

THE UNIVERSITY.

A GIFT OF £10,000.

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY SOUGHT.

AN ANONYMOUS DONOR.

South Australians are all proud of their infant University, which, though a baby, has done wonders and shown its capacity, with fair opportunity, to do much more. They are proud of the professors, and they are also proud of the young men who have gone through the various schools of the University. The country has in the past produced professional men and scholars of eminence, like Mr. J. J. Stuckey, M.A., who was fifth wrangler at Cambridge many years ago; Sir Denzil Ibbetson, an old St. Peter's College boy, who also distinguished himself in the mathematical tripos at Cambridge, and became a prominent Indian official; Professor T. Hudson Beare, a Prince Alfred College boy, who fills the chair of engineering at Edinburgh University; Professor E. C. Stirling, Sir John Downer, K.C., Dr. J. C. Verco, the late Sir R. O. Baker, K.C., who was also well up among the senior optimes at Cambridge; Professor Jethro Brown, and Mr. Justice Murray. In the younger generation there are Mr. J. R. Wilton, fifth wrangler at Cambridge, who also won a first-class in the second part of the natural science tripos; Professor J. B. Robertson, who has a chair in a Californian University; Dr. G. Duffield, and Dr. Ray, in addition to many other students, some of whom are now working side by side with the intellectual prizemen of England and America, and suffering nothing by comparison. The very best material for a University is available in Adelaide. But the University, though in a vigorous condition, is as yet without the resources of older institutions, with long accumulations of wealth, as in the mother land, or with the millionaire endowments of America. The Adelaide University is undeniably poor, and suffers greatly from that poverty.

Not a Club for the Rich.

The friends of the University do not underestimate the liberality of the South Australian Governments. Having regard to their numbers and the absence of excessive wealth, there has been great liberality also on the part of South Australian citizens as a whole; but much remains undone. Much that is valuable has not even been begun for want of cash and room. The Adelaide University is a national institution, and it must for a long time rely for its revenues in great measure on the State. It was not founded, and it has not developed as a club for the rich, or for the advocacy or dissemination of any political views, or the propagation of sectarian creeds. It is an intellectual workshop for all, and if it cannot expand with the rapidly increasing population, and assimilate the best methods of modern educational progress, it will fail of its proper purpose, and cease to be a source of pride to the State. To keep the door open for all time more room is wanted, either on North-terrace or elsewhere, and this was promised by the late Premier (Mr. Verran) for the uses both of the University and the School of Mines.

More Expansion Needed.

The matter is urgent, for without a site no adequate expansion is possible. There is little doubt that the present Premier and Mr. Butler, with their colleagues in the present Ministry, are equally anxious that the way should be made clear for proper expansion and progress, but that will not be possible if the University is limited to its present site. Within the University a movement is already on foot to add to the present buildings a common hall, where professors and students may meet and dine together and mingle in friendly social intercourse rather as comrades than as masters and pupils. It is hardly necessary to point out the advantage of such intercourse to the student. To the professor there is the advantage of studying the character and guiding the ambitions of the youth with a more perfect knowledge than he could otherwise obtain.

Helping Research Work.

Other useful projects are under consideration in addition to the provision of a common hall and residential college. These include the procuring, in connection with the library, of instruments, radium, and other equipment needed for original research work, and in special cases grants of money to assist students engaged in such work. The idea is that no student shall be shut out from attaining the best results simply by reason of a lack of funds, and that no student who may require no monetary help shall be debarred from securing the best results by want of books or tools. The desire is that every student of the Adelaide University shall ultimately have as good a means of acquiring knowledge on the spot as he can have in any other part of the world. A University magazine is also talked of.

A Generous Donor.

The realisation of these hopes depends upon a site being given, and a subsidy of pound for pound by the Government on contributions raised for the purpose. Without this State help the project must be made extremely difficult of accomplishment. A residential college in Adelaide will, however, be assured. Other residential colleges may follow, with the purpose of meeting the convenience of country districts and municipal centres of population. There can be no question of the value that the Adelaide college will have for those students in all districts whose parents are unable to pay for lodgings in the city while they simultaneously lose the services of sons or daughters. Youths who are anxious to ease the load on their fathers by working hard for long hours and earning wages while they are studying at the University, can find only in the city the casual employment at irregular hours which they need. An anonymous friend of the University has offered to give £10,000 for a commencement of the work, if the Government will contribute a pound for pound subsidy for buildings and an ample site is secured. Without an eligible site it is considered to be impossible to persevere with the proposal.

