

The Register
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HEADS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

The University of Adelaide has accepted a new principle in appointing as Vice-Chancellor a member of the teaching staff. For years, in the early history of the institution, no "paid servant of the University" was able to obtain the vote of the Senate—practically the whole body of graduates—for a seat on the council—the administrative body. A council, however, composed entirely of men who had no inside knowledge of the working of the institution was found to be handicapped in the discussion and regulation of current affairs, and four or five professors have long lent their practical experience to the collective wisdom of the council. The further step of making one of them Vice-Chancellor has now been taken, and an important precedent is established. A salaried official is second in command of the University! In these progressive days, precedents have not, perhaps, the old value. For the past 20 years the Vice-Chancellors have been lawyers; but in earlier times they were more apt to be ministers of religion—just as the Chancellorship was at one period held by the Bishop of Adelaide, although it now long has been, and doubtless long will be, connected with the office of Chief Justice.

The death of Sir Samuel Way and Dr. Barlow within a year has removed two venerable figures from the chief seats of the University. The late Chief Justice had so great a passion for work that he tried to do more than one man can fairly undertake. His successor in the most important two offices shows no sign of a wish to divide his energies into a multitude of channels. Chief Justice Murray, himself a graduate of the University, should be an almost ideal Chancellor. To him is now joined, as second in command, Professor Mitchell, who combines with deep learning a sound business faculty. Very marked is the compliment paid to him by his fellow-members; for the council is compelled by statute to appoint one of its own members Vice-Chancellor, although the range of choice for the Chancellorship is unlimited. Other members are far senior to him in point of service; he is not even the senior professor. His qualifications, however, must command respect in any company; and the University is now presided over by two comparatively young, strong, and capable men, in place of the more venerable figures of yesterday. The change is symbolical of the University itself, which tends to become less and less a repository of dry and ancient learning, and more and more a centre of knowledge to which the whole community may turn for the newest and best information in any department of life.

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CRAMPING THE UNIVERSITY.

AN OUTSPOKEN CHANCELLOR.

INSTITUTION MUST REMAIN IN ADELAIDE.

At Parliament House on Monday morning the Chief Justice (Mr. G. J. R. Murray), as Chancellor of the University, pointed out some of the disadvantages under which the Adelaide University is being conducted, and outlined a number of improvements which would remove present difficulties. He gave evidence before the North Terrace Institutions Commission, whose members are Mr. Smeaton, M.P., the Hon. J. Carr and J. A. Cooke, M.L.C.'s, and Messrs. Laffer, Green, Gunn, and O'Connor, M.P.'s. The Chairman intimated that correspondence on the subject of the enlargement of University property had passed between the Government and the council of that institution as long ago as 1912. It was pointed out then that a definite scheme of extension should be laid down, and that whereas Sydney had 125 acres of land, Adelaide had only 4.7 acres.

—Question of Removal.—

The Chancellor thought the need for extension as set out in the correspondence of 1912 applied equally or with even more force to the present day. The University, however, would be satisfied with less than 125 acres for immediate use. The area of 11½ acres asked for was certainly necessary, but would meet needs for only a short period.

The Chairman—Do you think we should simply ask for the land we need for immediate use?—The Chancellor admitted that a university was a thing which grew, but it need not necessarily be located in one spot. Different laboratories and departments might be situated in different places. At Oxford and Cambridge the university buildings were placed in various parts of the towns, and so long as the buildings were conveniently situated in relation to each other that condition of affairs was satisfactory. On the other hand, the principal buildings at Edinburgh, Leeds, Glasgow, and Owens College, Manchester, were under one roof in each instance. There were in those cases, however, no large areas for expansion.

The Chairman—That is the result of their having been founded centuries ago.

The Chancellor—Yes. The commission opened up the question of whether the University should be removed from its present site. His own opinion was that it was not only impracticable, but most undesirable. Something like £85,000 had been spent on the building, and he thought as much more accommodation as there was in the building at present was needed. It would cost something like £200,000 to compensate the University for the standing buildings, and provide new structures. He could not call to mind a site large enough and sufficiently convenient to answer University needs near the city which would also prove beneficial to the community. The University possessed no residential property at the present time, and for that reason it should be centrally situated. If it were decided that the University should be moved, residents of Magill could not be expected to travel backward and forward to a college situated, perhaps, at Glen Osmond. They would waste so much valuable time day by day, and it would be most inconvenient in regard to evening classes. Parents would not allow children to travel long distances at night, and would lose confidence in the institution. Consequently the usefulness of the University would be very much impaired. In addition to that, students who came from Gawler, Hamley Bridge, and other places situated a considerable distance out of the city, would not be prepared to add another hour and a half to their travelling time in reaching the University. He thought to shift the University, so long as it remained a non-residential institution, would be a mistake. It was necessary to its effectiveness that it should remain in a central position.

