

(4.) That a candidate be allowed to "repeat" two subjects in the final section of his pass degree.—Rejected by the Senate by twelve votes to ten.

(5.) That the Government research scholarships be not restricted to subjects which are of immediate economic value. Although this was not a recommendation to the Senate, but to the Minister of Education, it too was "rejected" by the Senate.

(6.) That University scholarships be established for the encouragement of research upon certain conditions. The conditions proposed by the professorial conference were not accepted; the Senate set up a committee of three* to draw up a scheme.

(7.) The syllabuses in mathematics and chemistry were accepted.

(8.) And finally, on the motion of Mr. Von Haast, the Senate, by fifteen to seven, decided to discontinue the "annual" professorial conference established only the year before.

I wish to submit on behalf of the Reform Association that this Education Committee has now to come to a decision upon a single and very simple issue. That issue is: Has the belief of the previous Committee that "the University is itself moving in a direction which will gradually evolve a scheme of reform on the lines indicated" proved to be correct? This belief was the single ground assigned for not giving a Royal Commission. We submit that this belief has been proved incorrect, and as a consequence that this Committee has now no other course open to it than to grant a Royal Commission: that is, if we can establish that the Senate refuses to utilize "the professorial staffs of the colleges in framing curricula," then it follows from the previous Committee's report that we have established a case which they would have accepted for a Royal Commission. As we understand you accept their report, which was adopted by Parliament, it is only necessary for us to give evidence on this single issue. I submit that the Senate, in its decisions (stated above) on the recommendations of the professorial conference, not only refused to accept the advice of the conference upon every point of importance, but abolished a conference which in the previous year it had called "permanent." We submit that it is not open to doubt that the Senate has failed to utilize the professorial staffs in a larger measure for the framing of curricula. It cannot be argued that since the Senate has circulated schemes of University reform for discussion it has merely delayed the reforms which the Education Committee look for, and the delay is unimportant. The Senate recognized in 1908, five years ago, the need for improvements in the arts and science curricula. It set up a committee to "consider and report upon Dr. Starr Jordan's suggestions, and generally the revision of the University system, so as to bring the University education of New Zealand into line with modern developments in the leading universities of Europe and America." And certain members of the Senate have been endeavouring ever since to introduce those improvements. The Senate has called two professorial conferences, but as it refused to accept the conclusions of either, and abolished the last for having put workable proposals before it, no advance has been made. The defect of the present curricula in arts and science, recognized as such by the Senate in 1908, have been allowed to continue to the injury of some thousands of students. The effect on the teaching of science has been disastrous.

The Senate has failed to improve the B.A. degree in five years, either because the majority of its members are not in earnest or because they are incapable. If it is incapable of improving a curriculum, what hope is there of its accomplishing the very much larger task it is now concerned with? Even if it is assumed that the Senate is a highly competent and earnest body, when it has completed the large task it is now embarking upon it will still have the arts and science course to improve, and with the advice of the same professors that it now treats with contempt. There is no escape from the conclusion that the Senate, taken as a whole, has no intention of consulting the professors and lecturers, or it would have either accepted the conclusion of the last professorial conference or referred those conclusions back to the conference for alteration in specific directions. The Senate's actual action of abolishing the conference can be described in no other words than irresponsible and reactionary. It was irresponsible inasmuch as it wasted its own time, that of the professors and lecturers, and the funds entrusted to its care, to no effect.

The Constitution of the Commission.—If the Committee reports in favour of a Royal Commission then it will be necessary to decide on the constitution of the Commission. The Hon. Mr. Herdman gave evidence at the last inquiry on behalf of the University Reform Association on this point. We desire that evidence to be repeated. He said,—

"Now, I wish chiefly to address the Committee on the constitution of the proposed Royal Commission. Reform is necessary, and if reform is necessary it can be got in three different ways. It can be got by the Government and the Education Department taking the matter in hand; it can be got by appointing a Commission to inquire into the whole question of education throughout the country; and, thirdly, it can be got by a Commission simply appointed to inquire into the system of university education alone; and it is that third proposition that I advocate. As to the first two, whilst everybody respects the view Mr. Hogben takes, I venture to believe that if the Department took the matter in hand it would not be so satisfactory as if a Commission were appointed—an independent Commission of impartial persons.

"Mr. Hogben: I did not suggest that the Department should do it at all.

"The Chairman: I think Mr. Hogben said that if Parliament actually reformed the constitution then he thought the other reforms would follow, and there would be no necessity for a Royal Commission.

"Mr. Herdman: Then I misunderstood him. I thought Mr. Hogben meant that if we establish a case here for reform there would be no need for a Royal Commission at all, and that the Government would probably pass legislation which would accomplish everything.

* Professors Chilton, Hight, and Farr. Professors Hight and Farr took part in drawing up the details proposed by the conference. With Professor Chilton they are now to revise the work of the whole conference of thirty professors—work which was neither hurried nor ill-considered.