

Advertiser  
10th Dec. 1898.

Register  
10th December 1898.

THE UNIVERSITY COMMEMORATION.

A queer mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous is the ceremony connected with the annual conferment of degrees at the Adelaide University. The authorities in all the splendor of academic costume supply the former, the students with jest and song provide the rest. On Friday the latter were very noisy, and the Chancellor expressed sorrow that the Rev. F. J. Jervis-Smith would have such a bad account of the proceedings to take back to Oxford. That gentleman, upon whom was conferred an ad eundem degree, was highly eulogised by the Chancellor. His Excellency explained that it was in acknowledgment of the courtesies which had been shown by the University of Oxford to the colony of South Australia and to the University of Adelaide, and in recognition of his distinction in the domain of science, that the council invited Mr. Jervis-Smith to accept the degree. He trusted that for many years that gentleman might be a living bond between the University of Oxford and the University of Adelaide. Among those admitted ad eundem gradem were also the Premier and Mr. Glynn. Mr. Kingston was arrayed in a brilliant scarlet robe, and when he ascended the platform the students sang—

He happened to be there, he happened to be there, in Oxford town he got the gown, which brings to him this great renown, He's LL.D., to-day, we do declare, Just because, because, because he happened to be there.

The Chancellor, "by virtue of the authority" he possessed, formally admitted Mr. Kingston, and presented him with a parchment as a record of the fact. Mr. Glynn, whose costume was much more subdued than that of his political opponent, was received with two verses, sung to the air of Father O'Flynn, the second being—

Now we venture to give you our word, Never the like of his speeches was heard; He's verses for ladies, and songs for the babes, Till yawns for the gentlemen—Patrick McGlynn. All the degrees having been conferred, Professor Salmond delivered an address on "Intellectual interests," and although it was an interesting contribution, the effect of its delivery was somewhat interfered with by the interruptions of the students, who responded to the question of "What is the chief end of man?" with painfully realistic imitations of what one hears at the Zoo, and called out "Hot pies" when Aristotle was quoted, and beat the big drum violently at a reference to the "heresy of the lotus eaters," and moaned piteously at the mere mention of Greek philosophy—all of which annoyed their Chancellor, who seemed rather relieved when he had finally uttered—"Dissolvimus hanc convocationem."

The Register  
10th Dec. 1898.

UNIVERSITY RECIPROACITY.

An interesting feature of the Commemoration Day proceedings of the Adelaide University on Friday was an acknowledgment by the Chancellor of the courtesies which both the colony and our Alma Mater have received at the hands of the University of Oxford. When admitting the Rev. Frederick John Jervis-Smith ad eundem to the degree of M.A. the Chancellor, Right Hon. S. J. Way, said, inter alia:—"We have seized upon the opportunity afforded by your presence in Adelaide to reciprocate in your person the courtesies which the University of Oxford has shown both to the colony of South Australia and to the University of Adelaide. The celebrations last year in honour of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee were marked by signal demonstrations of the affection of the mother country for her distant dependents. Amongst the most striking of these demonstrations was the conferring of honorary degrees by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge on the Premiers who visited England as the guests of the Queen and representatives of Her Colonial Empire. In the distribution of these distinctions it fell to the lot of our own Premier, the Right Hon. C. C. Kingston, to receive the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford. But there was an earlier courtesy on the part of that venerable University which more directly and more closely concerned ourselves. It was the great compliment which the University of Oxford paid this University in 1864 by conferring the honorary degree upon your Chancellor, Mr. Jervis-Smith. In grateful acknowledgment of these courtesies, as well as on account of your own academic status, the Council of this University invited you to do us the honour of accepting the degree which I have just conferred."

ADELAIDE: SATURDAY, DEC. 10, 1898.

COMMEMORATION DAY.

The absence of the medical faculty from the degree-list of the Adelaide University is noticeable this year. In law and in science respectively were five candidate bachelors, and arts and music had two; but the only medical students of the University whose names figured in the lists had finished their studies at Melbourne, and were obliged to take their degrees ad eundem. Five new solicitors do not represent the total annual additions to the Bar of South Australia under the existing regulations, or under those which the Senate of the University passed the other day, for the taking of a degree is only one of several ways in which the right to practise law may be gained. On the whole there does not seem to be any need for law reform of that particular kind which aims mainly at increasing the number of uneducated lawyers let loose upon confiding clients. Imagine the medical law reform which should augment the ranks of doctors by adding quacks to them!

The Premier, who was admitted ad eundem to his honorary Oxford degree of D.C.L., may in future be able as a member of the University to look at such matters as these from the academical as well as from the outside standpoint. When admitting the distinguished Oxford scientist, the Rev. F. J. Jervis-Smith, to an ad eundem degree the Chancellor expressed high appreciation of the courtesy shown by Oxford to South Australia in conferring upon its Premier an honorary distinction. Later, however, he thought it necessary to apologize to the same visitor on account of the boisterous and at times idiotic behaviour of some of the students at the rear of the hall. The undergraduates evidently considered that they were entitled to expend their surplus energies in noisy inanities at a subsequent stage because they had exercised such remarkable self-control in refraining from any demonstration on account of the contrast between the treatment of "the medical exiles" and the man who did so much to drive them into exile. Even to have thus treated that man would have been a poor and vulgar revenge, and it was obviously far from being in accordance with the fitness of things that the delivery of Professor Salmond's admirable address should have been so greatly marred and interrupted by their cat-calls. That time was indeed ill-chosen for jesting.

