

NEW ROLE FOR UNIVERSITY

If the keynote of national greatness be education, and there can be no reasonable doubt about it, then there is abundant ground for gratification in the manner in which it was sounded at the recent conference of the Chambers of Commerce of Australia in Adelaide.

The proposition was advanced by the Rev. K. J. F. Bickersteth that there was need of close understanding between the head masters of public schools and such bodies as the Associated Chambers of Commerce, because no small proportion of the boys who passed through the schools entered upon a commercial career.

Eventually that means the adoption of what is becoming more and more the dominant principle in the system of educating and training the young, and that is that the school period should not be devoted wholly to the absorption of the details of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but should be allied to lessons in the practical application of all knowledge to the necessities of life and the work-a-day world.

No proper accomplishment of this aim can be secured unless there is a sympathetic collaboration between such bodies as the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Manufactures, and the University, the former bodies indicating the avenues along which education, training, and research may develop commerce and industry, and the latter providing the necessary courses to obtain those objects. In America the position has been recognised, and large sums have been spent by the commercial and manufacturing interests to promote education along such lines and for special industrial research work.

This must make for the betterment of the people so equipped and finally lead to their supremacy in competition with other nations whose skill and educational development have not reached so high a standard.

At the back of these advantages is the claim which was also voiced at conference for the prolongation of the school-going period. That this is not such a "bogey" as it may seem was shown by the citing of the case of a boy who remained at school until he was 19, and then in one year outstripped a lad whose educational career had closed three years earlier. The extension of the years devoted to education not only assist in the development of character, but also in teaching how to handle men, two of the greatest factors in success either in industrial or commercial life.

For the promotion of this higher attainment in the realm of commerce it was suggested that a central committee be formed in each State, representing the Chamber of Commerce and head masters of departmental and other schools, to decide upon the leaving age, the syllabus, and other kindred matters. If representatives of the Chambers of Manufactures be added to the list the committee should have in it the elements for bringing the power and influence of the University to the commercial and manufacturing arenas of Australia.

Scientific principles are just as applicable to those branches of the world's activities as to the professions of medicine, engineering, and law, and there are irresistible reasons for the invasion of this new field by the University.

MYSTERIOUS MORTALITY AMONG CATTLE.

CAUSE BEING INVESTIGATED.

A mysterious malady among cattle in the southern portion of the Northern Territory will be investigated by a professor of botany and a veterinary surgeon.

For some months cattle being travelled over the belt of country north of the Alice River, in the Northern Territory, have suffered from a mysterious malady which has in many instances proved fatal. Drovers whose mobs have been affected held the opinion that the consumption of a poisonous plant, which they have so far failed to identify, is responsible for the mortality among their cattle. Several specimens of suspected plants have been sent down to Adelaide, where they have been investigated by the Government veterinary officers attached to the Stock and Brands Department, and by Professor Osborne (Professor of Botany at the Adelaide University). Realising the necessity for a thorough enquiry, the Minister for Home and Territories (Senator Pearce) recently arranged for Professor A. J. Ewart (Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne) to visit the area in question, and in conjunction with Captain Bishop (Government veterinary surgeon in the Northern Territory) to carry out such investigations. Professor Ewart, who arrived in Adelaide by the express from Melbourne on Wednesday, left by train for Oodnadatta yesterday, en route for Taylor's Crossing (200 miles north of Adelaide Springs), where he will be joined by Captain Bishop, who is travelling down from Darwin. Professor Ewart expects to be away about three months, and on his return will submit a report to the Department of Home and Territories.

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EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

From "EDUCATION".—The Hon. H. A. L. Fisher (former President of the Board of Education of England and Wales) endorses the recommendation that use should be made of the dramatic instinct and faculty in teaching English and the development of the powers of thought and language. Vide the official report. It appears that the primary schools of Western Australia have adopted the British recommendation. It would be of service if "Unlooke," in Education, would tell us how the use of drama stands as regards our primary schools in South Australia, and if he could give a little information as regards the other States as to the use of drama in their primary schools. He is evidently an able and experienced teacher. According to the official English report, the results of appeal to the dramatic impulse in the education of children are amazing. It is a pity that our University has no lecturer on education. If we had it might help in the proper spending of money on schools.

MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

Application to Social Problems

Recent reports in the press of the conference on social efficiency have brought under the notice of the South Australian public the fact that our Governments have remained with their backs toward modern psychological research and the part that it is playing in helping to solve many educational and social problems (writes Alexander Leslie).

