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ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY BILL.

In committee. Clause 3. Five additional members of the Council to be appointed by Parliament. Mr. HOMBURG asked the Minister to explain the reasons for this new departure? The MINISTER of EDUCATION said the object of the Education Commission was to increase the usefulness of the University, and, in view of the increasing sums voted by Parliament for the support of that institution, it was considered that we should follow the lines adopted in other places, and have direct Parliamentary representation on the University Council. These representatives would act as a useful link between Parliament and the University. The University Council and the Education Commission had agreed that the number should be five, and it was now proposed that three should come from the House of Assembly and two from the Legislative Council. A member, on losing his seat in Parliament, would have to retire from the University Council, and the elections would be for three years—the term of Parliamentary representation. Mr. RYAN said the clause represented a compromise between the Commission and the University authorities. For all the

other Australian Universities, except those of New South Wales and Tasmania, the Government nominated certain members of the Council.

Mr. SMEATON agreed with the clause, in view of the fact that the University is becoming more and more dependent on Parliament to keep it going.

Mr. BLUNDELL moved "that progress be reported."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. McDONALD said if the delegates were to be of service they should be appointed for three years. They should not cease to be members of the council simply because they might cease to be members of Parliament.

The Hon. A. H. PEAKE said the University had been receiving something like £8,000 a year from the Government. The Commission, however, had found that in comparison with the universities in other States the Adelaide University had not been treated in a prodigal way by Parliament, and that if its usefulness was to be extended Parliament would have to come to its assistance to a greater extent. In addition to recommending that an extra grant of £4,000 a year should be given, the Commission felt there should be members of Parliament on the council who could inform the House as to the work being carried out and the various needs of the institution. It was never suggested that the present members of the council were not capable men, but as the University was becoming more and more a part of the State system of education, the Commission considered that Parliament was entitled to know more of the doings of the institution. Members of Parliament were appointed to the council of the Melbourne University by the Government, but the Commission thought it was preferable that they should be chosen by Parliament here. He would not be a candidate for a seat on the council if his side of the House should be asked to nominate one. He did not wish it to be thought that he had been manufacturing for himself a seat on the council of the University. He could do more effective work in the capacity of a Parliamentary critic of the way the money voted to the University was expended. He would support the clause.

Mr. RUDALL was very glad to hear Mr. Peake express the opinion that no fault could be found with the way the money granted to the University had been expended hitherto. They could not do better than adopt the suggestion made by the University Council, and have the Government represented on the council by the Minister of Education, the Treasurer, the Director of Education, and the Under-treasurer. He felt disposed to move an amendment to that effect when the Bill got to committee.

Mr. HOMBURG said Mr. Rudall had prestalled him. He was about to suggest if there was any real need for increasing the number of persons on the University council—of which he was very doubtful—the better way to secure what the Minister of Education desired would be to give the Government of the day the widest possible field for their selection. They should not necessarily appoint members of Parliament. They seemed to be loading up a board that was already numerically large. The taxpayers he knew were represented on the council only through the graduates, because the council was appointed by the Senate, which was elected by the graduates. Still, the council numbered 25 now, and if, as the Government proposed, it was increased by five, the number would be bigger than the circumstances demanded. Another point was the pronounced determination of members opposite to abolish the

Legislative Council. (Mr. Ryan—"You might leave that out.") It was a dire contingency that might have to be faced. (Mr. Smeaton—"It is too far off.") Had he done nothing more than get that admission he would be satisfied. Mr. Smeaton often was the master of the Government, and there was great comfort in his assurances. (Mr. Smeaton—"I mean because of the great block that exists down there.") Still, it was a contingency that would have to be reckoned with. If the Legislative Council was abolished, doubtless the Assembly would take the five seats. Under the Constitution of the council of the School of Mines, which was doing very important work in this State, the Government appointed their nominees. He had not heard any dissatisfaction expressed with the manner in which that council was doing its work or carrying out its obligations to the taxpayers. Parliament had made no proposition to appoint members of either House to the council. He understood the University Council, too, had given satisfaction, and if a change was to be made the Minister of Education would show where the present arrangement failed, and what would be the cost of the proposed change.

Mr. RYAN said the matter of representation did not emanate from the Royal Commission, but he believed was introduced by Professor Mitchell, and was strongly supported by the authorities connected with the different Universities of Australia. The proposal embodied in the Bill was really a more conservative scheme than that favored by many, but it represented the unanimous opinion of the Commission.

The Hon. A. H. PEAKE said the danger to be apprehended from the appointment of ex-officio members of the board was that they would not have a live interest in the work involved. Of course the same objection might be urged against the council of the School of Mines. That, however, was a live body, due, no doubt, largely to the fact that it had a live president at its head. The Commission were told by the Chancellor of the Melbourne University that the Parliamentary representatives of that State on the senate of their University took a lively interest in the work. For that, among other reasons, the Commission asked this Parliament to follow that example.

The clause was declared carried, and Mr. HOMBURG called for a division, which resulted as follows:—

Ayes (17).—Hons. W. J. Denny, A. H. Peake, C. Vaughan, and J. Verran, and Messrs. Anstey, Blundell, Campbell, Cheson, Coombe, Green, MacGillivray, Ponder, Ryan, Senior, Smeaton, Young, and Hon. F. W. Coneybeer (teller).

