

Professor Boulger.

CUI BONO?

"The windy affairs of men
Rise like a cloud of dust,
And are as quickly laid again."

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE has not shone lately in a very brilliant light before the public for whose benefit it was founded. As an educational institution it is not particularly successful, and amongst other similar foundations it takes something like a back seat.

It is a very costly establishment, with lots of professors at large salaries, and a very disproportionate number of seekers for knowledge, known as students. Large endowments with stringent regulations and extra severe examinations do not seem to have been followed by adequate results; indeed, the cost per head of the students if reduced to a tabular form would tell a remarkable tale.

The Council rules everything, it sits with closed doors, and the Senate knows nothing of what goes on within the walls of the secret conclave, which consists of some twenty members, of whom about eight—or forty per cent.—are men who have never been at a University, and whose claims to have seats in the Council are quite undiscoverable.

The Chancellor was not a University man, and, by some strange concatenation of circumstances did not know when the time for which he was elected had expired, and who continued to act without any legal authority to do so. This is an excellent example of the manner in which the business of the Council is conducted, and one calculated to inspire public confidence.

Then there was a bungle about the appointment of a law lecturer, in which a good man was thrown overboard and another, admitted to be indifferent, kept in office for

a year, pending the search for a suitable professor in the Old Country, after having declined to look at the claims of a fitting person who hailed from Sydney.

Then the Council changed the tenure of office of professors on re-appointment after the term of their original engagement came to a close. This alteration was condemned by the Senate, but their voices were disregarded by the Council, which in spite of that condemnation continued to advertise the Hughes Professorship upon the objectionable terms.

And thereupon something like a row broke out, slightly fostered by the fact that the Council refused to accede to the resolution of the Senate to be allowed an inspection of the Council's register of attendance, and by the general disregard of the wishes and resolutions of the Senate.

That row culminated in the holding of a meeting of the Senate, in which the conduct of the Council in relation to the Hughes Professorship was very roughly criticised and denounced. Several unpalatable resolutions were carried by large majorities, and these resolutions afford the general public an opportunity of judging what a very happy family is enclosed within the University walls.

In fact the Council and the Senate are at loggerheads. In the autocratic manner in which the Council deals with matters which concern the whole body corporate, very small regard is shown to the interests of education. That appears to be a matter altogether separate from the power and dignity which pertain to the exalted office of a University Councillorship.

If reports be true, the principal part of the business of the magnates of the University consists in looking after rents and leases, and in monetary business. The University is too heavily endowed. It has more money than it can profitably use, and no one seems to be one atom the better for it.

It is not a very pleasant thing to learn from a distinguished member of the Senate that an impression has got abroad that the University is managed by a clique, and we quite agree with him that whether true or not the rumour is most injurious to the interests of the University.

The University has a visitor in the person of His Excellency the Governor; but does he visit? and when he does visit, what does he do? No one knows any more about that than they do about the proceedings of the University Council. Perhaps the visiting is done in the same way and on the same principle as the Council does its business in the hole-and-corner fashion which commends itself so greatly to British ideas.

Surely it is more than unseemly to see a wrangle between two important sections of our boasted University when it is abundantly evident that the Council is in the wrong. The Senate has been snubbed. Two of the most important professorships have been dealt with in a very high-minded and apparently undesirable manner, and a general want of confidence in the Council has been established in the minds of the members of the Senate which is simply disastrous.

This is the climax to which the annual expenditure of many thousands of pounds has brought the University affairs. How long will this bad state of things continue? When the annual vote for the University comes before Parliament, perhaps some explanations may be required before any more money is placed in the hands of the Council, which at present seems to be virtually irresponsible.

UNIVERSITY BRAINS OR NO BRAINS.

Boulger is a man who is the happy possessor of brains, and a knowledge how to use them; therefore he is kicked out of our University. The University Council is like unto an assembly of foxes who meet to consider how they can best eat up their goose, and find another one which they can torture. Boulger has shown himself to be a capable professor of English literature, has proved himself to be popular amongst the students; but on finding that they had to deal with a man of "education," the members of the Council, who, for the most part, have never been within the halls of learning, etc., have been taking a great deal of care to prepare a bed of the sweetest roses on which they should lay down the worthy professor, and keep him there until they should obtain the services of a man in want of a situation. In fact the foxes have found their victim one too many for them, so they air their spite by snarling at him, and casting away his services, which all but themselves appreciate.

And then the worthy councillors appoint a bishop, a mathematician, *an ironmonger*, and a *soft goods seller*, to select a man to instruct the rising genius of South Australia [in English literature. Now, how this motley crew will come to a decision as to what man should take Boulger's place it is hard to say. Kennion will probably choose a parson who has entered the preaching profession because he was the fool of his family; Lamb will be likely to select a hard-headed old fellow who is good at doing sums; Blyth, Sir Arthur, is certain to hit upon a man well-versed in the art of making tacks and hoop-iron, and

with a smattering of 1888 novels; and Davie Murray is sure to take under his paternal wings another little "Davie" who has spent his life within the four walls of a hosiery shop, and who in his spare moments has succeeded in learning by heart the first act in Shakespeare's Henry V. And the cross between these four animals is to be "Professor of English Literature at the University of Adelaide."

Good-bye, Boulger! May you be treated as a gentleman, *and by gentlemen*, when you are in your next billet.
