

test of knowledge and the completion of education. There can be no greater evil to any true system of education than this, and things will not be rightly ordered here, higher education will not be duly encouraged, until the pernicious use of the matriculation examination is wholly abolished. Correspondents who have lamented the ill-success of their friends will find a complete answer to their complaints in Professor Kelly's address. All lovers of the higher education, all who wish that we should not only learn to live but live to learn, owe the Professor a vote of thanks for his able and scholarly paper. If the Adelaide University were conducted on the lines laid down in this address there would be more reason to speak well of it for what it has done in the past, and greater reason for hopefulness on account of what it is bound to do in the future.

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THE address given yesterday by His Excellency Sir Wm. Robinson at the University commemoration is one worthy of more than a passing notice. Its aim was not to say a few pleasant things which might make the ceremonial pass off with éclat: it was a careful survey of the relations which University teaching in general, and our own University tuition in particular, bear to the age in which we live. His Excellency modestly calls himself a mere "looker-on whose time has necessarily been engaged in the more active business of civil life;" but when such a thoughtful and experienced onlooker assumes the rôle of a critic and a prophet his words deserve both our thanks and our attention. Sir William evidently entertains a great opinion of the social and national value of higher education. He expresses no sympathy with that narrow-

minded "practicality" which would limit education to what would fit a youth to keep accounts and write letters in a merchant's office. He would extend, not limit, the range and the usefulness of our University. To use his own simile of the banyan tree, he would have the University throw out branches and at the same time "throw down shoots to form future stems," and thus find fresh support and renewed life till it "counts its pillars by the hundred." The text of the address is to be found in the idea which Sir William so frequently expressed—that no University should rest in a state of "crystallisation," but should aim at what is the ultimate object of the highest teaching—the education of the people for the life of the community. Every university has a tendency to become crystallised; but in this active age, and with so many rising nations to set the old world on new paths, pressure from without will effectually check this tendency. Even the Oxford crystal has been submitted to the process of cleavage, and is reflecting the present needs of the community. Scotland and Germany have set an example which England is gradually following.

Sir William Robinson, at the same time, recognises two dangers which beset higher education in these days. One of these is what may be called specialism, or the concentration of mind on one subject to the exclusion of others; and another

peril is just the opposite, or the attempt to compass too many fields of knowledge, which, "except in minds of the highest order commonly ends in vague generalisations, indefinite conclusions, and, finally, exhaustion." Lord Derby, another looker-on, made some similar remarks at the speech-day of University College, Liverpool. He observed—"It was no use saying they ought not to be specialists. They had got to be specialists if they meant to do anything. Men like Bacon 200 years ago could not take in all knowledge, and in these days the intellectual world was too vast even to perceive such an idea. Men must resign themselves to undertake one small piece of work and give their lives to it, and be happy if they could succeed in doing even that thoroughly. But it was just because they must be specialists in practice they were bound to counteract the consequent tendency to narrowness by an intelligent appreciation of what other men were doing." The remedy for both these dangers is suggested by His Excellency, who finds it in the special discipline that ought to pervade school life, and which should be tested by the examination for matriculation. We presume therefore that he would not favor giving too wide a range of options in the subjects for matriculation. All learners ought to tread a common path up to the gates of the University, after which they may follow their own pathways as specialists. This is a good rule of thumb, but it is difficult to resist the tendency to specialise by any such arbitrary limit. As was pointed out yesterday the candidates for the Mus. Bac. degree may postpone their matriculation till their second year. Music may be considered an exception, but might not a case be made out in favor of the youthful engineer, or the agricultural chemist, or the electrician? The danger which Lord Derby and Sir William Robinson warn us against is one which ought to be very carefully noted in the charts over which colonial universities have to steer their way. His Excellency's address advocates very earnestly the supporting of the universities by the State on the most liberal scale. He would

have its chairs not only chairs of tuition but chairs of research. He would connect the high schools and the universities by the liberal provision of scholarships which will enable even the poorest to obtain the best education of which they are capable. There are already three such scholarships annually open to competition; but His Excellency would look on these apparently as but the beginning of larger things. He desires that it should be within the reach of all intelligent young people to progress into the higher realms of learning. It is no loss, but a gain, to the community to expend its treasures in educating itself. Such an education is a boon to the recipient, but it is provided for by the State, not for his sake alone, but for the entire community.

His Excellency quoted some very remarkable facts and figures from the address given by Sir Lyon Playfair this year to the British Association. It would be well for all to ponder them, especially those who look upon colleges and seats of learning as expensive luxuries, and out of place in a wheat-growing colony like this. It would seem that the people of France, after their disastrous defeat by the Germans, sought for the cause of their manifest inferiority, and that the answer was because France had allowed University education to sink to a low ebb. "Before the great revo-