



MR. C. R. HODGE.

UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR.

WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MECHANIC.

THE WORK OF MR. C. R. HODGE.

"The Mail" man sat at the feet of Gamaliel yesterday; not the Gamaliel of sacred history, nor one prepared to abandon modesty and ally himself with the sage of Old Jewry, but still a Gamaliel in the sense that after all said and done the greatness of an educational institution rests not wholly on tradition but on the human force which throbs behind it.

academic learning counts for most of all. In the long roll of education standard bearers included among the last, the professors and lecturers stand out—a coterie of genius whose imagination and knowledge mirror the days right back to the Oldest World, and lay bare the history of the universe since Time began.

in every man, and universities to-day may well gauge their good fortune as much on the man who controls the educational machine as on the brilliance of their teachers. Under this category comes Mr. Charles R. Hodge, the Registrar of the University of Adelaide. True it is there is an able board which outlines the basis of administration, but the administration itself is in the hands of Mr. Hodge, and the council is quite content to leave it there.

"The Mail" has no special predilection for interviewing the sons of the manse but it happens that Mr. Hodge is also a descendant of the broadcloth brigade. He had no thoughts of being a parson, however. His first attempt at battling it out with the world was as a mechanic, but early interest in inventiveness did not carry itself into actual practice. Next he tried drapery,

and after considerable commercial experience secured a position in the University. Not long afterwards his ability carried him to the Registrarship, a position all concerned will be more than pleased to see him occupy for many a year to come.

Mr. Hodge was born at Geelong on September 20, 1857, and at 55 is therefore in the prime of vigorous manhood. His father is a Congregational minister, now on the retired list after 50 years' service. Mr. Hodge is one of a large family, and was brought over to South Australia when quite a boy. He received the principal part of his education at a private school conducted by the late Rev. John Hotham at Port Elliot, and remembered Mr. David Lindsay being there at the same time.

"What attracted you then?" "I took up commercial pursuits, and was at one time in charge of a small department in one of Adelaide's large draper establishments."

"That could not have appealed to you for long?" "No, it did not."

"Didn't you ever have a desire to follow in your father's footsteps?"

"Never at any time. One of my brothers, however, did so, and is now in Napier, New Zealand."

"How did you first become acquainted with the University?"

"At the time they were trying to popularise it by the professors giving public lectures in the old institute room. I was an occasional attendant, and in 1884 the late Rev. Robey Fletcher, a great personal friend of my father, persuaded me to apply for the position of assistant to Mr. Tyas, then Registrar of the University. The University was established by Act of Parliament in 1874, its work commenced in 1876, and in 1884 I first joined the staff. I was then 28. One great satisfaction I have is to know that my father was one of the first contributors to the public fund inaugurated with the object of establishing the University. At the time I commenced my duties with Mr. Tyas the whole of the University staff, including professors, assistants, registrar, clerk, and caretaker, numbered

ten. As a matter of fact, the registrar and his clerk were the only members of the administrative staff. Now the staff consists of 11 professors, 30 lecturers, and 12 teachers in the Conservatorium, a total of 53. Besides those, our administrative staff now includes the registrar, assistant registrar, librarian, in addition to clerks and typists. Including the cadets in the laboratories and caretakers, the University staff all told is about 70."

"How did you secure the appointment of registrar?"

"Mr. Tyas had a very severe illness, and the council showed their confidence by appointing me as acting registrar. That was in 1891. On Mr. Tyas's resignation I naturally applied for the position, and always look back with gratitude that, independent of the testimonials given me by the then professors and lecturers, the staff all signed a letter to the council in favour of my appointment. There have been only three registrars of the University: Dr. Barlow held the position from its inception in 1874 until 1882. Mr. Tyas from 1882 to the end of January, 1892, and I was appointed by the council on February 1 of the same year. I have, therefore, been 21 years in the major position."

"Your work is strenuous?" "Yes; but it has its compensations in the fact that it is work of absorbing interest."

"The degree of the Adelaide University is almost a passport to learning all over the world?"

"Yes; the degrees of this University are recognised as academic distinctions and rewards of merit, and are entitled to rank, precedence, and consideration as fully as if they had been granted by any university of the United Kingdom. The Adelaide University is well known everywhere, and our students have always upheld the prestige of their Alma Mater. During my holiday trip in 1911 I visited the University of Rome, which, however, was in vacation, but I met one professor