

THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.

PROVIDING FOR EXPANSION.

DEPUTATION TO THE PREMIER.

On Thursday morning a deputation from the Adelaide University waited on the Premier (Hon. J. Verran) to ask requests for certain concessions which had been under consideration for some years.

In introducing the deputation, Mr. W. D. Ponder, M.P., said the deputation requested that the land which would be available when the Destitute Asylum Buildings were removed should be reserved for future extensions of the University. An increased grant was also desired.

The Chancellor of the University (Sir Samuel Way) expressed their indebtedness to Mr. Ponder for having consented to introduce the deputation at very short notice. He would like to add that they had always looked upon the University as a non-political institution.

Mr. Verran—Quite so.

The Chancellor, continuing, said their first object was to ask for a reply to the request made by a deputation which waited upon the late Premier (Mr. A. H. Peake) towards the end of last year. At that time they asked for payment of the customary subsidy for the new buildings which had been erected, and for the same subsidy for buildings to be erected immediately. Since the foundation of the University 34 years ago they had been subsidised on a £ to £ basis. They had not received a subsidy on the buildings for the last eight to ten years. Such large buildings as the Elder Hall, Conservatorium, and Prince of Wales Theatre had been constructed at a cost of £35,650, the subsidy on which would be £17,825. When the buildings were erected application was not made for payment of the subsidy. Large gifts for the purpose of endowing the University were available and they were utilised in providing buildings. The money had not been applied for, because of the financial difficulties in which the State was then placed. During the past 10 years there had been an unprecedented expansion of the operations of the University, and there was a pressing need for new buildings. While in 1899 there were 581 students, the present number was about 1,040. During the same period the number of professors had increased from 8 to 11, and the number of lecturers from 16 to 29. The fine block of buildings they now had had all been erected in the last 10 or 12 years, with the exception of the original Universal building. For the last 20 years they had received no grant whatever apart from the subsidy of 10 per cent. on their income. During the last six or seven years the New South Wales Government had paid £150,000 for new University buildings, while in Victoria, in addition to a subsidy of £21,000, as against that of £7,000 or £8,000 received for the Adelaide University, the Government had paid £37,000 extra in grants, and had spent £70,000 on new buildings, between 1883 and 1902. It was stated at the deputation which waited on Mr. Peake in November last that the works they most urgently needed comprised the following:—Extension of the library; additional lecture-rooms for the schools of classics and philosophy; adequate accommodation for the professors, the law school, the geological and mineralogical departments; a caretaker's lodge; and accommodation for the herbarium and the department of botany. These works would cost £11,000, but they now asked that the amount be increased by £1,000. The number of their students made a common room urgently necessary, and that would raise the cost of the proposed works to £12,000. On that amount they asked for a Government subsidy of £6,000. The bulk of the buildings must be erected during the vacation. They desired to begin the work at once in order to complete it before March next, so as not to interfere with the work of the institution. They owed a great deal to his late colleague, Sir Henry Bunday, for the foundation of the University. Every Government did not get such strong support as did the present Administration. (The Premier—"That is very kind." Laughter.) He was non-political. He supported every Government when he thought they were right, and he held his peace if he considered them to be wrong. (Laughter.) The grounds of the University of Sydney comprised 128 acres, and of the University of Melbourne 100 acres, while the Adelaide institution only had five acres. If the expansion to which he had referred had taken place during the last 28 years, what progress could they expect in the next 50 years? He knew that the question of removing the Destitute Asylum had been under consideration for some time. Those buildings covered four acres. He hoped that the Government

would be able to provide better accommodation for the old people outside the city bounds, and that the buildings and grounds could be made available for University purposes. Some of the buildings could be used almost at once for lecture rooms. Last year it was suggested in the press that the education block should be made complete by handing over to the University the site not only of the Destitute Asylum, but also the site at present used for the military and police quarters, so that the University would then have an area of 13 acres. He had received from Mr. R. Barr Smith a letter apologising for his inability to attend, and stating that there was no other public use to which the land referred to could be applied than for subsidiary buildings to allow of the healthy expansion of the University. They were completely hemmed in by other institutions, and their only outlet for the University was in the direction of the Destitute Asylum and the police parade ground. (Applause.)

The Hon. R. Butler, M.P., supported the request. The land referred to was the most valuable State-owned site in Adelaide. Education had advanced, and the time was at hand when the University should be at the disposal of every capable boy and girl. (Applause.) The question of higher education, which was not a party one, would receive the most sympathetic support of members of his side of the House. (Applause.)

Mr. E. W. van Senden (president of the Chamber of Commerce) referred to the desirability of extending instruction in commerce at the University. To the commercial houses of the States it would be welcome news that the University purposed bestowing a degree in commerce. (Hear, hear.) That was done at other universities. Residential colleges were also worthy of consideration. In such a place a student would have a quiet home for study.

