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THE UNIVERSITY AND OVID.

To the Editor.

Sir—The Professor of Classics and the classical scholars of the University Senate will doubtless tell us that Ovid is a writer of singular elegance and force of expression, and that he charms the ear and captivates the mind. Even so, these characteristics being united to his wanton, indelicate, corrupt, and corrupting expressions make Ovid perhaps the most dangerous of all writers to introduce to the attention of the young men and young women of our country. It has been truly said that that the writings of Ovid are calculated to corrupt the heart and sap the foundations of virtue and morality. The Prince of Darkness could not devise a more effectual means of permanently staining the imagination or of suggesting vice to youth of both sexes than to set them upon such a thorough study of Ovid as is involved in the study of Ovid for university exams. Yet our university, which contains on its senate the Lord Bishop of Adelaide, the Rev. Dr. Jeffries, and the Rev. Dr. Patton, ministers of the Holy Saviour, besides other grave and reverend seigneurs, have actually prescribed the study of Ovid for the senior university exams, and the heads of St. Peter's, Prince Alfred's, Way College, and these institutions for girls which prepare for these exams, have, without public protest, taught to the youth, male and female, this elegant but corrupt writer. Large numbers of parents are not acquainted with these matters, nor able to look into them. They have a right to expect the protection of their children's morals from these authorities.

It cannot be said that Ovid is the only master of Latin, or that he is the supreme master of that tongue. If it were so that would be no excuse for giving Ovid to boys and girls between 16 and 21. As a matter of fact, there are such writers as Virgil, Cicero, Seneca, besides Caesar's severe prose. If later in life any of them wished to attain to the fulness of Latin scholarship then they could study the elegant and vicious Ovid. It is quite another matter to introduce this licentious writer to youth, many of whom do not intend to make much attainment in that tongue. So evil is the work prescribed that I have reason to know that one master has refrained from teaching parts of the book prescribed. He could not face it for shame's sake, to deal with the subjects mentioned by Ovid, that past master in all the vice of the evil court of Augustus.

Not content with prescribing Ovid for 1901, the authorities have prescribed Ovid again for 1902. If the man in the street did but know Ovid—it is one of his blessings that he does not—he would quickly compel the withdrawal of this evil author from the chief schools of the country, and demand that our youth should be taught a pure literature. In fact, this action of the university raises the question whether the university should not be placed under the supervision of the Minister of Education. It is quite certain he would exclude Ovid, and give moral protection to our children. There is quite time enough to withdraw Ovid for this year, and it is to be hoped that the responsible people will do so.

I am, Sir, &c., PARENT.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

A disease which is said to be new to Australia has been discovered within the past few days by Professor Watson, of the Adelaide University, Dr. Angus Johnson, and Veterinary Surgeon Desmond. It is known technically as trichinosis, and is caused by a small worm called Trichina spiralis. The disease was noticed during an operation for cancer in the neck, recently performed, and naturally caused considerable interest and alarm among those who were informed of its appearance. It was known to be common in the United States of America and in Germany, where its origin was attributed to the consumption of the partly cooked, and sometimes raw, flesh of pork, which is regarded as a staple diet in those countries. The operation in the local case having been successfully performed, the growth, which was removed, was examined, and minute white bodies were seen to be scattered through the tissues. These were subjected to a microscopical test, and recognised to be the typical trichina spiralis. The patient had never been out of the states, but he admitted having been passionately fond of polony. Professor Neumann, a French scientist, states that "it is in eating the flesh of the pig that man contracts trichinosis. The pig is contaminated by the ingestion of trichinised meat or animals, such as the rat, mouse, &c. Coprophagus habits also allow it to be ingested by devouring excrements, containing adult or embryonic trichini." The symptoms of the disease when it attacks man are similar to those of typhoid fever. In an epidemic of trichinosis in Germany in 1883, Professor Neumann states:—"It was reported that the ingestion of salted trichinised hashed meat, eaten one day after the pig was slaughtered, caused the death of 33 per cent. of those who consumed it."

Register 10th Feb. 1902.

RETURN OF MR. G. REIMANN.

