

The Bill proposes to hand over the entire institution to the Education Department, regardless of the wide differences between the two divisions of its work and the utter unsuitability of the proposed authority for the control at least of the higher or scientific branch. Whatever case may be made out for the transfer of the industrial classes to the Education Department, so as to merge them into a system of trade schools to be connected with the present arrangements for primary and secondary education, there is none for dealing similarly with the diploma courses in mining, metallurgy, and engineering. From the standpoint of a theorist anxious to reorganise technical education on the basis of abstract fitness it would certainly appear that the University is the natural heir to those portions of the school which are concerned with the professional or scientific branches of technical instruction. The Education Department has no better claim to take over the associateship and fellowship curricula of the School than it would have to annex the B.Sc. or the B.E. of the University. As a matter of fact, the two institutions already work the scientific courses in close co-operation, thus avoiding duplication of teaching and appliances, and if a single controlling authority is considered necessary, it would naturally and normally pass to the University rather than to the managers of primary schools who have neither the educational status nor the acquired skill for the advantageous assumption of its duties. Transfer of the scientific branches to the University would be in perfect harmony with the extension of academic work on the technical side which is to be seen in Universities, both in the old and the new world, which have endeavored to keep pace with modern educational requirements. It is to the credit of the School of Mines and Industries that it established its higher technical branches not in competition with similar teaching by its neighbor, but to fill an obvious gap in the educational system. When it made a success of them, and the University, fired by a spirit of emulation, launched out in a similar direction, the need of co-ordinating the activities of the two institutions, where they ran on parallel lines, at once arose, and satisfactory arrangements were made to avoid overlapping and duplication. These have met every objection on practical grounds to the co-existence of two authorities granting degrees and diplomas in similar fields of scientific training, while a wholesome rivalry has been kept alive. Undoubtedly, however, if changes are to be made in obedience to the demand for systematisation and co-ordination of educational work, the University, not the Education Department, should assume the responsibility for the higher and professional branches of technical education.

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*Advertiser, 9.11.15*

Dr. W. T. Hayward, Messrs J. R. Fowler, M.A., R. *East* Smith and S. Talbot Smith, M.A., and Professor E. C. Stirling, C.M.G., will cease to be members of the council of the Adelaide University to-day. The term of office of Mr F. Chapple, C.M.G., as warden, and Mr. T. A. Caterer, B.A., as clerk of the Senate, will end on November 24. The retiring members of the council and the executive officers of the Senate are eligible for re-election.



Sir Lancelot Stirling, who completes his 66th year to-day, and who has played for so many years a prominent and an honorable part in the political life of the State, was born at "The Lodge," Strathalbyn, and is the second son of the late Hon. Edward Stirling, once a member of the Legislative Council. He was educated at St. Peter's College, whence he proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated as bachelor of arts and bachelor of laws. He was called to the bar at the Inner Temple in 1871. Sir Lancelot entered the House of Assembly as the representative of Mount Barker in 1881, and six years later he was returned to the House by the electors in the Gumeracha district. In 1890 he took his seat in the Legislative Council for the Southern District, which he has represented ever since. He was chosen President in 1901, in succession to the late Sir Richard Baker. A year later he was created a knight bachelor, and the honor of K.C.M.G. came to him in 1909. Sir Lancelot as a youth was a great athlete, and he has always taken a deep interest in sports of all kinds. For some years he was master of the Adelaide Hunt Club, and he has frequently invited the Hunt to meet at Strathalbyn, where he has dispensed the openhanded hospitality for which he is famous. He was once a leading polo player, and he still manifests considerable eagerness in respect to that pastime. Sir Lancelot has been a firm friend of the producers ever since he entered public life, and he is widely known and highly respected both among pastoralists and farmers. He is proud of his Scotch blood, and he has been an honored president of the Caledonian Society. He is a genial, kindly-hearted man, but he has always had the courage of his opinions. As President of the Council he has splendidly maintained the high standard attained by his distinguished predecessors in that office.

*Advertiser 10.11.15.*

## THE SCHOOL OF MINES.

To the Editor.

