

Ad. 5.9.19.

FORESTRY.

A FORWARD MOVEMENT.

Sydney, September 4.

The Premier has addressed a letter to the Prime Minister and the Premiers of other States on the subject of forestry, which is set down for consideration at the next Premiers' Conference. The communication is based upon a resolution passed by the Inter-State Forestry Conference in 1917, "That the seriousness of the forest situation demands immediate action with a view to conserving all prime timber country within the Commonwealth." Mr. Holman points out that the total area protected throughout the six States for forestry is 18,000,000 acres—New South Wales, 7,000,000; Victoria, 4,000,000; Queensland, 4,000,000; Western Australia, 1,600,000; Tasmania, 1,000,000; and South Australia 176,000 acres. It is estimated that New South Wales could increase her area to 8,000,000, Victoria to 5,500,000, Queensland to 6,000,000, South Australia to 600,000, Western Australia to 3,000,000, and Tasmania to 1,600,000. It will be suggested to the conference that there should be an immediate investigation, demarcation, and appropriation of available forest resources, that the future aim should be a total forest area of at least 30,000,000 acres, and that at least £50,000 a year might be advanced for each State during the next ten years for forest establishment, regeneration, and planting, the States unable to provide this amount to be financed by the Commonwealth.

Ad. 1.8.19.

Downer.

Our Sydney correspondent telegraphed last night:—Although the late Sir Samuel McCaughey's will has not yet been sworn for probate, it is stated that the principal beneficiaries are:—Sydney University, between £300,000 and £400,000; Queensland University, £200,000; the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales and Queensland, £250,000, of which the New South Wales Church will receive rather more than two-thirds. Included in this is £20,000 to the Scots College, and £20,000 to the Burnside Homes. The Sydney Grammar School receives £10,000, Newington College £10,000, the King's School £10,000, Cranbrook £10,000, the Sydney Hospital £5,000, the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital £5,000, the Royal Alexandra Hospital £5,000, and the Salvation Army £5,000. A large sum has also been left for the widows and orphans of soldiers killed in the war.

Ad. 8.8.19.

TEACHERS AND TEACHING.

The new Director of Education, Mr. W. McCoy, B.A., whom the Government have selected from no fewer than 37 applicants for the position, comes from Tasmania with the highest possible credentials. He has had practical experience from the bottom to the top of the educational ladder. The Tasmanian Minister of Education certifies that he is a zealous and tactful administrator, gifted with the power of infecting his officers and staff with his own enthusiasm, and that as an educationist he has a wide outlook, is well in touch with the latest developments, and cherishes high ideals. His success as an organiser is proved by his great achievement in lifting the education system of Tasmania out of a state of chaos to order and efficiency. There is abundant scope in South Australia for the work which Mr. McCoy appears to be so capable of doing. But the Government and Parliament must give him the opportunity. It is a lamentable fact that for many years past education in this State has not kept pace with the progressive systems, we will not say of America, but even of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. The arrested development of the service here is not, however, at all surprising, and no reflection need be cast on the successors of the late Mr. Hartley because they have failed to maintain the advance his energy and foresight initiated. If a State wants an up-to-date system of popular education, it must be prepared to pay for it. The man at the head may be ever so able and zealous, but unless adequately supported with funds by Parliament he can make no headway. It may be inferred from the action of the Government in increasing the amount of the Director's salary, and searching through the Commonwealth for the best man available, that they desire to take a forward step. But there is small hope of any considerable improvement without a substan-

tial expansion of the education vote. The first condition of progress is to allay the well-founded discontent prevailing throughout the service. Of what avail is it to place at the top a high-salaried Director if the teachers with whom he is to establish sympathetic relations are underpaid?

