

The Advertiser
2^d March 1899.

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THE UNIVERSITY.

The annual Calendar of the University of Adelaide is a very complete work of reference, containing in the five hundred pages to which it now extends almost everything on which the most pertinacious enquirer might demand information. From the list of worthies who have held office at any time since the institution was founded down to the questions in arithmetic propounded to the children who faced the Junior Public Examination last December—all is found within its covers. There is no saying to what magnitude the volume may extend in the future, if the University continues to broaden its scope in the same generous fashion as in the past. From a modest beginning in 1873 there has sprung a powerful and energetic body that each year increases in influence and in utility. The four professorships originally existing have now been doubled in number, and the eight original matriculated students have grown into a body of more than two hundred graduates, while another hundred are at the present moment following in their steps. This body of graduates is augmented, and of course immensely strengthened by an almost equal number of men who have taken degrees at other of the world's universities, and then, making a home in Adelaide, or returning to it after study elsewhere, have sought and obtained admission to a status equivalent to that gained at Oxford or Cambridge, Dublin, London, or Edinburgh. Outside assistance, too, has always been freely tendered and willingly accepted. Disregarding the traditions of more conservative seats of learning in the Old World, South Australia's University has always welcomed upon its Council, or governing body, men who had in the press of the business of life found no time to turn aside for an academic course of study. By these an element of strong common sense and business management, not invariably found in the cloistered seats of learning, has been imported into the matter, with the result that no University anywhere can claim to be better governed, or more soundly administered on financial lines, than that of Adelaide.

About one-third of the annual Calendar is made up of statutes, regulations, and schedules of permanent interest, but the rest is proper to the year 1898 alone, and this will give some idea of the labor annually entailed in preparing the volume. Examination papers of every kind are given in full, and these of course bulk very largely, while it may be suspected that their interest and value to students and school-teachers will account for the comparatively large sum which the sale of these calendars always brings in. A balance-sheet carefully prepared accompanies the Vice-Chancellor's report, and shows that income from all sources amounted in 1898 to over £17,000, expenditure being considerably less. The Government subsidy on endowments was £5,700, and £4,800 was received from interest and rentals, but the highest source of revenue was found in fees received from students, which brought in £6,400. The School of Music is the largest contributor under this head, and is of course on the other hand correspondingly expensive to maintain. Nearly £1,000 was expended during the year upon

the new Conservatorium building, and rather more was repaid to capital account, in spite of which a considerably augmented balance is shown as being in hand for current expenses. A general statement of the financial position makes clear the notable fact that the University possesses actual income-producing securities to the value of £125,000, while, making a reasonable estimate of the value of land, buildings, and equipment, it has under control a total amount of nearly a quarter of a million sterling.

A grand total of 1,741 candidates entered for the public examinations—senior, junior, and preliminary—which were conducted by the Adelaide University during the year in addition to its own more immediate functions. Permanent centres have been formed for the holding of these examinations in Moonta, Port Pirie, Clare, Naracoorte, Mount Gambier, and even Perth; at the first-named two, as well as at Mount Barker, courses of extension lectures were given during the year. The value of this machinery in

extending the spread of culture to non-metropolitan residents can hardly be over-estimated. The reports of examiners who came into contact with the varying efforts of so many ambitious young people offer some delightful reading, although pleasantly free from the too usual desire to make cheap humor out of unhappy lapses of memory. In the preliminary examination only a fraction over half the number of candidates were successful, and teachers are blamed for sending up in many cases those who are hopelessly unprepared. It appears that in English many failed to gain a fifth of the marks possible, and it seems hardly credible that quite forty failed to answer any single question in arithmetic correctly. On the other hand, nearly as many obtained full marks. The juniors—under 16 years of age—have elicited incidentally from the Board of Examiners a most interesting pronouncement on the conditions into which the German language is lapsing among residents in the province with whom it is the mother-tongue, although they habitually speak English as well. The position is as might fairly be expected. Not only is the vocabulary in use extremely limited, and vitiated by the intermixture of hardy English words, but both grammar and idiom are rapidly deteriorating among those who do not attend German schools. It is impressed upon students that, without due attention to grammar, they are quite likely to be "ploughed" in an examination even on their mother-tongue. History and geography showed highly satisfactory results; in English the experiment was tried for the first time of requiring certain standard poems to be committed to memory; in Greek there was one solitary candidate. It may be gathered in general that Australian youth is addicted, even in serious composition, to the use of slang and colloquialisms—clothed occasionally in inverted commas by the more conscientious, as some kind of an apology—and has a "breathless contempt" for such trifles as capital letters and punctuation.

