

✓ Advertiser 16/4/94.

### THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY.

#### COMMEMORATION DAY.

Sydney, April 15.

There was a very large and fashionable attendance at the annual University Commemoration on Saturday. The Chancellor (Sir William Manning) in his address said that the proposal of the Government to annihilate all Parliamentary aid whatever beyond the statutory endowment of £5,000 a year, opened up a dark prospect. The University had reached the very acme of success in so young a country, and no wonder alarm was felt that through the retrenchment of the Government a period of desecration was at hand. It was specially gratifying to be able to again report that the women students had maintained an equal pace with the men, both as regarded instruction and honors. The senate had prepared to meet the necessity for retrenchment to the fullest extent consistent with the maintenance of a proper standard. As a result of the Government reductions and the financial depression there was a deficit on the year of £500 after absorbing a surplus from the former year and carrying on the far-reaching retrenchment for 1894. Every possible reduction had been made.

Sir Robert Duff, after referring to the good work done by the University, said in spite of the bad times, and the consequent narrowing of the resources, such an invaluable institution should be tenderly dealt with. To retrench was not always to economise. This young and advancing country could not afford to take a retrograde step in the march of education.

## The Register.

ADELAIDE: TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1894.

### UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL LIFE.

Dr. Bevan's recent delightful lectures at the University will partially fail of their purpose if they do not bring home to the minds of the authorities of the institution a lively sense of the extent to which the influence of our chief seat of learning may be increased as a popular educator. It is questionable whether a person who heard one or both of the eloquent and humorous doctor's addresses did not regret that the University is not more frequently utilized as the means of providing such an intellectual treat for the public. Every friend of education and culture must ardently wish that a system were in force here, bringing the community generally and the University into closer touch. The University extension movement in England and in Victoria and Queensland is taking the collegiate classes and lectures to the people. That is what the original promoters of this most important development of educational work aimed at, and that is what they are accomplishing. In their anxiety to advance the cause they have so much at heart the promoters, as we have recently learned by telegram, have arranged for a Conference in which the Australian Universities are asked to take part. The invitation is one that should be warmly accepted. The need and the advantage of the movement which is to be thus stimulated are apparent. Proportionately the number of persons in any society who can enter upon a University career is necessarily small. Lack of opportunity, through want of either funds

or time, or both, places advanced study beyond the reach of the majority. Such is the case even in this colony, where, after allowing for all blemishes, there exists one of the most perfect systems of education in the world. But should the majority therefore be shut out from all direct participation in the benefits resulting from the existence of a University among them? Must it be assumed that they have no desire to follow out those courses of study which are pursued in such a hall of knowledge? Assuredly not. Among them are many who within the limits of their scanty leisure would show, if the chance were given them, that their appreciation of the highest type of teaching is no less keen than that of students who daily sit at the feet of our local Gamseliels. Why not then, so to speak, popularize the University?

University extension could not, of course, be effected here on the big and complex scale on which it is being promoted in the old country. When our population has grown denser—when up and down the land flourishing towns begin almost to jostle one another in the process of expansion—we shall have good cause for closely copying the English plan, if we do not develop an improved scheme in the meantime. Even in Victoria it is the primary idea which originated in England rather than the complete and more recent system that has been introduced. The truth is that the principle must be accommodated to circumstances, and fortunately it is capable of the most Protean adaptation. Here it might take the form merely of brief courses of lectures by thoroughly competent men given under the auspices of the University. Whether the addresses should be delivered within the precincts of the University or not is a matter of little consequence; whether those who attend them should be given the opportunity to write papers on those dissertations for examination and correction by the lecturers is a point that can be settled later on. We are not unmindful of what is already being done. Take for example the series of lectures on "Moliere," given in connection with the University, which have proved very valuable. We are in fact fully conscious of the immense value

of educational effort of this stamp, and wish it every possible success. Nevertheless we would at this moment specially urge the claims of instruction appealing less to the demands of a class. For after all the proportion of persons who can follow Moliere's comedies with ease sufficient to give zest to the task is not large. What we should like to see established in association with the University is a system of lectures for attendance at which a nominal charge would be made lectures of a character likely to be useful to the multitude in forming judgments on the great questions of the day. We have already urged in connection with Dr. Bevan's lectures that the University should remain true to its main ideal of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. That all the labourers in the limitless and exhaustless field of truth should seek only for the fragments of wisdom that can be easily and quickly converted into hard cash forms no part of our convictions. With the world generally holding such a creed all the poetry would speedily pass out of life, inspiring thought would be unknown, ennobling ideals would disappear, existence itself would become cheerless, ugly, and