

Argus (hull) 29.4.19

Argus 30.4.19
UNIVERSITY WANTS.
STRENGTHENING THE STAFF.

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.

From "L.J.F."—I am just a plain business man, but as I have "kiddie" I am interested in the director business. When my firm wants a good man for a certain position, which means the rise or fall of the business, it just reaches out and beckons to the best man on the market, and offers him its price. There might be some real good men and old friends already in the firm, but that doesn't stand in the way of getting a better man if there is one to be obtained. Sentiment never stands in the way of good business. I am a taxpayer, and I have the right to ask that the Government give us a good business deal; they owe it to us, and they owe it to the "kiddie." I am sorry the headmasters have laid themselves open to such a lot of criticism. They ought to be able to take a broad impersonal view, and I think they have shown they cannot.

From "A CHALKY"—There seems at present "much ado" about the selection of a new Director of Education. Why have one at all? Have the Directors been such a success in the past? Why invest, or rather "invest" one poor mortal with such a host of cares and responsibilities? Each Director, of late years, has begun by making herculean struggles to perform conscientiously all the many onerous duties that came crowding upon him. The consequence—Mental torture and physical suicide; nothing less. To look at the situation from another standpoint, why should one man have so much power over the members of such a noble profession? He may be a saint—he may not. Who is infallible? And such a case, who could remain so? No; it is so much to expect from any one human. Now be alternative. Why not have a board of directors, like so many other States and countries, nominated and chosen by local school committees—representative of the people. As for the cry of "new blood," why, certainly; but where is so urgently needed amongst our inspectors? I should say send out applications for two, three or even four new inspectors, not only throughout the Commonwealth, but also in the United Kingdom and America. Presently, I should say, get men who have graduated from Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, men who have had much and varied experience; men who have travelled and seen the working of the newest and latest educational schemes and systems; men who are not too old nor too hurried to have lost much of the glorious fire, energy, and enthusiasm of youth and health combined. Let us never lose sight of that grand old maxim, "mens sana in corpore sano."

Argus 5.5.19

Among the passengers to Adelaide by the Melbourne express on Saturday was Sir Douglas Mawson, formerly leader of an Antarctic Expedition. For the past three and a half years Sir Douglas has been engaged in war work for the British Ministry of Munitions. His duties rendered necessary frequent visits to France, Italy, and the United States, and before Russia went out of the war he was in close touch with Russian officers. He also represented the Ministry for War in Great Britain in connection with high explosives. Sir Douglas, who is looking well, arrived alone, as Lady Mawson and the members of their family are to remain in Melbourne for some time. He stated that Great Britain did enormous work during the war in the supply of munitions, and huge factories were erected to produce every conceivable kind of explosive to meet the requirements of almost every front. Many of these large factories were now being turned over for the production of peace-time requirements, such as dyes and commercial chemicals, so that the money expended in the erection of the costly plants should not be entirely lost. The Government was selling some of the plants to private commercial firms, and a great many were so designed that they could be converted at small cost to peaceful industry. Great Britain, so far as the progress of commercial production was concerned, was in an unique position to secure foreign trade, but, unfortunately, there was a lot of labour unrest at the present moment, which might cripple the country at a critical time. Sir Douglas stated that one of the greatest factors in production was fuel supply, and the United Kingdom was recognising this to the fullest extent. Large sums of money had been made available for research purposes in fuel matters, and in the erection of treating plants with a view to make them more valuable. Considerable time and money had been expended in experimental work in connection with the utilization of peat and also lignite and brown coal, while improved methods were also being employed for the more economic use of black coal. Under the new processes being adopted in connection with the coking of coal, apart from the tar extracted, they were also getting a motor spirit and a fuel oil for naval purposes. It was now proposed to erect large centralised power stations, where coal would be burned under boilers for the production of electricity, and it was already prophesied that all the railroads in the United Kingdom would be run by this power. Fuel oils and other by-products from the coal supplies of Great Britain would be also sufficient to serve all domestic needs within the homeland. The problem of inferior brown coal, Sir Douglas Mawson stated, had been taken up very strenuously, and new methods had been devised, so that carbonaceous substances which had no former commercial values would now be utilized. He was hopeful that these new methods might be employed in the development of the Leigh Creek and Collie deposits. Of course, certain tests would have to be made as to nitric coals and coke residues, and the quantities of oil and spirit contained in these coals would have to be considered. It was a question of treating them from the purely commercial standpoint. In conclusion, Sir Douglas said he was a lecturer on geology at the University of Adelaide, and he expects to return immediately to his duties there.