The report of the Vice-Chancellor makes it clear how great is the value of the connection between the University and the School of Mines. An arrangement has been made between the two institutions whereby each can make use of the other's teaching when convenient, an extravagant and unnecessary duplication of subjects being thus avoided. It has even been agreed at length to issue a joint diploma. As already mentioned, there are now 100 undergraduates at the University, but twice as many students more attend various lectures without intending to take a degree. A score of these are law clerks preparing for a certificate that will enable them to practise in the Supreme Court, but the greater number are attending various science lectures, and no fewer than 107 come from the School of Mines. It is interesting to note that there are, in spite of all possible obstacles, as many as 37 undergraduates at present studying in the first three years of the course for a degree in Medicine. But the great feature of the year has been the opening of the Conservatorium of Music, which commenced its operations just twelve months ago, and had enrolled before the end of 1898 three hundred students. The building that is to form its home is being rapidly pushed forward, and is expected to be completed in September next. Scholarships for piano and violin playing have already been awarded, and four others are available this month. The Council and Senate of the University continue with a gratifying consistency to re-elect the same gentlemen to hold their highest offices; and with the Chief Justice as Chancellor, Dr. Barlow Vice-Chancellor, and Mr. Chapple Warden of the Senate, assisted by a strong and well-balanced Council, the University should have every chance of continuing and even extending its influence and its utility.

THE UNIVERSITY YEAR.

A very remarkable contrast is suggested by a perusal of the Adelaide University Calendar which has just been issued from the Press. Twenty-five years ago the University was founded, its first aim being to provide facilities for students taking one course, namely, that for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Year by year alterations in the scope of the work of the institution have been introduced, and, as our readers are aware, the principal of these in recent time has been the establishment of the Elder Conservatorium of Music. The strange fact to which we allude is that during last year only one student entered upon the course for the B.A. degree, while the Conservatorium, in the very first year of its existence, had no less than 300 pupils. Modifying circumstances must to some extent be taken into account. For instance, there is no doubt that some of those who are entered as students for the Higher Public Examinations will ultimately proceed to their degree in the arts course; while in connection with the Conservatorium it is to be remembered that the teachers of the old College of Music took some of their pupils with them. Still, after making all allowances, the contrast between the original object of the institution and the actual direction which affairs have taken is, we repeat, a very striking one. Baldly stated the truth is that the founders tried to build up a University on European lines, but in large measure they have failed, because the people have wanted something different. They, or their successors, have since had the good sense to make provision for those branches of learning for which there exists an undoubted public demand. Soon, however, the question will arise whether the policy of catering for the favourite subjects of study has not been rather overdone. The foundation-stone of the Elder Conservatorium was laid by His Excellency Sir T. Powell Buxton last September, and the Calendar informs us that it is expected that the building will be ready by September next. On the occasion of the ceremonial referred to the Lieutenant-Governor eloquently advocated the admission of music as one of the subjects of collegiate study, and dwelt upon the fact that melody and harmony had not been banished from the programmes of the old European Universities. His Excellency's wishes, it would seem, are to be abundantly realized, for the musical side of the local University gives promise of overshadowing everything else, and of attracting to itself the main portion of the professional work of musical in-

structors, both advanced and elementary, carried on in the city. In support of this statement it may be mentioned that last year the fees collected from musical students amounted to £2,894, or—reckoning the arts and science course as separate—just about three times as much as the revenue thus derived from any other department of study.

While only one person, as already mentioned, began the regularly established course for the degree of Bachelor of Arts last year the lectures were attended by thirty-three "non-graduating" students, and taking the arts and science classes together, there were as many as seventy who aimed at passing the Higher Public Examinations. Twelve commenced the regular course for the Bachelor of Science degree, and it is now becoming more and more evident, especially in view of the mining diplomas which can by recent regulations be awarded, that the sciences will be much more attended to in the future than the "litterae humaniores." The Public Examinations continue to control, to a larger degree, the secondary education imparted in South Australia. Last year, in reviewing the contents of the Calendar, we mentioned that these had attracted no fewer than 1,420 candidates. The long procession of the rising generation desirous of passing these tests still, however, becomes each year numerically stronger, and in 1898 as many as 1,741 presented themselves. Teachers should note with special care the reports appended by the examiners to their lists of results. In reference to the last Preliminary Examination it is stated that the proportion of successes was too small, there being only 306 out of the 560 entries, and that the excessive number of failures showed a certain