

PROFESSOR RENNIE DEAD.

A DISTINGUISHED SCIENTIST.

The Adelaide University, from first year undergraduates to the Chancellor, and, indeed, a large section of the Australian community, mourn the death of Professor Edward Rennie, M.A., D.Sc., which occurred at his home, Childers-street, North Adelaide, on Saturday afternoon.

Twelve months or more ago, the professor was very unwell, but since then he had made a wonderful recovery and latterly had enjoyed good health, so much so that he was feeling quite robust. He actually underwent a medical examination on Friday and was pronounced all right. On Saturday afternoon when watering his garden he felt there was something wrong, so he went into the house, had a drink, and lay down in the sitting-room. He soon became unconscious and to the consterna-



Professor Rennie.

tion of those members of his family who were at home passed away. There was difficulty in getting a doctor, but when one did attend, he pronounced life extinct. His son, Mr. Edward Rennie, who is a lecturer on engineering in Melbourne University, is in Adelaide on holiday, but he did not happen to be at home when the sad event occurred.

Professor Rennie was in his seventy-fifth year. He had been Angus Professor of Chemistry at the University of Adelaide since 1885, and was as widely loved for his innate gentlemanliness as he was respected for his learning. He was the senior professor of Chemistry in Australia. The Professor was the son of Mr. E. A. Rennie, for many years Auditor-General of New South Wales, and was born at Balmain, Sydney, on August 19, 1832. His wife, who survives him, is a daughter of Dr. J. J. Cadell, of Sydney, and there is one son (Edward) and two daughters (Miss Katie Rennie and Miss Alison Rennie). Another son (Henry Charles Cadell) died in August, 1925. Both sons were graduates of the Adelaide University, one in medicine and the other in engineering, and it was while on war service in France as a doctor that Henry developed the malady that resulted in his death.

It was at the Sydney Grammar School that Professor Rennie began his education. He continued it at the Sydney University, where he obtained his degree in Arts in 1870, and in 1876 he became Master of Arts. He was master at the Sydney Grammar School from 1870 to 1875, and at Brisbane Grammar School in 1876-7.

In 1877 he went to London to continue his studies and for chemical research work, and he graduated at London University as Doctor of Science in 1881. During his stay in London he was assistant for two years to Dr. C. R. Alder Wright in the chemical department of St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, and he taught occasionally in the Royal College of Science, South Kensington. On returning to Australia he was connected with the Government Analyst's Department in Sydney, and in 1885 he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the Adelaide University. His was the first appointment to the Angus Chair of Chemistry.

So began in South Australia a period of over 40 years of active service by a man who rose to great eminence in the science of chemistry, and to a place high in the hearts of men. First elected to the Council

of the University of Adelaide in 1886, he resigned in 1895 to go abroad to observe developments in chemical manufacture, and he returned after an absence of a year. In 1913 he was re-elected to the council, and remained a member until his death. He was a fellow of the Chemical Societies of London and of Berlin, and of the Institute of Chemistry of Great Britain and Ireland. Professor Rennie took a prominent part in the establishment of the Australian Chemical Institute, of which he was president. He was also president of the South Australian branch of that organization, by whom, last March, he was tendered a complimentary dinner on his being elected president of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science, on the occasion of the congress in Perth. Nearly 200 delegates attended from all parts of New Zealand and Australia. Twice he had been president of the Royal Society, and he was also chairman of the South Australian committee of the Federal Advisory Council of Science and Industry.

The School of Mines and Industries provided Professor Rennie with another outlet for his energy in the cause of science. He was reappointed to the council in 1918, after an interval of 23 years. He was one of the original members of the council, and in welcoming him back, in June, 1918, the President said no member of the first council had been more zealous or more helpful than Professor Rennie. His scientific attainments, his familiarity with laboratory work, and his readiness to serve made him invaluable. When he resigned in 1895 Sir Langdon Bonython had expressed, on behalf of the then existing council, their great regret, and again as spokesman for the council he extended to him a very cordial welcome, and voiced the satisfaction of its members that the school was again to have the inestimable advantage of his assistance. Professor Rennie had returned to them with increased knowledge, wider experience, and with all the old disposition to serve.

Professor Rennie's connection with Chalmers Church dates from the time of his arrival in Adelaide, and he had been an elder for about 40 years. He was also chairman of the Presbyterian Girls' College. He combined with the qualities of a distinguished scientist those of a devout Christian. It was fitting, therefore, that the last human honors should be paid to him at Chalmers Church. In this connection there is an interesting coincidence which may be mentioned. Mr. Edward Rennie, of Melbourne University, is a musician, and it was arranged that he should act as organist at the service at Chalmers Church on Sunday morning. The professor selected the hymns for the occasion, and they included Horatius Bonar's well-known hymn beginning with the words:—

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon My breast.

A simple service was held at the church and at the graveside at the North-road Cemetery, conducted by the Rev. J. Hall Angus and Dr. G. Davidson, at the request of the members of the family, and they took alternate parts. At the church Mr. Sable Grivell was at the organ, and he played the dead march from the "Song of David" (Mackenzie). The pall-bearers were the Chancellor of the University (Sir George Murray), the Vice-Chancellor (Sir William Mitchell), the president of the School of Mines and Industries and member of the council of the University (Sir Langdon Bonython), the Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy), member of the University Council, Dr. W. T. Cooke, and Mr. C. R. Hodge (former Registrar of the University). Among the other mourners were the son, Mr. Edward James Cadell Rennie (of the University of Melbourne), Mr. T. E. Barr Smith, Mr. W. G. T. Goodman, Dr. F. S. Hone, Mr. W. J. Isbister, and Dr. Helen Mayo (members of the Council of the University), the Registrar (Mr. F. W. Eardley), Professor Wood-Jones, Professor Braithford Robertson, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly (Dr. David Chapman), Rev. Floyd Shannon, Archdeacon Myres, Sir Robert Fleming, Dr. T. Fleming, Dr. London, Dr. S. W. Pennycook, Dr. A. M. Cudmore, Dr. Brodie Smeaton, Dr. Grant, and Messrs. R. J. M. Lucas, F. Bevan, A. E. Hampton, G. Shaw, F. L. Winzor, H. Othams, W. Taylor, and T. W. Tassie.

TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY OF THE PROFESSOR.

BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY.

"The passing of Professor Rennie seems like the passing of the old University as I know it," said Professor Sir William Mitchell, Vice-Chancellor of the University, last night, "when a few of us divided all the work outside of our teaching, and nothing seemed a burden to any. But I am afraid we let Professor Rennie do most. It was only later that we realised how much he was undertaking, and how he deprived him of the time to carry on the researches in organic chemistry for which he was so well fitted, and which he had so brilliantly begun. I think he was always called 'Dad.' The word expresses what the professors and lecturers felt, as well as the students. And I

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