

**Medical Course**

"Medicus," Adelaide:—I have to complain of lack of courtesy on the part of Mr. F. W. Eardley (Registrar of Adelaide University) in evading the issue raised by my queries published in "The News" on Friday regarding the reason for the proposed hurried legislation to allow medical students to pass their examinations in May.

Less than a month ago the Senate revised the whole of the medical examination regulations.

What is the reason for this extraordinary proposal to modify them now, and the virtual refusal to explain why?

Mr. Eardley says that the examination is not supplementary, but it is a "new examination, and may not be taken by any student who has passed the third examination not less than a year before."

Is it not therefore a fact that a fifth-year student or a sixth-year student who has failed in November, 1927, may thus pass in May, and may be swerved aside from going to London by the prospect of such an examination giving him his degree?

Is there any other course in which November, March, and May examinations are prescribed? What is the reason for urgency?

What has occurred between the last senate meeting and commemoration to warrant the proposal?

Is it not a fact that a student has his course laid out from year to year, beginning and ending with the academic year, roughly March to November? How can this warrant an examination in May?

Is it not a fact that a student who has failed cannot go to Melbourne and proceed where he left off here if he fails in Public Health, and that the proportion of failures in Public Health is usually high?

**Students for England**

"Senate," Parkside:—Mr. F. W. Eardley (Registrar of Adelaide University) misses the whole point of the article by "Medicus."

Is it a fact that two sixth-year students have already left for London, that four fifth-year students have booked their passages and will leave shortly, and others intend to leave?

Why was not the granting of an examination in May for sixth-year students discussed by the Senate a few weeks ago when the whole medical course was revised?

Will Mr. Eardley state how many lectures were given to fifth-year students in surgery in 1926 and 1927? Were not the numbers 14 and seven respectively instead of 80 each year? Yet the students paid full fees for the full number of lectures and were examined in them.

Is it not a fact that many students have lost confidence in the medical school?

The senate ought to appoint a select committee to enquire into the affairs of the school and not hastily adopt legislation in an attempt to prevent students from going to London.

**Reply by Dr. Ray**

Dr. W. Ray, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Adelaide University:—In reply to the letters by "Medicus" and "Senate," I wish to point out that the proposed examination in May in the final year of the medical course is not an emergency measure, as suggested by those correspondents.

Its evolution dates back several years. In the regulations years ago, supplementary examinations were totally prohibited in the final examination and candidates who failed had to wait until the following November for re-examination.

The course at this time was a five-year one. Final year failure brought the university time of the undergraduates to six years—the present length.

After lengthening the normal course to six years the clause prohibiting supplementary examinations in the final year was deleted, and in special cases supplementary examinations were granted in March.

This measure has never been a satisfactory one, for from December to March little teaching is to be had by the student.

The new proposal will supersede the present March supplementary examination, give the failed candidate an opportunity for further study, and examine him in May.

The arrangements for this legislation had not been completed when the Senate met last.

As the Senate, in the ordinary course of events, would not meet until November, the Faculty of Medicine (in view of the desire of some of the failed men to go abroad) asked that a special meeting be called to finalise the matter instead of waiting another year.

The examination is not merely for those who have failed in November; it will give any candidate an opportunity to spend a few more months on his final year's work should he so desire.

There are not more failures in public health than in other subjects at the fifth year examination. I do not know what status would be granted to fifth-year medical students proceeding to Melbourne under the conditions stated.

The course in surgery was interrupted by the illness of the lecturer, which caused him subsequently to resign his lecture ship.

**MR. MCCOY RETURNS**

**TOO MUCH VALUE ON EXAMS**

**Educational Systems Compared**

"We place far too much value on examinations. These may be necessary to ensure a certain standard being reached for entrance to a university, but those who enter the academic ranks are in a minority.

"We follow the traditions of Britain in this respect, but in most parts of Canada and America boys and girls are admitted to universities by means of a certificate from their head master—the schools having been approved by the university authorities."—Mr. W. T. McCoy.

Mr. McCoy was sent by the Hill Government to attend the Imperial Educational Conference, at which 45 separate parts of the Empire (including South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, and Fiji) were represented. He returned this morning.

"In my opinion," he said, "South Australia is lagging far behind Great Britain and America in the matter of agricultural education, beyond the elementary stage and below college rank. In the United States agricultural education of college rank means education of university grade. A boy cannot enter an agricultural college in America before he has satisfactorily completed a four years' high school course.

"He is usually 15 years old, and has devoted himself entirely at college to the scientific basis underlying agricultural practice—no college time being given to manual farm work, since it is held that skill in manipulative operations can best be taught on the home farm.

"There are 3,600 high schools in America that have agricultural departments. They are manned principally by graduates. I visited a number of these high schools, and many of the farms from which the boys come, and was surprised at the character of the work carried out by them.

