

Register March 28/3/88.

THE UNIVERSITY SENATE.—A meeting of the Senate of the University will be held to-day, when the business will be the election of a Warden and Clerk of the Senate and three gentlemen as members of the Council. As regards the Wardenship only one candidate presents himself, namely, Mr. F. Chapple, who has occupied the position for some years, and who has given every satisfaction. The duties of Clerk of the Senate have been performed since Dr. Barlow's resignation by Mr. Hackett, but this gentleman now aspires to higher honours, leaving his former position to Mr. Caterer, the first graduate of the University. The most important duty devolving on the Senate to-day is the election of three members of the Council. Many members of the Senate hold that the government of the University has got too much into a particular groove, and a determined attempt is now being made to introduce new blood into the Council. As a means to this end the recently formed Association of Graduates has nominated three candidates to fill the present vacancies in the Council, the gentlemen named being Dr. Walter Smith, Mr. G. Sutherland, M.A.—a candidate for the representation of the North-Eastern District in the Legislative Council—and Mr. J. T. Hackett. It is asserted that the nominations received by these gentlemen are sufficient in number to ensure their return; but this assertion has often been made before, and nearly as often been refuted by facts. At any rate the Association nominees will meet foemen worthy of their steel in such men as Dr. Stirling, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Cockburn, and Mr. Cooke. Everything depends upon whether the members of Senate have enough interest in the election to attend the meeting, and upon this point there should be no doubt. The deliberations of the Senate will also be interesting, because some recent actions on the part of the Council are to be challenged as unwise and contrary to the best precedents. The recent appointment to the Lectureship in Laws for one year will form one of the debated points, and, indeed, his appointment at all is open to question, apart from the matter of its duration. Then comes the point raised by the limitation of Professors' tenure of office. No satisfactory reason has yet been advanced for the departure on the Council's part from the rule observed by older Universities; if there is such a reason it ought to be brought forward, and perhaps one or other of the Professors who have agreed to the change might enlighten the public on the hidden advantages of the scheme. We do not quite understand Dr. Smith's motion "that it is desirable to amend the first section of the Adelaide University Act, whereby the incorporation is confined to the Council and Senate, and all undergraduates and all graduates of less than three years' standing are excluded from the Corporation." Dr. Smith surely cannot mean that boys and girls of 17 or 18 should be allowed seats in the Senate. If he does he will have to show his authority and cite a precedent. But it will do no harm to ventilate grievances, and so long as personalities are avoided as much as possible the result cannot but be advantageous to the best interests of the University.

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PROFESSOR BOULGER AND THE UNIVERSITY SENATE.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—As I find that a general impression exists that I am a member of the newly-formed Graduates' Association, kindly permit me to declare in your columns that such is not the case. When invited to join the Association I replied that I did not think it becoming for a Professor in my peculiar position to take such a step, and for the same reason I declined the offer of a member of the Association to nominate me for one of the vacancies in the Council. I do, however, sympathize with the action so far of the Association, except as regards the exclusion of graduates who happen to be members of the Council, and I intimated my disapprobation of such a course to one of the most eminent members of the Association. With the general conduct of the new institution I sympathize, because I feel that a combination of graduates in arts to secure the interests of liberal as distinguished from merely professional education in the University is much needed. Of the twenty-one gentlemen who at present constitute the Council only ten have obtained by examination a University degree in arts, and not more than five have obtained such a degree with honours. I do not attach undue weight to University degrees either with or without honours, and no one can appreciate more highly than I do the services rendered to the University by such men as the Chief Justice and Sir Henry Ayers, but I do contend that the Senate would do well in increasing the proportion of literary and scientific scholars in the composition of the Council, and I believe that the Graduates' Association is likely to conduce to such an end.

Furthermore, I wish it to be known that, although I was present at the Senate meeting on Wednesday, I did not speak or vote on any matter connected with myself. I attended because, in the first place, matters were to be discussed which had no reference to myself, and as regards which I desired to exercise my right to vote, and secondly because I wished to note any statement concerning myself which might demand explanation. I find that this precaution was not unnecessary. Professor Rennie is reported by your contemporary to have said that he "and Professor Bragg and Professor Boulger were the committee who recommended to the Council to make the alteration of office at six months' notice." Now, the three Professors referred to did not form any committee. They accepted the invitation of a special committee of the Council to attend, and to express their views, and they neither jointly nor singly recommended any alteration to the Council. Nay more, a member of the Council who was present declared that he was not prepared without further consideration to support any such recommendation. What the committee did when the Professors retired, or what private or public parley my colleagues may have subsequently held with the Council I do not know.

Again, Mr. W. Symon is reported to have said—"The Professor having completed his five years was told that he might continue his duties, *and no one would interfere with him so long as he did not become incapable to perform his duties.*" I should like to learn Mr. Symon's authority for the words marked with italics. No communication to that effect has been received by me from the Council, and in default of such a communication I may be excused if I regard the bare assertion of even such an eminent ex-member of the Council as Mr. Symon as scarcely satisfactory. Finally, Mr. Hartley is reported by you to have expressed himself thus:—"Many things had been brought under the notice of the Council of which the Senate were ignorant, and on the matter in question their eyes were at present semi-blinded. Things had come to the knowledge of the Council that had led the Council to reverse their decision as to the tenure of Professorships." Although I do not take the insinuation as having reference to myself I quite agree with your remark that it is not "either manly or straightforward." In fact, "were I in Ireland"—to appropriate the speaker's felicitous phrase in extenuation of hyperbole—I should characterize it in much stronger terms. I may add that such a defence of the Council's action is quite at variance with Dr. Barlow's contention that the alteration of tenure has been effected in order to benefit the Professors.

I am, Sir, &c.,

E. VAUGHAN BOULGER.

Adelaide, March 29.