

in another he appears to favour the opposite view. Possibly the seeming inconsistency is due to his belief that that part of the student's training which consists in what is called "walking the hospitals" cannot be satisfactorily carried out here, while his purely theoretic and experimental education can. Whatever be the truth as regards this matter every one will be pleased that the University Council is endeavouring to make arrangements for enabling the medical student to complete even half of his studies within the colony.

## THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—If we may form an opinion from the monthly reports published in the *Register* of the work transacted by the Council of the above, we can only arrive at the conclusion that during the year 1881 little progress will be shown, and even that little not in the right direction. In the appointment of the Rev. W. R. Fletcher, M.A., as temporary Professor for 1882, in succession to the late lamented Professor Davidson, we cannot forget the late Professor's salary was raised to £1,000 per annum, in order that he might resign his clerical duties and devote his entire time to the work of his Professorship. Are Mr. Fletcher's clerical duties lighter? We should say not. As to the other appointment (Dr. Stirling) we believe the *Register* would have been still more correct if it had inserted "very" before "few" in the sentence "It is to be feared that for several years to come Dr. Stirling will have but few pupils." There has lately appeared in the *Register* advertisements calling for lecturers in the Melbourne University, but our Council approve of the good old Whig principle of keeping them in the family—very pleasant, but not likely to be very profitable or popular at the present day.

I am, Sir, &c.,

PROGRESS.

Norwood, November 2.

## MEDICAL INSTRUCTION AT THE UNIVERSITY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I think that a great deal of the misapprehension which exists in the minds of many people with regard to the intentions of the University authorities might be removed by a few candid explanations from their side. With this view, I venture to supplement the observations in your sub-leader of to-day by a few remarks on some proposed changes in the University curriculum, and the spirit in which they are conceived. I should add that I write them in a purely private capacity, and that I alone am responsible for the views advanced, though I believe them to be quite in harmony with the sentiments of my colleagues on the Council.

In a young and essentially practical community like our own it is obviously undesirable that the chief educational body should make provision for general culture only, as is mainly the case at the older English Universities. I apprehend that the function of a colonial University should be in a large measure to supply a high-class technical training in those professions in which the youth of the colony are to earn their livelihood; but at the same time it should equally be the province of the University to see that it is not mere technical education only which is imparted through its teaching. The strictly technical or professional courses should be preceded or accompanied by a certain amount of general education in addition to that which has been taught at school; the University should, in fact, insist that general culture should not be neglected by those who seek professional degrees at its hands. Hitherto the University of Adelaide, through no fault of its own, has been able to make provision for general culture only, that is to say, for classics, mathematics, English literature, and some of the natural sciences, and in so doing it has failed to secure the sympathies of a large class of the public, who require an education of a different kind, or who at least wish that the scope of its teaching should be

extended. In fact there is no use denying that the growth of the University has been less rapid than could be wished, partly no doubt from want of enthusiastic encouragement from those it was hoped would be its ardent supporters, partly also no doubt from its own inherent shortcomings.

I think that the Council have fully recognised this fact, though I repeat again that it has mainly been due to causes entirely beyond its control, and it now desires to extend the operations of the University by providing a curriculum which shall include teaching in two of the professions practised here, viz., in law and medicine.

It is not competent for me to enter into the details of the scheme for law instruction, as the matter is still *sub judice*. I may only remark that if the scheme as proposed by the Council be sanctioned in the proper quarters, and be fully carried out, a very complete faculty of laws will be established, which shall include teaching in all branched, required by the legal practitioner, and of course the granting of law degrees. I would also ask the public and the Press to suspend their judgment on a scheme of which they can only have imperfect and insufficient particulars. As regards a faculty of medicine I observe that there are some who would wish to see a complete School of Medicine established here at once in preference to a school of law. I wish that the numbers of students at the University would justify the step. It is only those who are acquainted with the elaborate educational machinery of a complete medical school who can properly appreciate the difficulties in the way, and the impossibility of founding such an institution here under present circumstances. The Council, however, hope that as

"Mighty things from small beginnings grow,"

it will be rightly interpreting the spirit of the times to make a commencement in this direction; and with this view, as you have reported in your issue of to-day, it has appointed a lecturer on physiology. Though logically perhaps anatomy (or the knowledge of structure) should precede physiology (or the knowledge of function), it was thought that the latter subject from its much greater general interest should have the preference. It is the intention of the Council to get this course recognised by the chief medical examining bodies of Great Britain, so that while the knowledge of the structure and functions of their own bodies may be diffused amongst students generally, intending students of medicine may gain credit for attendance on this course at least here. I, for one, should be very sorry indeed to see students of medicine pass through the whole of their curriculum here. We cannot yet supply the great opportunities for clinical study and for hospital practice afforded by the great metropolitan and provincial hospitals of Europe. But what I think we can do, and should do, is to supply the preliminary and non-professional parts of a medical student's education. Botany, chemistry, and comparative anatomy are already taught, and taught well. So far as such encyclopaedic knowledge lies within one man's capacity, physiology now finds a place. With the addition of anatomy and the proper development and recognition of the above subjects the University might, and I hope will, before very long provide teaching in all the preliminary subjects of a medical student's course. This would shorten by two years at least the time necessary to be spent in England, and would permit the students' whole time there to be devoted to hospital practice and clinical study. In the course of time, as the population increases and funds are forthcoming, it will, I hope, be found possible for the University to equip a medical faculty with all the appliances and means for a complete and scientific medical education.

Such, Sir, are my own views with regard to some points connected with the present and future prospects of the University, and I believe that they are shared by many, if not all the members of the Council; at any rate, I know them to be actuated by a sincere desire, not only to enlarge the sphere of University teaching, but to enlarge it in directions that shall be most advantageous to the public and useful to the cause of education.

I am, Sir, &c.,

E. C. STIRLING, M.A., M.D., Cantab.  
Formerly Lecturer on Physiology to St.  
George's Hospital, London.

Adelaide, November 2.

Full stop

S/  
Cap P.

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