

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

STUDENT LIFE IN GERMANY.—I.

BY REV. A. B. BAIRD, B.A., EDMONTON, N.-W. T.

The first thing that inspired in me an ambition to complete my student life by a session in Germany was a series of letters that appeared in THE PRESBYTERIAN some seven or eight years ago, by a student whom I had known in the last year of his Canadian college course while I was in my first, and who described his visit to Deutschland in such vivid and enthusiastic style that I ever after turned a longing eye on Germany's universities. What facilitated the carrying out of my wishes in the short time at my disposal was the German arrangement of sessions, which, besides its intrinsic merit, is very convenient for one who is unwilling to spend more than a year away from home after completing his course in Canada. The summer session—or *semester*, as it is called—begins in April, just a week or two after the close of the session in the Scotch Universities, and it goes on till about the middle of August. This summer session is quite different from that which has lately been established in Edinburgh. In the latter university the professors go off for their holidays, the teaching is left to the tutors, the attendance of students is very small comparatively, and the session does not count in the course. In Germany, on the other hand, the lectures of the summer session are quite on a par with the winter course, and the attendance of students is almost as large.

My Canadian companion and I left Leith by

STEAMER FOR HAMBURG

on the evening of the day on which the laureation of graduates had taken place in the University of Edinburgh. Our company included several Scotch students, two of them ladies on their way to spend the summer in Germany, and a Bohemian whom we had known during the winter, and who, poor fellow, seemed to be true to his name, not only in its literal but also in its metaphorical significance. He seemed to spend his time in wandering about from one university to another, never spending two sessions at the same.

On the evening of the second day we landed in Hamburg, and the next morning took rail for

LEIPZIG,

and after a long day's ride over a country much flatter than that between Winnipeg and here, we reached our destination, only to find the whole place under possession of the great Easter fair. I found lodgings at once with some friends, my companions found homes elsewhere, and the next few days were devoted to the fair, which three times a year changes the whole appearance of the city, fills every nook and corner with the barrows of transient traders, covers every square and *plats* with booths, and invades even the university quadrangle with bales of sole-leather and cases of great German-looking pipes. I don't think I ever saw a better place for character study, and the charm of it to me was that the characters, or at least their modes of manifestation, were all more or less new. Lectures, however, began, and went steadily on in spite of the bustle outside of the walls, and even Saturday saw no intermission in that workaday world. But we drew the line at the Saturday lectures, and from the first that day used to be devoted to some long walk out into the country, an excursion by rail to some historic spot, or, if these failed, we mingled with the crowd that filled the Thomas-kirche to hear the *mollete* performed by the boys of the Thomas-schule, where Sebastian Bach was once organist. The choir consisted of about thirty boys, and I never heard music like it. The *mollete* are really introductory to a prayer-meeting, but, with characteristic German sympathies, about 2,000 people go to hear the music, and about twenty remain for the prayer meeting. After leaving the church, the afternoon used to be devoted to a stroll in the Rosengarten, a great park which stretches away almost to Halle, twelve miles; or we enjoyed a pull in an old-fashioned row-boat on the Pleisse, which drags its slow length along through the plain that surrounds the city. The physical features of the country about Leipzig are dull enough, but the neighbourhood possesses several points of no mean historical importance. An early visit was paid to the Napoleonstein, the point of vantage from which the mighty conqueror watched the battle of Leipzig. It is marked on the map as a hill, and rises to the height of about

six feet above the plain. Another Saturday, soon after our arrival—the cherry trees along the road were in full bloom, I remember—we went out to see the battlefield of Lützen, about twelve miles distant. We had armed ourselves with Schiller's "History of the Thirty Years' War," and sitting on what Schiller calls the bridge over the canal that crosses the scene of the conflict (the bridge was about ten feet long, and the water perhaps eight inches deep), we laboriously spelled out the positions of the two armies and their movements on that eventful day which ended in the death of Gustavus Adolphus, whose remarkable monument stood not far from us on the spot where he fell.

Leipzig itself is an old-looking city, with a population of 180,000, and a

UNIVERSITY

that dates back to 1409. Part of the old building that was in use before the Reformation is still employed for university purposes, and still shows antique monkish frescoes on its thickly-plastered, uneven walls. The university boasts an attendance of 3,400 students, and a teaching staff of 163, being surpassed in these points only by Berlin among the German universities. But what it loses here is more than made up by the fact that Leipzig is the centre of the book trade, and that every publishing house in Germany has a depot here. There are in all more than 300 book stores and nearly 100 printing offices.

In the long list of Theological Professors, there are three who stand a head and shoulders above the others and whom every student goes to hear, no matter what specialty he is prosecuting: these are Delitzsch, Luthardt and Kahnis.

