

GERMAN UNIVERSITIES.



GERMANY is pre-eminently the land of learning, of philosophy, of investigation into nature and man; and in the German universities during the past century has the learned research of that great nation been especially concentrated. These great institutions are centres of intellectual force, from which new ideas have penetrated into all parts of the European world. No matter on what subject a student is engaged, be it theology, philosophy, science, philology, jurisprudence, he is certain to find his text-book studded with references to German works, written for the most part by university professors. "It is," says Mr. Carlyle, "a blessing that in these revolutionary times there should be one country where abstract thought can still take shelter; that while the din and frenzy of Catholic Emancipations, and Rotten Boroughs, and Revolts of Paris deafen every French and every English ear, the German can stand peaceful on his scientific watch-tower, and to the raging struggling multitude here and elsewhere, solemnly, from hour to hour, with preparatory blast of cow-horn, emit his *Höret ihr Herren und lasset's Euch sagen*: in other words, tell the universe, which so often forgets that fact, what o'clock it really is." This is not, perhaps, quite so accurate a description of Germany at the present day as when Mr. Carlyle wrote it forty-six years ago. Germany has since then been engaged in more than one great war, her political struggles have been very intense, she is now erected into a brand-new empire, and her peace is broken by Jesuits, Socialists, Particularists, and her philosophic calm has been disturbed by the tempests of political strife. But it may still be truthfully said of Germany that learning is generally valued for its own sake more highly there than in any other land, and that in no country are so many learned books written, or so purely an intellectual life led by so many people.

In Germany has arisen that new criticism which, in half a century, has completely revolutionised our historical knowledge, and our conceptions of the

ancient and mediæval world; and from Germany have proceeded those philosophical ideas which, for evil or for good, have exercised so vast an influence on the historical and literary thought of England. It was the German mind that first gained an insight into the unique genius of the works of Shakespeare, and the best commentary on Shakespeare is still that of the German professor, Gervinus. It was German research that first laid bare the origin of England's political institutions. It is to German industry and genius that we are mainly indebted for the great modern science of comparative philology. And in all these various departments of human intellectual activity, it is not only Germany, but especially the German universities that have led a way and cleared a track for the thinkers and workers of other and less original nations. A few words about the German universities may, therefore, be of interest.

There are in the German Empire twenty-two universities, from the great seats of learning and science at Berlin and Leipzig, with their 3,000 students, and about 200 professors apiece, down to such small and comparatively insignificant institutions as Rostock or Erlangen, neither of which contains more than 200 or 300 students, with a proportionate number of professors. Some are situated in very beautiful and historic cities, as Munich, Heidelberg, Strasburg, and Bonn; some in rather dull and uninteresting places, as Breslau and Rostock. The greater number are to be found in comparatively small towns, which, however, are rendered interesting by reason of the events that have occurred in times past within their walls. Such are Marburg, where an angry conference took place between two of the great leaders of the Reformation, Luther and Zwinglius; Munster, where the Anabaptist insurrection endangered the Protestant cause in Germany; and Jena, where Napoleon triumphed over the Prussian hosts in 1806. A German university is a very different institution from our English universities; indeed, it rather resembles those of Scotland. A visitor who walks through Oxford, and is told that such a building is Christ Church, that this other is Baliol, and that again is Exeter, finds it difficult to conceive of one university at all. The colleges are everywhere; the university, although possessing a name, seems to have no local habitation; it is intangible, and only to be grasped by the imagination, while the college is a solid reality embodied in brick or stone. In the German universities there are no colleges; there is simply one institution, represented by one large pile of buildings. The difference, therefore, between Oxford and Berlin, for instance, is very similar to the difference between the simple government of Great Britain and the complicated federal empire of Germany. In consequence of the non-existence of separate colleges within a university, the German student lives in the town, like his Scotch brother, destitute of proctorial or tutorial supervision.

There is something to be said for each of these systems. Life is certainly more pleasant in the English university; the college being a kind of club, where easy social intercourse, free from restraints, can take place; but few can doubt that under the German system more real work is done. The German system, again, is by far the less expensive; but an Oxford college life does undeniably confer upon many men a culture which we may seek at Leipzig or Gottingen in vain.

