The University.

There are several lawyers on the Council of the University, who have failed to give that long consideration to that corporation the watchfulness and judgment with which it is to be hoped they will protect the interests of their private clients. The result is in some respects possible, and in others ridiculous, being no less than the absence of a Chancellor lawfully appointed. By the Act of 1876, by which the University was founded, it is provided that the first Chancellor shall hold office for five years, and their successors are to hold office "for such other term as shall be fixed by the statutes and regulations of the University made pursuant to this provision."

The "statutes and regulations" here referred to are Acts of Parliament, but are by-laws made by the University, to which by ancient custom the name "statute" is given. Chapter XII of these, printed in the Winter session of the Chancellor who shall hereafter be elected shall hold office until the 9th day of November in the fifth year from the date of his election, and no longer.

But in the case of the appointment of the Chief Justice as Chancellor, this "statute" regulates his term of office. The Chief Justice was elected Chancellor on January 26, 1889, and therefore went out of office on November 9, 1893. Not having been re-elected since then, he has never since then been Chancellor. But, unconscionable of the defect of his position, he has continued presiding and voting at meetings of the Council, and has done other acts in his capacity of head of the University.

The things so done are of course invalid, which is matter of regret as regards such as are wise and ground for joy in respect of such as were foolish. Any further acts done in praesepe in respect of the sealing of the deed purporting to accept the liberal gift of the Angus Engineering Scholarship and exhibitions, or in respect of the other conditions imposed in connection, are no proper subject for censure. But if, at the Council's conference with him, he was not legally so much as a member, the Chief Justice gave his vote as a member of the Council, and then as President, when he was not legally President, I have heard nothing of the result of his voting. In case that the choice of Mr. Premus-father to the office of Chancellor be incorrect, we believe, within this category, and it is therefore a source of satisfaction that the Council will have an opportunity of reviewing its decision, and of doing justice to a gentleman who, but for the illegal voting, might have been successful. There are other matters of detail no doubt in which the mistake may have caused much trouble and delay, but so far as I am aware, there have been no acts done and none that have been common approved and signed irregularly. And it is easy to imagine that, as usual on such occasions, each occupant of the common interest strives to throw the blame on somebody else.

Where so many learned and capable persons are at fault it is not for us to judge between them. If they had appointed a conscience keeper or remembrancer, that functionary would
feel his withers wrung; but the Council have no such efficacy, and it is better to let them bear the blame equally. It is not a question of anything being done with the corps of the corporation; it is one of sheer vacuity and illegality of which purport to have been done. The first step to the rectification of this mistake will probably be the development of the error committed; the next, the election of a Chancellor; the third, the lawful performance of such things as ought to have been done, and, let us hope, a wise abatement from such as ought not to have been done. The law is thus blinded at one, and belonging to each of these clauses, but there is another which peculiarly affects persons admitted to degrees at the recent ceremonial. The eighth statute provides that successful students are to be admitted to their degrees at a meeting of the Council and Senate, and that the form of presentation shall be "Mr. Chancellor, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, &c., I present to you A B as a fit and proper person, &c. . . ," and the form of admission shall be "by virtue of the authority committed to me I admit you to the rank and privileges of a [Bachelor of Arts] in the University of Adelaide." Now, inasmuch as the learned gentleman to whom the presentation was made, and who purported to confer rank and privileges by virtue of the summons, was not entitled to him, had not had authority committed to him at all; still, a verbal formulary scarcely satisfies the demands of the statute. How far the defect is cured by the affixing of the corporal seal to a certificate of the admission is a question for the lawyers, of whom there are plenty. All that need be said here is that the seal is, by the statutes, to be kept in the custody of the Chancellor, and there was no Chancellor, and the signature of the Chief Justice at the foot of the parchment was not that of the signature of the Chancellor. The repetition of the conference of degrees after the election of a real Chancellor might be an interesting public repetition of error and would be a confirmation of "rank and privileges" which their owners may now regard themselves as holding by a pernicious tenure. Corporate bodies cannot neglect their legal duties without causing a good deal of trouble to others as well as themselves.

The Adelaide University,

To the Editor,

Sir—The condition of the ground around this university is that of daily remark and sarcasm. Cannot something be done to raise the level of the ground from their lethargic sleep? It seems nothing less than an insult to the donors of this splendid and useful institution to allow it to remain as it is. Eight of the one hundred pounds would probably be a good way towards paying the cost of laying them out, and the balance as the ground of the Exhibition adjoining it. Animation awakened "the powers" to erect a beautiful frame; activity may have the same good effect in improving the grounds enclosed by it.

I am, Sir, &c.,

R. T. H.

Kent Town, December 29, 1882.