

AN ADELAIDE STUDENT RETURNS.

A STUDY OF ENGINEERING ABROAD

Mr. R. C. Robin, who won the Angas scholarship for engineering at the University of Adelaide in 1921, arrived home yesterday after a five years' trip abroad. He has been appointed to a position in the department of the Engineer-in-Chief. He has been specialising in the study of constructional work during his stay in England and America. One of the big works on which he was engaged was a power plant for the Philadelphia Electric Company, which, when complete, will be the second largest in the world. He thinks America is 50 years ahead of Great Britain and Australia on the construction side of civil engineering, but that Britain has the advantage with regard to designing.

The foremost designers, Mr. Robin thought, were on the Continent, where labor was comparatively cheap and materials were expensive. Continental designers planned to reduce to a minimum the material required. The position was reversed in America, where materials were obtainable at low cost. Unskilled labor was comparatively cheap in America, but many skilled men on constructional work earned as much as £14 a week. Plasterers were the highest paid. He spent most of his time in America, working in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. Conditions of life were very good in America, and the people were saving a lot of money. The prohibitionists claimed that this was due to prohibition, but the other side attributed it to the remarkable prosperity prevailing throughout the States.

An interesting feature of American life, Mr. Robin remarked, was the negro. In the southern states there was strict discrimination between the negroes and whites, and the negroes were forced to occupy separate compartments on the street cars. Virginia was the farthest north state in which such conditions prevailed. The negroes mostly occupied menial positions; but the passengers on the boat Australia learned with some astonishment that a beautiful pianoforte selection played to them by Mr. Percy Grainger is composed by a negro. With all their prosperity he did not think the Americans were as happy as Australians. They became so engrossed, and gave so much to their work. Recreation did not enter into the lives of so many of the people.

While in America Mr. Robin met a number of South Australians, among them being Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Gillman (tour). Mr. Russell Harris (who is a long woolbuyer for American woolen manufacturers), Mr. W. H. James, Mr. Wigg, and Mr. A. Jenner (who was on electrical staff of the Philadelphia Electric Company). Mr. Robin is looking forward with pleasure to resumption of life in South Australia. He is a son of Mr. R. B. Robin, of Gilberton, and brother of Miss R. Robin (secretary of Society for the Prevention of Cruelty Animals).

ADV. 1.6.26

UNIFORM DENTAL COURSES.

Sir Joseph Verco, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Adelaide, attended a conference in Melbourne last week to discuss what action was necessary in order to secure uniformity in the dental courses of all the Australian universities. Sir Joseph stated on his return to Adelaide yesterday that the various courses were fully considered, and that, as a result of the conference it was hoped to secure the desired end, and thereby maintain the high standard of dental education. The delegates, who comprised the representatives of the Faculties of Dentistry of all the universities, will report to their councils.

ADV. 2.6.26

FLORA AND FAUNA BOARD.

The hon. secretary of the Flora and Fauna Board (Professor Wood-Jones) reported to a meeting yesterday that the Royal Society of London had granted him £100 in aid of research work on the development and life history of the monotremes and marsupials, and that this sum would be placed at the disposal of the board and the work conducted on Flinders Chase.

THE UNIVERSITY AND SPORT.

POSITION OF COMMERCE STUDENTS

PROBABLE EXCLUSION.

It is understood that commerce students at the University of Adelaide, who do not sit for examinations are liable to be debarred from representing the University in any game.

For some years commerce students at the University of Adelaide were debarred by the Cricket Association from representing the University at cricket, on the ground that they were not University students. The combined efforts of the Adelaide University Sports Association and the Commerce Students' Association resulted in this ban being lifted, since when commerce students who have played a prominent part in University life generally, have taken their place in the University eleven. Last season's University cricket team included three commerce students—N. A. and L. S. Walsh and A. G. Alexander. It now appears likely that commerce students will once more be prevented from representing the University at any games. It is understood that the general committee of the University Sports Association requires prospective members from the Commerce school to satisfy the committee in regard to the following matters:—

- (1) Each commerce applicant to observe rule 7 of the A.U.S.A. constitution, i.e., he must apply to general committee of the A.U.S.A. for membership.
- (2) He must also submit what lectures he is attending.
- (3) He must submit whether he attended the prescribed number of lectures, if present at the University for the last year, and if he sat for an examination at the end of the year. If he has not done so, to forward his reason.

It has been made clear by the executive that it is determined to debar from membership students who take up the commerce course for the sole purpose of playing games at the University. A good deal of controversy has taken place among the students. It is contended on one side that the merely nominal qualification for membership of the University gained by entering for any course and neither attending regular lectures nor sitting for examinations is an undesirable practice. It has also been suggested in certain quarters that outside influence has been brought to bear on the Sports Association. The view said to be taken by the outsiders is that the University could secure the best cricket team in the State by simply persuading all the best cricketers to enter their names for one or other of the courses available.