The Premier to be Approached.

To start these important works and make the success of the University secure for all time, an interview will be sought by the promoters of the scheme with the Premier before his departure to England, asking for his approval and consent. There should be no doubt as to his reply. Messrs. Peake and Butler, and those associated with them, are not likely to do anything to hamper the adequate expansion of the University or to jeopardise its success and leave it a stunted and incomplete institution. University men and those who love the cause of learning speak of the enthusiastic reception which will await Mr. Peake among the educated classes in London, if he is able to announce that one of the last acts of his Government before he left Adelaide was to make sure that when the population of South Australia is counted by millions, as some day it will be, Adelaide shall have a University fully furnished and equipped, equal to all requirements and worthy of the great central State. Few statesmen have the opportunity to serve their day and generation in this fashion. The ideal of every Government in these democratic times is to render easy the avenue of advance from the primary school to the School of Mines and the University, and the chance of securing the co-operation of wealthy men in the accomplishment of that ideal is one to be eagerly seized.

ENDOWMENT OF LEARNING.

South Australia is only a small community, and few of its citizens are burdened with excessive wealth. Yet the gifts which have been made for public purposes in this State will bear comparison with similar benefactions in other parts of the world. The cause of learning has been advanced by many liberal donations and bequests. The Collegiate School of St. Peter has been richly endowed by munificent givers, and Prince Alfred College has also received a number of welcome contributions both towards its building fund and its scholarship endowments. The School of Mines and Industries, too, has been assisted in a generous way. The University, however, has attracted special attention from the rich men of the community. Its establishment was due to the wise liberality of Sir Walter Hughes, and its various chairs have been endowed by open-handed gifts from Sir Thomas Elder and Mr. J. H. Angas. These gentlemen and others enabled many scholarships to be provided, and the public have on various occasions subscribed funds for similar purposes. The Government of the State have also recognised the claim of the University to adequate support from the public purse, and the Council and Senate of the institution have every reason to be gratified with the help received from the public exchequer in connection with the establishment of the University, its endowment, and its maintenance.

One great disability under which the University of Adelaide has always labored has been the lack of space for expansion. In this respect it is disadvantageously situated as compared with its sister Universities in Sydney and Melbourne, where not only the work of the students, but their sports, have been considered and provided for. Another drawback, the influence of which is keenly felt by professors and undergraduates alike, is the lack of residential colleges. In the older universities of Great Britain, as well as in connection with the ancient institutions on the Continent, the colleges are the University. In Oxford and Cambridge the great bulk of the students are in residence, and Balliol College at the former, and Trinity College at the latter, are almost as famous as is the University of which each forms a part. In America, too, the residential college is a great feature, and it is becoming so in Sydney and Melbourne. There is the same close relationship between the men of one college as there is between the boarders at a public school, and the real influence of a university is wielded through the men in residence, and not through the undergraduates, however numerous, who merely attend to listen to lectures and separate as soon as they are over. With the object of enabling the Adelaide University to add at least one residential college to its equipment, and to associate with it a common room in which "dons" and students may meet in close social intercourse, a generous citizen of Adelaide, who desires for the present to retain the veil of anonymity, has made an offer of £10,000 contingent upon a suitable site being obtained and an equal subsidy being provided by the Government.

The desire of the donor is to bring the University up to the standard of other institutions of its class in the neighbor States and elsewhere. He is evidently hopeful that the example he has set will be followed by other rich residents of Australia, and that, still aided in the same proportion by the State, it will be rendered possible materially to increase the sphere of usefulness of the University. Here there are no accumulations of wealth in the hands of the University Council, the result of centuries of successful work, nor are there millionaires to whom the gift of sums in six figures is a mere bagatelle. There are, however, many men of means who, given an inspiring lead, are able to make substantial gifts to the objects of their admiration. There is no doubt that the creation of a fund from which grants could be made to poor but deserving students is a laudable ambition. Brains should not be wasted.