

Adv. 21-7-33

# SCHOLARS, OR LEADERS

## PUBLIC LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICE

To The Editor

Sir—It is so rare to find either lack of logic or lack of knowledge in your consistently fine leaders, that it seems a little unfair to seize upon an exception. In view, however, of the fact that my name is mentioned, and that I was chairman of the recent Rhodes Scholars' conference in Melbourne, perhaps I may be permitted a rejoinder to the article under the heading, "Scholars, or Leaders?"

You refer to the gentle admission by us at this conference that we "had not done everything possible" in the matter. That is true, for Rhodes Scholars are at least as human as mankind generally; but the context of the discussion was "public duties," and the discussion expressly negated policies as being anything more than one example of "public duties," which, as you correctly say, was the phrase used by the founder. And may I suggest that just there you have fallen into confusion. You refer to Mr. Rudall's election, if I read your leader aright, as an exceptional instance of carrying out this ideal of public service. In this you do less than justice to Mr. Rudall himself. Mr. Rudall has been one of my closest friends for years, and no one rejoices more at his election or expects more from his Parliamentary career than I do. But I would hesitate long before suggesting (as it seems to me your article suggests) that his long service in the war, devoted service as Assistant Director of Education after the Armistice, and his many public activities in Gawler and elsewhere since, were not public service, and that his real public service is only now starting.

I cannot understand the antithesis implied in your heading, "Scholars, or Leaders." It might be apt to enquire into which category, for example, you put the Chief Justice (who is also Chancellor) or Sir William Mitchell (who is Vice-Chancellor). I would have thought that these gentlemen were both scholars and leaders. And, if so, why should not the same apply in a humbler way to Rhodes Scholars? In South Australia several Rhodes Scholars are among the leaders of the medical profession. These gentlemen give many hours a week of entirely honorary service to the Adelaide and Children's Hospital. It seems to me that this is public service of the highest kind, and no whit less useful than that afforded by a great many members of Parliament. In South Australia and elsewhere, Rhodes Scholars are on the councils of the Universities, assisting not merely in scholarship, but in the administration of hundreds of thousands of pounds a year. Is not all this leadership in public service?

Cecil Rhodes was not foolish enough to expect more than a sprinkling of Rhodes scholars in Parliament, and even he did not realise the extent to which, following payment of members, politics would become a semi-professional vocation, much like other professions. You say Rhodes evidently realised that there are prominent scholars who would make bad members of Parliament, or bad business men, when he directed that his Oriel gift of £100,000 should be administered by business men. Then two questions arise:—(1) Have the Parliaments of Australia really managed their business and financial affairs well, say since the war? and (2) Can you remember a first-class leader of the business community in the Lower House (which controls finance) since the war—a business leader of, say, half the calibre of Sir Walter Young, who performed such remarkable public service a year or so ago? And, if not, what has the latter part of your article got to do with your apparent view that leaders of public affairs are only found in Parliament?

In every State, Rhodes Scholars have tried (five within the last 12 months) to get into Parliament and failed. You are no doubt right when you say it is because they are not leaders. But where, then, are these leaders found? And in particular (I speak now as a member of the Rhodes Selection Committee) how are we going to discover these embryo leaders at the mature age of 20 or 21?—I am, Sir, &c.,

HARRY THOMSON.

Adelaide, July 20.  
[This letter from a Rhodes Scholar and King's Counsel is an able and spirited defence of Rhodes Scholars in general, and of those who select them; but it is not a very logical rejoinder to a leading article in which neither Scholars nor selectors were in any sense attacked. The leader was designed to be, and was in fact, an expression of gratification that a Rhodes Scholar was coming forward into public life (as distinct from public service), and of hope that more Rhodes Scholars would be able to take part in the public life of the community, rather than that their public service should be confined to the fields of endeavor in which they are engaged in their private and workaday capacities.—Ed.]

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# DEATH OF PROFESSOR LOWRIE

## Notable Service To Wheat Industry

### BROKE DOWN PREJUDICES TO SUPERPHOSPHATES

#### Former Roseworthy Head

Professor W. Lowrie, whose researches into bare fallowing and manuring for wheatgrowing

assisted in the establishment of the industry on a profitable basis, died at his home at Echunga on Thursday night. Professor Lowrie, whose health had not been good recently, was the Principal of Roseworthy Agricultural College from 1887 until 1901, and was a former Director of Agriculture for the State. His wife survives him.

