

FRIDAY, 15TH AUGUST, 1913.

Professor VON ZEDLITZ further examined. (No. 6.)

1. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] I understand, Professor Von Zedlitz, that you are coming to the Committee now with this additional argument in favour of a Royal Commission that the Senate itself has given evidence that it does not want to reform itself?—It seems so to me, sir.

2. Then, may I ask what you think of the apparent endeavour of the Senate to reform itself by its own resolution—the ABC proposal: do you think they are in earnest about that?—Well, I should call it evidence that they realize something will have to be done, and that they would rather it was done by themselves if possible than by any outside interference. The situation was similar in London after the Commission which sat between 1891 and 1894, when the University authorities agreed to effect a compromise with the reformers provided they themselves could have the carrying-out of the arrangements.

3. Then, do you think the Senate is competent to reform itself?—No.

4. Why?—Well, for this reason: that the majority have denied the principal planks in the reform platform persistently; and if I may I will read a paragraph from the *Westminster Gazette* bearing upon the report of the London University Commission. It states, "The two most important questions before the Commission were the dual character of the University and the heterogeneity of its constitution. The former has excited great and, we fear, bitter differences of opinion within the University itself, and the Commission have very rightly laid stress on the fundamental incompatibility of educational ideals between the 'external' party, who regard it as the chief and almost the only function of the University to examine students, and the 'internal' party, who contend that the primary duty of a university is to educate them. In adopting the latter view the Commission have, in our opinion, taken the only view possible, and no one acquainted with the progress of education, either in theory or in practice, whether at home or abroad, can doubt for a moment that they will have the whole weight of modern tendency behind them. We have suffered from the curse of examinations in this country to a degree for which no comparison can be found outside the sheepfolds of China."

5. How do you apply that?—I apply that to the Senate, who deny that the majority of whom hold with the Chancellor of the University that the main and ultimate aim in the course of a student's training is what the Chancellor called the power of applying knowledge—that is to say, the examination test. You remember the evidence he gave and the exact language he used. I cannot quote the words exactly, but they were to that effect. The majority of the Senate which holds those views is not a fit and proper body to reform the University. They have given the fullest evidence that it would be foolish to trust them in that respect.

6. Then you suggest that some other body should be brought in to advise as to the reform of University work in New Zealand—some other body than the Senate itself—a Commission, for instance?—Yes.

7. Whom are they to advise?—Parliament and the Ministry—yourself.

8. That would mean ultimately legislation to reform the Senate whether the Senate is willing or not?—I think so.

9. And reform the University work on the report of the Commission?—I think so.

10. Now, as to the constitution of the suggested Commission, I think you have all been arguing in favour of an external member of the Commission—some one from outside?—Yes.

11. Where do you propose to get him from?—Well, we greatly hoped that you, sir, when recently in England would have had time to make some inquiries as to the possibility of getting such a man.

12. Do you suggest he should be got from England?—I think that would be the wisest course, because of the close connection between this Dominion and the English institutions.

13. Can you tell the Committee what the position is in England, Germany, and America, for instance, with regard to university education—are the ideals of those places the same?—No, not exactly.

14. Can you briefly give us the difference in the ideals between the three?—The German universities are weak in neglecting the teaching of the junior students. They lay essential stress upon the advanced work, and largely leave the ordinary undergraduate to get along as best he can. The English universities attempt to combine both ideals. I think one could say that they attempt to combine the ideal of advanced work and research with the teaching of the student who has just left school. Probably the weakness of the English universities is due to the chaotic state of secondary education more than to anything else, and to the desire of attempting to do more work than the money provided really renders advisable in many cases; and the feature in the American universities which finds least favour with the British world is the presidential system, I think.

15. Which of the systems do you think most nearly approximates the conditions in New Zealand?—I do not think we can possibly escape from the English system on the whole. We can deviate from it in important details, but we have to reckon upon drawing our staffs largely from there, and there are reasons why we cannot draw the majority of our outsiders from America and the Continent of Europe. It is extremely unlikely we could, and we are bound consequently to the ideals that are on the whole prevalent in the Mother-country.

16. And do you look to our permanently drawing our staffs from the Mother-country, or is the time approaching when we can have some hope of drawing our staffs from our own country?—The absolutely desirable thing is when we get a man like Professor Maclaurin, who is a New-Zealander, understands New Zealand, has been educated here and also at Home; but the time is beyond the lifetime of any person present here, at any rate, when a man solely educated in the University of New Zealand in any subject will be fit for a professorship in the University.