

were required in the University, and especially as to the necessity of a Royal Commission to go into the whole question. Of this opinion they gave further concrete evidence in 1912, when they nominated and vigorously supported in his candidature for election to the University Senate Professor T. A. Hunter, a man well known to them, as perhaps also to you, as no mean enthusiast in the cause of reform. Professor Hunter now represents the graduates of this district on the Senate, and has as yet apparently seen no good reason for diverging from those opinions to which he gave such vigorous expression before his election. In these and other ways have the graduates given evidence of their genuine desire for changes which they honestly think will be of benefit to the University, and through it to the community as a whole. A few of the defects and inconsistencies which they attribute to the present system I shall now set out in brief.

*(a.) Organization of the University.*

One reason for the graduates' discontent with the present organization of the University is that under the existing split system of representation the influence of the graduates is ineffective. The graduate bodies that are officially recognized are the four District Courts of Convocation and the General Court of Convocation, consisting of the four District Courts. The only effective power the District Courts have is that of electing eight members to the Senate, two from each Court. The General Court of Convocation has no effective powers of any kind, and has not met since 1902. On academic questions the influence of the graduates on the University is negligible. It is true that on one or two occasions the Senate has sent out a series of questions to the various District Courts asking for answers and suggestions. Quite recently it has sent to individual graduates a table of three suggested schemes for the reconstitution of the University, asking each graduate which of the schemes he or she prefers, or to suggest modifications. But what effect can suggestions which have the sanction of no officially recognized authority hope to have? In any case, if these schemes have been submitted to, say, a thousand graduates, a thousand replies may be received differing in details, and the Senate can then fall back upon its trusty weapon "lack of unanimity," and continue comfortably along its old groove. The Senate's position is almost analogous to that of a Legislative Council which, while vaguely promising to reform itself in the future, strenuously opposes any active external aid in the present, and lays to its soul the flattering unction of its past.

Another defect in the present organization is what is generally referred to as the divorce of the colleges from the University. The professors and students are professors and students not of the University, but of their respective colleges. Theoretically the University has no direct control over the colleges. Its only influence is indirect and in so far as it lays down the curricula according to which the students of the colleges shall be examined. It is like a State which, owning the right-of-way, lays down narrow-gauge rails and leases the running-rights to private companies who must build their rolling-stock to fit the gauge laid down. Theoretically the colleges need not teach any of the subjects laid down by the University. Practically, however, as far as academic functions are concerned, the control is of iron, for by determining all the conditions requisite for obtaining degrees, and by appointing all examiners and controlling all examinations, it restricts academic activity to the narrowest confines. With regard to the disposal of its funds, the appointment of its professors, and the general conduct of its affairs each college is its own master. So where it should be most free it is most tied down, and where it should be under most restraint it is most free.

All this would be remedied were the University a federal one in which the Governors of the colleges became *ipso facto* Governors of the University, and the colleges themselves thus integral parts of the University.

The graduates of Victoria College would be the last to deny that there are men on the Senate to-day to whom the cause of University education in New Zealand owes an infinite debt of gratitude. But they would also be the last to admit that any body of men, however enthusiastic and benevolent, constituted as the Senate is, could be expected to conduct all the functions of University government satisfactorily. The two functions of University government are financial administration and academic control, and the men who are best qualified to carry out the former are not infrequently worst qualified to carry out the latter. The New Zealand University Senate, however, bravely endeavours to carry out both almost without assistance, and it would be unkind to judge too harshly of one who is endeavouring to achieve the impossible. The Senate, as constituted by the Act, is almost entirely a body of laymen, and, left with it, the financial affairs of the University would be in good hands; but for academic affairs there should be another body, a consulting Board, an academic Senate, whose permanent functions should be to make recommendations to the Senate as to degrees, diplomas, scholarships and prizes, course of study, and examinations. For this none could be better qualified than the professors of the University. These men have presumably spent their lives in pursuit of knowledge in an atmosphere of scholarship. They have made it their profession, their business, first to master their respective subjects, and then to master the art of teaching them. Teaching they have learnt. The frequently made statement that a professor is an employee of the University or college, and should therefore have no voice in its government, is so absurd as hardly to merit contradiction. Here is no mere stonebreaking navvy working with his hands only, but a man whose mind has undergone years of training for the profession he has undertaken. It would be just as ridiculous to say that, because a manager of railways is in the pay of the people, the lines on which he should conduct his work should be laid down by the people's representatives without his being consulted. The comparison is not an unfair one. The professors have doubtless been consulted on occasions in the past, and there has even been a professorial conference, but in the one case the advice given was individual and informal; in