"Two important points which should be definitely associated with the name of Lowrie," said the Director of Agriculture (Professor Perkins) yesterday, "are the necessity under our conditions of preparing the land as bare fallow for 12 months or thereabouts before seeding, and the application of adequate dressings of a water soluble phosphate. He worked out the problem connected with these two points at Roseworthy. When he had satisfied himself that these were the best means of improving yields he went from one end of the State to the other, addressing meetings and endeavoring to persuade farmers to adopt the methods which he had shown definitely to be successful at Roseworthy.

"Although the results of his pioneering work did not appear in a general increase in the State's yield until after he went to New Zealand, there is no doubt that the work he did in finding out the best means to increase productivity and in persuading farmers to adopt those methods, has been chiefly responsible for the very satisfactory yields at present.

"I consider, speaking personally," concluded Professor Perkins, "and as one associated intimately with him for 10 years, that probably no single individual did more to make general farming in South Australia payable."

#### Great Service To Agriculture

"It is with the deepest regret," said Professor A. E. V. Richardson last night, "that Roseworthy collegians of the former generation will learn of the passing of Professor Lowrie. He rendered magnificent service to South Australian agriculture during the period when he was Principal of Roseworthy. At a time when the agricultural and livestock industries of the State were in a pioneering stage he persistently advocated sound methods of cultivation and livestock management, and he was mainly instrumental in popularising the use of superphosphate which has done so much for Australian agriculture."

#### Brilliant Scholar

Professor Lowrie, who was the son of a shepherd, was born near Galashiels, Scotland, in 1857. He was brought up on a farm and educated at Edinburgh University, where he obtained an M.A. degree in 1883. The following year he gained one of the Highland and Agricultural Society's bursaries, which enabled him to return to the university and undertake a course of study dealing with the principles of agriculture. He distinguished himself by securing honors in all classes necessary for graduation as a bachelor of science, in addition to obtaining the society's diploma. In 1887 he was appointed principal of Roseworthy, and by sheer enthusiasm and energy gradually wore down the prejudice manifested by many farmers against the new methods of agriculture which he advocated.

He won the confidence of producers and demonstrated the soundness of his theories. There was widespread regret when, in 1901, he accepted the position of Director of Lincoln Agricultural College at Canterbury, New Zealand. In 1908 he was appointed Director of Agriculture in Western Australia, and in 1909 declined an offer of the chair of agriculture at the Sydney University. He was appointed Director of Agriculture for South Australia in 1912, but resigned in 1914 owing to differences of opinion with the Minister for Agriculture regarding the reorganization of the department.

On his resignation the professor retired into private life, and at Battunga, Echunga, carried out farming and live stock breeding. His Border Leicester sheep always attracted favorable attention.

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# SCHOLARS, OR LEADERS

## WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

To the Editor

Sir—This has developed into an interesting controversy with the honors on the side of your sub-leader. "Mr. Rudall has been one of my closest friends for years, and no one rejoices more at his election than I do." These words explain the purpose and purport of Mr. Thomson's letter. He has come to his friend's defence as becomes a friend. But what a pity to have brought in the name of Mr. Rudall or that of any Rhodes scholar, or the other distinguished persons whom Mr. Thomson mentions. The point at issue is whether knowledge gained by a course of study, which culminates in the selection of the student for the benefactions under the will of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, has accomplished what the donor wanted. Truth compels one to say that it has not, and that Rhodes Scholars, as a whole, have not taken that prominent part which has been expected of them. That they have served, yes. But who? In Australia alone, it is an outstanding and incontrovertible fact that out of the hundreds who have qualified, a mere handful, and possibly not that, have become distinguished leaders in any branch of public service.

To suggest, as Mr. Thomson does, that Rhodes scholars who serve on councils of universities and vigilance committees, and supervise the distribution of money, is leadership, is to beg the question, and belittle the office. Surely Rhodes had a bigger vision than this. This class of work is being done, and as effectively, by hundreds of persons who have not had the advantage of a university, nor even a high school training. Is it not a fact, too, that on those same councils, the scholars are not the most outstanding people?

It was not suggested in the article that leaders must necessarily be in Parliament. Your readers will be big enough to see beyond this. But in what other department is there outstanding leadership by Rhodes men? Do they dominate in art, science, commerce, profession, or industry? Are they found leading our citizens in any big organisations, and if so, what? Scholars there are among them, but do they lead public opinion and overtop their fellows? It is becoming painfully pronounced that learning as such is not fulfilling expectations. Did Cecil Rhodes lay too much stress upon learning, and not enough upon character?

