

and where they have better chances of success. Besides, this greater variety of choice gives men more opportunities of making the best of themselves. (Cheers.)

In moving a vote of thanks to Sir Langdon Bonython, Mr. C. B. Whittles, President of the Union, stated that it would be noticed that a change had taken place from the old classical kind of education which was calculated to make the boys clerks, teachers, and professional men, and the girls typewriters and governesses. There had been an undoubted disinclination to take up everyday life. He thought that in moving a vote of thanks to Sir Langdon they would do well and go further, and pass a resolution that the Conference as a body should take up the subjects of technical education and domestic economy, and do their best to push the matter on.

Mr. J. Harry, in seconding, said the Government, the Press, and the Education Department had a responsibility in the matter of technical education to save young people from idle lives. Something must be done to bridge the gap between school days and manhood. The teachers had been continually under obligation to Sir Langdon Bonython. (Cheers.)

The Chairman responded in a few words.

#### THE WORK OF THE TEACHER.

Inspector Burgan chose as the subject of his address the work of the teacher, tracing the growth of the movement to educate the masses of the people, especially during the reign of Queen Victoria. He went on:—A great struggle has been carried on during the whole of this century, and to-day those who have worked in the cause of education can congratulate themselves, and point with pride to the tokens of a moral victory, the effects of which are to be seen in the increasing civilization and growing strength of the British nation. (Cheers.) The signs of the times, too, point to further progress. People in all civilized countries are undoubtedly becoming more and more fully alive to the fact that for a nation to be ignorant is to be degraded, to be morally and intellectually low down in the scale, and to take an inferior position as regards industry, trade, commerce, and political power and influence. Hence it is that all classes, from artisan to peer, who are interested in the progress of industrial pursuits, scientific discoveries, the progress of art, the increase of trade and commerce, and the building up in any way of the national wealth, all vie with each other, and strive to bring about educational reforms that only visionaries of the most transcendental type would have dreamt of a short decade or two ago. During the Victorian period, too, we have noted with pleasure that while the idea has been steadily and persistently gaining ground that all classes of the community should have the fullest opportunities and the best facilities that can be obtained for the education of the rising generation, there has also been growing most surely the belief that if national education is to succeed so as to do for the people the utmost that it is capable of doing, teachers must be more carefully trained, and better equipped for the services they have to perform. Teachers of the type satirised by Dickens in "Nicholas Nickleby" must give place to men of the right stamp, having true ideas of what education is, and possessing those powers of mind and body which will enable them to do their work with the greatest efficiency. Turning our attention for a moment to this colony, we find that up to the year 1875, when the Council of Education was formed, with our late esteemed and beloved chief, Mr. J. A. Hartley, as its President, the state of education, although improving, was not by any means satisfactory. With characteristic energy, enthusiasm, and wonderful practical knowledge and skill, Mr. Hartley set to work to create a new order of things, and on every hand we have testimony from those able to judge that he has left us a heritage to be proud of. (Loud cheers.) It is for you who have to do the work in our schools so to identify your scholars with his plans and methods as to show the world their full value. Whatever our system may be, we have to depend on you to give full effect to it, for it is only by your being in full sympathy with it, and striving with resolution, energy, and skill to make it a success, that it will live and be cherished by the people. The introduction of our system necessarily made great demands on all of you who were then in the service. You nobly responded and adapted yourselves rapidly to new conditions, and in doing so you gave ample proof of ability and earnestness. The excellent state of our schools at the present day is a flattering tribute to the genius and memory of our late Inspector-General of Schools, and, further, it is a convincing proof of your zeal, industry, conscientiousness, and skill. There is, however, much still to be done to give full effect to all Mr. Hartley's plans and ideas. I have every confidence, however, that there will be no effort wanting on your part to secure the consummation of all his ardent hopes and desires. Your work is highly complex in character. Briefly summarized, you have to develop the intellectual faculties, to store the mind with knowledge, to form character, and generally to prepare the child for active participation in all the varied duties of life. To do all this well needs talent of no mean order. A trained and cultured mind, sound judgment, great tact and skill in management, a fine temper, and good physical powers are required. Then, if you would succeed, you must always keep in view the co-ordination of the various parts of your work, and see that at each stage there is no diminution of attention to every part, so that the result may be the perfect embodiment of your ideas and efforts. It often happens that neither children nor teachers succeed as they would wish, and the cause of the failure is not detected. The first steps are the most important, and in education especially they often determine the condition of the child for life. The importance and value of infant training, therefore, leads me to say that the first stage in elementary teaching needs the utmost care, the highest skill, and the most earnest and most devoted attention. We know that there are certain latent powers in the mind of the child which can only be brought to perfection by use, and our aim

