

# GERMANS ON STAFF OF LOCAL VARSITY

## President Falconer Gives Information About Three of the Teachers

### NO CAUSE FOR SUSPICION

## They Are Capable Instructors and Are Needed by the University

To the Editor of The Daily News.

Owing to remarks that have been made in the press and elsewhere concerning certain members of the staff of the University of Toronto who are of German birth I think that it is only right that I should send you the following information:

I judge that the three members of the staff whose names have been most frequently mentioned in this connection are P. W. Mueller, Associate-professor of German; Dr. I. Benzinger, Professor of Oriental Languages, and B. Tapper, Instructor in German, all of University College.

Professor Mueller has been in this country for nearly twenty-two years. He was pastor of the German Lutheran Church, and at the same time took classes in and graduated from the University of Toronto with the degree of B.A. On the recommendation of Professor van der Broucken he was appointed to the staff in German a few years ago, and has proved himself ever since to be an excellent teacher of German. Owing to the uncertainty of his position he was not naturalized in Canada. On his return to Germany three years ago he found that for eleven years he had not been a German subject. After the occurrence in the Harbord street school he asked for naturalization papers and he expects to receive them in December.

#### Case of Prof. Benzinger.

Professor Benzinger is a Doctor of Philosophy of Berlin, and for ten years lived in Palestine, where Professor McCurdy met him three years ago and asked him whether he would be willing to apply for the position vacated by Dr. Eakin. I made inquiries in England in the summer of 1912 from leading authorities in Semitic Languages and they agreed that he was a very distinguished scholar in his line of work. He came on our staff in October, 1913. Dr. Benzinger returned to Leipzig for purposes of study last spring. He had asked that his son who was at school in Goslar should be admitted to the University this autumn. When the war broke out his son, being 18 years of age, was sent into the army. As we did not expect that Dr. Benzinger would be able to leave Germany, we made partial arrangements to fill his place for the winter, but he secured a steerage passage from Rotterdam and arrived here on October 6th. He had no difficulty in leaving Germany because he is not a German reservist and on account of his rather delicate health he has never served in the army.

#### No Obstacle to Drilling.

With regard to the report that he refused to dismiss his class when I announced that work should be discontinued in order that I might urge the undergraduates to join the Officers' Training Corps, Professor Benzinger tells me that he did not see the order, but that in any case his class was a small one of graduates who were not expected to be present in Convocation Hall. In the afternoon he has a class for a few graduates who are not drilling after four o'clock. There is one undergraduate who comes to him for instruction on one day of the week when he is not drilling. I believe that Professor Benzinger is putting no obstacle in the way of his students' drilling and is acting in accordance with the spirit of my conversation with him when he first returned.

#### No Cause for Suspicion.

Mr. Tapper is a young man who came to the United States a few years ago and who intends to become an American citizen, if he does not get a permanent appointment in Canada. He is a graduate of a college in Iowa and was sent to us a year ago by the University of Chicago when we found ourselves in great straits as to the teaching of German owing to the illness of one of our professors. Mr. Tapper lives with other junior members of the staff in the Faculty Residence and I have never heard that by utterance or action he has done anything that would be inconsistent with his remaining on the staff.

In the case of these three gentlemen, after the fullest inquiry that I have been able to make, I am of opinion that they have done nothing that should arouse any suspicion that they are injurious alien enemies. As members of the staff they are all excellent teachers and perform duties which it would be exceedingly difficult for us to have fulfilled otherwise.

R. A. Falconer.

University of Toronto,  
President's Office,

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