The last Congress of State school teachers, contrary to all precedent, allowed their own grievances to submerge the educational questions with the discussion of which they ordinarily occupy their time during the winter vacation. They are not as a class given to querulous complaining; they have plenty of public spirit, and take pride and interest in the performance of their important duties. But even the brain-worker is worthy of his hire, and if he is compelled to make sacrifices on the altar of State economy which are not expected of other sections of the community in this time of increasing cost of living it is not to be wondered at that he should become dissatisfied and gradually lose heart. Public men plead the proverbially vexing want of peace as an excuse for the half-starved condition of a service which will cease to attract clever young men and women into its ranks unless the financial status of the teaching profession is materially improved; and it may be admitted that, so far as the politicians are concerned, this explanation covers the ground. It is the citizens generally who need to realise that they cannot have a first-class system of education if they are unwilling to grant the necessary funds. And the same may be said of all those educational reforms which the Ryan Commission recommended, and for which the statutory machinery has been prepared. It is well known that in the towns the provision for vocational training is inadequate, that the outlying country places are so badly provided with schools that rural settlement is retarded on that account alone, and that even where the system is at its best the classes are excessively large, the class rooms are overcrowded, and the equipment is that of a former age. On September 3 next Mr. Angus Parsons intends asking the House of Assembly to declare that in its opinion there is urgent necessity for the extension of educational facilities and a revision of salaries paid by the Education Department. Everybody in contact with the facts knows that this motion touches the fundamental and pressing needs of our system. A recognition of the two requirements, and a determination to meet them without grudging the cost, must be the basis of a successful policy of educational progress, and the new Director, with all his gifts, cannot otherwise be reasonably expected to lift our school

CAPT. W. J. DENNY.

Hearty Home Greeting.

On Thursday morning Capt. W. J. Denny, M.C., M.P., returned to Adelaide after three and a half years' absence on war service. His brother (Father Denny) and his sister (Miss Denny) met him in Sydney. He is in the best of health. Capt. Denny was greeted at the Adelaide Railway Station by, among others, Mr. Gunn, M.P. (Leader of the Opposition), Hon. J. Jelley (Deputy-Leader of the La-



CAPT. W. J. DENNY, M.C., M.P.

bour Party), Mr. Edwards, M.P. (the colleague of Capt. Denny in the representation of West Adelaide), Mr. F. W. Birrell (President of the Adelaide Trades and Labour Council), the Hon. F. W. Conroy, Speaker of the House of Assembly, and Mr. P. McCabe (President of the Hibernian-Australian Catholic Benefit Society). Friends flocked around him, and he was warmly welcomed. In a subsequent interview with a reporter he said that he left Adelaide on March 18, 1916, as a Lieutenant in the 9th Light Horse, bound for Egypt. He went to the Tel-el-Kebir Camp, but soon after arrival departed to France, and was present at the action of the Australians at Fromelles, where the division sustained heavy losses. After having been on various parts of the French and Belgian fronts for 18 months, he took part in the final battle of Ypres in September, 1917. There he was seriously wounded in the right arm. A bullet tore the muscles from elbow joint to near the wrist. The result was several months' hospital in London, and his discharge papers bore these words—"Unfit for further active service." Because of his services in the last action at Ypres Lieut. Denny gained his captaincy and his M.C. When he was able to get about again he went, at the request of the War Office, with a party of wounded British soldiers to the United States to speed up the sending of American troops to France. He was in America for about three months, and then returned to Britain and France, where he performed duties in connection with the demobilization of the Australian Imperial Force.

—A Book Published.—

Between whilst he wrote a book—"The Diggers"—in which (as already shown in The Register) he sketches phases of the lives of the Australian troops in Egypt and parts of France and Belgium. After his return to London he contributed articles to the British daily papers, notably for The Daily Telegraph, dealing particularly—with the aid of official documents—with that most brilliant period of the services of our men from August 8, 1918, to the cessation of hostilities. He has another book "on the stocks." It relates to Australia, and its purpose is to interest people in Great Britain and the United States in "Things Australian."

