

Register Sept^r 28th 1886

THE UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—The thanks of every man of liberal education in South Australia are due to Professor Boulger and Mr. Chapple for the stand they are taking in favour of a liberal education for our sons. To the *Register* also our hearty thanks are due. When Professor Boulger noted the small percentage of educational experts in the University Council he touched the matter precisely. Would that the governing bodies of our public schools contained more educational experts. The vice of a new country is too great reverence for utilitarianism. It is this that weighs with self-made men—all honour indeed to that splendid quality in them, that evident power. But surely culture is something in the world's history, and has contributed something to the sum of human happiness. I observe that Dr. Thomas in his speech puts forward the utilitarian aspect of higher education in all its naked deformity, and because he has "found French and German infinitely more useful in his profession than Latin and Greek" would relegate the classics as a means of culture to the limbo of the schoolmen. I fully grant that in doctors' Latin is no *gradus ad Parnassum*, and that their Greek on the average is but hypodermic, though well rubbed in by the crammer during the embryo state. Their real learning, and their ability in the highest of all accomplishments, the mitigation of human suffering; their really wonderful devotion to professional duty, regardless of personal convenience and even danger; their uniformly high character and general goodness do justly entitle them to be heard on most points. But I do not think their opinion should carry undue weight upon this subject—to this they are laymen. No doubt French and German are "more useful," and this *argumentum ad ollam* is at the root of the hostility to what our forefathers and the Universities at home (at least Oxford and Cambridge) call "*Literae humaniores*." A University surely is a place for such humanizing culture rather than a happy hunting ground for the pot. The aim of "Alma Mater" should be to guide and raise the tone of her children, to create a love of culture, to foster literary taste, to draw out latent talent for the future wellbeing of our country as a nation, and not basely to enquire what will pay best, or, in other words, enable them the more easily to thrust the weaker to the wall in the struggle to be rich. No doubt the University is not doing the work which its munificent founders designed for it, but why is this? Simply because our population is insufficient to furnish pabulum for its treatment. It is monstrous to suppose that our population at present affords a class that can furnish pupils for the University in even moderate numbers. Hence, as Mr. Chapple says, it has held an examination beneath the dignity of a University, and invites "crowds of boys and girls in jacket and pinafore" to be examined in elementary subjects by first-class professors from Europe. Let us be patient. A nation

is not made in fifty years, nor can a University make its mark in ten or a dozen. Let us not lower its status—a thing easily done—and if “the jacket and pinafore” atmosphere be perpetuated by present utilitarians, because the children to be taught find Latin and Greek harder than German and French, why, the result will be precisely what is most to be deprecated—that our young people of higher aims and grim purpose will go elsewhere for their University training, and the noble purposes of our Hughes, Elder, and Angas spirits be frustrated by the smaller aims of the advocates of a present expediency. I am surprised to read Professor Kelly’s speech. His own “standing at other Universities” leads him to speak *de haut en bas*. What we need is such a position for the Adelaide University as shall preclude the possibility of such an attitude from any quarter.—I am, Sir, &c., W. N. C.

UNIVERSITY SENATE MEETINGS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Referring to Mr. Chapple’s letter in this morning’s issue, will you allow me to confirm the accuracy of his statement as to my remarks on the Prince Alfred College boys? I have very good reason to know that they have not deteriorated at all, and I should be extremely sorry if what I said in mere good-humoured banter could be made to bear a serious construction.

I am, Sir, &c.,

JOHN A. HARTLEY.

Adelaide, September 27.

House of assembly
Register Sept^r 29th 1886.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARSHIP.

Mr. REES—Is it the Government's intention to seek for legislative authority for the proposed transfer of the South Australian Scholarship to the Medical School? The MINISTER of EDUCATION—It will not require legislative authority. It has to be brought before the House on two distinct occasions. The first is the rescinding of the regulation founding the Scholarship. The new regulation has been laid on the table. The second occasion will be when the Estimates come on for discussion next year, when the first apportionment has to be voted to the Medical School at the University. Mr. SYMON—Would it not be better to submit the matter to the opinion of the House without waiting for the Estimates next year, because if we wait it will be too late to revive the Scholarship, as there will be no candidates? The MINISTER of EDUCATION—I don't think it necessary to move a motion as to the abolition of the Scholarship, as I believe the House agrees to it. Anyhow, it is competent for any member to take up the matter on the new regulation.

Public Works—Works and buildings, £950. Passed. Miscellaneous, £4,806. Passed.

Resolutions reported; Committee to sit on Thursday.

Register October 1st 1886.

THE UNIVERSITY NEW REGULATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Before the proposed new regulations become finally and irrevocably fixed for years to come it is the duty of every person who has any perception of their tendency to endeavour to obtain either their temporary suspension for further consideration, or their modification, so that as far as possible they may be bereaved of their inevitable power to injure the cause of education. With the proposal to make actual matriculation open to all who satisfy the Professors without the terrors of a formal examination I most heartily concur. It is a right noble idea, and is perfectly in accordance with the Act of Incorporation and the intention of the large-hearted founders of the institution. The Preliminary, Junior, and Senior Examinations, however, are not a part of the proper work of the University; it voluntarily comes forward, offering, in consideration of a fee, to examine the work done in the schools; but, certainly, we may

at the very least expect, nay, demand, that the judgment be a just one. Now, it does not seem an honest proceeding to stamp A1 upon that which belongs but to class 2 or 3, or, to express it otherwise, to award the highest credit to work which may be done with ease in a year, while that which has taken two or four years—exercising meanwhile the best influence upon the faculties—is put in the lowest place, or not recognised at all; this is manifestly unfair. We have no reason to hope for very different results in the future if young people and their teachers are left to choose what is most agreeable for the present. Girls have been allowed to take French instead of the more essential Latin, and the result has been a lowered standard of female education in South Australia for some years past. Boys, too, have been given the first positions in outside examinations who have not been prepared for University teaching. Both boys and girls by adroit management of their studies and attention to the mark schedules have obtained first-class places for work that was not first-class—the standard being the curriculum of the University. In this the University has not been true to itself and to the interests of the youth of this land, who sadly need every possible incentive and spur to choose the better things. But now that licence which has operated so adversely in the education of girls is extended also to boys, for they, too, may pass in the first class of the proposed Senior Examination with the three easiest subjects they can select. I do not plead for coercion in anything, but here certainly there seems to be an opportunity for obtaining higher results by appealing to the spirit of honourable rivalry, which is as powerful as it is common. Why should not the first class—if indeed there be the distinction of classes at all—be reserved for those who pass in the subjects which would enable them to enter the University and there proceed with the studies specified for some definite course, as for instance, the B.A., the B.Sc., the Medical or Law course? There will still be perfect freedom in the choice of subjects, but the love of ease will be counter-vailed by the honour which may be derived from a generous diligence in intellectual toil.