THE GOSSIP 21-8-29

THE LATE MR. W. T. McCOY.

It came as a shock to most people last week when it was announced that Mr. W. T. McCoy, the Director of Education, had died after a very brief illness. He was only sixty-two years old in his apparent prime, and with the knowledge and experience which would have served the State and its educational system for many years. It is surprising how many of our leading men, men of brilliance who have devoted their lives to their work, have passed away around the age of 60.

Ten years ago the Government of the day decided to obtain the best man available for the task of directing our educational system. Education in this State, has always been on a high level, and the State has been fortunate in the men it has had at the head of its system. The late Director was brought to this State from Tasmania. The reputation he had there was soon confirmed, and during the last ten years many splendid improvements have been made in the educational system. The training of the teachers has been put on a sound basis, whilst various branches of practical secondary schools have been established. Many reforms have been introduced, and South Australia can be well proud of the provision made for the education of its school pupils.

The late Mr. McCoy set himself to his task with a purpose. He knew what he wanted, and unnecessary delays in attaining his object irked him. He was popular with the teachers under him, and the State has lost a most valuable servant, and one whom it is going to be exceedingly difficult to replace.

ADV. 26-8-29

AUSTRALIAN NATIVES

SORRY PLIGHT OF PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

UNIVERSITY EXPEDITION IMPRESSED

The Adelaide University has accepted the task of recording the history and preserving relics of the Central Australian natives. A large number of native implements, ancient and new, were secured by the expedition to Hermannsburg.

Professor T. Harvey Johnston, who was one of the Adelaide University expedition to Central Australia, said on Saturday that he thought every member of the party had come back with a feeling of the keenest sympathy for the aborigines, and a strong feeling that something further must be done on their behalf. "They provided a wonderful study," he said. "It is generally accepted that the Australian native is nearer to the stem of development than the Mongoloids and Red Indians, and as the last of a very primitive and active race their customs have aroused scientific interest throughout the world. At present there are people in Europe, one of them from Hungary, gathering information. The Board of Governors of the Public Library feels that it is an important part of its duty to gather as much knowledge and material as it can, having relation to the Central Australian natives. It is considered that this is the particular province of the South Australian authorities, and it is generally regarded as the work of the South Australian Museum to preserve the relics of this race. This applies also to the Adelaide University, which from Adelaide being looked upon as the scientific headquarters for that division of Australia, and its close association with the northern part of Australia.

Professor T. Harvey Johnston

Specimens Collected by Mission

"The expedition made the Hermannsburg mission station its headquarters. The officers of the station are assisting the Museum in obtaining specimens of ethnological interest, such as native weapons and objects of veneration. The board placed a sum of money at the disposal of the mission for the purchase of approved articles, and some very fine ones were assembled for inspection by the Curator of the Museum (Mr. H. L. Heinrich) and his staff. A selection was made and brought back to Adelaide. Other material will follow within the next few weeks. It is all new, or more or less characteristic material. The ethnological importance of the specimens and objects is great. Professor Strehlow, a one-time superintendent of the Hermannsburg Mission, published a valuable monograph on this subject. Other articles which are regarded as standards throughout the world. We took Strehlow's work with us and found it extremely valuable. Much primitive material and specimens of great value possessed of their territories. Actually, a reserve has been proclaimed, and it is considered that part of it, in the Petermann Ranges, is considered suitable for cattle, and nothing has been decided as to whether we are going to sacrifice the grazing of a few hundred or thousand cattle, or sacrificing the natives to have been disposed of their territories.

Half-Caste Problem

There are three groups of natives who have to be considered. The first group is the comic Australian native. Every white man should be kept out of any place set apart for them, particularly cattlemen. The cattlemen are not against prospectors and settlement, but I am opposed to the idea of allowing comic Australian contact with these natives. The only exception would be a medical officer, who would be of the greatest assistance to the people. The second group consists of the natives who have come under missionary influence. We see how much more can be done than is already being done by the Hermannsburg Mission, and I hope it will be given every assistance. The third group are the half-castes. It is an extremely sad state of affairs when generally speaking, almost white to almost black, are thrown together with apparently no definite hope whatever. The question is whether those who are predominantly Europeans. The children generally are very responsive, with several remarkable exceptions. Of course, only a few can be raised from the mass. Some of the caste children are quite the Southern Australian type, and could be distinguished by them four or five years. The white man commits his thoughts to paper, with the blacks, it is not remembered. It is difficult to predict," concluded Professor Johnston, "but the Museum authorities are certainly taking an important scientific work in securing and collating about these primitive folk. Other centres have been visited by University expeditions, but this was the first to Hermannsburg."

of relieving the mission, but to bring about a fresh diet, including lizards and grubs, all of which has a beneficial effect in keeping down scurvy.

Five Years' Drought

"The outstanding feature in these parts at the present time is the absolute lack of animal life apart from birds, particularly hawks and crows. The latter are the scavengers of the settlements. Birds only live on insects, plants, or other birds. The basis of bird life is plant life in some form or other, and the tragedy for the blacks is that a five years' drought has left nothing in the way of smaller plants except little patches of saltbush. During our stay four points of rain fell, distributed over five days, and a few shoots of parakelia, a good stock food, came up. The country improved some what towards Alice Springs, and we were informed that in the north and east conditions were much better. Loss of stock plays an important part in the native's existence. The mission cannot spare any animals for the supply of meat except to men who may be engaged in the actual labor. The blacks have to live on flour, with sometimes a little rice and apricots.

