

Is Mr. Peake listening?

Are you listening, Mr. Peake? What should be done in normal times. But then let us in justice remember Mr. Peake did not have three years of slumber, so he was not deigned to see the vision of Benjamin, and that thus the condemnation of Mr. Parsons on the Education administration, "Things left undone which in normal times—those days when you were there Mr. Peake—should have been done." Where was Mr. Parsons in these normal times? We know he drew his Parliamentary salary. Still, be not dismayed, Benjamin still speaks—

"I say this to our teachers,

"I shall watch their work."

"I am at the head of this great Department of Education."

"I want the teachers to realise their interests are mine.

"I know their work is exacting."

"I hope to remove unnecessary accretions."

"I start with the impression that the service is not overmanned, and in some respects underpaid, and

"I shall do everything possible to improve conditions.

"I shall encourage efficiency.

"I shall welcome suggestions from the teachers for the improvement of the service.

"I shall be careful to remember"—then, alas! the type box was emptied—nothing remained but to substitute another word. Other Ministers have used "ours" or "theirs" or "the wishes of Parliament," but then they were not the Hon. Herbert Angus Parsons, with his love of "I's" and "My." "My" is used to convey his Ministerial blessing.

'TIS FROTHY NONSENSE.

What vague generalities and frothy nonsense from him who sat in idleness, and when the opportunities for doing something were within his reach allowed these to pass without as much as one word.

Let Himself Pledge "Liberal" Members.

If the new Minister is in earnest in his statement that he is anxious to improve the education system in this State, so that the taxpayers may be guaranteed that measure of efficiency which the expenditure demands, then let him pledge such of the Liberal Party who may find a place in the new Parliament to the report of the Education Commission, consisting of representatives of all parties then in the House, and approved by every member of that commission. But as in his slumbers when in Parliament he has not become familiar with them. Here are some of the reforms suggested, dealing as they do with:—

Cost of education.

Control of the education system.

Primary education.

Kindergarten.

Compulsory attendance.

Home lessons.

Length of the school day.

Teachers' classification board.

Transfer of teachers.

Curriculum board.

Teachers' Training College.

Size of Classes.

Long leave of absence.

Equipment of schools.

Inspection of schools.

Inspection of private schools.

Abolition of school boards of advice.

Education in reformatories.

Mentally defective children in schools.

Itinerant teachers.

Physical culture.

Conduct of children.

Sex physiology.

School buildings.

Supervision of secondary education.

Inspection of State colleges and High Schools.

Status of High School teachers.

Agricultural education.

University education.

University buildings.

More land for the University, School of Mines, and Public Library.

Constitution of the University council.

Council of public education.

Certificates.

State control and organisation of the technical branch.

The University and technical education.

Manual work in the primary schools.

Compulsory attendance of apprentices at technical schools during working hours.

Substantial increase of bursaries and scholarships.

Labor Party Ideals.

Lest these reforms, which would give to the children of South Australia some of the advantages the children of the other States enjoy, be not far reaching enough for the awakened Minister, he may tempt his party to support the educational ideals of the United Labor Party of South Australia, which are:—

Compulsory age of attendance to be raised from 13 to 14 years.

Extension of free education to all citizens of the State up to and inclusive of universities.

School books and requirements for school children to be free.

Our reasons for demanding these are that we hold "It is the inborn right of all in this country, if they are worthy

of the highest education a country can give to get that education free." We have learned with Marshall in his "Economics of Industry":—"Since the manual Labor classes are four or five times as numerous as all other classes put together, it is not unlikely that more than half the best natural genius that is born into the country belongs to them, and of this a great part is fruitless for want of opportunity. There is no extravagance more prejudicial to the growth of national wealth than wasteful negligence which allows genius that happens to be born of lowly parentage to expend itself in lowly work."

Until this is generally realised we will still be groping in the muddledom we are at present, so characteristic of every public question which the Peake Administration governed, and nothing short of the recommendations outlined can supply South Australia's greatest need—a national conception of education.

The Register.
February 12, 1915.

THE UNIVERSITY CALENDAR.

