

-Care for the Children.-

Education had been defined into physical, intellectual, and moral branches, but there was no sharp dividing line between the three. Each one included something of the others. Some teachers thought they were doing enough for the physical education of the children in the drill lessons and the breathing exercises laid down in the curriculum. They might ask themselves whether the furniture of the school-rooms was arranged in the best way for the advantage of the child. They should endeavour to make the best of the material supplied by the department, although in many cases it was old-fashioned, and did not conduce to the highest physical development of the pupils. They should see that it was so arranged that the children could see their work, and that the light came from the left instead of from the back. The scholars should not be allowed to crouch over their work, and thus lay the foundations for near-sightedness. A good supply of fresh air should be secured, and the teacher should take an interest in the games of the children. He thought it would be a good thing to banish marbles from the playground and encourage chey-chase, cricket, and football. (Applause.)

-Interest and be Interested.-

Speaking of the intellectual training, he asked if their aims were right. Did the results to be gained at the annual examination loom too largely before them, and was there not a great temptation to drill the children in preparation for inspectors' questions rather than to encourage intellectual development? Methods of work would largely depend on their aims and purposes. They must endeavour to be interesting, and in order to accomplish that they must discover what interested the children. They must display their own interest so as to infect the children and their parents. (Applause.) They were often so bound down by stereotyped methods that they could not break away from them. They needed to use all their talent in their work. A good deal might be done by paying attention to the part that singing might play as an aid to teaching. They wanted to develop the children so that they could acquire knowledge for themselves. (Applause.) In respect to moral training he thought that the lessons given should have practical application. For instance, if charity were under discussion, the scholars should be provided with an opportunity to practise the virtue by contributing of their pence to such admirable institutions as the Children's Hospital. (Applause.) The walls of the schools should be decorated with pictures. In and around the city that was done through the Decoration Society, and many of the schools had capital art galleries. There were schools where it might be impossible to get the best pictures; but, if they could not get steel engravings, they could make selections from illustrated papers which, if neatly and inexpensively mounted, would alter the whole appearance of the school. (Applause.) In some respects the teachers of to-day were better off than those of the nineteenth century described in humorous verses (which he read to the conference), especially in relation to examinations. The returns were much simpler to-day, and it was a distinct advance that the little folk in the lower juniors were to be exempted from the ordeal. One of the hindrances to effective work in the schools was irregular attendance. (Applause.) They should remember that the simpler the machinery the more effective it would be. He hoped they would all go back to their schools on Monday morning determined to do better work than they had done before, and that the result would be seen in the lives of those entrusted to their care. (Applause.)

At the instance of Mr. T. S. Nicolle, seconded by Mr. S. Gent, an enthusiastic vote of thanks was accorded to the President for his able address.

-"Have We Too Much to Teach?"-

Inspector Martin delivered an address on the above subject. He said that for years he had advocated a reduction in the arithmetical course, and, apart from Australian geography, that course could very well be cut. He read extracts from his annual reports to show his consistency on the points to which he referred. Many of the teachers were running their schools on wrong lines, and were beginning at the middle instead of laying the foundation work. If more time were taken in guiding the preliminary steps of the children the final stages of progress would be quicker. The teacher should always be a learner, because one could not be a teacher unless he was a learner. They should thoroughly study the little dots. The great trouble was that the methods of teaching were wrong, and therefore the teacher found at the end of the year that he had too much to teach. The remedy lay in revising the system of subjects, and allowing time for teaching thoroughly.

On the motion of Mr. S. G. Albanus, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Martin for his interesting remarks.

-Election of Officers.-

Officers were elected as follow:—President, Mr. W. H. Cherry; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. J. Harry and J. Willmott; Treasurer, Mr. V. J. Pavia; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. J. Fairweather; Minute Secretary, Mr. R. T. Burnard; Assistant Secretary, Mr. B. J. Gates.

The following were appointed as the executive committee:—Miss Hales, and Messrs. G. Charlesworth, T. G. Roberts, A. Lampe, S. F. Robinson, and J. D. Drinkwater. The President, in returning thanks for his re-election, said the officers were sorry to lose Mr. W. A. West from the executive. That gentleman, though not actively connected with primary education, had been a tower of strength to the committee.

-Reports.-

The treasurer (Mr. Pavia) presented the financial statement. The affiliated associations numbered 29, covering country from the far north to Mount Gambier and from southern Yorke's Peninsula to the Murray Plains. The membership numbered over 400. The receipts had been £132, including £70 from last year; expenditure, £56; leaving a credit balance of £76. The report was adopted.

The corresponding secretary (Mr. J. Fairweather) read his report, which referred to the establishment of nuclei of libraries in country schools, supplemented by the inauguration of a pedagogic library at the Training College for the use of teachers. Arrangements had been made whereby teachers might secure the payment of their salaries prior to the extended holidays, conditionally on the orders not being presented to the Treasury in the first few days of the new half-year. The attempts to start a teachers' paper had fallen through. A neat cross had been erected over the grave of the late Inspector Plummer, some of the subscriptions for which had come from the other States. Letters had been forwarded to the Director asking for a reduction in the average number of children taught by each assistant; but the reply had been that, while the idea was the goal which must be striven for, at present it was impossible. The Acting Director held out no hope of granting the request that all schools having six separate classes and an average attendance of 25 should have a paid monitor. There had been a more hopeful reply to the resolution asking that specially qualified teachers of infant departments should be able to rise to the same salary as first assistants in girls' departments. The Acting Director had said it was not improbable the subject would form part of the proposed new scheme for infant teaching. No hope was held out that the salaries of first female assistants would rise to £180, and the Acting Director did not think there was any possibility of increasing the salaries paid to women assistants in the earlier years of their services. That teachers in charge of special schools should be paid a fixed salary was another thing that "could not be done at present," and the department was "as far as possible requiring the parents to render some assistance by finding board for the teachers of special schools on specially favourable lines." The executive viewed with pleasure the assurance that greater convenience would be made in teachers' residences. The report was adopted.

