

Adventures ⁴ February 23/85

WE have received a copy of the Adelaide University Calendar for 1885, including the annual report of the council for 1884. The book is naturally a little more bulky than its immediate predecessor, as it records several important additions to the functions of the University, and of course the registrar has not forgotten to improve it generally, as the experience of former issues has suggested. With the calendar itself and its valuable addenda and appendix we have little to do. It is the annual report to which we shall chiefly confine our attention. In one respect 1884 was the most eventful year the University has seen since it was founded. We refer to the establishment of chairs of anatomy, chemistry, and music. That through private liberality such a great extension of the scope of the University should be made in a single year is a significant sign of the healthy character of the institution and of the important influence it exercises in the community. It points to a wholesome activity which is the best criterion that its work is popular and successful. The report refers at some length to the arrangements connected with the establishment of the School of Medicine. So far only initial steps have been taken, and the council have acted wisely in not attempting too much at first in this direction. With the professors of anatomy and chemistry, and a lecturer on physiology, a good basis will be formed upon which to build a school which may hereafter send forth competent masters of the healing art. It is mentioned that a dissecting room is being provided, and clinical instruction arranged for at the Adelaide Hospital.

Coming to the details of the use made of the University we find that though there has been a diminution of students in some class-lists, yet altogether a fair improvement is observable. Five students commenced their undergraduate course for the B.A. degree; three completed the first year and a like number the second and third years. In 1883 seven students started, while six finished the first year, four the second, and two the third, so that here there has been a slight decrease. The B.Sc. degree was only sought for by one student, a lady who completed her second year. For the

LL.B. degree forty-two students were studying in 1884, which is no great improvement, as thirty-five commenced their course for the degree in 1883, when the School of Law was established. The various courses of lectures were attended by fifty-three undergraduates and ninety-nine other students, the total number being about the same as in the previous year. Considering the general depression this may be regarded as satisfactory. A very gratifying state of things is noticeable in regard to the matriculation and junior examinations. While in 1883 fifty-five candidates entered for matriculation at the two examinations, in 1884 the number was no less than ninety, the proportion who passed in each year being about the same. In the junior examination not only was the number of candidates considerably increased, but the proportion who passed rose from 58 per cent. in 1883 to 75 per cent. in 1884. It may be remarked that in the optional subjects of this examination, forty-two out of fifty-four candidates passed in chemistry, and twenty out of twenty-one in animal physiology. This looks well for the prospects of the medical school. As our readers know, the education department has made some important alterations in the rules for governing the three University scholarships. Instead

of candidates having to be domiciled in the colony for two years prior to entrance it is now only necessary that they should have lived here one year. This is a liberal concession, and ought to mean an increase in the number of candidates. An innovation which, no doubt, has been made from some unsatisfactory experiences is to the effect that a scholarship candidate who fails at the yearly examination will thereby forfeit his scholarship unless the failure is due to unavoidable causes. The necessity of some such regulation is apparent after a little consideration, as it ensures that those who gain the scholarships shall make good use of them. An alteration has also been made in the domicile clause of the coveted South Australian scholarships, the resident years being reduced from five to three.

One of the directions in which the usefulness of the University can be extended is in the instruction of those who wish to study, but who are perforce occupied during the greater part of day in earning the wherewithal to exist, and indeed to pay their fees. The only way to reach such students is by establishing evening classes on some permanent and satisfactory basis. The council, in their report, mention this matter, to which we have repeatedly directed attention, and point out, as we have done, that want of funds alone prevent them from carrying the scheme into effect. They intend, however, to give it further consideration shortly. In the absence of any special means of evening instruction, such as are to be found in some great English cities, Adelaide has nothing to fall back on except the University, which would be perhaps fortunate if the council could arrange to set apart their halls and provide teachers for the purpose. Of course, at the start the fees paid by the students would not be nearly enough to cover expenses, and before the classes could be opened the council would have to possess a special fund from which to draw. That the classes would be eventually successful may be taken for granted if the experience of other large towns can be accepted as a guide. The balance-sheet of the

University varies little from last year except in the receipt and investment of the £10,000 so munificently given by Sir Thos. Elder to endow the Medical School. Apart from the scholarship funds and special gifts the revenue was about £8,700, not including a balance of £717 in the bank at the commencement of the year. It is noted, however, that owing to bad seasons the tenants of the Wirreanda lands could not pay the rents agreed upon, and the council had consequently to write off £2,908 from the general rent account. This must have seriously hampered them, but by recent arrangements they seem to think that the future rent is well assured. The report altogether indicates that the University is making steady progress, and there is substantial reason to believe that the devotion of the council to its interests is a guarantee of its continued prosperity.
