

teachers are not overworked. At the end of four years pupil teachers entered the Training College at about 18 years of age, and there they alternated teaching and learning week and week about. As to those who did not pass, they are taken on as acting assistants in the schools and given another chance of passing the examinations. He denied the assertions of Mr. Tucker that some of the country teachers are inferior. Some of the most brilliant men in the service were now teaching in the country. (Hear, hear.) The Government had been recently negotiating with the University as regards the latter taking over the training of teachers, the offer of the University being to do the work free of cost. The Government recognised that the supreme control must rest with the Minister for the time being, and that there would have to be a council of education, whose members would work with the council of the University in this matter. Under this system teaching and training would not be combined to the same extent as now. It was proposed that young persons who show aptitude for teaching shall during the year 1900 serve as monitors, and receive instruction to enable them to enter the fifth form of secondary schools; that is, to pass our preliminary University examination. The whole of the children who were going up for the preliminary this month were going up without the payment of any fee. If the children who passed this examination showed during these twelve months that they are good enough to go on, it was proposed that for two years they should get their education free (books included) at the Advanced School for Girls, or at a boys' secondary school, the State paying during that period for the maintenance of country children. He had suggested to Mr. Stanton whether it would not be well to retain the Training College for educating the male teachers on the same lines as the Advanced School for Girls would train the female teachers; otherwise Mr.

Scott, the present head of the Training College, would have to be taken over by the University. By the time the teachers had worked for two years in these secondary schools they would be supposed to have passed the senior examination at the University, and they would then have two years' teaching in the schools while attending lectures at the University or School of Mines in the afternoon and evening, so as to enable them to get through the first year's work for a degree in arts and sciences at the University. The teachers in State schools were fully competent to instruct the children, and were well fitted for the work. The University scheme was that there should be two years' training, then two years' teaching, and afterwards two more years attendance on University lectures, free of charge, while in addition to this free education the Government would provide a maintenance allowance.

Mr. McDONALD—What will all this cost?

Mr. BUTLER—Not much more than at present, the chief cost being the maintenance.

Mr. MILLER—Where does the agricultural interest come in?

Mr. BUTLER—It was well looked after. The Chancellor of the University, when the scheme of training for teachers had been completed, wrote thus:—"Permit me again to congratulate you on the result of your deliberations. The more one thinks of it the more one sees the advantage that must come through a scheme like this. Its effect will be to bring the full educational resources of the colony within the reach of every child, through the teachers of the State schools. And I venture to predict that in the not distant future, it will prove itself to have been one of the most momentous measures ever taken for the advancement of education in Australia. I shall have the great pleasure of bringing before my council the requisite amendments in our statutes to give effect on our part to the scheme, and to secure the immediate formation of the joint board of education." The Government owed a debt of gratitude to the University in this matter. Mr. Miller was interested in special agricultural education, but he was more concerned about two inches of rain. (Hear, hear.) The State school teachers were inculcating a taste for agriculture into the children, and recently he allotted a portion of the educational vote to buy seeds with which to experiment.

Mr. MILLER—Can't you let the teachers go to the Agricultural College to qualify first?

Mr. BUTLER said teachers had their eyes open. He had seen excellent wheat grown at the State schools. The samples were named very carefully, and from his own son he knew that pupils quick to learn were helped with their agricultural studies. His sympathies were entirely with Mr. Miller, as he did not want country boys to crowd into the city. His great desire was to keep them on the soil. The Adelaide Agricultural School at the Old Exhibition Building was doing excellent work. Rome was not built in a day, and they were progressing at this institution by degrees.

Mr. SCHERK—Very slowly, though.

Mr. BUTLER said when the school started there were 30 pupils, but now there were 80, who obtained a valuable secondary education at 1/ per week. They were being thoroughly fitted for the practical work of agricultural life. Agricultural schools were established at Clare, Jamestown, and Naracoorte, and the Government were considering an application for one at Angaston. He had always looked upon Mr. Tucker as an advanced Liberal, and was surprised at the way he referred to the cost of education. Mr. Tucker's figures were grossly exaggerated. Mr. Tucker stated that free education was not as valuable to the country as to the city, but it was nonsense to talk like that. As a matter of fact, the advantages of the State educational system were felt more in the country than the city, and but for the State system country children would not be as well educated as they were now. No scheme established by private enterprise could meet the wants of the country children like that supported by the Government. There were State schools in the country within three or four miles of each other, and there were 20 State schools in Encounter Bay.

Mr. TUCKER—You send down inferior teachers to educate the children.

Mr. BUTLER said the teachers were educated at the Training College before being sent to the various districts, and they were quite competent. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. TUCKER—Do you say the farmers get the full benefit of our educational system?

Mr. BUTLER—Yes. Education costs twice as much to the State in the country as it does in the city. In the country there are 120 schools, with fifth classes, and 100 children in Encounter Bay are being educated to that standard to-day, who a year or so ago were deprived of that privilege. Mr. Tucker only made the cry for party purposes.

Mr. TUCKER—I'll move for a return to prove my statements.

Mr. BUTLER said 10,000 children in small country schools cost £50,000 a year to educate, or £5 per head, while the cost of 10,000 children in the city was only £20,000, or £2 per head. Mr. Tucker said £750,000 had been spent on school buildings, costing the taxpayer £25,000 a year in interest.

Mr. SCHERK—This has nothing to do with the motion.

Mr. BUTLER—Will Mr. Scherk keep quiet. (Laughter.) The total expenditure on school buildings from 1876 to 1898 was £439,947, and the interest on this sum at 4 per cent. was under £18,400. Mr. Tucker was wrong too, when he said free education cost £200,000 a year. The actual cost of primary education was £120,912, and secondary education £1,079, making a total of £1,200,000.

