

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

* HIGHER EDUCATION.

“ The body having general control of higher education in the Dominion is the University of New Zealand, which was founded by the New Zealand University Acts of 1870, 1874, 1875, and recognized by the Royal Charter of 1876 as entitled to grant degrees in arts, law, medicine, and music having currency throughout the Empire. The Amendment Act of 1883 and the supplementary charter of the same year give authority in addition to confer the degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Science. Further, the University Degrees Act of 1904 has given the Senate statutory authority to confer certain other degrees—Doctor of Literature, Master of Laws, of Surgery, of Science; and Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of certain branches of applied science—veterinary science, dental surgery, engineering, agriculture, public health, and commerce. For these no further charter has been given, so that nominally these degrees have currency only within New Zealand; some of them, at least, might be held to be already included within the powers of the supplementary charter. The four chief functions of a university may be said to be—

- “ (i.) To provide higher education for those who have passed beyond the standard of the secondary schools;
- “ (ii.) To train its students for their professional work;
- “ (iii.) To be the home of sound learning, where knowledge is increased, and research is encouraged—and so to be an active agent in aiding the progress and in raising the standard of culture of the community;
- “ (iv.) To confer degrees as evidence of the completion of a course of higher education, or of professional courses, or in recognition of research-work or of definite contribution to human knowledge or thought.

“ In New Zealand the actual task of providing higher and professional education (i) and (ii), is undertaken mainly by the University colleges and other institutions named below; but the University exercises most important functions in regard to these matters, inasmuch as the recognition of the institutions themselves, the conditions as to study, the keeping of terms, and so forth, the requirements of the degree examinations, the appointment of examiners, the conferring of degrees, the awarding of scholarships and prizes, and many similar matters are dealt with by the University itself, acting through the Senate, or through the Chancellor as the representative of the Senate. At the outset, the University found it necessary to employ outside examiners for its degree examinations, and in the main this policy is still continued, with the consequence that the colleges, which are the actual teaching bodies—having the programme of work determined very strictly by the statutes of the University, and the examination-tests of the bulk of their work conducted by examiners in Great Britain—possess very little real freedom in teaching, and very little power to direct or modify the character of the work of their students.

“ The beginning of research-work is provided for in the conditions attached to certain of the higher degrees; but, so far, not much has been done to encourage advanced research; probably the conditions have not been altogether favourable to it.

“ In two of the University colleges the lectures are delivered mainly, but not entirely, in the evening; in the other two most of this work is done during the

* The portions within inverted commas are reprinted from last year's report.