Sir—I have read Mr. Laybourne Smith's statement in regard to the School of Mines and Industries appearing in to-day's issue of "The Advertiser" with great attention and with unaffected interest. I would not have it appear that in anything I propose to say I am antagonistic to the spirit in which Mr. Smith writes on a matter on which he must be regarded as an authority, and should be heard with profound respect. His long and useful association with the School of Mines and Industries gives him the right to hold views with firmness and decision in regard to the working and value of that institution, and although I differ from him, I do not in any way depreciate the motive and spirit which actuates him, for these I am persuaded are beyond reproach. Let it be clearly understood that I and those others in Parliament who followed the lead of the Government in the part of the Education Bill which affects the Schools of Mines, did so with a full appreciation of the value of those institutions, and with a sincere desire that that value should not be lessened in any way. It was not easy in my own case at least to follow a lead which seemed to, if it did not, condemn the previous management of those institutions. Their excellent work over many years, work which, especially in the case of the Adelaide School of Mines and Industries, had brought it a world-wide name for the value of its diplomas, was sufficient to give pause to any thought of mere coordination of educational institutions under a departmental head as being the sum of attainment to be achieved. The whole argument to me for the change lies in the closer association which the provision of the Acts will secure between branches of our educational system, which have hitherto been too independent of each other, in idea at least, if not in fact. The School of Mines and Industries has two sides to its work, both educational, but one linking itself more with primary education, while the other connects on the higher side which touches the University, and I am not surprised that Mr. Laybourne Smith and others are somewhat dominated with the idea that the higher and academic side is the more important and should control—if control there

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must be a part from the Education Department—the side which, as I have said, is more linked with the primary schools. My difficulty is that I cannot see how it will be possible to develop the trade and industrial school in connection with our public school system without trenching on certain functions of the School of Mines. So far as the academic and scientific side of that institution's work is concerned, I freely admit that it links itself, without straining any principle, with the University courses which finalise in those diplomas which give a stamp and standing to the graduates who secure them. There are alternative methods by which this difficulty may be surmounted; the one is that to which Mr. Laybourne Smith makes objection, the other is by continuing the School of Mines and Industries under its present method of control as a sort of technical university, into which students from the public trade and industrial schools should pass for their higher and finishing courses; but as the only advantage I can see in that method is the continuance of the present administration of the School of Mines and Industries I do not regard it as a settlement which will be ultimately satisfactory. For although it would be impossible to imagine that commonsense and reasonable men, such as are on the council of the School of Mines, would not seek to work in harmony with the methods devised by the Education Department for the adequate training of junior students in technical and trade schools; yet the very fact of independence would create such a break that many possibilities of misunderstanding and friction are conceivable and not unlikely to occur. I am perfectly sure that no desire for personal aggrandisement for himself or for the members of the council of the School of Mines and Industries actuates Mr. Laybourne Smith in the view which he has so strongly expressed, and it is all the more difficult, therefore, to disagree with him in his view, but, looking ahead, say a decade hence, one can believe that the work of the School of Mines and Industries, closely co-ordinated with the educational system of the State under the control of a Superintendent of Technical Instruction, who would supervise the whole of the technical school activities of the State, will be equally successful in achieving the purposes which we all value so much, even although we disagree in the method devised for their attainment. To my mind the weak point is touched by Mr. Laybourne Smith and in the leading article which appeared in the columns of "The Advertiser" this morning, where it is shown that close association between the University and the academic side of the School of Mines' work is more than desirable to give a high objective to the efforts of the students, and an ultimate reward to those who shall be successful, which will give a standard of value in competition with similar institutions in other States and countries. I do not yet see the way to overcome this difficulty, but I believe it can be surmounted, and would suggest that Sir Langdon Bonython and Mr. Laybourne Smith, with their undoubted knowledge of the conditions of the school with which they have been so long and honorably associated, linked to a desire for the benefit of the students who will use that institution in days to come, will set themselves the task of devising some method by which the association of the University may be secured for the advantage of those who will graduate from class to class, from junior to senior, and ultimately to the advanced technical instruction which is imparted under the aegis of the University.—I am, &c.,

T. H. SMEATON.

Parliament House, November 9, 1915.

[Our correspondent evidently does not realise that Mr. Laybourne Smith resigned the position of registrar of the School of Mines two years ago.—Ed.]