

Law will probably double or treble the usefulness of the University, and the only subject for regret is that similar attention cannot in the meantime be paid to medicine. It is a reproach to the colony that as yet the leading subjects of professional study cannot be learnt in the Adelaide University. That there are professional men in practice who would be quite willing, more for credit's sake than for mere emolument, to accept positions in the University may be taken for granted, and with the expenditure of six or seven hundred pounds a year the legal classes will probably be as efficiently taught as they would be with double that sum. No time should be lost in giving effect to a scheme whereby the University will be of service in the preparation of legal students for efficiently entering upon the duties of their profession. The course proposed by the Council is no doubt susceptible of improvement in some respects, but the aim is unexceptionable, and it is to be hoped that no merely carping objection will be offered to it.

From the advertiser
18th October 1882

Miscellaneous, £3,829. — Mr. TOMKINSON strongly objected to the vote of £2,814 as a grant to the University Council towards the erection of a new building. — Mr. PLAYFORD also asked for an explanation of the item. He had heard it stated that the University obtained a supplement to the rents received by them from their lands. — Mr. REES thought the University obtained more recognition than it deserved. The last matriculation examinations were a disgrace to the colony, and why? Simply because the University shamefully neglected the encouragement of technical science in the colony. It was surprising for one to learn that a law school was to be established in preference to a curriculum of technical science. In a utilitarian community like South Australia technical science ought to have great prominence, instead of so much attention being paid to classics and mathematics, and in consequence of the neglect of the practical arts our artisans were suffering. The greatest insult offered to the people of the colony was the ring formed at the University to glorify two individuals. The University were laying altogether too much stress on law, of which we had altogether too much in South Australia already. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He hoped the need of giving further encouragement to technical education would not be lost sight of. — The CHIEF SECRETARY explained that the sum of £33,627 had been spent on the building by the University authorities. Parliament had agreed to provide one-half of the amount spent, and towards that sum £14,000 had been voted. The sum of £2,814 on the present estimates was the balance of the half they had agreed to pay. In reply to Mr. Playford, he said that the rents from University lands were not supplemented. — The Hon. R. D. ROSS expressed regret at the speech of Mr. Rees. He certainly did not think it in good taste. — Mr. REES had heard that argument used when he discussed this matter on a previous occasion. He would reply by simply repeating

Advertiser 15 Oct

his statement that if the University paid more attention to the utilitarian interests of the colony than they did to the impractical the better it would be for South Australia.—The Hon. R. D. ROSS had not been arguing as to whether there was a need of greater technical education in the colony. That he knew was one of the hobbies of the hon. member. What he did object to was Mr. Rees's allusion to an alleged "ring" at the University; and he thought it was altogether unbecoming for the hon. member to make use of remarks of that kind in the House unless he was prepared to justify them.—Mr. TOMKINSON said as the money appeared to have been already voted, he would withdraw his opposition to the item to which he had objected.—Mr. REES was sorry he should have been called upon to justify conduct which he considered in perfectly good taste. For years past he had held the view that if there was anything wanting in the colony it was technical knowledge for our artisans. Our artisans, he contended, were lamentably deficient in this respect, and he did not blame them, but the University. He had not intended his remarks to have the slightest possible personal reference to Mr. Ross, in whom he recognised one of the most useful members of the University Council.—The Hon. R. D. ROSS was sure the hon. member made no reference to him individually. He could not possibly regard Mr. Rees's remarks as personal to himself, because he belonged to no ring in the University. He had, indeed, no cognisance of any University ring that was bringing discredit on the country. It was to the hon. member's observations on this point that he took exception, and he repeated that he did not think Mr. Rees should speak of a public body in such disparaging terms.—The line was then passed.

Adv
Oct 18

A "breeze" threatened to blow in the Assembly on Thursday evening during the consideration of the Supplementary Estimates. Mr. Rees took the opportunity, when the proposed vote of £2,814 to the University Council towards the erection of the new building was being discussed, to attack in unmeasured terms the neglect by the University of the claims of technical education. The University, he submitted, had failed ignominiously to do its duty in this matter, and he ridiculed the proposal to establish a law school in preference to a curriculum of technical science. Of law, he said, we had already too much in South Australia, but technical education was a thing through the want of which the colony was keenly suffering, although in a utilitarian community it deserved special attention at the hands of the educational authorities. The hon. member added that "the greatest insult offered to the people of this colony was the ring formed at the University to glorify two individuals." Mr. Ross was indignant at the remarks of the hon. member for Onkaparinga, and he did not hesitate to express his conviction that they were characterised by anything but good taste. Mr. Rees retorted that he had heard that "argument" before, and he replied by repeating his statement that it would be a good thing for the colony if more attention were paid by the University to the utilitarian than it devoted to the unpractical. On this the Speaker pointed out that he was not criticising Mr. Rees's remarks with regard to technical education, which was one of that member's hobbies, but had objected to his unbecoming references to the alleged "University" ring, references he ought not to have made unless he was prepared to justify them. An assurance was then given by the hon. member who commenced the discussion that he intended no personal reference to the Speaker, but he adhered to his remarks concerning the neglect of the University in the matter of technical education. The dispute finally came to a close by Mr. Ross observing that he could not have regarded the observations of the hon. member for Onkaparinga, as intended to be personally applied to himself, seeing that he belonged to no "ring" and had no knowledge of the existence of any such; but he regretted that Mr. Rees should have thought fit to make use of such disparaging references as he had done to a deserving public.