The calendar of the University of Adelaide just issued presents the usual mass of facts and figures sandwiched in with statutes, regulations, and lists of subjects. So great is the pressure on its space that all examination papers and examiners' reports, with various other details of a more restricted interest, are now published in four other volumes. The most interesting part of the calendar is at the end, in the annual report and balance sheets. The University of Adelaide now has 400 undergraduates, with another 300 students attending various lectures, and 300 more at the Conservatorium. It receives in fees (in round figures), £10,000; in interest on investments, £5,000, and in Government subsidy, £12,000; apparently manages to make both ends meet—although the present trying year may test it more severely. Fortunately, it has a sound financier in Mr. George Brookman, at the head of its finance committee. The veteran Chancellor (Sir Samuel Way) has held office since 1883, and the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Barlow) since 1896. They are associated with a council of 20 elected by the graduates, with five more members appointed by the two Houses of Parliament from among their own numbers; and thus a light of public watchfulness steadily beats upon the University's doings. A notable event of the past year was the visit, just as the war began, of European scientists, on a selection of whom, at a rather dramatic gathering in the Town Hall, degrees were conferred with a happy disregard for their—in some cases—hostile nationality. New endowments during 1914 were for an Alexander Clark memorial, and a Lister prize. The Workers' Educational Association received willing help from the University towards establishing its well-meant schemes of learning to be more widely spread. A professor, three lecturers, and a host of graduates have left for the war; and all the staff, teaching or administrative, is paying a monthly percentage of salary to patriotic funds. Mr. Waite's fine gift of his Urrbrae Estate has been formally made, and is to take effect after the lives of the generous donor and his wife. The calendar, in its accustomed suit of sober white, will be widely read by those who wish to keep in touch with a great institution of steadily increasing utility.

Advertiser
February 13th 1915.

THE UNIVERSITY.

Attention is drawn to the University announcement, which appears in our advertising columns, giving particulars in regard to date of entry for scholarship examination and information relating to the opening of the University and Conservatorium. The time-table of the subjects to be taken in the commercial course this year is also given. The University calendar, the manual of the Public Examinations Board, and the syllabus of music examinations for the year are now ready, and copies may be had at the University or of all booksellers.

THE ART OF PLUCKING.

The manual of the Public Examinations Board of the University of Adelaide for the current year contains as usual reports concerning the examinations held last year. For the primary there were 529 candidates, and 329 certificates were issued. There were 661 candidates for the junior, 549 for the senior, 130 for the higher public, 128 for the junior commercial, and 21 for the senior commercial examination. The percentages of failures in the various subjects were relatively high in many cases. Thus of 285 primary students who took geography 130 failed. In the junior 487 candidates entered for English history, and 154 failed. In the senior, out of 257 who entered for Latin in November, 148 failed. In the higher public 19 out of 56 failed in English literature. In the junior commercial 54 out of 121 candidates failed in commercial geography, and in the senior commercial 9 out of 18 failed in commercial arithmetic. The proportion of failures was not always so heavy, but it is apparent that in regard to all the subjects very many of those who looked for their names in the list of passes "went away exceeding sorrowful."

THE INGENUOUS CANDIDATE.

The reports of the examiners concerning the public examinations conducted in connection with the University of Adelaide last year make interesting reading, although they do not on this occasion contain as many "howlers" as usual. In primary history many candidates said Julius Cæsar landed in England in 55 B.C., and returned to conquer it in 43 A.D., nearly a century afterwards. Others confused Sir John Moore, who was buried "at dead of night with the lanterns dimly burning," with Sir Thomas More, Chancellor to Henry VIII. In senior modern history some candidates drew a rough oblong to represent England and Wales, put Ireland on the east of England, and divided England into six squares, labelled alternately Whig and Tory. The last-mentioned candidate had evidently seen a newspaper map giving the distribution of parties after a general election. Italy was drawn to look like England, but the candidate left it blank, as he could not locate the towns. Queen Elizabeth, too, was described as the "Puritan" Queen, perhaps because she was not married. In senior arithmetic candidates said a cubic foot of jarrab only weighs half a pound, and that a man pumping for an hour might expect to get three gallons of water. He probably would, even in time of drought. Another candidate put the quantity at 750,000 gallons, which would suit the Commissioner of Public Works in these times. A candidate said a certain mixture contained 200 per cent. of lime, and yet another thought 14 miles an hour a fair speed for a hare. He had evidently never coursed one. In the junior commercial examination a candidate advanced the theory that the Andes "cause a fairly heavy rainfall by the wind being condensed." If we had the Andes here now that a general election campaign is in progress the drought would soon be broken up. Another candidate accounted for the fertility of the Argentine by saying, "When great storms rise in the Pacific Ocean the wind carries a great amount of salt with it, and as salt practically destroys plants and grain the Andes keep back the wind and salt." That is like the pins which save the lives of people who do not swallow them. In the senior commercial examination a candidate who started with stock worth £150 made no purchases, and yet managed to effect sales to the extent of £1,000.