

had to pay for their own training. The answer was that the teachers were as necessary to the safety of the land as soldiers, and that the teaching profession did not afford the prizes that would induce any one to go for either of the other professions. (Applause.) The state would have as a result of the present system superior culture and efficiency in its teachers, and a corresponding improvement and advancement in the progress and intelligence of the children. He must say a word of acknowledgment to the head masters and seniors for the unselfish and self-denying assistance they had given to the movement. They had nothing to gain by having a class of teachers with superior advantages to succeed them. In addition to what they had done for the system, the University had the satisfaction of seeing masters and seniors sitting with their younger brethren at the feet of the professors. Many of them in the country had no hope of obtaining the degree, but they had got the fire of the work, and did their utmost to take the subjects which the students at the University were being taught. Professor Mitchell in a lecture last year said men and women were the most valuable asset to the state, and education its most important industry. He would borrow an illustration of that fact from Professor Rein. No nation had shown a greater change between the beginning and end of the nineteenth century than Germany. At the beginning that empire was dismembered, divided, and impotent. To-day it was the foremost nation on the Continent of Europe. All that became possible from the quiet, unobtrusive work in her schools. There the force was nourished; there the ground was prepared for success; there the weapon was forged with which the battle of progress was won. Surely that was a sufficient object lesson for Australia, at the beginning of a great Commonwealth, of the value and necessity of a complete system of education. (Applause.)

The Minister of Education (Hon. J. H. Gordon), received with applause, said as the Minister controlling education he was chiefly responsible for certain economies which had been brought about by the new regulations, and which would no doubt be the subject of a good deal of criticism during the sittings of the conference. He thought they would expect him to say something upon the subject. (Applause.) He would ask them to remember one or two facts. Comparisons of the salaries of the teachers with the salaries paid in the other states was for several reasons no guide for them in South Australia. As a matter of fact, speaking generally, the position of the South Australian teacher was as good as it was in most of the other states, and statements made to the contrary were largely inaccurate. He would read then the following comparison of the salaries in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. In Victoria teachers of schools over \$50 average attendance began at £358 and could rise to £432. In South Australia the teachers of such a school began at £370 and could rise to £420. In Victoria teachers of schools with an average of 500 to 800 began at £286, and could rise to £349. The teacher of a school in South Australia with an average attendance of 500 and running up to 725 began at £280, and could rise to £370, which was a higher maximum salary. In Victoria teachers of schools from 200 to 500 began at £235, and could rise to £277; with them teachers of schools from 200 to 500 began at £233, and could rise to £280—again a higher maximum. In Victoria teachers of schools with an attendance of 75 to 200 began at £195, and could rise to £225; with them teachers of schools with an average attendance of 60 up to 200 began at £180, and could rise to £220; a higher maximum. In Victoria teachers of schools with an average attendance of 35 to 75 began at £141, and could rise to £154. In South Australia teachers of schools with an average attendance of 35 to 60 began at £140, and could rise to £180, a much higher maximum. In Victoria teachers of schools with an average attendance of 20 to 35 began at £123, and could rise to £133; with us they would begin at £120, and could rise to £140, again a higher maximum. For schools under an average attendance of 20 Victoria paid £112 per annum, but the teachers of these schools were all certificated teachers. Our provisional schools answered to this class, and we paid from £52 to £120, a higher maximum though a lower average; but many of our provisional teachers were mere amateurs. These comparisons were not vitiated by the fact that our schools were graded differently to those in Victoria. In Victoria, for instance, they had only one class of school between 200 and 500 average attendance; whereas we had three classes. The extras earned by the 4,500 teachers in Victoria only amounted to £2,412 last year. It had been said that in Victoria the salaries were supplemented by extras, but according to Mr. Coghlan the sum total of their extras only amounted to £2,412 in 1901-2, or about £1 per head per teacher per annum. But even if South Australian teachers were, as compared with those in the great colony of New South Wales and elsewhere, not so well paid, they must remember that with one exception, viz., Queensland, South Australia was the most heavily taxed state in Australia. Some of the figures were as follows:—National debt of New South Wales equalled £49 10/5 per head of population; annual interest per head, £1 15/4. Victoria, debt, £41 15/5 per head; interest, £1 11/3. South Australia, debt, £72 11/3 per head; interest, £2 15/9. Bound as we were by this enormous debt it would be madness for us to measure our establishments by those of our richer and more lightly taxed neighbours. The financial position of South Australia compelled them to pay smaller salaries in every branch of the public service than were paid in the other states, and he had no hesitation in saying that the disparity, if any disparity existed, was smaller in the case of the Education Department than in any other department of the Government. Those who like himself knew something of the trend of politics must know that a strong force had been gathering against the free education system, on the ground that its cost was growing at a rate which the country could not afford to pay. As compared with the cost per child in average attendance in 1877-8 the cost had gone up in 1901-2 by 5-2 per child, unless something had been done and we were—because Parliament might upset the regulations—

