

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMENT.

The charge of unfairness made against the Council of the University by Professor Phillipson in an interview published in "The Advertiser" yesterday, was referred to the Vice-Chancellor (Professor Mitchell), who was asked to make a reply. Professor Mitchell, however, was not anxious to avail himself of the opportunity. Because, he said, "that would involve the publication of the report, and I have neither the authority nor the desire to do that."

The Vice-Chancellor added, "On account of the charge of unfairness, however, I may be expected to say that the report deals only with the facts, and that the decision of the council was unanimous."

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At a meeting of the Council of the Chamber of Manufactures on Wednesday, Mr. A. A. Simpson moved—"That members, having learnt that Mr. H. H. Corbin, lecturer on forestry at the University, has been appointed Professor of Forestry at the Auckland University, regret that the services of such a valuable officer should be lost to the State, and suggest that, if it is possible in any way, the necessary steps should be taken to retain his services." Timber, he said, was one of the most important raw materials, from a manufacturing point of view. The man who encouraged its production should be kept in the State. It would be a retrograde step to allow Mr. Corbin to leave South Australia without making an effort to retain his services. The motion, which was seconded by Mr. A. E. Clarkson, was carried.

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DENTAL AND MEDICAL EDUCATION.

A NEW SPHERE OF WORK.

The chief purpose of the Education Department's new medical and dental clinic is to have school children examined and reports made to their parents, whose duty it will be to act on the advice and have the children attended by the family physician or dentist.

The rooms set apart for the recently-formed medical and dental branch of the Education Department were officially opened on Thursday afternoon by the Minister of Education (Hon. L. L. Hill). The premises, which are situated in Victoria-place, at the rear of the Education Building, have been recently renovated and fitted with the necessary appliances for the examination and treatment of patients. There was a representative gathering of educationists and members of the Public Service, and among those present were the Vice-Chancellor of the University (Professor W. Mitchell), Sir Joseph Verco (Dean of the Faculty of Industry), and Dr. H. Swift (Dean of the Faculty of Medicine).

The Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy) welcomed those present and stated that the department was anxious that they should view the building and gain knowledge of what they hoped to achieve.

The Minister of Education (Hon. L. L. Hill) said it was the wish of the Government that an early start should be made with the new department. He regretted that it had not been established many years before. Although it had taken a good many years to establish the clinic, the Government which might take office would dare to close it. On the contrary, he was satisfied that the taxpayers would realise its wonderful advantages and would ask for the work to be extended in the near future. Medical inspection of school children now formed an essential part of the department's education policy. When the present Government took office the department employed one medical inspector, two nurses, and one dentist to attend to the needs of 85,000 children attending about 1,000 schools. It was found impossible for the staff to cope with the work.

The Government decided on a general policy which would enable the staff to examine each primary school child twice during his or her school career, and once in the high school. In order to carry out that work the branch was reorganised, and a staff of doctors, dentists, and nurses was appointed to assist Dr. Gertrude Halley, who was appointed principal medical officer. The duty of the school doctor was to examine children, with a view to discovering defects which might interfere with their health and educational progress. As a rule these defects were unknown to the parents, who were advised when medical attention was necessary. When systematically carried out, medical and dental inspection must be regarded as a first-class investment, inasmuch as it would do a great deal to safeguard the health of the future citizens of the State. Recently one of the newly-appointed medical inspectors examined 618 boys in two schools. His examination disclosed that there were nine suffering from defective vision, four from

