

Power to Produce Wealth

is the true measure of the commercial prosperity of a country. Not men alone but minds are the first requisite for superiority in production. We are pleased to have been able to note that that idea is rapidly gaining ground in the Universities of Australia. No longer is attendance at a University looked upon as the privilege of the wealthy, but rather as the right of every able-minded man and woman. The Universities of Australia have set a good lead to a University in Western Australia by saying in the main that 'not wealth but intellect must be the test for admission to a University.'

"Yes, I am fully aware of the efforts that are being made in Western Australia. I have the pleasure of the acquaintance of some of the men who gave evidence before your Commission. If I have one regret, which I allude to without any desire to pass judgment or in any way to tell you your business (which you ought to know much better than any stranger), it is that your Commission was not given an opportunity of doing what we did in South Australia, namely, of visiting the educational centres of Australia. Your Commission would, I am sure, have been just as much astonished at the wonderful progress that was being made as we ourselves were.

"You ask how I would define the operations of a University? The proper function of a University is the first thing to be borne in mind. Shall we say that it is the duty of a University to call together the best minds that a community can provide, to cloister them, so to speak, so that they may investigate and make research, and having become advanced students in particular lines of work to send them out to guide others, and through those with whom they come into contact encourage others in the State to learn those lessons they themselves have learned."

What would you consider an ideal government for a University?

"I may perhaps be pardoned for expressing a doubt as to whether the government which has been conceived for the Western Australian University is going to be the best form of government. But before I attempt to analyse it I must say that I am not unconscious of the fact that the requirements of the State are better known to Western Australians than to anyone who has only been a resident of the State for, comparatively speaking, but a few hours. I have, however, had occasion to examine the proposed scheme of government very closely, and though somewhat radically inclined myself on the question of University government, I cannot but feel that unless very great care is exercised in the choice of your first government it may be found that the advantages that are hoped to be derived from a democratised council may not be realised. The proposed Western Australian system is a distinct innovation in Australia. It does differ materially from the more recently established University of Brisbane, and what strikes me most as the element to be specially guarded against is that the professorial representation will be in a very large minority on the council. While I am prepared to say that the professorial is not the best and cannot be expected to be the best

Form of Government

from an administrative point of view, yet it is the professorial board which must be looked to to guide a University. I think your constitution will be watched most carefully by those who, like yourselves, are deeply interested in University advancement. But do let this be remembered: Though a professorial board may not be the best from a business side, from the educational standpoint they must always be relied upon as the guides of policy. I have heard from prominent University men that there is a danger with a young State University, such as yours may be, of the political element entering within its walls. It would be much better for the State that it did not attempt to create a University at all if any loophole permitted of political battles being fought within its walls. The education of a country, especially the University education of a country, is too big a thing to be associated with any warfare that for weal or for woe permeate the atmosphere of to-day.

"My own system, which I must confess has not met with the approval of many very sound and conscientious men in my own State, though it has met with the approval of Professor David, of Sydney, and other Professors in the Commonwealth, is this: Five members of the council should, I think, be elected from and be of the professorial side. An additional five or even eight members might be elected from the graduates, when the University had reached a ripe enough age to have graduates of its own; and one might, I think, be elected

from the ranks of the under-graduates. One of the members of the council should also most certainly be a woman. Then I think that both Houses of Parliament, when meeting as a Parliament, and after electing their Speaker, should have the right to elect from their ranks from three to five men. In our own State the University people readily agree that we should have five such parliamentary representatives on the council, and we propose that three members shall be elected from the Assembly and two from the Council. Then at the Federal Senate elections a State might be allowed to elect three members amongst its senators of the council of the University in its midst. You may be told that these seats will be made a present of to the newspapers. I am not blind to the fact that amongst

The Best Friends of Education

in Australia are responsible newspaper men like the Fairfax family in Sydney, the Syme family in Melbourne, Sir Langdon Bonython in South Australia, and everyone knows throughout Australia the undying interest of Sir Winthrop Hackett. Then the representatives of big public bodies, such as the president of the Chamber of Commerce, and of Manufactures, and so on, and the president of the Trades and Labour Council, might also be given a place on the board. The Chancellor should be elected by the board for a longer period than the members themselves. The Chancellor might be elected for six years, and the other members might retire at the rate of one-half every three years. The Director of Education of the State should always have a place on the board or council. Then I would leave the management of the institution, not so much to the Registrar as to the Vice-Chancellor or the Principal, who, in addition to being a man interested in education generally, would, in a large measure, possess the saving grace of common sense and that essential in the management of all men and things—a knowledge of every-day affairs. No, I do not think that such a man need of necessity be a University man. One of the big surprises I have received as Chairman of the Commission has been my discovery, even in the Universities of Australia of many particularly brilliant professors who have themselves never taken a professorial degree."

How would you describe the essentials of a University site?

