

of the last five years, had fallen by £17,000 per annum. That, of course, was due to the decline in the number of students. That decline had continued this year, and there was every sign that it would continue for some years. In many ways it was not an unwelcome phenomenon. Many of the classes had been so large as to impose a very great strain on the teaching staff, and conditions for the students themselves had not been in every way satisfactory. That very fact made it impossible to meet the shrinkage in the number of students and of income by corresponding reductions in the teaching staff. The staff was still, he thought, on the small side for the vast commitment which the University undertook both in the way of teaching and in the advancement of knowledge.

No doubt economies were possible here and there: and every opportunity would and should be used. But it was useless to imagine that such reductions of expenditure would make much difference to their financial situation. They could not bring expenditure for staff or maintenance very much below the point at which it now stood without doing harm to the fabric and to the life of the University. If, therefore, they were to get out of their financial difficulties, they must look not to reduction of expenditure, but to expansion of income.

The Courts of the four Scottish Universities, acting together, took a first step at the beginning of the year towards the objective of increasing their income. They had approached the Secretary of State for Scotland, and had asked him to use his powers under Section 16 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1908, to make a grant from the Scottish Education Fund to the four Universities.

For nearly thirty years the Secretary of State had had the power to make a grant. He had not been asked by the Universities to use it, but in the difficulties in which the Universities were placed it seemed right to all the Courts that he should now be asked to invoke that power.

None of the Scottish Universities had enjoyed—perhaps he should say, had sought to enjoy—assistance from the local education authorities at all corresponding to that which nearly all the Universities south of the border enjoyed. The latter derived a substantial proportion of their income from grants freely given by the local education authorities. That had been a constantly expanding source of revenue in the English Universities, and was one of the reasons why they had been able with relative ease to meet their constantly increasing demands.