

## REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PROFESSORIAL BOARD.

SIR,—

The present seems a suitable occasion for laying before you a few facts connected with the progress of the University of Otago during the past few years. For the purpose of a brief review, I take the last five years—i.e., from 1894 to 1898, inclusive. Beginning with the number of students in attendance, I find that it has steadily increased during these five years—the total numbers being 211 in 1894, 226 in 1895, 234 in 1896, 257 in 1897, and 269 in 1898. In dealing with scholarships, honours, and degrees, I reckon them according to the year in which the candidates sat for examination. During the last five years our students have gained twenty scholarships, which gives an average of four for each year; six students have taken the degree of Master of Arts with first-class honours; and twenty-two students have taken the same degree with second-class honours. A distinction very rarely taken in connection with the New Zealand University is the diploma that confers honours in science. No student in any of the colleges took it between 1894 and 1897. At the examination in 1898, however, two of our students took this diploma, one with first-class and the other with second-class honours. During the five years we are considering, thirty-six of our students took the degree of Master of Arts, fifty-six the degree of Bachelor of Arts, one the degree of Doctor of Science, thirteen the degree of Bachelor of Science, one the degree of Doctor of Laws, eight the degree of Bachelor of Laws, fifteen the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, and one the degree of Doctor of Medicine. This gives a total of 131 degrees, which yields an average of twenty-six for each year. It is gratifying to find that so large a number of our Bachelors of Arts proceed to the higher degree of Master of Arts. Some may be surprised that, in a school so well attended as the Medical School, only fifteen have taken the degree of Bachelor of Medicine. This, however, is easily explained. A large proportion of our medical students, after spending a few years with us, go to Britain—generally to Edinburgh—to finish their medical studies, where many of them have carried off high distinctions, and have thus done credit to their early training. In regard to scholarships and honours, Canterbury College and the University of Otago are pretty equal during the five years under review. Canterbury College has gained nineteen scholarships for our twenty; eleven of her students have taken the degree of Master of Arts or the diploma in science with first-class honours for our seven, whereas in the degree of Master of Arts and the diploma in science with second-class honours we are exactly equal—twenty-three each. It will thus be seen that there is practically no difference, except in first-class honours, where Canterbury College has the advantage. In justice to the local institution, however, it should be mentioned that Canterbury College has enjoyed two great advantages over the other New Zealand University Colleges. It has two high schools under the direct control of its governing body; and, owing to its exceptionally favourable geographical position, it is fed by a much larger number of high schools than any of the other University Colleges. I trust that all contests between Canterbury College and the University of Otago, whether in scholarship or athletics, will always be conducted in a spirit of friendly rivalry, and with the most perfect good humour. We are both aiming at the elevation of our New Zealand youth; and in both cases the results show that the two institutions are doing excellent work, and are entitled to enjoy the confidence of the public. Among the honours gained by previous Otago graduates during the period under review, the following are worthy of special mention:—Mr. Don has taken the degree of Doctor of Science; Mr. Milne has taken the degree of Doctor of Laws; Dr. Chapple has taken the degree of Doctor of Medicine; Mr. Mellor has gained the Exhibition 1851 Science Scholarship, of the value of £150, tenable for two years; Mr. Adams has passed the Indian Civil Service Examination; and Mr. Salmond has been appointed Professor of Law in the University of Adelaide. A pleasing feature of our University history during recent years is the great success of the Mining School, the attendance at which is steadily rising from year to year. It is gratifying to know that many young men trained in the school are now occupying good positions in various parts of the world. I have much pleasure in mentioning that the school received, some time ago, a valuable gift of appliances and balances from the Hon. A. Lee Smith, M.L.C., who presented them in compliance with the wish of his son, a promising student in the school, whose early death is deeply regretted by all who knew him. The chief change in the teaching staff that has taken place recently was caused by the death of our lamented colleague, Dr. Parker, whose great services to the University and to science were suitably recognised at the time by the Press and by various public bodies. Shortly after his death a careful and sympathetic appreciation of his life-work appeared in *Nature*, which was written by his friend, Professor Howes; and, not long after his death, scientific literature was enriched by the publication of an elaborate and beautifully illustrated “Text-book of Zoology,” prepared by Dr. Parker and Professor Haswell, of Sydney University. During Dr. Parker’s illness, and during the time that elapsed between his death and the arrival of Dr. Benham in the colony, very valuable services were rendered to the University by two of our own graduates, Mr. Tennant and Mr. Mawson, who successfully conducted classes in botany and biology. Dr. Heinemann, the lecturer on German, having resigned his appointment at the beginning of the present session, his place was taken by another of our graduates, Mr. Howell, an accomplished German scholar, whose class, however, suffers from the fact that the teaching of German is almost entirely abandoned in Otago schools. It is to be hoped that we are on the eve of a revival of this important study. A number of our ablest young men, after passing through our University Colleges, now go to Europe to pursue their studies, and it is a great disadvantage to them that they have no opportunity here of learning German. Every student knows that it is impossible to get to the bottom of almost any subject without a knowledge of German. As the present is a time of great commercial prosperity in the colony, it may not be out of place if I indicate in a word or two the most pressing needs of the University. Our library is deplorably behind the times. The University Council is unable to allow an annual grant for its extension, and it is not too much to say that it would require £100 a