

1910
NEW ZEALAND

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE) ON THE PETITION OF THOMAS H. LABY AND TWELVE OTHERS (UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS).

(MR. SIDEY, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on the 16th November, 1910, together with Copy of Petition and Two Departmental Reports, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 7TH DAY OF JULY, 1910.

Ordered, "That a Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to consider all matters relating to school-teachers, education, and public instruction generally, public-school training of teachers, higher education, technical education, and manual instruction, and such other matters affecting education as may be referred to it; to have power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Allen, Mr. Hanan, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Luke, Mr. Poole, Mr. Sidey, Mr. Stallworthy, Mr. G. M. Thomson, Mr. J. C. Thomson, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. FOWLDS.

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives of the Dominion of New Zealand in Parliament assembled.

THE Petition of Thomas H. Laby H. B. Kirk, and others, of Wellington, humbly sheweth,—

That the University of New Zealand was established for "the promotion of sound learning" (charter of the University of New Zealand).

That your petitioners believe that the present constitution of the University is unsound, that the methods of administration of the University and colleges are inefficient, and that sound learning is not being promoted in the way most effective for the development of the national life and industries of the Dominion, and for thorough professional training in medicine, education, law, and applied science.

In support of the above contention your petitioners submit the subjoined statement, which they believe to be true.

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

1. There are thirteen different bodies—Senate, Professorial Boards, Councils, and Courts of Convocation—with statutory powers in University affairs. Exclusive of members of the Courts of Convocation, there are 143 members of governing bodies. This number is excessive, and detrimental to efficiency

2 These bodies are quite distinct, and their functions have not been co-ordinated.

3. The distribution of powers among these bodies is most unusual, and has been proved by experience to be very unsatisfactory

The Senate (a lay body of twenty-six members, six of whom are professors) frames and controls the curricula and syllabuses—technical work which the constitution of the Senate makes it unfit to perform, and which, in other universities, is a function of professors. This unusual distribution of powers has led to serious lack of progress in University methods and ideals.

HOURS OF STUDY

Too much of the instruction at Victoria College and Auckland University College (770 students) is given in the evening

A Royal Commission on the Melbourne University (1903–4) said, ‘ The following observation is largely applicable to the scope of the work of the colleges forming the New Zealand University : ‘ It may be said that, on the whole, the evening work is on a distinctly lower plane than the day work ; that generally its aim is not as high, and it does not provide so comprehensive a course of study as the day classes.’ ”

STUDENTS ABROAD.

It seems to point to a defective university system that so many young New-Zealanders spend their years as undergraduates in universities abroad. In a recent year (1909) forty-eight New-Zealanders passed various medical examinations at Edinburgh alone, and in 1908 only eighty-one students were enrolled at the New Zealand Medical School (Dunedin).

EXAMINATIONS

1 The system of external examinations is one that has been tried in London, India, South Africa, and elsewhere. State papers show that the results have been disastrous. South Africa, like other countries, has now abandoned this system, and is spending £500,000 in reorganizing its universities. The system has been condemned by Commissions on the Scottish, London, Melbourne, and other universities, and by the foremost educational experts.

2 The cost of examining alone is about £5,000 per annum, while the total expenditure of the Auckland University College is little over £7,000.

Among the strictures passed on this system by Dr Starr Jordan, President of Leland Stanford, Junior, University, were the following:—

- (a.) “ It tends to degrade the New Zealand professor to a coach, his work to be judged by persons at a distance and unfamiliar with the conditions.”
- (b) “ It tends to check alike his originality of thought and method and his power of adapting his work to the needs of New Zealand.”
- c.) ‘ It is most injurious to the student himself. Preparation for outside examination on the part of the student is cramming pure and simple, and its result is not mental strengthening, but mental dyspepsia.’ ”

FINANCE.

1 Comparative Table of Yearly Incomes

University.	Population.	Income.	Income per Head of Population.
		£	d.
California*	1,500,000 (1900)	100,000 (1902)	17
Toronto (Ontario, Canada)	2,200,000 (1900)	140,000 (1908)	15
New Zealand	1,000,000 (1910)	60,000 (1908)	14 †

* It is to be noted that this refers simply to the State University. California has, in addition, other institutions privately endowed, including the famous Leland Stanford, Junior, University.

