

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE DEMOCRACY.

OBLIGATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP.

In proposing the toast of the "University" at the Arts Association dinner at the Cafe Rubeo on Saturday evening, the Attorney-General (Hon. H. Homburg) made reference to the fact that whereas for centuries it was patricians to the fore, to-day it was plebeians to the fore. They were told that the world was ruled, not by men of talent, but by men of character, and living as they did in an age and in a country of democracy, where, to use a common phrase, "one man was just as good as another" (An interjector—"And sometimes better"), and where the highest posts in the Government and in the service of the country were held by men who had sprung from the ranks, it was well that the University continued more and more to open wide its doors for the admission of students irrespective of means, so long as they manifested character and a genuine desire for learning. No Roman or Grecian soothsayer, and least of all a University, could ignore the need for assisting in the education of a democracy to fulfil those functions of government which democracy had set itself to manage and erect. They had often heard about the rights of citizenship; they seldom heard of its obligations, and those who were in a position to interpret the spirit of the times would be bound to admit that men in humble occupations were continually being raised to important posts which they willingly undertook and capably discharged. At the same time those obligations were better discharged by men who, in addition to their hard-earned experience, were able to rely upon the knowledge which a University had been able to impart.

Professor Henderson, in response to the toast, said it was gratifying to hear Mr. Homburg's kindly remarks, which appeared to have been an expression of what was generally felt in South Australia, if one could judge by happenings in recent years. For instance, they had had a splendid offer—a conditional promise—by a private citizen of financial assistance for the extension of University work. There was an increase in the Government vote to the University some two years ago, and now the report of the Education Commission was entirely favorable to the University. The Commission recommended that the land asked for should be granted to the University, and that pound for pound be given by the Government for the erection of buildings on the University ground. As a member of the University staff, it was very gratifying to him to feel that the institution had the goodwill of the people of the State, so far as it could be found out by such expressions as those. He thought that was due to the fact that the people felt that the University was trying to do more in the public interest. For instance, there were evening classes for people who were at work in the daytime, and they had the University extension system, which was in a very flourishing condition, and was an attempt to let people know what was being thought about the important questions of the time.

The professor went on to say that while the University was trying to keep in touch with the public in various ways it must not be forgotten that it had a special work to perform in the State, namely, that of higher education and research. That was work which could not be so well done by any other educational institution, and therefore the obligation upon the University to undertake that duty was great. Part of that work was the training of teachers at the University to go out to every part of the State and instruct others. It was done in the second place by keeping up to date in all the information connected with the chairs established at the University in different branches of knowledge. The special work of the University was also done not only by research on the part of the professors and lecturers themselves, but by training men who would in the future be capable of doing research work. That was the best work a University could do, and the work for which it specially existed. The economic advantage to be derived from that research work was enormous, and could easily be understood by people who would think for a moment how much the development of South Australia was due to the inventions of a scientific character, which had been the result of research. If they contrasted, for instance, South Aus-

tralia under the aborigines, without scientific knowledge, and South Australia at the present time and the place it was taking in the economy of the world, they would get some idea of how far those inventions through research had enabled them to develop the resources of the country. As South Australians, they were using the inventions of people in Great Britain, on the Continent of Europe, in America, but there was research for them to do in their own country. They were under an obligation to do their best in that way in order to give back something to the world in the way of research in return for what the world had done for them. Therefore, they should do research work in botany, zoology, agriculture, medicine, history, and in science generally.

Register, August 14

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Appointment of Director.

On the death of the Director of Education (Mr. A. Williams) Mr. M. M. Maughan, who previously had been chief inspector, was appointed Acting Director. Tenure in any Government position in an acting capacity is generally a stepping stone to the higher post, and it is believed that when the Government decide upon the successor to Mr. Williams Ministers will take into very serious consideration the claims of Mr. Maughan to the position. When the Director died the Premier, who is Minister of Education, was on his way to England, and the Education Commission, after two years of investigations, was just completing its report, which it was freely stated would recommend some vital changes in the department. In these circumstances the choice of a successor was delayed until Mr. Peake's return from England, and when he came back he asked the Education Commission to furnish its report so soon as possible. The Government then resolved to delay the selection of an officer until the recommendations were available. When the report was received it was realized that the Minister of Education would require the assistance of a Director to advise him in considering the recommendations. These can be divided into two classes—legislative and administrative—and the Minister realizes that he must have information at once in regard to the cost of the alterations suggested. An Acting Director could not so well assist him in deciding which of the 94 recommendations should be accepted, as the man who would have to be the head of the department in carrying out the propositions which the Ministry will adopt. In these circumstances the Ministry will make an appointment almost immediately. It is known in the best-informed circles that the Government will not go outside the State for a successor to Mr. Williams, and the general feeling is that Mr. Maughan will be promoted.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION.

The appointment of a Director of Education is one of the matters at present receiving the Government's serious attention. That an appointment should be made at the earliest possible moment is imperative, for the position, now that the Education Commission has presented its report, is such that the affairs of the department will shortly undergo a change, and it will be necessary that the department should have a permanent head before it. When questioned in the House of Assembly on Wednesday the Minister of Education (Hon. A. G. Peake) stated that the Government recognised the necessity of making an early appointment. This seems to indicate that no attempt will be made to entice an officer from a neighboring State to accept the position, and if such is the case it is practically certain that the Government's choice will fall upon Mr. M. M. Maughan, who has been Acting Director of Education since the death of Mr. Alfred Williams. Mr. Maughan is an able officer, and knows the working of the department thoroughly. It is certain that his appointment would give general satisfaction.

Advertiser, 15/8/13

ANCIENT AND MODERN LANGUAGES.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION (Hon. A. H. Peake) told Mr. Hudd he is aware that whilst instruction is given at the University in Greek and Latin, no provision is made for instruction in German and French. He will bring the matter under the notice of the proper authorities with a view to having instruction given in the modern languages.

Register, August 15th

PERTH UNIVERSITY.

PERTH, August 17.

The university convocation has announced the following appointments:—Dr. J. W. Patterson to fill the Chair of Agriculture endowed by Sir Winthrop Hackett; Mr. E. A. Weston, veterinary lecturer; Professor Whitfield, Vice-Chancellor; and Mr. S. H. Fletcher, clerk to the convocation. A motion was carried rejecting the Government's proposal to lease the university endowment lands at West Subiaco asked for workers' homes, in return for a temporary university building erected in Irwin street, city. It was urged that the West Subiaco land was specially suitable for a university site. It was resolved unanimously—"That the senate do not part with any endowment land without consulting the convocation." A proposal to provide a lectureship in music was rejected.