Advertiser 4.5.19

Captain L. A. Whittington, who returned to Adelaide on Tuesday, was closely associated with Lieutenant J. E. Edwards, M.M., while they were prisoners of war at Clausthal, Germany. He stated that Lieutenant Edwards, who was for several years a member of the literary staff of "The Advertiser," attempted to escape from prison on two occasions, but was unsuccessful, though once he evaded the Germans for several days. Captain Whittington is a member of the legal profession, having been admitted to the bar in South Australia in 1911, and was a prominent lacrosse player, having been a member of the University A grade team.

Daily Herald 1.5.19

Dr. J. C. Verco has been appointed to the vacancy on the council of the University of Adelaide caused by the death of Sir Edward Stirling, C.M.G., M.A., M.D.

Register 3.6.19

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE.

A meeting of the council was held on Friday last. Present—The Chancellor (Sir George Murray), Dr. Verco, Mr. F. Chapple, the Hon. F. S. Wallis, M.L.C., Dr. Rennie, Professor Chapman, Mr. M. Maughan, Mr. S. J. Smith, Professor Perkins, Dr. Helen Mayo, Mr. W. J. Isbister, K.C., Mr. W. R. Bayly, Dr. Foulton, and Dr. Hayward. The council appointed Professor E. H. Rennie Deputy Vice-Chancellor during the absence of Professor Mitchell. It was resolved that Professor Henderson be invited to deliver the annual address at the commemoration to be held in December next. The council appointed the undermentioned members of the Rhodes selection committee for 1919: Mr. J. R. Fowler, Dr. J. C. Verco, Professor Henderson, and Professor Naylor. Mme. Bressan-Saccon was appointed teacher of Italian at the Elder Conservatorium. A letter was received from the commissioners of the exhibition of 1851, inviting the University to nominate a research scholar for 1920.

FRENCH.

"As you know, these rooms are badly ventilated, the students are crowded like sheep in a fold, there is no provision for a fire in winter or for fresh air in summer. If a fire or an alarm of some kind occurred I think that we might witness a catastrophe one of these days. Speaking now on behalf of those who lecture—when a room built for 50 students contains 80 the atmosphere is unbearable, and if one has to lecture a couple of hours or even three hours consecutively, as happens for some of us, the state of the throat is very bad."

HISTORY.

"The theatre is always filled. A few students cannot find room at the desks, and have to sit on the steps and take notes on their knees. In 1914 the class in British history, part I., was so large that not only were all the desks occupied, but tables and chairs had to be arranged on the floor to accommodate the overflow. The outbreak of the war carried off numbers of male students, so that in 1915-16-17-18 the philosophy theatre was just about large enough for the purpose, without, however, leaving any margin. Now, any increase in the number of students—even to the extent of half a dozen—would overcrowd the theatre. The atmosphere in the theatre when it is crowded is very bad indeed. Students complain of headaches, and the father of a student told me recently that his son complained of feeling ill after enduring an hour in that crowded room. I can quite believe that the young man did not exaggerate."

GEOLOGY.

"Requirements as to accommodation in the geology department are simple, and consist of a new geology school. Present conditions are:—One lecture room for four courses in geology and three in metallurgy. One laboratory with 35 places to accommodate 72 students. Parts I., II., III., and fourth year and research students are all in one room. For five years laboratory work in part I. has had to be duplicated. Small museum hopelessly overcrowded. Tons of specimens used in teaching, &c., stored in roof. No room for library. Now housed in passages, laboratory, and two other rooms."

The total increase in staff salaries in these departments amounted to £2,560, making a total for the whole University of £2,590 a year.

While the council was discussing the details of the various reports, the treasurer (Dr. J. P. Wilson) deprecated any further discussion, as it was useless for the council to go on voting these increases when it had not made arrangements to provide the amounts required. The chairman (Sir John Grice) and Sir James Barrett, however, pointed out that these reports were only framed to show the absolute necessities of the University, and that if the council approved of the principles laid down it would be possible to lay the whole matter before the Government. The recommendations of the committees were, in the main, approved, and it was decided to resume the discussion of the whole question at an adjourned meeting of the council this afternoon.

THE UNIVERSITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—In any discussion of University management one frequently hears the sentence, "The University should do this or that," when it would be more to the point to say that the public (or its representative, the Government) should permit the University to take the suggested step. It appears to be forgotten that the University of Melbourne is entirely dependent upon the Government for the money required to move forward. For instance, the University is fully prepared to embark on a comprehensive scheme of University extension (tutorial classes, &c.) as soon as money is made available for that purpose, and is already doing as much as it can with the means put at its disposal. The council has passed a resolution in favour of opening the doors of the University as widely as possible to all deserving students, but the people (through the Government) must provide the requisite scholarships, bursaries, or free places; and they must be prepared to increase the staff, and erect new buildings in order to provide for the additional students. These are two matters, out of many, in which the blame for the present position rests with those who withhold from the University authorities the means for carrying out a policy which is in accordance with the desires of the community.

