STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN NEW SOUTH WALES, 1880-1930:
A STUDY OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE
"NEW EDUCATION"

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VOLUME I

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1969
Plate 1. Elementary Schooling, c.1920 - The Education Gazette, XVI, 4, 1st April, 1922, 78.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Education Department Archives: Records of the N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction/Education, N.S.W. State Archives, Sydney (Title of Department changed 1915).

H.R.A.: Historical Records of Australia

Minister's Report(s): Report(s) of the Minister for Public Instruction/Education to the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly


N.S.W.P.D.(2): New South Wales Parliamentary Debates, Series 2, 1901-

S.M.H.: The Sydney Morning Herald.

V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly: Votes and Proceedings of the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly

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INTRODUCTION

The fifty years from 1880 until 1930 encompassed a most important period of New South Wales educational development. These were the years which saw the introduction of direct ministerial responsibility, the establishment of a Department of Public Instruction, major changes in the character and content of elementary schooling, the establishment of a system of secondary education, the assumption by the state of responsibility for technical education and the abolition of the pupil-teacher system of teacher training. In addition the period was punctuated at the turn of the century by a vigorous demand for educational reform, a demand which was but a local expression of a world-wide movement. In essence the agitation was for a school curriculum and an educational system appropriate to the needs and character of late nineteenth and twentieth century western industrial society. At the elementary school level the demands for change were partly
based on utilitarian grounds. Such were features of the arguments that a place must be found in the curriculum for manual training and nature study. Technical and scientific training was, after all, as necessary as proficiency in the basic skills. But there was more to the reform movement at the elementary school level than this utilitarianism. It was also concerned with fundamental aims and principles. Here the educational ideas of Froebel were the touchstone and those of Herbart grist to the mill. What was demanded was a "new" education and these turn-of-the-century reformers saw themselves as figures in a "New Education Movement". In New South Wales the twentieth century began dramatically with a series of events which were a local expression of this Movement. Francis Anderson criticised the policies and practices of the Department of Public Instruction, Joseph Carruthers initiated a public campaign for reform, there was a Royal Commission, the first of the reports from Board, and a number of educational conferences. The drama of this period must not be permitted, however, to obscure either the fact that this New Education had its roots in ideas and innovations already current in the
nineteenth century or that New South Wales had already encountered some of its principal elements. These encounters are as much a part of the New Education Movement as the events of 1901. Thus this history of state primary schooling in New South Wales between 1880 and 1930 is a study of the impact of this New Education. It is a study restricted in scope to the primary school and one in which the principal concern is with the impact of these ideas upon the curriculum. But the concept of curriculum is a broad one. Often this term is employed merely to denote the group of subjects or topics specified for classroom study and as synonymous with the terms "course of study" or "syllabus". In this thesis the school curriculum is conceived not in such a narrow manner but in the American fashion as "the entire program of the school's work ... and as everything the students and their teachers do". Such a concept includes "the formulation of educational objectives, the planning, use,  

and organization of learning experiences and the appraisal of student learning\(^2\). And so, with the acceptance of such a broad definition of curriculum, this present study is concerned with concepts of educational purpose, the content of courses, methods and conditions of learning, the competency and qualifications of the teaching staff and the methods of evaluation and inspection.

As the work progressed a number of broad generalisations emerged. One is reflected directly in the structure of the thesis, for three major phases were discernible in the evolution of the elementary school curriculum. First there was a phase from 1880 until 1900 during which local educational practices and policies responded to encounters with some of the ideas and innovations which later coalesced into the New Education; second there was a brief but momentous period of public debate and

controversy from 1901 until 1904; third there was the period from 1905 onwards which began as one of experimentation, interpretation and implementation and ended in reaction and conservatism. Development was towards a wider concept of educational purpose, a broader curriculum, sounder techniques of instruction, greater freedom for the child, better qualified teachers and improved material conditions of learning. During the process New South Wales was indebted to overseas ideas and practices for every major educational advance with British developments the major determinant of local policy. Elementary schooling was transformed by these innovations from abroad by enlightened individuals or by governmental and departmental action but such reliance upon overseas precedent was a reflection of the underlying immaturity and conservatism of the local system. This reflected, too, the character of the local society. Education was sensitive

3. This was the period of discussion and controversy for elementary education and teacher-training. In other areas it was more protracted: no scheme was initiated for secondary education until 1913 and in the case of technical education the delay was even longer than this.
as much to social, economic and political conditions in New South Wales as it was to overseas ideas and developments. Consequently progress was never swift nor sure. It was much too dependent upon community attitudes and governmental policy; and the unfortunate truth is that the community generally was disinterested in education and governments unsympathetic to its financial needs. Always achievements were curtailed by social and economic realities. And the prime social reality was that for much of the period under consideration New South Wales was pastoral, agricultural and commercial, for there was very little industrial development until World War I. It was against this background that education was conceived as a matter of proficiency in the basic skills. Even when a broader concept of purpose was accepted in theory such proficiency was never relinquished as the prime aim. At the best there was an eclectic combination of progressivism and conservatism which meant that in practice schooling was a matter of achieving results by progressive techniques. This is a general proposition which is true of the period as a whole but society was not
static, nor were educational ideas and practices. Purposes, courses, methods and material conditions did change. But almost always there were difficulties. Too often schooling was conducted by inadequately trained teachers working under adverse conditions simply because the community placed insufficient value upon education to provide the finances really required; And so, whilst this study is a history of important developments it is certainly not a history of glorious achievements. Even the New Education was at first adapted to local circumstances so that it became little more than a theory of teaching methods; and then, just when there was the prospect of something better, came a reaction into conservatism which was in turn followed by an economic depression.