In the German universities there are three classes of teachers. These are—(1) The ordinary professors, consisting of those who are regular members of the faculty, who receive a fixed stipend from the State (each university being regarded as a State institution), and are eligible for election to the senate and rectorship of the university. (2) Extraordinary professors, who have no seat in the faculty, cannot be made members of the senate, and who generally receive a smaller income than the ordinary professor. They are, however, usually promoted to regular professorships when any vacancy occurs, and may, indeed, be looked upon as professors in the probationary state. (3) Private lecturers (*privatim docenten*), who deliver regular lectures, like the professors, but have no definite appointment, and receive no salary, and are therefore dependent for support upon the lecture-fees of their hearers. These private lecturers are young men who have but recently graduated, and who hope to attain one day to the professor's chair. At Cambridge they would be private tutors, or "coaches;" here they are lecturers, although frequently combining private tuition or literary work with their more regular duties. The ablest of these young men are subsequently appointed extraordinary professors, and so ultimately reach the regular professoriate, the goal of their ambition. The test of ability is found in the number of students they have been able to attract to their lectures, this being no easy matter, as will be seen when it is remembered that such young graduates must compete with illustrious and veteran professors, whose names are known all over the civilised world. Although this professorial system is wellnigh perfect when considered theoretically, yet as a matter of fact many practical objections may be brought against it, not the least being the condition of these *privatim docenten*, who frequently undergo great hardships and privations before they can secure a permanent footing and a decent position in life. How different the lot of such from that of the prosperous and luxurious fellow of an English college! The more perfect *via media* has yet, apparently, to be attained. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, university lectures all over Germany were delivered in Latin, a practice very injurious to the development of the German language, and which probably retarded the advent of the rich German literature, which during the past century has effected so much for the culture of the human race. It is the merit of Thomasius, a professor in the University of Halle, to have broken through this pedantic system by lecturing in his native tongue. Latin, however, is still used in academic dissertations, essays, the conferring of degrees, &c. Lecturing is carried

to high perfection in the German universities; textbooks being little used, the student relies on his professor, and in this way the professor himself receives a stimulus which is wanting in Oxford and Cambridge. The lectures of the German professor are thus very able and elaborate productions, and are often listened to by very large audiences. Thus the distinguished theologian, Professor Luthardt, of Leipzig, draws an audience of between 400 and 500 students; whereas our ablest English theologian, Professor Lightfoot, whose popularity at Cambridge is very great, does not attract more than 100 students to his lecture-room, and that is considered a very large audience for Cambridge, where many of the professors lecture to fewer than twenty students. These lectures are delivered in a large building, divided into a number of halls (*hörsäle*). No student is compelled to attend, each being left to his own judgment. An industrious student will hear as many as five or six lectures per day. At the beginning of the session a small book is issued, containing a syllabus of the lectures which will be delivered, the time, subject, and name of the professor. We have before us now the syllabus for the "*Sommer-Halbjahre, 1877, auf der Universität Leipzig*" (Summer Half-year, 1877, in the University of Leipzig). To many persons this would be a bewildering little book; they would marvel at the vast range of human knowledge of which the Leipzig professors are treating during the summer, and at the mental calibre of the students who can assimilate such stores of learning and of thought. The lectures begin at seven o'clock in the morning, and are continued till eight o'clock at night; very few, however, being delivered between the hours of one p.m. and four p.m. Each lecture lasts one hour.

In some universities there are meetings in the professor's house for the discussion of biblical and classical authors, the writing of essays, &c. In Tübingen the lectures are supplemented by weekly examinations, conducted by *repententen*, who may be compared with the tutors and lecturers of our own colleges. Many professors take a warm interest in students; and a letter of introduction from any well-known English scholar will always insure a hearty reception to an English student at the house of a German professor, who is, after all, not so dreadful a phenomenon as some people imagine, but who has the same feelings as humbler persons, accompanied however by an almost infinite capacity for work, which he shares with very few.

It may be remarked that German students do not wear caps and gowns, and that their mirth is very much excited by the sight of the academical costumes of Oxford and Cambridge. Gowns, however, are worn by the professors. The students have their clubs for social enjoyment and recreation; but it seems a pity that they cannot enjoy themselves without consuming so much beer, which converts a students' party into a bacchanalian revel. Such a scene is well described in Goethe's "Faust," where some Leipzig students are gathered together in Auerbach's cellar, singing noisy songs, and drinking to the health of some fair

one who has enthralled the heart of more than one member of the company. Duels, too, are frequently fought, and a wound on the face is regarded as a mark of honour.

