

home. Accordingly there is a persistent demand for more special schools. So far the demand has been successfully resisted, but it is becoming more insistent each year. There is no doubt that a hostile feeling towards the national University has been engendered and fed in Auckland, by the belief that the representatives of the South Island in the governing body of the University have not been willing to assist Auckland in what are regarded as legitimate claims. The following extracts from evidence taken give some idea of the feeling :—

Professor T. A. Hunter : “The problem of the special schools has become the football of university politics. The southern colleges, early in the field, listen with dull ears to the demand of the northern colleges for fair treatment on this question.”

Mr. F. de la Mare : “The nemesis of university politics is the special school. In my opinion, one very strong argument for four universities is the parochialism engendered both within and without the Senate. Otago and Canterbury profess to stand for a principle of specialization by colleges, no doubt with good cause. The effect is a *bloc* to preserve the vested interests of Otago and Canterbury in medicine and engineering. As soon as those interests are safeguarded, the *bloc* will make any concession elsewhere, and will vote cheerfully for two schools of forestry and three schools of agriculture, when it is safe to say that no well-informed person believes that more than one of each of university standing is either required or economically sound.”

Under the head “Education in Engineering” we deal with one result of the battle for the establishment of special schools, and we arrive at the conclusion that the Aucklanders have reasonable cause for complaint against the Senate. But such an opinion does not commit us to a policy of further duplicating expensive institutions.

The matter of the establishment of special schools is not an easy one, even if it is not complicated by provincial jealousies. A medical school should be able to command clinical material, an engineering school should be in close touch with great engineering industries, an agricultural school should be in a farming environment. The interdependence of university schools must also be a factor in the decision. We have shown elsewhere how close a connection exists between education in mining and education in engineering, and how modern building methods have brought the training of the architect close to that of the engineer. Other connections will disclose themselves as the location of other special schools is under consideration.

Location of
Special School a
complex question.

Another important question is the number of students of high mental calibre available for the school. It may be argued that the Dominion is one, and that a national professional school should draw its students from all parts of the Dominion. A liberal scheme of free places has, indeed, been provided, but unless there is added such a system of maintenance bursaries as would probably be regarded as prohibitive, it is certain that the practical outcome will always be that the establishment of a professional school in a city will draw towards the school the most talented boys and girls of that district, while only those whose parents are able to afford the incidental expenses can attend from other centres. We note that even the Junior University Scholarship is not available for the full medical course, as its benefits are limited to four years, and the medical course extends to six years at least.

The fact that the professional schools of medicine, dentistry, and engineering are in the South Island apparently limits the choice of professions available for the youth of the North Island. How else can we explain the fact that there are 434 law students in the North Island college classes, while there are only 152 in the South Island, although instruction in law is given in each of the four University colleges? Parents anxious to do the best for their boys and girls will undoubtedly agitate for better facilities, and it may be very difficult, especially if short views are taken, to withstand the pressure. But the consequences of duplication in a country of necessarily limited resources and power of absorption are very serious. There will be an inevitable lowering of the standard of equipment of the two institutions, for the modern professional school is a costly concern, and its legitimate demands are ever increasing. As to the power of absorption of graduates by the community, attention may be drawn to the fact that there are in New Zealand 1,200 legal practitioners and 586 law students. Making due allowance for the students who are studying law subjects for purposes of commerce and industry, we cannot conceive that New Zealand requires such an output of lawyers.

Disproportionate
number of Law
students in the
North Island.