This then is a study of primary schooling between 1880 and 1930 in which the main concern is with the changes in the course of study and in the ways in which this was taught. As such it is also a study of the "New Education". It is in addition a sociological study, for the development of education is examined in terms of its social, political and economic determinants.
PART ONE

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1880-1900

I LEGISLATIVE, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

II MODIFICATIONS IN THE COURSE OF STUDY, 1880-1900

III CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

IV CRITICISMS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND DEFICIENCIES: AN EVALUATION AND AN INTERPRETATION
The year 1880 was a dramatic moment in the educational history of New South Wales. State aid to denominational schools was abolished by legislative enactment and simultaneously the Department of Public Instruction was created and direct ministerial control introduced. Studies of the history of education in this State have in general been highly critical of the policies pursued by this Department during its first two decades of existence. The vigour and significance of the demand for educational reform with which the twentieth century began and the condemnatory phrases which were then uttered have too often obscured the facts concerning elementary education in New South Wales in the late nineteenth century.

The Public Instruction Act of 1880 provided the legislative basis for educational policy. It embodied a noble faith in the value of universal elementary education but at the same time sanctioned the belief that an education in the basic subjects was quite sufficient for the majority of the children of New South Wales. Despite significant social change which saw the
emergence of political parties, the Maritime Strike and the federation of the Australian States, this limited concept of an appropriate education continued as an important determinant of curriculum development. This became especially important with the onset of the economic depression in 1892. Then educational progress was readily sacrificed to retrenchment.

The limited concept of education did not go entirely unchallenged. In England there were demands for the inclusion of useful, practical and scientific studies within the elementary school curriculum. In England, too, kindergarten work was accorded increased recognition. These overseas developments influenced the curriculum in New South Wales. There was, in essence, a preliminary encounter with ideas and innovations which were later featured as elements of the "New Education" although neither this term nor the "New Education Movement" was to emerge until the turn of the century. Nevertheless these preliminary encounters were a challenge to local community and parliamentary opinion and to the Public Instruction Department's own heritage
CHAPTER I

LEGISLATIVE, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

After 1st May, 1880 the Public Instruction Act\(^1\) provided the legislative basis for state-controlled elementary education in New South Wales. The bitter sectarianism which surrounded this Act should not obscure the fact that it expressed the educational convictions and hesitations of the parliamentarians who framed and approved it and the opinions and attitudes of the community they represented. Parliament and community had their ideas of appropriate governmental responsibility and authority in education. They had their ideas, too, of desirable purposes, contents and limits of schooling. These opinions functioned as legislative and social determinants of curriculum development under the newly established Department of Public Instruction. The 1880

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1. '43 Victoriae, xxiii' (Assented 16th April, 1880), Minister's Report, 1880, Appendix A.
Act itself which embodied many of these opinions is the logical point at which to begin.

**THE SPIRIT AND PURPOSE OF THE 1880 ACT**

The principal purpose of the Public Instruction Act was "to afford the best primary education without sectarian or class distinction"\(^2\). It was the culmination of a long campaign by educators and legislators to establish a general system of education in New South Wales modelled upon the Irish National System, a system which had been advocated as "well suited to the circumstances of the Colony"\(^3\) by Governor Bourke in 1833. Many factors contributed to the eventual attainment of this apparently ideal solution. The inability of the denominational system to provide adequately and economically for the educational needs of the colony was one\(^4\). The success and efficiency of the National Schools

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2. *Ibid*, 17 (Clause 6).


after their establishment was another\textsuperscript{5}. The decline of denominational fervour amongst Anglicans\textsuperscript{6}, the difficulties the minor protestant sects had in maintaining schools of their own\textsuperscript{7}, the activities of the Public School League\textsuperscript{8} and the opportunity afforded for an expression of anti-Catholicism were others. What must be emphasised, however, is that when the arguments which were invoked are shorn of sectarianism and prejudice there remains evidence of a sincere desire to bring elementary education within the reach of all the children of New South Wales. Such was the faith of those who furthered the cause of the Irish National System. Rightly or wrongly a denominational system in any form was discarded as inadequate, inefficient and uneconomical. There was no rejection of religion\textsuperscript{9} or religious teaching\textsuperscript{10} in the Act, but only an insistence

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{5} W. Wilkins, \textit{National Education}, Douglas, Sydney, 1865.
\item \textsuperscript{6} A.G. Austin, \textit{Australian Education, 1788-1900}, Pitman and Sons, Melbourne, 1961, 113-17.
\item \textsuperscript{7} \textit{Ibid}, 113-15.
\item \textsuperscript{9} 43 Vic., xxiii, \textit{op. cit.}, 18 (Clause 7).
\item \textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid}, 19 (Clause 17).
\end{itemize}
that this be conducted upon terms determined by supporters of the National System.