Native Birthrate Maintained

"The tribes are particularly examined were the Aruntas and the Luritjas. The latter is apparently a Arunta for strainer. The Luritjas come mainly from the western parts of Central Australia, while the Aruntas inhabit the central and eastern portions. They seemed to be on friendly terms at the mission, although the tendency was for each to be restricted to its own end of the camp. The majority are ignorant of the language of the other tribes. The work of the mission is chiefly among the Aruntas, and an examination of its records showed that there had not been any diminution among the offspring.

Good Chance of Holding Their Own

"It looks to me as if these natives have a very good chance of holding their own, particularly if they are kept from contact with the whites. We all felt that contact with whites is not for the native's good. The first desire is for the white man's clothing, generally rags, which are thrown off at night when he dirts around the fire. It is amazing how the natives of these rags are maintained. The black is a fine specimen physically. Having no ideas of sanitation, the climate is ideal for a native's health. Suggestions have been made for the creation of a native state, but I rather think it would be outside a native's mentality. Their tribal government is of a type that would not lend itself to central control. Some people have the wildest hunting grounds, from waterhole to waterhole, round which they circulate. Suggestions have been made that a native reserve should be proclaimed in the shape of a reasonable size. Actually, a reserve has been proclaimed, and it is considered that part of it, in the Petermann Ranges, is considered suitable for cattle, and nothing has been decided as to whether we are going to sacrifice the grazing of a few hundred or thousand cattle, or sacrificing the natives to have been disposed of their territories.

"Music" and "Butcher" Doctors

"The mission school room was apart for our use, and a busy time we spent in examination and measurement of the blacks, a large number in thisloved region being full blooded. My particular work was to assist Dr. J. B. Cleland in the blood grouping tests. The blood was secured from the ears. Each section of the party had its own particular task, and it was not long before the natives marked us off. We are all "doctors." Dr. Davies, of the Elder Conservatorium, was the "music doctor," while Dr. Cleland and myself were quickly christened the "butcher" doctors. When our purpose was better known we were always referred to as the "ear markers." Doubtless there were many traces of the incisions remained, but they were hardly noticed. As a recompense each native received a chit to be cashed at the store in supplies. They mainly selected flour, sugar, tea, a tin of jam, a little tobacco, and a few matches. There is a great need among them for a change of diet. More meat is needed and green vegetables. The blacks are encouraged by the mission folk to "go bush" with the object of relieving the mission.

Reg. 31-8-29

FEWER TEACHERS WANTED

Probationary Studentships To Be Suspended

CUT IN TRAINING

THE NUMBER of teachers available to the Education Department is up to requirements, and, according to a circular just issued by the department, only 50 probationary studentships, instead of 200, will be awarded.

Thereafter, probationary studentships will be suspended indefinitely.

To ensure a steady supply of qualified candidates for admission to the Teachers' College, it is proposed to register suitable persons, who, on the completion of all requirements under the regulations, shall have prior claim to enter the college, but in most other directions, the extensive training of teachers will be largely discontinued.

It was explained yesterday that this decision had been brought about by fewer resignations.

FEWER MARRIAGES

Fewer women were resigning because of marriage, and there was a big decrease in the number of men leaving to take up positions in other professions.

The present conditions, which compelled most people to remain in their present employment, were held to be responsible. It was said that resignations from the service each year were about 200.

Last year the Teachers' College had more than 800 students. The figure was about the same this year, but next January would be a considerable reduction.

ADV. 2-9-29

EILDON WEIR SUBSIDENCE

The Victorian Government requested that Professor R. W. Chapman might be permitted to act on the committee appointed to investigate the Eildon Weir bankment at Eildon Weir, Victoria, which was causing uneasiness. The Premier of Victoria (Sir William McPherson):—"I shall be glad if you will be so good as to convey to the University authorities an expression of the thanks of the Government for their courtesy. The board has carried out its work, and Professor Chapman's services in connection therewith are much appreciated."

Reg. 2-9-29

A resolution of sympathy with the relatives of the late Mr. W. T. McCoy (Director of Education) was adopted at the meeting of the Council of the University on Friday. The Chancellor (Sir George Murray) and the Vice-Chancellor (Sir William Mitchell) praised the work of the late Director.

ADV. 3-9-29

CONSERVATORIUM CONCERT

Members of the staff of the Elder Conservatorium gave a concert in the Elder Hall on Monday before a appreciative audience. The programme which had been carefully selected, comprised songs by both old and modern and composers of the more modern school.

The entertainment opened with Mozart's sonata in D major for two pianos with Mr. William Silver and Mr. Fred Redmann as instruments. Miss Hilda Gill's voice was heard to advantage in a series of Biblical songs by Dvorak. The numbers were sung with a true appreciation of their religious character, and the sympathetic accompaniment of Mr. John Horner added to their attractiveness. One of Sweet Love Seemed That April Morn" by Clara Edwards, and "My Heart is Like a Singing Bird" (Harry) were also rendered by Miss Gill with rare charm. Mr. Alfred Parsons demonstrated his mastery of the cello in Eckard-Jaume's sonata for violincello and piano, in which the piano part was played by Mr. John Horner. Beethoven's Andagio, Scherzo and Rondo movements were rendered by the two artists with great skill, and their effort earned much applause. Miss Ivy Ayers took for her first piano solo Paure's theme and variations, and later in the evening she gave a delightful series of "Pictures for Children," by Rebikoff. Sir Walford Davies's sonata in D minor for violin and piano was played by Miss Sylvia Wallington and Mr. George Pearce in a thoroughly musical manner.