definitions given at the University senior examinations recently. One question was:—"What are the characteristics of dramatic blank verse? Why is it blank?" Here are three answers—"Blank verse is blank because it has no rhythm;" "dramatic blank verse is only used when the speaker is uneducated, and has no knowledge of verse;" and "blank verse is used because it is easier for the author to write a long literary work like a play with as few restrictions as possible." It is interesting to be told of a great classic work that "the whole poem is bathed in iridescent light;" "the metre expresses the spirit of philosophy," that it is "perfectly true in subject, and idealistic in form, like a treasure cave, full of enchanting surprises and never-ending wealth." Far the most interesting and instructive answers were given to the question why Wordsworth wrote of certain things in verse. A few were honestly delinquent—e.g., "Poetry is more suitable for describing all these matters than prose, because in prose we have to be very careful to say exactly what we mean;" "talking of flowers is more suitable to poetry than to prose;" and "with verse the poet can place his words so as to give the required accent and speed in reading; with prose, however, the accent may come anywhere, and the speed cannot be regulated."

Reg. 26th Jan. 1903.

The new theory of music certificate issued by the Adelaide University is of an ornate and attractive design, suitable for framing. In addition to several appropriate musical emblems, it contains excellent pictures of the Adelaide University and the Elder Conservatorium of Music. It is the work of Mr. L. Howie, of the Adelaide School of Design. Mr. C. R. Hodge, the Registrar of the University, informs me that all the certificates won in the recent musical examinations will be ready for issue early next week.

Mr. Hodge also sends the pamphlet for 1903, giving full particulars of the School of Music at the Adelaide University. This little book, like its predecessors, is well got up, and remarkably clear in its form and arrangement. The last days of entry and the dates of the various examinations are printed in conspicuous positions, and a short index is also supplied. There are the customary class lists of successful students, last year's examination papers set by Dr. Ennis, and the list of students studying at the Elder Conservatorium during 1902, which totals 286.

Register 23rd Jan. 1903.

HIGHER COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE RESENTED.

The Adelaide Chamber of Commerce recently adopted a resolution dealing with the subject of higher public education as a preliminary to appointments in offices. A reporter of The Register waited upon Mr. S. J. Jacobs (President of the Chamber of Commerce) for a statement regarding the matter, and, in connection with the information imparted by that gentleman, also interviewed the principals of two of the metropolitan business schools, whose remarks are appended.

Mr. Jacobs said:—"The Chamber of Commerce is strongly impressed with the importance and value of the higher education in commerce, and the members mean to offer it the utmost encouragement by giving preference when making engagements for their offices to those who can furnish University qualifications. The feeling of the chamber is that nothing else can so promote enterprise and the extension of commerce as the power of knowledge. Courage, self-reliance, and initiative are all gained through the higher commercial education, and only by its aid can we hope to hold our own with other nations. What first impressed me with its importance was the difficulty of securing men fitted to accept the responsibility of opening and conducting new or branch businesses in other countries. The few who appear qualified to take these positions are those who have laboriously, in the course of long years, gained their way to positions of trust, but whose knowledge had been obtained solely by, and was limited to, their experience. I think it may be put down as a general principle that the man of business has got to the end of his life before he has completed his commercial education, unless he has had the advantage of some systematic instruction. Throughout Europe, and in America and Canada, the importance of higher education is recognised and provided for; and, if Australia desires to hold her own, and to secure proper expansion of her trade, it is necessary to follow such wise examples. From time to time, inspired by these reasons and necessities, the Chambers of Commerce of Australia have promoted educational classes for commercial subjects. Something less desultory, however, and more thorough, is needed; hence the action of the Adelaide University in establishing a faculty of commerce, entitled to the utmost appreciation and encouragement. The course of study mapped by the Univer-

sity has been remarkably well thought out, and nothing else so much as a careful investigation of the scheme can convince young men of the immense value of the higher education. In this respect nothing is of more value than a knowledge of commercial lore and accountancy, and young men already holding positions in offices may attend lectures in the evening at the University at very small cost. In the course of my investigations on this subject I have formed a very high opinion of the thorough and scientific methods of the commercial schools of Adelaide, where young people can be admirably equipped to take up the work at the University."

"Have you considered what is being done at the School of Mines in the interests of higher education?"—"Yes; I have heard that it has arranged a scheme of commercial instruction. The principals of the private schools, I am told, complain that the competition from that quarter is very unjust, and I agree with that position. I think, too, that it would be a great mistake for the School of Mines to interfere with the work of the University by issuing certificates and diplomas; there should certainly be no lower standard of efficiency than the certificates of the Adelaide University."

The following is the opinion expressed by Mr. W. Hogg, of the Adelaide Shorthand and Business Training Academy:—"As a teacher of commercial subjects I am chiefly concerned with the 'elementary' commercial examination. The term is a misnomer, as the examination is far beyond the elementary standard of examinations conducted by the London Chamber of Commerce, Society of Arts, and other examining bodies at home. The examination, however, is a splendid test of the candidate's fitness for employment in an office, and those successful should prove valuable additions to the staff of any business. Our University authorities have placed the commercial community under a great obligation, and I hope business men will encourage the movement by giving preference to those who gain the University's certificates. At present a candidate for the elementary examination is required to first pass either the primary, junior, or senior examination, but this prevents many from competing who would otherwise do so. No one can pass the commercial examination whose general education is defective, but if the board is not satisfied on this point it would be better to add to the list of subjects. The shorthand test of 110 words a minute is too stringent, and recently a lad who is earning his living as a shorthand writer and typist failed to satisfy the University. I should like to see candidates allowed to choose the rate at from 80 words a minute, and am sure this would be an advantage. Those capable of higher rates would then get credit for their ability, and the University would be responsible for only the rate examined in. It has been uphill work for the last 15 years to establish the recognition of the value of commercial education in South Australia, and now that private teachers have done so it seems very hard that a Government institution should step in and compete with us. I have already suffered severely from the competition of the School of Mines evening classes, and further competition in so small a community as ours spells ruin to all private teachers of commercial subjects. To give an idea of the difficulty experienced by those who have endeavoured to establish commercial schools I may say that during the past 10 years no fewer than five have failed in the attempt, and this without Government competition. It will be much harder with this added disadvantage to face."