† In New Zealand this income is spread over four separate colleges, and the New Zealand University is therefore not much more than half as effective as if applied to a centralized university.

2 Comparative Statement of University Expenditure of North and South Islands, New Zealand, 1908

	Expenditure.	Students.	Specialization in—
	£		
South Island	32,000	720	Medicine, dentistry, mining, engineering.
North Island	17,000	770	Law, science, commerce, mining.

This marked difference in the expenditure in the two Islands deserves serious consideration.

LIBRARIES

No true university can exist without adequate library facilities. The following table shows the state of the University libraries (1910):—

	Auckland, founded 1882.	Victoria, founded 1897	Canterbury, founded 1873.	Otago, founded 1869.
Number of volumes	7,000	7,250	4,000*	†
Average of volumes per year	250	550	110	
Annual grant for last three years	£120	£295‡	£100	
Number of periodicals subscribed to	23	46	8	
Number of free journals	Nil	10	Nil	

* No college library; books stored temporarily in one small room, and in a few cases in the college hall.

† No particulars of the library at the Otago University are available.

‡ This has since been reduced to £150.

The table given above shows that—

- (1) If there were no overlapping in the college libraries, they would form collectively only the nucleus of a university library
- (2) The annual grant for purchase of new books, binding, &c., is quite inadequate.
- (3) Periodical literature has been unduly neglected.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will inquire into the state of university administration and education in New Zealand.

And your petitioners will ever pray &c.

THOS. H. LABY
H. B. KIRK.
(And 11 others.)

REPORT.

No. 620.—Report on the Petition of THOMAS H. LABY and twelve others (University Professors).

PETITIONERS pray for inquiry into the state of university administration and education in New Zealand.

The Education Committee has the honour to report on the petition of Thomas H. Laby and twelve others, That the Committee is of opinion that the petition should be referred to the Education Committee at the beginning of next session, in order that full investigation may be made; and, further, that the petition, with the departmental reports, be printed and circulated.

16th November, 1910.

T. K. SIDEX, Chairman.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

SIR,—

Education Department, Wellington, 20th October, 1910.

In reference to the petition of Thomas H. Laby, H. B. Kirk, and others, I have the honour to say that, as the whole matter of the B.A. and B.Sc. degrees is now under the consideration of a special Recess Committee of the Senate of the University of New Zealand, which has power to call a conference of professors of the four University Colleges, and as the question of these degrees involves also most of the matters that form the subject of the petition, I hardly deem it expedient at present that an inquiry should be held into the state of university administration and education in New Zealand, but suggest that time should be given to see what may be the result of the labours of the Recess Committee and of the conference of professors referred to.

I have, &c.,

G. HOGGEN,

Inspector-General of Schools.

The Clerk to the Education Committee.

FURTHER DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

NOTES ON THE PETITION OF THOMAS H LABY H B KIRK, AND OTHERS, IN
REFERENCE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

1 It is true that there are thirteen different bodies dealing with the University education in connection with the University itself and the affiliated institutions, but of these only one—the Senate—has any share in the direct government and administration of the University. Besides the Senate there are the four Professorial Boards, the four Councils or Boards of Governors, and the four Courts of Convocation, one body of each kind in connection with each University College. It does not appear from the constitution of the various universities into which I have looked that this number of bodies is unusual, looking at them as bodies dealing with the affairs of the several colleges. On the other hand, it is not a common thing for a university to have only one body controlling its affairs.

2 It is quite true that these bodies are distinct, and their functions have not been co-ordinated by legislation.

3 The statement that the distribution of powers amongst these bodies is unusual appears to be correct. For the purpose of comparison I give here the constitution and powers of the bodies controlling the Universities of Toronto, Wales, and Birmingham, the two former being universities having, like that of New Zealand, constituent or affiliated colleges, and the last-named having practically no affiliated colleges.