"I am convinced that, provided we can get teachers with the proper qualifications, who will command the respect of both students and farmers, our high schools could maintain successfully such agricultural departments.

"Both in America and Britain the elementary schools are ahead of ours in the teaching of elementary science, elementary agriculture, drawing, music, woodwork, physical culture, and domestic arts. Their greater success seems to me to be due as much to the advisory and superintending work as to that done by the teachers themselves.

"In all other respects I think our primary schools can hold their own with any that I saw. I saw no better infant schools than those in South Australia. Certain of the high schools can also hold their own. In America most of the high schools have five departments—secondary, commercial, industrial, agricultural and home economics. Here we have only two, with the exception of the schools at Cleve and Murray Bridge, where there are three."

**NEWS 13.12.27**

**MISSIONARY FROM SUDAN**

**Dr. Ronald Trudinger**

**WORK AMONG PAGANS**

Dr. Ronald Trudinger, who arrived from the Sudan with his wife and two children by the Moldavia on Saturday, is a native of South Australia. He has been 14 years in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan as medical missionary under the auspices of the Sudan United Mission.

Melut, 420 miles south of Khartoum, where Dr. Trudinger is stationed, is not a pleasant place. Malaria is rife, mosquitoes swarm in millions, and the air is always humid.

It is four years since Dr. Trudinger was last at home. This time he will leave his two children behind, as the climate is too severe for them.

Melut has a rainfall of 25 in.—four months wet season and eight of dry. The country is one of long grasses and small forests of acacias, which are pretty when in blossom.

**Pagan Tribes**

The Nilotic races with whom Dr. Trudinger lives are of a proud, independent nature, and difficult to reach. The Shilluks

and the Dinkas, the two main tribes, live on the opposite banks of the White Nile.

They are tall, strong, and well developed. Their principal industry is farming. Sheep, goats, and cattle are kept. Corn, cotton, and sorghum are grown.

From the latter they make a porridge, which is eaten with sour milk. Little clothing is worn except for visiting, when a cloth is thrown over the shoulder and falls, enveloping the figure.

"Women and girls wear iron bracelets and wristlets," said Dr. Trudinger. "They like to hear the clink of metal when dancing. But the tribes are so largely ruled by witchcraft and spirit worship that they do not trade much in metal, believing it to be banned by their gods."

Men shave their heads all except a ridge from front to back. This is worn in tufts, which the Dinkas call "cockscorn," or, if a very thin tuft, "telegraph wire."

Shilluks shave their heads in a definite pattern, which looks like a hat without a crown. When fully grown the rim is about 9 in. in diameter. This is a sign of distinction.

Cuts in the forehead and the removal of teeth from the lower jaw are other tribal customs. Except for these disfigurements some are featured like Europeans.

**Trading in Wives**

Wives are traded for. If a young man has a sister it behoves him to look after her well and be nice to her. When she is bought in marriage for 15 cows one may fall to him, and he has therefore more chance of himself marrying early.

Only few converts have been made, Dr. Trudinger said. The natives are grateful for the hospital treatment, but they are so bound down by witchcraft, and, moreover, have been so harassed by Mohammedans and slave raiders, that they suspect every foreigner.

They are just beginning to discriminate between the white man and other races. Snake worship has a strong hold on them, and other reptiles and wild animals are objects of veneration also.

Bride snatching is frequent. After such an occurrence whole villages meet and join in a club fight. When a few heads have been battered the old men decide how many cows the would-be bridegroom can pay, and if he may keep the bride.

Dr. and Mrs. Trudinger will spend some time in Adelaide before returning to their duties at the mission station.

**ADV. 14. 12. 27**

The senate of the University of Western Australia has appointed Mr. E. W. Bennett, M.Sc., of New Zealand, to a lectureship in biology and Dr. George A. Elliott, M.Sc., Ph.D., lecturer in chemistry. Mr. Bennett is 28 years of age, and is at present assistant curator in the Canterbury Museum, New Zealand. Dr. Elliott, who is 24 years old, has been engaged in research work at the University College, London, since 1923. Messrs. Ross McDonald, F. T. Leake, and J. T. Dwyer, Perth solicitors, have been appointed part time lecturers in law.

Sir David Gordon returned to Adelaide

**ADV. 14. 12. 27**

**AFFORESTATION.**

**REPORT OF CONSERVATOR.**

The report for the year ended June 30 of the Conservator of Forests (Mr. E. Julius), presented to Parliament on Tuesday, showed that the total area of forest reserves on June 30 was 202,227 acres, temporary forest reserves 3,805 acres, and temporary reserves 1,773 acres. On account of the extensive programme on hand the area of the South-Eastern forests had been increased by 46,000 acres, which had recently been purchased. That land had not been gazetted, and consequently was not shown in the total area. Further expectations of land, both in the South-East and Adelaide hills, were being carried out, with a view to adding still further to the area of forest lands, but under an agreement reached at the Hobart Forestry Conference in 1920, the total for South Australia should be 500,000 acres. Considerable advance on previous activities had been made, inasmuch as 4,242 acres had been enclosed and planted, including 1,335 acres at Mount Burr, 1,875 at Penola, 874 at Bianche, 108 at Kuitpo, and 28 at Wirrabara. Of the total area mentioned, 3,177 acres had been planted with softwoods, 77 with natural regeneration hardwoods, 289 had not been planted, and 609 acres comprised firebreaks. To provide sufficient plants, 3,804,800 seedlings had been raised in the various nurseries, at a cost of 7/ a thousand. The spacing adopted allowed approximately 630 trees to the acre.

