

THE DOMINION, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1916.

Examinations at the pass grade are to be conducted by the 'professors and lecturers' of the college. I presume this means that the professors and lecturers in a college in English, for example, will examine only in English, and so with other subjects. The resolution of the board is not clear. Examinations in subjects taken at a higher grade than pass (I presume this means repeat subjects and also honours) shall be conducted by a special board consisting of all the 'responsible' teachers of the subject in affiliated colleges. A moderator, who may or may not be a teacher at an affiliated college, may be added to each special board, if the Board of Studies on the recommendation of the (? responsible) teachers thinks fit. The results of examinations higher than intermediate 'as a whole' (sic) shall be determined by a General Board which is to consist of chairmen of the special boards. 'Responsible' teachers are not defined. It will be news to many that the colleges possess teachers that are not 'responsible.'

Specific Objections.

"In the B.A. and B.Sc. degrees the candidate is bound to take only one or two subjects of a higher grade. The teachers are therefore mainly to examine their own students. The Special Boards are to examine in the higher grade. This would mean, if there is a professor in each college, say of Latin, that the four Latin professors are to examine all those taking Latin at the higher grade. The papers would require to be prepared by the Special Board some time before the end of the last term. Every teacher would therefore before the term expired know the questions his students would have to answer. Would it be his duty to question his class on the subjects which he knew would appear in the examination paper? Is the Board of Studies aware that in connection with one University this very question has been raised?—the College of Dundee, connected with St. Andrew's University. It is said in one resolution of the board: 'In no case shall the work of any student be examined by fewer than two examiners under conditions to be "approved" by the Board of Studies.' What does this mean? Whether the decision of the Special Boards is conclusive or not is far from clear. Resolution 7 says: 'The Special Boards shall meet in Wellington on the first Tuesday in December and discuss the results of the final and honours examinations. If the results have been ascertained, what is there to discuss? Then the next day the General Board is to meet and it is to 'finally determine the results as a whole of the final and honours examinations for the approval of the Senate.' If the determination of the Special Board is not to be varied, does it require the 'expert' knowledge of a General Board to decide who has passed or failed? The members of the Senate are not credited with much ability by the Board of Studies. In brief, these are the proposals so far as examinations are concerned.

Rules of Other Universities.

"The principle laid down is that the teachers are to be the examiners of their own students. Is this the rule in the other Universities of the Empire? So far as the Mother University—Oxford—is concerned, it is not the rule. In Oxford and Cambridge the private tutorial system of teaching is in vogue, and it is rare (if it ever happens) for a private tutor to examine his own pupils. How careful Oxford is in securing examiners who cannot be accused of bias will appear from some rules published by the Registry of Oxford:—

"No examiner shall examine viva voce any candidate who belongs to any college or hall in which he is tutor or in which he has been tutor during the two years preceding, or who has been his private pupil within the two years preceding.

"If in voting upon the place to be assigned to a candidate in any class list the examiners shall be equally divided, the chairman shall have a casting vote: provided that if the candidate shall be of the same college or hall as the chairman or of any college or hall in which he is tutor or has been tutor during the two years preceding, or shall have been privately taught by him during the two years preceding, then the casting vote shall be with the majority.

"In practice an examiner takes no part in a discussion upon a candidate who belongs to his college or who has been his pupil. In Scotland I understand that there is at least one assessor—an external examiner—associated with the teacher in every examination, and that this external examiner does the main part of the work.

Sir Robert Stout reviewed in detail the provisions in the charters of many provincial universities in Great Britain and Ireland, and in India, to show that in these newer universities the examination of students by their teachers for university degrees is expressly provided against. Amongst the universities he mentioned were: The University of Wales, the Universities of Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, and Bristol, the National University of Ireland, Dublin University, and the five Universities of India.

What of Other Examinations?

"The University exports in the United Kingdom and in India have not adopted the principle laid down the our Board of Studies, viz., that the teachers should be the examiners of their students," Sir Robert Stout continued. "If this principle is to be adopted, it cannot be confined to University examinations. There are other 'responsible' teachers who can examine their students. We have just as able and upright men and women on the staffs of our primary and secondary schools as we have on the staffs of our affiliated colleges. Why, then, do we have a large number of Inspectors of Schools? They are not teachers. Some of them have done very little teaching. For what purpose are they maintained in their present position? Is it not that the State may ascertain how our educational administration is carried on? Further, we have entrance examinations in this University. Would not the certificate of any teacher be sufficient to certify the ability of his pupils to enter the halls of learning in our University? Are external examinations to be denounced? If so, what is to become of the Civil Service examinations, both junior and senior, and scholarship examinations, accountancy, medical, degree, etc.? Must not they all be abolished? Teachers are examined, and are awarded certificates on their examination. If this principle of external examination is not approved, the teachers' certificates, I presume, will be granted by the officials of the Normal Schools. This will make a saving in the Education Department expenditure.

Another Suggestion.

"There is a more important question, however, to be considered. If the teachers are to be examiners, and if the Board of Studies is to frame programmes of studies, there is little left for the Senate of the New Zealand University to do. The cost of administration of the New Zealand University with its Senate, its Board of Studies, its examiners, etc., is large. We are in troublous times, and shall sooner or later feel the great financial pressure that follows every war. No war has been so colossal as the one in which our Empire is now engaged. It is our duty to husband our resources, and it is criminal to waste money unnecessarily. If, then, the New Zealand University is not necessary as an examining and a degree-granting University, it is the duty of our Parliament to abolish it. If the teachers of colleges are to be responsible for the granting of degrees and diplomas, let the university colleges be constituted four independent universities, with power to grant degrees, and to perform other university functions.