(a.) *Toronto University*.—There are five bodies or sets of bodies dealing with University matters, not including bodies controlling the affiliated or “federated” colleges. These are,—

- (i) Board of Governors, consisting of Chancellor *ex officio*, elected by the Convocation of graduates, the President *ex officio*, appointed by the Board, who appears to be always a professional member, and eighteen persons appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, one of whom is named as Chairman of the Board. The chief functions of the Board are that it appoints all officers and servants of the University, upon the nomination of the President, and manages the property, revenue, business, and affairs of the University. It determines salaries and fees.
- (ii) The Senate (101 members in 1907–8), consisting of (1 *ex-officio* members (18 in 1907–8)—namely, the Chancellor, Chairman of the Board of Governors, the President of the University, Principal or President of each federated college, the Deans of the five faculties named below, and all past Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors, 2) representatives of the faculties (professors) in the University and the University colleges (32 in 1907–8); (3) members appointed by the federated colleges and (one each) by the Law Society, Agricultural College, College of Music, College of Pharmacy, College of Dental Surgeons, and Veterinary College (15 in 1907–8), (4) elected members (36 in 1907–8—32 elected by graduates of the several faculties in the federated colleges, and 4 by principals and assistants in high schools).
The powers of the Senate are the establishment of courses of study, the determination of the courses on the report of the various Faculty Councils, management of the library, and the making of recommendations on various matters to the Board.
- iii.) The Convocation, consisting of the whole body of graduates of the University, elects the Chancellor, and, by faculties, members of the Senate, and makes recommendations to the Senate.
- (iv) Faculty Councils, five in number—namely (1 Arts, (2) Medicine, (3) Applied Science and Engineering, 4) Household Science, (5) Education. Each Faculty Council consists of all the professors and associate professors engaged in teaching students in the faculty. Lecturers therein have seats, but no votes. The duties of the Faculty Councils are to draw up the curriculum of studies, appoint examiners, conduct examinations, &c.—all subject to the approval of the Senate.
- (v) The Caput. The Caput is a committee composed of the President, the Principals of the federated colleges, and the deans of the faculties of the University, has power to authorize teaching and lectures by others than the regularly appointed staff, and exercises discipline in University matters and where more than one college is concerned.

(b.) *University of Wales*.—In this University there are three bodies dealing with the affairs of the University, exclusive of those concerned with the affairs of the University Colleges,—

- (i) University Court. This consists of 100 members *ex officio* appointed and elected, consequently it is a mixed professional and non-professional body. It is the supreme governing body of the University, and controls the income and business affairs of the University. It appoints an external examiner in each subject, to act jointly with the examiners appointed by the constituent colleges, and may appoint visitors of constituent colleges, hears appeals of the colleges from the decision of the Senate, and, upon the recommendation of the Senate, but not otherwise, legislates upon matters concerning studies, examinations, degrees, scholarships, &c.

- (ii. University Senate In 1906-7 composed of fifty-nine members—namely Principals of the colleges, such professors and lecturers as are heads of departments in colleges recognized by the Court as departments.
- The Senate (1) proposes all statutes relating to studies or examinations for degrees, &c., for approval by the Court, (2) approves or rejects schemes of each constituent college regarding the studies and examination of its own students, but the Senate cannot initiate such schemes, and any constituent college can appeal to the Court against the decision of the Senate thereon.
- (iii) Guild of Graduates Consists of all graduates of two years' standing and over, and all members of teaching staffs in colleges. It elects some members of the University Court, and may make recommendations to the Senate. Beyond this it appears to have no other function.
- (c) *University of Birmingham.*—This University has three bodies conducting its affairs,—
- (i) The Court of Governors, consisting of 225 members, *ex officio*, and nominated, appointed, or elected by various persons and bodies, professional and non-professional (the *ex officio* members include, *inter alia*, all the deans of the faculties and all the professors). The Court is the supreme controlling authority, its principal functions being those of legislation and appeal. It controls the Senate only through the Council.
- (ii) The Council of the University This is also a mixed body, consisting of twenty-eight members. Its functions are the management of the finance and similar business of the University; drafting of statutes, which it submits to the Court, making of regulations, supervising of instruction and teaching as explained under the heading of 'The Senate.'
- (iii) The Senate, consisting of about thirty members—namely, the Principal, the Vice-Principal, the deans of all the faculties, and all the professors. Its powers are that, subject to review by the Council, it controls the curriculum and the examinations, makes recommendations for degrees, scholarships, &c., carries out the discipline, and, in addition, deals with other matters committed to it by the Council.