(Applause)—to check the increase of the cost of state education, this antagonistic force would have gathered strength, and might have resulted in a radical alteration in the existing scholastic system by less sympathetic hands. ("No.") As it was, our free education system remained unimpaired, and long might it continue so, while those who were prepared to attack it would be mollified by the economies which had been made. Indeed, most of them were not enemies of the system of free education at all, they simply took the position that the people of the state could not bear the increasing taxation which the rising cost of education involved. The first thing folk have to do is to live. The chief object in life of every organic being is to procure food. Education played a secondary place in the list of human necessities, and must always give way to the more imperative wants. When therefore taxation for education presses, as in this state it threatened to press, too hardly upon actual means of living the pressure must be relieved and the cost of education be reduced. (Murmurs of dissent.) To reduce the cost of an established scholastic system without injuring the system was a difficult task; but he believed the new regulations had accomplished it. ("No.") To reduce the emoluments of those engaged in any service without creating some dissatisfaction, he might almost say without inflicting hardship, was impossible. The new regulations had created some dissatisfaction, and had involved from some points of view hardship upon those who relied upon a continuance of the regulations under which they entered the service. He was sorry for their disappointment. He could only say that he conscientiously believed that in the interests of the education system the economies were necessary, and that the Government had effected them in what they believed to be the best way in the interests, not of the individual teacher—for the interests of the individual were necessarily subordinate—but in the interests of the great system which it was their duty to maintain. He did not think the time would ever come when the taxpayer of South Australia would not consider free education a good investment or be unwilling to pay for it to the utmost limit of his ability. (Applause.) The taxpayer must have the money to invest. Every member of the Government was prepared to advocate free education to the highest point of solicitation and persuasion. The importance of the general education of the people as a necessary factor in national

prosperity was now admitted in every civilized country, and in nearly every civilized country it was now admitted to be the duty of the state to educate its citizens. A striking instance of the value of national education was supplied by the report of Mr. Moseley's commission of investigation into the question of the supremacy of America in the mechanical arts. The commission placed as their first reason why America was beating England the fact that the education of the American people was superior to that of the people of England. The science of education was now taught in innumerable able works, and nothing new to be said about it had come to his mind. But there were two things which he would like to impress upon teachers. The first was the urgent necessity for directing the minds of our children towards the advantage of country life as compared with life in the cities. (Hear, hear.) "No question of the day," said Ryder Haggard, lecturing on May 8, "is more neglected, and thrust aside than that of the flocking of England's population from the fields to the cities, and yet none is more important. It means that the character of the race is changing; it means that their physique is deteriorating; it means that fewer men of the best class are available for the purposes of national defence; it means the crowding together of vast hordes of people, who, at the first breath of panic or of serious depression in trade will cease to be able to earn their livelihood, and will have to be supported and controlled." (Hear, hear.) Another eminent writer said:—"The fact seems to me sufficiently demonstrated that the cultivation of the soil is the despised child of our civilization. It hardly takes one forward stride where manufactures take a hundred. The only progress realized in the production of food for mankind during several centuries is the introduction of the potato into Europe, which makes it possible for the operative, the proletariat, to imagine that his hunger is satisfied, when at the same time his body is slowly starving to death for want of proper nutriment; while it enables the capitalist to screw down the wages of his employes to the lowest possible point. Fruit and vegetable gardens, mushroom beds, show us what a wealth of provisions can be produced on the tiniest scrap of ground. Experience teaches us that man's labour, as a general thing, can nowhere be employed in a more lucrative way than in agriculture. If a man should work over his field with the shovel and spade instead of the plough, he would find that a plot of ground of incredibly small size would be sufficient to support him. But mankind is suffering for want of food, provisions are growing more and more expensive, and the wages-receiver must work an increased number of hours each day to get enough to eat. Nature shows man that he cannot live apart from her, that he requires the field as the fish require water. Man recognises that he sinks lower and lower when he forsakes the soil, that the farmer is the only one who remains healthy and strong, while the city saps the very marrow in the bones of its inhabitants, rendering them unfruitful and liable to disease, so that each family absolutely rots out in two or three generations. The city would become in a hundred years an enormous cemetery, without a single living being within its walls, if it were not for the fact that there is a constant influx of people from the country to fill up the ranks left vacant by death. In spite of their knowledge and appreciation of these facts, men continue to abandon the fruitful fields and flock to the cities; to tear themselves away from life and throw themselves into the arms of death." This great lesson could not be too often told to our children, and only the very youngest would fail to understand it. (Hear, hear.) It was vitally necessary to be taught in Australia, where our cities were far too big, and where the unfortunate conditions

