

The Register
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want of judgment in sending up pupils who were hopelessly unprepared. Most of the instructors, however, have only too much reason to know that nervousness, rather than lack of preparation, may cause some of their best pupils to fail. For the Preliminary Examination the candidates are nearly all quite young boys and girls, who are readily bewildered or puzzled by the stating of a question in an unusual way. The correspondent who the other day took exception to one of the examples in arithmetic was certainly wrong in saying that it admitted of a multiplicity of answers; but yet we are bound to admit that, apart from the ingenious theories put forward by some of his critics, the mistake into which he fell himself must have been quite excusable in the cases of some of the young scholars, considering the needlessly involved mode which was adopted of presenting the problem. There are always much better and more direct ways of testing the general intelligence of a lot of candidates than the device of an inverted or involved mode of stating the questions.

Unfortunately the project for rendering the University, with its new funds from the Elder Bequest, more serviceable to the general body of teachers throughout the colony has recently remained very much in abeyance. The late Mr. Hartley had this scheme very much at heart, and it is gratifying to note that the public subscription for a memorial to him, together with the special additions made to it by the University itself, has resulted in the founding of three Hartley Studentships, so that one may be competed for each year, as this assistance may possibly carry a student right through his course in Arts or in Science. Of course, the most unsatisfactory portion of the report is that which has reference to the Medical School. To those students of comparatively limited means who have formed the conclusion that it is impossible to complete their studies it must appear a piece of the most refined irony to find in the University Handbook for the year the "Rules for the admission of medical students to the practice of the Adelaide Hospital." In justice to the compilers it should be mentioned, however, that these rules are distinctly alluded to as being "published for convenience of reference," and their inclusion in the Calendar carries with it no responsibility in regard to what may be done in the Hospital. The annual exodus to Sydney and Melbourne of undergraduates at the end of their third year indicates a state of things which is a real disgrace to South Australia. There is now no question of lack of funds. The University is able and willing to carry through its part of the implied bargain made when students were invited to begin their courses. The breach of faith morally committed in suddenly blasting the career of an aspirant for a degree because he happens to be too poor to go to another city in order to finish his studies is enough to cause pain and shame to every wellwisher of the colony. The present Calendar gives evidence of progress in many directions. The volume is now a large one of 500 pages, well edited, and well got up. Nothing would give us greater pleasure in connection with the University than to find before the present year closes that the wretched Hospital dispute has been settled, sufficiently at least to admit of satisfactory clinical instruction being imparted to medical students.

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The Elder Conservatorium will reopen to-day with quite a large roll of new students. Yesterday the teaching staff were kept busy examining and advising students who were seeking admission. The appointment of Mr. T. H. Jones, Mus. Bac., to conduct the theory classes has given general satisfaction, and those who remember Mr. Jones's successful career at the University classes expect excellent results from this appointment.

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RETURN OF PROFESSOR BRAGG.

Professor Bragg, of the University of Adelaide, was a passenger by the R.M.S. Victoria, which arrived from London late on Sunday night. He was absent from Adelaide for over twelve months, having visited England and the Continent with his family, partly on matters of business, and partly on a holiday trip. Speaking to a representative of "The Register," the Professor said he had been trying to learn something of what was being done in his own department of work in England. He found the people at home very kind, and ready to afford him every assistance in their power. "I had," he said, "one whole day with Sir William Crookes, and Sir William Huggins, of spectroscopic fame, also gave me a day." When he left Adelaide Professor Bragg received a commission from the Government to enquire into educational matters in England, and a portion of his time was devoted to this object. The subjects upon which he sought information chiefly were the training of teachers, and higher primary education. The result of his enquiries will be drawn up in a report, which will be submitted to the Government. The Professor attended the Teachers' Guild meeting, and also the meeting of the British Association. Some time was spent at the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge. Among the people he met was Professor Rennie, who was busily engaged in visiting metallurgical and chemical works. The Professor and Mrs. Bragg enjoyed an enjoyable holiday in Scotland and in Italy, and had the good fortune to accompany the Kitchener Expedition as far as the first cataract on the Nile.

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MR. R. BARR SMITH.

One of the most useful and patriotic colonists that South Australia ever possessed is Mr. R. Barr Smith, whose portrait we publish above, and who, in company with Mrs. Barr Smith, is about to leave the colony on an extended holiday trip. Although the name of Mr. Barr Smith, like that of his late illustrious brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Elder, has long been a household word, very little has been written about the esteemed owner of Torrens Park. Nothing is more distasteful to him than to hear his own praises sounded, and while his extreme sensitiveness on this point is, no doubt, in one sense an admirable trait in his character the public through it are at a disadvantage in that owing to lack of information they can hardly estimate such a splendid citizen at his true worth. Mr. Barr Smith does good by stealth, and blushes to find it fame. With Mrs. Smith it is just the same, and so, to paraphrase Byron, it might truly be said of both—

To those who know them well these words are weak,
To those who know them not, what language can they speak?

Many of the poor people in the Mount Barker and Mitcham districts will feel that a good angel has gone out of their lives when Mrs. Smith takes her departure. But we must abstain from telling all that might be told for fear of causing annoyance to two princely benefactors.

