

examination and external syllabus, the slow working of the University machinery, which, as several witnesses put it, "is breaking down under its own weight."

Of these shortcomings the last is mainly due to the geographical factor, the great distances separating the four University colleges, which, whatever development of the means of communication may take place in the immediate future, must always remain serious. Even in a country like Wales, where the greatest distance separating two constituent colleges, Bangor and Swansea, is under 250 miles, all of it by land, the tax on the time and energy of the college staffs which is involved in attending University committees is no light matter. The distance between Auckland and Dunedin is 850 miles, and communication between the University colleges of the North Island and those of the South is rendered additionally tedious, and even formidable, by a sea passage of twelve hours.

The geographical factor.

With regard to the other shortcomings, some of the witnesses seemed to consider them as necessarily involved in the single university system for four teaching centres; others held that they were independent of it, and could be eliminated by suitable reforms without having recourse to separation. In our opinion the latter is the correct view. There seems no reason why in a federal University the teacher should not act also as examiner and why the college should not be allowed to submit its own courses of study for the approval of a central Academic Board, whose function would be limited to seeing that such courses were academically sound and equivalent in extent and difficulty to those submitted by the sister colleges. This is in fact the system actually in force in the federal University of Wales. The question at issue resolves itself, therefore, almost entirely into one of policy.

Academic freedom possible under a federal system.

On the one hand it was urged that the splitting up of a federal university into a number of independent universities has always been accompanied by a remarkable increase in local support and those local benefactions which have hitherto, with the single exception of Otago, been so lamentably lacking to the New Zealand colleges. Very striking evidence was offered of the results following from such a development in South Africa, and also in the British Isles in the cases of Liverpool, Sheffield, and Belfast. The foundation of the many provincial universities in England within the past thirty years out of colleges often linked by a federal system is one of the most remarkable achievements of higher education in England. The movement is thus described by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1911: "Not since the monastic revival of the twelfth century, or the scholastic revolution of the sixteenth, has England known an educational movement so rich in romance, in courage, in devotion, and in promise. The dreamer has dreamed, the founder has given land and gold, the public have subscribed, civic pride has been stirred, and the cry and need for knowledge have justified them all."

Separation might be accompanied by large benefactions.

It must be remembered that in England the newer universities obtained the financial support of very wealthy men or of great civic Corporations. In New Zealand the conditions are very different. Wealth is not concentrated in the hands of a comparative few, nor are there, as in South Africa, great and wealthy industrial concerns; while municipal bodies have difficulty in commanding sufficient resources to undertake satisfactorily the many obligations they must carry in developing cities in a young country.

Conditions in New Zealand not favourable to such benefactions.

We think that the analogy with Great Britain, South Africa, and other countries must not be pushed too far. We are not unmindful of the fact that the New Zealand people have been accustomed for many years to receive back from the Government the cost of public education, and that a considerable proportion of the students of the University are "free place" students financed by the State. A public so accustomed to depend on the consolidated revenue for the education of its youth is less likely to respond with enthusiasm to a proposal to contribute to a local university. It is, of course, probable that comparatively small amounts may be forthcoming, especially if they can command a corresponding Government subsidy, but the huge capital expenditure necessary to establish and maintain a modern university suitably housed and environed must, we think, still be looked for mainly from Government sources.

The State has assumed the whole burden of educational expenditure in New Zealand.

The Otago University seems to have enjoyed from the very beginning steady local support, due no doubt to the fact that it was established not by the central

Otago University has received most from private sources.