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UNIVERSITY PROFESSORSHIPS.

University Professors who are "scandalous; inefficient" in the discharge of their duties have no right to continue in office any longer than the time required for securing successors to them. Professor Harper asserted in the Melbourne University Senate last week that such a description must be emphatically applied to certain Professors whom the Council had permitted to remain at their posts, although they might quickly have been displaced, as they held office nominally only on a yearly tenure. The same situation with modifications has not been unknown in the University of Adelaide; and for this among other reasons the discussion now proceeding in the sister colony concerning the general aspects of the subject is worth watching. The Council is supposed to be the guardian of the students' interests; yet the Senate is inclined to ask who is to watch the watcher, and to answer by reference to itself. When, however, one watchman undertakes to keep guard over another, it is open to the latter to ask exactly the

same question, and thus finality might never be reached. In "The Register" some time ago we showed that a speaker in the Melbourne University Senate had alluded to the practice of the Adelaide University as supporting the argument in favour of entrusting absolute power to the Council, but that this impression was founded on a wrong reading of the statutes in force here. When the local Council wishes to dispense with a Professor's services he can appeal to the Visitor of the University—the Governor of the colony. A similar precaution was adopted in the Scotch Universities some years ago, when dismissed Professors were allowed the option of appealing to Her Majesty in Council. If a Professor were guilty of drunkenness or other indecorous conduct, or if he dishonestly neglected his work, he might nevertheless greatly harass any member of a University Council who might state the fact in explanation to the Senate publicly assembled; but when he knows that by an appeal to the Visitor he renders himself liable to have the whole matter threshed out in Parliament under the cloak of privilege he will pause before opening the gates to publicity.

The chief difficulty has hitherto been due to the fact that, while the Council of a University is an executive body holding its meetings in private, the Senate conducts its proceedings in the light of public criticism. Facts may come to the knowledge of the former which call for the utmost rigour of which executive powers are capable, and yet the Senate may be left in ignorance of the true grounds on which the Council has acted. On the other hand, the Council may be remiss in leaving unrectified abuses which members of the Senate may know to be notorious. In the dispute over the statutes of the Melbourne University the Senate is unwilling to accept the compromise offered by the Council, and seeks to circumscribe the powers of the executive body by the proviso that "no expression of opinions on religious, political, philosophical, or scientific matters shall be adjudged conduct which renders a Professor not a fit and proper person to hold office." This amendment plainly involves a side reference to the case of Professor Marshall Hall and his metrical writings. Within the limits of decorum freedom of speech ought always to be permitted and even encouraged. The pity is that the interests of the students might suffer severely while controversies were proceeding regarding the limits of philosophical or other opinions. It is easy for an offender who is not doing his duty to represent his case as one of persecution on account of his opinions; and if a majority in the Council were bent upon ignoring the rule now suggested they could readily find a tangible excuse, on the principle that any stick is good enough to beat a dog with. The real hope for reform in matters of this kind may lie in an amendment of the law affecting privilege in its relation to bodies undertaking public work; but even that change would be attended by risks.

