

## Hands Off Education!

7 - JUL 1931

At Adelaide High School yesterday Mr. Hill, who is Minister of Education as well as Premier, took the extraordinary course of criticising the report of a committee and using material from it before the document had been presented to Parliament.

The internal committee on education, which was appointed to assist the Advisory Committee on State Finance, consists of Prof. J. McKellar Stewart, Mr. J. Wallace Sandford, and Mr. W. J. Adey (Director of Education). It is known that a majority report has been prepared by Prof. Stewart and Mr. Sandford, and a minority report by Mr. Adey.

In the Assembly Mr. Hill has been asked to lay them on the table, and has agreed to do so. "I had reports submitted to me only a few days ago," said the Premier yesterday, "suggesting that we would have to close a number of schools in South Australia, that we should charge £2 9s a year for high school education, and that certain other savings should be effected."

Courtesy to members might have suggested to Mr. Hill that he should present the reports to Parliament before making use of extracts from them upon which to expound his own views. His duty to taxpayers should also have impelled him to make the full text of the documents public to enable citizens to learn all the facts instead of having to rely on a partial statement from an admittedly partisan source.

Although disclaiming any intention of criticising those who made the report, the Premier said that it had been pointed out that since 1875 South Australia had spent £1,750,000 on education buildings. "Do they realise that last year we lost £1,800,000 on the railways?" he continued. "I think that education should be left alone, and that attacks should be made on those departments which are really losing money."

As Mr. Hill knows, practically every department has contributed to the unhappy financial position of South Australia, and every department has had to make sacrifices. It is neither logical nor just for him to single out the railways for criticism, especially as economists amounting to nearly a million pounds have been effected in that department in the past nine months.

With the desire that the children of the State should have the best possible education everyone will sympathise. But in these times we are forced to face up to realities, and the question resolves itself into one of what the State can actually afford.

## TRAINING OF

### TEACHERS

13 JUL 1931

### Should State Pay?

### COST S.A. £40,000 IN 1930

Should the State pay to educate teachers?

This question was raised recently in Victoria by a board of enquiry into the cost of education in that State. It is one which also affects South Australia.

In 1930 the cost of preparing students at the Teachers' Training College for their life work exceeded £40,000.

ECONOMIES were effected in that year, and many more have been made since. But in times like these, when the burden of taxation is exceptionally heavy and Government expenditure must be cut to the limit, the question is one which bears examination.

Some of the total training expenditure of £40,470 in 1930 was made up in amounts of £29,292 (allowances to probationers and teachers in training), £8,534 (salaries to staff), and £2,689 (contingencies). Contingencies included books, special allowances and travelling expenses. The total showed a decrease of £15,268 on the amount for 1929.

### ALLOWANCES STOPPED

To understand the system of allowances one must consider a teacher's life from the time he or she desired to become a teacher.

It was the practice when a boy or girl (aged 15) with the necessary qualifications wished to enter the Teachers' Training College to give a probationary student stipend of five years in order to prepare for entrance to the college.

Annual allowances were made of £40 for boys and £30 for girls, but these have been discontinued this year. In addition a boarding allowance of £20 or a travel allowance of £5, where necessary, and sometimes assistance to purchase books were given.

At the age of 17, if the student had passed the leaving examination in prescribed subjects, he or she was admitted to the training college for a period of one to four years, according to the requirements of the course taken, the average being two years. During this time, women received £50 and men £60 annually, with board or travel allowance as in the case of probationers. A while ago the allowances were increased, but the

## STATE HIGH

### SCHOOLS

11 JUL 1931

### Case for Retention

### "TOO MANY HASTY JUDGMENTS"

Too many hasty judgments have been formed in the demand for the closing down of high schools on the score of economy, states the South Australian Public Teachers' Union.

Much of the criticism, the union says, savors of class consciousness.

The union added that the man of moderate means who desired his children to be given at least equality of opportunity with those more fortunately situated had everything to lose by any severe curtailment of State education.

"It seems that the attack arose from a frantic desire to diminish Government costs at the expense of the department least able to retaliate," the statement continues.

"Savings can be made in the secondary education system, but they should not involve a decrease in the efficiency of the system or a diminution of the facilities offered by it."

The union adds that Governments of all shades of opinion have done everything possible to improve and extend the facilities for free education. All this progress was allowed to go on with little or no protest because it was realised that the system was being brought somewhat into line with other nations, and because it was recognised that a well-educated community was an efficient and well-behaved one.

"If free secondary education is heading the State to financial destruction as so many are claiming to be, it is, in consequence of its undeniable value, that it is, that none of them had the foresight to see the impending doom?"

### BURSARY SYSTEM

"There are many advocates of a system of bursaries to be awarded to the brightest pupils. It is gathered from this that it is proposed to award scholarships to those pupils who secure highest marks in the qualifying certificate examination.