The commerce students maintain that it is ridiculous to make the sitting for an examination the criterion whether a person is or is not a University student. This is the impression conveyed by the ultimatum from the A.U.S.A. general committee. One commerce student remarked that University men were not schoolboys, but students. Examinations were naturally enforced at primary and secondary schools, but University students, acquiring knowledge of their own free will, need not necessarily pay the fees to sit for examinations unless they had a particular purpose in doing so, for example, the acquiring of the standing conferred by a degree or diploma.

When spoken to on the subject on Tuesday, Mr. C. H. Bressler, president of the Commerce Students' Association, said if it was the intention of the A.U.S.A. general committee to debar legitimate members of the Commerce school from participating in University sport, the Commerce Students' Association would give them its full protection.

ADV. 2.6.26

FORESTRY.

ADDRESS BY MR. ANTHONY, M.P.
The second of a series of meetings of members of the men's branches of the Liberal Federation in the Unley district was held in the Unley City Hall on Tuesday evening. Mr. H. C. Richards, M.P., presided.

An address on "Forestry" was delivered by Mr. E. A. Anthony, M.P. He referred to the afforestation schemes which had been developed by other countries. He said it was far better to have a permanent board appointed to carry on the work of forestry, regardless of what Government were in power. It was essential that a forestry department should be above political influences. The Government could annually vote certain amounts to this board. The work of one Government might be nullified or allowed to stagnate if the department was allowed to remain in the hands of whatever Government were in power. Great interest was being taken by conferences all over the State

in the question of afforestation and resolutions were being carried urging that a more vigorous afforestation policy should be adopted. The employment of prison labor in forestry was not a success. The Minister was not right when he said that anybody could grow a tree. Anybody could not grow a tree. If the department were not scientifically managed it would be a failure. The prison labor scheme had failed, they had been told, because there were not enough prisoners to go round. That was probably a very good thing for South Australia. South Australia was the first State in the Commonwealth to have a forestry department. It was established in 1876. The department had not altogether been a losing proposition. If the Government wished to realise upon the wonderful asset tomorrow they would receive a tremendous return owing to the money which had been invested in it. He did not agree with the Minister that his policy of afforestation in the South-East was comprehensive enough. There was any amount of land in the hills which would not grow anything but trees, and was very suitable for the growing of pines other than pinus insignis. He and his colleagues did not agree that the Government's floodwaters scheme was the only scheme which could be adopted successfully. No water should be allowed to run to waste. The money might be better spent in the hills, not only in the provision of more reservoirs, but also in the planting of timber for the consolidation of the water tables. The floodwaters scheme should originate in the hills, and not only begin there, but end there. There was a danger of the supplies of jarrah being extinguished in the near future. In no other country in the world was such valuable wood as jarrah used for railway sleepers. As a timber country the South-East was out of the question, and the extortionate freight made a paper pulp industry unreasonable. The hills districts were a better proposition than the South-East. Mr. Anthony referred to the unfortunate loss the State had suffered in the closing down of the Adelaide forestry school, which had trained many students who now occupied high positions in forestry in all parts of the Commonwealth.

ADV. 2.6.26

TRAVEL IN EUROPE.

A TOURIST'S IMPRESSIONS.

Professor Sir Archibald Strong on Tuesday evening at the Institute, North terrace, delivered an address to members of the Society of Arts. The president of the society (Mr. John White) occupied the chair.

The lecturer gave his impressions of travel in Europe, which he visited last year. It was most convenient, he said, for the traveller from Australia to England, to break his journey at Gibraltar and go through Spain, where the Moorish architecture was a feature of the beauty spots. When in England he found the impression prevailed that Spain was a barbarous and bandit-infested country in which to travel, and that hardly one good hotel was to be found outside Madrid. Those suppositions were not true in the least degree. Most of the places of great interest in Spain were on the main railway line and were easily accessible. The Madrid to Paris express was one of the best trains he had seen in Europe. While in the south of Spain, on New Year's Eve, he witnessed special dancing at his hotel by five girls, clad in white. The exhibition was superbly beautiful, and for concentration, passion, and beauty of form and posture, it surpassed any of the Russian dancing which he saw afterwards in other European cities. He noticed a charm and politeness about the average Spaniard. It was not voluble or effusive, but a quiet and dignified kindness. On going to Paris the apathy towards England was most marked. He, in common with a great many English people, would like to be able to feel wholeheartedly friendly towards France, but the attitude of the French towards Britain, especially over the debt, was hardly one that allowed one's feelings to go out to them with sympathy. He did not know that Great Britain's policy of refraining from saying anything that might hurt her neighbor's feelings had been altogether wise. France, Belgium, and Italy were the cheapest countries in which he lived while abroad. Amazing value was obtained in Paris; at a first-class hotel he paid only 3/ a night for a room. Visiting Scandinavia, he was greatly impressed by the beauty of the fjords on the north-west coast. A great defect in Norway and Sweden was the lack of the antiquity and tradition which was so marked in Belgium, Italy, and Spain. It seemed that the cities in Scandinavia had been so burned and battered by their wars that not much of the old architecture was left. Yet the cities were beautiful, partly because of their situation and partly because of their architecture. A noticeable feature of those northern countries was the sanity of the life led by the people. There was plenty of brightness, music, and general enjoyment by the people, without indulgence in excesses; there was no outward sign of that vice, which, in certain of the southern European cities, marred the brightness of the life of the people. In Holland he found living was most expensive. The paintings by Rembrandt at Amsterdam and other places were wonderful. In Germany he found courtesy was extended to the British

