

whither we are drifting? And also, is it not a proper thing for us even now to stand still for one moment and ask the question what is our object in rearing children at all? Certainly to be solid, cheerful, healthy men and women. I think this is the answer everybody would give except a bookworm or a misanthrope. But can we rear them under such a pressure of exams. and secure this object at the same time? I dispute it. No fact is more apparent than this, that there are as many differences between families as there are between breeds of horses; some are cart horses while some are for the racing course. The racehorse needs a deal of physical training, and it is our racing breed of boys and girls that go in for these exams. But if I say to my boys, "Lads, go in for your football and cricket," I feel I do so at the peril of their failure in their exams. If exams. are to be won, then, boys, bid adieu to your field exercise. This is what our University is leading us to. And yet is there a parent with a grain of common sense in his constitution who would not rather see his sons start life's struggle with sound health than a brain weighted with cram knowledge resting on a broken down body? It is useless for men of genius such as Adelaide presents us with in so many scientific and literary walks in life to tell me that this need not be so. I affirm distinctly that if anything like certainty is to be secured in passing our present University exams., then the boy or girl must give their days, and their nights too, to books and study. Does anybody seriously consider the results of the course we are pursuing in piling on the pressure in this way? Some one may tell me it is not needful to send your boys and girls to such exams. I reply, that against my better judgment I am obliged to do so. I may be told that Adelaide University must follow her neighbours. I would be satisfied if she did, but I am impressed with the conviction that we have in our University the most conservative institution in the British Empire. Why it should be so I know not. Her senior public exams. are said to be in lieu of a matriculation exam., but I hear on all sides—and my own view accords with what I hear—that they are far and away much more difficult than the defined matriculation exams. of any University anywhere. This leads me to say, why should the University not have her own matriculation exam? If she had then we could compare the standard she sets up for herself better than we can do now, and as the senior public exams. have a severity all their own they could then give all the additional honours they thereby possess to the successful candidates. It seems a hard thing all round. The boys are worried, their physical development must take a back seat, they must pass a harder ordeal, and yet the issue is only a beggarly matriculation exam.; and after all, too, how the whole thing stands in the way of the University itself! How many boys are obliged to pass on to something else than a University career, because the mathematical paper, or the German paper, or the English literature paper, has been set at a standard far above that of the ordinary matriculation exam. It seems as if our pride had run away with our judgment; feeling that we are very small we must puff ourselves up by showing an exalted standard. Is there no one to consider these matters?—I am, Sir, &c., PATER.

Register 5/12/90

UNIVERSITY NOVERCAL EXAMS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I have only yesterday returned to Adelaide, and had an opportunity of seeing the papers set at the so-called matric. exam. held recently at the University. I have also seen a letter signed "Pater" in your paper, and although I do not purpose following his example of writing anonymously, yet I cannot refrain from entering my strongest protest against the system, now for at least three years becoming aggravated, of making the matric. exam. a competitive trial of strength between the leading schools of the colony. The preponderating influence of the Inspector-General of Schools in giving undue weight to subjects suitable for the High School for Girls has long been a serious mischief to the University by substituting a little learning in the ologies for the sounder branches of education. The compulsory introduction of large quantities of English poetry to be committed to memory, accompanied by long papers on Parliamentary procedure by the learned Clerk of Parliaments, are highly creditable to that gentleman's erudition; but they are "mair curious than edifying," and have been the cause why not a few students have been debarred from joining those University schools in which alone they could gain admission to their professions. But the most serious indictment lies in the mathematical papers set by Professor Bragg and Mr. Chapman, who, I hope, will pardon the necessity which obliges

me to mention names. The former gentleman I have had the honour of knowing since his arrival in the colony, and for his great ability and attainments I have the highest respect; but I fear that very ability itself is the cause why he does not fully appreciate the difficulty to schoolboys of his papers. Mr. Chapman I have not the pleasure of knowing, but should say from the style of his papers he is a very learned scholar, but has the good fortune to be a very young man. I would only ask any disinterested mathematical scholar who is not so learned to have lost his common sense to compare the paper set by Mr. Chapman at the last exam. with the matriculation paper of any existing University. I will go further and ask him to compare it with the papers set at the Cambridge [Previous to men of two years' University standing, and I think he would prefer the latter to Mr. Chapman's. I believe these papers are submitted to the Board of Examiners prior to being set. Whether this particular one was I know not; but I do not hesitate to say that there is not one individual amongst the Professors of the University, all men of high University degrees, who could pass the Adelaide University matric. in classics, mathematics, and English without a good hard bout of work beforehand, and yet this is an exam. merely to test if boys are sufficiently well educated to take advantage of University teaching or to join the professional schools. Unfortunately the members of the Council either do not understand, or, like Gallo, do not care for such lowly subjects as students who are not yet admitted within their sacred portals; but it would be well that more consideration should be shown to the outside students, who after all constitute the *raison d'être* of the University. I see by this morning's paper that the Council has, in its wisdom, thought fit to reject the recommendations of the committee of the Senate on the LL.B. regulations, approved and passed by the full Senate, the outcome of eighteen months' labour and consideration of lawyers, members of the University, and which would have placed the Adelaide LL.B. on a par with the other Universities. Surely the almost total collapse of the Law School during the past two years ought to have been a sufficient reason for taking advice on the matter. In conclusion, I would urge on all members of the University the necessity, never more apparent than at present, of returning as members of the Council those gentlemen who are capable of understanding from their former experience and training the requirements of the students and of the public, and who have some knowledge of the subjects and standards they take upon themselves to direct.

I am, Sir, &c.,

F. A. D'ARENBERG.

Register 6/12/90

UNIVERSITY NOVERCAL EXAMINATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I have read Mr. D'Arenburg's letter in reference to the above, and fully endorse his contention that the preponderating influence of the Inspector-General on the University Council and the abstruse character of the mathematical papers is militating seriously against University work. "Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare," "Pope's Poems," "Childe Harold," &c., are doubtless well in their way, but to compel boys to learn them, when the time spent on chemistry, physics, &c., would be so much more valuable to them in their degree course, is a fatal mistake. By all means set "yards of poetry" for the girls to learn—it is a most refining process; but this subject should not be the one compulsory subject failure in which means that the candidate fails in the whole Senior Examination. If a boy choose to take up an alternative subject that will ground him better for a subsequent University course he ought to be permitted to do it. To learn poetry and history is no test of brains, but merely a test of memory, application, and time, and the most intellectual candidates are the ones most liable to be plucked by it.

I am, Sir, &c.,

CHEMISTRY.