

Adventskalender 19th December 1882

while in the second there were four out of nine, and in the third eight out of 37. In Latin the Prince Alfred boys are in the proportion of 14 out of 27; in mathematics 18 out of 34, in chemistry 13 out of 14, and in botany 17 out of 19. (Loud applause.) I may remark here that great credit is due to your headmaster, Mr. Chapple, who I know has so much the cause of physical science at heart. (Applause.) I would also like to state that the advanced school for girls seems to have come out most uncommonly well in these examinations, and you boys may depend upon it as you go on that you will have to look out that the girls don't beat you. (Laughter and applause.) To pass for a moment from the mental to the physical, I am glad to see that you are holding your own at football and cricket, and I am glad to know that this afternoon you are going to have some boat-races; and I congratulate you, as I have done before, on having so fine a sheet of water on which to row as the Torrens lake. (Applause.) I think I have now referred to the principal matters connected with Prince Alfred College since the time I have been here. I do most heartily wish the college success, as I wish success also to all institutions of a similar kind, as I do to the cause of education, and especially to the cause of higher education in this colony. May it go on as it has done from the beginning up to the present time—and I think I may say specially during the last five years—and may the college increase in numbers and quality until we have higher education spread throughout the length and breadth of the land. (Loud applause.)

Mr. F. CHAPPLE, B.A., B.Sc. (headmaster of the college), read his report as follows:—

May it please your Excellency—I have great pleasure in reporting that the year now ending has been in many respects the most prosperous in the history of the college. The attendance has been the highest yet reached, the average number present for the four terms being 360, or fifty more than last year. And I am thankful to say that the health of this large number has been excellent. This is partly to be attributed, under Providence, to the spacious and commodious premises in which we are quartered, to the care that is given to sanitary arrangements, and to the regulations as to contagious complaints made some few years ago in the general interest. The new wing of the college building has been completed during the year. We entered at mid-winter into occupation of it. This gave us nine additional classrooms, it enabled us to take classes out of rooms where they had temporarily been taught, and left the vacated rooms available for other purposes. We have now for the boarders every comfort and convenience, library or reading-room, common-room, studies for senior boys, and small bedrooms away from the dormitories for the little boys. We can expand in this branch of the school when necessary, and take several more boarders when they apply for admission. The results at the public examinations conducted by the Adelaide University are exceedingly gratifying to us; we hold a position on the lists of which any school might be proud. The details of our boys' successes are given on page 2 of the programmes that have been distributed throughout the hall. In March last the South Australian Scholarship, which is of the value of £200 per annum for four years, was gained by S. E. Holder, B.A., of the Adelaide University, and we recall with a good deal of satisfaction that on each of the three times that this, the most valuable prize placed at the disposal of the Adelaide University, has been awarded, it has fallen to the lot of one who has gone to the University from Prince Alfred College. In the same month, at the examination for the University Scholarships, which are of the value of £50 per annum for three years, and are offered to those wishing to enter upon a University course, J. W. Leitch, then Dux of our school, was amongst the successful trio, and at the matriculation examination in the same month Meyricks, Chewings, and Melrose secured the only first-classes that were given to boys, while Davies, the only other candidate that we sent up, obtained a second-class. Our position upon the lists just issued scarcely needs pointing out. The matriculation list appeared in the daily papers this morning. Prince Alfred College boys are shown by it to have taken two first-classes; six, that is, all the places, in the second class, and four in the third; that is twelve passes, while all other schools put together have only eleven. In the junior examination the first five places in the whole list are ours; in all, our boys gained six first-classes, four seconds, and eight thirds. The special or optional subjects in which our boys excelled were mathematics, natural science, and Latin. And here let me mention Mr. Churchward, B.A., as having largely contributed to the mathematical success, and Mr. Wainwright,

B.Sc., as having carefully and painstakingly taught the botany class. From Mr. Hunter, B.A. the senior Latin and Greek classes have received able and scholarly teaching, and the results must afford these gentlemen, as well as the boys, sincere and well-merited pleasure. There has been a good deal of criticism in the public press lately on the scheme for these examinations and on the conduct of them, and it may not be inappropriate for me to say that with one view strongly advocated by some public writers I cannot agree. It is said that the present regulations for these examinations—in particular the regulation which allows boys when they have passed the junior examination in elementary history, geography, grammar, and arithmetic, reading, writing, and spelling, to omit these subjects at matriculation—encourages cram, crude and hurried preparation. It appears to me to be admirably adapted to do the very opposite, and to promote genuine mastering of the studies—sound and honest work. A student does not understand the lower work less clearly because he has risen higher, but better; nor does he forget it, or cease to use his attainments because he will no longer be put to the test in them. A school where the teaching is kept to the minimum requirements of examiners must be a very unhappy place to be in. No teacher, of broad culture himself, would be likely to narrow down to examination lines. It is assumed as an axiom by many that classes are confined to the curriculum in which they will be examined; but my experience and observation gives this an unhesitating contradiction. Higher work has always been done in the schools here. For the first time this year it receives credit and secures marks in the examinations. Schools value very highly the verdict in their favor given by a public examining body, but after all a school-master worthy of his office cares infinitely more to do good work than to be told he has done it, and his boys readily catch his spirit. He does not wish them to work at a subject, after high-pressure preparation be examined in it, and then throw it on one side. He makes the new truths cohere with the old—grow out of the former knowledge. He is not a trader to put all his goods in the window, clear them out, and then fill up again. He is a cultivator; he must foster the natural development of mind and heart; the fruit must be grown not hung on. If any school-master acted as it is unhesitatingly assumed he does, he might bring up to examination point a few of those most wretched and useless of beings “educated stupids;” but his worthlessness would soon be exposed and utter failure overtake him. As to the conduct of these examinations I may be allowed to point out in our case how singularly the University’s estimate of our candidates’ attainments coincides with their positions at school. On a comparison of the school roll on the wall yonder, or of the prize-list of the fifth form on page 4 of the programme, with the University list of those who have passed the junior examination there will be seen to be close practical accord between the two, and yet they are entirely independent results. The order in which the boys have been arranged with us—determined by marks obtained for daily work, for weekly and final examinations—not only on the subjects taken cognisance of by the University, but in others, is substantially the same as that, in which the University board of examiners placed them for these examinations. This agreement gives us, on the one hand, additional confidence in our own methods of determining school rank, and speaks to us very plainly of the care and thoroughness with which the University examinations are conducted. The lower forms generally have done well during the year, especially during the last half, when the additional accommodation made work easier. The conduct and general tone have been highly creditable to boys and master. There have been important and valuable additions to our staff during the year, and I must tender my sincere thanks to all for the enthusiastic manner in which they have thrown themselves into the work of the school. This is no formal and conventional utterance, it is heartily meant. In sports the boys have been highly successful. The first eleven have only lost one cricket match—that was against the old scholars; and at football they have never had to lower their colors either. Rowing has this year been added to the list of athletic exercises—thanks to the public spirit and practical sagacity of the mayor (Mr. E. T. Smith) and the Adelaide Corporation in forming the Torrens Lake—and our boys have had many a health-giving pull on that fine sheet of water. They look with a good deal of interest upon the race to be rowed this afternoon, and of course the crew are hopeful of victory. I am not afraid of the over-development of bone and muscle, as some are. The strain of modern competition in life demands the sound body not less than the sound mind. It is still true that idleness and the lack of occupation of leisure hours is the mother of all evil. Manly sports and hearty outdoor exercise are still important factors in producing a vigorous full-orbed manhood.