traveller. In Berlin there was apparent prosperity, although the German newspapers at the time contained accounts of unemployment and failures in business. The currency there had been stabilised, and the cost of living was about the same as it was in London. A lover of pictures should not fail to visit Berlin if he was in Europe, because the trip was worth while for the paintings alone. At Warsaw the people were exceedingly anxious for the goodwill of Great Britain, and seemed to be under the impression that Czechoslovakia, which the Poles disliked, had been represented to Great Britain to the exclusion of Poland. Poland had a population of 28,000,000, and was a most important nation, being a buffer between Western Europe and Bolshevik Russia, and for that reason was of tremendous importance in connection with the safety of the European nations. Vienna had its attractions, and Budapest was a city of historic interest. Hungary had been greatly reduced in size since the war, and at Budapest there were four statues, erected since the war, to mark the loss of nationals who were in subjugation in Czechoslovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Austria, and Roumania. The fact that the people of Europe were not all in their own countries was a great problem for those who were seeking to settle the peace of Europe. The difficulty was to bring the nationals out from subjugation to their own nations, and to draw a line delimiting the nations according to their national borders.

ADV. 2.6.26

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES.

CONFERENCE IN MELBOURNE.

Melbourne, June 1.
The conference of representatives of the universities of the six States of the Commonwealth was continued to-day at the Melbourne University.

A discussion on the subject of Australian universities and the British superannuation scheme was opened by the Sydney delegates. It was pointed out that British universities had a scheme of finance based on endowment insurance, and reference was made to the different kinds of policies. The fundamental aspect, it was explained, was that the premium must be 15 per cent. of a man's salary, and that the employing body should pay at least 10 per cent. of that. The conference expressed itself in favor of arranging, if possible, some scheme by which policy transfers could be effected with benefits as between Britain and Australia, and vice versa. A motion was carried suggesting that in cases where new appointments are made in Australia, the universities should adopt a scheme similar to the British system, so that in future, reciprocity would become possible as regards superannuation and insurance schemes.

On the question of universities conducting official tests and experiments, it was stated that engineering and other schools performed a good deal of testing work for the Government and various private firms, for which fees were charged. The Sydney representatives to the conference indicated that the fees charged scarcely paid for the maintenance of the facilities available for such testing work. In the course of discussion, it was indicated that most of the universities had the work functioning on a reasonable basis. It was decided, however, to assemble for circulation particulars of how this sphere of university activity was being managed in the various States. It was agreed that it was desirable that universities should carry out such testing work in the interests of the public when necessary, but it was contended that the operations should at least pay their way.

A suggestion that a central depot be established for supplies to the various universities of Australia of materials and apparatus used in the scientific departments was regarded as impracticable.

The relationship of graduates to the financial needs of Australian universities was an item on the agenda under the name of the Sydney University. This provoked discussion on the question of graduates who had progressed well in their professions being encouraged to assist financially university education. The Queensland delegates reported on a scheme, in which leaflets were circulated, pointing out the various needs of the University from time to time. Attached to the circular were little forms for contributions. A suggestion was made that graduates should take up a small insurance policy, the insurance being made over to the University and the proceeds at the maturing of the policy going to the University.

"The excessive cost of postage on books" was the heading under which Tasmania revived a discussion on a subject that had occupied the attention of previous conferences. The representations made to the Postmaster-General on the subject, and his replies, were reviewed. The policy of the Postal Department in regard to the representations made was that it had to treat everyone alike, and it could not make exceptions in regard to any particular class of the community. The conference accepted the explanation of the department.

Reference was made to an enquiry by the Australian Commissioner in America whether Australian universities would be able to advance concrete propositions with a view to an Australian professor being selected to visit America, and how he would be financed.