

Register 25th May/15

MODERN EDUCATION.

Montessori and Junior Technical System.

An announcement of considerable importance in regard to education was made by the Minister of Education (Hon. Crawford Vaughan) on Monday. He mentioned that during his recent trip to the eastern States he visited the famous Blackfriars School in Sydney. He was accompanied by the Director of Education for New South Wales (Mr. P. Board). "I was very anxious to see the direct administration of the Montessori method," Mr. Vaughan remarked, "and there can be no question that this method of imparting knowledge—especially to infant children—has revolutionized the whole educational outlook. The set desks have given way to tables and chairs, and the restrictions imposed upon children under the old-time methods have been replaced by a freedom that brings out the initiative of the child. I propose to take early steps to introduce the Montessori method into our school system. To indicate that freedom does not lead to anarchy, Miss Simpson, of the Blackfriars School, informed me that, on one occasion, word of a teacher's absence failed to reach her. The class, consisting of children between four and six years of age, went on without any one noticing that the teacher was not present. Everything proceeded as usual, the children were at their games, and when Miss Simpson passed through the room she merely thought that the lady in charge was temporarily away from her class. It was not until later in the day that she discovered that no one had been in charge of the class during the morning. The work had gone on without any difficulty, and this in what is, perhaps, one of the worst slum quarters of Sydney."

The Minister also enquired into the question of the establishment of junior technical schools, upon which subject a report has been received from Inspectors McBride and Pavia. Mr. Vaughan regards the work accomplished by these schools in the eastern States as excellent in every way. The boys, he said, pursued their studies with the same zest as the little children did under the Montessori system. If South Australia desired to have a community of capable industrial workers the example set by New South Wales and Victoria would have to be followed, and it would be necessary to link up the technical branch of training with the primary system of education, as recommended by the Education Commission. It was proposed to start, at any rate, one junior technical school immediately, with a view to a general inauguration of a fuller technical training for their boys and girls. It was not yet settled where the school would be established, and he was not quite sure whether it would be necessary to engage an instructor outside the State or not.

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Mr. J. Nangle (Director of the Technical Education Branch, Department of Public Instruction, New South Wales) passed through Adelaide on Monday, after conferring with the council of the Institutes' Association of South Australia with reference to educational classes for institutes. To a reporter at the Melbourne express yesterday afternoon, Mr. Nangle said he had been to Broken Hill to bring the college there into line with the new system of technical education introduced into New South Wales. He had managed to spend a few brief hours in Adelaide, in the hope of learning something, and he could say that he had certainly not been disappointed. He had been much impressed with the series of educational institutions grouped along North terrace, and by the other important educational buildings in other parts of the city.

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LATE CAPT. A. H. POSSINGHAM.

Capt. A. H. Possingham, who has been killed in action at the Dardanelles, was adjutant of the 8th Infantry Battalion (Victorian unit). He was a native of South Australia, having been born at Houghton 30 years ago. He was a son of the late Sgt.-Mjr. A. R. Possingham, who, as a member of the Adelaide Mounted Rifles, was well known to the older school of military men. Capt. Possingham was married, and his widow at present resides in Perth, Western Australia. He has also left a widowed mother and brother, of Houghton, and two sisters (Mrs. A. Pittman, of Hope Valley, and Mrs. H. C. Le Lievre, of Henley Beach). Capt. Possingham's military career commenced in 1906, when he accepted a commission in the now disbanded cadet organization. He was O.C. of the Hindmarsh Senior Cadets. In 1910 he joined the permanent military forces as non-commissioned officer of the instructional staff, and in 1911 he received an appointment as lieutenant on the A. and I. staff. Capt. Possingham was one of the first officers chosen for service in the present war, and he left Australia for the front as a captain. His educational attainments were of a high standard. At one time he was the dux of the old Agricultural College, Frume road, and won the gold medal and bursary for entrance to the Roseworthy College. He also took the B.A. degree at the Adelaide University. The deceased officer was at one time a school teacher, under the State Education Department. He was attached in turn to the East Adelaide and Norwood schools.

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—Elder Conservatorium Concert.—

There was a large audience at the Elder Conservatorium on Monday night, on the occasion of the students' concert. Excellent vocal items were presented, as well as capital pianoforte and violin selections. The proceedings were begun with a quartet by Misses M. Ingham and H. Gill (Brookman scholar), and Messrs. L. Martin (Elder scholar) and R. Correll. Misses R. Spriggs and L. Barbour provided enjoyable pianoforte solos. Miss D. Smith sang "Melisande in the wood" and "Lullaby," Miss F. Price "A summer night," Miss G. Wood "Se tu m'ami" and "Without thee," and Miss Prosser "A song of thanksgiving." Miss V. Thrush gave evidence of a remarkably sweet voice in "Elizabeth's prayer." Mr. R. Correll contributed "The devout lover," and Mr. Gard "Oh, vision entrancing." Violin solos were rendered by Misses P. Mowkill (Elder scholar) and R. Meegan. The proceedings were concluded with "God save the King." Prior to that item Mr. A. Bampton gave an organ solo "Sonata in F sharp" (last movement).

✓ Advertise, 25th May/15

EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

NEW POLICY FORESHADOWED.

MONTESSORI METHOD AND JUNIOR TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

During his recent visit to New South Wales and Victoria the Minister of Education (Hon. C. Vaughan) made a number of enquiries into school matters, and was particularly impressed with the advantages of the Montessori method of instruction, which has been adopted in Sydney in connection more particularly with the teaching of the younger classes in the primary schools. Mr. Vaughan visited the famous Blackfriars school in Sydney in company with Mr. Board (the New South Wales Director of Education). "I was very anxious," the Minister stated on Monday, "to see a practical demonstration of the Montessori method, and there can be no question that this manner of imparting instruction has revolutionised the whole educational outlook. The set desks have given way to tables and chairs, and the restriction imposed upon the children under the old-time method is replaced by a freedom that brings out the initiative of a child. I propose to take early steps to introduce the Montessori method into our school system. To show that the freedom existing with it does not lead to anarchy, Miss Simpson, of the Blackfriars school, told me that one day a teacher was not present to take a particular class, and word of the fact failed to reach her (Miss Simpson), but the class of little children, aged between 4 and 6 years, went on just the same without anyone noticing the teacher's absence. Everything appeared to be as usual, when Miss Simpson passed through the room, the children being absorbed in their lesson-play, and she thought the teacher was somewhere about the building and temporarily away from her class. Some time later it was discovered that there had been no one in charge all the morning, but the work had gone on smoothly and quietly. Probably this is one of the worst slum quarters of Sydney. I also looked into the question of the establishment of junior technical schools, upon which we have received a report from Inspectors McBride and Pavia. The work done by the junior technical schools in the eastern States is excellent in every way, and the boys pursue their studies with the same zest as the little children of five and six years under the Montessori system. If we want to have a nation of capable industrial workers we shall have to follow the example set by New South Wales and Victoria, and it will be necessary to link up the whole of our technical training with our primary system of education as recommended by the Education Commission. The Government propose to start, at any rate, one junior technical school immediately, with a view to the inauguration of fuller technical training for boys and girls." On the question whether a man would be found locally to begin the new branch, or whether one would be called over from the other States, Mr. Vaughan said it was a matter that would have to be looked into.