

as Chancellor may be safely entrusted with the superintendence of the legal studies of the University, Mr. Fletcher as Vice-Chancellor will take an interest in classical and modern literature and philosophy. Scarcely any better arrangement than this could be devised. The Chancellor from all accounts has bestirred himself in no ordinary way, so that the law classes may be a success. Mr. Fletcher's appointment as Vice-Chancellor will similarly conduce to the popularity of the arts course. Both are speakers of considerable merit, and their presence at the annual commemoration towards the end of the year will tend greatly to grace and dignify the proceedings.

From the Register
August 1st 1883

UNIVERSITY LANDS AT WIRREANDA.

A paper laid before the Assembly pursuant to a motion by Mr. Henning, gives full information with regard to the land leased as an University grant at Wirreanda. The first head of the return shows that 15,000 acres were granted on December 16, 1876, its quality for agricultural and grazing purposes being favourably reported upon by the Surveyor-General. It is shown further that the land was originally leased to F. W. Stokes and H. A. Short on July 1, 1876, for two and a half years, at a rental of £476 13s. 8d. per annum, or a little over 7½d. per acre; that the whole rent was paid up to the time, January 1, 1879, when the lease expired. On the expiry of Messrs. Stokes & Short's lease the block of 15,000 acres was divided into eighteen sections, which were disposed of on lease to the highest bidder at auction for a term of twenty-one years from May 13, 1879. The names of these lessees, the area of their leases, and the rent agreed to be paid were as follows:—Johnston Mitchell, 1,643 acres at 2s. 6d.; R. G. Crettenden, 838 acres at 2s., 860 acres at 2s. 6d., 908 acres at 2s. 8d., Joseph Turner, 962 acres at 2s., 1,006 acres at 2s. 6d., 1,002 acres at 3s.; Fitzgerald & Horan Brothers, 836 acres at 2s. 6d.; R. Dempsey, 918 acres at 2s. 6d., 769 acres at 2s. 6d., 786 acres at 2s. 6d., 393 acres at 5s., 701 acres at 2s.; Denis Ryan, 753 acres at 2s. 6d.; F. Growden, 894 acres at 2s. 6d.; John Moyses, 886 acres at 2s. 6d., 837 acres at 2s. 6d. Reductions were granted to the lessees mentioned in Return III., on the following conditions:—The Council of the University agreed that those lessees who had enclosed their holdings within six months from November 12, 1880, with six-wire sheep-proof fencing, should be allowed—1. A remission of one half-year's rent. 2. That they should pay only half of the rent in arrears. 3. That the future rents should be reduced to one-half of the original rentals to the end of the term of their leases. The amount of these reductions were 50 per cent. on the original rentals, or a reduction of £946 12s. 2d. per annum. The amounts actually received after such reductions were made was £534 13s. 2d. The names of tenants now holding their leases are—R. G. Crettenden, 2,606 acres, for pastoral purposes; J. Turner, 2,970 acres, do.; J. Moyses, 1,723 acres, do.; D. Ryan, 753 acres, agricultural—a total of 8,052 acres. As to the average rent per acre paid by each tenant now in possession, the return states:—Crettenden holds 2,606 acres at a rental of £158 13s. 8d., an average per acre of not quite 1s. 2½d.; Turner, 2,970, £186 2s. 6d., average of a trifle over 1s. 3d.; Moyses, 1,723, £107 13s. 9d., average of 1s. 3d.; Ryan, 753, £47 1s. 3d., average of 1s. 3d. Total, 8,052 acres, £499 11s. 2d.; average per acre, 1s. 2½d. It is added finally that "no formal applications for further reductions of rent have been made, but informally offers have been made for vacant sections at prices varying from 6d. to 10d. an acre. The tenants in possession have informally stated that the present rents are too high, and have suggested that the land is not worth more than 9d. an acre."

*From the Register of
August 27th 1883*

THE TAXATION PROPOSALS AND
PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—The Treasurer, speaking on behalf of the Government, informed Mr. Rees last week, in answer to a direct question, that it was not intended to exempt St. Peter's, Prince Alfred, and Whinham Colleges from payment of the proposed tax. Of course, the minor institutions would be included in the decision. I hope, however, that Parliament will see its way to effecting a considerable modification of the tax in this instance, if it does not entirely do away with it.

No one can fail to see that peculiar difficulties beset this question. The institutions named, for example, occupy valuable ground very near the city. This land is not directly productive; the State does not get any pecuniary advantage from it. It figures largely in prospectuses, and the Colleges may be said to trade on it to some extent. Instances are not unknown of pupils having been attracted to one or other of them by the fact that the buildings are on a large scale and surrounded by so many acres of playground. And so it might seem, at the first glance, that these buildings and lands should contribute to the general revenue just as much as the farmer should pay taxes for his tools and machinery. And again: Supposing that these Colleges considered that the payment of this impost would cripple their resources as educational factors, the land would be sold at auction and cut up into allotments of various sizes and devoted to various uses, each of which allotments would directly contribute to the State revenue.

This is the line of thought which occurs to the mind first. But when we go further into the matter we cannot fail to see that there is great deal to be said on the other side of the question. In the first place, how and for what purpose were these lands acquired? I am speaking more particularly now of the incorporated Colleges—St. Peter's and Prince Alfred's. For the other institutions, however important and useful, however sincerely devoted and admirably adapted to the spread of education, can by no process of reasoning come under any other category than that of establishments founded and carried on for purposes of gain. St. Peter's and Prince Alfred Colleges are, on the other hand, incorporated institutions, founded and carried on for purposes of education pure and simple. Their governing bodies cannot touch a penny of the profits. They are simply stewards, not proprietors. They have no more right to use the school buildings for purposes other than that laid down by Parliament than they have to set up a branch establishment in Parliament House without anybody's leave or licence. The proprietors of private schools

could turn their buildings into breweries, if so it seemed good to them. The land, then, which surrounds Prince Alfred and St. Peter's Colleges and the buildings themselves were provided by colonists at their own expense for a fixed purpose. This purpose was that education in suitable premises should be ensured to their sons and descendants, and to the sons and descendants of their fellow-colonists. From time to time, as the colony has increased in numbers and wealth, additions have been made to the buildings and other possessions of these schools. It may be that flattering allusions to these possession and buildings have found their way into prospectuses. That is but natural. It would ill become the inhabitants of this city, who justly congratulate ourselves on our public parks and "lungs of the town," to deny the boon of free air and room for exercise to our boys, who spend five or six hours a day in school. If we want our boys to grow into fine healthy men we must not take their playgrounds from them. By the proposed tax school authorities are almost induced to sell their land, deprive the boys of good honest play, or else to make up the increase in their expenditure by a corresponding increase in their fees.

And here two points require consideration. These Colleges, as well as other secondary schools, stand midway between the State