I took your article to welcome the entry of a scholar into Parliament, the most useful area of public life. Glad to see him get away from smaller into bigger fields, and discard work on district councils, vigilance committees, and minor associations (which can, by no stretch of imagination, be said to fit the expectations of the great donor), and bring these same scholars out into the open, to match their energies with those of other men who have not had the advantage of such a training, and lead them rather than serve them.—I am, Sir, &c.,

K. T. NEWMAN.

Pirle street.

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Dr. Brian Maegraith, who was recently awarded a Beit Medical Research Fellowship in London, has won an Oxford honors degree in science for his laboratory researches in connection with cerebro-spinal meningitis.

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The Right Rev. John S. Moyes, M.A., Bishop of Armidale, celebrates his 49th birthday today. He was born at Koolunga, and was educated at St. Peter's College, the Adelaide University, and St. Barnabas Theological College. He took his M.A. degree in 1907, and the same year was appointed assistant curate at Port Pirie. He afterwards became rector of St. Outhbert's Prospect, St. Paul's, Port Pirie; and St. Bartholomew's, Norwood. In 1925 he was elected Archdeacon of Adelaide, and four years later was elevated to his present position. He married the eldest daughter of the late Sir Richard Butler.

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# ELGAR AND DELIUS QUARTETS

## Fine Conservatorium Concert

By Dr. Alex. Burnard

Last night, at the Elder Hall, the Conservatorium String Quartet—Peter Bornstein, Kathleen Meegan, Sylvia Whittington and Harold Parsons—gave two remarkably fine performances. The works were both string quartets, and the composers both Englishmen, and it was of interest to compare the restrained mysticism of the one with the no less glamorous atmosphere of the other. In the Elgar work (a first performance here) were several strong reminders of his second symphony, notably in the nebulous, dream spirit of the first movement. The second had a quiet pastoral charm, dropping down to a drowsy murmur that was ineffably tender. Serene harmonies and use of the highest string tones were typically Elgarian. The final allegro, with a decided strength and freedom from trammels, expressed a strain of lyricism perhaps inspired by a country walk through varied scenery. The whole was an excellent presentation of a work that left a residual impression of cloudless happiness. We must hear it again.

One has only to listen occasionally to the cello part to realise the chromatic basis of much of the Delius Quartet. The playing of the first movement stressed the fresh English quality of the second, a Scherzo, went well, springing lilt, and possessed some of the bucolic atmosphere that distinguishes his "Brigg Fair" fantasy. The slow movement is the cream of it all. It is named "Late Swallows"—presumably from its palpitating summer atmosphere. In the muted section the harmonies are of an unearthly beauty, the whole effect being enhanced by a languid undulating figure. Here was beautiful playing indeed. Nothing obtruded to ruffle the lovely day-dream. We may be said to have basked in it. Another genial all-in-together in the last movement, was of a frank charm that the players obviously enjoyed as much as we did.

Mr. Harry Wotton's first public appearance has been looked for with zest. His voice has a many, resonant quality, tinged occasionally with a certain reediness, and he produces it easily and openly. There was true pathos in his "An Die Turen" (Wolf), and the sturdy ring of Strauss's "Brett Uber Mein Haupt," was well delivered. Korbay's "But One True Precious Pearl" uses a traditional Hungarian tune. Mr. Wotton's sostenuto here was very fine. His frequent use of the upward portamento makes for a slight monotony. In his unpretentious encore, "Love Me or Not" was also exhibited a masterly control of the long phrase. Accompaniments were sensitively played by Mr. George Pearce.

News 25-7-33

# NOTED EXPLORER RETURNING

## Sir Douglas Mawson at Fremantle

FREMANTLE, Tuesday.—Sir Douglas Mawson, the noted South Australian explorer, interviewed in the Oronsay, which arrived from England today, on his way back to Adelaide, said that his visit to England was for the dual purpose of arranging the publication of scientific reports of his Antarctic expeditions of 1920 to 1932, and of releasing cinematograph films, which would be shown throughout the world, the proceeds to be applied towards the cost of the reports.

Asked about his future intentions, Sir Douglas said there was no money to be got for exploratory work, and so he had no definite immediate plans. His old ship the Discovery, was laid up.

The Discovery II, which recently returned to England from the Antarctic, was likely to be going there again in October for further oceanograph surveys, and to continue investigations of the habits of whales.

While in England he made enquiries about whaling with a view to enabling the Commonwealth Government to exploit whaling in southern waters, which hitherto had been largely in Norwegian hands. That was an anomaly, as the industry was located at Australia's door.

There was tremendous activity in whaling before the financial depression began, but the demand had now so decreased that the only way to make it a success was to regulate the output.