There is not, however, so much drinking and duelling as in former times; but still the amusements of the German student appear to be much less healthy and less rational than those of the English undergraduate.

Most of the German universities can boast of their great men. Just as Cambridge points to Bacon, Milton, and Newton among her sons, so Leipzig claims Goethe, Schiller, and Jean Paul Richter, three of the most richly-gifted geniuses of modern Europe. Among the great men of Berlin are Neander, the church historian, and Schleiermacher, the great expounder of Plato. Jena numbers among her great men the philosophers Hegel and Schelling, who were both professors there. Hegel wrote one of his greatest works at Jena, while the great battle was raging outside the town. The thunder of the cannon and the shrieks of the dying were alike unheeded by the great thinker, absorbed in his engrossing subject. Tübingen gave birth to the school of destructive criticism, of which Dr. Strauss was the foremost exponent.

At present, Berlin and Leipzig take the lead among German seats of learning, Berlin being especially distinguished by its illustrious historical professors. The names of Von Ranke, the Nestor of German historians, of Mommsen, Gneist, Ernst Curtius, Von Sybel, and Waitz, present a brilliant constellation of historical genius unequalled in the world. Berlin also

boasts of Professor Helmholtz, the famous physicist, whose researches and discoveries in connection with the theories of vision, and the conservation of energy, are the pride of Germany and the admiration of the learned world. Leipzig is specially noted for Oriental studies and for jurisprudence. Among her professors are Wundt, the distinguished physicist; George Curtius, the philologist; Delitzsch, one of the greatest of living Hebraists; and Windscheid, the jurist. Jena has fallen from her high position, but can still boast of two distinguished men of science among her professors, Hæckel and Gegenbaur, the zoologists. Göttingen is another university which has declined in public estimation, but among her professors are the eminent physicist and psychologist, Hermann Lotze, and the famous historian, Dr. Reinhold Pauli, whose name is well known in England as the author of the *Life of Simon of Montfort*, and who is probably as well acquainted with early English history as any living Englishman, excepting Professor Stubbs and Mr. Freeman. Halle counts among her teachers the theologian, Julius Müller, and the well-known *savant*, Volkmann. Among the Bonn professors are Dr. Lange, the theologian, and Dr. Nasse, the famous author of the work on mediæval land tenure. The most eminent professor at Heidelberg is Dr. Bluntschli, the jurist, and author of a code of international law. Philosophy does not occupy the supreme position in Germany which once fell to its share, but some very able philosophical teachers are still to be found; among the most distinguished are Professor Erdmann of Halle, the Hegelian, and Dr. Zeller of Berlin, the exponent of Plato and the Greek school generally.

A BELGIAN DAY-NURSERY.

BY LADY GEORGINA VERNON.



HERE are so many kind-hearted people interested in the subject of day-nurseries for our little ones, that few apologies are needed for bringing the subject again before our readers. A visit that I paid this summer to one or two of the largest nurseries

at Brussels was so full of interest, that I think others might be glad of some of the hints I gained on various little points of management, and some of which might be engrafted on the rules of our own now rapidly in-

creasing day-nurseries. The largest and oldest establishment of the kind at Brussels is situated in the Rue de l'Abondance, a wide airy street, away from the principal thoroughfares of that gay and busy city. This Crèche is often denominated La Mère Crèche, as it is not only the largest but the oldest one in Brussels; it has now been founded thirty-two years, and is one of the first that was established anywhere. I believe the Belgian Government has not in any way taken up the subject of *infant* training or teaching, therefore all this work is necessarily left to charitable people who are willing to devote money and time to this good object. This large institution of which I speak has accommodation for nearly 400 children, and there are combined under the same roof the Crèche for infants and L'Ecole Gardienne for the elder children, as they are received here from fourteen days old up to seven years. It is all under the supreme control of a directress, who appears most thoroughly to carry out her work, keeping a mother's eye on the babies, and intelligently superintending the training of the elder ones. In many ways this combination of infant-school with day-nursery is a great advantage, and especially so to the