which the writers he had quoted had described, were beginning to prevail. (Applause.) The second thing to which he wished to refer was the necessity for directing the minds of the older children in our schools towards their duty as members of the democracy. "The public education of a great democratic people (says Professor Butler) has other aims to fulfil than the extension of scientific knowledge, or the development of literary culture. It must prepare for intelligent citizenship. If our education be sound, if it lay due emphasis on individual responsibility for social and political progress, if it counteract the anarchistic tendencies, that grow out of selfishness and greed, then we may cease to have any doubts as to the perpetuity and integrity of our institutions." (Applause.) How best to inspire the scholar old enough to understand the lesson with the idea of his duties and his privileges as a citizen must be left to the genius of the teacher; but it could and should be done. A good beginning might for instance be made by exposing the fallacy of the cry "Liberty, equality, and fraternity," as had been pointed out by more than one publicist, unrestricted liberty and perfect equality were not compatible. Liberty led to inequality, owing to the natural differences of capacity and application among men. While equality in any economic sense was attainable only by the suppression of some degree of liberty in order that directly or indirectly the strong arm of the state may be able to hold back the precocious and push forward the sluggish. (Applause.) Our constitutional system—which was in effect the rule of public opinion—made each individual opinion a fact in the final conclusions of legislation. How important it was, then, that each boy and girl should acquire an intelligent notion of what our institutions really meant, and of their individual responsibility relative thereto. (Applause.) In conclusion he assured the Teachers' Union of his sympathy with its aims, and wished the institution every prosperity. (Applause.)

Mr. W. J. Sowden, who was received with applause, said:—In rising to address the brilliant audience he felt affected by two serious disadvantages. He was conscious that the clock was ticking insistently towards tramcar time, and also that he immediately followed two of the most eminent of Australian orators, who had spoken with characteristic grace on a subject peculiarly their own. In these circumstances it was desirable that his course should deviate somewhat from theirs, and therefore he should not attempt to add to the glowing eulogy of education and of educational systems which had already been heard. Nor should he presume to teach the teachers their business. He wished, however, to try to deal in outline with the relations between the teachers and the public whom they so zealously served; and if incidentally one effect of such a reference should be to infuse fresh courage and to put new heart into them no one would be better satisfied than himself. The policy usually adopted towards the teachers by public men was to administer honey to them on festive occasions, and to dose them with caustic during the rest of the year. That policy might be improved upon. (Hear, hear.) He believed the teachers lacked public recognition, and he was not sure that that was not the result of free education, because when people did not have to pay for a thing directly they did not appreciate it. He had been informed that the union intended to dabble in party politics, with the view of getting better results. The union or any other association that touched party politics was like the man who went to law about an oyster—he got the shell and the lawyer the fish. (Laughter.) In all seriousness he urged them not to touch party politics. (Hear, hear.) Though he disclaimed any right to attempt to teach the teachers, yet he might plead the privilege of being able to speak with some authority regarding their work. Once upon a time he was a pupil teacher himself. He tried that profession as an experiment because he had been told that he was not bad enough to make a successful lawyer, but too wicked to be a clergyman. (Laughter.) He soon discovered that he could not be a capable teacher either, and so he became what he was. (Laughter.) Some people might say that he declined to carry the bricks of teaching, and yet preferred to bear the building stones of journalism. That might be true, but his view was that there was much more of deadly sameness—much more of dull monotony—in the bricks than in the building stones. The teacher's life was lonely and introspective, even though he might mingle daily with thousands. His whole business depended entirely upon himself. (Hear, hear.) In it no labour-saving machinery could be effectively used, though he had certainly seen specifications of a wholesale canning machine by which a dozen boys at a time could be operated upon with complete satisfaction to all excepting the lads themselves, and he had heard of a calculating machine into one end of which an algebraic problem might be put, with a certainty that the answer would emerge at the other end. (Laughter.) He rejection of the teaching profession was influenced by several considerations. The first of those affected the teacher in the abstract. The responsibility of the position alarmed him. He had read that in China a youth who had killed his father was beheaded, and his schoolmaster was also decapitated, on the ground that if he had taught the lad properly he would never have been a criminal. That was probably an exaggeration, but it was very suggestive—so much depended upon the teacher. The smile of the forest and the gardener had recently been applied to the teaching profession, and one thought that deeply impressed him was this—that a gardener who had the care of a tree during

its first three or four years of active life inevitably made or marred that tree. If it were crooked when it left his hands it would always remain crooked; it would never overcome the initial warp. When he heard enthusiastic laudations of the education system it seemed to him necessary to insist upon the proposition that the teacher was at least as important as the system itself. The finest organ might emit

