

Critic 3.9.19.

Argus 4.9.19.

"When do you resume your practice?"
"Straight away," was the characteristically prompt reply. "I shall begin this week."

—Another Life.—

"It all seems like another life, now that I am back in Adelaide again," she went on; "but in less than three years I saw more than I have done in the rest of my lifetime."

"When did you leave Adelaide?"—"In February, 1917, I went to England, in response to appeals for doctors. It was an anxiety, leaving my father and mother, but they, unselfishly, urged me to go—and I felt that the larger duty did call me overseas."

"Where did you begin work?"—"At Cambridge Hospital, Aldershot, and it was a tremendous experience. I was in the surgical wards in charge of every variety of war ailment and wound. The convoys arrived continually from France, and more than 1,000 patients were accommodated at this busy centre."

"Were you not the first woman surgeon there to achieve equal status officially with the other surgeons?"—"Yes," was the amazed reply. "How did you learn that?"

"Some of the men you nursed have returned, and have told us of your untiring and unselfish work. They also said you had gained the rank of major."—"As doctors, we are classed as majors, but not officially gazetted in England. The old country is very conservative, and was only beginning to consider this step when the armistice was signed. Australia is much more progressive in the matter."

"When did you go to France?"—"In November, 1917, women volunteers were sought, as the war was at a terrible pitch, so six of us went to Abbeville, in the centre of the battle zone. There were three hospitals there, an Australian, a South African, and a British. I was, of course, attached to the British one."

—Once in a Lifetime.—

"Was it not terrifying to suddenly go into the actual fighting zone?"—"I did not feel it so, simply, I suppose, because there was so much to do. You just felt that you were in God's hands, and if you were killed while fulfilling the duty of the moment, then it could not be helped; and was no more than those wonderful soldiers were doing incessantly."

"What about air raids?"—"They were the worst proposition, because we felt so helpless to protect the wounded patients from such attacks. The women all behaved splendidly throughout that awful three months in 1918, when nearly every night bombs would be dropped somewhere in the locality. After I had been there for nine months we were literally bombed out."

"This brings the climax. Did you not receive a decoration at Abbeville?"—"You seem very well informed," said Dr. Chapple, laughing. "Personally, I detest talking of myself, but I had better tell you and be done with it. On May 29, 1918, the Germans had been overheard taking photographs. I cannot say whether they knew of the hospitals or not. Anyway, providentially, that night I was on rounds in the women's camps, making an inspection, and, as there was no other doctor available they asked me to stay that night. Had we returned to the hut we would all have been killed. We had warning that Zeppelins were coming, and left the camp to take refuge in a trench near by. Then commenced a deafening bombardment beyond description. The aim was only too good, and a bomb even fell into the trench we were occupying. Fortunately the construction of the trench was zig-zag, so the missile was limited in its effect. Out of 40 women nine were killed outright, and a number injured. There was much work to be done then, with limited means, to relieve the sufferers. Even telephone communication with headquarters was temporarily cut off. There were lots more raids, too."

"Were you not alarmed?"—"No, not even then. I think when there are suffering and death near at hand, fear absent itself. I was surprised, and, of course, honoured, when I heard that the Military Medal had been given to me 'for gallantry on the field.' I had never looked at my work in that light." Thus modestly did Dr. Chapple relate her marvellous experience and escape. Nor would she again refer to it. "Look what all the other doctors and nurses have done," she urged. "I wish you would not write anything at all."

On leaving Abbeville, the doctor went to Rouen and Havre, and different military bases, adding to her surgical experiences. With the cessation of hostilities she returned to England, and, while waiting for the homeward-bound boat, occupied three months in a graduate course, to further equip herself for a return to civilian life.

