

student's future employment is quite unpredictable, and to attempt to anticipate all his possible needs is quite impracticable. In the event, I have been most impressed with our science graduates' ability to undertake work of most diverse character and to settle quickly into new environments. Again, there is the question of the time to be spent at the University. It is difficult enough in the few years he is here to give the student the mini-



Professor Slater

mum fundamental training and any applied science could therefore be given only by sacrificing some of the fundamental work or by extending the courses. If it be suggested that there is need for special post-graduate courses, there might be a measure of agreement between some of the Colleges and Dr. McMeekan. But nothing of this sort could be profitably attempted with the available resources in building, staff and finance.

The claim that the University is divorced from reality was made without any clear explanation of what this phrase was meant to imply. I should think the University was no more or less so than the disciplines professed within it. If it means that the University takes no direct interest in the problems of the community, then the answer is two-fold. First, it is surely the University's prime function to provide the trained minds which can, in later years, help the community to formulate and solve its problems. Secondly, it is not true that the University is in this way divorced from reality. In my own laboratories, for example, a senior full-time research worker is most actively engaged in the study of one of the very problems to which reference was made in the dis-

cussion, the utilisation of the iron sands of New Zealand, and there are several investigations proceeding in other Departments of this College which seem to me to be equally important to the community. Furthermore, by establishing Schools of Social Science and of Political Science and Public Administration the University has given the clearest possible expression of its awareness of its broad responsibilities to the community.

The question of the wisdom of giving training in fields where there are not opportunities of employment in New Zealand is again difficult to answer. I am not sure that the facts support the thesis and in their absence (they were not given) I make no further comment.

There will always be staff in the Colleges whose interests are chiefly in teaching, and others who are more drawn to research as an end in itself. Some again would prefer to see research assume a disciplined place in the whole process of education. Within these limits it becomes difficult to agree that "the University" has not been interested in research, and has thus "lost it." At least in recent years, through the vigorous efforts of its spokesmen, it has shown the greatest interest in research and nothing has fostered it more than the introduction of the Ph.D. degree.

Finally, the question of the graduate's awareness of the opportunities awaiting him in New Zealand. I suppose most graduates talk to their teachers about such matters before they leave and I should be surprised if my colleagues do not attempt, as I certainly do, to give them some indication of the opportunities, both financial and intellectual, afforded by the different organisations which now compete for their services.

## WHAT DR. McMEEEKAN SAID

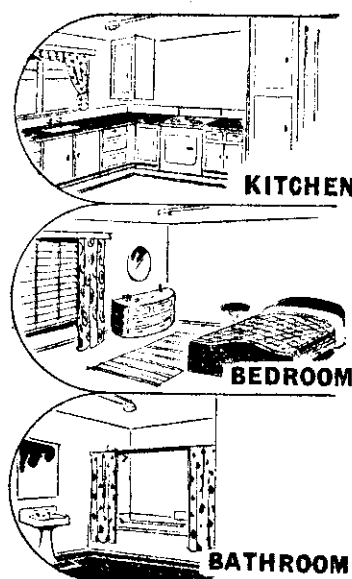
THE principal criticisms made by Dr. McMeekan were:

I don't believe that research should be supported merely for research's sake, because the people think it is a good thing. I believe research should only be supported if it is likely to benefit mankind and benefit the way of life of everybody. And it won't be successful, the dividend won't be paid in any terms, economic or social, unless this research work itself is in the hands of competent personnel.

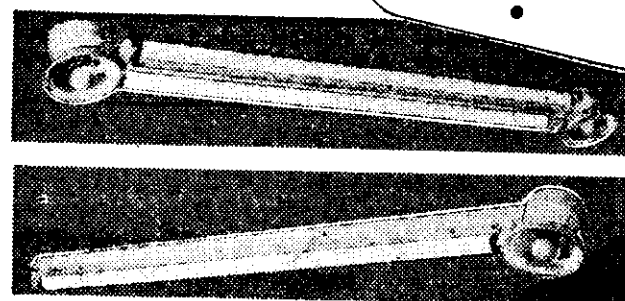
I am working in the applied field, and the Universities rather pride themselves on what they call the pure research field. And I quite definitely have the feeling that our four main Universities at least are a little divorced from the realities of life in New Zealand. That applies to their teaching in a very real measure, so that a large proportion of their products are not aware of the situation, and on top of that they tend to get trained in fields for which there are no opportunities here.

I'd like to ask . . . whether it is a sound investment that the four Universities of New Zealand should receive a total of £10,000 a year for research. My own feeling is that we can hardly blame the rather narrow and academic interests of our University professors, since they haven't any money to be expansive with. They cannot get interested in problems except cheap little problems that don't require very much expenditure and that limits them a good deal in the sort of training they can get.

I'd like to make the additional point—again it is purely an opinion, of course—that I believe the Universities have lost research because they have not been interested in research. For example, I don't believe the station with which I am associated, Ruakura, would ever have been established if Massey and Lincoln had done their job on the research side. It is because they weren't doing it and because the agricultural industry demanded work of the nature that we are carrying out that stations like Ruakura, and there are many of them today, were established; but we have unfortunately got into the position where nearly all agricultural research is carried on outside the Universities. And yet these outside institutes must have staff and they cannot get them unless some [research] is carried on within the Universities.



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