

working at my subject or, say, in sleep. It is a dangerous temptation to which to expose any class of human beings, and not every New Zealand professor has been proof against it. The test by external examination is miserably unable to prevent this evil—in fact, actually encourages it—and we possess none of the safeguards against slackness which other universities apply. Consequently there is nothing in New Zealand but one's own conscience to keep one straight, and no tribunal but the invisible and imaginary tribunal of the opinions of the university teachers and workers outside New Zealand. It is with them I should like to stand well. You will understand that, if I am satisfied that they would approve my course of action, I do not care in the least what any one in New Zealand thinks of me. Besides, there are my old teachers, some of them left; there are the many old friends and acquaintances in Europe who are now making their mark in or out of universities; there are the leading statesmen and thinkers of the world—I may never see any of them, and they may never hear me—still, it is in their judgment that I would like to stand well, even if it means incurring the displeasure of many influential New-Zealanders. Then one always lives in the hope of a trip Home, and there is always a possibility of having to look elsewhere for a job. In either case my best recommendation in the opinion of university authorities or valued friends outside New Zealand would be that I had done my duty by calling attention to the remediable evils of our University system. If you have the least doubt that educated opinion outside New Zealand would side with us you could easily cause wider inquiries to be made. You already have sixty-five opinions in the pamphlet; you have the unanimous report of the London Commissioners; you have our eagerness for a Commission, provided any one man whatsoever, such as the Imperial Government would recommend as suitable, be given a seat on the Commission. You may think our conduct is cocksure or arrogant—certainly Sir Robert Stout does. Really it is in a humble sense that we must follow, rightly or wrongly, in the wake of the civilized world. Our only claim on your attention is if we give you, not our own opinions, but those of the leading men in our various specialities. In all modesty and humility the best hope of the New Zealand University is if its professors follow the trend of thought in the great world outside without caring two straws for the criticism of local bigwigs. You have the motives, so far as I know them, that cause this agitation. The last—the selfish one—is completely satisfied. We felt that if we kept silence we should disgrace ourselves in the opinion of the men whose opinion we value most, and we have avoided that stigma. We have nothing left to gain by the success of this agitation and much to lose. There is the danger of half-hearted reforms worse than the present. If we succeed completely we shall have a lot more work, worry, and responsibility, instead of the easy job of irresponsible criticism. Do not suppose that I underestimate the real difficulties of the problem to be solved, or the objections raised, among others by Mr. Sidey—"local conditions," and the "unripeness" of the University for the proposed changes. After years of reflection I feel unable to settle to my own satisfaction several of the points of detail involved in reconstructing our University, and I always bear in mind that I may be mistaken as to all and any of the issues. It may be perfectly true that our wisest plan is to leave things as they are. But surely not without such preliminary investigation as a Royal Commission of the type suggested would give: some one who understands what is essential to a university, and how the essentials can be guaranteed, coupled with New-Zealanders who understand local opinions and conditions. The "unripeness" of the University, I take it, means the unfitness for greater responsibilities of some at least of the teachers. That is, in my opinion, perfectly true. For that very reason we propose that, both as regards the examinations and the syllabus, the teachers should be compelled to act together, and ultimately under the control of the whole body of teachers, subject to the Senate in the last resort. But it seems to us a very strange suggestion that, because the existence of a bad system has in some cases led to the appointment of inferior men, and in others to the degeneration of good ones, therefore the system must be continued for all time. You will find that there are few or no subjects in which all the teachers in the four centres are bad. We want the better ones to have a fair chance of making their influence felt. And the more true it is that teachers are unfit the more need, it seems to me, of authorizing a searching inquiry. If there are unsatisfactory men in positions of trust the sane, honest course is to throw as much light upon their doings as possible, when you get such a splendid chance as three-fourths of them petitioning for that very thing. Lastly, there is the question of the unsatisfactoriness of Royal Commissions. Alas, I know it only too well! The acute agitation about London University has lasted nearly thirty years, and there have been in that time four Royal Commissions, sitting altogether over ten years. If you give us a Commission it is probable that its recommendations may be neglected or distorted. But the experience of London also shows sufficiently that no other way is possible. The final report of the last Commission traces the whole history of the agitation, and lays down with convincing lucidity the cause of the failure of London University, the agitation for reform, and the failure of successive Commissions. Hitherto it has always been attempted to establish a compromise between two totally irreconcilable ideals. I am going to resist absolutely the temptation to read you a lot of passages which favour our contentions, in order to stick to one point. The Commissioners set forth the two ideals: the ideal of an examining university "which believes that examinations based upon a syllabus afford 'a guidance of test' which is an adequate means of ascertaining that a candidate has attained a standard of knowledge entitling him to a university degree," and the ideal of a teaching university which "believes that training in a university under university teachers is an essential and by far the most important factor in a university education." The Commissioners do full justice to both these ideals. They state forcibly the arguments suggested at this table by Mr. McCallum and Mr. Sidey. They state—Mr. Sidey will get good quotations from them—that inferior teachers and inferior institutions may prefer and even benefit by the examining-university ideal. They finally recommend that all the features we share with London University—the evening work, the exempted candidate, the external