HOURS OF STUDY

It is stated that too much of the instruction at Victoria College and at Auckland University College is given in the evening. The following is a comparative statement of the number of lectures per week given at each of the University colleges before and after 5 p.m. respectively :—

	Before 5 p.m.	After 5 p.m.
Auckland	35	39
Victoria	44	102
Canterbury (exclusive of Engineering)	81	52
Otago University	153	57
Total	313	250

Practical Work.

Auckland	18	6
Victoria	16	27
Canterbury	*	2
Otago University	83	5

* All the remainder; number not stated.

Some of the universities in the Empire differentiate between day students and evening students by requiring the latter to keep terms for a longer time than the day students. For instance, in the University of Sydney an evening student cannot sit for his final B.A. examination until the end of his fourth year, whereas an ordinary day student can take the same examination at the end of his third year. Some universities require five years instead of three.

STUDENTS ABROAD.

The Department has no information as to the number of New-Zealanders that proceed to Home universities, whether before or after taking a degree in New Zealand.

EXAMINATIONS.

The system of external examination in vogue in New Zealand is now employed by few if any, other universities in the Empire; but the discussion of this question involves controversial matters which I understand it is not the desire of the Committee that I should discuss at this stage.

The cost of the examinations conducted by the University of New Zealand is, as stated in the petition, about £5,000 per annum, but this, it should be remembered, includes not only the cost of external examinations, but also the cost of the Matriculation, University Junior Scholarship, and other entrance examinations, and of the examinations in law, medicine, engineering, and mining which in any case have to be held in New Zealand. The total cost of all these amounts to a very considerable proportion of the sum of £5,000 named.

FINANCE

1 In the year 1909 the net income of the University of New Zealand was about £10,000, and, inclusive of grants from the Government for buildings, &c., the total net income of the four University colleges was about £68,000. Not including the building grants, the total was £61,000. The total net income of the University and University colleges may therefore be considered to have been £78,000 or £71,000, according as the grants for buildings are or are not included—that is, 18d. (or 17d.) per head of the population; not, I think, 14d., as stated in the petition. The income of the University and of the University colleges is shown on pages 3 and 8 of the attached paper on higher education (E.-7, 1910).

2 *Comparative Statement of University Expenditure in North and South Islands of New Zealand (1909).*—The following is a summary of the expenditure of the four University Colleges, compiled from the tables in E.-7, 1910, just referred to:

	General.	Buildings.	Total.
	£	£	£
Auckland	7,890	854	8,744
Victoria	10,264	6,484	16,748
(a)	18,154	7,338	25,492
Canterbury	17,465	10,923	28,388
Otago	15,360	2,563	17,923*
(b)	32,825	13,486	46,311
Total (a) and (b)	50,979	20,824	71,803

* Including an expenditure of £325 on Museum.

The number of students at the four colleges is shown in Table M, on page 5 of E.-7, 1910. From this it appears that the total number of all students attending lectures at the two colleges in the North Island was 870, and the total number attending lectures at the two colleges in the South Island was 821.

LIBRARIES.

There is no information in the Department with regard to the state of the libraries at the four University Colleges. As allusion is made in the petition to the University of Toronto, I may state that the University library there in 1907-8 contained upwards of 87,000 volumes, together with upwards of 22,000 unbound pamphlets, and had, besides other rooms, a reading-room capable of seating upwards of two hundred readers.

As is well known, the libraries of the older British universities are very large.

4th November, 1910.

G HOGGEN

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