

Continued

berg Bensly, M.A., Cambridge; Mr. Arthur William Gosnell, M.A., Cambridge; Mr. William Mitchell, M.A., Edinburgh; Mr. William James Conybeare, B.A., Cambridge; Sir Herbert Oakley, Mus. Doc., Oxford (*in absentia*); and Mr. Richard Ernest Shuter, M.A., Melbourne. The prizemen of the year are:—The Stow prizeman, Messrs. Frederick William Young and Philip Mesmer Newland; Sir Thomas Elder's prizes for physiology, Messrs. Arthur Geoffrey Owen and Bernhard Traugott Zwar (students in medicine of the first year), and Charles Bickerton Blackburn (student in medicine of the second year); the John Howard Clark scholar, Mr. Lionel Joseph Robertson; the Roby Fletcher scholar, Mr. James Beith Wilson; and the Everard scholar, Mr. James Atkinson Bonnin. Professor Mitchell will deliver the annual address.

15th Dec 1895

UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL.

On Monday morning a deputation representing the University Council waited on the Government and asked that the vote of £600 for the medical school of the University should be continued, or at least that £500 should be voted to avoid the necessity for seriously curtailing the efficiency of the institution. Originally the vote stood at £800, but two years ago the amount was reduced by £200 and this year the Government have proposed to wipe out the whole vote. The council urged that if this were done they would either have to economise in very undesirable directions by dispensing with important lectures which form a portion of the curriculum during the last three years of a student's course, or charge prohibitive fees, which would have the result of driving students away from this University to the institutions of the other colonies or England. The Minister of Education expressed his profound sympathy with the deputation, but held out little hope of the request being complied with. When the Chancellor of the University realised there was slight possibility of their wishes being acceded to, he took the responsibility of saying that if the Government would give them £500 without prejudice to their right to £800 when things were more prosperous, the council might suspend the notices they contemplated sending out—presumably to the lecturers announcing the inability to find the means with which to continue their commissions. But the Minister was still unable to give a satisfactory answer. He promised to consult his colleagues and communicate a reply as soon as possible.

15th Dec 1895

THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

SUCH a little thing is asked, and yet there is so much trouble in getting it! The maintenance of the Medical School at the University is reduced to a paltry question of £500 for the present year. Yet the Council left the presence of the Minister of Education yesterday without a promise that this trifling subsidy would certainly be granted. It is true that Dr. Cockburn spoke to the deputation sympathetically. No one better than he recognises the value of the school, or could be more anxious to preserve it. He talked, however, of strained finances, and deficits, and sacrifices imposed on other institutions, and could give the council no definite assurance that the vote would be restored. The Government have of course to make out a case for taking away the grant. Their case is that it is part of the odds-and-ends system of retrenchment, and they evidently feel that if they give way in this or that direction they simply invite pressure upon them in others. But this £500 saving, while financially trifling, is in its possible results a serious matter. It threatens the collapse of a branch of University work which at present is both flourishing and useful. Worse than that, it really involves a breach of contract. The Medical School was established with the aid of liberal private endowments on a distinct understanding that the Government would grant £800 a year. The University, though bad times have severely straitened its resources, submitted for two years without a murmur to a reduction of £200. It will, for the present year, forego another £100; but if the vote is wholly withdrawn the lecturers of the Medical School will have to be informed that no funds are available for the payment of their fees. The work is already done at the minimum cost, so that no margin remains for saving. Dr. Cockburn promises to bring the matter under the attention of his colleagues, and with the assurance that his influence will be exerted on their side the deputation had to be content. It is surely impossible that the Government will resist the representations of the University. Perhaps it is not desired to create the appearance of giving way too readily; but that an unbending attitude will be persisted in is simply

in is simply inconceivable. If this money were wastefully expended, or if it would make no difference to strike off the vote for a single year, the £500 economy might be worth a struggle. The money is, however, well spent, and the withdrawal of the grant will paralyse, if not destroy, the Medical School. There must be numbers of other ways in which a trifle of £500 can be saved without causing so much mischief. The colony is not in such a tight corner as to have no alternative to this reactionary policy.