

student can appreciate the free life of the university, as distinct from that of the school, and the responsibilities of the university class-room, he must possess a certain maturity of mind, intellectual independence, and developed self-control. Young, immature students, and students inadequately prepared, cannot enter properly into the true spirit of the university, which is a free community of teachers and students working in co-operation. Too often "they continue in a state of pupilage and receive instruction of much the same kind as at a school though under conditions of greater individual freedom." It is not asserted that such students, following with reprehensible docility the work of the lecturer, may not be able to pass external examinations and secure degrees; but the degree alone should not be the real purpose of attendance at a university. The great aim of a university course should be the acquisition of a university education and all that it includes. The possession of a university degree may or may not be a guarantee of this. Any system of granting degrees upon external examinations alone rather accentuates the doubt.

Secondary School
Board recommended.

If it be agreed that the Matriculation Examination should be abolished and two public examinations be substituted therefor, the question arises whether the university, or the Education Department as representing secondary education in New Zealand, should be responsible for conducting them. It must be remembered that the interests of all the pupils in the secondary schools and not merely those looking forward to university courses are bound up in this question. There appears to be no necessary reason why the university alone should be entrusted with the duty, and there certainly is no guarantee that the university teachers who may be expected to take part in the work are sufficiently acquainted with the special problems of secondary-school work. For secondary education has its own special problems, and these must be considered in any adequate scheme of public examinations. There are, however, many reasons why university men and the university organization should, in such a community as New Zealand, be actively associated with the scheme. Nor should the Education Department alone undertake the duty of conducting it.

The course which commends itself to us is for the University to take control of the new examinations, and to entrust the administration under the governing body of the University to a Secondary Schools Board, appointed under university statute. Upon such a Schools Board there should be strong representation of the whole of the secondary-school interest (both State-aided and private schools), and of the secondary-school administrative staff, as well as of the university teaching staff. Such a Board would come to its work with a real knowledge of secondary-school conditions and possibilities, and we should hear less often of "freak" examinations and of courses prescribed which are either too difficult or too easy for effective work.

In our opinion the fundamental consideration in any system of public examinations for secondary schools should be the joint representation of university interests and of secondary-school interests upon the administrative body. Under such an organization the well-being of the schools and the well-being of the university are both kept in view to the advantage of each. The London Commission, 1911, dealing with the question whether the university should be responsible for school examinations, says, "In any circumstances, the influence of the university will ultimately be paramount in regulating the standard of proficiency in special subjects to be required of students for admission to the degree courses in each Faculty, but the secondary schools are similarly entitled to arrange their curricula in the interests of all classes of their pupils, and the school examinations must be based on these curricula. The central education authority, on the other hand, is concerned to see that its grants to the schools and to the university are effectively used, and in the ultimate issue it is that authority which must provide for the co-ordination of secondary schools and universities, and must give the necessary assurance to the universities that the pupils seeking admission to their degree courses have reached the required standard of education."* This statement covers the ground very well, and, in our judgment, justifies our recommendation to create a Board representative of the three interests mentioned.

* London University Commission, sec. 93, p. 41.