

The Register.

ADELAIDE: MONDAY, MARCH 25, 1912.

AN EMPIRE CONGRESS.

Fifty-two Universities of the Empire will be represented at the Educational Congress to be held in London in July. Four days will be devoted to discussion, and the delegates will spend about a month in visiting the various universities in Great Britain and Ireland. Adelaide and the other Australian Universities will be directly represented. The General London Committee, of which H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught is President, consists of distinguished representatives of three interests—the Universities, the Empire, and London. It includes the Chancellors of the Universities in the United Kingdom, the High Commissioners of the Dominions, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and other members of the present and late Governments, and the Lord Mayor, and the Chairman of the London County Council. One of the main purposes of the gathering is to take stock of the vast developments in the education system of every country of the British Empire, to ascertain how far standards of training adapted to local conditions may be harmonized, co-operation in various departments of activity established, and interests common to Universities promoted. If the Universities are to attain the highest degree of Imperial usefulness it is essential that they shall fall into line in certain phases of their work, while they specialise in other branches. For instance, it is admitted that the standards of preliminary training need harmonizing so far as this may be done without disturbing University traditions or the general policy and working conditions of the individual seats of learning.

The Congress is expected to draw the Universities much closer together. It will be the first attempt at federating the Empire's great seats of learning, and the meeting could not have been convened at a more opportune time. As The Times points out, every one agrees that the self-governing Dominions are entitled to a more and more intimate connection with the mother country in the public services, the control of defence and diplomacy, and the administration of the great dependencies of the Crown. No real organization of the kind is possible to-day, because there is no standard of training common to the Empire as a whole, and if the Universities can do something to supply that standard, they will not only strengthen their own position, but render invaluable service to the cause of Imperial union. Some of the subjects to be considered are specialization among Universities, inter-University arrangements for post-graduate and research students, the relation of Universities to technical and professional education and to education for the public services, interchange of teachers and students, the problem of the Universities in the East in regard to their influence on character and moral ideals, conditions of entrance to Universities, and the mutual recognition of entrance tests, the action of Universities relatively to the after careers of their students, the extension movement and tutorial class-work, the establishment of a Central

Bureau and the position of women in Universities. These questions should afford a wide range for fruitful discussion. Universities, particularly those in the oversea Dominions, have assumed new responsibilities in their widening spheres of activity. The modern University recognises that there is no profession, trade, or occupation which should not demand its attention so far as training for a career is concerned, and how far the influence of the seat of learning should be exerted in this direction will probably be one of the most interesting themes at the Congress. In the mother country the demand for University extension is growing. Artisans are asking for tutorial classes for systematic education in the evenings, and the extent to which this worthy ambition ought to be met will occasion an exchange of views based on actual experience.

The expanding movement in favour of an easier interchange of teachers and students is supported on the ground that it conduces to higher educational vitality. It is represented that a professor of history could teach advantageously to himself and his students alternately for two years in a University in the motherland, and then for two years in a colony; or a year in one colony and a year in another. In this way the students of the two or three Universities would be enabled to attend his lectures in their three years' course. A number of colonial Universities have pressed for the establishment of a Central University Bureau, which would perform various important functions and help to solve many existing problems affecting Universities in different parts of the Empire. The Bureau would be a sort of intelligence department in connection with Empire University work, and particularly in relation to the interchange of teachers and students. It is hoped that the discussions regarding University government, the degree of control which a University should exercise over affiliated colleges, and the conditions of service of professors and teachers will lead to useful conclusions of deep interest to the cause of higher education in every quarter of the globe.

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UNIVERSITY ECONOMIC SOCIETY.

The second annual meeting of the University Economic Society was held on Monday evening. The society is formed of present and past students of the University in commerce and economics. The President (Professor Mitchell) occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance of members present. The annual report, read by the Secretary (Mr. Wylie), disclosed a satisfactory state of affairs. Five meetings had been held during the previous year, and lectures had been delivered on each occasion. The officers were re-elected. A lecture on the "Economics of Governments to Companies and Trusts" by Professor Jetbro Brown, occupied the greater portion of the evening. The subject was interesting and instructive. A long discussion followed.

ADVANCED COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

The authorities of the University of Adelaide are doing their utmost to promote commercial education, and for the purpose of advancing the study of commerce at the University the late Mr. Joseph Fisher generously gave £1,000, and the Chamber of Commerce made a grant of £25 per annum for three years. It is provided that every alternate year a lecture on a commercial subject, to be called the "Joseph Fisher Lecture," shall be delivered at the University, and subsequently published. The next lecture will be given at the Prince of Wales Theatre at the University, on Thursday evening April 25, by Mr. H. Y. Braddon, of Sydney. The title will be "Company Law; Some Sidelights on Modern Commerce." The Board of Commercial Studies considers that the lecture will provide a further stimulus of public interest in the question of advanced commercial education.

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Professor Stirling was a passenger for Melbourne by the express on Wednesday.