

causing it to vanish from the sight of men.

What the Other States Are Doing.

In New South Wales the Government recently appointed Mr. Meredith Atkinson, on the advice of Mr. Mansbridge, to be director of tutorial classes on the staff of the Sydney University, and the work in New South Wales will be adequately financed by the Government as it develops, which it is rapidly doing. Tasmania quickly followed the lead of New South Wales, and appointed a man to take tutorial classes at Hobart and Launceston, as well as some economics work at the University. He is now on his way out from England. The Western Australian Government has promised an adequate grant, and several classes are being rapidly formed in that State in conjunction with the University. In Victoria the Government has made an interim grant of £300 for the rest of the year, and has definitely promised £2,000 for the ensuing year. Melbourne University is about to consider the appointment of a man who will give the whole of his time to extension work. Four classes are now being carried on in Melbourne and suburbs. Queensland has had two tutorial classes, and the request for a grant has been favorably considered. New Zealand is also commencing work in a definite way.

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EDUCATION FOR THE WORKERS.

THE NEED OF THE AGE.

SEQUEL TO EMANCIPATION OF LABOR.

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE.

A deputation, consisting of members of the council of the newly-formed Workers' Education Association, waited on the Minister of Education (Hon. A. H. Peake) at the Treasury on Wednesday morning to ask for financial help from the Government in the establishment and maintenance of the University tutorial classes which it is intended shall carry out the objects of the association.

The Hon. A. W. Styles, M.L.C., introduced the deputation.

Professor Jethro Brown said the movement must not be looked upon as a luxury so much as a necessity. Since the emancipation of Labor there had arisen the problem of leisure. What was the good of providing the workers with additional leisure, it was asked, if they only employed it to get drunk or take part in degrading entertainments? He was not going to discuss the justice of that question, but it was one which had often been asked, and it was relevant to this extent, that if social progress was going to degenerate then improved opportunities for leisure must be accompanied by improved opportunities for self-development and self-education. The mind of the emancipated had been allowed to run more or less to waste. He read an article the other day in which the writer spoke of the "slow ossification which we call middle age," and, again, of the "torpor which creeps over the mind of the average individual after, or soon after, he has definitely settled in life."

The Problem of Adult Education.

Education was no longer to be confined to the youth. It was necessary that its influence should be felt throughout the whole community. They were brought face to face with the problem of the education of the adult. The Workers' Education Association was a definite contribution to this movement. He confessed that when it was first mooted he was very sceptical as to its prospects. He did not think that large bodies of workers, after their day's work, would care to spend their evenings in arduous intellectual efforts, and still less did he think they would do that study and reading

at home without which collective thinking would be relatively useless. Events, however, had entirely falsified his pessimism, and the movement promised to be as pronounced a success in Australia as it had been in other countries. For a long time in the universities there had been a protest going on against the mere pouring of information into the minds of students, so that they were able to reproduce it at examination, but did not absorb it, and were not afterwards troubled by it any more. The workers Education Association was proceeding on sounder lines, and in the classes it arranged there was in addition to exposition, collective thinking and earnest enquiry. It was because these methods had been followed that the movement had achieved such success. If, as he thought, the education of the adult was to be the problem of the future, it might be solved along the lines adopted by the Workers' Education Association. The movement held out nothing less than a promise of the restoration of education to its proper place, as one of the great spiritual forces of the community. The immediate need of the association was the financial support of the Government in a form which would enable them to employ the services of really competent graduates of the University to conduct the classes. The ordinary University graduate who was working for a livelihood could not give the necessary time to the work, and so it was absolutely necessary that the teachers should be paid.

At Least £1,000 Required.