defective hearing, 118 from enlarged tonsils, eight from adenoids, 280 from defective teeth, and 14 others from various conditions affecting school progress. Five cases showed a serious heart condition, and six others were suggestive of early pulmonary tuberculosis. In all no less than 479 parents were notified of defects, and it was known that as a result of the examination, many children were sent to the family physician. But besides examining the children, the medical inspector enquired into the hygienic condition of school premises, with special attention to ventilation, lighting, drainage, and accommodation. He examined the candidates seeking admission to the Teachers' College, and lectured to students on school hygiene. The number of school dentists was increased from one to three, and as soon as suitable applicants could be found, the number would be increased to six. The work of the school dentist was largely educational, the object being to arouse an interest in parents and children in regard to the importance of sound teeth. The school medical officer or dentist visited the schools and notified the parents of children with defective teeth. A short period was then allowed to elapse to enable those parents who desired to have their children treated privately. If that was not done, the school dentist returned and with the permission of the parents carried out the necessary work. Up to the present, during the current year, the city dental clinic had been open for 10 weeks, and during that period the dentists had examined 1,248 children, and carried out work in the surgery covering 698 treatments, 676 fillings, 494 extractions, and 61 cleanings. Besides attending to the medical and dental defects, it was found that there were many sub-normal children in the schools, who were educable, and often revealed unsuspected aptitude when trained by skilled teachers. The number of such children in South Australia was probably the same here as elsewhere, between 1 and 1 per cent. There were a number of backward children, possibly amounting to 10 per cent. of the whole, who were two or three years below the class appropriate to their age. In November last, Dr. Constance Davey, a South Australian graduate with very high qualifications in psychology, was appointed to organise and supervise the work of grading and teaching these children, and of training the teachers. Dr. Davey commenced her duties in December of last year, and so far had examined the children and established classes in four of the metropolitan schools. Dr. Davey's services had also been placed at the disposal of the Minda committee, the State Children's Relief Department, and the Children's Court. It was claimed that the department now had a very complete branch for dealing with the health and welfare of the children, and it was expected that within two years very satisfactory results would be achieved. The staff was second only to that of New South Wales in numbers, and was second to none as regarded the qualifications, energy, and integrity of the officers. (Applause.)

Sir Joseph Verco said, so far as the dental work of the department was concerned, he was pleased that the first dentist appointed (Mr. A. P. R. Moore) was one of the first graduates of the new dental school at the University. He had the assurance from the Director that he was a most excellent officer. He had previously congratulated the Premier on the decision of the Government to extend dental work in the Education Department, and also for introducing psychology. The latter subject occupied a prominent place in educational matters in England, and when over there he had met Miss Davey, who, in his opinion, was a "perfectly sane psychologist." (Laughter.) Dr. Halley had had far more work than she could cope with, and the appointment of the additional officers would enable the work to be extended. It was necessary that the parents should be educated regarding the dental and medical needs of their children. He congratulated the Minister for the work so far done, and for his vision of extending the service.

Dr. B. H. Morris (Inspector-General of Hospitals) supported Sir Joseph's remarks.

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WONDERS IN WOOD
Adelaide Doctor's Hobby
WALKING STICK CURIOS
Shakespeare says there are sermons in stones. Dr. A. W. Hill goes one better and finds both inspiration and recreation in wood. His hobby takes a quaint form—the making and collecting of walking sticks, and Australian wood is his chief medium of expression.

In an idle moment at a sleepy seaside resort Dr. Hill fashioned a piece of tamarisk into a very presentable walking stick, though it was built on the "use rather than ornament" plan. This usually despised wood revealed such unexpected beauties when polished that he decided to experiment further, and in the three

It is being realised in the various States that a thorough system of afforestation and reafforestation is necessary if Australia is eventually to supply its own timber for building, mining, and other purposes. At present large quantities of timber are imported, but a world shortage is steadily approaching.

With the growth and development of the timber industry there arises the demand for proper provision for establishing its scientific side. South Australia has foreseen this requirement and founded at the University a School of Forestry. Excellent results have been obtained.

Forestry courses at universities include, among other things, the science of tree culture as well as the methods of dealing effectively with parasites and pests which attack them. This phase is of the highest importance, because if aboriculture is to be established and maintained upon a commercial basis the combating of these evils will be imperative. Trees which have been attacked by borers and other pests are useless for timber, and when felled have to be cast aside. That is not an economic proposition in the forest industry. Means must be found of destroying or repelling the pests, and that will be one of the essential activities of the School of Forestry.

If the industry is to be built up on the wide lines which the existing and prospective dimensions of the timber trade demand it will be necessary to create schools of forestry in all the States. There will be varying conditions prevalent and difficulties to meet in all parts of Australia, and the different schools will be able to specialise on the peculiarities of their own districts.

Application was made to Mr. Bruce recently for assistance from the Commonwealth Government to the Adelaide School of Forestry in order to establish a central school for Australia in which the forestry work of the continent could be focussed. The Prime Minister pointed out that forestry was a State concern, and before the Commonwealth could do anything to assist the States would have to combine and request the Government to assist them. In that case he promised sympathetic treatment.