Mr. G. Reimann, of the Adelaide Conservatorium of Music, returned from an extended holiday trip to Europe by the German mail steamer Bremen on Sunday. He left the state 14 months ago, and most of his time has been occupied in visiting the chief musical centres of Europe, and in the investigation of ideas for adoption at the Adelaide Conservatorium. Mr. Reimann reached Berlin in February last, and during the ensuing five months he had many opportunities of hearing the best music. From the capital city he made a trip to Heidelberg to attend the annual festival given by the Society of German Musicians, and was fortunate in having for a companion his old teacher, Professor Scharwenka. After spending the vacation in the hills at Thuringa Mr. Reimann proceeded to Bayreuth to be present at the Wagner festivals. The month of September he spent at Dresden, and inspected the conservatorium, and enquired into musical matters there. October quickly sped while he was at Leipzig on a similar mission. Returning to Berlin, he devoted the remainder of his time there especially to the Royal Hoch Schule of Music, and of course made the most of the opportunities presented of hearing the best performers. In December he went to London, and, chatting with a representative of "The Register" with respect to his experiences there, he said:—"My special mission in the metropolis was to inspect the three leading schools of music—the Royal College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, and the King's Hall School of Music. The members of all three institutions received me extremely kindly, and, apart from giving me every assistance in reference to my mission, they also manifested great interest in musical affairs in Australia, and Adelaide in particular, as I happened to hail from there. In addition I visited all the important concerts that were being conducted at the time. I attended a ballad concert at the Queen's Hall, where I had the pleasure of hearing Miss Ada Crossley, the reports of whose artistic qualities I found not to have been one whit exaggerated. Miss Amy Castles and Miss Clara Butt, whose voice and artistic style are simply phenomenal, and Mr. Kennerley Rumford, husband of Miss Clara Butt, and a most artistic baritone singer, also took part. Then I attended one of the orchestral concerts conducted by the celebrated Woods. Its performances are very fine. I witnessed the debut of the young Bohemian violinist, Kocian, at St. James's Hall. He bids fair in a short space of time to rival his fellow-pupil, Kubelik. At the Royal Albert Hall I attended the farewell concert given to Chappell, who for 40 years was manager of the celebrated Monday popular concerts, and there heard, among others, Santley and Padewski. During my stay in London I put up at the same quarters as Mr. R. Nitschke, who has done excellent work under his tutor, and will make a name for himself in the near future. Mr. Nitschke was very jolly when I left and excited, being then on the eve of entering upon matrimony."

MUSIC IN GERMANY AND ENGLAND.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. G. REIMANN. (By Musicus.)

The many friends of Mr. G. Reimann, the well-known musician and teacher of the pianoforte, will be glad to hear that his 14 months' trip to Europe has been productive of the happiest results, and that he is now thoroughly restored to health and strength. Though under the doctor's care during much of his holiday, Mr. Reimann managed to hear much music, especially in Germany, and he attended some performances of worldwide celebrity. In the course of an interesting chat I gleaned a few particulars of the principal concerts he heard and the present trend of music in Germany and the old country.

—Perfect Modern Technique.—

"Since I was last in Germany, about 17 years ago," said Mr. Reimann, "music has made wonderful strides, even in a city like Berlin, which has been long celebrated as one of the chief musical centres of the world. As far as technique is concerned the leading pianists, violinists, and orchestras of the present day have attained to such a pitch of perfection that really any further advance in that direction seems to me absolutely impossible. You can hear numbers of pianists and violinists whose manipulative powers are almost flawless; indeed this species of excellence is so common that it is accounted of little value unless accompanied by interpretative genius. This technical advance has no doubt been brought about by the improved systems of scientific training that have been so universally adopted during the last 15 or 20 years. A boy now starts on the best and quickest methods from the beginning of his training, and the result is that at 15 he is as accomplished as the older school of musicians were at 20. As an instance I can quote you the case of Kocian, a young violinist whom I heard in London, who threatens to rival the now famous Kubelik. Though only in his later teens the young fellow displayed finish and technique which were simply marvellous, and would have done credit to a mature virtuoso. Much of this must of course be credited to his teacher, Sevek, who has an immense reputation as a pedagogue. Then, again, the instrumentalists in the great Continental orchestras come straight from the conservatories, where they have been trained by some of the most famous performers of the day. They play together day after day, sometimes spend all their life in the same band, and are directed by musicians who may be fairly termed virtuoso conductors. Men, like Dr. Richter, Weingartner, and Nitsch simply play in their orchestras as a great artist would on the pianoforte, and the effect is delightful in the extreme, while the ensemble of the performers is just perfect."