The sincerity of the belief in universal elementary education and the desire to extend this as widely as possible were expressed in a number of innovations introduced by the 1880 Act. Foremost was the provision for compulsory attendance\(^{11}\). In addition the attendance required for the establishment of a public school was reduced\(^{12}\), and free railway travel for pupils of public schools was introduced\(^{13}\). Austin suggests that there were three main elements in the educational argument which formed the basis of this faith in the value of elementary education: a "police view" founded upon a wide acceptance of a direct association between ignorance and crime; an acceptance of the need for an informed electorate implicit in the "we must educate our masters" jibe of Robert Lowe; and a realisation of the connection

\(^{11}\) Ibid, 19-20 (Clauses 20 and 21).

\(^{12}\) Ibid, 18 (Clause 8).

\(^{13}\) Ibid, 18 (Clause 14).
between education and national development. Austin founds his argument upon Victorian examples but implies a generality for these views in the other Australian colonies. Such can be demonstrated without great difficulty in the case of New South Wales at least; nor is this surprising since these views were based in large part upon the opinions of British liberals. Opinions of this character were in fact voiced by parliamentarians during the debate upon the Public Instruction Bill. Dillon, for example, invoked the "public view" of education when he justified compulsion on the grounds that "education is necessary for the better security of life, liberty and property". Hungerford expressed the argument for an informed electorate when he asked rhetorically what was more desirable than that every child should be educated to understand his political responsibilities and so "exercise his franchise rightly". The connection between education and national

16. Ibid.
development found no champion in the debate of 1879 but Barton expressed this idea in parliament in 1881 when he said that "the education of the children is undertaken by the State, not for the benefit of the parent, but for the national good". Later, in 1893, Parkes was to claim that the purpose of the 1880 Act had been to provide the best primary education for all children "in the broad interests of the growing nation".

Implementing the aim of universal elementary education determined priorities in Departmental policy in the years immediately following the 1880 Act. The first tasks were obvious enough - more schools and more teachers would be needed now that the number of pupils required for the establishment of a school had been reduced and education had been made compulsory. This was a considerable task and commendable progress was made. The number of public schools rose from 1,115 with 78,818 pupils enrolled at the beginning of 1880, to

17. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 5, 211-12, 19th July, 1881.
1,912 schools and 167,134 pupils by the end of 1884. A residential college for the training of women students upon the completion of their pupil-teachership was established at Ashfield in 1883 with Miss Caroline Mallett as principal. And in addition the finance provided for education was particularly generous in 1883 and 1884. Yet notwithstanding these developments, parliamentarians sanctioned a quite limited concept of the education which should be provided for all children and held, in addition, equally limited concepts of parliamentary financial responsibility and of the extent of the State's authority to compel compulsion. There was

20. Ministers' Report, 1884, 1 and 5.

21. It became known as the Hurlstone Training School, the decision as to title being made on 28th March, 1884 (Education Department Archives, Pl795, School Files 1884, Training School Hurlstone). The site is now occupied by Trinity Grammar School.

22. Education Department Archives, Pl783, School Files 1883, Training School Hurlstone. (It opened on 15th January, 1883.)

23. Parkes, who was in England at the time, was given the task of selecting the principal. It was on the advice of A.J. Mundella, Vice President of the Education Committee of the Privy Council that Miss Mallett was selected. (Education Department Archives, Pl771, School Files 1882, Training School Hurlstone, Parkes to Mundella, 23rd May, 1882).
a naive optimism that with the Irish National System triumphant all problems would be solved. A vague charter for secondary education had been included in the 1880 Act to satisfy a minority but this does not cloak the limited nature of the education which was actually stipulated by legislation. Under the Act certificates exempting children from attendance might be issued once they had been educated "up to the standard required", a standard which demanded proficiency in reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic. These are the rudiments only of an education but with these the legislators of 1880 were willing to be content.

Parents were free to express their opinion of just what constituted an adequate primary education by their actions. Unsure just how acceptable the innovation of obligatory attendance would be, Parkes worded the

24. Inclusion of the clauses permitting the establishment of high schools was a concession to the demand for grammar schools at Maitland, Bathurst and Goulburn (Vide S.M.H., 6th March, 1878 and N.S.W.P.D. (1), 2, 1187).

25. 43 Vic., xxiii, op. cit., 20 (Clause 20).

26. N.S.W.P.D. (1) 1, 88, 5th November, 1879; and 271 and 274, 20th November, 1879.
compulsory clauses so that they could be satisfied rather simply by an attendance of "seventy days in each half-year"\(^{27}\) or else circumvented altogether by evoking one of the many acceptable excuses\(^{28}\). Robertson, Parkes' Minister for Public Instruction from 1880-1881, linked obligatory attendance and the collection of fees as matters of some delicacy "touch(ing) directly the personal wishes and feelings of parents, and thus involv(ing) the risk of conflict"\(^{29}\). A policy of tact was therefore decided upon and a Principal School Attendance and Payment Officer with an initial staff of four assistants appointed to implement it\(^{30}\). The magnitude of the task, the inadequacy of the compulsory clauses and some measure of community attitudes towards education are reflected in the attendance problem with which they had to contend.

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27. 43 Vic., xxiii, op. cit., 19 (Clause 20).
28. Ibid.
29. Minister's Report, 1880, 8.
30. Ibid.
THE ATTENDANCE PROBLEM

Consideration of the attendance problem is best approached through the relevant statistics for the period. These form the substance of Table I.

