

way of endowments, but also by raising the level of education to a height where a University may properly step in, but not for actually founding a University to act as a teaching body.

* * I beg to hand in the Tasmanian Acts for establishing a Council of Education, empowered to allot scholarships and to grant a degree, with some Reports founded on the examinations. These papers are the property of the Education Board of Otago, to whom I beg that they may be returned. I do not wholly agree with the Tasmanian scheme, excellent and enlightened as it unquestionably is. I think that in its present state, physical science is unfitted for an instrument of education in schools; the examiners seem, as I should have expected, to find that examination in such subjects, results mainly in a mere effort of memory, in other words in "cram." The time will certainly come, and I should gladly see it, when natural science will be taught in schools. Meanwhile, the best means of advancing the study of natural science appears to me to be by giving prizes in schools for collections of natural objects classified by the collector, and by the formation of local museums. I am warranted by the opinion of scientific men in saying that this is all that can now be done. The standard of the Tasmanian scholarships is fixed at a very high minimum, which seems to me a defect, as their object is, not to secure a limited number of highly cultivated men, but to encourage and prolong education among the whole population.

It seems to me an objection, from the point of view which I take of such an institution, that the taking of the degree is a necessary preliminary qualification to the competitor for the Tasmanian Scholarship. The Tasmanian Act also, I think erroneously, makes no provision for the employment of the funds in the case in which a scholarship is vacated by death, misconduct, or resignation.

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DR. ALEXANDER.—1.] Regarding the object to be the extension of good education in the Colony, I do not think it would attain it, and do not recommend the measure.

The selection of a few clever boys as representatives from a small number of schools in which the fees charged in most cases prevent any but persons of some means making use of them for their sons, cannot, I conceive, advance the education of the mass of the people. Competition would be limited to a few, and as a rule, those who could afford to get assistance from tutors or masters would obtain the prizes. The after result of the small number returning to New Zealand would be inappreciable.

The consideration of such a measure should, I think, be deferred until good education both by district schools and by schools where all of the higher branches of education are taught, is available, free to the whole population.

2.] I do not think they would have this result, except on a limited number of pupils, whose attainments would make it likely they would obtain one. I think any exhibition should be looked on as a prize for proficiency in the general branches of education taught in a school.

If such exhibitions could be given to a number of pupils this result might be anticipated, but they are necessarily confined to one or two.

3.] I cannot offer any suggestions under this head.

4.] Admitting the principle, Melbourne University would be most suitable, as the students would then be able to return home at vacations, and would not be entirely removed from the influences of friends and family, and the knowledge of their conduct and progress would be much more easily known. Sending them to remote Universities would be open to these drawbacks.

It is also probable that a more practical education is given at a Melbourne University than in some of those of England.

7.] I consider a central University with Professors and classes at present premature. The Australian Universities are not attended by students from New Zealand, and as they are quite as convenient as any New Zealand one could be to a large part of the Colony, and not entailing more expense in travelling and residence, it may be inferred that there is no immediate demand for such an institution.

I am, however, of opinion, that Collegiate Institutions with competent Professors in the centres of population are of much more importance, and would meet the real requirements of the country for some time. For the formation of such institutions, I would propose that the local governments should provide buildings, library and apparatus, and pay the expenses of maintenance, and that the General Government should appoint and pay the salaries of the Professors, on being satisfied in each case that suitable buildings, &c., were being provided. The Government would thus furnish most important aid to education, and be sure that this aid was only extended in the direction in which it was really required. I consider this Province, with its good and extended educational system, as quite prepared for such a development. It is probable others might take advantage of it when such institutions were working. The formation of an University Board, composed of examiners, could be considered. One similar to that of the University of London as now constituted would be most suitable. No costly buildings would be needed, and fit persons could be found in the Colony at small cost to constitute it, as their ordinary occupations would not be materially interfered with.