

Advertiser May 31st 1886.

IMPROVEMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY.

With the growth of our University the demand for increased accommodation becomes more urgent, particularly in one or two directions. By degrees the council have done their utmost to meet the requirements of the various professors and lecturers, but in some instances these gentlemen have had to carry out their very important duties under considerable disadvantages. Of course the students have suffered from the same disabilities, and that so much success has been obtained is due to the enthusiasm of the former and the energy and assiduity of the latter. Last year all the fittings and necessary appliances for the Chemical School were completed, and the professor (Dr. Rennie) is now in possession of very excellent means for demonstrating intricate experiments to his pupils, whilst they enjoy every convenience for carrying on their own experimental studies. Then that old landmark (the powder magazine) just below the University was so metamorphosed as to adequately meet the wants of the professor of anatomy (Dr. Watson). The large ante room was suitably altered, and a new roof placed on it, and with internal improvements effected it was fitted up as a dissecting room, whilst a portion of it was divided off to serve for the professor's private office. Here all the grim surroundings of such a necessary educational establishment are to be found, and embryo surgeons may pursue their unpleasant but necessary studies.

Whilst these improvements were effected the lecturer on physiology (Dr. E. C. Stirling) had to be content with a meagre and indifferent room on the basement of the main building—a sort of cellar-like place. But this was only temporary, and as the students under his charge increased it was felt that more extensive and adaptable accommodation must be found for him. The council accordingly instructed their architects, Messrs. Grainger & Naish, to prepare plans for certain additions, part of which have now been finished, and are already occupied. It was decided to place the new building at the north-east corner of the University. There two floors, the upper one comprising the demonstrating-room, the lecturer's private room, and an instrument-room, and all the fittings have been arranged on the most convenient plans, as suggested by Dr. Stirling. In the demonstrating-room there are numerous microscopes, and the doctor has about 2,000 slides of the human anatomy. These, however, are not generally used by the students, as part of their elementary curriculum is to cut their own sections, stain and mount them. When Dr. Stirling was in England last year he secured some valuable machines, amongst these being one to record blood pressure. This it does by means of a glass pen on a cylinder covered with white paper. The blood is conveyed from an artery by means of tubes, and the record comes out as on the barograph chart. An electric clock can also be connected with the machine. Then there is a very small and sensitive machine for registering the beatings of the pulse, and a kind of tuning-

fork for measuring time, by which the hundredth part of a second can be noted. A miniature aquarium, enlarged models of the sense organs, bottles of preserved specimens, electric bells to communicate with the other professorial departments, a small working library, and all the minutiae connected with a medical school have been arranged in order, and both the lecturer and his students will now be able to continue their labors under the most favorable conditions. The theatre is below on the basement floor, and the fittings have yet to be made. There will be an outside entrance from above, and the students will walk down to the seats, which are to be above the lecturer, and arranged in a close semi-circular form. By this means the classes will be brought as close as possible to their instructor. It must be remembered that the medical school as at present constituted, only attempts to take students through the first two years of the M.D. course, which in all occupies five years. These first two years comprise the scientific part of a doctor's education, whilst the remaining three are devoted to the more practical part of walking the hospitals, and in learning to put the knowledge previously gained into practice. But it must also be remembered that with the present accommodation and appliances, not only the preliminary, but the whole of the courses could be carried through in the University. There are gentlemen in the colony quite able to undertake the work of instruction in all its stages, and for its size the resources of the medical school will compare with similar institutions anywhere; but there is the one little obstacle in the way, and that is the want of the necessary funds. The subject has been under the consideration of the council, and by that body referred to the faculty of medicine to report as to the probable cost. The latter were to have furnished their estimate on Friday, and it is understood that they will advise that it will be necessary to secure an additional £1,000 a year in order to make the medical school what it ought to be—that is, capable of turning out doctors of medicine ready and fit to begin the practice of their profession. The University has already lost a number of students owing to its inability to complete the medical course, and there is the

certainly that the ten students who are now under Dr. Stirling will be compelled to go elsewhere to complete their education if arrangements are not made before the termination of their two years to afford them the opportunity of continuing their studies locally. It certainly is an opportunity for one or more of our wealthy men to come forward and second the well-timed munificence of Sir Thomas Elder, to whom is due the credit of the establishment of the first instalment of the medical school. The school is now in the second year of its existence, and the question will need to be decided by the end of December next, so that there is no time to lose. Even now the medical and the law schools are the best paying divisions of the University, and therefore deserve the particular recognition both of the council and the public.

The contractors for the new buildings were Messrs. Hammond & Moss, and they have done their work very well, the cost being about £1,700. In the structure the opportunity was taken to use the stone from the Finniss quarries instead of importing it from Sydney. The local stone is pronounced by experts to be quite equal in quality to that brought from New South Wales, is much finer in the grain, and is easily worked. The color is soft and pleasing to the eye. The difference in stone is hardly perceptible, and in time will be less so. The quarry is situated near the Finniss-bridge, on the southern line, and covers a great extent of country. No doubt in time the stone will supersede Sydney stone, as it can be obtained in any quantity and size. The contract for fitting up the theatre has been let to Mr. N. Trudgeon, and the cost will be about £375.

Register June 3rd 1886

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARSHIP.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Are we to believe a rumour which has been circulated of late that it is the intention of the Government at an early date to abolish the South Australian Scholarship? To all those who have the welfare of the cause of education at heart, such a procedure must appear to be ill-timed and altogether unwarranted. Of course every one must admit that the finances of the colony are not at present in such a prosperous state as could be desired, but notwithstanding this fact, those who appreciate the value of a cultivated mind must see that the abolition of the scholarship in question cannot fail to be followed by bad results. It is a well-known fact that most of those who have hitherto entered our University as students in Arts were induced to do so by the hope of winning or at least competing for the South Australian Scholarship. The number of students at the University is still very small, and if this incentive to higher education be removed, the halls of learning on North-terrace will be almost empty, and our Professors will have the questionable pleasure of lecturing to empty benches. It would be interesting to know the reasons which (if the

rumour is correct) have convinced the Government that they have adopted the best plan. Surely it cannot be a financial matter only, for the expenditure of such a paltry sum as is required would impoverish no exchequer. It has been said that the standard reached by the candidates is not high enough, but it must be remembered that all those who have hitherto competed have taken the B.A. degree, and where can they go to receive any higher tuition? If the standard is raised no one will compete. This, then, is no reason for the action of the Government, for if they are not satisfied let the standard be raised. It should be remembered, also, that all candidates must be under 21 years of age, so that extraordinary efficiency cannot be expected. It may be said that the offering of one scholarship only will not promote the interests of learning to any great extent. But this is no reason why that scholarship should be abolished—on the contrary, a reason is furnished why the number of scholarships should be increased. Perhaps it will be said that parents will educate their sons even if no rewards are offered by the Government; but this opinion is entirely erroneous, for almost every candidate who has failed to win the prize has remained in the colony. Again, how many South Australian young men are studying the arts and sciences in England? They could be counted on the fingers of one hand. We should recollect also that one of the conditions for holding the scholarship is that the winner should study in a European University, so that the passage-money causes no small reduction. It is to be hoped that the Government will reconsider their decision, and not scruple to spend even large amounts for such a laudable purpose.

I am, Sir, &c.,

INTERESTED.

Port Adelaide, June 1.

[We learn that correspondence has been passing between the Government and the Council of the University, but no decision has yet been arrived at. The scholarship will, however, be awarded this year.—ED.]