Register

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OBITUARY.

Mr. F. H. Cowell, director of Messrs. Cowell Brothers & Co., timber merchants, died from pneumonia on Monday afternoon after a short illness. He was well known in Adelaide in both business and social circles, and the news of his death at the early age of 41 will be received with deep regret by a large circle of friends. Mr. Cowell, who was a son of Mr. W. J. Cowell, founder of the firm which bears his name, was born in Kent Town in 1883. After having received his early education at Prince Alfred College he went to the Adelaide University, where he took the degree of master of arts. He had intended to take the medical course, but on his doctor's advice he relinquished the idea and entered the firm of Cowell Brothers, in which business he took an active interest up to the time of his death. He married Miss Kerson, of Kingston, and the widow and three children survive. His mother (Mrs. J. W. Cowell), two brothers (Messrs. C. J. Cowell, member of the Adelaide School Exchange, and G. R. Cowell, of Ambleside), and four sisters (Mrs. Douglas Robertson, Mrs. Rupert Magarey, and the Misses Gertrude and Dorothy Cowell) also survive. Mr. Cowell had many interests outside of his business. He was a member of the Rotary Club, a prominent official of the Flinders-street Baptist Church, and a member of the board of governors of the King's College, and a member of the Forestry League. He was a lawn tennis player and a golfer, and was an enthusiast about horses. With his hacks he took a number of first prizes at the Adelaide and country shows. He had travelled extensively.

Mr. Thomas Pitman, a highly esteemed pioneer of the State, died on Saturday at Osmond-terrace, Norwood, in his 91st year. He was born at Trowbridge, Wiltshire, on May 16, 1834. The family, therefore, a resident of 84 years standing. He was married in 1855 at Christ Church, North Adelaide, to Miss Mary Day, who was born in Somersetshire, and arrived in this State with her parents in the ship Princess Royal. Mrs. Pitman, who is in her 90th year, still enjoys good health. Had the partnership of the aged couple remained unbroken on February 27, they would then have celebrated the 70th anniversary of their wedding. Mr. and Mrs. Pitman were for many years connected with the Kent Town Methodist Church for a long period. They were renowned for their kindly sympathy with those around them. Mr. Pitman came to the Northern Territory, and erected buildings for the South Australian Government, and the British and Australian Cable Company. He also visited the Victorian Schools, Bacchus, and Tarcowie goldfields, for many years he was a builder and contractor. He was also a most entertaining conversationalist, especially when relating his early experiences in the State. The family comprises Mesdames J. Bowell (Glenelg), W. Wyatt (Glenelg), and W. H. Newman (Hoyleton), Messrs. T. G. Pitman (Leabrook), S. H. Pitman (Rose Park), R. Pitman (Leabrook). There are eleven surviving grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

EDUCATION WEEK

PLEA FOR ESTABLISHMENT

AN INSPIRING IDEAL

Mr. Stan Whitford, M.P., writes—The most needed and least talked of requirement of the world today is education. Advocates of various reformers are obsessed with particular subject to such an extent that they become impatient and exasperated because they are unable to shape public opinion according to their ideals. Such people often become impediments rather than helpers in the general march of progress. They are, in themselves, intelligent and capable possessors of very urgent and needed knowledge, but they apparently fail to observe that they are possessed of a greater understanding and a clearer vision than their listeners, obtained very often by diligent and industrious attention to their own individual education. Clearly they are not conceited or bumptious, for they quite expect that the great mass of the people are their equals in learning, when as a matter of fact they are as wide apart as the poles. In reality the difference in the respective intellectual attainments is as great as that separating the headmaster of a public school from a pupil in the kindergarten.

It will therefore be seen that he who would win the name of a true reformer must not only be bold, firm, and progressive—and probably aggressive—but he must be patient, and forbearing also.

These characteristics are essential, because the propagation of knowledge is a slow and tedious process. An atmosphere that is capable of fertilising the germs of a renaissance in learning must be created. I have often heard the question asked why it is that our present educational institutions are not more frequently availed of by the public. The obvious reply is that the taste or desire for education is not developed in the universal sense. In this province it is appreciated keenly, even from quarters where we least expect to discover its welcome reception, but generally speaking it is a secondary consideration. Even our newspapers set apart very little space for the discussion of education.