**TABLE I: ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE IN 31 THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1880-1900**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ending Enrolment</th>
<th>Average Quarterly Enrolment</th>
<th>Average Attendance</th>
<th>Attendance as Percentage of Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Attendance as Percentage of Average Quarterly Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>114,811</td>
<td>108,841</td>
<td>71,999</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>166,611</td>
<td>134,872</td>
<td>90,944</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>167,134</td>
<td>139,159</td>
<td>95,215</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>179,990</td>
<td>153,244</td>
<td>105,538</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>186,692</td>
<td>160,919</td>
<td>112,220</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>195,241</td>
<td>170,357</td>
<td>116,665</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>210,643</td>
<td>186,207</td>
<td>132,580</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>206,265</td>
<td>181,678</td>
<td>130,089</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>221,603</td>
<td>197,025</td>
<td>142,193</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>227,561</td>
<td>203,910</td>
<td>141,723</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>238,382</td>
<td>212,713</td>
<td>153,844</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Compiled from *Ministers' Reports, 1880-1900*. 
Some satisfaction must have been felt within the Department, as the average attendance rose from 71,999 in 1880 to 153,844 in 1900. Certainly some commendation is due. However as a percentage of enrolment this attendance was still far from satisfactory. On the figures the teacher could expect only somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of his pupils to be present even in 1900. The havoc such poor attendance must have created caused considerable concern but in terms of the 1880 Act little could be done for children could legally be expected to attend only 140 days a year. In point of fact many did not achieve even this, as the figures in Table II demonstrate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ending</th>
<th>Pupils Attending 140 Days or More as Percentage of Total Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. Compiled from Minister's Reports for 1885 (p.8), 1886 (p.7), 1890 (p.14) and 1892 (p.7).
Obviously, then, in the case of many pupils there was the possibility of prosecuting their parents. The majority of such cases were never pursued to this point. In 1882, for example, 37,372 cases were investigated and although in 14,633 "the children's neglect to attend school was directly traceable to parental greed or indifference" legal action was taken in only 1,271. Twenty-one years later in 1903 the number of cases investigated was 65,051 but legal action was taken in only 1,839. Prosecutions were regarded as a last resort. At first no doubt this was the result of the policy of tact. Later it was because convictions were difficult to obtain. Onus of proof of a child's age and that he was not receiving instruction devolved upon the Crown and in the judgment of Chief Inspector Bridges "presiding magistrates side(d) with offending parents".

33. Minister's Report, 1882, 12-16.
34. Ibid, 16.
35. Minister's Report, 1903, 6.
The irregular attendance of those pupils enrolled at public schools was numerically the major issue, but the attendance problem did not end there. A smaller, but none the less important, attendance problem existed with children not enrolled in State schools. In 1891, a convenient mid-point in the period, it was estimated that there were 219,542 children of statutory school age in the colony of whom 169,949 attended public schools and 35,027 private schools. It was the proud boast, on this estimate, that 93.3 per cent of the child population was receiving the benefits of education but this left 14,566 children unaccounted for and the character of some private schools raises doubts about the regularity and efficiency of the education received by others. It was the view of Attendance Officers that many of these private schools were used to evade the compulsory clauses where fees were paid on behalf of children who did not necessarily attend. It was the opinion of Parkes in 1886

38. Minister's Report, 1891, 11.

39. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 19, 2439-2443, 8th June, 1886.
that what was required was legislation dealing with private schools\textsuperscript{40}. With this Inglis in his 1887 Report agreed\textsuperscript{41}. The issue of these private schools, including as they did Catholic schools, was, however, a delicate matter and it is to be noted that Parkes expressed his opinion whilst safely in opposition. When it was discovered that Attendance Officer Wigg had been guilty of exaggeration in his description of the particularly bad case which had sparked the parliamentary discussion the matter was dropped\textsuperscript{42}. In 1891 the issue arose once more, this time prompted by a deputation from the Trades and Labour Council to Francis Suttor, the Minister for Public Instruction at the time. This deputation expressed particular concern over the employment of children under statutory school age\textsuperscript{43}, a concern which

\textsuperscript{40}. \textit{Ibid}, 2444.

\textsuperscript{41}. \textit{Minister's Report}, 1887, 8.

\textsuperscript{42}. \textit{N.S.W.P.D. (1)}, 19, 2439-43, 8th June, 1886; and \textit{N.S.W.P.D. (1)} 21, 4017-22, 11th August, 1886. (Wigg much later claimed he had not exaggerated - \textit{Vide} N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors \ldots April, 1904, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1904, 184-85.)

\textsuperscript{43}. \textit{Minister's Report}, 1891, 12.
is to be interpreted in the light of increasing unemployment as the depression began. The basic weakness as Suttor saw it was the Act itself. As it stood he found himself unable to deal with the problem and listed five points which he suggested be covered by amending legislation:

1. Provision to deal effectively with children idling about the streets.

2. Authority to find out conclusively the total number of children of statutory school age in the colony.

3. Placement of onus of proof of age on parents or guardians.

4. Power to compel accurate returns from private schools.

5. The inclusion of a clause making it a penal offence to employ children of school age unless educated up to the standard required. 44

44. Ibid.
Despite the inclusion of these suggestions again in the 1892 Report of the Minister nothing came of them.

At the turn of the century the Act remained unaltered, although it was abundantly clear that it was somewhat effective with minor offenders but virtually useless with cases of chronic or total absence. "(V)icious parents"\textsuperscript{45}, as Chief Inspector Bridges described them, found no difficulty in evading the law\textsuperscript{46}. Earl Beauchamp, Governor of New South Wales, chose to discuss the attendance problem in his address opening the Third Annual Conference of the Public School Teachers' Association on 26th June, 1900. He summed up the position with these rounded statistics - 180,000 children of school age were being regularly educated; 10,000 were exempted from attendance by law; 35,000 children attended school less than half the time; 30,000 children were not receiving any instruction, although these may have attended at some

\textsuperscript{45.} Minister's Report, 1899, 66.

