

NORTH TERRACE INSTITUTIONS.

Interesting Improvement Scheme.

The Government is exercising its mind about how to deal with the growing demands of some of the important institutions on North terrace. As the city develops, and land values increase, the matter does not lose in importance, and the Government recognises the advisableness of taking immediate steps to secure what will be required to meet future extensions. There is a sufficiency of land on North terrace to supply all needs in this connection, and it only requires a judicious shutting of the cards to make the provision. The public have been aware for a long time that important changes were to be made as regards the allocation of these Crown lands, and it is possible the Government will shortly announce its intentions. When an effort was made some months back by the Federal Government to secure certain portions of North terrace lands for defence purposes the State Government said they would be needed for the extension of the University, but the extensive alterations at present being made to the existing buildings of that institution suggest that the University will not be moved. But even those additions will not be sufficient to provide for the needs of a growing community, and it will be necessary to seek further afield for room.

—The Jubilee Oval.—

It is generally understood that a part of the Government scheme is to obtain possession of the Jubilee Oval and grounds, which at present are leased to the Royal Agricultural Society. The society has been a good tenant, and has worked amicably with the Government with regard to improvements, many thousands of pounds having been spent by it in bringing the grounds up to their satisfactory condition. Still, the Agricultural Society recognises that its shows have grown to such an extent that operations are now too congested, and it is compelled to secure more spacious premises to meet future requirements. With the enormous amount of building going on in the suburbs immediately surrounding the city, the society is cognisant of the fact that the purchase of suitable grounds must not be delayed, and it is understood it is now making arrangements to obtain space which will meet the needs for the next 100 years. It is desirous of obtaining a site close to the city, which will be served by the electric car system, and it already has several places under consideration.

—More Room.—

The removal of the Military Staff Offices and the Destitute Asylum from the rear of the Museum to other quarters will also provide the Government with additional accommodation, and this space, combined with the Jubilee Oval, should supply the requirements of the University, Public Library, Art Gallery, and Museum, practically for all time. Negotiations are still in progress with respect to the acquisition of Torrens Park as a town residence for the Governor, and should satisfactory arrangements be completed, the building occupied by the Governor could be utilized as an adjunct to the University. In connection with the Government scheme for the readjustment of the North terrace properties, it is also known that the Premier intends to remove the wall which surrounds Government House, and the existing gardens will be converted into a park for the people.

—Park for the People.—

The guardroom at the entrance to Government House will be taken away, and it is understood that a sweeping curve will be made into the grounds to the north of the Soldiers' Memorial to allow ample road space from King William road to North terrace at the rear of the monument. The Government House grounds will be maintained as a garden for the use of the people, and the statue to be erected to the memory of the late King Edward will be placed there. The present parade ground to the north of Government House will also receive the attention of the Government at an early date, and it is expected that this land will also be converted into lawns and gardens. This blank space in the centre of a wealth of foliage and garden plots is an eyesore, and as the Defence Department is making arrangements for a new parade ground in one of the suburbs, it is only reasonable to sup-

pose that this land will be included in the general scheme for beautifying the city. The Adelaide Bowling Club, the pioneer in a game which has become popular in Adelaide, is anxious to obtain a little extra breathing room when the drill sheds shall be removed. The club's ground has already had a sum running well into four figures spent upon it, and it is not the least attractive feature of the Government domain between North terrace and the lake, but it is hidden from view by the unsightly drill sheds. If more space can be secured the club is understood to be prepared to spend a considerable sum in beautifying its eastern end of the reserve, so that it shall be thoroughly worthy of its picturesque surroundings.

