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SCIENCE AND THE FARM

Valuable Work of Waite Institute

DR. RICHARDSON ENTERTAINS GRADUATES

Members of the University Graduates' Association were entertained at the Waite Institute this afternoon by Dr. A. E. V. Richardson.

The doctor told the graduates that there was vast scope for research work in Australia, but much time must elapse before the full benefit was shown in an increase of primary production.

About 200 graduates attended. Before showing the visitors round Dr. Richardson spoke of the value of agricultural research. He told the graduates an increase in the yield of a bushel of wheat to the acre would mean £2,000,000 a year to the Commonwealth and £500,000 a year to South Australia.

Its application. The work of the institute will be progressive, building upon what has gone before and finding out the principles underlying our agricultural problems, so that ultimately the problems may be solved. The building up of a body of systematic knowledge by careful investigation and experiment is essential for the sound development of agriculture in any country.

Work of the Institute

The initial work of the institute will be to conduct certain fundamental investigations of soil and crop problems. These include scientific study both in the field and the laboratory. The study of the fungoid diseases of farm crops, their incidence, modes of attack, life history with a view to the more effective control of these pests, will be made.

The work will also include investigations into the best methods of producing various types of farm crops, the influence of fertilisers, varying cultural methods, rotation cropping on the yield of the principal farm crops, the methods of production of new and improved varieties of farm crops, and the study of native and introduced grasses and fodder plants.

The area of land left to the University under the Waite bequest amounts to 300 acres. Portion of this area comprises land typical of the Adelaide plains, and on this portion, the main field experiments will be located. The remainder consists of more or less hilly country, rising to an elevation of 1,200 feet. On this the investigation on the improvement of native and seeded pastures and grazing tests will be mainly conducted.

An important section of the work will be the determination of the mode of inheritance of various unit characters in wheat, oats, and barley, with a view of providing a scientific basis for the production of improved varieties of cereals. A grass garden has been established and consists of about 100 varieties of native and introduced grasses and fodder plants.

A series of demonstration field tests comprising the top dressing of native and introduced grasses and fodder plants.

A series of demonstration field tests, comprising the top dressing of native pasture with various fertilisers has been laid out in plots one acre each in size. The influence of the fertiliser on the growth and character of the herbage will be determined, and a botanical analysis of the herbage on each plot will be made from time to time. A pot culture house and wire-screened enclosure have been erected for carrying out certain fundamental investigations on the water and food requirements of Australian farm crops.

Laboratory Work

Portion of the existing outbuildings has been converted into an agricultural chemical laboratory. The work will consist for some time of the accumulation of data relating to the various soil types to be found in the agricultural areas of the State, and in the adaptation of the newer standard laboratory methods to Australian soils and soil problems.

It is hoped to make a particular study of the phosphoric acid relationships between the crop and the soil, utilising recent new methods of chemical and field investigation, and a detailed investigation of the changes brought about in the soil by bacteriological activity under local conditions with special reference to the various systems of rotation and of fallowing.

The equipment of a plant pathological laboratory is approaching completion. It is proposed to study the more important fungoid diseases of our staple crops with a view to the more effective control.

The Institute is co-operating with the State Department of Agriculture in the investigation of a peculiar disease in oats in the South-East, the cause of which is unknown.

The visitors were seeing the estate at its worst time as work had only just begun and no crops had been sown. He hoped they would again visit the estate next spring when some of the fruits of the first year's labors would be seen.

Dr. Richardson was supported by Professor J. A. Prescott who is in charge of the chemical laboratories. Among those present were Dr. E. H. Davies (president of the association), Professor Rennie (acting chancellor of the University), Sir Douglas and Lady Mawson, Professor Darnley Naylor and Mrs. Naylor, Mr. E. Anthony, M.P., Mr. T. H. Hollidge (secretary of the association), Dr. and Mrs. Pullene, Dr. and Mrs. R. S. Rogers, and Mr. C. W. Hayward.

Dr. Richardson explained the tests which the institute was carrying out, and Professor Prescott explained the laboratory work.

The party was entertained at afternoon tea by Dr. and Mrs. Richardson. Although only a few months have elapsed since the staff of the Institute was assembled much work has been done. An area of 30 acres of land, typical of the Adelaide and coastal plains, has been cleared, fallowed, and subdivided into 250 field plots.

The tests on this field comprise permanent rotation plots, fertiliser tests with seeded native grasses; fertiliser tests with wheat, oats, and barley; cereal tests, rate of seeding and time of sowing trials, cultural and tillage tests, experiments to determine the experimental error in field investigations, and plots for the study of the inheritance of character in wheat, oats, and barley.

