

TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

Retiring Officers Thanked.

The annual conference of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union was resumed at the Flinders Street Baptist Lecture Hall on Tuesday morning. The retiring President (Mr. W. Bennett) occupied the chair.

The President, in handing over the duties of office, asked Mr. F. J. Gartrell to take the chair for the coming year. He said he had received considerable help from the executive committee during his term, and had greatly appreciated the businesslike way in which they had dealt with all questions. He could not fail to express his regard for Mr. Gartrell, who, by his enthusiasm and ability, had shown great promise for future work on behalf of the union.

Mr. Gartrell, in responding, said he had been much impressed with the able manner in which Mr. Bennett had fulfilled his duties. He had shown a spirit of unselfishness throughout, and was held in the highest esteem.



MR. F. J. GARTRELL, President of the Public Teachers' Union.

At the instance of Mr. T. H. Nicholls, seconded by Mr. R. Sutton, the hearty thanks of the union were conveyed to the retiring officers.

The Chairman, referring to the election of Mr. H. M. Lushby, B.A., as President-elect, said he was one of Nature's gentlemen. He had shown distinct ability in the performance of his duties as treasurer, and he was sure that the union would continue to receive the full benefit of his experience.

Mr. Lushby acknowledged the compliment, and said that unionism was to him a religion.

Mr. J. Trotter moved—"In view of the fact that all technical schools are special schools, and exist only singly, promotion is very slow, and is at times blocked to men already in the service by the appointment of others from outside, we suggest that the increments now paid might be increased so that teachers may reach their maximum more quickly." Mr. E. H. Shapter seconded the motion, which was carried.

A further motion—"At present the staff of the trade school and the school of arts are called upon to perform clerical work after the schools close; and, further, the former staffs are on duty up to 40 hours per week, including up to three evenings. In view of this fact they consider they should enjoy the full school vacation"—was then submitted, and carried.

The general secretary stated that, in view of the prospects of the union gaining access to the Arbitration Court, it was time for them to prepare a general case for presentation to the Court.

Mr. A. R. M. Nancarrow submitted the following motion—"That the Director of Education be asked, by deputation, to consider more fully the question of the maximum skill mark awarded to chief assistants as compared with that of Class V. head teachers." Mr. E. Bartholomew, B.A., seconded the motion.

Mr. B. G. Doig proposed an amendment—"That Class V. men have the same range of skill marks as the chief assistants." The amendment was seconded, and carried.

The Chairman said that it would be necessary to appoint a deputation to wait upon the Director before the end of the week in regard to the matter. Messrs. Lushby, Corry, and the Chairman were appointed.

Mr. R. S. Booth moved—"That the final word in determining the skill mark of a teacher be left with the Classification Board." Mr. J. D. A. Drinkwater seconded the motion.

The motion was lost.

Prompt Dispatch of Business.

At the afternoon session further consideration was given to internal questions.

Mr. L. Gordon moved—"That some financial consideration should be given to any teachers who, for any considerable time, act as locum tenens for others receiving higher pay." Mr. C. Maloy seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. M. Gerlach moved—"That the principle, which is already in operation to a limited extent, of giving pay for extra work done at the request of the department in spare time be extended. Mr. Gordon seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Gordon moved—"That it is desirable in the larger schools that special expert teachers of sewing should be appointed, in addition to the usual staff." Mr. Lushby seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Gordon then moved—"That this conference emphatically confirm the action of the executive in requesting retiring leave." Mr. Maloy seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Lipert moved—"That, with a view to obtaining correct spelling, punctuation, and better English, the proof reading of 'The Children's Hour' be placed on a better basis." Mr. Smith seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Maloy moved—"That the department be requested to supply free of cost all equipment and tools required for the teaching of domestic arts, woodwork, and agriculture." Mr. E. W. Skitch seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. A. R. M. Nancarrow moved—"That, in view of the very large number of Class V. schools, and the very small number of Class IV. schools, this conference urges the department to establish another class between the present classes IV. and V." Mr. R. Nancarrow seconded the motion.

Mr. Gordon moved an amendment—"That the dividing line between class IV. and V. be moved to include a proportion of the larger class V. class IV." Mr. Gerlach seconded the amendment.

Mr. Nancarrow was granted withdrawal of his motion.

Mr. Lipert moved a fourth amendment—"That the minimum in-

reduced to 40." Mr. Maloy seconded the amendment, which was lost.

