

THE UNIVERSITY.

A meeting of the University council was held on March 31, and there were present—The Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, Rev. Dr. J. H. R. P. Jones, Prof. Rennie, Mr. Williams, Rev. H. Girdlestone, Mr. Ebister, Mr. Talbot Smith, Professor Stirling, Mr. Jacobs, and Professor Ennis. The report of the warden of the senate approving of regulation XIII. to be added to the regulations of the B.A. degree was received, and the regulation sealed. A letter was read from the Workers' Educational Association, London, inviting the University to become part of their federation for education, and to send in a subject for discussion to the Imperial Universities' Conference to be held in London in 1912. It was resolved to join the federation and to send in a subject for discussion, as suggested. On the recommendation of the finance committee the council approved of the formation of additional classes in elocution for undergraduate and other students. In response to requests from students who have completed the course for a degree since the date of the commencement, it was resolved to hold a special congregation on April 10. A letter was received from the Director of Education, stating that the Minister of Education had approved the award of 25 evening studentships, as recommended by the Board of Examiners. On the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, the Elder Scholarship in piano for playing was awarded to Dorothy C. K. Oldham. Dr. de Crespigny wrote accepting appointment as lecturer in practical pathology and pathological histology. On the recommendation of the faculty of music, the council approved the draft agreement between the Universities of Melbourne, Adelaide, and Brisbane in regard to the public examinations in music. Mr. Howden reported the gift to the Tate Museum by Dr. J. C. Verco of an interesting example of a fulgurite, obtained from a locality near Oodnadatta. The council directed that an expression of their thanks be conveyed to Dr. Verco for this interesting addition to the museum collection.

Advertiser, April 3/11

MAWSON ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

Melbourne, March 31.

The Federal Government have decided to hold over for the present consideration of the request of a recent deputation of scientific men for a subsidy of £20,000 towards the Mawson Antarctic expedition. The amount is thought by the Ministers to be exceedingly high. The matter will receive attention again when the Ministers return from England. If a vote should then be decided upon it will be submitted to Parliament for sanction.

Advertiser, April 4/11

DANGERS OF OPEN SPEAKING.

The method of appointing medical officers for the great public hospitals in New South Wales by a conjoint board composed of the hospital directorate and the Sydney University Senate was severely criticised on Thursday by Professor Anderson Stuart in his evidence before the South Australian Commission on Higher Education. He pointed out that 35 men would meet to make the appointment. It was impossible to discuss the qualifications of the candidates properly. Any word spoken against one candidate to the advantage of another was public property at once, and the man criticised would have his knife in the speaker for the rest of his life. This had happened to himself and to others, and the result was that men would not speak. In any case the appointing body was too big to deal with the question. Since canvassing had been abolished men voted for candidates knowing nothing of them and never having seen them. They judged upon so-called testimonials, which were often worth a great deal. Professor Anderson Stuart suggested that a small committee should be appointed by the conjoint board to consider the qualifications of candidates, and to then make a recommendation to the board.

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION.

ENQUIRIES IN BRISBANE.

BRISBANE, April 4.

The South Australian Royal Commission on Education sat at Parliament House this morning to take evidence. There were present Messrs. Ryan (Chairman), Coneybeer (Minister of Education), Peake, Cowan, Styles, and Green.

R. H. Roe (Inspector-General of Schools) outlined his work, and said no monetary assistance was given to schools controlled by religious bodies, but pupils attending them were at liberty to compete for scholarships. He instanced as an example of the valuable work done by the scholarship system the late Mr. T. J. Byrnes (ex-Premier of Queensland), who, he said, won his way by means of a scholarship to a grammar school, and was one of the most brilliant scholars they ever had. Many leading public men in Queensland had been helped forward by scholarships. He was aware that there was an agitation to do away with competitive examinations, and to have boys appointed to scholarships on the recommendation of the school masters.

The Chairman—I have been struck by the creditable amount you spend on primary education, but I do not quite see where your money goes, for I find that your teachers, certainly those in the initial stages, are the worst paid of any in Australia. Have you kept it as a principle of your Education Department that education for Queensland shall be not only State education, but co-operation between State and private schools?—No; on the whole the Queensland Education Department has looked upon its duties as confined to the provision of State education, and with the exception of grammar schools and technical colleges there has been no attempt at co-operation.

On your enrolment you have the best average attendance of any State in the Commonwealth, and your expenditure per head of the population is greater than that of any State except New Zealand. Your private school attendance is the largest in Australia, and I am trying to find out what there is in Queensland, where we could expect disadvantages, that made your public and private schools so attractive that they stand out prominently over all the other States. In Adelaide we provide the best free secondary education that can be given in Australasia, yet here in Queensland, with the disability of not having free secondary education, you are running away from us all around.

