

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

STUDENT LIFE IN GERMANY.—II.

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The standpoint of the German university is essentially different from that of the English or American institution of the same name. In Germany, the university is an organization for the purpose of directing and fostering among its members a spirit of independent research; in English-speaking countries, the university exists for the purpose of communicating received opinions. This is, of course, a bald way of stating the difference, and would not be a perfect definition without being qualified by a good many accessory statements, but it gives, I think, the key-note of each. Now, the work to be done in following out these two different plans will be to a considerable extent similar, but when the lines do diverge, the occasion may be found in nearly every case, by referring to the original idea of the university.

The thing which strikes the foreigner with the greatest astonishment is the uncontrolled

FREEDOM OF THE GERMAN STUDENT—

a freedom which stands out in all the greater relief when contrasted with the despotic exactions of the Government, the restraint of the press, and the close watch which is kept upon the doings of the people by the police. Foreigners are, of course, pet objects of suspicion. I do not think I had been ten days in Leipzig—at any rate I remember that my knowledge of the language was much further from perfection even than it is now when a military-looking personage called on me, and requested me to appear before the police court without a day's delay, and give an account of myself. I had allowed myself to fall into the impression that such things as passports were unnecessary at this stage of the century which flatters itself that it is the nineteenth; but this gave me a rude awakening, and I had to go off to Baron Tauchnitz, the British Consul, who gave me a "schein" which restored to its pristine brightness my suspected character. In spite of surveillance so minute that even transient visitors to the "Fair," were obliged to report themselves to the police authorities, and so prying that the houses of prominent citizens were continually being searched for socialistic newspapers or documents; in spite of so much vexatious tyranny that besets the student as a citizen, his life as a student is one of untrammelled freedom. "We have retained," says Professor Helmholtz, in his Inaugural Address as Rector of the University of Berlin, "the old conception of students, as that of young men responsible to themselves, striving after science of their own free will, and to whom it is left to arrange their own plan of studies as they think best." It is true that the course is set down as three sessions of two terms each, and that there is an examination at the close of the whole course; but the university has nothing to do with these things. The regulations are made, and the examinations are conducted by the Government as a test for those who wish to obtain appointments in its service. In order to qualify for these Government examinations, it is necessary that the student should attend certain "compulsory lectures," as they are called, but he may take these in any order he pleases, and at any period of his course. He may and does migrate with perfect freedom from one German university to another, so that it is an extremely unusual thing to find a student who has taken his whole course at one university, and in each university he has perfect liberty to choose among the professors of the same subject, whether they are professors ordinary or extraordinary, or mere private docents. The freedom from control which the German student enjoys in relation to the university, has made itself felt too in

HIS CIVIL STATUS;

he is a burgher, not of the city, but of the university; and if he comes in collision with the guardians of public order by the breaking of street lamps, or any of those exercises in which the traditional undergraduate mind seeks relief, when he is cornered by the police he draws himself up, and presents, not his revolver, but his matriculation ticket, which the "bobby" accepts with a touch of the cap, and which he hands over to the university authorities, who summon the student to answer for his conduct, and if he is found guilty he is imprisoned (on parole) in the university *carrier*—a room which has become quite a

museum of curiosities in the way of inscriptions, lampooning the authorities, or bewailing the hard fate of the captives.

HIS BEHAVIOUR.

As far as my experience goes, however, the German undergraduate is much better behaved than his English or American *contemporaries*. The first day one assembles with his class, he is conscious that he is among men who have outgrown the school-room. There is no chasing each other over seats, no loud laughter, or boyishness generally. The average age of the freshmen is perhaps between seventeen and twenty, and as they sit or stand in groups, chatting and laughing together, it is noticed that many of them are still enjoying their morning cigar. At a quarter past eight sharp the *Samulus* opens the door and the professor walks in, hat in hand, and without any gown, and takes his place, standing behind the plain desk. Each student at once takes his place, every cigar is laid aside, and without any formal prayer, even in the theological classes, the professor begins. There is no roll call, and yet the irregularities in class attendance seemed less than in Knox College, or in Edinburgh, where these were prominent. Questions are never asked by the student, and but seldom by the professor, even in the Hebrew and Greek exegetical classes; now and then there is a sound of shuffling feet, and the professor good-naturedly repeats some leading statement that has been hastily enunciated, or indistinctly heard. There is seldom any applause except at the end of the lecture. After the lecture is over, on gaining again the quadrangle below, we find it alive with students, and as we stand on the steps and look over the talking, laughing crowd, we begin to notice that over there is a gathering of fifteen or twenty students, distinguished by little caps of light blue cloth; on the other side is a similar group, with caps of crimson plush, and so on over all the square. Here, not far from the steps, is a group with modest black cloth caps, adorned with a band of white, gold and black. These are my friends of the *Wingelf* Club. As we join them, every cap is raised in the ceremonious fashion which marks the continental gentleman, and we are asked if we will join in the expedition of the afternoon, which may be a walk out to the Schützenhaus, or a stroll up through the Rosenthal as far as Gohlis; perhaps it may be a row up the sluggish Pleisse to Connwitz; but the German students are not great oarsmen. At any rate, wherever we go, it is likely that an impromptu meeting of the Club will be organized at the end of the journey, and only after refreshments, songs and stories, will we come back tired but happy in the evening.