should be to call these powers into action in such a way as to bring about the full development of every faculty. As the child's mind develops mental pabulum will have to be supplied, and the quantity and quality of it should be determined by the teacher, who should know so much of the child's power and capacity as to enable him to gauge accurately what is required. Great skill and caution are needed here, for on the one hand the wrong kind of food or a deficiency of it will dwarf the mind; while on the other hand an excess will lead to non-assimilation or mental dyspepsia. The happy mean is the course to be adopted. I do not intend to give specific instruction to you on matters of method, but in all your teaching there must be intelligence and thoroughness, a unity of design and purpose; a wise use of means to attain the desired aim; the formation of good mental and moral habits, which will give directive power to knowledge, and make life a pleasure and a blessing. Now, to obtain the highest and best results, there must be a bond of sympathy between the teacher and the child, which should never be broken by any act of the teacher. (Cheers.) The child should look upon the teacher as his best friend and guide, and there should be the happiest relations between them. These happy relations are sometimes disturbed, I think, in a way that they ought not to be. One of the great worries of a teacher is truancy, and he adopts all sorts of plans to cure it. There is one method, however, which does not commend itself to me, and that is the infliction by the teacher of corporal punishment. The responsibility for the child's attendance at school rests on the parents. The teacher's duty and responsibility begin when the child comes under his care. If, then, a child has such a rooted dislike to school as to constantly play truant, I fail

to see how punishment by the teacher will lead him to look with increased favour on what he dislikes. If punishment must be inflicted, let it be given by the parent. In connection with this matter, I would urge that parents should be consulted and taken into the confidence of teachers. By this means much valuable assistance should be obtained, and the work of the school should be done with greater ease and with more pleasure and profit to all concerned. Many of the ills incidental to school life would thus be easily avoided—the child's life would be happier, the teacher's temper would not be so often tried and ruffled, and the whole work of the school would be done with less expenditure of energy, less worry, and less anxiety. I know that efforts are being made to induce parents to join an association which shall give moral support and aid to teachers in their work, and I hope to see such an Association formed. "Visiting Day" has already shown us that parents do take great interest in the work of our schools, and I shall be glad to see their interest take the practical form which will lighten your labours and render them less onerous. One or two suggestions I should like to make. We have such excellent singing in our schools, and children take so much delight in it, that I think steps should be taken to form a Musical Association or Society, so that when school life is over they may continue the study and practice of music. Should we not also endeavour to form a public schools cadet corps, so that the boys who drill so well may have an opportunity of perfecting their physical training, and of becoming the nucleus of a strong defence force? (Loud cheers.)

On the motion of Mr. W. A. West, seconded by Mr. J. Lampe, and supported by Mr. Prisk, a vote of thanks was accorded to Inspector Burgan.

#### TRAINING OF YOUNG TEACHERS.

"The selection and training of young teachers" was the subject of a paper read by Mr. J. J. Burston, one of the Victorian delegates. He said:—"The four essentials of a good teacher are—1. Ability to impart knowledge, i.e., natural talent for teaching. 2. Power to control and command attention. 3. Presence, temperament, and physique. 4. A liberal education. The fact that the aspirant has successfully negotiated the sixth or highest standard of a State school ought to be quite a sufficient guarantee that his knowledge is immeasurably in advance of any instruction he will be expected to give during the first year or two of his apprenticeship, when he cannot fairly be called upon to manage a class higher than, say, the second or third standard. This arrangement would afford the examiner time to spend in the more profitable task of gauging the natural merits of the candidates, and here the teacher of the school, who has an intimate knowledge of the candidate, should invariably be consulted, with a view to making the best possible selection in the interest of the school and the department. By this means, and by this means only, will it be possible to avoid contracting occasional 'bad bargains,' which the State, as employers of teachers, is apt to make. It must not be concluded from what I have said that I join issue with those teachers who regard the pupil-teacher system as a failure and an evil. On the contrary, I have the fullest appreciation of their valuable services, and I regard them on the whole as the mainstay and backbone of all our large Victorian schools, where they form 75 per cent. of the staff. They are altogether inadequately paid, in view of the responsible duties which many of them are called upon to perform and of the extensive experience which many of them have gained. They are, in my opinion, worthy of salaries at least 50 per cent. in advance of that paid them at present; salaries ranging from £16 to £40 per annum in the case of females and £20 to £50 for males, not perhaps while going through their apprenticeship stage, but certainly when they have completed their course and have been placed in charge of the highest classes.

