

SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. BACHELOR.—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that some provision be made for continuing the education of boys from the compulsory standard up to the University senior public examination by the establishment of secondary schools for boys similar to the Advanced School for Girls, or other means."

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION said the speeches of Messrs. Batchelor, Hutchison, and Peake on this motion would encourage in the community a better idea of the great advantages of education. While the Government did not feel justified at present in incurring any largely increased expenditure in connection with education they sympathised with the hon. member in his desire that the brightest intellects of the community should have the fullest opportunities of development.

Mr. BACHELOR said that in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that some provision be made for continuing the education of boys from the compulsory standard up to the University senior public examination by the establishment of secondary schools for boys similar to the Advanced School for Girls, or other means. To which Mr. PEAKE has moved the following amendment, viz.—"To leave out the words 'establishment of secondary schools for boys similar to the Advanced School for Girls,' in order to insert 'extension of the State school system of education.'"

"The drudgery I could not do O Lord, assign to others! There's much to do of dirty work, It will not hurt my brothers, It's healthful for them, Lord, to dig And delve in grimy soil. The sweetest rest they're sure to win With unremitting toil."

Sir John Downer had also said that the Advanced School for Girls "had proved a howling mistake, for it had destroyed private schools, benefited those who did not require it, and had been of no use to those in whose interest it had been started." Not a word of that statement was true. At the time the school was started there were very few schools capable of training girls up to the University standard, that was to say, the senior examination. Instead of injuring private schools it had largely benefited them; in fact, it had been a model for the private secondary schools for girls, and it was well known that many of the best teachers in the private schools were drawn from the Advanced School.

outside the metropolitan area. As very few of the schools had been examined at the time the list was made up, the increase would be much greater after the close of the examinations. The Government would agree to the motion if Mr. Batchelor would substitute "children" for "boys," and strike out "secondary schools for boys similar to the Advanced School for Girls, or other means," and insert instead "additional exhibitions and bursaries." Mr. Peake had made light of the manual training given in the State schools. It was not contended for a moment that this manual education was imparted with the object of fitting out a boy for any particular trade, the sole idea being to train them to use their heads, eyes, and hands. In after life they would find this of great benefit to them. It would be found that boys who had had even the manual training given in our public schools would more quickly master any work they may be called on to undertake after they left school than the lad whose training had been on the intellectual side only; whether on a farm, or in a shop, or a trade, the skilful cunning hand would speedily outstrip the youth with no mechanical skill. A graduate from a manual training school of Washington wrote:—"I consider my training at the Manual Training School as being indispensable to myself and do not see how a young man of a mechanical, mercantile, literary, or even a professional turn of mind can consider his education completed or be satisfied with it without having had at least a taste for manual training. In every-day life, it makes no difference what the profession or occupation of one may be, something will turn up when the training such as I received at the Manual Training School will become essential to the success, advancement, and improvement of a young man. Manual training gives vigor and directness to every mental operation. The lessons learned by use of tools such as accuracy, adaptation, and persistence are the best possible preparation for the relation of other pursuits." The Government had established agricultural schools in the city, and they hoped to open one in the north and one in the south after Christmas. When the experimental stage was passed the Government would establish other similar schools. The cost per pupil at the city agricultural schools was about £3 10s. per year. This was after deducting the fees for a really good education, the curriculum being—Advanced arithmetic, algebra, plane geometry, mensuration and land surveying, mechanical drawing, composition, English literature, agriculture (theoretical and practical), fruit culture, viticulture, chemistry, and carpentry and smith's work. Judging by the splendid results obtained from granting exhibitions and bursaries the Government intended to extend the system, by which they hoped to reach the brightest intellects in the State schools. From January, 1878, to December, 1897, the following scholarships had been won by those who had held exhibitions from the public schools of South Australia, granted under the education regulations:—The South Australian scholarship, 4 out of the 8 awarded; University scholarships, 28 out of 69 awarded; Angas Engineering scholarship, 2 out of 4 awarded; Angas Engineering exhibitions, 2 out of 10 awarded; John Howard Clark scholarships, 5 out of 16 awarded; Everard scholarship, 1 out of 7 awarded; the Dr. Davies Thomas scholarship, 1 out of 3 awarded; Roby Fletcher scholarship, 2 out of 6 awarded; and St. Albans scholarship, 2 out of 4 awarded. One hundred and two exhibitioners had entered Prince Alfred College as pupils from January, 1877, to January, 1898. Of these 73 had matriculated or passed the senior public examination at the Adelaide University; 48 had won other scholarships offered by Prince Alfred College, such as "The Colton," "Old College," "Robb," "Foundation," "Malpas," "Elder," and "Longbottom" scholarships; 21 had taken degrees in arts or science; and 9 had taken degrees in medicine. The Illustrated London News of last month stated:—"In the Cambridge tripos a young lady has taken this year the proud position of 'equal to the fifth wrangler.' This is the highest place yet attained by a woman at Cambridge, with the exception of Miss Fawcett's famous record of 'above senior wrangler.' Another point to note is that several of the most successful on the tripos list have been holders of scholarships, without the aid of which, presumably, they could not have properly pursued their course, taken the needful 'coaching,' and so on. Both the senior wrangler and the lady fifth wrangler come under this description." This showed that these scholarships were not confined to South Australia alone. The Government now gave six exhibitions annually, tenable for three years, and open to boys attending public schools. These were worth £20 a year, or £40 if the successful candidate had to live away from home. The exhibitioners must attend St. Peter's College, Prince Alfred College, Christian Brothers' College, Way College, or some other approved school, and they were required to present themselves at the examinations of the University of Adelaide. There might thus be 18 boys at one time enjoying exhibitions. There were at present 17, and four of them received £40. In Victoria in addition to exhibitions offered by the Education Department a number of scholarships were offered by the private schools and colleges. Some of these were open to boys only, some to boys and girls, some to children of State schools only, some to pupils of any school, some to pupils in particular districts only. In some cases the scholarship paid the whole expense of tuition, exclusive of books and material, and in some cases a portion of the cost. The point he wished to emphasise was that while in Victoria the private secondary schools were giving something like 90 out of 100 of their scholarships to State school children the secondary schools here were not doing anything in that direction, and the Government meant to open up negotiations with them to see if they could persuade them to follow the Victorian example. If the Government increased the number of exhibitions and bursaries the private schools would get the benefit of the magnificent advertisement given them by the presence of the brightest of the State school pupils, and they should make some reductions in the fees. They did it for families, and if the Government sent 12 or 20 of the best boys they would have a right to claim some reduction. At the Brighton (Victoria) Grammar School they offered two scholarships of £10 a year for two years, which entitled the holders to education at half fees at Camberwell two scholarships were given for three years at £12 12s. and this covered all cost of tuition, except books and materials. In addition many other schools gave scholar-