But the German student does not spend all his afternoons in this fashion. He manages to get through a great deal of the most valuable work, and, thanks to his admirable training in

THE GYMNASIUM,

he is able to do it in the most systematic and expeditious manner. We are in the habit of looking at these "Gymnasia" as corresponding somewhat closely to our High Schools, but really, in methods and in extent of work, they offer a much more complete parallel to our universities, and so leave the German university as something quite *sui generis*. The German student again has his evenings left much more free than ours, by the habit of

EARLY RISING

which prevails throughout the whole country. We consider that we, on this side of the Atlantic, possess more of the go-ahead spirit than most people, but I do not know of any of our educational institutions where the lectures begin at six or seven o'clock in the morning, as they do in Germany. Another thing, the German student has

A NOBLE EXAMPLE

of industry and enthusiastic devotion to his subject in his professor. This man reached the rank and emoluments of the professorship only after he had proved, by long years of service as a private docent, his ability to think independently, and to teach clearly, and even now he does not rest on a bed of roses. He has little more than two months of vacation in the year; and since there is no compulsory attendance on lectures, he is obliged to depend on the ability displayed in his prelections for his audience, and consequently also in a great measure for his reputation and his salary. He delivers usually two full courses in the session—sometimes more—and he bends all his ener-

gies to his work. The same course is rarely delivered more than once in three years—the student course, it never occurs to him to go on reading the same note-year after year without a change, even in the second-rate jokes that make their appearance at the appointed places with the certainty of fate.

THE FEES

are light. A matriculation fee of \$5 entitles one to the privileges of the university—there is no matriculation examination. Most of the minor courses of lectures are free. In the main courses, the fee for the term is three marks for every day in the week on which the lectures are delivered—that is, if there are four lectures per week, the fee would be twelve marks (\$3). At the beginning of the *semester* each student pre-empt a seat by tacking his card on the desk in front of it, and that seat is his henceforth. In the classes which are likely to be crowded, it is advisable to secure seats, as we did, a few days before the lectures begin, because in a large room, where there is a class of 200 or 300, it is difficult to hear when one is in a back seat, and especially if he is not familiar with the language. The most of the professors seemed to me to speak very distinctly, but there are exceptions like Professor Kahnig, who has lost all his front teeth, and whose sentences come with a spluttering explosion of gutturals, which, to say the least, was not conducive to an easy understanding of his eloquent periods.

SUSTENTATION VS. SUPPLEMENT

MR. EDITOR,—I had hoped that my last letter would have terminated the discussion of the Scheme so far as I was concerned, but the interest awakened in the question, indicated by letters received, prompts me to ask your permission to say something further upon it. One standing stale objection made against the Sustentation Fund is that it is impracticable at present. And it seems that some think Mr. King's Scheme is more simple in its operation, and could be introduced with less friction into the Church. Now, this is an entire mistake. I confess to the inaccuracy of having said in a previous letter that it had the recommendation of simplicity, and perhaps this was one of the inaccuracies Mr. King charged against me. But on studying the Scheme as it is presented in operation in the report of Dr. Scott, the Home Secretary of the U. P. Church of Scotland, and looking more closely at Mr. King's regulations, which are in substance identical with those there referred to, it will be found a Scheme cumbersome and burdensome, and wanting in any one attractive element. Under the Sustentation Fund all regular charges are divided into two classes—aid-giving and aid-receiving—and such two classes must be found in every Church in the very nature of the case. There may be a few charges outside of these, not on, but coming on to the Fund, as they grow. But these are the two classes, this the natural division the Sustentation Fund recognises as existing among the congregations of the Church.

But in Mr. King's Scheme the congregations of the Church are divided into seven different classes.

1. You have the supplemented charges without surplus.
2. Those which are not on the regular supplemental platform.
3. Those which get one full share of the surplus.
4. Those which get one-half share of the surplus.
5. Those which get one-third share of the surplus.
6. The Manitobans, which are placed on a different footing from charges elsewhere.
7. Those which require neither supplement nor surplus.

That is, our Church is cut up into seven different kinds of charges—namely, the simple supplemented, the special arrangements, the full sharers, the half sharers, the third sharers, the Manitobans, and the independents. This may be a state of things indicative of simplicity, but it is difficult to see it. Can any one believe that this will be a simple state of matters for a Committee to deal with? Is this the Scheme that is so practicable compared with the Sustentation Fund? Let brethren take a note of this. Anything more arbitrary than the division of charges cannot be conceived of.

The surplus Scheme has only been in operation during seven years in the United Presbyterian Church, and has during three of these years been saved from deficits by a gift at the eleventh hour of \$2,500 from