Mr. Gordon's amendment was then carried.

Mr. A. R. M. Nancarrow moved—"That this conference desires to express its sympathy with Mr. Wright, late head teacher of the Curramulka School, in the persecution which he suffered in the prosecution of his duty as a teacher, and also requests the union to bring his case before the department, with the object of securing such redress as is possible, and also to impress upon the Minister the necessity of protecting teachers from such action as that from which Mr. Wright suffered." The motion was seconded, and carried unanimously.

Mr. C. Bronner moved—"That this conference reaffirms its opinion in favour of the introduction of the metric system of weights and measures." The motion was carried.

Mr. Bennett moved—"That, in the interests of our children, it is imperative that all schools and teachers should be registered." He said he had known one case in which a girl who had only passed through third class of the public school had opened a private school. Mr. Maloy seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. D. D. Smith moved—"That, in the opinion of this conference, the number of terminal examinations be reduced to two per annum." Mr. Maloy seconded the motion, which was lost.

Mr. Mackinnon moved—"That some better provision be made to enable teachers of Class VI. schools to gain promotion." Mr. C. E. Melrose seconded the motion, which was carried.

Mr. Maloy moved—"That this conference still presses for the appointment of an independent tribunal to regulate salaries and conditions for the teaching profession." Mr. H. Nancarrow seconded the motion, which was carried.

The formal business of the conference was followed by the National Anthem.

A SOCIAL EVENING.

There was a large attendance of teachers at the social gathering which took place at Aradia Cafe, on Tuesday evening. The guests included the Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy), the Acting Director of Education (Mr. C. Charlton), inspectors and members of the administrative staff. They were welcomed by the President of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (Mr. G. F. Gartrell). A musical programme, arranged by Mr. F. L. Gratton, was presented by Misses Elsie Daley and Eileen Paltridge, and Mr. Keith Allen. Mr. Gratton presided at the piano.

BEHIND THE MASK

WHAT ADELAIDE MAN SAW

London Through Agony Column
(By Dr. H. Heston.)

LONDON.

This London is like a man with a mask. Behind the hard-set faces of folk in street, bus, or tube, what fears and emotions are concealed? Behind the blackish brick fronts of endless city houses, rows and suburban lawns, shadowed semi-detachments, what is happening?

In this world of unknown faces you often find yourself asking such questions, and trying to get at the life and soul of this huge caravanserai. But the task is almost as difficult as guessing the contents from the shape of a brown paper parcel.

But if you catch your man when he thinks no one is looking, or when he shelters behind the veil of anonymity, then you learn something. Peeping through keyholes is undignified and risky, but peeping through the keyhole of "The Times" agony column gives you a view on to a wide and fascinating angle of life. "The Times" is once more a great journal, capable of printing leaders on MacDonald and Meales on the same page. It is so bulky that it takes the whole day to read through, and the quality of the paper is so good that it does not light fires at all well. I read it for an hour each day, but should the time come when I have only five minutes to spare, I shall devote those precious moments to the column and a half of "Personal" advertisements on the front page. For there, at five shillings a line—minimum ten shillings, and there are only seven words in a line—life reveals itself more frankly than in all the other 166½ columns put together. Wealth and poverty, love and luxury, broken hearts and broken fortunes, adventure and amorosness, bargains and bounders, cranks and countesses, romance, reguery, and Rolls Royces, mendicancy and Mah-Jongg all flare out into abbreviated print. Come and see.

NEW RICH AND POOR.

Flocks of advertisements concerning missing heirs and lost wills, hats to let at six guineas or more, suits turned inside out to look like new, appeals for funds for the unemployed, lost dogs and missions in "the log shack in Canada and Australia" for the women and children who are in danger of growing into "white heathens," announcements by cranks, curios, and Cupid.

The crank breaks out in a nine-line sermon starting with "The world's need is" followed by some disjointed texts. Or he squanders £2 as follows: advocating that the time has come when all smokers should combine to bring down the high cost of tobacco and cigarettes.

Of the lot of the new rich and the new poor one gets many glimpses. Lady de Broke has part of her house to let; a young Austrian countess receives guests in "comfortable castle" at three guineas a week, with reductions for quantities; a Russian countess offers her chinchilla coat and sable scarf for a mere song; a French titled dame wants to sell a "wax head of Napoleon I, made at St. Helena," mandarin's coats, Paisley shawls, Rolls Royces, court suits—now in great demand among the Labor Ministers—"an emerald and diamond suite" (secondhand for £4,500), and a necklace of 197 pearls plus some sapphires and diamonds (secondhand for £2,000), all go a-begging; some priceless old heirlooms are offered "to save doctor's widow, £2 destitute, from workhouse."

