

"(3.) That, with regard to finance,—

"(a.) The fees charged in the various colleges should be uniform;

"(b.) All the colleges should be adequately endowed, and where grants of a permanent character are made by Parliament, these should be statutory; and

"(c.) The financial position and requirements of each college should be inquired into, each college being considered on its merits, and provision made accordingly. (The Committee think that this inquiry might be conducted by the Inspector-General of Schools.)

"(4.) That—

"(a.) The library equipment of the colleges should be strengthened, especially in the interests of research.

"(b.) The Inspector-General should be asked to report on this matter. (In preparing his report the Inspector-General should consider whether a system of interchange of books between the libraries could be given effect to.)

"(c.) The reports of the Inspector-General under this and the preceding paragraph should be referred to the Education Committee of the House next session for consideration.

"(5.) That, considering the age of the institution and the geographical and other difficulties with which it has had to contend, the University has done very good work, and is justifying the expectations and accomplishing the objects of its founders. University education is free to all holders of scholarships, studentships, and bursaries, the number of these current last year being 557. If a student does not obtain a scholarship, but gains credit in the University Junior Scholarship Examination, he is entitled to a bursary which carries with it the payment of college and University fees for three or four years. The University has thus opened the doors of the professions to all classes of the community, and its graduates are taking leading positions in all walks of life. The Committee believes, however, that with reform on the lines above indicated the University will extend its usefulness as an educational agent, and become increasingly identified with the practical life and work of the community.

"(6.) That—

"(a.) This report be laid on the table of the House, and be referred to the Government for consideration.

"(b.) That the minutes of evidence, together with the pamphlet of the petitioners entitled 'University Reform in New Zealand,' and the 'Opinions of some New Zealand Educational Authorities,' be laid on the table of the House, and that the minutes of evidence be printed.

"25th October, 1911."

"T. K. SIDEX, Chairman.

During the parliamentary recess I inquired, as directed, into the matters referred to in paragraphs (3) and (4) of the Committee's report just referred to. My report (E.-7A, 1912), dated 17th October, 1912, was laid on the table of the House of Representatives by leave, and referred to the Education Committee, which, however, was unable to deal with it last session.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of the Committee's report were not referred to me; they deal to a certain extent with the subject-matter of the present petitions.

For the information of the Committee I give below a summary of the action taken by the Senate of the University of New Zealand subsequently to the presentation of the Education Committee's report in October, 1911.

At its annual session in January, 1912, the Senate established an annual conference of representatives of Professorial Boards, and passed the following resolutions:—

"(1.) That the Senate arrange for an annual conference of representatives from the Professorial Boards of affiliated institutions, to be held in turn in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, at times to be fixed by the Senate.

"(2.) That the first conference consist of seven representatives from each college, and in addition the head of the mining, medical, engineering, and dental schools.

"(3.) That at the first meeting of the conference a chairman be appointed, and that he have a deliberative and a casting vote.

"(4.) That the conference be empowered to consider—

"(a.) Any matter referred to it by the Senate;

"(b.) The courses of instruction for the degrees, diplomas, and certificates of the University, and the various examinations conducted by the University; and to report the results of their deliberations to the Senate for its consideration.

"(5.) That the expense of the conference be paid out of the funds of the University of New Zealand."

And also, later, the following resolution:—

"That to the first meeting of the professorial conference the following questions be referred:—

"(a.) Courses for B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, and essentially connected subjects;

"(b.) The best method of giving a permanent shape to the conference."

The first professorial conference thus constituted accordingly met, and held sessions for the four days from the 19th November to the 22nd November, 1912, discussing chiefly the matters referred to it by the Senate. The report of this conference is to be found on pages 10 to 18 of the minutes of the Senate for 1913.

The two chief recommendations of the conference were the amalgamation of the B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, for which a programme was suggested, and the gradual abolition of the external system of examination for degrees in arts, with a provision for substitutes for external examinations.