

Register 27th July 1896

DEATH OF MR. HAROLD B. FLETCHER.—
The many friends of Mr. Harold Browning Fletcher, fourth son of the late Rev. William Roby Fletcher, will regret to hear that the attack of meningitis, from which he had been suffering for nearly a fortnight, had a fatal termination at midday on Sunday, July 26. The deceased's constitution had been weakened by previous illnesses, and at an early stage the seizure of brain fever which developed itself during the week before last assumed so serious a form that the patient's medical attendants, Drs. Campbell and Poulton, held out but slight hopes of recovery. Mr. Harold Fletcher, who was twenty-three years of age, was of a singularly bright and happy disposition, and endeared himself to all with whom he came in contact. He had a special talent for music, and in 1892 passed the University Senior Examination in the practice of the art. At the time of his death he was Junior Clerk at the University, a position which he had filled for some years. Mr. Fletcher's stepmother and sister are at present on a visit to England, and his three brothers are also absent from the colony.

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THE HOSPITAL AND THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

It is gratifying to observe that the Board of the Adelaide Hospital is beginning to recognise that something more is required of it than to be, as one correspondent has forcibly expressed, a mere "doormat for the Government." A study of Acts and regulations has convinced some at least of its members that it is the real governing body of the institution, and cannot legally—however much it may be disposed to do so—renounce its functions or suffer them to be usurped by any one else. Acting under this new sense of responsibility, the Board at its meeting on Friday displayed in two or three matters a degree of independence positively refreshing when contrasted with its past docility and nervelessness. In the first place it took upon itself, at the instance of Mr. Lyons, the discharge—in a somewhat grudging spirit it must be confessed—of its debt of gratitude to the late honorary medical officers for volunteering to continue attendance at the Hospital pending satisfactory arrangements for superseding them. Every one capable of taking a fair and unprejudiced view of the attitude of those gentlemen and of the exigencies of the institution must feel that it would have been more in accordance with the dictates of fairness and humanity had the reply to this offer taken the form

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of "acceptance bounteous," but a courteous acknowledgment, even if belated, is better than no acknowledgment at all.

In the next place the Board, still led by Mr. Lyons, agreed to a resolution showing that it is duly impressed with the necessity of maintaining the Medical School. The manner in which the Government have acted proves to demonstration that the present and future prosperity of this branch of the University is a matter of small concern to our rulers. Under the flimsy pretext of not being able to spare the money—a pretext which, in view of the decision to spend unnecessarily many hundreds of pounds in patching up the Medical Staff of the Hospital, assumes a singularly ludicrous aspect—the Ministry for weeks steadfastly refused to make any provision for the school, and in the end were only prevailed upon to hand over a moiety of the insignificant sum previously granted. Subsequently, although it was pointed out that the dispersion of the Honorary Medical Staff of the Hospital meant, for the time being at least, the ruin of the school, the Government apparently regarded the prospect with the utmost indifference. It is to the credit of the Board that, yielding to pressure from without, it has taken something approaching to a resolute stand upon the matter, even going the length of admonishing the Premier and his colleagues to send to the proper authorities without delay an assurance that no pains or expense will be spared in safeguarding the interests of students.

While complimenting the Board on this exhibition of independence and courage, we are bound to say that the outlook for the Medical School is for the time being not particularly cheering. The capable staff of lecturers by means of which the work of the institution has been conducted so smoothly and efficiently has been broken up, and the

arrangements resorted to must obviously be of a stop-gap character. The University Council, realizing the importance of carrying on operations and counteracting as far as possible the disposition that is being shown by such undergraduates as are in a position to do so to continue the course in other Universities, have made it known that a lecturer in clinical surgery and another in clinical medicine will be available, and that students will still have the opportunity of attending the Hospital. The contrast between this arrangement and that which has hitherto been in force which provided for six clinical lecturers some of whom