

From the Register
October 18th / 1882

Miscellaneous, £3,829.

Mr. TOMKINSON objected to the item £2,814, grant to University Council towards erection of building.

Mr. PLAYFORD asked whether it was correct that the Government supplemented pound for pound all moneys raised by the University, including the rents derived from the large land grants made when the University Bill passed the House.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Bray) said it was expressly provided that the rents derived from the land granted for the use of the University should not be supplemented. This amount was the balance owing by the Government under the arrangement made that they should pay half the cost of the building.

Mr. REES thought that the claims of the University from time to time had been recognised by the House in a way that was hardly desirable. He had noticed that it was intended to form a Law School in connection with the University, but the legal profession was a very confined one in this colony, while technical education, the importance of which had been recognised when the University Bill was before the House and in the curriculum of other Universities, was not cultivated as it should be. The reports which appeared in the public prints showed that great stress was laid on classics and English literature by the Council of the University, and while these were very desirable the great want was a sound technical education. He was convinced that the University did not meet the requirements of the public, and he defied any one who knew the curriculum to say that it did. Take the last matriculation examination, and he ventured to say that it was a disgrace to this community that so few candidates went up. The reason was that the classics and mathematics had a too prominent place in the curriculum to the neglect of technical education. The Council persistently ignored that which was most important in a utilitarian community like this, when our artisans were practically ignorant of the first principle of technical art, instruction in which was the great want under which the youth of the colony were labouring. The greatest insult to the people of Adelaide was the ring formed in connection with the University, simply for the purpose of glorifying two individuals. They did not represent the community, and indeed there were a great many people in South Australia who were ignored by this University Council. If this University fulfilled the functions it was intended to discharge, he would be quite willing to supplement any moneys raised for its support and to advance its interests in every other way, but they were not represented in that Council. It was all very well in England for the classics and mathematics and English literature, which graced and adorned mankind, to be cultivated at the Universities, but here we should go in for technical science. Our artisans were suffering in comparison with those of the other colonies, and this, he thought, could be traced to the University ring. He would ask the Treasurer that in future technical art should be more encouraged than it had been in this colony.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Bray) had just looked up the Act, and had found it was distinctly provided that the moneys derived as rents should not be supplemented, and that no vote should exceed £10,000.

The Hon. R. D. ROSS could corroborate from his own knowledge that the rents were not supplemented by the Government, but he was bound to express his surprise at Mr. Rees's utterly unbecoming speech, and he trusted that he would admit that it was not in good taste.

Mr. REES had heard the same remark made before when he delivered a speech in connection with the University Bill. He still maintained that the curriculum was not the best suited for the interests of this community.

The Hon. R. D. ROSS had no objection to any remarks Mr. Rees might make in connection with his own peculiar hobby, but he objected to him speaking about a ring in connection with the Council. He knew of no such ring, and he thought that it was contrary to good taste for him to make such remarks unless he could justify them.

Mr. BUCKNALL understood that by voting this item they were merely fulfilling a promise made by a previous Government, and that the money had already been spent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Bray) said the University building cost £33,627, of which

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the Government agreed to pay half, and the item was just to make up the balance.

Mr. TOMKINSON hoped this would be the last item of the kind, for he was sure the Treasurer would be coming down directly and asking for a loan to provide for this and other works.

Mr. REES was very sorry he had been called upon to justify what he maintained was in perfect good taste. He had deplored again and again this absence of technical education in this community, and as illustrating the woeful ignorance of our artisans in this respect, he might mention that a short time ago he required a work needing a little technical art, and after waiting some months he had to obtain the assistance of the late Mr. Marshall Wood in procuring it. This work cost the gentleman who had employed him £500. Under these circumstances he denied that the Hon. Mr. Ross had any right to accuse him of any want of taste when he was deploring the absence of technical skill among our artisans. He maintained it was the duty of the University to encourage technical art by giving it a more prominent place in its curriculum.

The Hon. R. D. ROSS could not give Mr. Rees's remarks a personal application, and he was sure there was no ring in existence which had resulted in so much disaster to the country as described by Mr. Rees. It was to this expression to which he took exception, and he did not think he should speak of such a public body as the University Council in such a fashion.

Mr. PLAYFORD said there had been a rumour that the University Council wanted to get the rents from the lands supplemented by the Government. No doubt the Auditor-General would see this was not done even if it were wished.

Mr. FURNER felt it was no use objecting to the item, as it had already been spent.

The item was passed.

Grant to Narracoorte Hospital, £600; Deep Creek water supply, £115.

Passed.

The House resumed, and the consideration of the resolutions was fixed for Thursday next.

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SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.—Among the miscellaneous business transacted by the Assembly on Tuesday evening was the passing of the Supplementary Estimates, amounting to £55,652. Various items were objected to, but the Government succeeded in passing every line without alteration. Among the expenses criticised were the votes for Bundaleer Experimental Farm, sloping the banks of the Torrens, erection of Health Officer's residence, Port Adelaide, and additions to gaol at Port Augusta. Some question was also raised as to the grant of £2,814 to the University Council towards the erection of the building. On this Mr. Rees took the opportunity of making a fierce attack upon the University authorities, whom he charged with adopting a curriculum which was quite unsuitable for the necessities of the colony, ignoring, as it did, technical and utilitarian education in favour of instruction of an unpractical nature. The hon. member went still further, and spoke of a "ring" in connection with the management of the University for the glorification of two individuals. For this remark Mr. Rees was severely rebuked by Mr. Ross, who expressed the opinion that his remarks were utterly unbecoming. The resolutions of the Committee were reported, and their consideration made an Order of the Day for Thursday.

From the Register
October 19th 1882

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE.—A meeting of the Council of the University of Adelaide was held on Wednesday afternoon, October 18, for the purpose of electing two representatives upon the Board of Governors of the South Australian Institute. His Honor (Chief Justice Way), Vice-Chancellor, and Dr. Stirling were re-elected. A special meeting of the Senate was held afterwards to consider the regulations relating to the degree of Bachelor of Laws, and examinations in laws for students not studying for the degree. Dr. Gosse presided, and there was some discussion, after which the regulations were adopted.