

Advertiser 3rd Aug 1903

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"F. N. Linnington," Kensington, writes:—
 "Having read in The Advertiser the reference to discourteous behaviour of a number of gowned University boys at the University ceremony of the Elder statue, and being one of the invited public, I beg to trespass with the following questions:—1. To whom was the disrespect directed? Our Governor, or Sir Samuel Way, or the late Sir Thomas Elder? 2. Why should it be shown? 3. Is it with the approval, permission, or prompting of the tutors or principals of the University, or is it punished? 4. Is the exhibition of such buffoonery cultivated by University training? 5. Is our Commissioner of Police prohibited from keeping, or unable to keep, the peace at such a public gathering? 6. Will it be well to enrol a given number of citizens to ensure order on such occasions? 7. May it be presumed that such conduct is the correct thing for South Australia, and be indulged by persons anxious for an ideal?" "William Wye," Burnside, dealing with the same subject, observes:—"In your interesting account of the unveiling of the Elder statue you noticed the strange, if not disgraceful, behaviour of certain youths distinguished by University cloaks and hats. I could not help wondering whether the same conduct would have been tolerated if ill-clad lads and out-of-works had behaved in the same hilarious way at such a time and in such company. Perhaps there is some mystic element surrounding the square cap and long cloak that form a helmet and shield to those who, I expect, are looking forward to be our choice men to occupy the select positions and draw the highest salaries in the State. You said facial disapprobation was manifested. Would that have been considered sufficient punishment for a lower order of beings?"

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"Hopeful" writes:—"As an eye-witness of the disgraceful conduct of some of the students at the ceremony of unveiling the statue erected to the memory of the late Sir Thomas Elder at the University, I sincerely thank you for drawing public attention to these proceedings, and I trust some definite steps will be taken by those in authority to prevent such disturbances occurring on future occasions. I maintain that this was a public ceremony, and had nothing whatever to do with any rights the students may consider themselves to enjoy. If it had not been for the danger of creating further noise and confusion many of the public present would have demanded their exclusion for riotous behaviour. The insults during the speech of Sir S. J. Way (the Chancellor) and to those taking part in the orchestral selections, were bad enough, but still more disgraceful was the behaviour of some of the students while the Governor was speaking. His Excellency's speech was both manly in tone, marked by culture, and practical. For these reasons alone it should have commanded respect from those who would not like to be called uncultivated. However, if the latest demonstration on their part brings about some action that will ensure better conduct in the future it will be a good thing for future University students."

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EXUBERANT STUDENTS.
 The board of discipline of the Adelaide University will meet to-day to consider the conduct of a section of the students on the occasion of the unveiling of the statue of Sir Thomas Elder last week. The board consists of the Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way), the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Barlow), the dean of the faculty of law (Professor Salmond), the dean of the faculty of medicine (Dr. W. Anstey Giles), the dean of the faculty of arts (Professor Bensly), the dean of the faculty of science (Professor Stirling), and the chairman of the board of musical studies (who in this case is the Vice-Chancellor). The young gentlemen who formed a band, their instruments being penny whistles, have been summoned to appear before the board, with other of the students who are deemed to have misbehaved themselves on the afternoon mentioned.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

APOLOGY TO THE GOVERNOR.

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DISCIPLINE.

The students at the University were in an unusual state of excitement on Monday morning. Some of them had been summoned to meet the board of discipline to explain their conduct at the unveiling of the Elder statue the previous Wednesday afternoon, and there were much doubt and speculation as to what would happen. The primary cause of the excitement was the following notices, dated August 1, which were exhibited by order of the council:—

The students who took part in the procession with tin whistles on Wednesday last, and also those who were at the eastern windows of the University building, are requested to meet the board of discipline in the council room on Monday, August 3, at 12 o'clock.

The council request that one student from each year of the LL.B., M.B., B.A., B.Sc., and Mus. Bac. degree courses respectively, will attend at the University on Monday, August 3, at 12 o'clock, to confer with the board of discipline.

Shortly before 12 o'clock, between 30 and 40 students, comprising those who intended to appear before the board of discipline, in connection with the blowing of tin whistles, emerged from the University, and, with the Vice-Chancellor at their head, marched to Government House for the purpose of apologising to the Governor. It appears that on Saturday they communicated with the Governor's private secretary (Mr. Victor Hood), entirely on their own initiative, and without any approach from the University authorities, and asked whether they could wait upon the Governor. His Excellency consented to receive them, and they then communicated with the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Barlow), and arranged with him to act as their spokesman. Accordingly, the students, who were wearing their gowns, met his Excellency in the reception-room at Government House, at noon, and Dr. Barlow apologised on their behalf for their conduct at the unveiling of the Elder statue, and expressed their regret at what had happened. His Excellency accepted the apology in the spirit in which it was given, and in the course of a long reply tendered the students some good advice.

