

Register, Nov 16<sup>th</sup> 1909

The Government Gazette announces the constitution of the Public Library Board for the ensuing year as follows:—Appointed by His Excellency the Governor—The Right Honorable Sir Samuel James Way, Sir Charles Todd, Lawrence Grayson, Edward William Hawker, Richard Sanders Rogers, Thomas Gill, Lionel William Stanton, and Robert Cruickshank. Elected by the Society of Arts—Edward Davies. Elected by the Royal Society—Walter Howchin. Elected by the Adelaide Circulating Library—Claude Lindsay. Elected by the Urban, Suburban, and Country Institutes—Thomas Burgoyne, M.P., Lionel Henry Sholl, Harry Dickson Gell, William John Sowden, and Robert Woolnough. Elected by the University of Adelaide—Professor W. Jethro Brown and Professor George Cockburn Henderson.

Register, Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>

### UNIVERSITY EXPANSION.

A deputation from the Adelaide University submitted to the Premier yesterday a scheme of building development to cost about £11,000, and requested the Government to pay half the outlay. The Chancellor made out a strong case, and Mr. Peake adopted a sympathetic attitude. The University has sought no new public grant for 20 years, although in the last decade the number of students and staff has nearly doubled. The Premier rightly saw that only the highest standard should be maintained at the highest academy; and he pertinently observed that the more aid the Parliament gave to the institution the more control it would demand over its management. Whether it be correct or not, an impression certainly exists that the University has somehow become a little isolated from popular sentiment. This unfortunate result—if the impression be justified—may probably be due in part to the fact that in recent years public interest has not been enlisted so much as it might have been in its aims and methods and achievements. There has been no attempt to fill the vacuum caused by the too-persistent omission—caused originally by the boisterousness of students—of the Commemoration oration, which at least served to link the objects of higher education with popular thought and practical ends. Although this apparently insular policy may be merely a coincidence, it is significant that it synchronizes with a break in what Mr. Peake described relatively to the University as “the era of private munificence.” It is also marked at the present time by signs of impatience among some legislators with the condition of the higher education movement in the State.

Assuming that an independent and undoubted authority were available for the purpose, the Government would be well advised, in co-operation with the University authorities, to obtain a report after careful inspection of the University system in comparison with that of the most useful and modern academies outside Australia. That system might emerge from the ordeal completely vindicated; but in any case the public mind would be reassured, and any defects which might be discovered could be remedied on sound lines. Further Parliamentary control of the University might be a means of shedding new light upon the actual working of the institution; but it could not promote its usefulness in the absence of a clear and definite understanding of what

ought to be its functions, as well as its relations to the community. Simple justice demands the statement that, whatever improvements may be deemed necessary in the immediate future, the University has grown into its present state through a genuine endeavour to meet conditions as they arose; and any suggested reform must therefore be regarded as an expression in the direction of a fresh adaptation to a completely changed and changing set of circumstances. We are now on the eve of an important development of secondary and technical education co-ordinated for practical and industrial purposes; and that development will seriously affect the existing scheme of University public examinations, which (although they have been conducted with scrupulous care) have never been and never can be entirely free from the reproach attached to “cramming” and from other drawbacks.

Admission to the highest halls of learning ought generally to be based not upon the passing of an arbitrary test, but upon evidence that the work of the secondary school, free from the bias and diversion of external and arbitrary examinations, has been properly done. Higher education should be designed to supply the practical needs of the people, and in this connection it is noteworthy that the University expansion scheme submitted to the Government is thoroughly in harmony with this principle. While the chief end of a University is to promote research and creative work, another object hardly less important is to place its specialized knowledge within the reach of all who can use it beneficially. On the inventive side it should assist the State in the development of its natural resources and manufacturing interests; and as a diffusive agent its illumination ought to be available to every earnest seeker after light, whether graduate or undergraduate, or non-matriculated student. By means of a correspondence department and travelling lecturer American Universities enable persons following occupations in the country to pursue courses of higher education either with or without a view of graduation; and this latest aspect of University extension work deserves consideration in Australia. In granting additional aid to the University the Government is entitled to require increased control over the institution with a view to co-ordinate the educational agencies of the State upon an intelligent basis; and for this purpose it will be necessary for the Ministry first to formulate a complete plan of reorganization so as to guide all its representatives. Merely multiplying managers of this or that branch of educational activity will serve no useful end, unless they are instructed how to build together and harmonize their efforts according to a well-considered and settled design.

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### UNIVERSITY EXTENSIONS.

#### REQUEST FOR GRANT.

On Monday morning a deputation from the University of Adelaide waited upon the Minister of Education (Hon. A. H. Peake) to ask for a Government grant toward the erection of a number of new buildings. The Chancellor (Sir Sampel Way) said the University had not asked the Government for anything for 20 years. The students had increased from 1899 to 1908 from 581 to 1,041, and the teaching staff from 24 to 40. The University undertook the education of candidates for the teaching staff of the State schools free. Those fees alone would have amounted to £10,000. The University wanted a building above the physical laboratory to provide for additions to the library, and additional space for the medical library, which was to be handed over to the University by the Public Library Board. It also required a law lecture room and law library and professor's room. Then it was proposed to make additions to the Prince of Wales buildings for the purpose of a geological and mineralogical school, lecture rooms, laboratory, and microscopic storeroom, which would cost about £3,000; a separate building for a botanic school, with equipments, £1,500; and caretaker's quarters, cost £1,000. The total cost of the additions would be £11,000, of which the deputation asked the Government to pay half. Unless it were granted the work could not be carried out. The question of the Government subsidy had been discussed when the endowed lands had been handed over to the University, but the University's claim to it had never been withdrawn. The present Prince of Wales building, and others put up 10 years ago had cost £35,000, on which the Government's subsidy of pound for pound would have meant £17,000. The endowed land had been charged £5,000 land tax. The University paid the Government £2,879 when the endowed lands were taken over, and while the lands were assessed for taxation purposes at £50,000 the sum paid was £40,000, so the University lost £10,000. When the South Australian scholarship was discontinued the Government transferred £800 a year to the University to enable the full medical curriculum to be carried out, but subsequently cancelled the arrangement, and the loss to the University came to £10,000. The University did not claim the pound for pound subsidy on the Prince of Wales buildings, but would accept Government bonds for the amount. The Melbourne University, with more than double the number of students at the Adelaide University, had a State endowment of £21,000 a year, as against £7,000 for the Adelaide University. In addition, the Melbourne University had been granted £37,000 for specific objects in the last four years, while between 1883 and 1902 £75,554 had been granted for buildings and appliances. That made £100,000 in the last 20 years, during which period the Adelaide University had not received an additional sixpence. The Sydney University, the McGill at Montreal, and the Leland-Stanford in California had all been liberally treated by the Governments. He considered he had made out a case of urgent necessity, for the work could not be carried on without the assistance that was asked.

Professor Stirling remarked that the same standard of teaching was expected and given at the Adelaide University as at the universities of the other States, yet the professorial salaries were only half those of the Melbourne University. The laboratories at the Adelaide University were too few in number and not sufficiently equipped. The University ought to be the ultimate Court of Appeal in regard to the problems which arose in connection with the industries of the State.

The Minister, in reply, said the progress of the University indicated the progress of the State. Only the highest standard should be maintained at the University. He hoped the era of private munificence had not passed. The deputation had made out a good case. The University must not be blocked for want of funds. If private munificence would not come forward, then the Government must. He would give the subject his consideration, and refer it to Cabinet, and he hoped the outcome would be favourable to the deputation. He knew the mind of Parliament, and realized that the more it gave the more control it would demand.