

To Mr. J. W. Leitch, B.A., has been awarded the South Australian Scholarship. We congratulate him on his success, and trust that in the old country he will do honour to his training here.

The most unsatisfactory point in the lists which we publish this morning is the information concerning the candidates for degrees. For all we know, there may have been some unsuccessful competitors, but taking the report as it is published, it is dispiriting to read that for the B.A. course there were only two candidates successful in the first year's examination, three in the second, and three in the third. It is still worse in the Science School. Only one candidate makes her appearance on paper. Is the University of Adelaide to be a mere Examination Board? Are the Professors, able men as they are, to have nothing more to do than to test the work of the schools? Should they not be teachers as well? By the time the Professors of Anatomy, Chemistry, and Music make their appearance there will be almost more Professors than students. Surely this is not right. Education is not cramming, nor should a boy who has passed the matriculation examination consider that he has learnt everything. It would almost seem as if the system which obtains in most of the Colleges of the older Universities at home—of making matriculation a merely nominal thing—is after all preferable. If the examination is made too difficult, it almost induces people to think that when they have passed it they have finished their education, whereas they have really only begun it. In Melbourne the same evil is noticeable, but here, on account of the comparative smallness of our population, it is more glaring.

Surely it is by no means proper that such an expensive piece of machinery as the Adelaide University is should be put in motion for a dozen students. How many of these forty matriculated students will proceed to degrees? There is something radically wrong in the system of our University. The only time

at which the Professors as a body come prominently before the public is at the minor examinations. What are they doing in the interval? Next to nothing. A few lectures must be delivered to one or two students, and then the Professors rest satisfied with themselves, conscious of their own virtue. The fact of the matter is that they must be galvanized out of their old-world ways. If men do not come to be taught, the teachers must go out into the byways and compel them to come in. The motion which in some sort made a step towards this propagation of knowledge was, in very questionable taste, opposed by a member of the Professorial Board. He should not regret, none of his colleagues should regret, that by the establishment of evening classes their sphere of usefulness and influence is enlarged. We sincerely trust that an opportunity will soon be given to those who cannot avail themselves of the ordinary lectures of attending classes in the evening in which they shall be prepared for graduating.

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ARITHMETICAL PUZZLES AT THE UNIVERSITY.

[TO THE EDITOR,

Sir—We [have seen scores of arithmetical papers, but we never saw anything resembling the paper set at the last junior examination at the Adelaide University. It was highly original—nay, too original. You will find nothing like any of those famous questions in such standard works as Barnard Smith or Hamblin Smith. We, however, must confess it had one good quality. It was an excellent example of what an elementary paper on arithmetic ought not to be. We fancy we hear the professor, on having completed those questions from the inmost recesses of his imagination, exclaim—“Now, boys, there is something new for you; search arithmetics, ancient, modern, or antediluvian, you will find nothing like those questions. Barnard Smith and Hamblin Smith, though shining lights in their way, will throw little light on those puzzles. Puzzle them out the best way you can, and remember you have only two hours before you.” If this remarkable paper of mathematical puzzles were shown to the bookkeepers of the 101 mercantile houses of Adelaide and the question put, “Does any one of these questions come within the range of your business?” we venture to say that the unanimous answer would be no. Notice the examination papers selected from those given in England by leading examining bodies, and placed at the end of Hamblin Smith and Barnard Smith, you will find them plain practical questions such as can be answered by those acquainted with the leading rules of arithmetic. We ask—Why should our South Australian youth be worse treated than they are in London or Birmingham? If this assertion is correct, is it not absurd, nay a misnomer, to call the examination paper in question elementary, such as is prescribed by the rules of the University? We see no such questions as those complained of set in the papers of the Oxford and Cambridge examining bodies. All examiners are now and then inclined to indulge in certain vagaries in their own special subjects, and provision is usually made against these eccentricities by a body of supervisors. We do not expect to see much improvement in this respect in Adelaide, seeing that the supervision of such questions rests with the examiners themselves, who will be inclined to pass each other's papers. Hence it will happen that each examiner will remain master or autocrat of the situation. This evil might be corrected by infusing new blood from outside into the body of supervisors. As a large percentage of the passes on the matriculation-list were not called upon to face the arithmetic, having passed in that subject before in the junior examination, we attribute a large proportion of the failures to arithmetic, the other papers set being, in our opinion, unobjectionable. All public institutions allow the right of appeal to any one who considers he has been unfairly or unjustly treated. We would certainly advise those who failed in arithmetic at the late examination to

appeal against the paper as not coming under elementary arithmetic as usually understood. We will now put the issue into a nutshell. We deny that the questions referred to were elementary, and also that failure in such questions proved the candidate to be incompetent in elementary arithmetic. As we are on the negative, the onus of proof rests with our antagonists who will champion the justice and fairness of the paper.—I am, &c.,
KAPUNDA.

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JUNIOR UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—The letter from "Kapunda" in to-day's issue is very justly severe on the arithmetical papers put before the junior examiners at the recent University examinations. The questions might be fair enough for a second year student, but for a candidate professing only a knowledge of elementary arithmetic are unfair and absurd. My object in writing is, however, slightly different from "Kapunda's," although I heartily approve of his views. The University is a public body supported by public funds, and its examinations are accepted by the various schools as a fair test of the work they are doing. I think the University might fairly go a step further and enable the public to ascertain how the schools are doing their work, especially as a great deal of misrepresentation and misunderstanding is on foot on the subject. For example, I hear that one large school sent up a large number of pupils, *all* of whom passed. Another large school with a greater name and larger funds sent up about the same number, and passed only some 50 or 60 per cent. I also hear that the average age of the former was lower than that of the latter, thus intensifying its triumph. Now these reports may be wrong, and I as the father of a family seeking instruction for my children have no means of checking them. Cannot the University authorities inform the public:—1. How many appeared for examination from each school? 2. What was the average age of each applicant from the various schools? 3. How many passed from each school? 4. The average age of those who passed, distinguishing the schools? 5. In what branches did the pupils from each school fail? 6. How did those applicants who failed in the compulsory subjects distinguish themselves in the non-compulsory? These questions if answered would enable the public to comprehend for themselves how the various schools are working, and would also assist defective schools to repair their deficiencies.—I am, &c.

H.

December 16, 1884.