FRENCH LITERATURE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The last of the series of lectures by Mademoiselle Dussau on French literature of the nineteenth century was given at the University on Monday afternoon, October 23. Having portrayed the literary careers of 22 of the most remarkable poets, historians, dramatists, critics, and naturalistic novelists of the period in the previous nine classes, the lecturer concluded the course with a view of the characteristics of four representatives of the realistic order of novelists—Flaubert, les Goncourt, Daudet, and Zola. Before introducing the first of these to her audience Mlle. Dussau sketched the distinction between the naturalistic and the realistic, or, as it is sometimes called, the idealistic school, in fiction. The former was shown to deal with life as observed with healthy natural vision, finding no pleasure in gazing upon anything that is not pleasant and wholesome, whilst the latter not only pictures everything that comes naturally into view, but is at pains also to pry into every unsightliness that nature would mercifully hide, or that the depths of the gutters would conceal. Gustave Flaubert, a master of the novelist school which binds itself to the closest observation of nature and study of living reality, was then discussed. His merits as a writer were summed up in his profound knowledge of the characters he draws, his vivid imagination and wonderful powers of description; and the verdict was pronounced that whilst he is not likely to be classed as a writer of great popularity, he will always have a distinguished place in the estimate of those who love literature for its own sake. His most celebrated and successful work was the romance "Madame Bovary," which brought upon him a prosecution as an offender against good morals; after incurring some peril on this account, however, he was acquitted. Whilst Flaubert early obtained celebrity at a bound by one great masterpiece, the Goncourt brothers worked for years unnoticed by any but a small circle of intimate friends, Edmond and Jules Goncourt, the most up-to-date and exact of French novelists, paint the characters they take from contemporary life around them most carefully and expressively. Their neighbors are presented as taken in the very reality of life. Their most celebrated works were pronounced to be "Madame Gervaisais," a study of the psychology of deepest religious feeling in woman; "La Fanstine," a psychological and physiological study of a young girl of the upper classes, reared in the hothouse life of the capital; and "Germinie Lacerteux," which, in conjunction with Flaubert's "Madame Bovary," has been a model for all which has since been fashioned under the names of realism and naturalism. Alphonse Daudet, the lecturer classed, as the highest of his calling, and the most vivacious, witty, and "spirituel" of all leading novelists. His first publication of importance was a volume of poems, and in these, as also in his "Lettres de mon Moulin," which are charming and refined, he has shown himself to be not a mere novelist only, but a writer full of feeling, though this feeling is generally treated with railery. Amongst his best romances are "Jack," a sympathetic study of life amongst the destitute classes of cities; "Fromont jeune et Risler aîné," and his "Contes," in which with much strength he has shown a light and graceful irony. A personal acquaintance with Daudet enabled Mlle. Dussau to portray the manner in which he wrote. He lived first through the emotional scenes of his works, until every character had a distinct reality in his mind before anything was committed to paper. He paints nothing of character that is not drawn from nature. He is an optimist, and some of the characters who live in his works do honor to the human race. Whilst Daudet's delineations enable the reader to forecast the denouements of his stories without any actual narration of them, and he offers none, Emile Zola, on the contrary, the exponent and champion of realism, with whom the lectures concluded, fills in the details of everything. After a course at college, not distinguished by anything of brilliancy, and a life in Paris passed at times in extreme destitution, Zola began his career as an author with little literary training or culture, and his works are founded on rationalistic principles. In a careful estimate he was summed up as exhibiting a strong and sympathetic mind, accurate in observation, but deficient in logic, and a fatalist; and in contrast to the heroes in the works of Daudet, Zola's are almost all characters of low type—the writer even debases his grammar and his language to the level of their coarse speech—and if perchance any of nobility are met with they are treated with so little tact and delicacy that they lose all charm. As the result of a general view of this notorious realist he was dismissed with the judgment that his genius is one no person of refinement can admire, though the power of his descriptions will always be recognized.

At the conclusion of the lecture Mr. C. T. Hargrave, speaking in French, proposed a cordial vote of thanks to Mlle. Dussau for the instructive and interesting series of discourses she had delivered. This was seconded by Lady Brown, and carried with hearty acclamation.

"Cosmo" writes:—"The examinations in the practice of music have been commenced, and, as heretofore, complaints have been made after the exams are concluded. I take this opportunity to make public some of the treatment candidates have had to endure. The imported examiner has been very arbitrary and sarcastic at the expense of the candidates. For instance, one young lady was addressed something like the following:—'I see you are one of the clever young ladies. I have had other clever answers from young ladies this afternoon.' During this little conversation Professor Ives (who heretofore has had all the blame for anything that has gone wrong) had apparently to stand aloof, not participating in the examination. Some of the candidates on Friday were too frightened to do themselves justice. I write this for the purpose of preparing the other candidates who have yet to be examined not to take any notice whatever of remarks which may be considered sarcastic."

Advertiser 7th Nov. 1899.

MUSIC AT THE UNIVERSITY.

To the Editor.
Sir—I am surprised that you should have placed your columns at the disposal of an anonymous correspondent "Cosmo," who makes an attack upon my capacity and integrity as an examiner at the University musical examinations. I would have preferred to ignore the letter entirely, but the publicity you have given it renders such a course inadvisable. I deny that I made use of the words attributed to me, or of any words that could be so construed, and therefore request you to give the same publicity to this letter as you have given to that of "Cosmo."—I am, &c.,
GRAHAM P. MOORE.
The University, November 6, 1899.

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THE CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC.

The University authorities have every reason to be well satisfied with the manner in which Mr. W. C. Torode has carried out his contract for the erection of the Elder Conservatorium of Music. Although there is still a large amount of work to be done on the building, it is now sufficiently advanced to enable any one to form a fair idea of the appearance it will present when completed. The design is what is known as Italian or Florentine Gothic, and the work has been tastefully executed in different shades of stone. The front has also been considerably beautified by a quantity of chaste and artistic carving and moulding, which gives the edifice a well-finished appearance. Every effort is being made by the contractor to have the main hall completed in time for its utilization for the University Commemoration Day gathering on December 15. The main hall, which is 132 ft. long by 50 ft. wide, will be one of the best concert halls in the colonies. The open hammer beam roof, with its thirteen massive principals and polished wood ceiling, looks exceedingly well. The walls have been plastered and finished with stone stucco columns. The floor has also been laid down, and all that now remains to be done to complete the hall is to put in the windows and fix the cedar dado around the walls. The classrooms, entrance hall, and cloak-rooms are not so far advanced, but the contractor confidently expects to be able to hand over the building by the end of the year. A number of men are now employed cleaning down the exterior walls, and when the scaffolding is removed the building will be a decided acquisition to the architecture of the city.