On the vexed question of the admission of women to degrees the final decision at Oxford and Cambridge is now trembling in the balance, and it is unfortunate that any visitor from one of these ancient seats of learning should have gathered by personal observation evidence to indicate that undergraduates' manners are not much improved on account of the presence of students of the gentler sex. Not long ago the undergraduates of Cambridge in particular gave a remarkably unseemly exhibition of their distaste for the preferences expressed in "The Princess" by Walter, who—

Swore he longed at college—only longed;  
All else was well—for she society.

In the University of Adelaide one of the most popular of this year's achievements is the completion of her Mus. Bac. degree by Mrs. Kelly, whose exercise in composition has been approved by the examiners in England. Last year, when Miss Campbell won a similar honour, it was pointed out that—although the Adelaide University was the first in Australia to offer music degrees to women—the distinction of being the pioneer Australian lady Mus. Bac. had been gained by a Melbourne student. There is, however, a very important distinction between the degrees given in Melbourne and Adelaide respectively, as the Melbourne candidates are not required to write any composition similar to those demanded of students of music here. The final test in creative musical ability is indeed by far the stiffest part of the curriculum; and, as the Chancellor remarked on Friday, Mrs. Kelly is only the third successful student among twenty-five who commenced their studies at the University simultaneously.

Readers of Professor Salmond's address will understand the reason for the annoyance expressed by the Chancellor and many other hearers on Friday, on account of its delivery having been so interrupted by mischievous undergraduates. It is in some respects

one of the best addresses yet heard in the University. Its theme can hardly be too often or too strenuously insisted upon in a country like Australia, where, as the Bishop of Tasmania said at Ballarat the other day, speculation and sport combine to introduce an element of feverish unrest into the life of the people, and to brand as unsuccessful any man who is contented with a moderate share of money, even although he may possess many valuable qualities and achieve results which mere money could never buy. Professor Salmond entitled his subject "Intellectual interests," but he spoke chiefly of mental enthusiasms. Perhaps the most notable portion of his address was that in which he referred to those middle-aged men who, after a youth of intellectual activity, become mentally blase and degenerate into hopeless cynicism. London is swarming with such people. They vote it "bad form" for any one to "enthuse" about anything under the sun. They put on the airs of those who have been everywhere, seen everything, and done everything, and have found the world generally dull and a bore. Professor Salmond is inclined to mourn over men who fall into these evil ways after a student life of much promise, and who emulate the example of the man with the muckrake. But, after all, a compensating consideration lies in the fact that life is itself the severest of collegiate examinations. Students know that on the average at least three-fourths of the names on every pass-list are those of persons whom they picturesquely style "pot-hunters." They do not follow truth for its own sake, but simply for the kudos which they may be able to gain in the race for academical distinction. Few are so imbued with the love of truth that they will "scorn delights and live laborious days" in order to compass it; and still fewer not only do this, but possess the rare power to add something to the sum total of human knowledge. Hence any community which desires to bring its most brilliant intellects to the front must make its University the most democratic of all its institutions. From a large area, including poor as well as rich, it may be possible to glean a few of those scarce intellectual plants which are worthy of fostering care in order that they may become the prototypes of a higher order of national intelligence.

Advertiser  
13th Dec. 1898.

THE ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

To the Editor.  
Sir—Now that the constitution and management of the Elder Conservatorium of Music is the subject of considerable discussion, permit me to add a few remarks. I have no hesitation in saying that from my long experience of the principal conservatoria of Europe this so-called Conservatorium of Music should change so famous a title to that of college—a term infinitely more apropos. This soi-disant Conservatoire in no way deserves its title. In the proper meaning of the word a conservatorium is a university where l'art musicale is studied with the certainty that its professors are artistes of the first rank, in whom one can place implicit confidence: who enjoy a great reputation; who have won first prizes of one conservatorium or another. The professors of piano, violin, or violoncello give instruction only upon the instrument which they are appointed to teach, and that appointment is gained only by artistes holding the highest honours on that particular instrument. The assistant professors have likewise obtained the prix d'honneur. A conservatorium properly speaking does not consider economy, but "art"—art regardless of cost, talent sans réplique. In order to be accepted as a student of a conservatorium an examination must be passed. It is either fail or pass. There is no middle course, no royal road. Once a student one is perfectly content to obtain, after two or three years' unremitting study, the second prize. To be eligible to compete for the premier prix, or prix d'honneur, the student must have completed a three years' study. For this "grand prize"—the highest honor of the year—the judges are wholly unconnected with the Conservatorium. They are invited from other conservatoria, or are musicians of genius renowned all over the world. The candidate therefore may rest assured that his personality is unknown and in no wise taken into consideration; that success rests on his merits; that the judges are sans peur et sans reproche. The few remarks above will clearly show to any one acquainted with the management of the Elder Conservatorium and with the qualifications of its professors how little that institution deserves a title which suggests similarity of object with the great European conservatoria. As I have no connection with any musical institution in Adelaide, I ask you for space to insert this for the pure love of my art, and in the fervent hope that something may be done to render this institution world-famed and worthy of the glorious name of "Conservatorium."—I am, &c.,  
JEAN DURAND,  
Premier Prix du Conservatoire de Paris,  
en l'an 1887.