

From the Register Thursday Dec<sup>r</sup> 7<sup><sup>th</sup></sup> 1882

of the Council will, we believe be held in

ments for resigning his See and leaving for England. No stronger reason existed in December than in June why he should resign the Chancellorship, and so render the position vacant. The only course fairly open to him was the one he took of placing the office at the disposal of the Council. Another resolution passed obviously has a valedictory character.

Nearly twelve months have elapsed since the Bishop's letter was laid before the Council. For the greater part of that time Dr. Short has been absent from the colony, but he is, it would seem, still nominally the Chancellor of the University. In the interests of the University this is a most unfortunate and undesirable state of things. Nor is this the worst of the matter. The Council have placed themselves in a dilemma. Assuming, as is to be implied from the report of the Council meeting held last December, as well as from what took place at the meeting of the Senate yesterday, and the letter of our correspondent published elsewhere, that nothing the Bishop has done has rendered the office vacant or put the Council in a position to act at any moment as if it were vacant, that body must either be guilty of discourtesy to the Chancellor, or they must sacrifice the welfare of the University. The Act provides that "whenever a vacancy shall occur in the office of Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, either by death, resignation, expiration of tenure, or otherwise, the said Council shall elect a Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, as the case may be, instead of the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor occasioning such vacancy." Even if the Council had the power to declare the position vacant, it would, under these circumstances, be a very ungracious step for them to take. They must either ask Dr. Short to resign in order to render the office vacant, or they must wait until the expiry of his tenure of the Chancellorship, which will not be until 1886. The former course will involve a most ungraceful and ungracious act towards Dr. Short, and the latter will be exceedingly prejudicial to the University. Seeing that this is the state of affairs, it is not very reassuring to be informed by "A Member of the Council" that the governing body of the University have not even taken the trouble seriously to consider their position in regard to this matter. We cannot conceive of any business which has engaged their attention during the last twelve months which has been so important as to justify forcing this into the background. As a meeting

of the Council will, we believe, be held in about two or three weeks from the present time, we venture very earnestly to express the hope that the question of the Chancellorship will be then very carefully and fully discussed.

It must be remembered that the Chancellor of the Adelaide University is not, like the Chancellor of an English or the Lord Rector of a Scotch University, an officer whose actual duties are very circumscribed. The Chancellor of the Adelaide University is a member of the Council, and he is in reality the chief executive officer of the institution. If he is present to supervise the working of the University there are many things he may do to advance its interests. He may venture to assume a responsibility which cannot with propriety be taken by the Vice-Chancellor or any other member of the Council. It is not always an easy matter to obtain a full attendance of the Council. In such a contingency, in order to prevent needless delay, the Chancellor, if he is on the spot, may undertake to give the necessary directions in matters requiring immediate attention, trusting to the Council to confirm his action afterwards. To keep the office virtually vacant, as it is so long as the incumbent of it is not resident in the colony, is in many ways most prejudicial to the interests of the University, and it is the duty of the Council to regard those interests as being of paramount importance. Moreover, the existing state of things casts an unmerited slur upon the colony. It cannot be pretended that it is impossible to find in South Australia any one willing and qualified to fill the position of Chancellor of the University, yet this is what the extraordinary inaction of the Council seems to imply. We need hardly say that we write thus, not with the view of disparaging the services which Dr. Short has rendered to the University, or his claims to any mark of respect which the Council can tender to him. We believe the venerable prelate would be the last to desire to hold an appointment if, by continuing to do so, he hindered rather than promoted the prosperity of an institution with which he has been identified from its beginning. Our object is simply to urge upon the Council that they should clearly explain what the true state of the case is, and that they should lose no time in arranging matters so as to secure the services of a Chancellor who can take an active part in the direction of the affairs of the University. The University is largely supported out of the public funds, and the public have a right to demand that its interests shall not be in any way imperilled by the supineness of those who are charged with the administration of its affairs.