\textsuperscript{46.} Minister's Report, 1897, 110; and Minister's Report 1898, 65.
time and so were not necessarily illiterate; 8,000 of those enrolled at public schools were "incorrigible absentees". In all it was a position crying out for governmental action but action was confined to alterations in the machinery used to enforce compulsion. In 1887 the School Attendance Branch was abolished and the number of Attendance Officers was reduced from fifty-one to twenty-six. Subsequently this number was reduced to twelve and then in 1893 as a part of the retrenchment programme introduced to counter the depression Attendance Officers were abolished altogether and the task of enforcing the compulsory clauses handed over to the police. Each step along this road was an acknowledgement that it was a waste of public funds to maintain a staff whose achievements were limited even before they


began by the inadequacy of the very legislation they were to enforce. What is clear is that the parliamentarians who refused to amend the law were as much a part of the attendance problem as the parents who refused to send their children regularly to school. Parliament was apparently satisfied that most children were being taught to read, write, spell and perform arithmetic. There was either complacency or a fear of political repercussions if the matter were pursued; most probably both. The important question is why this problem existed. The compulsory clauses themselves and the attitudes of those who framed them gave some answer. The external conditions of the colony and the opinions expressed by parents and the wider community provide others.

THE COMMUNITY AND ITS CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

The basis of the attendance problem lay in the attitudes of the community towards education. Ultimately these attitudes were the product of the broad social and economic conditions of the time. New South Wales in the
late nineteenth century was pastoral and agricultural
with some mining, considerable commercial activity and
with an industry which, although expanding, was "still
chiefly 'domestic', tied to primary production and
consumers' immediate needs" 50. What was required as
manpower were labourers, artisans and clerks and of these
only clerks needed more than a modicum of formal
education. Departmental officers hazarded opinions of
parental attitudes which support this generalisation
and coincidentally throw some light upon the economic
structure of the pastoral and agricultural industries
of the period. District Inspector Bradley's comment
was among the most penetrative of these. He claimed
that in the Armidale area there were large numbers of
free-selectors who made their living by sheep farming
and agriculture on a small scale amongst whom "the

50. A.G.L. Shaw, The Economic Development of Australia,
Longmans Green, Melbourne, 1955, 132.
(Cf. the contemporary analysis by J.P. Wright,
"New South Wales Manufactures: Their Past Ten
Years' Progress, and Future Prospects", The
Australian Economist, 1, 14, December, 1888, 106-110.
employment of their children (was) regarded as little short of an absolute necessity". And he felt certain that the children of such men would be very poor attenders at school. There were others in the community, notably parliamentarians, who thought they could speak even more generally than this for the parents of New South Wales. John Stewart, in the Legislative Council in 1886, was prepared to claim that

\[\text{... the working multitude wanted schools where their children could be taught the rudiments, and then withdrawn in order that they might help to earn the bread of the household.}\]

Evidence that these sentiments were shared by many in the community is provided by the failure of the high schools which offered courses beyond the elementary level to gain support. It would be incorrect to exaggerate this point because the failure of the high schools was also related to the fees they charged. The


52. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 18, 706, 10th February, 1886.
alternative avenue through which a "secondary education" might be obtained, the Superior Public Schools where the fees were lower, fared somewhat better. But the point remains that many in the community regarded a simple elementary education as the most that was required. There was even a body of opinion which thought that whilst the state should spare no trouble to see that primary education reached every home in the country, having done this its duty was discharged. And beyond this there was even a supplementary fear that in providing facilities and encouragement for children to go beyond the elementary stage there was a danger of "over-educating" the boys and girls of New South Wales with dire social consequences. Hosking, speaking in the Legislative Council in 1897, expressed the danger thus:

We want the children of the country to be brought up to engage in useful mechanical labour, but in the existing state of things you cannot find young men who will take to the ordinary mechanical work of life. The natives of the colony want to be clerks or doctors or lawyers, but they do not want to be working-men.

53. _N.S.W.P.D. (1),_ 36, 1056, 7th December, 1888.
54. _N.S.W.P.D. (1),_ 91, 4788-89, 18th November, 1897.
This attitude was sufficiently widespread for a discussion of over-education (presumably requiring a refutation of its supposed dangers) to be set in 1893 among the questions on School Management to be attempted by teachers seeking a Class I certificate. And it was sufficiently widespread, too, for the Minister for Public Education, Francis Sutter, to attempt publicly to refute the charge at Kiama the same year. Unfortunately Sutter had doubts of his own and had also to defend the educational policy introduced because of the economic crisis. The result was a somewhat unfortunate statement from a Minister for Public Instruction:

No one could argue that it was the duty of the State to do more than give a full education to children between 6 and 14. It was desirable, when a boy reached the age of 14, after eight years' education, that he should assist his parents by learning a trade ... If a boy did not intend to follow a profession, the sooner he got to work the better it would be both for him and his parents.

55. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, III, 3, 1st August, 1893, 55.
56. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, III, 1, 1st June, 1893, 2.
57. Ibid.
This discussion of the dangers of "over-education" is but one more item illustrating the wide currency of a real doubt about the value of anything more than a rudimentary elementary education. Departmental officials might take the view expressed by Chief Inspector Bridges that "the best education should be placed within the reach of every child"\(^{58}\), but they had to contend with community opinion.

The personal opinions of parents had largely to be guessed at, much as Bradley and Hosking had done, or inferred from the continuing attendance problem. In 1886 one writer, under the pseudonym of "A Parent"\(^{59}\), plunged into print at length. The opinions he expressed throw some additional light upon community and parental attitudes. "A Parent" criticised the working of the 1880 Act in considerable detail. There was justifiable censure of the poor standards of sanitation and hygiene

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58. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, IV, 7, 1st December, 1894, 123.

which existed in many schools. And at considerable
length two fundamental educational issues were discussed -
the nature and the extent of primary schooling. Both the
age of entry and the leaving age were attacked: the
former as too early, the latter as too late. It was
claimed that children were better off at home until seven
and that fourteen was school age only if further
education at the Grammar School or University was contem-
plated. This opinion was supported by the argument
that "it does not require a period of eight or nine years
to teach a child to read and write and cipher". Such
an argument restricted the primary course to little
more than the basic subjects but the laws of health and
history were also admitted as proper subjects for the
primary school. The courses followed in the last two or
three years of primary schooling were unhesitantly

60. "A Parent" quoted the findings of Dr. Clark.
(These were reported in V. & P.N.S.W. Legis.
Assembly, 1883-84, "Report of Dr. Clark upon the
Sanitary Condition of the Public Schools of the
City of Sydney and Suburbs; also Report of Dr.
Mackellar", Vol. 7, 1007-22.)

Working", op. cit., 418.
condemned on the grounds that subjects such as Euclid, Algebra and French had no relation to the basic reason primary schools existed - proficiency in the three R's. Such subjects, moreover, lay outside "A Parent's" aim for his children. They were designed "to fit them for mere feeble clerks in public offices, when (he) wish(ed) to fit them for sturdy agriculturists or engineers"\textsuperscript{62}.

The article by "A Parent" was of interest on one additional point. The basic curriculum which was advocated included hygiene and history in addition to the three R's. The inclusion of history was in accord with the opinions of the legislators who stipulated in the 1880 Act that "lessons in the history of England and in the history of Australia sh(ould) form part of the course of secular instruction"\textsuperscript{63}. This was in fact a specific instruction to William Wilkins who regarded history as an unsuitable study for young scholars. After his retirement Wilkins was publicly critical of this political interference with the curriculum\textsuperscript{64}. But the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{62. }\textit{Ibid}, 424.
\item \textbf{63. }\textit{43 Vic., xxiii, op. cit.}, 18 (Clause 7).
\item \textbf{64. }W. Wilkins, \textit{The Principles that Underlie the Art of Teaching}, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1886, 35.
\end{itemize}
1880 instruction was clear. Henceforth the primary school course was to include history. To those who advocated it this subject was particularly valuable in producing an informed electorate.

Apart from the legislative directive that history and general religious teaching be included, the community attitude formed general and implicit determinants of curriculum and educational policy. Thus the Department had to contend with a considerable attendance problem which was the product of a widespread belief that a limited education was quite adequate. Parliament itself sanctioned such a view, firstly by the legislative provision for the issue of exemption certificates and secondly by its refusal to take any action to amend the compulsory clauses. Nor did the Department's difficulties end there. The National System had won the day partly because it was supposedly more economical and the claims of economy were to continue to determine educational policy for many years to come. There was a parliamentary hesitation to assume the financial responsibilities consonant with the desire to afford the best primary education to all children.
THE HESITATION OVER FINANCE

Despite protests in the Legislative Assembly\(^6\), Parkes made it clear that his government had no intention of making education free\(^6\) and justified his stand on two counts: first that the reduced rate of threepence a week was small enough for everyone to be able to pay\(^7\); second that payment of fees would provide a link between parent and school\(^8\). This argument lost its cogency when Parkes went on to speak of the considerable revenue these fees would provide\(^9\). The real point is that parliament was reluctant to assume full financial responsibility. Government after government faced with an increasing budget, a desire to limit expenditure, and the argument against school fees adopted the same attitude - fees were retained. The consistency of this policy is in one sense remarkable and in another sense a commentary upon

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65. *N.S.W.P.D. (1)*, 1, 89, 5th November, 1879 (Jacob).


67. *Ibid*.