Mr. W. Muirden, Principal of Muirden College for Business Training, when seen in reference to the subject, said:—"I am exceedingly pleased to note the interest taken by such an influential body as the Chamber of Commerce in commercial education. In an age such as ours, all who have the interests of commerce at heart should certainly encourage a high standard of proficiency in business men. Teachers of commercial subjects have for years been advocating the need for an impartial tribunal to test their work, and they are naturally elated at the action of the Adelaide University in providing examinations in business subjects. The establishment of a faculty of commerce, including business men, in connection with that institution is a very wise step, for who but business men can understand the needs of commerce? While it would be a mistake to exclude general subjects from the elementary commercial course it is a pity that the examination is dependent on the other public examinations. There should be no difficulty in providing an examination to meet all requirements without an embarrassing condition such as this. Considering the standard of the papers set at the 'elementary' commercial examination last year I think the term 'elementary' is somewhat misleading. The knowledge required to deal with the papers successfully could on no account be termed 'elementary,' and I fear if that term is retained it will tend to make the whole course unpopular. The action of the School of Mines in teaching commercial subjects I certainly consider very unjust. Whatever the objects of that establishment may be, it ought not to enter into active competition with private enterprise. As private commercial schools have most efficiently provided for the requirements of business people, and at very reasonable fees, the School of Mines has certainly in this respect exceeded the objects for which it was established."

STUDENTS' MEMORIAL TO PROFESSOR TATE.

The late Professor Tate enjoyed the respect of all sections of the community, but he was regarded with special admiration by those who had the privilege of studying natural science under his direction. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the late scientist's students should have desired to place within the precincts of their Alma Mater some tangible and permanent record of their appreciation of his labours in their behalf. This aspiration has been practically realized, for a handsomely embellished memorial tablet will shortly be placed in the natural science laboratory at the Adelaide University as a mark of their esteem and gratitude. The tablet consists of a brass plate, which bears the following inscription:—"In memory of Ralph Tate, professor of natural sciences in this University from 1876 to 1901. Erected by grateful pupils." The tablet has been mounted on a handsome carved walnut frame, which was specially designed for the purpose by the Director of Technical Art (Mr. H. P. Gill). The carving was done at the School of Design, and is a credit to the institution. It represents the various branches of natural science in which the late professor was especially interested. At the base of the bracket is a chaste and neatly executed design, consisting of two geologists' hammers, an instrument used for measuring the angles of rocks, and a spray of eucalyptus leaves. Another prominent feature is a frieze of shells, which has also been executed with excellent fidelity to nature. The embellishments are appropriate and effective, and they give a massive appearance to the tablet.

Register 10th Feb. 1903.

Mr. Langton Douglas, late Professor in the University of Adelaide, has, through Mr. John Murray, published what he designates "A History of Siena," a 25/ volume, wherein the fullest details procurable from personal research from original authorities and from the works of modern writers are given respecting the politics, art, science, and literature of the quaint old Italian town. Contemporaneously with it has appeared another volume, by Edmund G. Gardner, entitled "The Story of Siena and San Gimignano." It is also full of pictures, but it is much less comprehensive and pretentious than Mr. Douglas's masterpiece.

Register 16th Feb. 1903.

MUSICAL NOTES.

[By Musicians.]

The two Sydney dailies recently contained references to Dr. Ennis. These mention that the Elder Conservatorium is now a flourishing institution, with a students' roll of 250, and that it possesses a beautiful concert hall that seats 1,000 people on the ground floor, furnished with a fine concert organ built by Mr. J. E. Dodd, of Adelaide, which is much admired. The Daily Telegraph states that in the past year "chamber music has been the strong point of interest and merit at the Conservatorium concerts, and new works by Arensky, Richard Strauss, and Caesar Frank have been introduced. Professor Ennis is much interested in Strauss's works, and has just acquired the full orchestral score of "Death and transfiguration." Dr. Ennis may return to Adelaide by the mail steamer next Thursday, but he will be here at the latest by February 26.

Register 16th Feb. 1903
Elder Conservatorium

Miss Elsie Hamilton, the clever young pianiste, who was the first winner of the pianoforte scholarship at the Elder Conservatorium, and is now perfecting her art in Berlin, gave a recital at the Bechstein Hall in that city on January 3. Her programme contained the following numbers:—"Prelude and fugue in A minor" (Bach), "Sonata in F minor" (Brahms), Schumann's "Carnival," a group of Chopin numbers, including the "Nocturne in C minor" and "Ballade in F major," Tchaikowky's "Nocturne in C sharp minor," and Liszt's "Rhapsodie No. 12." Miss Hamilton's efforts appear to have been most successful. The critics—and those of Berlin are most exacting—with scarcely an exception made mention of her extremely musical temperament in their notices. At the end of Schumann's "Carnival" Miss Hamilton was recalled several times, which is quite an unusual occurrence in the middle of a recital in Berlin, and at the conclusion of her programme she received quite an ovation.