"That raises a question which has had to be considered in every State of the Commonwealth, or, rather, wherever a University has been established or mooted. I do not know if you are troubled in Western Australia with that vexed question—the battle of sites, as it is called. I do not, at any rate, mean to discuss the claims of one spot over another. There are, of course, some

Essentials of the Site

which, if neglected in the first instance, must ultimately cause considerable expense and great inconvenience, besides hindering the progress of any University building. In my humble opinion, the great weakness of the Adelaide University is that it was built in the heart of the city on a very small block of land. Whatever else is done, I hope that in Western Australia that mistake will not be committed. I am concerned not so much with the question of distance from the city as I am with the environments of a University site. I have tried hard to have the Adelaide University removed to a position four miles out of town, but there were strong reasons why the movement did not meet with the support of the University people. The prime reason was that alongside the University is the river Torrens, and from time immemorial the University life has been largely dependent upon that sporting comradeship which is nowhere so well developed as on a river. When considering the requirements for Western Australia I should say that a site of nothing less than from 80 to 100 acres should be even looked at. No, this is not a large area for the purpose. Nowhere in Australia to-day do they find they possess too much ground. Melbourne with 100 acres is feeling that it might soon be able to do with still more accommodation. Sydney with its beautiful grounds is in a somewhat similar position. Queensland, in my opinion, made an unfortunate mistake in jumping to the conclusion that that which could be most easily equipped was of necessity the best, and so they took the old Government House with about 14 acres of land right in the city. Already there is a feeling that it would be a mistake to retain that as the permanent habitat of the University, and we may hear any day that a larger site has had to be secured. Because a building has been a Government or a Parliament House it is no guarantee that the ultimate cost will be less than would be the case in a new building. After all

A University Building

has some outside influence on University work. There is, of course, a nobility in architecture. By the time, too, you have pulled down one room and knocked it into another, and adapted bedrooms, dining-rooms, and so on to the requirements of a University, it will probably be found that nearly much money has been spent

as if a new building had been commenced from the beginning. There is great wisdom in the saying:—"For University work, start de novo." Above all, secure your 80 or 100 acres, adjoining the river. Even if you have to go a mile or two further from the city, seek the river, for your University in Western Australia, like ours in Adelaide, and in fact the first Australian Universities of the future, will be more the homes of struggling men than of the wealthy, and the University which is without proper sporting facilities, especially of the aquatic kind, is very likely to develop class consciousness. In a University there should be no caste, no plebeian or aristocrat, but rather a common aristocracy of intellect."

Have you seen any of the local sites talked of?

"I have heard of some of the suggested sites, but because of my necessarily brief survey of them I feel somewhat diffident in passing any remarks about them. I know, however, that you have one scheme for taking over Parliament House. If I were sure I should not be thought guilty of pronouncing a judgment upon immature consideration I should certainly say—leave that alone. I cannot conceive of what advantage it could be. The locality counts for little, for as soon as a University is established, wherever it may be, means will be rapidly found for taking students to and fro. After all, supposing the Parliament House were utilised, and I speak with only a limited knowledge of the building, I am satisfied that in 20 years' time, when the occasion arose for extensions, no sane man would say—build another wing of the same design; and you would have always as the

Apex of Educational Institutions

a place with a conglomeration rather than a co-ordination of structure, ever a monument to your lack of architecture rather than an incentive to the rest of the State to give to architecture that pride of place which it so rightly deserves to occupy. I cannot help thinking that in a very little time you would be sorry for having patched up this building instead of erecting a new one. I am also of the opinion that any area under 80 acres is absolutely suicidal. There is a mistaken impression, I think, on the question of distance. Of much more importance than distance is the question of area, more especially when you have that essential to University life, residential colleges. A professor of Cambridge told me in giving evidence before the Commission that the greatest advantages possessed by the Melbourne and Sydney Universities were their residential colleges. Unless it is desired to make the University a University of Perth, rather than a University of Western Australia situated in Perth, a home must be provided for the struggling boy or girl whose parents are developing the country's resources out in the lone bush or who are employed on the busy mine. Those parents would hesitate before they allowed their children to go away into a crowded city at just that time in their lives when parental affections and guidance are so necessary, unless they can feel that instead of their fledglings going into some strange boarding-house they are simply being moved from one home to a residential home from home. I may be biased on that point, but it will take a long time to convince me that there is any utility in the suggestion of Parliament House. I was also shown another site—namely in Subiaco. Here, again, I really dread having to pass judgment on such a short acquaintance with the place. One must remember that as men are subject to their environments so are communities and so are buildings. A University in such and such a place would, because of its surroundings, have very little chance of bringing into existence such influence on the question of buildings as it would have if situated in some other place. Then, I had a lovely walk through your King's Park and along the river shores, and had pointed out to me a third site suggested, namely, at Crawley Park. I have hitherto not heard expressed an opinion on the place. I know nothing about it, except what I had read in your papers from week to week. But I must confess that if a University were erected there, I cannot conceive of any institution of the kind being more beautifully situated and possessing more delightful surroundings than at Crawley. You have everything there. There is room for colleges, room for sports, for playgrounds, for professional residences, which are one of the main factors in a community of interests, for a common-room where all might have their meals at a cheap rate. In the 80 or 90 acres, which would be available, there would be room for the botanist, for experimental agriculture, for the veterinary surgeon, and so on. I am sure that if you have any better place than Crawley as a University site you have something in Western Australia of which you may be as proud as you are of your wonderful agricultural and mineral resources. There, too, you have a prospect of studying where every prospect pleases, and, if I were not speaking of Western Australia, I might be tempted to add, and 'Where only man is vile.' An additional need in a University is that it shall