PATHETIC APPEALS.

When the new poor offer their valuables they probably find buyers. But when they offer their labor the appeal is often as pathetic as it is futile. A "gentlewoman in distress" must have immediate employment; a widow (gentlewoman), girl nine, will furnish and run house in return rent, coal-light; a lady of rank, moving in most exclusive circles, will undertake chaperonage, and suggests American girl, "motherless preferred," a titled lady widow, in straitened circumstances, desires work as bookkeeper, housekeeper, or grateful for a home in return for services; a baronet's eldest son, 26, 10 years' army service, travelled over world, seeks job; public school and Sandhurst, go anywhere; a young peer with the highest social standing and references, wants work "on account of heavy taxation and death duties." An advertiser "in good position, recently promoted, on verge of ruin through money-lenders, would appreciate helping hand." Ladies offer to act as guides or companions to overseas visitors "in non-honorary capacity." An army officer, "aged 25, speaking and writing French and German like a native, also fluent Italian and some Czechisch, desires employment other than drilling recruits, where intelligence, initiative, and lingual attainments would have some scope; not afraid of work, manual, menial, or intellectual." Finally, a former officer in the Russian Imperial Army (aged 27), one of the thousands of exiled Russians hanging round every European capital, "absolutely destitute, will accept any work at small remuneration."

What chance these genteel unskilled laborers have in a land where there are a hundred men trained, capable, and keen to take any job that falls vacant. I know not. But poverty and destitution are no longer the monopoly of the wharffe and the trade unionist.

BEGGING FOR ALMS.

From begging for work to begging for alms is a short step, as many an appeal reveals, and at times one stands amazed at the cool cheek of the beggar. Witness the couple who "offer home and education to nice boy in exchange good car," or the officer's wife, "small family," who "would be grateful extremely for loan or nominal rent country or seaside house, near golf, Kent preferred, April six months, greatest care, most appreciative." I've counted ten such advertisements in a month and wondered what the response is in a land where half the population is looking for a home.

The new rich ask or are asked in a hundred different ways. One wants to buy the "lordship of the manor" somewhere; another invites "any psychological society wanting further support" to send particulars; a third seeks an "easily-run, old-fashioned house"—as if there were any such in England.

To the rich and romantic the profuse luxuries of life are offered. A yachting expedition in the South and West Pacific, a motor tour through Algeria and Tunis, "two guns for expedition interior Africa, comfortable travelling, £500," partridge, pheasant, and fishing preserves; "treasure hunting in the Sahara" with a well-known traveller off to make a preliminary search for ancient treasure amid rock tombs; magic vistas in Amazonian jungles, Rhodesia, Uganda, Zanzibar, or skill in Mah-Jongg—and when playing it "get the right atmosphere by drinking our China tea"—all are offered to those possessing a bank balance when income tax has been paid. An Arabian days and nights world—if you have the cash.

PERSONAL MESSAGES.

There is the really personal message: "I long to see you again," says Louis to Tempier. "Do you doubt?" Fred asks Joan, and Bill reminds Emily that "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever"—all at ten shillings a line. "Dear heart," says someone, "I can forgive and forget, but the silent grief I have endured is trying me to the utmost." "Please do nothing rash," pleads Will to Fen, "want to see you, don't hesitate."

"Everything will come right," George reassures Ethel. "I shall never change." Frank is evidently trying in vain to

persuade Phoebe to slope, and as parting shot flings a ten shilling note and a job. "If you haven't the courage, tell me so quite frankly." Goblin is impertinent and answers Imp's request for her address with "To the right, to the left, in front, and behind." Rialto is worried over a problem which calls for William Le Queux or Sherlock Holmes—"No trace yet. Confident that Missive was received. P. Tynarworthy."

And so on, through a world where mystery and melodrama survive, where folk talk the passionate heroes of Charles, where the eternal triangle is the favorite geometrical figure, where late parents still open young people's correspondence, where mother searches for prodigal sons and Ada says "I believed and trusted, that is all."

Such is London when you get the mask off.