THE EDUCATION POLICY.

The Register could not be other than gratified that the Premier has, with characteristic courage and foresight, adopted the principles of education reform recommended by that journal for acceptance. In this State, as Mr. Peake truly says, every country has to work out its own salvation in the matter of national education, and, while probably no claim could be maintained for absolutely original ideas on the subject in the abstract, genuine statesmanship requires that the people supply particular needs in the most efficient and economical manner. The distinguishing features of Mr. Peake's programme are its completeness and its appropriateness, and it may be said also to reflect credit on the enthusiasm of the professional body by the Report's statement, Mr. Williams, in his comprehensive progressiveness, marks an epoch in the history of education in the State, and he has not only controlled and wisely and energetically pursued it will place South Australians among the foremost peoples in "knowledge, power, and skills"—the golden keys which unlock the door of material wealth. This statement of an adequate reason for an expansion of State education involves much more than the material advantages which at first sight appear associated with the word, "education"—"Nature guards her storehouse so jealously," because she has a hidden purpose to obtain from man the highest expression of his mental, moral and physical powers which cannot be reached apart from the realization of ethical values, so that happiness may be conferred with prosperity. No other investment of public resources is so profitable, and this made upon education, provided that the system adopted is sound and thorough and achieves practical ends. While Mr. Peake's programme is comprehensive, the whole range of instruction, from the kindergarten to the University, the Ministry proposes to concentrate immediate efforts upon immediate needs. Respect for educational institutions which thusly overlooks the psychological requirement that the ripening process must be timed by the growth of public opinion, and a complete plan, a scientific design, and well-considered methods, but he intends to make haste slowly but surely.

The Minister of Education recognises that his first duty is to improve the primary system relatively to infant and rural schools. Pioneer settlers are entitled to a liberal elementary education, and the system is adaptable in all the circumstances. Consolidation and travelling schools must be forthcoming, and provision made for recovering the unawake talent which is consistently exported from the State to the loss of the community. Here the problem is a twofold one of means and men. The departmental purse is limited, and the introduction of uniformity is too expensive for the isolated and distant parts of the State. The absence of qualified teachers. The latter restriction is largely due to defective methods for training students, which we are assured are in course of being corrected. This extension of primary education is also retarded by the paucity of skilled instructors, and the outside competition for ability may make it necessary to offer additional inducements to promising youths. The Government's next aim concerns the establishment of secondaries. In this case, as a preliminary, it has been decided to introduce a connection in the form of a secondary branch to the University. Although this preliminary arrangement will not be the standardisation of secondary education—a clear definition where the primary end is the secondary means, and where the secondary end is University training starts. Meeting this requirement will involve a scientific articulation of the whole educational system, including a scientific redefinition of the University's relations with the public. The Register's suggestion that the High School should be extended to the suburbs will be carried out under the most advantageous conditions and District High Schools are an important consideration should be remembered—that the State cannot afford to submit pupils free who do not furnish evidence of capability and industry to benefit by the costly instruction. Secondary education should not be placed on the plane of compulsory elementary education—and it should be extended only to those who, after answering the double tests of intellect and character. The Premier also undertakes the task of organizing the work of technical schools, as that of establishing evening courses in elementary schools. Both of these enterprises may be associated with the desire to direct and improve education for industrial purposes. Industry requires an additional preparation for trade and technical occupations, it will be found desirable to extend manual training in secondary schools.

The Register has repeatedly directed attention to the systemic and wasteful condition of State-subsidized technical education, and one of the first steps in connection with the organization of technical schools and the establishment of continuation schools should be the transfer of the School of Mines, in which the training of mining trade students, to the Education Department. These trades schools, in conjunction with the late School of Design, should then be coordinated to answer the purpose. The present examination in industrial design which may be requisite to import from England a competent inspector of technical education. The School of Mines in relation to its higher branches affiliated to the University should be established as a Technical College. The Premier is probably wiser than his critics in refraining, for the present at least, from a revolutionary interference with the University. By means of scholarships and bursaries the State is doing all that may be fairly expected to inculcate the spirit of the State public schools. More urgent than the abolition of University fees or the grant of additional endowment is the need to bring the institution into harmony with modern requirements. But, as Mr. Peake points out, even the best system of training the Universities by an outside authority of the highest standing. The State public should be placed in a position to judge whether full value is received for the taxpayers' moneys. In any case, the building up of the national education system will in time force essential changes in University administration. Meanwhile Mr. Peake is acting prudently in strengthening the foundations of the primary system and establishing on sound lines the secondary system, which, as Mr. Board has remarked, is the keynote of the educational arch.

Mr. Peake delivered a carefully prepared speech on Mr. Ryan's motion in regard to the increase of facilities for students in the Adelaide University. He began by congratulating Mr. Ryan on his speech, and expressed regret that he had not recognized what the State had done. "Learning, knowledge, power, and skill," he said, were the golden keys which unlocked Nature's storehouse of wealth, room, and sleep at night. The Government, the importance of education in all its branches, the State, was the first free High School in the Commonwealth. The great obstacle to making the system in the country was the lack of teachers. The Government, it was estimated, had established 54 scholarships of a value of £1,230. The great need was for efficient primary, secondary, and primary schools. Then came the University and Technical Schools. When Mr. Ryan wished to put on the fourth limb the third was completed. It was better that there should be a good system of secondary education, free to every boy and girl, than that a University education should be obtained on the same conditions. There was no chance of introducing the government using the grants until the secondary schools were more developed. Mention had been made of America's expenditure on universities, but the Government, in the Technical Schools, the Agricultural College, the School of Mines, and the University. The State was doing work which the University did in America. While, in America, the primary education was not carried out by the State, to establish a secondary system of sound lines, to organise the work of country schools, and to establish evening continuation schools. That was a varied and comprehensive programme. Mr. Ryan had jumped at something and he was warmly supported, the motion. He did not propose a reduction of £1,000 a year among ten students. The State was the cause of higher education, more particularly the cost of it. It was about £7,000 a year. This State, he said, was a small one but the State of its Australian neighbours, although it would be possible for the State to give brain students an opportunity of moving along. In the end of life. Mr. Daniel stated that education made for equality. The State did not know what it lost by not enabling every clever boy to have a university education. He hoped the High Schools would ultimately knock out the private colleges. Mr. Coghlan secured the adjournment of the debate.