

Department of Modern Languages

Annual Report - 1952.

The Department has suffered a very severe loss by the sudden illness and subsequent retirement of Mr. J.F. Meurisse Haydon. He gave his last lecture on April 4th, and only those who took over after him can fully appreciate the amount of work and careful preparation he devoted to his various responsibilities as Head of the Department and Senior Lecturer.

The courses throughout the year were:

- French IA: Six students enrolled; all passed.
French I : Seven students enrolled, but only four attended lectures, one of whom left Australia during the course of the year. The remaining three passed the annual examination.
French II: Two students enrolled; both passed.
French III: Three students enrolled; all passed.
German I: Eight students enrolled, but only four attended lectures after first term. Three passed.
German II: Two students enrolled and passed.

The small numbers in all courses are partly due to the fact that most part-time students feel that after having left school for some years their practical knowledge of the modern language is no longer sufficient for them to embark on a university course. There seems to be a genuine demand for an introductory course in French and German; similar courses are given in Dutch and Russian at Melbourne University, and in Italian at the University of Sydney. Such a preliminary course would give the students an opportunity of brushing up their French and German, and of starting the course with greater confidence and success. It seems that at the moment there is no other school in Canberra where adults can do French or German at matriculation level.

Another means of attracting students to the Department would be the establishment of Honours Courses. In the past most of our best students have left the Department after first year either to do Honours French or German at Melbourne or to join the Honours School of another Department.

In 1952, more than half the lectures (12 lectures per week) had to be given by part-time lecturers. The exam-results show that their teaching has been very successful, yet there is a great danger, especially in modern languages, in splitting up the work among so many different teachers. They can have no overall picture of the students' accomplishments and interests, and their standards naturally differ, quite apart from the fact that they come to us after a full day's work at another job. I would suggest the appointment of a third full-time lecturer for Modern Languages.

E.K. EMMERY

Acting Head of the Department of Modern Languages.

13th February, 1953.