

machinery of the University, but as yet the Governor has not been advised to give them validity by approving or otherwise dealing with them, and thus the Act has been made practically a dead letter. From this it is clear that the delay which has taken place in bringing the Act into practical operation is due, not to any neglect or omission on the part of the Council, but to the fact that the Government, although they have been in consultation over the regulations first passed for a period of more than six months, have been unable to arrive at any definite conclusion.

In your letter of the 12th October of last year, you informed me that the Governor would be advised to assent to the above regulations, and you pointed out the manner in which those relating to scholarships should be limited. In the fullest confidence that the promise contained in that communication would be made good, the Council immediately proceeded to prepare regulations and statutes which imposed the conditions and limitations required by your letter, and, believing that they were about to be placed in a position to do some practical work, they passed certain additional regulations and statutes for settling some minor matters of detail. I need hardly say that it was with surprise and disappointment that the Council learned from your letter of the 17th of the same month that the promise of the 12th was rescinded, and the University was to remain inactive for an indefinite time longer.

I venture to recall these circumstances to your recollection, because I am anxious to point out how important it is that the questions pending should be settled as soon as possible, in order that there may be no further unnecessary expenditure of time and money.

The Council is appointed to meet again on the 10th of April next, at Wellington; but it will be necessary, in case the statutes and regulations are approved, that I should be acquainted some weeks before the above date with the intentions of the Government, in order that I may be in a position, previous to the meeting, to make all the arrangements which I have been directed by the Council to make contingently on the statutes and regulations being assented to.

I think it my duty to urge the Government once more to come to some decision upon the statutes and regulations as soon as they conveniently can do so, on the ground of economy; a considerable expenditure has already been incurred, occasioned by the meetings, each time called at the instance of the Government, without any tangible result.

It has been reported—I cannot say with how much truth, but the account of the debates, as recorded in *Hansard*, appear to favour the supposition—that the Government think it desirable that the University should cease to exist, and that it is proposed in the meantime to retain it in a state of inaction, by withholding His Excellency's assent to the proceedings of the Council.

Considering the earnest advocacy which the present University Act received from the head of the Government, I can hardly credit this report, notwithstanding the reports of the debates and the unwillingness of the Government to give effect to the provisions of the Act; but I feel compelled to allude to the matter, because it is of the greatest importance that the views and intentions of the Government should at once be made known.

In the first place, an authoritative announcement of such a determination on the part of the Government, would probably render unnecessary any further meetings of the Council, and thus save a needless expenditure of public funds.

Secondly, it would determine the plans of those youths in the Colony who have been looking to the University as an institution under which they can prosecute their studies, and by means of which the honors and emoluments of a literary life may be opened to them. I am assured that there are several lads, who have just completed their school course, who are only waiting, before they finally determine upon a career in life, till they can ascertain how far the University can offer encouragement to them to devote themselves to higher studies. It appears to me highly inexpedient, if not somewhat unfair, to keep this class of persons in a state of suspense.

Thirdly, there are various applications from scholastic and collegiate institutions, in all parts of the Colony, for the benefits of affiliation to the University, which only await a favourable decision to provide additional means of instruction in higher subjects, and additional appliances, as well as to contribute towards the establishment of professorships, and the accommodation required for the delivery of lectures. These also should at once be informed of the prospect of their claims being considered and decided upon.

It appears to me, moreover, that the Council of the University has a fair right to be placed in possession of the intentions of the Government. Speaking for myself personally, I cannot but think that I, in accordance with the other members of the Council, have been placed in a false position by the action, or rather by the absence of any action, on the part of the Government. I consented, at the request of the Government, to be nominated a member of the Council under an Act which, as I then understood, had the cordial and hearty approval, not only of the Government as a body, but of every individual member of that Government. I think that under these circumstances I was justified in expecting the co-operation and sympathy and assistance of the Government in the task which, at their request, I as well as the other members had undertaken.

I have attended at very great personal inconvenience two meetings of the Council, solely with a view of promoting what I considered, and what I had reason to suppose the Government considered, a work likely to be a benefit to the Colony. The result, however, has been that the Council has been prevented by the Government from carrying on that work, and the Council