FRANZ DELITZSCH

has a romantic history. From being picked up as a foundling and taken in by a Jewish family, he has become one of the highest authorities on Old Testament literature in the theological world. The editor of a revised version of considerable parts of the Old Testament, the translator of the New Testament into Hebrew, the commentator on the Psalms and the Epistle to the Hebrews, is a little white-haired old man with a kindly blue eye, a Jewish but pleasant face, and a voice that is husky in the lower registers and squeaky in the higher. The course of his lectures which I attended was on Introduction to the Old Testament; and although the style of the professor's German is cranky, and more difficult to follow than that of any of the other professors whom I attended, yet I enjoyed his lectures very much. But what gave me the best insight into the character of Prof. Delitzsch was a series of conversations especially designed for the benefit of the English-speaking members of his class. This weekly symposium, which attested so practically the professor's interest in us, was held every Tuesday evening in the Vereinshaus—the German Bible Society rooms. In order to keep these talks from being altogether aimless, the professor announced as his subject a series of conversations on the elements of history underlying the Book of Genesis, but from the first it was understood that the talks were not to be rigidly confined to the main topic. Accordingly, not an evening passed but we had discussions about Robertson Smith's views, and the new criticism in Germany; frequently we wandered much farther, taking in sometimes the English Revised Version, in which the professor took the profoundest interest, and noted regretfully the impossibility of such a revision in Germany, on account of the wide divergence of theological opinions. These evenings had a social aspect too. As we assembled in the room, an officer of the Bible Society used to come in to take our orders; but there must have been some awe about the place, for the orders never amounted to more than a bottle of beer for the professor, and we learned before long to gauge the length of the "talks," not by the clock, but by the time our preceptor took to his beer. He would sit there sipping away and talking in the kindest and wisest style, answering questions and following out suggestions from members of the circle, but as soon as the bottle was empty, we knew that the end was not far off. The professor read English with difficulty, and could scarcely be said to speak it at all. Sometimes he would take his place and begin with a few words of English, over which he had apparently been thinking all the way to the place of meeting; but finding himself stuck before he reached the middle of the second sentence, he would dash off into German, translating here and there any easy word the English of which occurred to him, but ignoring com-

pletely any unusual or technical words on which we needed help. In the first interview I had with him, after labouring for some time in my best German to convince him that Canada was not one of the United States, he asked, as if suddenly remembering something, if there was near my home a place called Huron. I said there was, and he went to his book-case and brought out a theological magazine containing an article on "Protestant Bishops of Hebrew Extraction," from which he read a short sketch of the life and labours of Bishop Hellmuth, of the Episcopal diocese of Huron, and went on to speak with evident pride of the high positions held everywhere by men of Jewish birth.

PROFESSOR LUTHARDT

is a tall man, of fine presence. His oratorical gifts and his courtly manner fit him admirably for his position as Church leader. He is the champion of the ultra-orthodox party, and has a considerable following of devoted admirers among the theological students. As an author and professor he is best known in connection with the Exegesis of the New Testament. His commentary on the Gospel of John holds a front rank on a subject on which there are several recent works of very high merit; his lectures on the Epistle to the Romans seemed to be highly appreciated, but the course in which I saw most of him was on Theological Ethics. I missed the first two lectures, and I have sometimes wondered since if he called his subject *Theological* rather than *Christian* Ethics—as it is usually called—on account of views of his own about the relationship between Theology and Christianity. His arguments were always clear, and put in the most telling manner, but sometimes I thought his stock a little commonplace.

PROFESSOR KAHNIS

lectured on Systematic Theology and on Church History. Professor Flint, of Edinburgh, pronounces his work on the former subject "the best manual of Dogmatics in any language," but I enjoyed most his lectures on the History of the Reformation. He had a life-like way of painting the scenes of Luther's times that kindled enthusiasm and caused them to live in the memory. Some years ago he published the first volume of a History of the Reformation, which was received with great public favour; but some of the views contained in it did not meet with the approval of the Government, and the author, it is said, received a hint that his tenure of office would be more secure if he let the work drop. The second volume has not appeared. Professor Kahnis is a tall, stout man, of about seventy years of age, but his hair is still jetty black, and will not be restrained from tumbling over his forehead. The boyish appearance which this gives him is increased by the cheerful look of his round, smooth face, on which a smile plays very readily.

Besides these three professors, I attended a course by one of the young men,

PROFESSOR RYSEL,

on Immortality in the Old Testament. He was thoroughly at home in all manner of classic and oriental lore, and he had a most felicitous style of speaking. Occasionally, too, I paid a visit to the lecture rooms of

OTHER PROFESSORS,

especially the celebrated men, such as Curtius (of Latin Grammar fame), on Philology, Drobisch on Philosophy, and Roscher on Political Economy. Once only I went to hear old Dr. Holemann lecturing in Latin on the Psalms. I did not understand much of it, but of course I attributed it to his continental style of pronunciation.

The professors in nearly every case deliver two full courses of lectures, often on subjects not at all allied to one another, as has been seen in the subjects chosen for last session by Professors Luthardt and Kahnis. Besides these regular and full courses, each professor usually supplements his work with shorter special courses delivered once or twice in the week, sometimes in the evening. These lectures are usually open to the public, and no fee is charged for admission. In this way we had discussions of such subjects as the History of Missions to the Heathen, the Messianic Element in the Old Testament, and the Catacombs of Rome.

In my next letter I will tell what I saw of the students and of the state of religious thought in Germany.

THE Rev. Kenneth McDonald, of Belmont, was recently presented with a handsome gold watch by the members of his Bible class.