69. *Ibid*, 88 (5th November, 1879) and 270 (20th November, 1879).
the policies of political parties of the late nineteenth century. The period from 1880 to 1900 saw no less than twelve changes of government. It also saw the emergence of the Labor Party, with its plank of free education, as a major political force. And yet the campaign for an end to school fees was left to individuals. Thus William Teece moved in the Legislative Assembly for the abolition of school fees as early as July 1881\textsuperscript{70}, a motion Parkes blocked with a typically dramatic announcement that if it were passed his Ministry would resign\textsuperscript{71}. After Parkes had resigned on another issue Teece tested the attitude of the new Stuart Ministry by once again moving for the abolition of fees\textsuperscript{72}. The debate which ensued centred primarily upon the question of state responsibility and although a number of members, including Parkes\textsuperscript{73}, remained unconvinced the Legislative Assembly recorded:

\textsuperscript{70} N.S.W.P.D. (1), 5, 182, 19th July, 1881.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid, 211.
\textsuperscript{72} N.S.W.P.D. (1), 8, 224-26, 6th February, 1883.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, 237.
That in the opinion of this House the payment of fees for elementary education in the public schools of the colony should be discontinued.\(^{74}\)

Despite Reid's reassurances\(^{75}\) this motion was ignored by the Stuart Government. The next step was taken by Melville who initiated a bill in 1891\(^{76}\) and reintroduced it in 1892\(^{77}\) only to have it stopped on both occasions by prorogation. In 1895 Arthur Griffith, a Labor member destined to become a Minister for Public Instruction, took similar action\(^{78}\), but with somewhat more success. By 1897 his Public Instruction (Amendment) Act had passed through all stages in the Legislative Assembly where the Reid Government chose not to oppose it\(^{79}\). It was stopped at the Second Reading in the Legislative Council\(^{80}\). Thus Reid avoided any direct clash with the Labor Party whose votes kept his

\(^{74}\) Ibid, 254.

\(^{75}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 9, 1892, 1st May, 1883; and 10, 51 16th October, 1883.

\(^{76}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 52, xix; and 53, 1245, 19th November, 1891.

\(^{77}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 59, 878, 4th October, 1892.

\(^{78}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 79, xvi and 853f.

\(^{79}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 89, 3048, 17th August, 1897.

\(^{80}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 91, 4792, 18th November, 1897.
government in office although he knew that with a hostile upper house there was no likelihood of the measure becoming law. The Assembly debates were not without their little ironies: Hogue, who soon afterwards joined the Reid Ministry as Minister for Public Instruction, spoke in favour of the bill \(^{81}\); so did Perry \(^{82}\), who was to succeed Hogue to this post when the Reid Government fell \(^{83}\). The nineteenth century ended with Griffith again initiating his bill only to see it counted out at the Second Reading \(^{84}\) for lack of a quorum, a disappointment which no doubt was increased when he was informed that the Lyne Ministry would not support the measure \(^{85}\). The inescapable inference is that the Labor Party, for all its platform plank of free education, was not as a group

\(^{81}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 79, 857, 17th September, 1895.

\(^{82}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 81, 3406, 17th December, 1895; and 89, 3042, 17th August, 1897.

\(^{83}\) The Reid Ministry fell on 14th September, 1899 when the Labor Party withdrew support.

\(^{84}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 107, 5100, 13th November, 1900. (It was restored the next day: Ibid, 5135. The same difficulty had been encountered earlier when the House had temporarily adjourned during the Committee stage on 20th July, 1897 for lack of a quorum – N.S.W.P.D. (1), 88, 2098.

\(^{85}\) N.S.W.P.D. (1), 107, 5100, 13th November, 1900.
Diagram I  EDUCATIONAL FINANCES, 1880-1900
the character of which will be considered in detail later.

(iv) After 1893 the depression affected the education vote quite drastically. The average annual cost to the state per child fell to an all-time low for the period in 1896 and despite continually increasing enrolments the expenditure on school buildings was so curtailed for the remainder of this century that these became a major problem in the next.

Financial policy was more a general reflection of educational policy than a specific determinant of the elementary curriculum. With an apparently buoyant economy and with funds therefore available fresh educational departures, among them major curriculum

86. There was an occasion in 1884 when sewing was affected by an unexpected reduction in the vote for sewing mistresses during the Supply Debate and some of these women dismissed as a result (N.S.W. P.D. (l), II, 2442-43, 20th March, 1884; and Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Accountant to Under-Secretary, 25th March, 1884). And there was also the decision of the Parkes Government to abolish the fuel and cleaning allowances in 1886 (N.S.W.P.D. (l), 26, 1727-29; 33, 5421-22, 5564-65, 5634; 36, 1054-59; 37, 799; 44, 507 and 702-03).
departures, were contemplated in 1890. Although a number of innovations were introduced, subsequent development was seriously restricted by the onset of the depression. And it was after 1893, too, that the material condition of the schools, an important factor in the curriculum, degenerated. Basically the problem was more than just one of changing economic circumstances. There was a strong tradition of economy in education and whilst on the one hand the 1880 Act was an example of the increasing willingness of the state to interfere in the lives of its citizens the deficiencies of this Act and the difficulties surrounding its implementation demonstrate the hesitations of the legislators. Liberalism took education forward but forward only just so far. The horizons were limited and so was the sense of authority and responsibility. It was characteristic that the Sydney Morning Herald which had actively supported the campaign for free, compulsory and secular education became increasingly conservative and that in its conservatism it not only stood guard against undue expenditure but restricted the educational function of

87. S.M.H., 27th November, 1882. (This is an excellent example, for here favourable support of kindergarten work may be seen tempered by a warning against its possible cost.)
the state to instruction in the basic subjects. It was also characteristic that all of this was an anti-
podean reflection of English opinions and attitudes.