nothing better than a jargon of discords if its keys should be manipulated by a clumsy performer. A good engineer could get more out of a bad engine than a bad engineer could get out of a good engine. Man power and woman power would always be the dominant forces, and therefore the forces to be reckoned with and encouraged and honoured. (Applause.) From contemplation of the teacher in the abstract he turned to meditation upon the teacher in the concrete—the teacher as he was expected to be, as he ought to be, and as he was. His ideals must be high, because, with the exception of a few members of his profession, no man or woman could be truly said to devote his life to the tuition of the young, actuated thereto by any desire to make money out of the business. No teacher who undertook the work merely as an avocation could ever really succeed in it. He must regard it as a vocation. He must be born to it—not made for it. The perfect teacher had not yet been born, nor would the world ever see him until angels wore frock coats and muslin costumes and picture hats; but the principle still remained that the ideal teacher must be as the ideal poet. They could not turn him out by a mere apprenticeship. Some men had a capacity for absorbing learning, but they were like a reservoir without reticulation—they could not give off what they received. When they got a man or a woman with the power to take in knowledge and afterwards to disseminate it among the rising generation they had the man or woman with the teaching genius, and they could not reward him or her too highly. (Applause.) Many things should be taken into account in determining the payment and treatment due to a teacher. They should consider, first of all, the effects of the occupation upon physique. Teaching took a great deal out of the teacher. Doctors had assured him that among men of corresponding ages teachers had more than almost any other of the grey-haired, the no-haired—(laughter)—and the nerve-strained. The same authorities had informed him that many young girls had broken down hopelessly, and had been converted into mere bundles of nerves by the pressure on heart and brain involved in preparation for teachers' examinations; and such pressure was only introductory to that experienced after the actual school work was begun for probably at least as much was done by the teachers after the schoolhouse had been closed as during the time in which it was open. It was brain-racking work, too, especially when performed in ill-ventilated and overcrowded buildings. (Hear, hear.) But the physical and the intellectual qualities demanded of the teacher were inconsiderable when compared with the moral and social attainments required of him, especially in the country districts. (Hear, hear.) In the town in which he lived he was expected to unite the versatility of an Admirable Crichton with the organizing faculties of a Napoleon or a modern major-general, the meekness of a Moses, and the patience of a Job. (Laughter.) In fact, he must be not a little lower, but much higher than the other angels. The cry of the children was "Teacher does so and so, and therefore it is right." He lived perpetually under a limelight focussed on one of Sam Weller's million times magnifying glasses. (Applause.) He had to keep up appearances, but if he dressed too well he was condemned as a fop; and if he did not dress well enough he was derided as a slob. If he gave effect to St. Paul's advice to Timothy, he was apt to be regarded by some folk as a son of Belial. If he abstained altogether from drinking he was sneered at as a bigot, an anchorite, and an ascetic. If he did not smoke tobacco, he was deemed unsociable in some quarters. If he did smoke tobacco, he was imitated by his scholars with bits of cane or pipefuls of tea leaves, and condemned by their parents for being the cause of their depravity. He was expected to be able to dance, so as to be a model of deportment; and he was also expected not to be able to dance by those who deemed dancing to be a frivolous pastime and one of the darling devices of the enemy of souls. (Laughter.) If he was a member of one church, he was sometimes looked at askance by the members of other churches; and if he was not a member of any church at all he was considered to be a man to be avoided by the righteous. (Applause.) "Don't talk to me," said an indignant critic some time ago, referring to a local teacher, "that man is on the broad road to destruction. I heard him singing 'Kathleen Mavourneen' last Sunday night." (Laughter.) The teachers' character needed to have as many facets as a diamond. He was expected to be father, mother, spiritual guide, and even nurse to his scholars. Some parents wanted the teacher to act as a thrashing machine to correct their children for deeds done outside the school; and others wished to take his life if he chastized theirs. Some desired that he should act as nursery governess to the infants who were sent to school to be out of the way at home. Other parents were anxious that he should usurp the functions of the clergyman as well as their own; and everywhere was apparent a tendency to shunt responsibility from the shoulders which should bear it, and to place it on those of the teacher. (Applause.) More and more work had been, and was being, thrust upon him, and he ventured to put to the legislators and the electors of the country the question whether his pay and other incentives to the zealous performance of duties of such momentous importance to the welfare of the community were not being unreasonably diminished. (Applause.) What was the prospect to attract young men and young women to the profession? It was inspiring to talk of ideals. By all means let the admirers of the education system hitch their wagon to the stars; but they should not forget that the wheels of the wagon needed lubricating, and that the drivers of it required bread and butter. Were they doing all that ought to be done for the teachers? If so, why were so many of them being attracted to Western Australia and the other states, after having been trained in South Australia? (Applause.) Was that training given purely in a missionary spirit for the benefit of our neighbours. If those teachers were good