There had been a good demand by the public for trees during the 1926 distribution season, the number distributed being 28,525. The revenue received from this source was £306. From the plantations, 1,180 lb. of seed were collected. Buildings and improvements had been well attended to, and all livestock is reported to be

in good condition. Although some loss had been reported, in only one case did it reach any of the plantations, and an area of less than three acres was affected, which was an excellent tribute to the efficiency of the fire protection scheme and its administration by the officers concerned. Unusual weather conditions were recorded in several quarters. In the north an unusually dry summer caused loss to nursery stock. In the South-East, as a result of fierce equinoctial gales, the covering was blown off the seed beds, the damage having been confined to nursery stock.

There was no outbreak of disease in any of the plantations. Milling operations were carried out at Bundaloo, Mount Burr, and Wirrabara, and another plant was erected at the Cave Range Forest Reserve, near Narracoorte, where wood-blocks were cut from South Australian blue, red, and pink gum. A total of 1,760,568 super feet was sawn. It comprised 1,221,072 super feet of hardwood, and 539,496 super ft. of softwood. Sales of sawn timber amounted to 1,062,236 super ft., the Wirrabara seasoning kilns proving very effective in the economical production of well-seasoned pinus insignis. In addition, the following sales were made:—21,648 cubic ft. of hewn hardwood, 75,673 of round hardwood, 11,965 of round softwood, 389,423 of fuel hardwood, 105 tons of lime, 161 tons of wattle bark, and 721 tons of walnut. A noticeable feature was the output of wattle bark from the natural growth on the Moun Crawford and Kuitpo forests, which encouraged the hope that for the present year considerable revenue would be derived from that source. Excellent returns had been secured from Bundaloo and Lowan in wool and sales of fat sheep, which realised £2,379 and £1,413 respectively.

From 1927 to 1936 a planting programme of 5,000 acres net a year was being aimed at, and at the present rate of progress it was expected that in 1936 an area of 75,000 acres would be under plantation. Tests had been made of the pulping of pinus insignis for paper, but so far no information had been received concerning the results. Both Canada and the United States of America were feeling the effects of the huge inroads made into their natural softwoods forests, the world's demands being chiefly for softwoods. Europe was cutting 3,000,000,000 cubic ft. more than its annual increment. Siberia had large tracts of virgin forests, but from information gathered they were inaccessible. Australia, in the course of a few years, would have to rely on its own resources to supply its demands for softwoods. During 1925-26 the importation of softwoods into South Australia exceeded 68,000,000 super ft. At present to supply that amount of milled timber it would be necessary to fell 2,000 acres of mature timber. That had been worked out on the basis of an average yield of 6,000 cubic ft. an acre for a period of 30 years, with a timber area large enough for milling purposes. The majority of softwoods plantations in South Australia consisted of pinus insignis, and, although, at present, on account of the importation of oregon and redwood, it was not favorably considered by the trade as a building timber, it was certain that in the near future properly seasoned and graded insignis would find its place on the market. Professor Chapman, of the Adelaide University, had carried out a series of tests, and his figures showed that insignis compared very favorably with oregon. The Conservator paid a tribute to the work of the staff, which had succeeded in carrying through the largest planting programme in Australia. During the past three years a greater area of coniferous forests had been planted than during the previous 48 years.

**REG. ADV. 16. 12. 27**

**MEDICINE EXAMINATION RULES.**

A special meeting of the Senate of the Adelaide University was held on Wednesday afternoon, when the Warden (Mr. Justice Angus Parsons) presided. The business concerned the alteration of a regulation for the degree of Bachelor of Medicine. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine (Dr. W. Ray) moved that regulation VII. be altered to read:—"The ordinary examinations shall be held in or about November, and the supplementary examinations shall be held in March. The fourth examination shall also be held in May or June." In submitting the motion, Dr. Ray said that, originally in the five-year medical curriculum no supplementary examinations were allowed in the final examinations. When the course was lengthened to six years, supplementary examinations for the final examination were allowed in special cases. But as there was little facility for any further study at the Adelaide Hospital between November and March, it was felt by the faculty, who had been considering the proposal for many months, that it would be desirable to abolish the supplementary examination in the final examination, and substitute an additional final examination in May. The motion was seconded by Dr. F. S. Hone, and carried.