Mr. Roe could not offer any explanation, but in reply to Mr. Ryan said in a large centre like Brisbane there would be room for free high schools as well as grammar schools. The high schools could be established in such towns as Maryborough, Townsville, and Toowoomba without injuring the grammar schools. A high school in a small town would be so small that it could not be efficient, and by its presence would impair the efficiency of the grammar school. What he would recommend was an increase in the number of scholarships to provide for all who were really ambitious for secondary education.

Would you recommend that the University should be open to every boy and girl who could pass the entrance examination without any fees at all?—I am not sure that I would. That does not seem to me the best way of meeting the difficulty. The abolition of fees would increase the expenses of the University enormously, but it would not really make it easier for the poorer classes to send their boys to the University, because the chief difficulty is not the payment of tuition fees but the maintenance of their boys while they are there. I think you will help the poorer classes much more effectually if you give as many free bursaries as possible, whereas if you abolish the fees it practically helps only those who are able and willing to pay.

You think larger assistance in maintenance is of greater importance than a reduction of fees?—I do. I think that is really the way to open the doors of the University to all classes.

J. D. Storey (Under Secretary of Public Instruction and a member of the University Senate) gave a description of the foundation and growth of the Queensland educational system. At the request of the Chairman he specified the qualifications and salaries of inspectors. He stated that the Inspector-General received a salary of £800 a year and travelling expenses.

The Chairman—What miserable salaries you pay. I think a country like this, from what I have heard of your Government service, the salaries paid to your responsible officers are miserable.

Mr. Storey said if it rested with him nothing would give him greater pleasure than to increase the salary of the Inspector-General. He was in favour of technical education being completely under the control of the State. In Queensland they were likely to proceed on the lines of maintaining the primary schools and establishing high schools, which would be also technical schools. He did not think any more grammar schools would be founded. There should be a correct system all through.

By the Chairman—He thought before they had free university education they must have free secondary education. Merely making the university free would not help the children of poor people, unless help was given in their maintenance while at the university. No provision had been made for residential colleges, but the State had drafted statutes dealing with boarding arrangements. The object was to ensure to parents of students remote from the capital that their children would be well housed and well taken care of and protected. Provision was made for boarding houses used by students being under the control of the university.

Leonard C. Morris (Superintendent of Technical Education) described the duties of his office and the operation of the technical system. He thought interest in technical education was increasing, but there was still too great a want of appreciation of its advantages. The only remedy for that was to make it compulsory until the age of 17. Certainly all apprentices should be required to attend technical classes. The Mount Morgan Company practically compelled its boys to attend the Mount Morgan College, and last year paid £400 in fees for them. The result was that nearly all of these boys came out well. The control of technical education should be completely in the hands of the Government.

The commission adjourned until tomorrow.

Register, April 6/11

EDUCATION COMMISSION.

BRISBANE ENQUIRIES COMPLETED.

BRISBANE, April 5.

The South Australian Royal Commission on Higher Education resumed the taking of evidence this morning at Parliament House.

Mr. Robert M. Riddell (Deputy Superintendent of Technical Education) gave evidence with regard to the operation of technical education in Queensland as conducted in the technical colleges and in the School of Mines at Charters Towers. He advocated State management of technical education. He was in favour of raising the school age. He thought where separate secondary schools and schools of mines existed—the one under State control and the other managed by local governing bodies, as in some towns in South Australia—it would be advantageous to conduct the two in one building. If the school age were raised to 14 years the attendance at the technical colleges would be increased. There were about 250 attending the domestic economy classes at the technical college.

By the Chairman—The idea kept in view at the cookery schools was not to teach the girls how to make expensive dishes, but to make good dishes out of inexpensive material. Having worked under committee management and State management, he was satisfied, both from the point of view of efficiency of the student and safeguarding the public purse, that State management was best.

By Mr. Coneybeer—He thought that the first step in improving the educational system would be to extend the school age, and the second to make it compulsory for apprentices to attend technical classes.

Mr. F. W. S. Cumberae Stewart (Registrar and Librarian of the Queensland University) gave evidence with regard to the provisional curriculum and fees of that institution. There was a provision by which the senate could remit fees, but so far no application had been made for it to do that. His own personal experience was that the fees did not trouble students.

Further evidence was given, and the business sitting was concluded. The members of the commission will leave for the south to-morrow, but will break the journey at Toowoomba. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Tolmie) will accompany them thus far, he having arranged for them to inspect the Rangeville State School, where the head teacher has done a considerable amount of work in regard to making a school garden. The arrangement of this piece of ground is in many respects equal to an experimental farm in the quality of the work that has been done. The members of the commission will resume the journey south by the mail train on the following day.