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MUSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

MOUNT GAMBIER, February 16.—Dr. Ennis, of the Conservatorium of Music, Adelaide, addressed in the old institute hall to-night a meeting of music teachers and others on the connection between musical education and examinations, with particular reference to the advantages presented by University examinations. The attendance was small. Mr. F. H. Daniel (Chairman of the local University Extension Committee) presided. Dr. J. Johnson asked whether the licensing of teachers would not be a good thing. Dr. Ennis said in Victoria a scheme of registration existed, and those who were not registered were under certain disadvantages compared with those who were licensed—they could not recover fees in a Court of law, or something like that. Efforts were being made to have a similar arrangement in South Australia. The effect of it would be that those who had been professional teachers for a certain period would be enrolled at once, and the system would apply to future teachers. He was entirely in sympathy with the scheme. Dr. Johnson suggested that it should be compulsory on music teachers advertising to state in their advertisements and prospectuses whether they were registered or unregistered. Dr. Ennis said he had not thought of such a scheme, but it might be a good one, and he would make a note of it, and bring it forward at the proper time.

SCHOOL PROBLEM.

ROYAL COMMISSION'S ENQUIRIES.

EVIDENCE BY A HEAD MASTER.

A meeting of the royal commission appointed to enquire into the facilities granted by the University for higher education was held at Parliament House on Tuesday. There were present Mr. Ryan (Chairman), Hon. A. W. Styles, M.L.C., and Mr. Green, M.P.

Charles Bronner, Head Master of the Goodwood School and President of the Head Masters' Association and of the Teachers' Conference, said he had been teaching for 31 years. The general attendance in schools was not greater than seven years ago. It was smaller than in 1891. There was a discrepancy of, he thought, 8,000 or 10,000. The efficiency had not become less popular than it was.

By the Chairman—How have private schools fared?—I have read the reports, and they have not gained the pupils we have lost.

The falling off in attendance is not so much with children under as with those over 13?—Yes; 10 years ago I had 100 over 13, and to-day I have only 46. One of the reasons why people are taking children from school at an earlier age is that they might help the income of the home.

Witness said a number of parents were anxious to keep their children, especially boys, at school, but in a good many cases the lads were anxious to go to work as soon as they could. The desire to study came at the age of 16 or 17. The weekly wage received by those at work was a great temptation for others to leave school. The average boy was slower in the acquisition of the mere mechanical work. It was a greater trouble for him to learn such work as spelling or tables than was the case with lads 20 or 30 years ago. The tendency of the last four or five years had been to develop the reason, and the system aimed at drawing out rather than putting in. In the lower grades the children should acquire facts while the brain was susceptible—say, from the ages of six to 12. The applicants to enter teaching life had disappeared with the advent of high schools. It was difficult to get monitors. He thought the reason they fought shy of the Education Department while rushing other Government departments was that the immediate monetary return was not so great. Better prospects should make the service more attractive. Head masters of schools of 1,000 children, of which there were four, should receive higher salaries than they did.

The Chairman—Is the responsibility of the University professor any greater than that of a head master?—The qualifications, training, and expenditure to acquire a professorship would be immeasurably greater.

Do you regard the drastic alterations indicated in the Education Bill introduced last session as essential?—I do.

Can there be any objection to the University being the guide of the Education Department?—No; provided there are men on the University Council highly qualified in primary work, such as our present Director and other educationists in the department. There had been no truancy at Goodwood for years, and he thought the same could be said of many other schools. In his 15 years at Goodwood not a single parent had been brought before the Court for the non-attendance of children. He did not think it would be advantageous for any large section of pupils to pass into the universities; but he favoured technical and high schools. Attendance should be compulsory, on every day the schools were opened, and the age for leaving should be raised to 14. In New South Wales the schoolgoing age was six to 14, and South Australian children had to compete with those who received two years' more school life. In some of the cantons in his country (Switzerland) 30 per cent. of the gross revenue was spent on education, and South Australia might safely follow the example of that country, as far as was possible, in the altered circumstances. He thought the public schools were more efficient than any of the private schools.

The commission resolved to meet on Tuesdays and Fridays. At the next sitting the President of the School of Mines (Sir Langdon Bonython) will be examined.