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### IMPERIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE.

The Minister of Education (Hon. T. Pascoe) stated on Friday:—Recent English papers contain many references to the Imperial Education Conference, which sat in London during the latter part of June and the beginning of July. Mr. W. T. McCoy, B.A. (Director of Education), who represented this State, contributed to a discussion on supplying rural schools to sparsely populated districts. He told the conference that probably one-fifth of the population of South Australia consisted of small communities, and even isolated families scattered over an immense area. If the average attendance of six children can be assured, the Education Department sends a teacher, and for even a smaller number the department subsidized the pay of a governess. He also showed how 400 children, scattered over a vast extent of territory, were taught from the Correspondence School in Adelaide. In a discussion on inspection and examination, Mr. McCoy pointed out that the problem of inspection in Australia was very different from that in the Homeland. In Britain the local education authorities appointed, paid, and dismissed the teacher; and another authority judged the value of the work performed. In South Australia all these functions were performed by the Education Department. On the same day of the conference Mr. McCoy refuted some statistics used by the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, M.P., in an article in the June Empire Review. Mr. Fisher quoted statistics to indicate that in literacy Australia was behind Great Britain and the Dominions of Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. Mr. McCoy, armed with statistics derived from the Commonwealth Year Book, showed that Mr. Fisher had included, among the illiterate 239,780 children under the age of six years. If these were deducted it would give 90 per cent. of literates in Australia—a higher result than in any other part of the Empire. Mr. McCoy also introduced to the conference the question of the advisableness of organizing a Bureau of Education, which could publish in a Year Book all information concerning the administration of the various departments controlling education in the Empire. Not only statistics, but reports of developments and experiments and progressive work should be placed on record. The expense of the bureau, Mr. McCoy thought, should not exceed £10,000 per annum, which should be defrayed proportionally by the Homeland and all the colonies and dependencies. Dr. Viljoen, the representative of South Africa, supported the proposal, and suggested that in the annual compilation should be included information from the various countries constituting the League of Nations.

His work being judged by University professors, whatever the result he feels sure of unbiased judgment. Then comes the "final" test, the Board of Examiners for which consists of four members of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Australia, all men in active business for themselves within the State. Two examine upon one set of subjects, and two (brothers) on another. I do not wish to cast any reflection upon these gentlemen, but a Board of Examiners so constituted does not inspire confidence in young students. No board of four persons, for such a vital thing, should contain two brothers, especially when they examine together upon the same subjects, with open books before them. Naturally, under such an ordeal, the unfortunate candidate loses confidence, however well he may know his work. The decision of this board is final. Should the candidate be unsuccessful, which is usually the case, as a member of the deputation was careful to point

out, he must find employment as an "unqualified chemist," which is not always easy to procure, as the demand is for qualified assistants. As these are the conditions under which the apprentices and unqualified assistants labour for qualification, and the Pharmaceutical Society of South Australia have raised the question themselves, for an amendment of the Act in relation to "unqualified assistants," I hope some public-spirited persons will take the matter up, and see that an amendment to the Act is made. The Board of Examiners for such a test should be, preferably, elderly men of learning and integrity, on the retired list, whose knowledge of their subject is such that they may confidently examine a candidate without the aid of open books before them. The candidate would then approach the ordeal with less misgiving. A "registered" man in Thursday's Register says:—"The unqualified man may still sit for examination if he has the stamina and knowledge to do so." But the stamina he retains after such a drubbing is probably insufficient for the purpose. There are dispensaries, as the handbills describe them, cropping up like mushrooms in every likely suburb of South Australia, under the most familiar names, yet "Unqualified Chemists" are being judged as worthy or unworthy, in this anomalous manner. Many capable and efficient men are unregistered chemists to-day, and likely to remain so until some drastic reform is brought about. There are "branch" pharmacies existing in charge of young people who have scarcely passed a University examination, much less completed their course, and there are efficient men in charge of others, labouring under the ban of being unqualified because their certificate of competency has not been granted by the board, and before granting the amendment asked for by the Pharmaceutical Society of South Australia. The Government should see to it that the unqualified men get a fair show to become as independent as those who are complaining. Let the whole 164 members of the society be re-examined according to the present requirements of their board, and I would wager that not 25 per cent. of them would pass the test.