—General Observations.—

In the course of conversation he expressed the hope that "the war will teach us in Australia that we can and must become a self-reliant nation. We must depend on our own efforts. There is no country like ours. When I stepped off my boat I almost shed tears, I was so delighted to be again among my own people." He quoted impressive figures already published in substance in The Register, regarding Australia's splendid war efforts. Dealing with trade prospects, he said, "We shall have to buck in. The old countries have, I understand, organized huge campaigns to secure trade. We must step into line; otherwise Australian industries and workmen will suffer." Returned soldiers he advises against joining any political party. "Standing alone they are a great power." Capt. Denny added that he had made a study of cultivation in other lands, and especially of irrigation in the United States, Canada, Italy and Egypt. Those countries should set Australia a high ideal and a wonderful example. He had brought back a mass of information. Dealing with the mandatory received by Australia over the late German Pacific possessions, he said he and others thought this a luxurious burden, the expense of which would grow with its years. The problem of the returned soldier was difficult, and it would have to be grasped with both hands. The men must have the most generous treatment.

CORDIAL RECEPTION IN ASSEMBLY.

"I notice Capt. Denny, the member for Adelaide, is in the precincts of the House," announced the Speaker (Hon. F. W. Conroy), in the Assembly on Thursday. Members glanced around to the Speaker's gallery, and saw their old and gallant colleague seated with the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council (Hon. J. Jelley), the Hon. F. S. Wallis, M.L.C., and the Hon. L. O'Loughlin. The Speaker asked Capt. Denny to come forward and be sworn in, as during his absence at the front he had again been elected as a member. Accompanied by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, Capt. Denny proceeded to the clerk's table, amid cheers, and took the oath. He then proceeded to his seat on the first Opposition Bench.

During the debate on the motion for the establishment of a war memorial, the Premier said he, and he believed all, members of the House had pleasure in welcoming back Capt. Denny. They felt the heartiest satisfaction that he had returned safe and sound. (Hear, hear.) Several of them had attended a little farewell gathering in that House on the eve of his

sary text-books, and it was a severe struggle for the parents of many students to keep them at the University. Scores would never have attended excepting for exhibitions and scholarships which they won. Dr. J. P. Wilson, in dealing with an assertion that no subsidy should be granted for the "Johnnies of Toorak," stated that few of that class cared to risk health, comfort, and educational facilities in Melbourne, when Oxford or Cambridge was almost equally accessible and far more congenial. An appeal to common knowledge respecting the early surroundings of eminent members of the bench, the bar, the medical, engineering, and teaching professions, and of our most successful and lauded soldiers will convince any reasonable person that the Melbourne University has indeed been the *Alma Mater*, the benign mother, of the gifted and ambitious sons and daughters of the poor. It has not, unfortunately, attracted endowments such as many other universities have received, but it has certainly been aided for many years by the devoted work and oversight of voluntary helpers, whose services are too little recognised.

Ill-informed critics who decry the University in Parliament are not only ill-informed, but churlish. They are so self-satisfied, as are elected persons generally, that they imagine that no one but a politician is capable of performing a public duty, or is entitled to praise for service. Yet it would have been a poor "look out" for the University if, during the sixty years of its career, it had been controlled by Parliamentarians instead of by the men of public spirit who have held the office of Chancellor and others who have sat upon the council and have given in the sum total many years of unpaid and extremely valuable service to the State. It is to these men to whom we owe gratitude. For a long time, and particularly during the last twenty years, they devoted themselves in the face of serious disabilities, for the want of adequate funds, to the task of maintaining the University on a high level of excellence. To say the least, it would be but due recognition of their great work if Parliament and the wealthy men of Victoria were to now place the institution in a position of financial strength.

There is no need to "democratise" the University, save to the extent of making it more easily available than it is to poor and aspiring youth. Its students are usually intensely democratic in their ideas, and sometimes even iconoclastic. It is after subsequent contact with the world that this youthful exuberance is modified. The Premier (Mr. Lawson), who was among the visitors yesterday, is impressed by the urgent necessities of the institution, and he has promised that this month, probably, he will ask Parliament to grant a sum not exceeding £200,000 for building purposes, and will also propose an increase of the annual subsidy. He made a suggestion, which should be readily complied with, that hostels should be provided so as to reduce the difficulty and expense to country students in finding boarding accommodation in Melbourne. There should be no hesitation in supporting the proposals in Parliament, seeing that the money is already available for the purpose named without making any additional charge upon the revenue.