Though Australians may not respect everything that America and Continental countries do, we are sufficiently liberal-minded to realise that there is much to be learned from these countries in the matter of the application of psychology to education and industry.

In America the work of Terman, in England that of Binet, in France that of Binet, and in Italy the Tréves-Saffioti tests are all illustrations of the manner in which psychology is being used to pick out ability from mediocrity, with the idea of making those possessed of the former the directors of the State and of industry, and those of the latter the "hewers of wood and carriers of water."

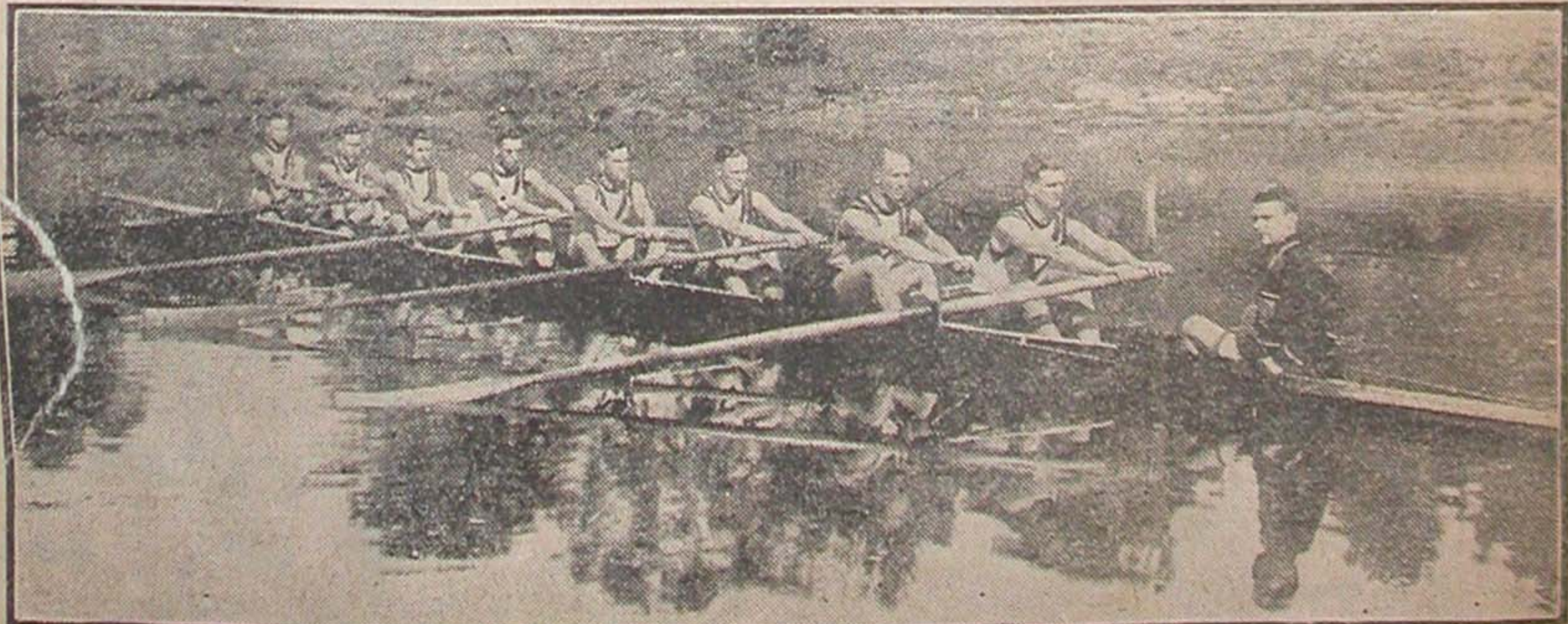
Hack men must do hack work, and though Australian democratic spirit may at first object to government by ability instead of by mediocrity, in the long run we have no doubt that her better instincts will lead the Commonwealth to plump for ability every time.

In Sydney the New South Wales Government has appointed a psychologist, Sir John MacPherson, to help the Government in deciding whether criminals need psychological or punitive treatment, and for some years such work has been done in one or other of the British gaols with excellent results.

Why cannot South Australia give a similar trial? No harm can be

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THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY CREW.



M. L. Formby (bow), A. J. S. Adams (2), R. C. McKinnon (3), P. A. Read (4), G. Tassie (5), J. S. Lord (6), K. H. Boykett (7), L. C. Maiden (str.), Ian Hamilton (cox).