Mr. Barr Smith is well known to South Australians as a member of the late firm of Elder, Smith, & Co. prior to its incorporation into a Company. He is the son of an eminent divine, the Rev. Dr. Smith, of the Free Church of Scotland, and was born at Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire, Scotland, in 1824. Mr. Smith came to the colony in 1854 to take the place of the late Mr. George Elder in the firm of Elder & Co., which in 1856 changed its name to Messrs. Elder, Stirling, & Co., owing to the Hon. Edward Stirling and Mr. John Taylor having been admitted as partners. In 1863 Mr. John Taylor retired, and the firm became known as Elder, Smith, & Co. Mr. Barr Smith has for many years been largely connected with pastoral and mining as well as with commercial pursuits. Every one at all acquainted with our North knows what the firm has done to open up and settle the country. It was they who late in the sixties and early in the seventies showed the other lessees the value of fencing and turning the sheep drift, as against the costly practice of shepherding. The firm of Elder, Smith, & Co. became responsible for £80,000, in the first place for the purpose of keeping the Wallaroo and Moonta Mines going, and it is due to the firm's liberality and strong confidence in the future prospects of the copper country that the mines bear such an important part in the prosperity of South Australia. The deficiency of the Wallaroo and Moonta Mines at one time was something like £100,000, which was ultimately largely repaid; yet during some years the earnings of the Wallaroo Mine were divided amongst the workmen, the proprietors reserving no income whatever from them. In a lesser degree, perhaps, the same rule applies to the Moonta Mine, which originally belonged to the late Sir W. W. Hughes, Sir T. Elder, Mr. Barr Smith, Mr. J. Taylor, and Mr. E. Stirling. The colony can never forget its indebtedness to the firm for the immense benefit derived from the Wallaroo and Moonta Mines, and, young as they are, commercial men are raised, there is an enormous population drawn to the country, and the country maintained there.

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Mr. Smith is a great patron of hunting and the turf, and his colours used to be seen regularly at the principal race meetings in this colony, and in Victoria. Mostyn, who he imported, won the Goodwood Handicap in 1894 and 1895, and the City Handicap in 1896. Indeed, this year the stable won the double. Destiny, entered in the name of Mr. Tom Barr Smith, carrying the well-known tartan colours to victory in the Birthday Cup in front of the ill-starred Lord Grenville. If every one went in for racing as does Mr. Barr Smith for the pure love of the sport, there would be no need for any crusades against the evils of the turf, because if every one was actuated by the same spirit, there would be no evil. Although he has never offered himself for a seat in Parliament or even in any municipal body, Mr. Barr Smith has always taken a keen interest in public affairs, and has been a member of several public Boards. He is a polished and effective speaker, and although the occasions upon which he has addressed large audiences have been rare, his remarks have always been weighty and to the point. Those who heard him speak at the banquet held in November, 1872, to commemorate the opening of the Overland Telegraph line, and again at meetings in connection with the reconstruction of the Banks a few years ago can endorse the truth of this.

About 25 years ago Mr. Barr Smith bought the estate of the late Sir W. W. Hughes at Mitcham, known as Torrens Park, one of the finest properties in South Australia. He also has a residence at Mount Barker, where he and his family spend the summer months. The University has benefited as a result of Mr. Smith's generous nature. In April, 1892, he handed to the Council a cheque for £1,000 to enable the authorities to increase the library. This was done in a careful and judicious manner, the committee purchasing the best editions procurable of the highest works in literature and classics, and had them stamped "The Barr Smith Library." In politics Mr. Smith is a genuine Liberal, and he has ever rendered generous assistance in promoting higher education and the intellectual advancement of the community. He has rendered great service to the National Art Gallery by the loan of pictures, and in other ways, and to his liberality is mainly due the establishment of a meteorological observatory on Mount Kosciusko, a mountain which he eloquently described in "The Register" after he had ascended it some

years ago. Mr. Smith has not only borne an important part in building up the very extensive business of Elder, Smith, & Co., which some years ago was converted into a limited-liability Company, but has given valuable service to several large financial institutions, in the capacity of Director. He is with good reason regarded as one of the soundest and best authorities upon finance and mercantile matters in South Australia. His splendid gift to the colony in 1895 of a steam-tug-boat, at a cost of £3,500, is but one of many benefactions which have made the public his debtor. Mr. Smith married a sister of the late Sir Thomas Elder, his partner in business, and has living three sons—Messrs. G. T. and H. Barr Smith—and four daughters—Mrs. G. Hawker, Mrs. T. O'H. Giles, Mrs. E. Braund, and Mrs. Professor Mitchell. There is no more liberal-minded or deservedly popular man in the colony than Mr. Barr Smith, and every one will wish him and Mrs. Smith bon voyage and the happiest of happy holidays.

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THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM SCHOLARSHIPS.

The University authorities inform us that the names of the four successful candidates for the Elder Conservatorium Scholarships for piano, violin, singing, and composition will not be announced until next Monday, as the examination is not quite completed. It is said, however, that the three Examiners, Professor Ives, Mr. H. Kugelberg, and Mr. T. H. Jones, Mus. Bac., have already made their selections in the three practical subjects, and that only the theoretical scholarship remains to be decided. It is expected that this will be finished on Monday morning, when the whole of the results will be made public.