THE UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

Turning for the moment from the popularity of Mr. Hughes and the big tasks that await statesmen of the Commonwealth, we can come nearer home to matters of local interest that demand our concern. Governments are apt to rush into projects of great magnitude sometimes without counting the cost, and sometimes without thinking of the smaller tasks on hand. The pendulum is apt to swing from one extreme to the other, and from being too conservative they will become too radical. In a way this is what has happened over providing mental hospitals. It was becoming a disgrace to the community that the provision in this direction was so inadequate, and at last the Government was moved and rushed out and bought almost enough land to provide for the sane as well as the insane, without reckoning on what was to be done with the old buildings. This matter was brought up in the Assembly last week, and an appeal was made on behalf of the University for the Parkside site. It certainly is becoming daily clearer that something will have to be done with regard to an extension of the University. The great difficulty is in obtaining a suitable site which is central. With regard to two schools, at least, at the University the range of sites is strictly limited. The medical school must be near the hospitals; the law school must be in the city so that students can attend to their practical training. While it is not absolutely necessary to have all the various schools contained in one set of buildings, it is more or less desirable. At the same time the growing needs must be met, and if the Parkside site is deemed suitable there is good reason in favour of setting this aside. But while the claims of the University are great and are wisely kept before the Government, they should not overshadow lesser claims. The policy of the Government on educational matters is not all that it might be, and cannot be, while primary teachers are labouring under the disabilities which they are. The Government is too loth to spend money on primary education; they are limiting in every sphere by their niggardliness the work that should be done. This is a permanent work whose claims are of the utmost importance, and should not for a moment be forgotten. There is room for much improvement, and the improvement, if and when made, will be reflected in the life of the community.

Arg. 4.9.19.

EXTENSIONS AT MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY.

MELBOURNE, September 3.
After a Parliamentary inspection of the university to-day, the Premier (Mr. Lawson) announced that proposals would be submitted to Parliament this session for making available a sum not exceeding £200,000 for building extensions and improvements at the university.

NEEDS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

LEGISLATION THIS SESSION.

£200,000 for New Buildings.

Abundant evidence of the overcrowded state of the Melbourne University and of the need for the immediate extension of the buildings was obtained by a large party of members of both Houses of the State Parliament on a tour of inspection of the institution yesterday morning. The Premier (Mr. Lawson), most members of the Cabinet, and a good muster of members accepted the invitation of the University Council, whose "political wisdom," as the Premier termed it, was first displayed in the circulation of a concise booklet setting out the actual accommodation of each department, together with a statement of present attendances. Inspecting the different schools, the visitors saw at a glance the disadvantages under which education is imparted. In the anatomy room each table, built to accommodate eight second-year students, had to serve twelve; lecture theatres, ill-lighted, and in some instances inadequately ventilated, were close and depressing after double-banked lectures; and the solution of the insufficiency of space in the laboratories was generally at the expense of comfort, hygiene, and light. Professor Skeats explained that since 1858 the sum of £2,750 had been expended on the geology school, and Professor Berry remarked that in the anatomy school the number of students had increased by nearly 500 per cent. in 15 years, while the staff, salaries, and accommodation had not been increased. In most of the lecture-rooms were graphs amplifying the appeals made in the council's booklet. The only speeches on the round of inspection were made in the chemistry laboratory, where, in an atmosphere charged with sulphuretted hydrogen, the Premier complimented the University on its high percentage of passes in the face of such disadvantages, while the leader of the Caucus party (Mr. Prendergast) talked of "democratizing" the University and providing education on the merit of brains and capacity, and not of wealth.