As this State has taken such a pronounced lead in the promotion of forestry upon a proper basis the authorities here should take steps to bring the other States together to decide upon a common course, so as to secure the much-needed financial assistance of the Federal Government. Though constitutionally it is a State activity, in essence it affects the whole Commonwealth, and therefore should receive that help which Mr. Bruce is so ready to give.

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years that have since elapsed he has collected 400 sticks, of every shape and variety, no two being alike.

Though the greater part of the collection is the result of Dr. Hill's own labors, he has obtained specimens from all parts of the world, from an inland creature, which might conceivably have given the finishing touch to a smart Parisian toilette, to a grotesquely carved stick which once formed the sole decoration of some dusky chieftain.

An outstanding and most artistic feature of Dr. Hill's work is that he always follows the natural bent of his material, rather than make it conform to a conventional design.

Though he allows his fancy to run riot when originating his designs, there is scientific neatness in his methods, and the curios are ranged in specially made shelves, each one in a separate compartment, bearing its distinguishing number and description.

Seldom has Dr. Hill had occasion to refer to the labels, for he has the history of each of the 400 pieces at his finger tips, and knows every ripple of their glistening surfaces.

MANY TIMBERS USED

One of the most beautiful things in the collection is a golden gleaming stick of fiddleback blackwood with tawny lights glinting like jewels beneath its iridescent surface. The maples make a brave show, and a piece of tulip wood from Queensland displays a broad and perfectly symmetrical stripe of creamy-gold shaded by varying tones of brown. Exquisite markings, highly polished, turn sheoak and stringy bark into things of beauty, and the rich wine red of a jarrah strikes a warm note in the color scheme.

A pugnacious blackthorn brings back the joys of Donnybrook Fair, and a wisted creeper from New Guinea looks as if it had been turned by an expert craftsman.

One stick is a skilful blend of red-and-white pine, and the tropics are represented by teak, cinnamon, betel-nut, and nipa palms from the South Sea Islands. Even the disreputable boxthorn is metamorphosed into a glistening golden brown, and a twisted ti-tree glows with rainbow colors.

Dr. Hill's inventive faculty shows itself in many ways, so many, in fact, that one is bewildered by the diversity of forms his originality takes. A branch from a tobacco tree is wrought into a human foot, and a sturdy tamarisk is topped by a fox's head. Cubist and impressionist designs are frequent, and nature herself exhibits some quaint fancies, such as in

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the head of a stick which strongly resembled a sleeping snake. There is a touch of the macabre in a mangrove with a singularly appropriate death's head, and in the brutality suggested by a sjambok, the terrible rhinoceros hide whip of Africa.

QUAINT DESIGNS

For handles Dr. Hill has invented a number of quaint designs, some of them particularly well adapted to the wants of an invalid. Branching antlers form the crooks of some sticks. Others are topped by ivory nuts, which, when polished, have a most striking effect. One exquisitely carved piece of ebony has a handle inlaid with chrysolite.

A link with an old tragedy is provided by a piece from the rail of the steamer Clan Ranald, which foundered near Edinburgh, and there is historic interest in a cedar stick made from one of the timbers of Hope Cottage, Kangaroo Island, as well as in a coolabah which once grew over Burke's grave at Cooper's Creek.

Amazing ingenuity is shown in some examples of native art, especially when it is considered that their only tools are shells, stones, or sharks' teeth. A fertile, if rather gruesome imagination, displayed itself in a stick decorated with a goanna, a laughing jack, a scorpion, beetles, a grasshopper, and the "horse-stinger."

Still more repellent was a vivid representation of a jack swallowing a snake. From the Pacific Islands comes a rarity—a stick made from a shark's backbone, or, rather, the rings of cartilage which do duty for its backbone.

An ivory stick from Japan is covered with typical examples of Japanese art, in striking contrast to the grotesque heads which adorn a chief's stick from the Solomon Islands.

In the pursuit of his hobby, Dr. Hill allows himself few limitations, as is evidenced by the following incident:—"One day," he said, "a man from the country brought me a piece of pepper tree, of the kind commonly known as a 'cow-wal-loper,' and said, 'I bet you can't make a walking stick out of that, Doctor.' I set to work, shaped and French polished it, and this"—pointing to a sturdy walking stick with rich tints playing on its glistening surface—"is the result."