The Register.

The Adelaide University.

The more popular character which the University of Adelaide has assumed during the past few years is strikingly exemplified by the new departures taken with regard to the issue of the annual calendar. The demand for information respecting the public and other examinations among intending candidates and teachers has become so great that the University authorities have consulted the general convenience by publishing in pamphlet form the regulations, details of subjects, papers, and class lists of these examinations. The annual report and statement of accounts have also been bound up in the same way, and much of the remaining portions of the calendar will also be issued in detached form. All these several parts will in due course be brought together in a volume of uniform shape and with the volumes of previous years. The separate issue of the pamphlet on the public examinations will be much appreciated, because in the past intending candidates have had to buy the whole calendar in order to learn a few details upon perhaps only one special curriculum. On the subject, it will now be open to each one to secure the same amount of information at very much less cost. This is only one among many indications that the University of Adelaide may fairly be included among the most progressive institutions which South Australia possesses. Lord Brougham compared the knowledge and erudition concentrated at such a centre of learning as a University to the reservoir collected in "those springheads, conduits, cisterns, and pools which the industry of modern man has dug, and framed and made." The great mistake committed in the earlier days of the Adelaide institution was akin to the one sometimes made by ungracious officials in the drier areas of Africa, namely, that of building a costly dam or excavating a tank and forgetting to consider sufficiently the question of whether their water could find its way into it. The outlay building on North Terrace has been very costly, close upon £12,000 from first to last, having been spent upon creating and furnishing it. Time after time while the building was being put up did we protest in vain against the diversion of income which should have been expended in the promotion of sound learning to the purposes of adorning the rooms with most elaborate carvings and fittings. Government and private subscriptions towards the Building Fund amounted to only £8,994, or very little more than one-half of the total sum of £18,696 spent on the structures itself, so that the remaining £9,600 had to be borrowed from the Endowment Funds. In point of fact, in 1862 the four students who commenced their university course had contested something, not to mention the idle, but also the inculpable staff of instructors to teach them what they went to learn. What wonder was it that many who were in search of a thorough University education sought it elsewhere?

A very different state of things now prevails. The outlay building, of course, still exists, and it is still over a small amount to the Endowment Funds; but last year, instead of four, thirty-four graduating students began their studies and to these must be added a large number of others who are not set down as graduating students, but who, nevertheless, entered the classes for the various science and arts courses. In all there were, we learn, under instruction ninety-three graduating and non-grading students, making total of 294. In the medical classes there were fourteen students in the arts classes ten, and in these for music and for music thirteen each. The great majority of the non-grading students were either in the arts or in the science school—the former claiming the while the latter had 119. From these figures it will be seen, reverting to Lord Brougham's simile, that we have at length got our tank fairly well filled with water. The question as regards the future as to whether the supply will be kept up and from present appearances there is good reason to believe not only that this will be the case, but that the whole area will be greatly augmented.

Practically the most probable portion of the educational business carried on at the University is now that which lies outside of ordinary University operations. Thus, to take the most elementary work first, it may be noted that the fees for the preliminary examination lost last year amount to £1,553, while the expenses were only £90. Clearly, in view of this excess, it would be well that the half-quota for this primary test should hereafter be expected to support themselves. The expenses of the law lectures last year came to £1,091, and the fees only came to £970. The medical fees are certainly very high even at present; but the expenses of the Medical School amount to no less than £6,606, while the receipts from fees were £4,170. The fees for evening classes came to £92, and the annual contribution to the same object from the Medical and Government subsidy to £122, or £245 in all; while the expenses are set down as being only £216. Of course it must not be forgotten that the evening students have the advantage of large and comfortable rooms, but it is not surprising to find that even with these aids they are far from self-supporting. In the case of the School of Science the actual total expenses are only £208, while the fees amount to £303. In other words, although there is now no subsidy, the Faculty of Music not only calls the University nothing, but yields a profit to it. There may be room for some reduction of the fees, but there is no need for any retrenchment.