The debate was interrupted by the orders of the day, and at a later stage Mr. Butler obtained leave to continue his remarks on Wednesday, October 11.

W. R. AMENDY

Trinity College
Hans.

Advertiser 7th Sept. '99.

Entries for the practical examinations in music to be held in connection with Trinity College in December next, were received on Tuesday last, and they reached the large total of 220. This is 194 in excess of last year's number. Considering that the fees for the examination are comparatively high, and that the entries have to be made fully three months before the examination, such a large number of entries is satisfactory. As it is impossible to properly tabulate the entries for to-day's mail to England, the local secretary (Mr. H. E. Fuller) has decided to receive further entries until Saturday next.

Total Entries 234

Register 7th Sept 1899.

EDUCATION AND PUPIL TEACHERS.

No apology is needed for bringing prominently before the public the evil being done through the overworking of pupil teachers—particularly young girls—under the Education Department. Readers of "The Register," which has so frequently called attention to the matter, will probably feel that if any apology were required it should come from the educational authorities. In the Assembly yesterday Mr. Archibald rendered good service to the community by practically condemning some of the principles of the administration of the department, and he has voiced the opinion and experience of numerous anxious parents. Persistent overwork is ruining the health of many pupil teachers; and when a serious injustice is constantly perpetrated in the face of repeated warnings those who are primarily responsible for it should be subjected to censure, and the more of it the better in the interests of the people. This, briefly stated, is the position. Pupil teachers are compelled to live two lives, and to undergo a double strain just when they are rising into manhood or womanhood, and when such pressure is peculiarly dangerous to their health. Many have to leave their homes at 8 a.m., or even earlier, and to work with only slight intervals until 10 p.m. The demand upon their time, consequent upon the necessity for passing their annual examinations, is preposterously heavy. In addition to their severe and worrying labours in the schoolroom they are obliged to sit up late at night studying, and not a few of them devote all their Saturdays, as well as most of their Sundays and public holidays, to preparations for these seriously trying ordeals. Girls who have been at work all day in a crowded and not too sweet schoolroom, and who have been

constantly kept on the strain in maintaining discipline and imparting instruction, ought to have plenty of outdoor exercise; but instead of this the pupil teachers are forced, under pain of falling at the end of the year and being put back, to give up all their leisure time to the driest and most exacting studies. Yet we hear strong Ministerial reprobation of the sin of "sweating"—outside the Education Department and other similar institutions of the State!

The fear of failure at the December examination is a constant source of anxiety to pupil teachers, especially to those who have just begun their careers, and who have during the day to lay the groundwork of a knowledge of their profession. This apprehension is in many instances well founded, as is shown by repeated reports from competent officers. Mr. Andrew Scott, Master of the Training College, wrote on March 18, 1899:—

I have to report the same fact as last year—viz., the large number of failures among the first-year candidates, largely due to the arithmetical. I consider that the time has arrived when some modification should be made in this subject for the sake of the first-year pupil teachers. Either they should be allowed to omit more of the work than they do at present, or else a separate set of papers should be drawn up for them at the December examination, as it is manifestly difficult to test satisfactorily first-year and fourth-year candidates by the same set of questions.

The Minister's report shows that out of 140 candidates for admission as pupil teachers 105 were successful; but the complaint by the Master of the Training College has reference principally to the December examination, which must be passed by first-year teachers in order to qualify them for promotion. The Minister remarks that "the number of pupil teachers who passed for promotion to a higher grade at the December, 1898, examination was 103," but he does not explain how many belonging to the respective four years of the course secured passes. Plainly, however, the test must be terribly severe, and exceedingly arduous the strain involved in four years of constant preparation for such stiff examinations, in addition to daily work in the schoolroom. No wonder that girls with a nervous temperament become seriously neurotic, and develop distressing complaints caused in young women by excessive mental toil and worry. Surely it is a cruel wrong to work these servants of the State under the constant fear of failure

and its implied censure "till the heart is sick and the brain benumbed!" It is not merely wrong, but also exceedingly bad policy. Cheerful, healthy dispositions are needed in the teachers of the primary schools perhaps more urgently than in any other department of the Government service; and nothing more quickly and surely conduces to irritability of temper than the nervous tension of the over-anxious temperament continually kept under the whip of the examiner and inspector. For the sake of the children, as well as for that of the pupil teachers who instruct them, a reform should be instituted without delay. The Minister of Education in his elaborate and interesting reply to Mr. Archibald in the Assembly yesterday tried to discount the evils as much as possible, passing lightly over the work involved in preparing for examinations; but scores of parents better acquainted with this branch of the subject than he is could tell him that serious injury often results from the heavy demands made upon pupil teachers. The obvious remedy is one which has been frequently advocated in "The Register," and it is satisfactory to find that the Minister shows a disposition to meet the overtures of the University in a friendly spirit, thus offering a chance of proper instruction to the teachers in an academic course. The Training College has hitherto been able to impart only one year's tuition to a limited number, but it has accomplished a good work in enabling its students to give up their whole time to study so long as they were passing through its course. The University now steps forward and practically offers to provide for a longer and much more complete and satisfactory curriculum.

The young pupil teachers should never be expected to do more than carry out their classroom work and master the practices of their future profession. At the same time the new scheme recognises this by providing free tuition for them until they pass the Senior Examination; but when they have arrived at the age suitable for College students they are not to be expected to devote their whole attention