"Is it not being unduly optimistic to suppose that students most likely to succeed in advanced work can be selected at such an intellectually immature stage in the child's development? If not it is proposed to award the money which would be saved by making that choice at, say, 10 years of age, instead of that mystical age, 14 years, up to which it is generally agreed that children should compulsorily attend school."

## FEES FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

17 JUL 1931

### Advice of Education Committee

### ALL-ROUND CUTS

Drastic cuts are recommended in the majority report of the Education Committee which with the minority report, signed by Mr. W. J. Adey (Director of Education), was tabled in the Legislative Council this afternoon.

Mr. J. Wallace Sandford (chairman) and Prof. J. McKellar Stewart were responsible for the majority report. Various questions have been asked by Opposition members of Parliament concerning the reports, and keen interest was aroused when it was known that they had been tabled.

They cover a wide scope. The majority committee recommends—

"The system of allowances to teachers (not special living allowances) be abolished when revision of salaries is considered in October.

"That special living allowances estimated at £1,738 be reduced by one-sixth.

"That positions of head mistresses and infant mistresses be abolished; mistresses to be elected assistants in charge with corresponding savings in their reduction of 10 per cent.

"That a fee of £1 11/6 be charged to pupils attending higher primary schools who have attained the non-compulsory age. That more than one paying child of the same parents be in attendance at a higher primary school at the same time in fees of 15s 6p each. That the second child receive a further reduction of 10 per cent. for the third and each subsequent child be made.

### HIGH SCHOOL FEES

"That a fee of £3 3s a term be charged to pupils of high schools who have not attained the non-compulsory age. Under such a system the amount a pupil a year, namely, £29 9s, would be approximately half the cost. Same percentage reduction to apply as in the case of higher primary schools where more than one child of the same parents attended. Provision to be made for free tuition under certain conditions.

"That amalgamation of the smaller high schools should take place. That fees of £2 11/6 a term be charged to pupils attending central schools, including Tebaron Technical High, who have attained the non-compulsory age. That maintenance grants to students at Adelaide Teachers' College be reduced.

"That rentals for school residences should be closely examined in October with the

# Primary Education Not Enough

## PROPOSED CUTS DEPLORED

EDUCATION to the top of the primary schools is not enough for our progress and safety. For the welfare and assistance of our nation it is imperative that the masses shall not be ignorant.

That will be part of the presidential address of Mr. P. A. Cory (president of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union) at the annual meeting of that body at the Teachers' College, Kintore avenue, tonight.

"It is claimed that advanced education should be only for those of outstanding ability," Mr. Cory will say. "Too many fail to realize that the standards of the past do not represent the requirements of today."

### THE REAL TEST

"The brain today plays a more important part in work than ever before, and tasks requiring muscle and little thought are few. Highly educated leaders directing ignorant employees cannot exceed."

"The claim that but few children are fitted for higher education is false. Every child should be given the opportunity to go as far as his ability will carry him. "Which is the real test for advanced education—the cost or the fitness of the individual? Many believe that most children are not fitted for higher education. If that is so it applies equally to the children of rich and poor. Does the rich man who has dull children deny them the benefit of whatever good education they want? He does not—and all honor to him."

### "MEAN AND COWARDLY"

"But there is a demand in this State today that educational privileges shall be financially curtailed, because the State is in financial straits."

"We have often been told that we prosper, and look the payment in the name of our children. Today even worse is proposed. To assist us to get out of our difficulties of our own making there are to be taken away from the children for their contribution. Our difficulties are not due to the children. Are we to be so mean and cowardly that the children shall be called upon to pay for our sins?"

"Let all true lovers of education and children unite, and the result will be one that will not cause us in days to come to blush with shame if they are told that we in the time of our greatest trouble and depression tried to save ourselves at the expense of children."

increases are not paid now. Teachers in training pay nothing for their actual education and are helped greatly with their living expenses. Perhaps they pay a pound or two a year for sports. The return is to enter a bond to serve the Education Department for periods which vary according to the course taken, the minimum being three years.

### FEWER OPENINGS NOW

Economies have been effected already, and more are to follow. With fewer resignations from the service the demand for teachers has become less, and consequently there are fewer openings for college trainees. Staffs are at a minimum.

This means less expense for the training college, because of fewer admissions, but, unhappily, it means, too, that fewer trainees find jobs when their study is ended.

"If students were required to pay for their training I am afraid there would not be many entering the profession," said Mr. F. R. Forzan (secretary of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union). "They would not be able to afford it."

## "No Education Cut While I am Treasurer"

"There will be not cut in the education vote while I am Treasurer and Minister of Education," said the Hon. L. L. Hill at the Payneham School jubilee celebration today. "Those who ask for a reduction of the vote must show me that the Government is wasting money. I am satisfied in looking through the department of the primary, secondary, and technical schools that there is no waste."

