

The Register.

ADELAIDE: TUESDAY, DEC. 18, 1883.

THE UNIVERSITY AND ITS YEAR'S WORK.

For the first time the University annual ceremony for the conferring of degrees and distribution of honours has taken place at the close of the year instead of at Easter season. The change is a beneficial one in many ways. It enables students to take and to enjoy their honours shortly after having gained them. It forms a fitting termination to the year's work of those pupils in the higher schools who have been studying for University examinations; and, as was very clearly shown by the attendance on Monday, the December commemoration is much more popular than that held in March or April. It is obvious that the inconvenience and crushing to which the visitors were subjected must by some means be avoided in the future. Either the attendance must be strictly limited by the issue of tickets, or a public hall, such as the Town Hall, must be engaged for the occasion. Perhaps, for the present at any rate, the latter course would be the

preferable one. There should be nothing exclusive in our University, either in regard to its classes or to its public ceremonials. The popularity of the institution is undoubtedly increasing. The number of candidates for degrees at Monday's ceremonial was indeed very limited, as only two students had been successful in the examinations. But, as the Chancellor pointed out, the University is now able to show a roll of forty-six undergraduates, and no doubt will soon have a much larger list of graduates. The very large increase over last year is, of course, due to the establishment of the Law School. The classes in law were well filled as soon as they started, and twenty-seven students who had enrolled themselves as studying for a degree presented themselves for examination. The range of subjects prescribed for the degree of Bachelor of Laws is not so wide as in most other Universities. But the examination has evidently been rendered sufficiently severe, and the future graduates in law will no doubt be well grounded in legal lore, even though their range of University reading in other subjects may be somewhat limited.

The musical taste and ability of His Excellency the Governor will probably become of service to the University, and give rise to the creation of a professorship of music, just

as the efforts of various members of the Royal Family have given to England a well-endowed College for the pursuit of the same study. It is a mistake to allude to music as "an ornamental art," as one of the speakers did at the University, even while commending the study. Music is not in any greater degree a purely ornamental art or science than mathematics or natural philosophy. Each study owes its value solely to its usefulness as a mental training, and music when properly studied—as it far too seldom is—affords a training just as intellectual as any of the others. Who can say that Beethoven was not as truly a poet as was Virgil? Is not the student who thoroughly understands the one master just as much entitled to the honour of being a man of intellect as the man who is versed in the other? Let it not be supposed, therefore, that the Governor, in exerting himself to secure funds for the creation of a Chair in Music, is labouring for a result in any degree less substantial and useful than those which have already been achieved in the University. The curriculum in almost all Universities should be made more liberal than it is at present. Much greater prominence should be given to the poetry and science of modern times. In short, as Professor Huxley has very justly remarked, it should be the aim of all—even the most ardent admirers of classical times—to be at least as thoroughly versed in the literature, science, and art of modern times as the ancient Greeks were in those of their own days. Unfortunately the reverse is the case. Hundreds of graduates are turned out every year in English-speaking countries with no more knowledge of English literature and science and with no greater appreciation of English culture than an average schoolboy would possess.

The Australian Universities more than others should endeavour to be thoroughly abreast of the times, and it is greatly to be desired that something like harmony and unity of purpose should prevail among them. The idea of an amalgamation of the Australasian Universities in respect of their examinations has been brought prominently forward by Professor Tate and the Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor of the University. The present isolation, when viewed from a common-sense standpoint, is nothing less than ridiculous. Some of the Melbourne Professors are engaged by the Adelaide University as special examiners. They have to set papers for the Melbourne classes and different ones for those in Adelaide. Now, it has often occurred to those interested in such matters that in each subject one set of questions should be drawn up for