ships, some of which covered fees, and some even part of the cost of board. An offer had been made by the Adelaide University to train all our State school teachers, and while the Government recognised that the teachers were doing very well, if our children were to be carried on to a higher ground it could only be done by the higher education of teachers. The Government were prepared to hold a conference with the representatives of the University to arrange a basis for this, and if they could agree on lines that would satisfy the Government and the House there would be a big saving in the cost of training teachers, and out of this they could afford to give 12 more exhibitions and 12 more bursaries. In any case the cost of these this year, if they did not come to any arrangement, would not be very heavy, and he believed members would endorse the expenditure of £200 extra so that our children might be given the benefit of the best education possible.

Mr. CARPENTER did not think there was any public expenditure which the taxpayers as a body would more willingly pay than the money spent on education, although the wealthy class sometimes raised valid objections. At the last election the class said in very woefully in their attempts to dissuade the Labor Party for opposing the reduction of the education vote by £10,000. Even their own people were ashamed of the action of a certain organisation in the matter. He was afraid some members were not quite clear as to the scope of Mr. Batchelor's motion, judging by the random nature of some of their remarks. In the past very often the higher branches of learning had been used by the wealthy for ornamental rather than useful purposes, and many occupations were open only to those who were able to carry on the education of their children to a much higher standard than was provided by the State, but many men with a university education were not fitted for the battle of life, and were beaten by men of lower attainments but more practical ideas, and the reason was that higher education was often given without a definite purpose. Education should not make the lower ranks dissatisfied with their lot or wish to shun honest work, but it should make the clerk a better clerk, the merchant a better merchant, the artisan a better artisan, and the laborer a better laborer. Those who had been handicapped in early life for want of it and had educated themselves were always the most anxious to help others to the advantages they had not themselves enjoyed, and it was in this spirit that Mr. Batchelor had proposed the motion. It was not intended to give a university education to everybody, but to bridge the gap between the State schools and that institution. Sir John Downer had somewhat surprised him by saying he would like to see the University open to everyone, adding—"who could get there." He evidently saw the desirability of opening the University, but was not willing to clear the road for those who could not get there. He spoke of money spent on education as luxury and extravagance, but it was nothing of the kind. The Minister of Education told the House not long ago the difference in the cost of education in the country and the city, and it was very considerable. City members, however, did not, he was sure, desire that the expenditure should be made equal, as they recognised the desirability of people in the country having as many educational opportunities as the city dwellers. There should be still more money spent in the country. He was glad to see that the Government had been fairly liberal in constraining the regulations as to provisional schools, but the minimum number should be still further lowered from 12 to 9 or 10, because while 15 or 16 pupils could often be obtained, the average attendance sometimes fell below 12, and the school had to be closed. The parents in the more sparsely populated parts would then share in the benefits for which they had to pay. He was sorry the amendment by the Minister of Education did not show what they might expect. How many exhibitions and bursaries were they going to have. (The Minister of Education—"We are negotiating with the schools.") If they could get a good increase it would be better than taking up some new departments that would harass the Treasurer at the end of the year. He thought the Government had promised too little, and he hoped the House would insist on something more. However, he was not going to oppose the amendment, and he would support the motion.

On the motion of Mr. HAGUE the debate was adjourned to Wednesday, October 12.