

## No. 620 (1910).—Petition of T. H. LABY and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of reform in University administration and education in New Zealand.

I am directed to report that the Education Committee, having considered this petition and the evidence of the petitioners and others in relation thereto, is of opinion—

(1.) That a case has been made out for reform in the constitution of the New Zealand University, more particularly in the direction of the utilization in a larger measure than at present of the professorial staffs of the colleges in the framing of curricula and syllabuses and in the conduct of examinations.

(2.) That the appointment of a Royal Commission is not necessary at present, as the Committee believes there is evidence that the University is itself moving in a direction which will gradually evolve a scheme of reform on the lines indicated; and this is borne out, to some extent, by the fact that in November, 1910, in accordance with a resolution of the Senate, a conference of representatives of the Professorial Boards was held in Wellington to consider certain academic questions referred to it by the Senate.

(3.) That, with regard to finance—

(a.) The fees charged in the various colleges should be uniform.

(b.) All the colleges should be adequately endowed, and where grants of a permanent character are made by Parliament these should be statutory.

(c.) The financial position and requirements of each college should be inquired into, each college being considered on its merits, and provision made accordingly. (The Committee thinks that this inquiry might be conducted by the Inspector-General of Schools.)

(4.) That—

(a.) The library equipment of the colleges should be strengthened, especially in the interests of research.

(b.) The Inspector-General should be asked to report on this matter. (In preparing his report the Inspector-General should consider whether a system of interexchange of books between libraries could be given effect to.)

(c.) The reports of the Inspector-General under this and the preceding paragraph should be referred to the Education Committee of the House next session for consideration.

(5.) That, considering the age of the institution, and the geographical and other difficulties with which it has had to contend, the University has done very good work, and is justifying the expectations and accomplishing the objects of its founders. University education is free to all holders of scholarships, studentships, and bursaries, the number of these current last year being 557. If a student does not obtain a scholarship, but gains credit in the University Junior Scholarship Examination, he is entitled to a bursary, which carries with it the payment of college and University fees for three or four years. The University has thus opened the doors of the professions to all classes of the community, and its graduates are taking leading positions in all walks of life. The Committee believes, however, that, with reform on the lines above indicated, the University will extend its usefulness as an educational agent, and become increasingly identified with the practical life and work of the community.

(6.) That—

(a.) This report be laid on the table of the House, and be referred to the Government for consideration.

(b.) That the minutes of evidence, together with the pamphlet of the petitioners entitled "University Reform in New Zealand," and the "Opinions of some New Zealand Educational Authorities," be laid on the table of the House, and that the minutes of evidence be printed.

25th October, 1911.

[Vide Appendix I.—13A.]

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