"The Government and the community must stick to three things in this crisis. They are the sick, the unfortunate unemployed, and the children's education."

"Actually, at the age of about 14 years a boy is passing through the most critical stage in his development. Experience shows that frequently vast changes occur in the boy both physically and mentally at this age, which selection for work. There are always both the likelihood that those chosen for bursaries at this early age will prove unsuitable to continue further study, and the danger of grave injury being done to those who are rejected. The choice can not be made with any degree of accuracy before the age of 16."

"Many critics of the existing system appear to be in favor of giving the State secondary schools a strong technical bias. What is more important is that every child of sufficient intelligence should spend a minimum of two years studying those subjects which will develop a truly critical attitude of mind; to acquiring habits of logical thought and of unremitting attention of hard work, and to developing initiative, which will enable him to sit up a situation quickly and accurately in all its details and act with precision the judgment made."

"A child at a secondary school receives such a training, and is at the same time subjected to discipline sufficiently rigid to prevent any serious lapses from a severe moral code, without hindering the development of individual characteristics."

### NOT WASTE OF TIME

"There is a vast mass of evidence collected by the researches of accredited authorities on education which goes to show that the qualities of the utmost value in any walk of life, are best developed by those subjects popularly regarded as being pure mathematics and the classics. Our own intelligence is even now considering the school curriculum, and the requirements for all its courses, technical or otherwise, consist almost entirely of these subjects."

"Even though a boy may rarely use in later life the facts he acquired at school, the logical discipline derived from their study leaves on the subconscious mind an indelible trace which will influence the whole of his future activities, and by which he is unconsciously guided in his decisions. The better the training received by the boy in the impressionable years of his early youth, the more valuable he will be to his employers and to the community."

"It is at least just to ask that before any definite opinion is formed with regard to closing down the schools, some attempt should be made to ascertain the full facts relating to the cost. They are saying 'they cost a lot of money.' An average man is ill-informed of the position."

"Even if the schools should be closed, the present is a certain amount of time to do so. They are keeping hundreds of lads from swelling the ranks of the unemployed. They are maintaining the morale and the will to work of at least a section of the community, and preventing the boys from acquiring habits of idleness at an age when habits formed are most tenacious."

"When it can be shown that closing the high schools will balance the Budget and restore us in the confidence of creditors overseas, it will be soon enough to begin to consider the advisableness of such a drastic move. It can only help to do the former at the expense of lowering the efficiency of the community to an extent which demands grave consideration whether it would not be false economy."

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**ABOLITION OF DOMESTIC ART**  
That domestic art and woodwork be no longer included in the syllabus of work for primary schools. Last year the cost of extra work under primary education, cost £7,700.

That means be devised for more rigorous selecting, according to their capacity, the pupils who shall be permitted to enter high schools. The means should be so operated as to reduce the number of pupils entering annually on the high school course by at least 50 per cent.

That the facilities for the central school, type of education be automated.  
The report of Mr. Adey says that he supports much of the report by the other two members, but there are certain recommendations which he should be modified. He supports with reluctance the suggestion that fees should be charged.

He supports with some reservation the suggestion that the fees should be admitted free of charge.  
"I am of opinion," he says, "that no child should be debarr'd through poverty from receiving a super-primary education." He suggests that children of parents who are unable to pay the fees should be admitted free of charge.

### MR. ADEY FAVORS RETENTION

The department, he states, is undervalued as far as inspectors are concerned. If domestic arts and woodwork in primary schools were omitted it would be a severe blow to the correlation of school training and after school occupation.

Referring to the suggestion to abolish the positions of head and infant mistresses, Mr. Adey says that the actual saving in money would not be very great. Admission to a super-primary course should not be dependent entirely upon school entrance marks, but rather upon physiological changes.

"The right balance between education for a profession and education for just being men and women is a matter which will always remain fundamental for a philosophy of education," he says. "The strict economy of the occupation of many, reduced to the performance of one or two simple acts with the assistance of machinery, may be lanced by an educator which teaches them to use leisure easily and properly. It is for this reason that I view with apprehension any curtailment of the influence of the high school."

### "UNREASONABLE ITEMS"

In the majority report sharp comments are made on several branches of the department. It says that the committee considered that the money for the extra work is not a reasonable charge upon the department. For several years this service cost about £6,000 a year.

The committee also says that the cost of supplying salaried supervisors of playgrounds is not a reasonable charge upon the department. Rentals charged to teachers for time residences completed last year totalled only £191, or 1.86 per cent on the "paper" expenditure of £10,270. The teachers concerned will get one exception not more than £300 a year.