-September Vacations.-

Mr. D. Menzie and Mr. G. Pennyfield withdrew their motion for the September vacation to coincide with show week, and the following, proposed by Mr. C. Malec, was carried:—"That teachers who so wish should be allowed to take their September vacation in show week."

-Women Assistants' Salaries.-

Miss Hales moved—"That in the opinion of the conference the salaries of first-class women assistants should be raised, and women teachers who have been through the University should start with a minimum of £84." Both minimum and maximum salaries for women were lower than what used to be paid before the reductions consequent on the drought years. In no case was the University training given for the individual and private benefit of any teacher. The Government had come to look for a special and superior education as a necessary part of the training of the teacher. The teacher should no more be called upon to pay for this than she should pay for the lighting and ventilation of the schoolrooms. (Hear, hear.) The woman teacher now left the University and took up work at £72 per annum, which, with £6 deducted for superannuation, left the amount £66. In her previous training she had received lower salaries, while women workers in other lines were earning sufficient to enable them to contribute something for the support of the home, which she was unable to do. It would make the position of women easier if the £72 were altered to £84, and the annual increments of £5 were altered to £8, as formerly. In times of stress the teachers had done their part in submitting to reductions, and they

should receive the benefit of better times, more especially as the men teachers who had laid their case before the authorities had had their requests granted. At present the highest pay for first-class women assistants was £148, a lower salary than that paid to a young man at the end of his first year's teaching. The training required for men and women was the same, the examinations, and likewise the bond required of each; they taught equal classes, and with the addition of sewing. Equal results were expected by the inspectors. Yet the man had the opportunity of rising to £450 and the woman only to £148. ("Shame.") The position of first assistant was the only one of honour open to women, and there were but six of them. These were held by head mistresses, including two who were formerly appointed at a salary of £250. On the other hand, men had 11 positions open to them. The qualities, influence, initiative, and ability of organization and control were just those that received a high pay in the case of men. There were women who had them, and it was not right that these should be poorly remunerated. Women had the same devotion to their work as had men, and felt strongly that if a woman possessed the required qualities for filling an equal position well she should be worthily paid. (Applause.)

Miss Jeffers, in seconding the motion, said that out of their £66 many of the country women teachers had to pay 18/6 to £1 per week for board. Taking 16/ as the average, they had but 10/ weekly left to provide books and teaching aids, clothing, pocket money, church collections—(laughter)—and everything else, and if taken ill away from home might find themselves stranded for lack of finances. A woman should not be called upon to look to her parents for the support that she should receive as the result of her own work—(hear, hear)—especially when the Government in last year and the present had such a handsome surplus. (Applause.) The motion was carried.

-Other Resolutions.-

Mr. D. Menzie moved—"That this conference is of opinion that schools with an average attendance of 30, in which six classes are taught, should be entitled to a paid monitor." A similar resolution, but of a more drastic nature, because the attendance was set down at 25, was carried at the Easter congress. It had, however, failed to win the desired approval. Their object was not to say what should be done, but to point out the injustice of the present system. The adoption of their proposition would mean an additional expenditure of only £200 per annum. Mr. A. J. P. Kummnick seconded the motion, which, after an exhaustive discussion, was carried unanimously.

At the instance of Mr. F. F. Wholohan, seconded by Mr. J. Harry, it was decided—"That the question of utilizing the Public Service Review as an educational medium be referred to the new executive to take such action as it may deem advisable." Mr. J. D. Drinkwater proposed—"that in the opinion of this conference the practice of keeping positions vacant for a long period is not in the best interests of the service." The practice indicated tended to kill all hope and to drive teachers out of the State. Mr. D. D. Murphy seconded the motion, which was adopted.

A vote of £2 2/ was made to the Children's Hospital in memory of the late Mr. J. Hartley, in accordance with the annual custom.

The conference thereupon concluded its sittings.

A CONCERT.

On Wednesday evening the members of the conference and their friends were entertained at a capital concert at the Elder Hall. They were received by the vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide (Dr. Barlow), who apologized for the unavoidable absence of the Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way). The programme, which was arranged by the Director of the Conservatorium (Professor Ennis) was received with the greatest warmth. Misses Elsie Torr, E. Rodgers, W. Holder, L. Galloway, F. Cowperthwaite, and Hilda Klintberg opened with a sextet. Pianoforte solos were given by Miss Muriel Mattinson and Mr. Gordon Short; an organ solo by Professor

Ennis; violin solos by Miss Sylvia Whittington; a vocal duet by Miss Florence Harris and Mr. N. M. Hack; and songs by Misses Hilda Klintberg, Florence Harris, and Muriel Cheek (with violin obbligato by Miss Whittington) and Messrs. Harold Savage, Stanley May, and N. M. Hack. Miss Muriel Mattinson and Mr. Arthur Williamson were the accompanists.