

Advertiser June 12th 1888

PROFESSOR BOULGER AND THE
UNIVERSITY.

TO THE EDITOR,

Sir—My attention has been drawn to an advertisement in your issue of the 6th instant, inviting application for the Hughes Chair of English in the University of Adelaide. In that advertisement no reference is made to the present occupant of the chair. Such an omission will be interpreted by your English readers in a manner objectionable to me, inasmuch as terminable professorships in English universities are never advertised for public competition without stating the eligibility of the existing professor, unless he is deemed ineligible. I trust, therefore, that you will permit me to state that I have been offered re-election, and declined because the council stipulated that I should accept terms as regards tenure of office and nature of duties less favorable than those which they now offer to every Australian or European candidate.—I am, &c.,

E. VAUGHAN BOULGER.

June 10, 1888.

Register June 29th 1888

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY.—*Table Talk* of June 22 says:—"Amongst the applications which have been received by the Melbourne University authorities last week for the position of Professor of Music at a salary of £750 a year were those of Professor Ives, of Adelaide; Mr. George B. Allen and Walter E. Lawson, of Melbourne; Dr. Pole, of Sydney; Mr. Woolnough, of Sutton, Surrey; and Mr. Charles Lahmeyer, of London." Professor Ives called upon us last night to state that the above paragraph, so far as he is concerned, has no truth whatever. He has not applied for the position.

Advertiser July 9th 1888.

THE HUGHES PROFESSORSHIP
OF ENGLISH.

We have received the following for publication:—

"To the Council of the University of Adelaide.

"Gentlemen—In all universities where terminable chairs exist it is usual in inviting candidates for the renewed tenure to state that the actual occupant is eligible for re-election, unless for some reason he be deemed ineligible. Will you be good enough to inform me whether it is from accident, from ignorance, or from design that you have omitted such a statement in your advertisement.

"I am, &c.,

"E. VAUGHAN BOULGER.

"Adelaide, June 28, 1888."

"The University of Adelaide, July 2, 1888."

"Dear Professor Boulger—Your letter of the 28th inst. was duly read at the council meeting on Friday last, and I am directed to inform you that it has been received.

"Faithfully yours,

"J. WALTER TYAS, Registrar.

"Professor Boulger, M.A., D.Lit., the University, North-terrace."

"To the Chancellor of the University of Adelaide.

"Dear Mr. Chancellor—I am given to understand that the word 'ignorance' in my last letter to the council is deemed offensive. Permit me to assure you, and through you the council, that I had no desire to be discourteous. My object was to make a statement and ask a question with the utmost brevity and perspicuity. The context of my letter shows that I mean merely to imply that the council were possibly unaware of a certain usage observed in other universities, and I regret extremely that my meaning has been misunderstood. I trust therefore that the council will state in their advertisement that I am eligible for re-election, unless they have some reason to consider me ineligible.

"I remain, &c.,

"E. VAUGHAN BOULGER."

Register July 10 1881.

THE UNIVERSITY.

The Senate of the University has declared open war against the Council. It is a necessity of the case that a member of the Senate shall be a graduate in arts, or laws, or medicine, whilst it is no way necessary that a member of the Council shall have further experience with University management than is acquired in the work of governing. What gives importance to this feature of the case is that the Council of the University has very large powers; one of its functions is to represent the feelings of the learned section of the community; it has to do with the appointment of professors amongst other things; and it has to regulate the disposition of public moneys. It has it in trust to see that the cause of higher education in the colony is effectually promoted, and that the moneys which are devoted by the State to this purpose are rightly expended. Hence the Council stands to the colony in a fiduciary relation, and its members are elected by its constituency in accordance with a known rule. The theory [that the Council is an irresponsible body is a mischievous fallacy. It cannot be supported in any way or by any method of reasoning. Granted that the Council is the concrete expression of the choice of the Senate; granted, even, that no better choice could have been made than has been made; we are irresistibly brought back to the conclusion that the Council is merely the agent by whose means and acting on whose advice the Senate promulgates laws binding on the University. Nor can we for a moment deny the force of the comparison which brings Council and Senate into a relative position to that occupied by Ministry and Parliament. If the Ministry does not carry out the will of the Parliament it falls. It is not necessary to follow Mr. Hartley into his technical pleading yesterday, for the simple reason that he must know as well as everybody else that the fiat of the popular House is law. If the Assembly decided to-morrow that the Inspector-General of Schools should no longer be an officer under the Government, all the Queen's horses and all the Legislative Councillors would not be able to improve matters so far as he is concerned. What is true of the House of Assembly is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of any popular Chamber; and the Senate, which is the constituency of the Council of the University, is bound to secure its ends in the long run.

Yesterday this run was openly begun. Resolutions were adopted by the Senate which were plainly opposed to the expressed wishes of the Council. The popular body has in direct terms condemned the governing body. This exhausts their power, for the Act gives the members of the Council unlimited authority to formulate what regulations they please. However, it was necessary the Senate should express its opinion on the subject, and steps, culminating in yesterday's meeting, were taken with this end in view. It has been our duty to protest against the new regulations made for the governance of quinquennial professorships, because they tend to lower the dignity of the chairs concerned and to depreciate their value. We cannot expect good men