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WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

THE FORTHCOMING LECTURE.

Arrangements are now well forward in connection with the mass meeting to be held in the Trades Hall on Tuesday evening next, when Professor Meredith Atkinson (director of tutorial classes at the Sydney University), will deliver a lecture on "The Objects of the Workers' Educational Association." Mr. T. Ryan will preside, and representatives of the University, the School of Mines, the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery, and the Department of Education will, it is hoped, as was the case at the lecture by Mr. Mansbridge, be on the platform, supporting the lecturer.

A meeting of the central council of the W.E.A. will be held at the University on Wednesday evening next, at 8 p.m., to enable members to meet Professor Atkinson, and discuss the working of the tutorial classes and other matters. Organisations proposing to affiliate or which have already affiliated with the W.E.A., are requested to elect their representatives for the council in time to enable them to attend this council meeting.

The central council when completed will consist of two representatives from the University, two from the School of Mines, two from the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery, one each from affiliated organisations, and 10 representative educational people. The Director of Education (Mr. M. M. Maughan) and other prominent educationists have accepted positions on the council.

It must be borne in mind that the Workers' Educational Association is not limited to trade unions, but is open to all organisations, such as literary societies, friendly societies, church societies, educational bodies, and political bodies of whatever party, provided it is understood that the Workers' Educational Association itself is strictly non-party, non-political, and non-sectarian. It exists for the sake of knowledge itself, but the organisations affiliated with it are permitted to work along their own lines on their own ground.

The Workers' Educational Association will bring learning and labor together by making the universities, the public institutions, and the educational organisations centres of life and learning for the masses. This is a mighty step forward in the progress of the world, and will lead to tremendous results in the future.

The Advertiser.
May 12th 1917.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE PEOPLE.

MELBOURNE COUNCIL'S SCHEME.

Melbourne, May 11.

There are indications that the requests recently made to the Premier on behalf of the University for assistance in carrying out schemes of immediate expansion and development, which the council of the University has declared to be urgently necessary, will be granted. Parliament will probably be recommended by the Cabinet to make a special building grant of £75,000, and an annual grant of £2,000 for extension classes. If the University council succeeds in getting the grant of £75,000 it will expend it in erecting an entirely new block of buildings, which will provide accommodation for the Faculty of Arts. It is proposed to spend up to £58,000 in the erection of what is termed a pavilion block, the completed plan for which shows six separate buildings arranged around two quadrangles. Then the present buildings will be remodelled, the latter work to cost something like £30,000. With its grant of £2,000 a year the University Extension Board intends to put into operation a scheme for bringing the University nearer to the people. The scheme favored by the board is on the same lines as that adopted by the Sydney University. A lecturer in economics will be appointed at a salary of £800, and the remaining £1,200 will be spent in securing lecturers who will conduct classes for working men in the country.

GRADUATES IN FORESTRY.

When Mr. H. H. Corbin, B.Sc., arrived from Edinburgh and became Instructor in Forestry, it was found desirable to establish a School of Forestry, attached to the University, in order that young men might be trained to take up the urgent work of tree culture. Equipped with this knowledge there is scope for those who have an inclination for out-of-door employment. People about to go on the land naturally would devote a portion of it to tree-shelter belts and plantations, and thus demonstrate to neighbours the advantages of trees on a farm, not only for protection from high sweeping winds and shelter for stock, but also for firewood and fences. Accordingly a prospectus was prepared, providing for training in the science and practice of forestry, in which there is a wide and interesting field. Many important problems await solution by experiment and research. The education provided at the School of Forestry consists of University instruction and practice in forestry in the State forests. There are 12 bursaries available at the University, exempting students from fees, and leading to the science degree in forestry. Students who graduate B.Sc. in forestry will be qualified for appointment in the Woods and Forest Departments. The first student to obtain the diploma is Mr. R. G. McKail, of the Mount Barr Forest. He will be admitted to the degree to-day. This is of special interest, as Mr. McKail is the first successful student. Mr. McKail has displayed commendable zeal during the three years' study, and has applied himself to arduous work both in the University and on the forest reserves with energy and marked ability. There is great need for men with similar qualifications throughout Australia, as too much cannot be known about the subject by those who have to handle woodlands and forests of considerable economic value.

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Mr. Meredith Atkinson, M.A., director of the tutorial classes in connection with the Workers' Educational Association, arrived in Adelaide yesterday morning. He was appointed some time ago at the instance of the New South Wales Government. The visitor was met at the station by Professors Jethro Brown, Darnley Naylor, and Porter (who is from the Sydney University and is taking Professor Henderson's place), and Messrs. T. B. Merry, T. Ryan, W. C. Melbourne, and V. E. Kroemer, members of the Workers' Educational Association committee in South Australia. Mr. Atkinson is visiting this State for the purpose of setting the local branch of the association on its feet. He will remain here for four or five days.