Wars, murders, fatalities, fires, sporting, political gossip, strikes, and lock-outs—what wonderful and prominent black headlines are placed over such subjects. Do they really portray the journalist's real valuation of the intellectual requirements of the public? Further, we countenance special holidays for royalty, saints, heroes, etc. Upon such days we worship the gods of sport. Even at an agricultural show there is more interest in the sport section than in the products from the soil. We have hospital weeks and health weeks. What about a week for education? Could we not spare a day? I think we could, when we owe it so much. But for it we should still be savages and civilisation would not exist.

The chief factor of the world's progress is ignored. If education were only universal, the dissemination of all knowledge would be easily accomplished. The truth contained in all doctrines and theories would be gleaned by the intellectual understanding of the community. Then, democracy would be a living reality, it will not be before. Impetuosity of teachers and propagandists would disappear, for only the mentally unfit would be backward. But even these, in a community of soundly educated people, would receive the maximum benefit of a civilisation so thoroughly organised. Surely the possibilities of universal education are immense. Then let "Education" be the word upon every lip, let every heart beat for the desire for knowledge, let every elector demand and receive modern education, and then:

> The curse that lurks the day
> Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
> And as silently steal away.

Education alone will solve our problems. Of course finance is one of the hindrances, but it must be remembered that during the last century the capabilities of the individual have been increased a hundred fold by the application of science to industry. Such advancement can be repeated if we adopt advanced methods of education. Since we know that our school buildings are abominable, and the facilities are lamentably out of date, it must be recognised that the development of our children is being retarded both mentally and physically. In view of these deplorable conditions, bold and progressive measures must be adopted.

During my connection with industrial organisations, on special occasions, I urged mass action, and success followed. I well remember one in the Central Markets, another in the Botanic Park, and the last outside of Parliament House. Issues then at stake were not comparable with the importance of education. They sink into comparative insignificance. Then why not mass action for education? Last Sunday I noticed the parade of the Church of England adherents in their "Procession of Witness." It was honored by the presence of the Lord Bishop. I admired their loyalty.

But I should also like a "procession of witness" that we all stand for modern and universal education. I can visualise a superb procession.—The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor, the Chancellor of the University, all the religious dignitaries of the city, the Director of Education, representatives of all local governing bodies, headmasters, teachers, and scholars, accompanied by school committees; all these, with brass bands in attendance, and flags bearing suitable mottoes. I cannot imagine a finer procession, with such a worthy object. In the Park, several platforms could be occupied, to point out the necessity for more schools, for modernising those requiring it, and for increasing the supply of school requisites; to explain the effect of education upon production, and above all, to declare the dignity and honor attached to a teacher's work.

If such mass action were taken, an atmosphere would be created that no Parliamentarian would dare to refuse the necessary money to complete the revolution in our education system so long overdue. It would be inspiring. It would be an ideal opening for an "Education Week" in South Australia. And it would be worth while.

I would suggest that the S.A. School Committees' Association organise for such an objective, and if successful they will have earned the eternal gratitude of the State. They would establish a movement that, if adopted by every country town as well as the city, would give a stimulus to the desire for more and more education, that our system would become pre-eminent in the Commonwealth, if not the world.

TEACHERS' ANNUAL CONVENTION.

Continued from page 10.

Satisfactory Year's Work.

The general secretary (Mr. T. H. Smeaton) submitted the annual report, which disclosed a satisfactory year's work. It stated:—

The routine work of the union followed these financial lines of activity—those were in relation to membership, and internal and external policy. Membership was necessarily the most important, and at no time in the history of the union had the members' roll been more satisfactory. At the end of the membership year, on December 31, 1923, the paid-up members numbered 1,061, while this year, with six months still to go, the paid-up membership was 917, and there was every probability that some more members who had not yet paid their subscriptions would do so. The general secretary's visits to many centres in the country and suburbs had doubtless also had a helpful effect on this phase of the union's work. Questions regarding textbooks for writing, arithmetic, geography, and other matters in connection with the curriculum remitted by the department for advice, had had the close attention of committees appointed by the union. Discussions between the union and the director on questions of retrenchment, long, and sick leave, salaries and conditions of service, and other matters of great importance to teachers, had also taken place, with helpful as well as hopeful results. The internal, or domestic, policy of the union, had been diligently pursued during the year, and no occasion that presented the least opportunity for pressing it upon the powers that be had been neglected by the executive committee. The relations of the union and the Education Department had continued to be most cordial. The work carried on by the union was to some extent controlled by other bodies with which it worked in friendly affiliation, and to no case had the harmony of the union itself been in any way interfered with. The question of a joint scheme of superannuation, to include the Railway Officers' Association, the Public Service Association, and the S.A. Public Teachers' Union, which was affiliated as a Public Officers' Union, had occupied a great deal of the Federation, had occupied a great deal of the Federation's attention, and it was expected that, whatever might be the whole scheme finally adopted, there would be made for members of the present fund and their dependants than had been the case hitherto. The delegate for the S.A. Public Teachers' Union on the board from which the executive of the Australian Teachers' Federation was elected at the recent conference held in Adelaide, was a highly appreciated honorary. The action of the Minister of Education (Hon. Lionel Hill), in reversing the previous policy in regard to the recognition of the general secretary of the union was much appreciated. The decision of the Federal Deputy Registrar of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court to grant registration to the Australian Teachers' Federation was elected at the "Federated State School Teachers' Association of Australia," had opened up a series of possibilities for the advantage of the teaching profession in Australia, which time would prove. (Applause.)

