

College at Melbourne—an institution that I was shown over when I was in Australia. A copy of the report and prospectus for 1887, and of the prospectus for 1889, I have caused to be laid upon the table. A reference to those pamphlets will show that a great work is being carried on in that institution, not only in the direction to which I have invited the attention of this Board, but in many other equally useful subjects, which are hardly within the province of this college. The Board, by the Ordinance, is charged with the duty of providing a liberal and regular course of education; and in founding a School of Engineering, and making due provision for its maintenance, it will have discharged in that direction one of the duties imposed upon it. But it has also cast upon it the administration of the funds of the endowment of the School of Technical Science; and this appears to me to be a fitting opportunity for the Board to consider the question from all its bearings. I think this college, looking to the experience in the other colonies, with their large populations, of the number of students in the Schools of Engineering at Melbourne and Sydney, cannot expect any considerable number of students to attend the lectures with the object of ultimately graduating in the School of Engineering. Hence the greater necessity, while providing instruction which will enable those to take a degree who wish to do so, to establish popular classes, and, by so doing, to offer to a very large class the opportunity of profiting by a course of instruction which cannot but prove of the greatest advantage to them in their respective callings, and open to such of them as may see their way to take advantage of it the means of obtaining a profession. I have satisfied myself that the whole of the elementary lectures could be given by means of evening classes, and thus made available not only for the students who intend to proceed to a degree, but for all others who may choose to attend them. These classes can be made to cover instruction in building construction, elementary steam-engine, geometrical drawing, freehand drawing, mechanical drawing, and a proportion of the lectures in the advanced steam-engine, applied mechanics, and elements of mechanism. In order to make these classes popular in the true sense of the word, the fee might be fixed at a price that would put them within the reach of all. Those who have watched the progress of events in the development of superior education in this district will remember that this college is the outcome of the evening classes initiated by the 'Collegiate Union.' The Canterbury College, as it exists at the present day, with an attendance of 240 students at the different lectures, had a very small beginning. Therefore, there is every reason to hope that the School of Engineering may be successfully established if it is launched on a proper basis—on one that will prove attractive to the very large and important class that I have already alluded to, and from which we may reasonably expect to draw a large number of students. I have referred to the fact that under any circumstances it would have been necessary for the college to provide increased instruction in the department of mechanical engineering before the commencement of the first term in March, 1890. I would therefore recommend the Board to appoint some competent person to the post of lecturer in mechanical engineering, who would devote the whole of his time to the duties of his office. The expense in the way of an increased vote for the salary of a full-time lecturer is one the college must have faced under any circumstances. If the college thinks well of the suggestions I have made, steps could be taken for the extension of the system of evening classes without any additional expense to the department by way of salary over and above that which must have been incurred to provide the increased instruction by reason of the lectures to be given to first- and second-year students. Both in Melbourne and Sydney the services of skilled workmen are employed in the laboratories of the University; but I do not see any necessity why this Board at present should be called upon to make any provision in that way.

“For the efficient establishment of the School of Engineering an outlay, though not necessarily by any means a large one, will have to be incurred for buildings. One of two ways may be followed, either by the erection of a temporary structure or by putting up a permanent building. The authority of His Excellency the Governor might be sought, as is provided by the College Ordinance, for the raising of a small loan for the purpose, the interest on which can be readily met out of the increased revenue of the endowment. In either case a loan would have to be raised if the college decide on the erection of buildings; it is only a question of amount. I fail to see how the work of the department can be done with advantage to the students or credit to the lecturers without the necessary buildings. The Board has before it the cost (£1,500) of the buildings of brick, with a slate roof, erected by the University in Sydney and the accommodation provided. Presuming that a similar sum were spent by this college, the annual charge for interest would not exceed £90 a year. I venture to think it would be better to put up a permanent building at a reasonable cost rather than erect some temporary structure, possibly of corrugated iron. It would not only, I believe, be cheaper in the end, but would have this additional advantage, which should not be lost sight of, of being, I trust, in harmony with the building in which we are now assembled. The Board, no doubt, will agree with me that on the college site we have, as it is, more than a sufficient variety in material in our buildings. A certain expenditure will also be necessary for plant, but the amount to be spent from time to time would be regulated by the Board. A total outlay of about £1,500, extended over a period of, say, four years, would, I believe, be found sufficient for the efficient working of the department for years to come. That portion of the plant—(1) a testing machine, arranged to test strength and elasticity of materials in tension and compression; (2) a transverse strength-testing machine; (3) verniers and measuring appliances—which would be required at once might be purchased out of capital, the remainder being provided out of income as the funds would allow of it.”

A Committee was appointed by the Board to investigate the funds available, and to draw up a scheme for the working of the department. On the recommendation of the Committee, it was decided to appoint a full-time lecturer to take charge of the school, at a salary of £550 per annum, but without fees. The appointment was offered to and accepted by Mr. R. J. Scott. It is in the knowledge of members of the Board that Mr. Scott had for some considerable period delivered lectures on practical geometry, mechanical drawing, and the steam engine, at the School of Art.