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THE UNIVERSITY TROUBLES.

The Senate of the University will to-day be asked to consider a motion providing for a change in the constitution of the governing body. It is hardly necessary to say that a change is eminently desirable. The Council, which is now elected by the Senate and not necessarily from graduates, has not borne itself so well that all men can praise it. Its members administer a princely estate, derived from the benefactions of individuals, from the bounty of the State, and from the fees of students. We have again and again had occasion to criticize adversely the financial management of the institution. And the Council has not been uniformly fortunate in its management of educational affairs. In the matter which now especially occupies the minds of persons interested in the University, the Council has introduced a regulation which has no parallel elsewhere, and which must operate seriously against the maintenance of a spirit of independence in occupiers of Chairs. If wiser counsels had prevailed, the advertisement calling for candidates for the Hughes Professorship of English Literature would have been withdrawn ere this. Against such withdrawal no one but the applicant who may be deemed worthy of the appointment would have had just cause of protest, and the colony will not readily believe that this gentleman is likely to be better qualified for the position by learning and experience than the present occupant of the Chair.

There should be some such modification of the powers of the Council as would lend weight to the moderate representations of the Senate. But we sincerely hope, for their own sake, that the members of the Senate will go no further in their demands. It is said that one of their proposals is to limit the choice of members of the Council to graduates. This would be a grave mistake. Graduates are not necessarily more learned in the highest and widest sense than men upon whose shoulders an academic hood never rested. One could name dozens of great authors who either never entered a University or who never proceeded to a degree. Nor does graduation in any way imply business ability. The mere passing a final examination in law, or medicine, or divinity, or arts does not establish a claim to be expert in University management. A man, for instance, could gain the highest degree attainable in London, and yet never have passed a term in residence or seen his fellows except at examination time. There is no special grace about degrees, and the ordinary graduate, the passman without honours, merely bears the Hall-mark of proficiency in certain studies. There is nothing to show that he could "run" a University. He may be the most able man under heaven, and yet again he may be the most helplessly unbusiness-like creature on the face of the earth. Certainly graduates should take a very prominent part in the government of the University. Such a part is now theirs in their capacity as the constituency of the Council. They have none but themselves to blame if they return to the Council gentlemen who are not graduates, and we find that even now only one-fourth of the Council has not graduated in Universities. At the same time

we have the strongest possible objection to relegate the government of the University to men whose essential qualification is that they are graduates. Rather would we see the State definitively represented in the governing body. The Governor should appoint a certain proportion—say one-third of the members, and the Senate the rest. Then the accounts should be audited by the Commissioners of Audit and not handed over to private gentlemen. It is only fair that the body which supplies the sinews of war should have something to say in the disposal of the moneys placed at the service of the University, just as it is reasonable that the Senate, the body of graduates, should have its share in the government of our highest educational institution.

The gentlemen who desire the establishment of drastic reforms in the constitution of the Council are, by the course they are adopting, running a serious risk of playing into the hands of that body. The country, and rightly, will never consent to the substitution for an irresponsible Council of a close corporation. If it was the Senate which had subscribed the funds for the establishment and maintenance of the University, the Senate might claim their entire administration. But these were subscribed by individuals, who, by-the-way, are not graduates, and by the State. Surely these should have a say in the administration. There are some changes which can with great advantage be made in the constitution. Every matriculated student, for instance, should be considered a member of the University, if only for the sake of developing a wholesome love for the institution. The Senate, composed as now or with modifications, should have a distinct voice in the management of matters in which it may be assumed to have a right to speak. When the Council finds that the great majority of its constituents is opposed to any particular course of action it should be compelled to give way at least to the extent of effecting a compromise. For instance, the opposition to the change in the tenure of professorial chairs being so strong, the law might fairly arrange matters so that the change should be postponed. Then all suspicions of unfair dealings or of prejudices against individuals would be avoided. The Senate of course could not be made the fountain of all regulation, for then the Council's occupation would be gone; but some arrangement might without difficulty be arrived at whereby the objections of the Senate to the decisions of the Council would have practical weight. It is not likely that at any time the large majority of the Senate would be utterly wrong, but, unfortunately, under the present constitution, wrong or right, that body is powerless to avert what it regards as an immediate evil. We should like to see some scheme for giving graduates a real interest in the University. This scheme should not, as has been suggested, go so far as the overriding of the Council after a proposal has twice or oftener passed the Senate without being accepted by the governing body, because this would mean the abolition of all responsibility and a possible pardoning to popular outcry. But it should contain provision for an appeal from a decision which is not unanimous to the general body of the electors. We believe that even