—Residential Colleges.—

The Chairman—That raises the question of a residential college.

The Chancellor said that they were highly valuable institutions, which brought the students into closer association with one another and with their teachers outside of school hours. It would not be necessary for such a college to be situated in a central position. He did not favour the idea of turning the North Terrace University into a residential college. There were over 1,000 students there at present, of whom about 500 were taking courses for degrees. It was desirable that as many as those as possible should reside in the residential college, but to provide each student with a bedroom and with studies would involve a large mass of buildings and tremendous expense. It was better to have residential colleges scattered in different localities, but in doing that it should be remembered that lecturers were busy men who could not at

ford to be travelling around the suburbs, and that medical students could not be expected to journey continually to lectures outside the city, and back again to clinical studies at the hospital. He did not favour denominational colleges. The different denominations did not pull together very well, and there was generally feeling between the members of the different colleges.

—Now is the Time.—

The present was the most opportune time for decision in the matter of allotting the University additional land. If that was not done, and the property was given to other institutions, it would mean the splitting up of various branches of the University when it had to be enlarged in years to come. If the land desired was not given to the University a most undesirable state of affairs would also be brought about in other directions. The University was an institution which should be encouraged in every way so that the State would be proud of it, and there was no reason why it should not in years to come attract students from all over Australia. Consequently the authorities should not be content to erect trumpery or unsatisfactory promises when making the additions which were so necessary, even at the present time. He knew of no other situation which offered such an advantageous site as North terrace.

The Chairman—Supposing we were in a position to offer Government House, with its 12 acres, for a new University, and kept the old buildings for other purposes, would that meet the needs of the institution?—The Chancellor—For the next 50 or 100 years.

In attempting to meet the needs of perhaps centuries ahead, you think more room would be necessary?—If we were in a position to offer Government House and the sites of the Police Barracks, the Destitute Asylum, and the present University accommodation, would that be sufficient?—That would be fine, and would meet the demands of all time, probably. It would also serve to provide room for the residential colleges which are bound to come in the future.

—Disgraceful Lack of Accommodation.—

Continuing, the Chancellor said if the growth of the University were checked at a time like the present it would never recover itself. It had extensive needs at the present time. The members of the commission must have been struck with the lack of accommodation at the institution if they had visited it. It was disgraceful in some directions. The accommodation for the professors was very unsatisfactory. They were poked away in little dens wherever a place could be found for them. The Library was growing, and more room would be needed in that direction. More lecture rooms were also needed. Frequently the lecturers were unable to fit their lectures in on account of the lack of rooms for that purpose. A large hall for extension lectures and examinations was a necessity. At present Elder Hall had to be taken for the examinations. A refectory would also be a welcome addition, in which the students met daily for lunch. The administrative work of the University was done in three small rooms, although the staff dealt with something like £20,000 a year. The retiring rooms of the students were hidden away in dungeonlike quarters, with flagged floors that were anything but a credit to the institution.

The Registrar of the University (Mr. C. R. Hodge) also gave evidence.

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THE UNIVERSITY.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL APPOINTED VICE-CHANCELLOR.

Much satisfaction will be felt concerning the appointment on Monday of Professor William Mitchell, M.A., D.Sc., as Vice-Chancellor of the Adelaide University in succession to his Honor the Chief Justice (the Hon. G. J. R. Murray), who was appointed Chancellor on the death of the late Sir Samuel Way, Bart. Professor Mitchell has been Hughes Professor of Philosophy and Economics since 1894, and a member of the University Council since 1896. He is a distinguished scholar and an accomplished teacher. Students who have passed through his hands are enthusiastic on the subject of the wonderful skill with which he carries out his professional duties, and concerning his never-failing courtesy and kindness. Professor Mitchell's influence on the progress of the University is everywhere recognised. He has helped the students not only in his own classes, but in other faculties in very many ways, and he has maintained his interest in them in after life. He has been invariably and untiringly enthusiastic in his practical friendship for the University, its graduates, and its undergraduates, and he is deservedly held in high honor by the council, the students, and the general community.

Professor Mitchell was born at Inveravon, in Banffshire, Scotland, in 1861, and received his preliminary education at Elgin, whence he proceeded to the Edinburgh University, where he had a highly distinguished career. During the ten years he remained at the institution he studied arts, divinity, and medicine. He took the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Science. In 1886 he was appointed lecturer in ethics at Edinburgh University. Afterwards he went to the University College, London, as lecturer on education, and he took a great interest in the Day training colleges, which have done so much to raise the educational standard of the teachers in English primary schools. Professor Mitchell was one of the examiners for degrees in philosophy for the University of Edinburgh, and on the theory of education for the University of Cambridge. He has written important articles on philosophical subjects for leading British and American reviews. Professor Mitchell is a typical example of broad-minded culture, and his appointment as Vice-Chancellor confers distinction on the University of Adelaide.