—Music in Berlin.—

Speaking of Berlin, where he spent much of his time, Mr. Reimann said:—"I really believe that Berlin is, from a musical point of view, the most famous city in the world. There you can hear all the celebrated artists, and at a tariff which will suit the most modest purse. There are three great resident orchestras, which I should say it would be hard to beat anywhere; and these give frequent performances of the best music. Then, again, in Berlin the musical season lasts for fully seven months, which is much longer than the London season. With regard to the local taste, I think there is an increased appreciation for good music; indeed, as far as I could observe this might be said of the whole of Europe; a state of affairs that is probably the result of the efforts of such orchestras as the Philharmonic, Berlin, the Kam at Munich, and Meiningen, who make annual tours through the principal European cities. There will soon be completed in Berlin new premises for the Royal Hoch Schule, directed by Joachim, which I unhesitatingly affirm will be the most elaborate and complete conservatorium of music in existence. In his design the famous violinist seems to have included every convenience and device which could suggest themselves to an artist of nearly 70 years' experience, with an intimate knowledge of all the great similar institutions of the world."

—A Model Opera House.—

At the Bayreuth festival Mr. Reimann heard Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" and "Parsifal," and was enraptured with the completeness and perfect finish of the representations. "The perfection of everything that art can produce," he said, "seemed to have been brought together to give to the world a perfect performance of those wonderful creations of Wagner's master mind. The stage arrangements and mechanical and scenic effects were all managed in absolute silence and with a smoothness which was delightful, and aided by the wonderful effects of the hidden orchestra the deception was so perfect that one almost imagined himself in another world. A pretty procedure is adopted before each act. About a dozen of the brass players from the orchestra come out on the balcony of the theatre half an hour before and play the principal motif of the act in unison. Five minutes before the appointed time this is repeated. All the audience are seated in the theatre in good time; every lady removes her hat; the lights are turned down until you are in absolute darkness, and perfect stillness prevails. Then the wonderful music from the invisible orchestra begins, commingling in a perfect flood of harmony, the effect of which is simply indescribable, and the curtain opens, not being drawn up as in most opera houses, but drawn apart from each side, a much more pleasing arrangement. No applause worth mentioning is given at the end of each act, but at the conclusion of the opera the cheering is simply deafening. Then the curtains are once more drawn aside, and you see the last tableaux once again, but there is no bowing or anything of that sort, nothing is allowed that would in any way spoil the impression created by the final scene. The very atmosphere of the place seems impregnated with music; it is the only theme of conversation in the gardens, restaurants, and hotels; and the little town, or, more correctly, village, is filled with musicians from almost all parts of the world—a notable assembly, I can assure you."

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Professor R. Langton Douglas, of the Adelaide University, who is visiting Italy, in order to obtain materials for the completion of his book on the history of Siena, has written to the Minister of Education from Florence, informing him of the cordial welcome which he received in Rome from Dr. Baccelli, Minister of Agriculture, and ex-Minister of Public Instruction, and other gentlemen interested in artistic and literary work. Professor Douglas is making enquiries into the teaching of agricultural science in the elementary and higher schools of Italy, and will prepare a report on the subject.

Miss Elsie Hall, the Australian pianiste, a native of Toowoomba, Queensland, who possesses the unique distinction of being the first English lady to win in open competition at Berlin the Mendelssohn State scholarship founded by the German Government, returns to London by the Grosser Kurfurst, sailing from Adelaide on February 15. Miss Elsie Hall, whose departure will be regretted, was also the only Australian musician who had a private presentation here to the Prince and Princess of Wales, before whom she played by command during their recent brief stay in Adelaide.