Noes (11).—Hons. R. Butler, L. O'Loughlin, and Messrs. Allen, Blacker, Burgoyne, Heggaton, McDonald, Moseley, Pflaum, Rudall, and Homburg (teller).

Pairs.—For—Messrs. Cole, Dankel, Winter, and Goode. Against—Messrs. James Jamieson, Ritchie, and Miller.

A majority of 6 for the Ayes.

Clause 4 passed.

Clause 5. Time of appointment and tenure of office. Mr. RUDALL asked if the Minister did not think the members of the University Council should be reduced in number so as to prevent that body from becoming unwieldy through the addition of five new members?

The MINISTER of EDUCATION believed the number would be reduced later on. That was a matter which rested with the University Council to decide.

Mr. HOMBURG said the council now consisted of 25 members, and 30 would be too many. (Mr. Ryan—"The Melbourne University has nearly double that number.") The number should be reduced from time to time until it stood at 20. There were only 42 members of the House of Assembly, which managed the affairs of the whole country.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION hoped the hon. member would not press the matter, which had been decided between the Education Commission and the University representatives. The council could determine later on whether the number of members should be reduced.

The clause passed.

Clauses 6 to 9 passed.

Clause 10. Annual grant increased by £4,000.

Mr. HOMBURG asked the Minister for particulars regarding the necessity for this increase.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION said the University had applied for certain amounts of money for continuing and extending its work, without prejudice to their application for £17,000 later on. The Commission decided to ask the House to grant an annual increase of £4,000 to cover the work anticipated. There had been a feeling that the University existed only for the children of the rich. If hon. members desired further information he would be prepared to let the Bill stand over until another day. He did not wish to see the measure rushed through. The £4,000 had not been earmarked, and the Council would determine the way in which it could best be expended.

The Hon. A. H. PEAKE said it was not clearly to the Commission that if it was desired to secure the best teachers for the University they must provide for the payment of salaries equal to what they could command in other similar institutions. The Commission were asked to recommend the granting of a sum that would cover big increases to the professors and lecturers at once. They took the view, however, that it was not desirable for the Commission to say whether the staff were underpaid or not, but that they should recommend a grant and leave the council to say how the money should be spent. The grant of £4,000 would practically mean an endowment of £100,000.

Mr. HOMBURG said all he wanted to know was the purpose to which the University intended to apply the £4,000. Was there no better and more profitable way of spending the money than in the manner which had been suggested. A large number of teachers in the Education Department

claimed to be entitled to higher salaries, and they were as much entitled to increases as were the University professors. The proposals made on behalf of the University included the appointment of a professor of French and German at £900, additional assistants in physics and chemistry £300, a professor of engineering £900, a professor of zoology and a lecturer on botany £1,300, law lecturers £400, a professor of pathology £900, and a lecturer on bio-chemistry at £400. That would take more than £4,000. He wanted to know was whether there were not other ways in which the money could be better spent. They could spend money more profitably on technical education and in extending the high school system throughout the State so as to give the children in country districts similar advantages to those enjoyed by pupils in Adelaide. It was clearly the first duty of Parliament to make provision for those children who had no means of getting the advantages of a University education.

Mr. RYAN said Mr. Homburg had not shown his hand, because he objected to granting the money, which was merely the amount necessary to meet the most pressing needs of the University. Mr. Homburg must know that to report progress at the present stage was to kill the Bill. The Government had done all they possibly could to facilitate the passage of the measure. They wanted to get it through so that it could be considered by the Legislative Council on Tuesday. If Mr. Homburg desired to kill the Bill they might as well take a vote at once and let the country see the attitude of that hon. member who had himself had the advantage of an education at the University.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION regretted Mr. Homburg had suggested there was some better way of spending £4,000 than by giving it to the University. He could see the way those words might be construed outside the House. He was endeavoring to extend the high school system and would be prepared later on to spend £4,000 and more in that direction. Mr. Homburg knew well enough that the majority of the high schools had been established in country districts. The £4,000 provided in the Bill was simply a small portion of the total sum required by the University, and he resented the suggestion that he was neglecting the primary and secondary schools. Since the Verran Government had been in office the school teachers had received greater increases in their remuneration than had been previously granted to them during the last quarter of a century. They had benefited to the extent of £17,000 a year. He had been asked to bring in the Bill on behalf of the University Commission, and he would not be twitted with having shown a lack of sympathy towards the extension of ordinary educational facilities in the country. Additional money was being spent on primary, secondary, and technical education, and the slight increase in the grant to the University was merely to give better facilities to the youth of South Australia to obtain the most advanced education the State had to offer.

There were 19 high schools in the State, and most of them were in the country. Twelve of the first 13 were in the country. The University had asked for this sum, and the Commission, recognizing the good work the institution was doing and the necessity for more funds, had recommended the payment of £4,000 without questioning how the board would disburse it. He would agree to report progress as Mr. Homburg had suggested, and he moved accordingly.

Mr. RYAN—No, I object.

Mr. HOMBURG—Who asked that progress be reported.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION said Mr. Homburg had done so.

The motion that progress be reported was declared carried, and Mr. RYAN called for a division. The bells had been ringing for some time, when Mr. Ryan asked leave to withdraw the call. Leave was granted, progress was reported, and the committee obtained leave to sit again on Tuesday next.