Dr. Richardson said that a set of permanent field experiments was essential for the scientific study of problems relating to the production and utilisation of farm crops. The field experiments supplied the data on which improvements in practice were ultimately based, and provided material for laboratory work in soil chemistry, soil physics, soil bacteriology, and plant pathology.

Value of Research

The permanent rotation tests comprise a series of 35 plots, each one-eighth of an acre in area. The object of the tests is to determine the most profitable system of rotation cropping for land with a 21 inch rainfall and the changes which take place in the fertility of soil as a result of varying systems of crop rotation.

Under some of the systems of rotation cropping practised on this series of plots, the land will be improved. Under other methods of cropping the fertility will be

INTERNATIONAL DEBATES.

Arrangements for the forthcoming debating contests between the members of the Oxford Union debating team and two teams of the Adelaide University, are well in hand. The visitors will arrive in Adelaide from Melbourne on Wednesday, May 13, and will be accorded a civic reception by the Lord Mayor, and will be introduced to representative citizens. The first debate will take place that evening, when the Oxford representatives will propose—"That it is in the best interests of the Empire as a whole for Great Britain to remain a free trade country." An Adelaide team, consisting of Messrs. J. R. McCabe, L.L.B., F. Adams, L.L.B., and M. R. Kriewaldt, B.A., will speak in the negative. On May 18 another local trio, Messrs. C. C. Crump, L.L.B., D. P. McGuire, and L. G. Melville, will propose, and the visitors will oppose, "That the referendum is a necessary and feasible part of representative Government." That day two of the Adelaide debaters, under the leadership of Mr. Malcolm Macdonald, one of the Oxford trio, will propose—"That industrial and political progress is bound up with the advance of socialism," and the negative will be argued by Messrs. J. D. Woodruffe and M. C. Hollis, of Oxford, under the leadership of an Adelaidean. The topics and the calibre of the debaters should assure the audience intellectual treats.

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MUSIC EXAMINATIONS AND THE UNIVERSITY.

From EDWARD HOWARD, Angas-street.—In your issue of April 24, Professor A. D. Ross, of Perth University, shoots an arrow at Trinity College of Music. He says:—"Too much expense is attached to the present practice of conducting the examinations through the Trinity College of Music, London." Is this statement true? Following are the fees of Trinity College, compared with those of the Australian Music Examinations Board:—Trinity College Senior, and Australian M.E. Board, Grade I., each two guineas; Trinity College Intermediate, and Australian M.E. Board, Grade II., each one guinea and a half; Trinity College Junior, and Australian M.E. Board, Grade III., each one guinea. The fees are the same. The trouble is that Trinity College is too successful. Does it give value for the money received, as compared with other examining bodies? To-day—Anzac Day—I felt pleased that my children were Australians, because in bravery, energy, determination and resource, Australians are second to none. Nevertheless, to think that Australia at the present time can equal the Old Country in musical matters would show a culpable ignorance of facts. Though by no means perfect, Trinity College has done its work well, and given such satisfaction to the music teachers of Australia that it has reaped the reward, viz., success; and it is open to the Australian Music Exam. Board to do the same. Personally, I am quite ready to give the reason why I submit my own pupils to the tests of Trinity College in preference to those of the Australian Board. There is, however, another side to this question. The project resolves itself into the Australian universities being induced to shelter and encourage a commercial enterprise in competition with outside agencies. This procedure has gone too far already. For the Australian universities to run schools of music, like their conservatoriums, which admit pupils of all degrees of ability, or no ability at all, so long as their fees are paid, is undignified, unnecessary, and unjust. For the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, or Edinburgh to conduct ordinary schools of music on a commercial basis is unthinkable. This should be the case with our own University and its Conservatorium. It is beneath its dignity. Again, such a procedure is quite unnecessary. There would be plenty of music teachers, and good teachers too, also musical activities of every kind, if university conservatoriums had no existence. A university is supposed to begin where the colleges leave off. They do so in all subjects but music. When our Conservatorium was inaugurated it absorbed The Adelaide College of Music. If this were not done to prevent opposition, why was it done at all? It also took over some of the outside teachers, and who will contend that they taught or teach now better inside than outside the Conservatorium? The Royal Colleges of Music in the old country stand on their merits, as does Trinity College of Music, and do not lean or rely on the prestige that is naturally derived from a seat of learning like a university. Whether that prestige were warranted or not, it would carry weight. Musical schools and colleges can, and should, look after their interests without university aid. Such aid is unnecessary. Thirdly this affiliation with the university is unjust. The public naturally think that education which receives the patronage and approval

