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University and Civil Service Salaries.

UNIVERSITY teachers, and not least those outside Oxford, will be grateful to the provost of Worcester College for his outspoken letter in the *Times* of August 15, in which he contrasts the higher salaries in the Civil Service with those of university professors and tutors in Oxford. The correspondence which this letter has evoked is most interesting, and raises certain points which have not escaped notice in these columns.

It may be recalled that the Select Committee on Estimates appointed by the House of Commons, in taking evidence regarding salaries, asked the representative of the Treasury questions regarding (1) comparable positions outside the Civil Service, and (2) stipends of university professors and tutors. The provost of Worcester College states that in Oxford "the stipend of the best-paid professorships was, and still is, 900*l.*" In this connection it should be pointed out that the average stipend for a university professor in the other universities and institutions of university rank in England and Wales is about 850*l.* per annum, while not a few receive no more than 500*l.* a year.

On the other hand, there are many Civil Servants receiving double the salary that "the greatest learning and distinction can obtain at Oxford, and many receiving much more than treble such stipends." But this is not the full tale, for the salaries of the permanent heads of Government Departments are at present 3500*l.* per annum—emoluments considerably beyond those received by the highest-paid officials in the universities. The tutorial fellow at Oxford, with his modest 800*l.* a year or so, may perhaps be pardoned if he fails to appreciate the point of view of the writer of the letter to the *Times* who may be taken to represent the views of the Civil Service, when he plaintively refers to the fact that after September 1 the salaries of these permanent heads of Government Departments will be "only" 3000*l.* a year. And all the more so if he believes with the provost of Worcester College that "with few exceptions Civil Servants of the highest class are men who in intellectual attainments, by virtue of which as tested in examination they were appointed, fell considerably short of the standard of a tutorial fellowship at Oxford."

From the point of view of the university teacher, whose emoluments at their highest do not approach to anything like this figure, and at their lowest are mere pittance, the situation is not without irony or even humour. Notwithstanding the very favourable comparison with the staffs of the universities, the Civil Service, we are told, is under the impression that it has not received the consideration to which it is entitled, and apparently is advocating a reference of the whole question of its stipends to the National Whitley Council for the Civil Service! Now it is not our purpose to argue the pros and cons of this question. What we are immediately concerned with is the obvious inadequacy of the remuneration of university teachers. "Academic remuneration is a disgrace to the nation," says one of the correspondents—a Civil Servant—in the *Times*; "University professors are scandalously underpaid," says another; while the provost of Worcester College brings a serious charge against the Government by accusing it of having done much to make it impossible for the universities to attract and retain the service of the very ablest men. Such statements without further support might be open to criticism, but it so happens that they are confirmed by statistics and evidence collected by the Association of University Teachers,

to which reference has been made in these columns on previous occasions.

This is a very serious state of affairs and should give pause to thoughtful men. It is futile discussing the minor elements in the problem when the main facts are of so serious a nature. Whether a Civil Servant or a university teacher puts in more hours of work in a year is quite beside the point and from the very nature of the work impossible to decide. Equally beside the point is the fact that the nation's income from foreign investments has shrunk by a hundred millions per annum. The question is whether the university teacher is, under present conditions, adequately remunerated, and, if not, who is to blame. A permanent head of a Government Department receives 3000*l.* or more per annum, a headmistress of a council secondary school may rise to 700*l.* or 800*l.* a year, whereas an Oxford tutor or a professor in one of our modern universities receives on the average a salary of about 850*l.* a year. Is this just or equitable? Is it likely to maintain, let alone increase, the efficiency of the university by attracting to it the right kind of man?

The universities are doing work of the highest importance to the nation, whether it is examined from the cultural or from the utilitarian side. Without this work national life would be immensely the poorer, and yet the staffs are scandalously under-paid. Already this is reacting unfavourably upon the quality of the candidates for vacant appointments, and in course of time the reaction will become even more pronounced.

For this state of affairs the Government cannot escape criticism; we are in entire agreement with the pertinent remarks of the provost of Worcester College. The University Grants Committee is cognisant of the fact that university teachers are underpaid, and that the universities are more or less in debt. As their sources of income are limited, they naturally and properly look to the Government for further aid. An annual grant of a million and a half is quite inadequate, and, in proportion to the total Treasury grant towards education, wretchedly small. If the University Grants Committee cannot convince the Government of the necessity of augmenting the annual grant to the universities for the particular purpose of increasing the stipends of the staffs, it is about time a more representative body took over its functions.

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Famous Chemists.

Famous Chemists: The Men and their Work.

By Sir William A. Tilden. Pp. xvi+296.

(London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.;

New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1921.)

12*s.* 6*d.* net.

SIR WILLIAM TILDEN, like many other persons, has been frequently struck by the general lack of knowledge, even among well-educated people, of the personal history and achievements of the men who have created epochs in science. This, however, need occasion no very great surprise. If the mass of the community are practically ignorant of science owing to the circumstance that they have been taught nothing concerning it, it is scarcely a matter for wonder that they should have no knowledge even of the names of its most distinguished votaries and no interest therefore in their lives and doings. Yet, as the author says, the story of their lives is not infrequently full of interest, even to those who are not specially attracted to science, or have little concern for its progress.

There has been, however, a great awakening of late. The lesson of our recent experience has been driven home. It required the Great War to enforce it. For generations past a few enlightened men have been preaching, with what seemed to many an almost tiresome reiteration, the truth that science in these days is more than ever at the basis of national welfare and security. The peril of the greatest crisis through which this country in all its long history has ever been confronted has at length aroused it to a recognition of this fact. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the evidence of this belated appreciation. We see it in the general anxiety concerning the present character and sufficiency of our secondary education, in the extraordinary rush of students into our university laboratories and lecture-rooms, in the more general recognition by manufacturers of the relation of science to industry, and, lastly, in the action of the Government in creating, on broad and liberal lines, a great scheme of State-aided endowment of science. The establishment of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, with its network of affiliated research associations throughout Great Britain, marks an epoch in the history of science of which it is impossible to exaggerate the significance and potentiality. Of course we must be prepared for wasted effort and wasted money. To muddle through is characteristic of our method. Science