#### EDUCATION IN VICTORIA.

Mr. G. H. Carter, after expressing the appreciation of the visiting delegates, stated that it was a matter for congratulation that the South Australian Union was doing such excellent work, and they noted with great interest (mingled with regret that their own young people had not similar advantages) the splendid scheme which they had in view for the training of pupil

teachers. Since his last visit to Adelaide educational matters in Victoria had been greatly stirred. The question of the salaries of the public servants, and the classification of their work, had been enquired into by a Board, and a Royal Commission was at present engaged in enquiring into their system of instruction, with special reference to the introduction of kindergarten, hand-and-eye training, and manual work. There was a very strong feeling in Victoria that they should have more science teaching, and their Department of Education had recently issued what might be termed a tentative syllabus of new work. But they had an overcrowded programme of instruction already, and the members of their Union were of opinion that to add to it such new subjects as had been proposed, and at the same time to retain their system of payment by "results," would be unjust to the children. They had therefore been considering what subjects on their programme could be eliminated, or, at least, greatly curtailed, in order to make room for the new work. South Australian teachers would be able to give them most valuable information in this respect, because they knew well what their result system was, and how their present system compared with it, both with reference to the pupils and the teachers. They were in a position to tell them whether they were able to devote sufficient time to science without encroaching on that required for ordinary subjects, and also whether the introduction of hand-and-eye-training in the schools had realized all expectations with regard to its usefulness, and its adaptability to local conditions. They should return to Victoria with a store of information which would be of great benefit to their Union, and to the cause of education in Victoria. While they looked forward to federation with the strongest confidence, they looked still further to the time when the teachers of the different colonies, the "moulders of the nation" would work hand in hand for the general good, with the vast importance of their work recognised and thoroughly appreciated by the people, and when each succeeding generation, moulded by educationists whose whole souls had been in their work, should rise strong in body, liberal-minded, well-informed, and thoroughly unselfish.

Mr. P. Miller spoke of the conferences of Victorian teachers which had been held during the past twenty years, and the benefits derived from those gatherings. He looked forward to intercolonial congresses and a federation of the Unions.

Mr. R. W. Smith expressed his pleasure at seeing the union between the teachers and the University in South Australia. He alluded to the manual and domestic training started in Victoria. He had noticed that in South Australia a teacher was allowed to take up special subjects according to his taste. He concluded by a reference to the kindness they had all received since their arrival in the colony.

Mr. A. A. Wicksteed proposed that a vote of thanks should be tendered the visitors from Victoria for the interesting addresses which they had presented. He thought Mr. Burston's address might fairly be regarded as a testimony of wisdom to their late Inspector-General. (Hear, hear.) The motion was seconded by Mr. W. Bennett, and supported by Inspector Whitlam, and carried with acclamation.

A collection was made to purchase a wreath to place on the grave of the late Mr. J. A. Hartley, and the President was asked to convey the sympathy of the meeting to the widow.

A paper on arithmetic was read by Mr. Schroeder, in which many practical hints and instructions were conveyed to the teachers, and Mr. Schroeder was heartily thanked.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The first business at the afternoon session was the election of officers, which resulted as follows:—President, Mr. John Harry; Vice-Presidents (city), Mr. J. Donnell, (country), Mr. A. E. Lampe; Treasurer, Mr. R. J. Burnard; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. Charles Charlton; Minute Secretary, Mr. A. H. Neale; Assistant Secretary, Mr. M. F. Uren.

#### NOTICES OF MOTION.

The following notices of motion were discussed, and agreed upon:—

Proposed by Mr. Wainwright, and seconded by Mr. Nichol—"That the annual subscription to the Union be raised to 2s. per member."

Proposed by Mr. M. M. Maughan, and seconded by Mr. C. Charlton—"That a fund of £100 be raised for the purpose of making loans at low interest to teachers in temporary difficulties; such loans to be repaid in monthly instalments, and secured by orders on salary."

Proposed by Mrs. A. Francis, and seconded by Miss L. L. Symon—"That 'stitching' on the bands of garments be abolished; but that this subject be taught and examined in the same way as darning."

Proposed by Mr. A. E. Mueller, and seconded by Mr. R. Llewellyn—"That the Union bring under the notice of the Board of Inspectors of Schools the necessity of cleaning the interior of teachers' residences at least once in every five years."

#### A SICK FUND.

Mr. S. H. Warren moved—"That this Conference feels that the time has arrived when the public-school teachers of South

Australia should make some provision for relief in times of sickness and non-receipt of salary by the formation of a Teachers' Sick Fund." As things stood at present if a teacher should be ill for more than a fortnight in the financial year his salary ceased, and the Superannuation Fund, although it was a grand institution, did not fix any relief in such cases. The teacher was then in a position of seeing any savings he might have made swept away, and perhaps a debt accumulated. It was these unavoidable gaps in the activity of the teachers which he wished to bridge over. There need be no office expenses in connection with the Sick Fund. He suggested that the rate of subscription and benefits should bear a direct relation to the rate of salary. He advocated that every teacher who felt inclined to join the fund should pay £1 for the present year, and that in case of illness he should accept £1