Immediately the Vice-Chancellor returned from Government House a meeting of the board of discipline was held, and a large number of the students who had taken part in the disturbance at the unveiling ceremony, complied with the request to meet the board. The Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way) presided.

One of the students, speaking for himself and his fellows, expressed regret at what had taken place, and apologised to the Chancellor, the University authorities, and the Elder committee.

The Chancellor, in addressing the students on behalf of the University and the public committee, accepted the apology which had been tendered. He also read the following letter which he had just received from the Governor:—

"Your students have been to see me, and have made a most complete amende honorable, and I feel sure they are genuinely sorry for what occurred, and especially for the rudeness to you, which I told them hurt me a great deal more than anything they could have said to me, and I beg you will forgive them in the same way that I have. When we parted I felt that I had formed a new circle of young friends, and I shall be only too glad at any time to do all in my power to help them to keep up the high standard and good name of their University. I asked the Vice-Chancellor, who at their own request came as their spokesman, to ask the University authorities from me not to let the matter go further, but to discharge it, as I have done, from the record.

The letter was brought down by a foot-constable, who some of the students imagined had been sent to the University to maintain order. They, accordingly, surrounded the bewildered representative of the law, and sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow," and then gave him three cheers.

The conference between the board of discipline and representative students was postponed.

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THE GOVERNOR DEMANDS AN ENCORE.

Miss Ethel Hantke ought to feel a cubit taller after her experiences at the Town Hall on Saturday night. This favourite vocalist took part in the A.N.A. hymnal entertainment, presided over by His Excellency the Governor, and her best effort was Gounod's "Entreat me not to leave Thee." The audience entreated accordingly, and the lady returned, but simply bowed her acknowledgments. Sir George Le Hunte, however, was not satisfied. He left the chair, and disappeared down the gallery steps to that draughty waiting recess which is provided for concert performers. Presently His Excellency reappeared on the platform, triumphantly leading Miss Hantke by the hand, and resumed the chair, while she sang "He shall feed His flock" from "The Messiah." The audience were no less pleased than the singer at the determination of the Governor to secure an encore. Subsequently His Excellency, in replying to a vote of thanks, congratulated the soloists, "particularly that young lady whose exquisite singing much impressed me."

THE STUDENTS' APOLOGY.

On Wednesday last a number of the students in the Adelaide University were, in connection with the unveiling of the Elder Statue, guilty of conduct which would have discredited so many untutored street arabs. They made a public nuisance of themselves. On Monday, these youths apologized to the victims of their larrikinish conduct; and—as one of those victims, His Excellency the Governor, generously suggests—at that point the incident may be fairly considered to have closed. Repentance, however, is of little use without the subsequent production of fruits meet for it; and His Excellency evidently had this thought when he significantly reminded the erring students of the need—if they wish to secure and to hold general respect—of doing all they can to preserve a good name for the University. This hint was more than justified. Some of the guilty and foolish, but now apparently penitent, young fellows have for a long time done much to degrade their Alma Mater in popular estimation. Among them have been several whose utter rudeness, unredeemed by a single intrusion of smartness or of wit, has been simply deplorable; and whose sheer ill-mannered misconduct would, if it had been displayed by newsboys in the street, have probably led to police proceedings, which could not have ended in a graciously received and accepted apology. Now that one substantial proof of returning commonsense has been given by the students, the public will be disposed to withhold judgment from them until after the next Commemoration ceremony shall have been witnessed. That will bethetest. When an engagement of the kind was last held the behaviour of certain of them was so stupid, and so grossly offensive, that some of the insulted visitors may have been forgiven for imagining that they were in the Parkside Asylum instead of in the greatest centre of culture and learning in South Australia—a place at which the students were in a sense the hosts of those who attended the Commemoration, and might naturally have been expected to treat their guests as gentlemen. No wonder that some of those deeply offended guests recalled, as an instance of the reiteration of history, such apposite references as were published a third of a century ago in Wilkie Collins's "Man and Wife," a book that may be read again with peculiar profit at present. However, the next Commemoration is presumably to be—with the aid of tact and forbearance on both sides—in the strongest possible contrast to others which have so discredited the University; and that is the most hopeful and complimentary remark which could be made with reference to the students, whose change of conduct may have come late, but—better late than never. As a body

they are fine, sturdy, well-intentioned youths, full of splendid possibilities. All they need is right direction. If they must have their little joke on Commemoration Day, let it be a gentlemanly little joke with the laugh cordial and pleasant, and fairly bought.