In proposing the toast of "Parliament" at luncheon in the union room, the vice-chancellor (Sir John Grice) urged Parliament to enable the council to perform its duties to the students. The Public Works department estimated that £200,000 would barely suffice to provide the necessary extensions, and that £10,000 was required to be spent on existing buildings to put them in order. He commented on the fact that the fixed endowment was £9,000, the same as when the University Act was passed in the fifties, whereas the staff had increased from four professors to 18 professors, 12 full-time demonstrators, 66 lecturers, and 11 demonstrators and assistant lecturers. Annual grants had been added amounting to £21,300 last year, exclusive of the veterinary school and tutorial classes, but it was not the same as a fixed annual endowment, because to secure the best teaching there must be some security of tenure. It was estimated that the University could not be conducted in a reasonable manner for less than £30,000, independent of the veterinary school and tutorial classes. If the institution was to keep abreast of the times in the courses of study an additional annual grant of from £7,000 to £10,000 would be involved. Sydney University received from the Government last year £68,000, including £29,000 in fixed endowment. In addition, before the McCaughey bequest, Sydney University had £570,000 in endowments, as compared with £180,000 in Victoria. He appealed to Parliament to complete the pyramid of education.

Professor Osborne, president of the professorial board, said that it was impossible now in existing circumstances to give students what they received a few years ago. He was convinced that if Parliament met the views of the Ministry the public appeal suggested by the Premier would meet with considerable success.

Mr. Lawson, who admitted that the position was not fair to the students, said that he hoped that Parliament would have sufficient vision and imagination to realise the place which the University could fill in the life of the community. "The Ministry," he continued, "will submit to Parliament, probably this month, definite proposals for the amendment of the constitution of the University and for making available a sum, say, not exceeding £200,000 for building extensions and improvements to existing buildings, as well as proposals for increasing the annual grant to enable the council to meet the requirements with which it is faced." (Applause.) The extension of the system of secondary education would make greater demands on the

University. He hoped that the council would consider what facilities could be given to the children of poor and middling poor parents in the country. They should aim, he thought, at the establishment of two hostels, which would not hurt the great affiliated colleges. The difficulty of securing board and residence in Melbourne was the great bar to the attendance of country students. He hoped that Parliament would help the Ministry to improve the condition of the University. (Hear, hear.)

The President of the Legislative Council (Mr. Manifold) said that his influence would be exercised in favour of placing the University on a different footing.

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Mr. Mackey) urged that members of Parliament should be brought into closer touch with the University.

Amongst suggestions made by Mr. Prendergast, who remarked that some persons who had died had not done their duty to the University, were that provision must be made for boys "who came out at the top of the State schools," that to command public money the University must become a public institution—free and secular in its teaching, and that the bar constituted by fees for matriculation should be removed. As far as was consistent with democratic instincts he would do his best to make it a useful democratic institution.

The gift of 69 works on Egyptology, presented to the library by Mr. T. S. Townsend, London manager of "The Argus," was on view in the union room.

Argus 4.9.19.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1919

It is scandalous that the Melbourne University should be in such a condition as it was shown to be to the Parliamentary visitors yesterday. Overcrowded, ill-ventilated, insanitary, badly lighted, ill-equipped with appliances, under-staffed, a menace to the health of professors, demonstrators, and pupils, a fraud upon the parents who pay fees for capable instruction under favourable conditions when these conditions cannot be complied with in present circumstances—in short, it is a flagrant discredit to the State and to the people. Twelve anatomy students working at unlovely fragments at each dissecting table, the atmosphere of lecture theatres close and depressing, one crowd of students following another in quick succession, the numbers of students increasing year by year at a rapid rate, while the staff, salaries, and accommodation have not been increased for fifteen years—these are the outstanding facts. The prospects for the immediate future are distressing, because there appears to be no means of providing accommodation for the large number of students who are known to be preparing for the University at the public and State schools.

If the University were merely a training institution for the sons of the rich—as a number of persons, even including members of Parliament, affirm—there might be justice in the cry: Let the rich keep it going; let the fees be so increased that proper accommodation and adequate staffs can be provided; let the rich endow the institution or do without it. But such a conception is manifestly, and even perversely, erroneous. It has been estimated that 80 per cent. of the University students come from State schools. Professor Tucker, in a recent article in these columns, in commenting on the allegation that the University is for the rich and the aristocrat, affirmed that of those who have passed through his lecture-room during many years, half of them received less than the income of an unskilled labourer. Many found great difficulty in providing themselves with the neces-