

Req. 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1902.

## UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

### THE CHANCELLOR'S "AT HOME."

The interior of the Elder Hall presented a bright and animated spectacle on Tuesday evening, when the Chancellor of the University, His Excellency Sir Samuel Way, Bart., and Lady Way entertained the students and their friends at an "at home" in connection with the close of the academic year. This was the first gathering of the kind that has been held in Adelaide for several years, and the undergraduates thoroughly appreciated the revival of a pleasant social function. The viceregal party consisted of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Lady Way, Miss Shylie Blue, Dr. Richards, and Capt. Blue, A.D.C. Among those who accepted invitations to be present were the Minister for Defence (Rp. Sir John Forrest), the professors and other members of the University teaching staff, and a large number of graduates who have won distinction in their respective professions. The guests were received on their arrival by the Chancellor and Lady Way. After the reception a short musical programme was carried out in a manner which elicited unmistakable tokens of approval from the audience. At 9.30 the hall was cleared for dancing, which was kept up until 11 o'clock. Refreshments were provided in the basement of the building. The following are the names of those who took part in the musical programme:—Violin solo, "Legende," Mr. Eugene Alderman; song, "The sailor's grave," Mr. Maurice Chenoweth; song, "Song of thanksgiving," Miss Jarvis; pianoforte solo, "Waltz in A flat," Miss Maud Puddy; song, "Waiting," Miss Bruggemann; violin solo, (a) "Le cygne," (b) "Saltarello," Mr. Eugene Alderman; song, "When," Miss Ada Thomas; song, "Stars of the summer night," Mr. Maurice Chenoweth; song, "Goodby," Miss Bruggemann.

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### A MARRED CEREMONY.

Fun is a good thing in its way, and perhaps there is hardly enough of it in the world in these strenuous times, when "a little nonsense now and then" may well be "relished by the wisest men;" but between innocent amusement and clownish foolery a wide gulf is fixed. What should have been an imposing ceremony in connection with the University commemoration on Wednesday afternoon was utterly marred and spoiled because certain undergraduates had not realized this fact, and had apparently left their brains at home. Some of them mistook doggerel for poetry, discordant noise for harmony, and silliness for smartness. Doubtless much of their misconduct must be excused on the ground of exuberance of spirits, but it is necessary that they should be told—as a guide possibly for future action—that, however genuine may have been their desire to entertain the large audience which assembled in the Elder Hall, they simply succeeded in boring and otherwise annoying the people. They made what ought to have been a pleasant and profitable gathering a mere headache-creating pandemonium such as might be produced by a lot of larrikins in the streets late at night. One of the traditions of recognised principal seats of learning is that those connected with them should be rational gentlemen; and it may not be inopportune to suggest to some of the young men who took part in the rowdy proceedings yesterday that the Home for Weak-minded Children has no room for further inmates at present. Such stupid demonstrations as have discredited the annual celebrations of the University might be expected at an institution like Minda, but they seem to the casual observer to be curiously inappropriate in the highest halls of culture in South Australia. One cannot, however, resist the conclusion that there is not so very much difference between the monkey on the stick which amuses the half-witted child and the Guy-Fawkes-like effigy which dangled on the rope in the Elder Hall yesterday, and appeared to many of the undergraduates to represent the highest possibility of ingenuity and cleverness. Such young gentlemen are capable of better things.

Mischief, like evil, is usually wrought more from want of thought than for any other reason. The youths who act so foolishly at University commemorations probably believe that they are remarkably funny, but a calm review of their proceedings ought to induce them to ponder the question whether what they are doing is, in colonial parlance, "good enough." Are they not belittling their own order by insulting the Chancellor and his guests with their senseless at-calls, infantile pranks, and often impertinent and rarely witty ejaculations? University