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A special congregation will be held in the Prince of Wales Theatre of the Adelaide University this afternoon, at 4 o'clock, to confer degrees on the the following candidates:—For the Degree of Bachelor of Laws.—Badger, Robert; Mills, John Brier (in absentia). For the Honours Degree of Bachelor of Arts.—Philosophy—Allen, Eleanor Alice. For the Ordinary Degree of Bachelor of Arts.—Blackburn, John Stewart; Blair, Euphemia Theodosia; Page, Albert Edward; Rowe, Edgar Percival; Weir, Isobel; Payne, Louise Mary Gwyther (in absentia). For the Ordinary Degree of Bachelor of Science in Forestry.—McKail, Ronald George. For the Ordinary Degree of Bachelor of Science.—Williams, Ralph (in absentia). For the Degree of Bachelor of Engineering.—Wight, Albert Raymond (in absentia); Brown, Arthur Cubitt, and West, John Stanley (in absentia, in lieu of surrendered Degree of Bachelor of Science). For the Diploma in Applied Science in Electrical Engineering.—Brown, Arthur Cubitt (in absentia). The Chancellor of the University (Sir Samuel Way) will preside. The members of the Senate and Council are requested to wear academic costume.

EDUCATIONAL MISSIONARIES.

ALLIANCE OF LABOUR AND LEARNING.

Recently much has been heard of the benefits which have resulted in the United Kingdom from the efforts and influence of the Workers' Educational Association. Professor Meredith Atkinson, M.A., who is the director of tutorial classes at the Sydney University, and Honorary Secretary in connection with the movement in the Commonwealth, arrived in Adelaide on Tuesday morning, to assist in the launching of a branch of the association. In the evening he gave an address at a gathering at the Trades Hall on the objects of the movement.

—Alliance of Labour and Learning.—

Professor Atkinson said the prime object of the association was to convey higher education to the working classes. The body was formed in England about 11 years ago, and had had enormous success in the United Kingdom, where more than two thousand branches, both labour and educational, were now affiliated with it. Recently its work had spread to Australia, and more recently still to Canada. In addition great interest in its results was being shown in France, Germany, and South Africa. It stood for an alliance of labour and learning. Its chief activity was what was known as the tutorial class, which consisted of about 20 students taught by a university tutor on the special subject which they had selected for study. Each course extended over three years, and the standard reached was the honours standard of the universities. Each student had to write one essay a fortnight. Attached to every class was a select library of books, for the use of the students, besides which reading facilities were given in every library in the district. The association recognised the fact of democracy, and also the great need for taking democracy up to a stage at which it could legitimately claim to fulfil its higher functions, and provide a body of citizens devoted to the service of the community. The association did not aim at purveying technical knowledge, facilities for which were already provided to a fair degree.

—Ripe Judgment in All Things.—

The object was to convey to the workers that higher kind of knowledge which fitted the mind to apply itself readily to all social problems. The association claimed that the tutorial class was just that alliance of labour and learning which was most likely to achieve the desirable end which it sought. The classes met once a week during the winter months for two hours a night. About half of the time was given by the tutor to a simple exposition of his subject, and then followed a period of lively questioning and discussion, during which the thoughts and opinions and knowledge of the students and tutor were thrown into the common melting pot. It was wonderful to watch how a class changed in tone and attitude as the period of study proceeded. Grievances gave way before tolerance; crudities of thought were replaced by refinement of intellect; often cherished convictions were doomed to destruction; and just as often a student might find a conviction of his own reinforced by science and reason. Above all the aim of the organization was to give the students a ripe judgment in all things. By means of the tutorial class the association was seeking to create a nation of straight-thinking men and women, imbued with the high sense of civic duty, and who, far from disrating their class, would take their place in it as educational missionaries, endeavouring to uplift the whole community.

—Promise of Success.—

It was in no spirit of undiscerning optimism that he ventured to predict that Australia would provide fertile soil for the development of the movement. Already the demand for classes in every State exceeded the supply at immediate command. New South Wales and Victoria had secured Government grants, which were administered through the universities by means of joint committees of workers and professors, for the purposes of the tutorial classes. In South Australia the association was firmly established, and was at present beginning to undertake its work in co-operation with the University of Adelaide. Tasmania had appointed a tutor, who was now on his way from England. Queensland had several classes working, and Western Australia was just beginning to form a class, and hoped to secure a Government grant in the near future. "There is no place," added Professor Atkinson, "where the movement promises to succeed better than in South Australia. The promoters in Adelaide have not made any mistakes, but have started soundly and wisely."