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### AN ADELAIDE DOCTOR.

#### GREAT SUCCESS IN EDINBURGH. RECEIVES A RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP.

Dr. Harold Whitridge Davies, son of Professor Harold Davies, who gained his degrees in Medicine and Surgery at Adelaide University in 1917, some time ago went to Edinburgh to carry out research work under Professor Meakins. He has just been the recipient of a high distinction as a result of the success which has attended his work at Edinburgh.

In a letter from him and received by his mother last mail he says:—"I have been officially appointed a Fellow under the Rockefeller Foundation. I leave Edinburgh for New York on September 22, and will probably work in the hospital of the Rockefeller Institute for six months, then hope to go to Philadelphia and the Mayo Clinic for a few months each. It is hard to realise that I have already had four years of research work with the best of men and have sixteen original papers as well as experience in post-graduate teaching to my credit. I shall be very busy until I leave Edinburgh, owing to International Physiological Congress and with our book and various papers to finish, post-graduate lectures to be prepared and delivered and a hundred and one other things to arrange before leaving."

The Rockefeller Foundation, which is very wealthy, some time ago gave the University College, London, large sums of money to build a hospital, and to provide other equipment, because they have full-time clinical teachers and research workers.

Dr. H. Whitridge Davies (eldest son of Professor Harold Davies, of the Adelaide University), who for the last four years has been doing research and post-graduate work at Oxford and more recently at Edinburgh, has been appointed a Fellow of the Rockefeller Institute. Dr. Davies will leave Edinburgh at the end of September, and will proceed to New York, where he will work for six months in the Hospital of the Rockefeller Institute. After that he will probably go on to Mayo Clinic at Rochester, N.Y., for further research work.

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### INTER-UNIVERSITY DEBATES.

#### CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS.

Sydney, August 17.

The Queensland team which will compete at the inter-Universities debate in Adelaide will find itself rather unpopular, for it has chosen a trouble-inviting subject for debate. In August 23 Queensland will affirm, "That the Northern Territory should be handed over to Japan in return for the payment of our national debt." Adelaide will oppose this.

On August 25 Melbourne will affirm, "That Governments are justified in entering into competition with private enterprise." Sydney will oppose it.

On August 27 a debate between the two losers will be on the subject, "That the influence of modern journalism is pernicious."

On August 29 the final debate will take place between the winners of the first two debates on the subject, "That the attitude of France in international affairs is to be deplored."

#### Great Interest Displayed.

During the coming fortnight, the inter-University debates are to be held at the Prince of Wales Theatre, University, North-terrace, when teams from Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide will compete for the championship. Considerable interest is being displayed in the University circles in the results of the debates. Last year Melbourne defeated Sydney and Adelaide, but the Adelaide team are confident of reversing this position this year.

Messrs. Kierwaldt, McCabe, and Adams are the members of the Adelaide team. Amongst the prominent gentlemen who have consented to act as adjudicators in these debates are Professors Darnley Naylor and Coleman Phillipson, Dr. Heaton, and Messrs. A. W. Piper, K.C., and G. McRitchie. Great public interest was shown in Melbourne last year in connection with these debates, and it is expected that the attendances in Adelaide this year will be equally as large. Tickets are procurable at the University office, North-terrace, and from the secretary, Workers' Educational Association, North-terrace. As the seating accommodation at the Prince of Wales Theatre is limited, it is advisable that those who are desirous of attending these debates should obtain their tickets at an early date.

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### INTER-VARSITY DEBATES.