students, of all men, are expected to place before them exalted ideals, and always to respect and show respect to their Alma Mater. Why should the accomplishment of a young man's or a young woman's ambitions in the academic sphere be marked by the running of a gauntlet inexpressibly trying to people of a sensitive nature? If a cricketer makes a big score, or knocks down a large number of wickets, he is greeted with frantic screams of laudation, followed generally by the presentation of a gold medal, or—what is still more appreciated—a purse of sovereigns! Is it wise from the standpoint of the undergraduates themselves to celebrate the formal recognition of their fellows' educational successes by sneers, yells, and more or less rude or personal and always noisy comments? Manifestly a radical change should be made in future in the arrangements for the commemoration days at the University, and the authorities must face the situation boldly. The thoughtless misbehaviour of the undergraduates has caused the engagement to become a sorry farce and an ordeal to every one connected with it. Under happier conditions the lapse of each year would be marked by an address from the head of the University, delivered with the purpose of showing the advance made in connection with this most important institution, and that statement ought to rank high among the annual contributions to literature. At present, however, the public know practically nothing of what the University is

doing—not because the Chancellor is not perfectly willing to take the people into his confidence; but for the simple reason that, if he attempted to speak, his voice would be drowned in the distracting confusion raised by a number of youths the best way to treat whom would be to whip them soundly and send them supperless to bed.

"Commemoration" day should furnish some of the most substantial delights afforded throughout the year to those taught at the University and to the teachers; but instead of that it is seized upon for the display of larrikinish conduct which—however it may be lacking in actual vice—would, if it were shown in the streets, lead to the stern intervention of the guardians of the peace. The public hope is that as soon as the undergraduates shall realize that their actions are regarded by all sensible people with contempt and deprecation, and that they are lowering the status of the University, they will preserve a decorum which will distinguish them as truly as the lack of it has recently disgraced them. If, however, this hint should not be taken, it is quite conceivable that the suggestion which has been made more than once—to the effect that a staff of police be told off on Commemoration days to compel the undergraduates to curb their riotousness—may be carried into practice. Another alternative would be to exclude the roysterers from the room while the other guests are present, just as unruly children are precluded from sitting at the dinner table among more sedate company. First let their reason be appealed to; but the University Council will be expected to guard the public against the repetition of such wretchedly unworthy and intolerable scenes as were witnessed at the commemoration on Wednesday.

### UNIVERSITY AMENITIES.

The graduates of the University of Adelaide met on unaccustomed ground last evening, after having completed the year's labours with a crowded commemoration and degree list of unusual length. Their purpose was chiefly—as one of their professors put it—to pat each other on the back, and thoroughly they carried it out. It is a British custom of long standing to celebrate any important occasion by a dinner, and in this case, quite apart from the interesting speeches, the function may be said to have a special value. Ten or twelve years ago Oxford and Cambridge men in and about Adelaide had a dinner of their own, and a surprising number were found eligible to take part. But that event was more in the nature of a reuniting of old ties, and the linking together for once of men who had a common bond that lay in the past. The great English Universities are living, even active bodies, but their influence is felt in this country only, as it were, at second hand. The Adelaide University is the centre about which all higher education in South Australia must be grouped. What it has done is altogether less significant than what it is doing and may be expected to accomplish, and the men last evening assembled are in the main those on whom the immediate future has to depend. It is well to bring the diverse elements which make up the whole body into closer personal relationship. The social element is, in the opinion of many, the one thing lacking in the newer Universities. A youth leaves his suburban home every day to attend classes, and that is called going to school. He does the same thing later on to attend classes rather more advanced, in another institution, and then he is described as an undergraduate. The distinction is inadequate, and the boyish behaviour of the undergraduates on various public occasions indicates that something is lacking. The value of "residence" during term time, as made an essential feature of the course in the older seats of learning, lies in giving a young man, at the most impressionable period of his life, an influence which is quite outside that of his home life, though running parallel with it. He learns the control of money and of servants, the management of a rudimentary domestic establishment. Beyond and above all this, he is surrounded by buildings of great age and great beauty, by traditions that teach reverence and make for a certain high standard of character. However careless a youth may be, and however resolved on enjoyment of the passing hour, he can hardly pass through three whole years amid such surroundings without being the better for them. The Universities of Australia are almost entirely destitute of anything that makes for a mutuality of existence. Is it fanciful to see in this the cause of the want of sympathy that obviously prevails between the governing body and the governed? An occasional dinner is in itself a small matter, but it may be important as tending in some small degree to develop the social side of an institution in other respects fully equipped.