OUR UNIVERSITY AND ITS AIMS.

To-day the University of Adelaide holds its high day, and makes some attempt at reproducing on Australian soil the imposing spectacle of an academic commemoration, such as is celebrated at the seats of learning in the mother country. The Council has seen fit, therefore, and such of its members as are entitled to academic robes will put them on “for this occasion only,” and the two classes of dignitaries will direct their steps to the right and left of the platform on which the Chief Justice will preside. The gentlemen who, after examination here, are entitled to degrees will clothe themselves in the appropriate garments of their youthful alma mater, and be led up to the dais by the Dean of some faculty and hear from the Chancellor the words which are made to constitute the conference of the degree. The graduates of other Universities to be admitted at eadem garam will go through the like process; the priests and scholars will then “go up into the high places,” and then a few superior boys and girls who do not as yet belong to the Institution will receive public recognition of their merits. There are no prize essays in prose or verse, but a Professor will deliver a several discourse on the subject to be dealt with, and the Chancellor will give an address. These things may not be much, but such as have the Council give to us. The ceremony is not grand enough to be imposing, but it is simple and admirable, and has its uses. It may fail to excite enthusiasm in the breasts of those who, having been nurtured at the bosom of a more august mother, cling round the skirts of the Adelaide University as of a foreign nation; but it certainly gives the stimulus of plausible and authoritative recognition to academic achievements, and tends to encourage the students youth who are not yet mature for the gown. So agreeable, indeed, must such a meeting be that it occurs to us to suggest that such a ceremony as those employed in universal cap-and-gownness should be carried a step further, and that if so many learned and distinguished gentlemen were to adjourn to a good dinner. Instead of parting at the door it might be left to the Chancellor to prevent misunderstandings. There is another point, however, in which mediocrity might with advantage be foregone. There is no reason why a student who has passed his examination should not be enabled to reap the fruits of the sweet labour by being presented to the Chancellor. The Registrar at once instead of having to wait for a public presentation which he may be unable to attend. At Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, where a graduate has to swear to something, such a requirement may be necessary. The only possible place there are several days in the course of the year; while at the University of London, where no swearing is wanted, the certificate is given on demand, and the presentation is optional. Passing away from the ceremonial, however, let us say a word about the practical course of study. It has done much that is good, and has left much undone. When it was started there were many foreshadowings as to its being premature, and practically useless.
After a short experience it tauntingly acknowledged its primitiveness, but resolved not to be useless. Finding that there were few persons in the colony prepared to pursue an academic education by following the studies for a degree in arts, which is the normal foundation, the Council did their best to stimulate the schools by taking examinators into hand. After much protest, "stopping to conquer," the Council had to give up much service to the schools and their scholars. Finding also that the inclinations of the youths—"misanthropic"—tended in the direction only of such learning which is profitably in gaiety, the Council admitted them to two professional courses after a very slender groundwork of liberal education. This, we are inclined to think, is a mistake. Whether it be a mistake in medicine or not it is evidently so in law, and there are symptoms that the students and graduates in law are of that opinion. The slender learning required for matriculation does not arm the student with the means of encouragement for an independent study. His Latin does not enable him to construe his Institutes, his history is too scrappy to form the basis of a study of constitutional or international law, and his want of logical training leaves him hopelessly in the dark of the intricacies of the law in general. The result is a waste of his first year or two, and then the violent exertion of the memory in the subsequent process of "cram." It is with great regret that we find the fees in the American universities, and the contrary have been diminished; for this is where the duty of the University is to be done. It enjoys an ample, a manifest endowment; the salary of able and popular Professors is remarkably high, and the lectures entail no expense beyond it. Moreover, so long as attendance at lectures is made a necessary condition, a course should be delivered in the evening, so as to assure that it is really what cannot be attended by day. These evening lectures should be a matter of course, not dependent upon subscription, and, like the others, should be cheap. It is by such means (adopted by some extent) that the University of London has welcomed into its ranks a number of what may be called "volunteer" students, men who have long left school or have never been to a school, whose day is occupied in earning a salary, but whose nightly studies render them honor to their country and glory to the University.

In connection with this insufficient provision for the first academic duty of fostering the fundamental liberal education, we cannot help noticing the very unequal distribution of the University funds. The Council set down their income to be £1,900, and the accounts, set down their income at between £1,000 and £2,000. Out of this more than £2,500 is spent in salaries, and this brings us to the expenditure on the several "faculties" and the Law Faculty, which is one of the finest in the country. The Law Faculty is that in which there is the greatest number of students, twenty-nine studying for a degree and fifteen who desire certificates to be admitted as solicitors. The Law Lecturer gets only £200 a year, and about £160 more may be obtained in a province; and on this £200 by 44, the Law School costs