

From the Register
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THE UNIVERSITY CLARET JUG.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Having made my protest I did not contemplate returning to the charge. I should have been satisfied with the fact that I had pointed out a certain incongruity between claret jugs and a University Commencement; but the mellow and genial letter of your correspondent "Mirror" has emboldened me to crave space when you can find it for a few words in reply. Let me first express my regret at finding that he is not one of us; a man of so ripe a culture and of so kindly a nature would be welcome everywhere, but nowhere could he find so fitting a position as upon the Council or the Senate of the University of Adelaide. On reading his letter my thoughts strayed back to the old Eton Latin Grammar, to Colonel Newcome's favourite quotation from it—

Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores nee sinit esse feros.

For I felt that here was a man who, if he had not graduated in arts, had faithfully studied them, and with the natural result.

"Unostentatious effort," says "Mirror," "is what you want." Exactly so. It is of the ostentatious effort made at the late Commencement that I am complaining. The claret jug was ostentatiously displayed upon the platform, and greeted the eyes of the senators as they solemnly marched in; it was—I will not say ostentatiously presented, because to say so would be rude and misleading, and because the Chancellor presented it with modesty—but still it was ostentatious in being *coram populo*, and in the same sense it was ostentatiously received. I quite agree with your correspondent, "unostentatious effort is what you want." And then, to bring in poor Thomas Carlyle and his Lord Rector's robe. There is a pride that apes humility, and also a dignity that assumes simplicity. I thought at the time—for I was never an admirer of querulous and fault-finding Carlyle—that it was a clever piece of acting, and "Froude's Reminiscences" have convinced me that I surmised truly—certainly unostentatious effort is what you want.

"To be an educational success the University must be popular," says "Mirror," but not I think, in the sense of courting popularity; she should naturally be so lovable and attractive as to compel admiration, and to secure popularity in consequence; but

"Mirror" would have her deck herself in meretricious splendour, and court the attentions of the passers-by; for my part I would rather she resembled Egeria, and pursued the even tenor of her way in close retirement, leaving results to speak for her in after time. It is true that "there is no limitation of the means by which sound learning is to be promoted," and then "Mirror" goes on with a rich fancy to show that learning disdains water-gruel, and has a strong affinity for beer and Burgundy. In times not long ago they used to seek to impart learning in the same way in which you charge a breech-loader; and to those who, like myself, are beginning to be *laudatores temporis acti*, and to think that the past generations of scholars will have but few successors, it might appear that with the revival of the birch we might have a revival of sound learning, and I hope to have "Mirror's" strenuous aid in any endeavour which I may make to have it introduced as a part of the curriculum of the University. Should this be carried a flagellator will have to be appointed, and may I recommend your correspondent for the position?

"Mirror" has pointed out one want in our infant University—the want of conviviality. Something must be done, and that speedily if the University is to flourish, to remedy this glaring defect. Might not something be done in this matter by Parliament in the amending Act which they are to be asked to pass? The late Vice-Chancellor gave a dinner some years ago to sundry members of the University, at which I happened to be present. It was an excellent and enjoyable repast. It was a feast of reason and a flow of soul. I was for some after enthusiastic in and for our University; but I must confess that as the effects and recol-

lection of that banque is failing fast away, so in an unaccountable manner my enthusiasm has been correspondingly waning. A repetition of that dinner is required; it would indeed be too much to expect a repetition at the same liberal hands. I feel it should be provided for by public bounty, and that a sum of £— should be placed on the Estimates for that purpose.

Thus far you see, I am at one with "Mirror" in the matter of conviviality; but I would shroud these things from the public gaze. At Oxbridge the reverend and learned Dons used after their public appearance in Hall—at which, I believe, they only made a pretence of dining—to mysteriously disappear into a dark recess known as the "Combination-room." What transpired there it was never my lot to know; but vulgar rumour, which we know is oftentimes a lying jade, was wont to say that nectar of the gods and choice Havannahs, and racy speech and joke regaled those fortunate mortals who were privileged to enter there. We must have something of this kind; I feel the hour is come. Is "Mirror" the man? Let us have this, I say, but not at the Commencement—proceedings in public. Imagine (*horresco referens*) the Chancellor calling out "*Nunc est bibendum*," and the potent, grave, and reverend seniors tossing aloft their respective claret jugs—for I feel we must all obtain one (either by presentation or otherwise)—or imagine (to continue the quotation of the above Horatian line) the same august officer charging us "*Nunc pede libero Pulsanda tellus*;" what a disgraceful scene would then be presented! *Concilium Senatus et Tota Academia* in all their stately robes of office, wearing appropriately their claret jugs and the other insignia which a grateful Alma Mater has conferred upon them. Imagine them all going through the mysteries of "hands across" up and down the middle, and other tortuous convolutions of the dance. No; if these things must be done in the interests of the University, "*Procul, o, procul este profani. Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*;" then when the doors are closed and none but the initiated are present, let us devote ourselves with all our powers to the business before us.

You see, Mr. Editor, "Mirror's" letter, excellent as it was, has failed to convince me that the presentation of the claret jug was, in spite of Mr. Barlow's great merits, unworthy of the dignity of the Council and University of Adelaide.

I am, Sir, &c.,

SIGMA.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I do not think that "Sigma" and "Mirror" should indulge in so much waggery at the expense of the University, especially as I have heard that the "claret jug" was purchased by a few of "Guilielmo Barlow's" friends in the Council out of their own moneys. Indeed, looking at the *personnel* of the Council, and knowing that there is no power for the Council to purchase the bauble in question out of the University funds, in common with other outsiders, I cannot believe that those shrewd men forming the Council would ever sanction such a diversion of the funds; besides I do not suppose "Friend Willy" would permit his admirers in the Council to so thoughtlessly misapply the funds. Moreover, if the Council in an ill-starred moment did so naughty an act, it is just possible that our Parliament may be asked to validate the mistaken application of the University funds by including the "Claret Jug" in any fresh legislation. Why not make "Willy" the Vice-Chancellor? Give the Council all and every power to deal with the funds and do what it listeth in the management of the University, and extinguish the Senate, as the small power possessed by that body is very embarrassing to the profoundly learned Councillors constituting the University of Adelaide. No attempt has been made by the Council to account for the enormous sums unauthorizably spent in the past. Such expenditure was exhaustively referred to in the able leader in your impression of the 13th of February last. On the reassembling of our Parliament a searching enquiry will be insti-