Mr. T. Ryan read the following letter from Sir Langdon Bonython, who had been asked to attend as president of the council of the Adelaide School of Mines:—"I regret to say that I shall not be able to be with you to-morrow morning, but I wish to assure you that your application to the Government has my enthusiastic support. Money could not be voted for a better purpose, and I am certain, from what I know, that any grant made will be carefully expended and the best possible results secured." Mr. Ryan explained that the association needed a grant of at least £1,000 to enable it to carry on the very valuable work it had undertaken. He pointed out that the scheme was to establish classes of 30 members, each with a qualified leader, who would have to be paid. This was not an application on the part of the fathers and mothers of the State that their children should be better educated, but a request that they might be educated themselves. And if the Government gave the necessary assistance they would be helping the cause of education generally. The council of the association was a representative one, and included members from the University, the School of Mines, the Public Library, and the Women's Non-Political Association, together with the Director of Education, a representative from almost every trade affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council, and many others. It was proposed immediately to inaugurate three classes, and they had already received nearly double the number of applications necessary to start two classes. The class for economics was filled within a couple of days or so, and there had been numerous applications for membership of the classes for industrial law, and literature, and that for hygiene, which would be largely attended by women.

The Search for Knowledge.

The Rev. Canon Hornabrook declared that there was nowadays a tremendous seeking after knowledge. Children had this thirst for knowledge, and if they did not find out in the right way they sought for information in the wrong way, and often ruined their lives as a result. Men were much the same in their search for knowledge, and in the absence of proper guidance would almost make a sort of knowledge for themselves. The question was whether they were going to be taught by the State, and given the advantages which it was believed ought to belong to everybody. If the thirst for knowledge was directed in the right way they would get in time that national spirit which they felt would do such great things for Australia. It seemed to him that in that association they might see the beginning of a movement which would make for national unity and the development of this national spirit which they all desired.

Professor Portus, of Sydney, who is at present acting at the Adelaide University, emphasised the fact that the subjects with which it was proposed to deal were in no sense technical subjects. The education which the association sought to impart was not of the kind which would enable a man to turn to a new means of livelihood. The subjects were deliberative. It was not intended to make the classes into a sort of grown-up tech-

nical school in any way. They aimed at the higher education of men and women in those subjects which did not earn bread and butter, but which rather gave their students a point of view in life. That was the great need in Australia. In the other States the Government had assisted the movement, and he desired to point out that any grant made by the South Australian Government would be spent by a committee of four members of the association and four representatives of the University, a committee, in short, of enthusiasts and experts, who would select the proper teachers and pay them.

Mr. Styles, at this stage, apologized for the absence of Mr. Lawrence Grayson.

Minister's Reply.

The Minister, in reply, said he was pleased to see the keen interest that was being taken in this matter, and he was obliged to the members of the deputation for having told him of things connected with it, of which he was formerly ignorant. He had no doubt that the association's object was most commendable, to encourage people to read and think on matters which were of great importance to the community. It was no doubt important that the community should know a great deal about the subjects which had to be mentioned. The subject of economics would, of course, be pursued with great zeal. He knew something of its difficulties, and of its relation to politics, and he knew, also, that a number of people got on very well in politics without knowing anything about economics. There were one or two points on which he would like to be informed before he brought the association's request before Cabinet. He would like to know, for instance, something of the fees to be charged.

A member of the deputation explained that the charge to each student would be 2/6 a quarter.

The Minister said it had occurred to him that people would not care to be

educated entirely at the expense of the State. He thought he ought also to know how far they intended to push the movement into the country. It was a question for consideration, whether the Government should be asked to subsidise a club of this kind for Adelaide alone.

Professor Portus said he thought the idea was to have a class wherever 30 students could be assembled.

The Minister said it occurred to him it might be possible to graft the classes on to the schools of mines throughout the State, or perhaps the institutes might be made to serve the same purpose. He desired to look into the question from the national rather than from the local standpoint. If it was to be a national question then they might get the sympathy and co-operation of the largest towns throughout the State. They mentioned the sum they thought the Government might grant. He would make it his business to find out what had been done in this matter by the Governments in the other States, and what the Government of South Australia did would be in some measure governed by what was being done in other parts of the Commonwealth. When he had gone into these things he would put the matter before Cabinet.