

THE TEACHERS' CONFERENCE.

The ideal society, educationally speaking, would be that in which the greatest available for the training of the young...

"Do we," as Mr. Bennett pertinently asked, "in our schools give sufficient training in the rights and duties of a citizen?"

Register JUL 1924

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TEACHERS' ANNUAL CONVENTION.

RETIRING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Appeal For Better Conditions.

The annual conference of the South Australia Public Teachers' Union was opened at the Flinders Street Baptist Lecture Hall on Monday morning.

The opening address was delivered by the Director of Education (Mr. W. F. McCoy). He said he was very pleased to read the reports of the different branches of the Union, especially those in the country...

The Director said that they should foster Australian spirit among their children, while at the same time keeping before them the spirit of loyalty to the Empire. There were suitable opportunities when teachers could impress upon the scholars the value of that respect and loyalty.

The thanks of the conference was conveyed to the Director for his address. "Aims and Objects." In a comprehensive address on "The aims and objects of the union," Mr. Bennett said that while they included the assertion of the reasonable rights of teachers...



MR. W. BENNETT, retiring President of the Public Teachers' Union.

with many schools in South Australia where the equipment was insufficient and shabby, and a condition which tended to create physical defects among the children...

Backward Children and Girls. The treatment of backward children mentioned Mr. Bennett, had been discussed at a recent conference of the Education Society, and public interest had been awakened by the recommendations of the Advisory Council on Education...

preparing for professional work, it failed to meet the need of the majority. Under stress was laid upon mental ability when they offered their girls no alternative to the High School course. Skill rested in the hands as well as in the head, and should have equal opportunity for training and development.

Teacher Registration and Training. Mr. Bennett added that teachers would never be recognized as professional workers until all were registered, and a board of registration and examination appointed.

A Tribunal of Appeal. In reference to leave of absence, Mr. Bennett suggested that a permanent relieving staff should be appointed, and that the amount of sick leave should not be based upon length of service.

The Adolescent. "The problem of the adolescent," the speaker added, "is very important. Most children leave school when they have barely mastered the rudiments of the ability to read and write and have not had sufficient exercise in the use of these mere tools of true education."

Citizenship. Concluding, Mr. Bennett said: "Do we in our schools give sufficient training in the rights and duties of a citizen? If our children were going out from the primary school to working schools, then the work of training for citizenship must be continued, but, as things are, the bulk of the children leave our schools at the age of 14, and receive very little training in citizenship."

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EDUCATIONAL REFORMS.

No human institutions ever reach perfection, but that is no reason for discouraging the idealists who perpetually strive to attain it. On the contrary, unless aspiration is pushed high, and there is "divine discontent" with the obviously imperfect, it is hopeless to look for the continuous improvement which is the sure sign of progressive life and development both in societies and individuals.

Mr. McCoy was sent abroad to observe and study the developments of education in other countries. He was trusted as an enquirer, and, therefore, his report should command as it certainly does, respect.

Mr. Bennett, not without reason, asks that education shall be envisaged in a true and just perspective. The South Australian community spends over 10 per cent. more on its amusements than the total cost of educating its children.

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