Mr. T. H. Smeaton, M.P., said it had been the intention of the Defence Department to apply for an extension of the grounds. He thought some arrangement could be arrived at satisfactory to both departments. He supported the request.

Mr. F. W. Young, M.P., said the tendency was to extend the facilities for secondary and technical education, and the result of that would be a largely increased number of students.

Mr. T. Ryan, M.P., while expressing his approval of the request of the deputation, said if the land asked for were handed over there would only be a miserable 13 acres. What was required was 30 to 40 acres. In a few years there might be added to the roll 1,000 names.

The Chancellor added that they did not ask that the £17,000 should be paid to them in cash, but they wanted it as an endowment. They wanted more money to extend the work. For instance, they really should have two chairs for classics, and chairs of public health, pathology, zoology, ancient history, astronomy, botany, and veterinary science.

The Premier, in reply, said he was forcibly reminded that the family of the University had become too big for its home. They were all pleased to know that South Australia had made such excellent progress during the past few years, and he was satisfied that the system of higher education would have to keep pace with that progress. He could assure them that their request for the money would receive the most careful consideration. The Peake-Butler Government had suggested that that amount should be placed on the Estimates and it was now receiving attention. If, however, there was going to be a greater University it was a question whether it would not be wise to get out of the city to where they could procure a larger area, and have greater freedom.

Mr. Smeaton—It will mean a lot of money.

The Premier—Probably it would, but they had to remember that they were legislating not for the present day only but for the future. If the area of the University was to be extended as suggested he was not quite so sure that the small area they were asking for would be equal to all the demands of the future. It might be better to get out where they could procure, say, 100 acres, and there erect buildings that would be equal to all the demands that would be made upon it. When the Government had to pay up to £200 per foot in the city for land that probably would be required for Government purposes he did not know that they would be justified in parting with the land referred to. The Government had to deal with the difficulty of securing and training teachers, but they must consider the University equally with the public schools. There need be no fear for the present that the Government were going to hand the Destitute Asylum block

over to the Commonwealth. He would submit the whole matter to his colleagues, and they would carefully consider the three main points raised, (1) as to new buildings, (2) as to the amount of money required, and (3) as to the area of land. (Applause.)

The Minister of Education (Hon. F. W. Coneybeer) also replied. He said he wanted to extend education to every section of the community, so that boys and girls who had brains could develop them. He wanted the University to be something different from a conservative institution, which young men and women thought they had little chance of entering. On the land on which the Destitute Asylum was erected he would like to see a training college for teachers.

Daily Herald, Sep 9th 1910.

INTRODUCING DEPUTATIONS.

QUESTION OF COURTESY.

In the House of Assembly on Thursday afternoon Mr. Young asked the Premier what was the rule of the Government with reference to the introduction of deputations. He wanted to know whether it was necessary for the member representing the district from which a deputation came to introduce whether the matter concerned was of State or only of importance to that district.

The Premier said he took it to be the public duty of the member representing a district to introduce any deputation that came from it. The hon. member was referring to what had taken place that morning. He thought Mr. Young was intruding on the rights of the members for the Adelaide district in endeavoring to introduce a deputation.

Mr. Young—Certainly not.

The Premier said he took the stand that it was the duty of the members for Adelaide to have introduced the deputation.

Mr. Jackson—That is the Government's policy?

The Premier—Yes.

Mr. Rudall—There is a good chance for a Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera.

The Premier—And perhaps the hon. member would not make a bad figure in it. (Laughter.)

Mr. Young then asked the Premier if he was aware that he had received a deputation in connection with Gepp's Cross which was introduced by the member for Wallaroo.

The Premier said that the deputation came at a moment's notice, and Mr. Winter was a member of the union.

Mr. Young—And I am a member of the University Council.

The Premier said the Gepp's Cross deputation was also a matter of urgency.

Mr. Young asked the Premier if he remembered the occasion when the Royal Agricultural Society approached the Government in reference to the registration of stallions, and if it was not introduced by Sir Lancelot Stirling.

The Premier said that he had done nothing more that morning than other members of the House had done. The Hon. L. O'Loughlin, when Commissioner of Public Works had taken the same stand. He considered it right that the members for the district should have the right to introduce deputations to the Government. (Hear, hear.) What happened that morning had been nothing unusual. When there were members for the district of Adelaide and special concessions were being asked for, it was right that they should be asked to introduce the deputation.

Mr. Blundell asked whether it would not have been courteous for those who arranged the deputation to approach the members for the district and ask one of them to introduce the deputation.

The Premier considered that it would have been. As he had indicated that morning the members for the district should have been approached even if they refused to act in the desired capacity.