Even with regard to the routine work of the University, the staff is obviously insufficient, and the class-rooms as inadequate. Teachers are overburdened with huge classes, and students half-stupefied with foul air. The council has repeatedly begged for money for buildings. One wonders whether it would not pay to throw dignity overboard, and adopt the fashionable weapon of to-day—to strike until the Government agrees to provide the necessary funds. The people's representatives might then recognise the almost desperate conditions which are hedging in and crippling the work of the University.

In its struggle to be allowed to do its duty the University requires, and deserves, the assistance of all past students. The first step towards giving such help is to organise. The organisation is in existence. The University Association asks for the immediate assistance of all graduates in its work for the coming year. If that assistance be granted it may be possible to make the year of peace a turning-point in the history of our University.—Yours, &c.,
April 25, M. M. PHILLIPS.

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS.

Teaching Staff Comments.

The council of the University of Melbourne yesterday afternoon had before it the reports of sub-committees appointed to consider the needs of the various departments, in view of the large increase in the number of students. The reports were in two groups, one dealing with the medical school, the other with the rest of the University.

The medical school committee, which included Professor Sir Harry Allen, Sir James Barrett, Mr. G. A. Syme, and Professors Osborne and Berry, reported that the number of medical students for 1914 was 387, while already this year 588 had enrolled, and this number would probably be increased by late entries. The fees payable by these students this year would amount to nearly £14,000, representing an increase of over £5,000 within five years. The result was that the school had outgrown the class-rooms and laboratories. Overcrowding prevailed, notwithstanding duplication of classes. The staffing, always inadequate, had not received any substantial additions comparable with the increase in the classes and in the revenue, and immediate remedy had become necessary.

The committee, in its report, gave details of the overcrowding in its various departments thus:—

ANATOMY.

In the lecture theatre there is seating accommodation for 100 students. On March 19 there were 210 in the theatre. The histology laboratory was designed for 80 students; 120 can be crowded in. There are now 155 second-year students working in this room, apart from the honours students, whom it is desirable should be able to attend. The dissecting-room is fully occupied with 24 tables, now accommodating 280 students. In the second term there will be about 320 students—medical, massage, and dental.

PHYSIOLOGY.

"In bio-chemistry, the laboratory, if crammed, will hold 104 students. The actual class includes 120 medical, 5 science, 1 agriculture, and 4 veterinary, a total of 163, with late entries yet to come. In the practical clinical physiology of the third year, with Dr. Wilkinson, honorary lecturer, in charge, 104 can be taken with difficulty. There are 114 in the class, so that 20 students or more who were rejected in their last examination must be taken separately. In bio-physics the large room will hold 60 students, and the small room 23, a total of 83. Even last year it was necessary to double-bank the class in two divisions. The difficulty this year is greatly intensified."

PATHOLOGY.

"The department of pathology has never had any pretence to an adequate staff. What staff has existed was provided almost entirely by private benefactions. The professor has acted as sole curator of the museum of pathology, including over 20,000 specimens. The Army War collections will arrive shortly. The classes in pathology have decidedly increased, but the accommodation has hitherto been sufficient. There is, however, a certainty of further large increase, and division of the laboratory class may be unavoidable in 1920. Difficulty is experienced in providing post-graduate classes for higher degrees in surgery and in dental science. More adequate provision must be made."

The committee went into elaborate detail as to the requirements which, it was pointed out by Sir James Barrett, were merely to put the University into the position absolutely necessary to enable it to carry on. The summary of the recommendations for the medical school involved an increase in salaries proposed for 1920 of £1,030 above those required for 1919.

The committee, dealing with the University departments other than those of the medical school, consisted of Sir John Grice, Sir James Barrett, Mr. L. A. Adamson, and Mr. Frank Tate. The committee interviewed the various professors, and received the statements of their requirements as to accommodation and staff, and also inspected a number of the departments. On all sides they were met with appeals for further help and complaints of inadequacy of accommodation. The most striking of these reports are:—

CLASSICS.

"Our accommodation will be sufficient for our numbers, but Professor Tocker, who is taking the largest classes at present, has found it necessary, from a hygienic point of view, to transfer his lectures to the Biology School Lecture Theatre. Even the smaller of our two rooms is a most unhealthy room to spend any long time in."

ENGLISH.

"The accommodation at present available is hopelessly inadequate, even to our present needs in the school of English. Our lecture room nominally accommodates about 80 students. Last year we crammed about 100 into it for the part I. lectures. At the end of every lecture the air was very foul, and I had numerous complaints from students. This year it has been impossible to accommodate the part I. class in the lecture room, and we have only been able to hold our classes through the kindness of the medical authorities, who have lent us a theatre. But even this would not serve to accommodate the class which may be expected at year."