Partisans and a "Shibboleth."

"There are several persons still alive who took some part in the constituting of the university, and they will regret that such a national institution should cease to exist. About fifty years ago, when the question of making provision for university education first arose in Otago, many thought that it would be for the benefit of the life of our coming nation, that the intellectually-gifted of our sons and daughters should belong to, and be educated at a university, and that sectional or district prejudices, which often arise, should not divide us in the pursuit of the highest educational development of our people. They may have dreamed dreams; and persons who were not then born when such subjects were discussed may be right in now assuming that our early settlers knew nothing about university

matters, though many of these had had a university education. It was hoped that no political or partisan feeling should ever enter our halls of learning. They did not foresee the future. Such partisanship has invaded one college, in fact it is said it is found in two, so that no one who cannot pronounce the 'shibboleth' of a so-called University Reform Association has much chance of having his services utilised in the administration of a college. We have for a few years had a persistent demand from some of the professors of our colleges that the professoriate should control our university education. Some of these who made this demand have now left New Zealand, and I notice that one of them has found in his present place of residence that its primary and secondary, as well as university education, require a complete alteration. Was it not one of our ablest English philosophers who said 'The eye sees that which the eye is prepared to see'?

"Reform" May Save Money.

"Those who have stood by the cradle of the New Zealand University may regret to have to take part in its obsequies; but if it is not required, it must be abolished. Our resources are wasted if there is a useless institution maintained in our midst. Monetarily there will be a great gain by its abolition. We can save the cost of the Senate, of the University Office, of the Board of Studies, of our Calendar, of all the examinations, entrance, degree, diploma, etc., etc. If it is the function of the teacher to examine his students, he needs no extra salary for performing this duty. This is, in fact, the rule in universities where the teachers aid in examining. For example, in the University of Adelaide, which has the method of joint examinations—that is, by teachers and by external examiners—there is this regulation on the subject:—

"The professors and lecturers shall take such part in the university examinations as the council shall direct, but no professor or lecturer shall be required to examine in any subject which it is not his duty to teach."

The primary and secondary schools teachers can examine pupils who desire to enter the university, and can give them necessary certificates. Further, there are 45 inspectors of schools that can be dispensed with if the teachers are the proper persons to examine their pupils, and the staff of the Central Education Department could be much reduced. ~~Very many thousands a year~~

could thus be saved, and it will not be denied that it is the duty of the Government to see, especially in this crisis of our history, that none of our resources are wasted. No doubt a degree granted by one of the colleges will not be considered by the public equal to one granted by the university. The degrees to be granted under the new proposals, even if the University be maintained, will be only college degrees, for the main part of the examination for the primary degrees is to be conducted by the teacher of the student alone. It will be only correct to tell the public that the degrees granted have been granted by the college, that they are not truly university degrees.

"In the days of long ago the idea was that with a New Zealand University, controlling and granting degrees, etc., provision could be made for new schools, or colleges, in other parts of the Dominion, but this will be difficult to realise, if we establish four separate universities.

The Pass Degree.

"Over three years ago, namely in November, 1912, there was a representative gathering of professors held in Wellington. There were thirty professors present. They recommended a change in our programme of studies for the primary degrees. We do not know whether their recommendations were unanimous or carried only by a small majority. The full minutes of their meetings were not published. It may be useful to compare the recommendations then made with those that are suggested by the Board of Studies. The 1912 recommendations appear at Page 11 of the Minutes of the Senate for 1913. In 1912 it was proposed to abolish the Bachelor of Science Degree. It is now proposed to retain it. The grouping of the subjects for the degree has been altered. There was provision for one or two subjects being repeated and a candidate could get his pass degree if he got in four subjects and

two of these were repeated. He was not bound, however, to repeat in two subjects, he could have taken six subjects. The present proposal is to compel a repetition. Is this wise? There seems to be a tendency amongst some educationists to compel specialisation at, what appears to me, a too early age. Many of our students will become teachers. Is it wise to confine their attention to a few special subjects instead of giving them a broad culture? I do not think so. The resolutions of the Board of Studies bind the freedom of the students in their choice of subjects. Little or no initiative or judgment is left to them and they are deemed unable to control their own educational career; they must consult their professors and are bound by their advice. In many of the most successful universities the teachers have not this power. I thought a university was a place 'where the wind of freedom blows.'

'It is not necessary that I should at present discuss the various proposals for amending our programme of studies for our degrees. Our professors seem to spend much of their time in making suggestions for amending the requirements for our university degrees. One proposal of the Board of Studies is to cancel one amendment made in the First Division of subjects for the degree of Bachelor of Laws, at the last annual meeting of the Senate. The amendment made the two subjects 'International Law' and 'Conflict of Laws' one subject. This amendment was suggested by the teachers of law in the affiliated colleges, and is to come into force in 1917. It is now proposed to revert to the former position of having two separate subjects in 'International Law' and 'Conflict of Laws.' It is not stated whether the teachers of law have been consulted. There is only one teacher of law on the Board of Studies. I would suggest that before any alterations are made in the syllabus we should consult the professors of each subject. I make this suggestion because I have received a letter from Professors Dunlop and Salmond protesting against the amendment made last year in our mental science course, and asking that it be cancelled. I have pointed out to them that, unless the Senate should consider the question one of urgency, we cannot accede to their suggestion without consulting the Board of Studies. There is no professor of mental science on the Board of Studies, and perhaps few, if any, members of the board know anything of the subject.'
