

# STATE SCHOOL TEACHERS MEET IN CONFERENCE

## LIVELY DISCUSSION ON SUGGESTED FEDERAL SUBSIDY

### Fears Expressed of Probable Interference With State Policy

SYDNEY, Tuesday. In his address to the conference of the State School Teachers' Federation, which is being held in Sydney, the Minister of Public Instruction (Mr. D. H. Drummond) said that there seemed to be a distinct clash of opinion between two schools of thought at the conference—one leaning toward the federative principle, and the other toward a more unified system of control.

He stated that in Canada, the United States of America and Newfoundland, there existed a strong current of opinion in favour of centralization. These countries differed from Australia, however, in that here there was no Commonwealth Department of Education, but everything was centralized in the State capitals. A great centralized Government department had always to fight against the tendency to become inelastic and wooden. The closer to the people a Government could be kept, the better the people were governed. At any rate the New South Wales Government heartily favoured co-operation with other States if there was to be any hope of education benefiting the people.

**TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**  
The president of the federation (Mr. L. T. Latter) spoke on "The Teacher and His Work." A teacher's work, he contended could not be judged in the present. Examinations were not the real test of his activities. He built for the future. In this lay the actual judgment as to success or failure.

The rapid changes in the modern world compelled the teacher to look far outside his own country. The barriers of distance which, for such a long time had limited the contacts of individuals and nations, were being broken down by modern inventions.

**CITIZEN OF FUTURE.**  
These changing conditions, which had so vastly enlarged the scope of individual contacts and experiences, demanded a state of mind entirely different from that of the simpler social organization of the past.

The citizen of the future should be trained to think in wider terms. In other words, he should be "world conscious." For this reason a very definite responsibility was placed at the door of modern education—that of helping the boys and girls of to-day to know the world.

An understanding of the people of other nations such as came best through actual experience, in working and living with them, was an important phase of present day education.

**SUBSIDY FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION**  
A brisk discussion developed on the motion that—"The Federal Government be asked to subsidise all forms of trade, commercial and agricultural education," put forward by Mr. P. Hughes (Tasmania). Those in favour of the motion pointed out the great need for Australia to fill her empty spaces with young men who would benefit both themselves and her by going on the land. There was at present no uniformity. Certificates gained after a period of trade training in one State should be valid in all States. This notion was a step toward uniformity.

In Canada last year the Government was prepared to grant £2,000,000 to the States for research in the wheat fields of the Dominion.

In South Africa also the Government subsidised various States of the Union for educational purposes. In fact, Australia was the only country that did not give its States some educational subsidy.

As far as Tasmania was concerned, said Mr. Hughes, the Federal Government took £1,000,000 away every year, and did nothing to put it back.

**COMMONWEALTH INTERFERENCE**  
Those opposed to the motion pointed out that the land and agriculture were State matters. No Government was likely to distribute money without requiring a strict account of how it was spent, and claiming a voice in educational policy. Once the policy of State education was modified in this small

man and Queensland did not vote. A motion that in the interests of the Australian nation a Commonwealth standardization of salaries and conditions for teachers was necessary was referred to the Federal council.

#### OTHER MOTIONS ADOPTED

Mr. Hill (Victoria) moved that the Federal Government be asked to grant a subsidy for the medical inspection of schools and for medical and dental clinics. This was adopted.

A proposal that in the interchange of overseas teachers, the Federal Ministry should give consideration to the question of how those teachers who went from Australia might act as representatives of Australia was rejected.

The following motions were adopted:—"That technical colleges and the universities be brought into closer relationship, and, to further this aim, representatives of universities, directors of education, principals of technical colleges, and representatives of the State School Teachers' Federation be asked to confer."

"That in the States where it is necessary the curricula of secondary schools be amended to provide for the study of elementary economics and sociology, proceeding direct to matriculation in the economics course at the university."

**OPPOSITION OF NEW SOUTH WALES**  
Mr. E. J. Rourke, acting president of the New South Wales delegation, quoted a message from the Premier (Mr. T. R. Bavin) disapproving of Federal interference in education, and declaring that if the Commonwealth Government made grants for education these grants should be paid into the general funds of the State Government, and not allotted to any specific departments of educational activity.

The motion was adopted. Mr. J. F. Hill (Victoria) brought forward a motion to the effect that "as the presentation of the works of Shakespeare is of such national importance this conference requests the Federal and various State Governments to grant a subsidy to enable his plays to be produced."

Of all the civilized nations of the world, he said, the British countries were the only ones which did not subsidize drama. A subsidy of £1,000 a year by the States and £1,000 by the Commonwealth would enable regular Shakespearean performances to be given.

Mr. Buttsworth (Tasmania) maintained that Shakespeare was necessary in the life of the modern child, as an antidote to the less worthy class of motion pictures.

The motion was adopted. A motion that "members of this conference endeavour to have a definite system of exchange of teachers between the States instituted during 1929" was adopted unanimously.

**ABOLISHING EXAMINATIONS**  
Another motion put before the conference provided that "this conference urges all the States to strive for the abolition of the system of external examinations in primary and secondary schools."

The chairman, however, ruled that the motion was out of order, since all decisions made at the Federal conference were binding on the States, and in this instance the States had had no opportunity of discussing the question. The conference, therefore, decided to debate the question, "Can external examinations be abolished?"