During the coming fortnight inter-Varsity debates are to be held at the Prince of Wales Theatre, University of Adelaide. Teams from Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide will compete for the championship. Considerable interest is being displayed in the University circles regarding the results of the competition. Last year Melbourne won, defeating Sydney and Adelaide, but the Adelaide team are confident of reversing this position this year. On August 23 Queensland will meet Adelaide on the subject, "That the Northern Territory be handed over to Japan, in exchange for the payment of our national debt." On August 25 the Sydney representatives will engage Melbourne on

the proposition "That Governments are justified in competing with private trading enterprises," and on Monday, August 27, the losers of the first two debates will meet and discuss the topic, "That the influence of modern journalism is pernicious." On Tuesday, August 28, the winners of the first two debates will discuss the question "Whether the action of the French in the Ruhr is justifiable or not." Messrs. Kierwaldt, McCabe, and Adams will be the members of the Adelaide team. Among those who have consented to act as adjudicators in these debates are Professors Darnley Naylor and Coleman Phillipson, Dr. Heaton, and Messrs. A. W. Piper, K.C., and G. McRitchie. Great public interest was shown in Melbourne last year in connection with these debates, and it is expected that the attendances in Adelaide this year will be equally large. Owing to the heavy expenditure involved in teams coming from Queensland and the other States, a charge of 2/6, which will cover the whole course of debates, will be made to meet such expense. Tickets are procurable at the University office, North-terrace, and from the secretary of the Workers' Educational Association, North-terrace. As the seating accommodation at the Prince of Wales Theatre is limited, it is advisable that persons desiring to attend the debates should obtain their tickets at an early date.

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### OAKLANDS ESTATE.

#### PROPOSED NATIONAL RESERVE.

A meeting to consider the conversion of a portion of Oaklands Estate, which adjoins the Willunga Railway line, near Ascot Park, into a national reserve, was held in the Brighton Town Hall on Thursday night. The Mayor of Brighton (Mr. Anohency, M.P.), who occupied the chair, stated that part of the delightful Oaklands park should be set aside for coming generations. He had urged the Premier (Sir Henry Barwell) to move in the matter. The park lands of Brighton were in the proportion of only one acre to each 146 of the population, or 19½ acres in all. The Marion Council heartily supported the project.

Mr. C. J. Coventry proposed, and Capt. S. A. White seconded—"That it is desirable to set aside a portion of the Oaklands Estate for national purposes." Mr. Coventry said it was a trust for the present generation to hand on to the future.

Capt. White stated that to cut down the grand old trees on the estate which had stood for hundreds of years would be an irreparable crime. No money would be lost through the purchase of an area, and the retention of the natural beauties of Oaklands would be a gain to the people of the State as a whole.

The proposal was adopted. Mr. Hugh Corbin, Lecturer in Forestry at the Adelaide University, stated that the red gum was gradually disappearing from Australia. Oaklands Estate was one of the few places where they still existed.

Capt. Earle said that there was an urgent necessity for open spaces in towns. A triangular piece of land of 18 acres (which included most of the trees) had been offered by the owners, and, alternatively pieces of 9, 3, and 2 acres. Any one of those areas would give facilities for children's playgrounds.

After several speeches in support of the project, a committee of nine was formed to go into the details of the scheme. It was decided to send a deputation to the Government to urge the acquisition of the land as a public reserve.

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### UNQUALIFIED CHEMISTS.

From "INTERESTED":—I read in The Register of Saturday of a deputation to the Government from the Pharmaceutical Society of South Australia in regard to unqualified chemists, and I note the reference made to "the strenuous apprenticeship, &c." of those taking up the profession. Every word of this is true; but it does not go far enough. A boy who is indentured to a chemist usually begins his apprenticeship by paying a premium. He then begins his four years. The first year he is paid 10/ a week, the second 15/, and the third £1, and the fourth 25/ a week. He has a fortnight's holiday annually, and time off for lectures, which cannot be taken at night, though usually this is done. He has very high lecture fees to pay, expensive books to provide, and the appearance of a professional man to maintain. He begins work daily for his employer at 8.30 a.m., and works until 6 p.m., meal hours excepted; two evenings also until 9 o'clock, and every alternate holiday, Saturday, and Sunday, usually week-end hours. He begins work for himself, mentally, at 8 p.m., if early, but more often 10 p.m., and works until 1 or 2 o'clock next morning. The University exams. are taken with some hope of suc-