

Register

5th Feb 1896

THE MEDICAL SCHOOL AND THE GOVERNMENT.—The Government have finally refused to renew the grant which sustains the Adelaide Medical School. The hopes of those who desire to see South Australia supplying and educating at least a fair proportion of its own qualified medical practitioners must therefore be turned in the direction of the speedy replacement of the present Cabinet by men who have, in this and other matters, at least some little conception of the requirements of the people's welfare in sickness and in health, and some sort of conscience in keeping faith with students who have begun the course of study for the medical degree. The transparent plea of poverty comes with a particularly bad grace from a Ministry which has notoriously squandered money on things from which the community as a whole has received no benefit, and which, moreover, was in a position to announce, only last week, that, at the present rate of progress, the year's income promises to be a good deal in excess of its Treasurer's estimate. The state of the public finances, we are afraid, is being made use of in this instance as the stalking-horse for private grudges. In the meantime the crisis in the history of the Medical School must be dealt with somehow or other, and a special meeting of the University Council is to be held on Friday for the purpose of considering the unfavourable answer of the Government to the forcible representations of the deputation which waited upon the Minister of Education a few weeks ago. The serious nature of the position arises from the fact that the lectures of the first term begin next month, and unless the students who are continuing their courses for the medical degree and diploma have the advantage of receiving lectures from a certain number of specialists—one for each subject of their course—they may study as much as they please, but their degrees, even if obtained, will not be recognised by the General Council of the Medical Association or by the Registration

Boards of any of the adjoining colonies. In addition to the Professor of Anatomy, whose continuance in office is fortunately secured through the munificence of Sir Thomas Elder, there are no less than nine specialist lecturers, who respectively take up the subjects of physiology, medicine, surgery, diseases of women and children, the eyes, the ears, the nature of drugs, and medicine as applied to lunacy and the law. It is impossible to combine these subjects under the charge of two or three lecturers, because the regulations of the General Council provide that the majority of them must be taken up singly, each by

Continued

its own specialist, and it is an advantage to have the services of medical men who are in practice, and who keep constantly in touch with the special duties of their profession. The Council of the University intend, as we announced several weeks ago, to make an appeal to the public spirit of the present lecturers, desiring them to co-operate with the object of preventing the complete collapse of the Medical School. This means, of course, that these gentlemen are to be asked to lecture for little or nothing, and not only to lecture, but also to undertake the very considerable amount of preparation and organization which most of the courses of lectures demand. There are in all twenty-eight subjects in which students have to pass in order to get their degrees, and the fees are already heavy. It has only been by the exercise of very rigid economy and the keeping down of salaries to the lowest limit that the School has been carried to its present promising stage. We hope that some, at least, of the lecturers will see their way clear to continuing their work until it has been decided by the constituencies whether the colony is to remain under the rule of men who wantonly discountenance some of the most valuable institutions that contribute to the education and the general welfare of the people.

Advertiser

8th Feb 1896

ADELAIDE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

The council of the University of Adelaide held a meeting on Friday afternoon to consider the action of the Government in cutting off the grant of £600 to the Medical School. The outcome of the discussion was that a committee was appointed to confer with the Minister of Education on Monday. The meeting was then adjourned until Wednesday.