Mr. W. Cremer (Victoria), who had brought forward the motion, said that the external examination system had its origin in the competitive system prevailing in industry, a system of social organization that reached its peak in the Prussia of 1914. It tended to make the pupil give back to the examiner just what he thought the examiner required, after a study of the latter's foibles and of the questions which were asked year after year. It forced every mind into the same groove. One could not call it anything else but cramming.

The ancient Greek schools knew nothing of examinations, and yet their teaching was by no means a failure. Despite this, the idea prevailed that the school which gained results at examinations was the one which deserved success.

**IS TEACHING A PROFESSION?**  
The external examinations system experiment on the part of the teacher an absolute impossibility. No examiner could give proper consideration to the paper in the time at his disposal.

The whole question came down to this—Was teaching a profession? The doctor and the lawyer did not have to submit to inspection to prove that they did their work properly. Why should the teacher?

Voting on the question by States resulted as follows:—Victoria and South Australia, yes; New South Wales, no; Tas-

# PUBLIC SERVICE TRAINING

## Study at University

For some time the Public Service Association of the Commonwealth has advocated the establishment of a diploma course in public administration at universities.

The secretary of the South Australian branch (Mr. L. C. Hunkin) has been informed that the senate of the Sydney University has decided, on the recommendation of the Faculty of Economics, to comply with the desire of the association.

A course will be instituted in March, and all who desire to submit themselves for examination must attend the lectures. It is hoped by Mr. Hunkin that other Australian universities will follow the example of that in Sydney.

The Adelaide University has already assisted to the extent of instituting a special course in public administration which is attended by several civil servants, 15 of whom were successful in the final examination last year. Mr. Hunkin was one of the successful students.

### CONDITIONS OF COURSE

The course at the Sydney University is subject to the following conditions:—Students need not matriculate; the course is for three years; subjects which must be taken.—First year—Economics I. and an additional study. Second year—Public administration I., economics III., and an additional subject. Third year—Modern political institutions, public administration II., economics III., or an additional subject not previously taken. One additional subject must be chosen from the course prescribed for students in the faculty of arts. Public finance is included in economics III.

Mr. Hunkin stated yesterday that the training at the University had enabled officers to show qualifications for promotion to the highest grades of the service.

### UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS.

The results of the leaving examinations of the Adelaide University, for which candidates sat early in December, will be published either at the end of this week or the beginning of next. Last year the results were made known on January 3. This year, however, the number of candidates greatly exceeded that of last year.

### RESEARCH POLICY IS SOUND

Mr. J. A. Prescott (Professor of Agricultural Chemistry at the Waite Institute) was communicated with, in the absence of Dr. A. E. V. Richardson.

The professor said he was specially interested in the recommendation in the report for closer co-ordination of the Development and Migration Commission and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and the appointment of a separate economic service. He endorses those recommendations, as he considered such a policy was quite sound.

**RHODES SCHOLARS.**  
**TRUST'S ANNUAL STATEMENT**

The annual statement of the Rhodes Trust for the academic year 1927-28 shows that the number of students gathered at Oxford University was 280, of whom 187 were from the British Empire and 93 from the United States of America.

The subject most favored by students was law, there being 55 students taking that course. Natural science and medicine claimed 43; English literature, 21; modern history, 17 and philosophy, politics, and economics, 15. There were only two students of theology, and only three were studying forestry or agriculture. There were 176 scholars in residence at the beginning of the 1928-29 academic year.

During 1927-28 five deaths of former students occurred, including that of Mr. J. A. Thomson, the New Zealand (1904) scholar.

Among those who received degrees at examinations were the following:—D. Ph., A. R. Callaghan, New South Wales (biology); L. G. H. Huxley, Tasmania (physics).

B.Sc., M. L. Formby, South Australia (medicine); R. N. McCulloch, New South Wales (physics); F. L. Thyer, South Australia (medicine).

Final Honor Schools, First Class—Natural Science, G. W. Paton, Victoria. Natural Science—Second class A. H. Christian, Western Australia. Philosophy, Politics, and Economics—Second class, J. E. Barry, Queensland.

Part I. of the final honor School of Chemistry, K. R. Allen, Western Australia.

Among the distinctions won by Rhodes scholars at Oxford were:—J. C. Eccles (Victoria), Research Fellowship at Exeter College; H. W. Florey (South Australia), Rolleston memorial prize; R. Wilson (Tasmania), a Commonwealth Fund fellowship for study in the United States. P. H. Rogers, the New South Wales 1905 scholar, has been appointed a justice of the Supreme Court of his native State.

Several Australians were also prominent in sport, M. L. Formby, of South Australia, was a member of the Oxford lacrosse team which met Cambridge; W. N. Harrison (Queensland) was a member of the athletic sports team against the same University, and K. R. Allen, of Western Australia was included in the water sports team also against Cambridge. A. C. Wallace, the New South Wales 1922 scholar, and P. Lawton, the Queensland 1921 representative, were members of the Australian Rugby football team which toured England in 1927. Wallace was captain of the team.

## UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

### Leaving Examination Results

Early in December candidates sat for the leaving examination of the University of Adelaide. The results are not yet available, but the clerk of public examinations at the University advises that they will be published either at the end of this or early next week.

The results of 1927 leaving examination were made known on January 3, 1928. This year, however, the suspense of candidates, parents, and teachers is unavoidably prolonged owing to a large increase in the number of candidates.