The report was adopted.

The financial statement of the treasurer (Mr. H. M. Lushey) showed that the income for the year was £2,226, and expenditure £1,206, the balance in hand being £869.

The statement was adopted. The thanks of the conference were conveyed to Mr. Lushey for his valued services.

It was decided to amend rule 11 by the addition of the following words:—"A new member joining the union later than March 31 in any year shall pay his, or her, subscription for such quarters as shall then be unexpired."

Limiting the Delegates.

Upon the following proposed new rule (37a), "The members of the annual conference shall be the retiring officers and members of the executive committee, the ingoing officers and members of the executive committee, and delegates from associations [illegible] provided in section vii., rule [illegible]"

Mr. M. Gerlach moved:—"That, in addition to that amount, the sum of £100 be transferred each subsequent year until the total reached £300." He said that it was fanciful to have a defence fund to assist teachers in the event of charges being laid against them, and not have sufficient money in the fund to meet such an emergency. The motion and the amendment were negatived.

Mr. W. Ham moved:—"That the amount to be set aside for the defence fund be 3 per cent. of the annual subscriptions." Mr. Gerlach submitted an amendment that the amount should be increased to 10 per cent.

The motion was carried.

Mr. Wagstaff moved:—"That the department be requested by the conference to approach the University authorities with the view to the establishment of an arts degree in education." It was pointed out that the proposed degree should contain subjects more in accordance with the course of the teacher in his professional duties. The motion was carried.

Unionists Wanted.

Mr. N. H. Edwards (High School Male Teachers' Association) moved:—"That all non-members of the union be informed by circular of the following:—(1) The Government has granted a tribunal to teachers; (2) the general secretary is the recognised executive officer of the union; (3) the Australian Teachers' Federation has been granted access to the Federal Arbitration Court as an industrial union; (4) benefits gained by the union are won by union members, and it is open to the Court to award such benefits to unionists only; (5) you are cordially invited to join the union, and help yourself and your co-workers."

Mr. H. Flint, B.A., seconded the motion, which was carried.

The following motion was also carried:—(1) "That this union submit to the department the anomaly of the differentiation between high school men and primary school men in the matter of house rent, and ask that houses be supplied to high school men at the same rate as primary school men;" (2) "that all married men in country high schools be supplied with houses, and at the same rate as for head teachers in primary schools."

A motion by Mr. F. V. Cox, "That we again urge the necessity for the appointment of a relieving staff, and that we ask the Director to take steps in that direction at the earliest opportunity," was seconded by Mr. J. Nairn, and carried.

Mr. Booth's motion, "That a suitable badge be secured by the union for the members of the union," was lost.

Officers Elected.

The following are the officers for the ensuing year:—President, Mr. F. J. Gartrell; President-elect, Mr. H. M. Lushey; Treasurer, Mr. L. H. R. Gordon, M.C.; Immediate Past President, Mr. W. Bennett; Vice-Presidents, Mr. E. Allen, Miss Phebe N. Waters; Minute Secretary, Mr. J. W. Odgers; members of the executive, Misses A. Smith, E. L. Opie, L. Heyne, Messrs. G. N. Gosden, E. H. Shapter, H. E. Flint, C. Bronner, J. Drinkwater, R. E. T. Edwards, F. V. Cox, T. Nevin, L. Gordon, M.C.; M. Gerlach, P. Corry, T. S. Bosch, J. Anderson, E. W. Skitch, A. R. Francis, G. A. Traeger, D. D. Smith, A. T. Peake, H. Cockrane, and W. Ham; member of the classification board, Mr. W. Bennett; member of the Advisory Board of Education, Mr. C. Bronner; General Secretary and Editor of the Teachers' Journal, Mr. T. H. Smeaton.

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