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UNIVERSITY ECONOMICS. From J. CAMERON PORTER:—One of your correspondents recently expressed the opinion that all industrial leaders should have "a course in economics, but not that sort which is taught by university lecturers." And another correspondent, "A. Corpe," writes enquiring for the reason of this objection to university teaching, and asks, "Are not these university lecturers always looking for the truth?" As a humble capitalist wage slave, who has been looking for truth during the last 40 years, I am wondering who or what has suggested to Mr. Corpe the idea that university professors—particularly of economics—are always doing the same. In my opinion, Mr. Corpe is in error. These men do not spend their time looking for "economic truth." They are paid servants of a capitalist State, not to search for or teach the truth, but to teach orthodox—that is, capitalistic—economics, as opposed to the economics which is taught in such educational institutions as the Labor colleges of Great Britain and the Workers' Educational League of America. Dr. Heaton, of the W.E.A., I know, scouts this idea, and tickles his students with the plea that his method of teaching economics is "neutral"—that is to say, is neither capitalist nor proletarian economics, but just the real thing—"pure economics"—which is all very pretty for the perpetuation of an educational body like the W.E.A., which is depending upon the financial support of the capitalist State. What surprises me is to see leading lights of the Australian Labor Party falling into the trap, which one can attribute only to their want of knowledge of working-class economics. Yes, I wholly endorse the view that the

working man (that is, the Labor movement) lacks above all things a sound education in the sphere of economics—an education on the lines of the British Labor colleges. By this I mean education of the workers from the working-class point of view, an education towards the abolition of the capitalist system, which keeps them in subjection to a comparatively small section of society.

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ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

STUDENTS' CONCERT.

There was a large attendance at the Elder Hall last night, when a concert was given by students from the various studios and the ensemble class. There were several numbers of particular merit, almost up to professional standard. In this group was placed, by general opinion, the violin playing of Miss Doreen Stoneman, whose artistic work in Sarasate's "Zigeunerweisen" was greatly admired. Especially finished pianoforte technique and grateful regard for tonal contrasts were evidenced by Mr. Harold Foale in the "Theme and variations," by Glazounow. Sincerity of purpose and technical ease made the violoncello solos of Mr. Carville Jones most acceptable. The first was the familiar "Londonderry air," arranged by Oxford, the second Popper's moto perpetuo study, "The spinning wheel." Much interest was shown in the first movement of the "Quartet in G minor," for pianoforte and strings, by Gabriel Faure, with Miss Muriel Prince at the piano, Miss Helen Magorey (violin), Miss Doreen Stoneman (viola), and Mr. Val Robertson (cello). This had been assiduously rehearsed and closely studied for tone grading and rhythm. Miss Valda Harvey's operatic soprano voice was quite equal to the demands made upon it in the "Vissi d'arte" aria from Puccini's "Tosca." She was given warm approbation for her rendition of the beautiful prayer, "With Mr. William Silver at the second piano, Mr. Cecil Basey made a first appearance in a concerto work. The first movement of Grieg's "Concerto in A minor" was brilliantly executed, and showed Mr. Basey's keenness for technical study and certainty of pedalling. Miss Mabel Siegel impressed the assemblage with the depth and richness of her contralto voice in the aria, "O don falale," from Verdi's "Don Carlos." Mr. Alva Penrose was the only tenor, and his contribution was Brahms's "Summer fields." Miss Phyllis Tonkin's light soprano voice was noted as suitable for the Rossini music contained in the cavatina, "Bel raggio." With Mr. George Pearce at the second piano, Miss Dorothy Jenkinson played the first movement of Mozart's "Concerto in A" with due regard for legato and clear scale passages. Miss Vera Simpson's violin solo was Svendsen's "Romance in G," which she realized quite satisfactorily. Miss Joan Mellowship's pianistic progress was noticed while playing the first movement of Beethoven's "Sonata, op. 10, No. 1." Deep regret was felt when an announcement was made that Miss Mary Horgan had met with an accident. Miss Horgan and Miss Adele Wiebusch were to play an important duo, "Lutzow's wild chase," by Weber-Hiller, and had prepared it entirely from memory. The soloists received considerable help from the accompaniments supplied by Messrs. Alice Morgan and Muriel Prince.



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