

GREAT DAY FOR THE STUDENTS.

The students of the Adelaide University celebrated the advent of vacation in an exceptionally hearty manner on Wednesday. In the morning they went through the principal streets of the city in perhaps the most weird and comical procession seen in this State. Thousands of people came in to witness the show, and business in warehouses, shops, and offices was practically suspended while the procession passed. In no respect did the undergrads exhibit an objectionable spirit, and practically all Adelaide laughed unreservedly at them. It is likely that the procession will become an annual event. In the afternoon a fashionable audience crowded the Elder Hall, where the University commemoration was held. The students scattered showers of confetti over the people. They were more considerate to the Chancellor than usual, and their musical programme appeared to be thoroughly acceptable.

A UNIVERSITY COMEDY

PUBLIC PROCESSION BY THE STUDENTS.

A SATIRICAL SUCCESS.

For here on this terrestrial ball,  
Nations and markets rise and fall,  
But humour wobbles most of all.

The other day an American professor of theology, convinced that the pranks of University students at commemoration time were the product of a specific mental disease, set out to diagnose the ailment. After considerable investigation into the historical significance of the ceremony he called it "the audacity of a picturesque imagination." The epidemic in its pronounced form did not affect Adelaide until this year. Previously the students have been content to concentrate their theatrical display and poetic resource at the orthodox degree-conferring function, but on Wednesday their originality and grotesque humour took a more striking turn. The commemoration festival is largely an exclusive gathering. The scope for ludicrous display and clever satire is to an extent limited. For the first time, therefore, the young men who wear the black-and-white check hatbands made their appearance as public entertainers. Their debut was an eminently successful farce, as it was intended to be. They endeavoured, so it was said, to astonish the natives. They did so with a vengeance. One might have been excused for exclaiming with the Prince in "The Princess":—

On a sudden, in the midst of men and day,  
And while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,  
I seemed to move among a world of ghosts,  
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.

The strictly orthodox spectator may have viewed the procession with a feeling of quiet protest, but those who were able to enter into the spirit of the movement and of the season saw an excellent reason for this temporary disregard of classical dignity and precise gesture. The whole procession, from the red-costumed, long-eared Mephistopheles ("our patron saint") in the lead to the bewildered, clown-driven donkey at the rear, was a capital caricature of public men, institutions, and events, and the promoters deserve the thanks of the large gathering which thronged the streets for supplying gratis a long list of mirth-provoking diversions. If the proceedings did indicate the audacity of a picturesque imagination, there was, at any rate, the justification of traditional privilege, and the Adelaide undergrads were no more undignified than their brother students in the other States or those in the university cities of the old world.

The procession was certainly a ridiculously heterogeneous affair. It was the combination of a piece of every imaginable procession which has the dash of the farcical about it, with a Tivoli "turn" and a circus performance thrown in. All stages of vehi-

cular construction seemed to be represented. The inartistically decorated conveyances carried some of the most ludicrously attired passengers that the boldest imagination could conceive. Clowns, bespangled and painted like a barber's pole; soldiers, from a resplendent Hussar to a kilted Scotchman, with pink legs on which feathers had been stuck; plantation niggers wearing hats several feet in diameter; mediaeval knights, with pretty noses and powdered hair; nurses, bewigged lawyers, firemen who wore helmets which looked like inverted teapots, arrow-marked criminals, ebony-faced aboriginals, almond-eyed Chinese, straggly bearded Russians, cowboys swinging whips nearly as long as the procession itself, and—well, any other character that may be imagined. The vehicles and horsemen threaded their way through the crowded streets with as much progress as the tramcar-piestall would permit. But that elongated, gaudily painted conveyance, was true to itself every time! The passengers had frequently to alight and push the wheels with protesting grunts, while one of the officials—a white-whiskered individual, who carried a huge can of oil—pathetically lubricated the joints of the horses. It was the smartest and most effective appeal for an electrical system that has ever been made in Adelaide, Hansard speeches and public meetings thrown in.

It would, of course, be impossible to make a detailed reference to the procession, but the leading characteristics may be explained. The Adelaide system of horse traction, which lends itself admirably to caricature, was the subject of an exceedingly clever hit. One of the picturesque piestalls that frequent the city streets in what Scotchmen call the "wee sma' oors" had been engaged. On each side of the vehicle were suspended streamers with these notices in large capitals:—"From Slowtown to Paradise," (No.) fare 3d. Asteclean horses (?) Tram Company, Adelaide. No connection with syllabus (syllabus) of "Varsity." There was a trio of gaudily arrayed officials on the car—one held the reins with nervous gesture, another wielded the whip, and a third spent his time oiling the stiffening joints of the horses. The man and the oilcan had the busiest part of the contract by a big margin. This tram was a characteristic tram as Adelaide cars go—and that is not at motor car speed. The passengers were continually alighting, and putting their padded shoulders to the wheels, but the vehicle was always the obstacle to advance, notwithstanding the placarded assertion, "Where there's a will there's a (Sammy) way." It even stopped a donkey cart. Another capital piece of satire was the hospital scene. On a ramshackle vehicle was an operating table, bearing a male patient, who threw his arms and legs about with the facility of a windmill. The youth was undergoing the excruciating pain of having a leg (wooden) amputated by a butcher's saw, and three prettily costumed nurses, with red and blue faces, white streamers, and sympathetic hands, were holding the patient, who had not been given an anaesthetic, in position. It was certainly a repulsive advertisement for the progress in surgical science as practised at North terrace, and several children screamed at the sight. Under a skull and crossbones this interesting announcement was displayed by the travelling surgeons:—

Well man, sick man,  
Dead man, stiff;  
Cut him up, chop him up,  
What's the diff?  
Humorous, tumorous, blood, and gore,  
Adelaide medicals for ever more.

It was also intimated that sawing was done for the trade, and that families could be supplied at the shortest notice. Then this appropriate question was asked—"Where's the rest of Tommy?" Where? The Metropolitan Fire Brigade and its popular chief were not forgotten. A tired, looking horse with a packet of "Force" tied under its nose was drawing a reel, in which sat two helmeted, brass-buttoned officials, wearing unkempt beards and a look of stolid unconcern. But Nero fiddled while Rome was burning! One of the occupants smoked a stout cigar, and there was a strong suggestion of abdominal rotundity about his physique. Behind the reel came the ladder, but neither conveyance seemed anxious to get to the scene of the conflagration—certainly an unfair satire on the splendid efficiency of our brigade. But even Superintendent Booker enjoyed the joke, and unless he makes a