The history of curriculum development in the elementary schools of New South Wales in the late nineteenth century is in part the history of the interaction between the limited community concept of education which prevailed so widely and ideas which were challenging because they were broader and somewhat novel. In a similar sense the history of curriculum development in this period is in part the history of the interaction between these newer ideas and an established Departmental heritage of curriculum theory, of administrative policy, of complacency and of regimentation which stood as factors against change until modified. These Departmental

88. S.M.H., 4th November, 1901. (An important example to which later more detailed reference will be made in this study.)

traditions were established by William Wilkins during the eras of the National Board and the Council of Education. They were unaffected by the introduction of ministerial control and the establishment of a Department of Public Instruction. This heritage is explicit in Wilkins' own statement of his curriculum theory which he made in 1886 and in the educational principles enunciated by Gladman, the textual authority for the teachers of New South Wales during the late nineteenth century.

THE EDUCATIONAL AIDS AND CURRICULUM THEORY OF WILLIAM WILKINS

At a series of six lectures delivered at the Sydney Technical College Wilkins, but recently retired from the position of Under-secretary of the Department, set forth his philosophy of education and his concept of curriculum. These lectures are a statement of the educational and psychological theory by which the work

90. W. Wilkins, op. cit., 1886.
of the recently established Department of Public Instruction and its predecessors was justified. And although the foundation and extension of elementary education owed more to sociological factors than to either psychological or educational theory, such theory was nevertheless important. Beside the legislative and social foundations of late nineteenth century education, this theory was, indeed, more immediately and directly relevant when details of the curriculum were decided. Merely broad outlines were decided by community expectations. It was Wilkins who had formulated educational purposes in theoretical terms, determined the details of curriculum, provided the state with its system of teacher training, and developed the inspectorial system into an examination for results. This "Wilkinism" was to remain as an abiding determinant of educational policy and practice - in some respects long into the twentieth century. The continuity of the educational tradition at least as long as the end of the nineteenth century was in fact proudly emphasised by Bridges in 1897 when he pointed out that most of the then regulations of the
Department had been formulated in the days of the National Board\(^91\). In curriculum this continuity was clearly evident. A change was required by legislative enactment: history had to be included. But there was no great haste. As a temporary measure when the Department was established most of the Council's regulations, including those on curriculum, were reaffirmed. As a result the 1867 Standard of Proficiency continued in operation until 1884.

Wilkins' educational innovations in New South Wales were modelled upon those of his mentor, Kay-Shuttleworth\(^92\), and upon those of the Irish National Board\(^93\). His educational theory was derived primarily from Pestalozzi and from faculty psychology. So axiomatic did Wilkins

\(91\) F. Bridges, *Education in New South Wales: An Historical Sketch*, n.d. (c. 1897).

\(92\) C. Turney, *op. cit.*, Part Seven: William Wilkins - The Colony's Kay-Shuttleworth.

consider the Pestalozzian aim - the natural, progressive and harmonious development of all the child's powers and faculties - that he plunged into his 1886 lectures with this unexamined and only implicitly stated. Consequently Wilkins' first major explicit step was an attempt to establish a catalogue of the faculties and a chronology of the order and period of their development. This was a necessary prerequisite to curriculum construction for one who accepted the Pestalozzian analogy that the faculties were present in the mind from birth "as the flower, perfect in all its parts, is enfolded in the bud". Wilkins was undoubtedly aware of Pestalozzi's broader aims; he was certainly aware of Bain's classification of faculties into the four divisions of the Senses, the Intellect, the Emotions and the Will; but it soon became apparent that Wilkins was himself primarily interested in the faculties of the Intellect. He felt justified in this because he

was certain that the principle of "parallel development" would ensure simultaneous growth even in those areas to which no special attention was given.\footnote{95}

The Senses were accorded a brief aside during which the "muscular sense" was noted as one valuable in education. The Emotions and the Will were briefly discussed under "School Discipline" where such "motives" as pleasure, pain, fear, wonder, self-approbation and "moral sense"\footnote{96} were listed primarily because these could be manipulated by the teacher as he sought "to subordinate the wills of his scholars to his own, that he may the more thoroughly train their intelligence and form their characters."\footnote{97} The faculties of the intellect were discussed in much greater detail with Wilkins presenting the contemporary view that these developed from

\footnote{95. \textit{Ibid}.}
\footnote{96. \textit{Ibid}, 22-35.}
\footnote{97. \textit{Ibid}, 22.}
"mere sensation" at the stage of infancy, to the emergence of the representative faculties of memory and imagination which characterised the stage from five to ten years of age, then to the emergence from the age of ten onwards of the cognitive faculties of classification, generalisation, induction and reasoning\textsuperscript{98}. This developmental sequence determined the character and purpose of the education provided at each of the various stages. Up to five the function of education was "mainly to cultivate habits of direct observation, to foster the spirit of inquiry and rational curiosity, and to extend the pupils' vocabulary as a means to expressing the results of their observations"\textsuperscript{99}. Between five and ten when the representative faculties appeared the formation of concepts was the major aim with the strengthening of the memory, the training of the powers of abstraction, comparison and classification, and the exercise of inductive reasoning as important but subsidiary objects. In the final stage, from ten onwards, it was expected that the pupil would be able to undertake systematic study on his own "without

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid, 18-20.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid, 19.
formal teaching"\textsuperscript{100}. And it was the view that during this last stage "the exercise of the reasoning powers must be the chief object of the teacher's solicitude"\textsuperscript{101}.

Faculty psychology provided a theoretical basis for the structure as well as the purpose of the curriculum. Wilkins invoked Morell's sequential classification of "subjects known to be within the range of children's minds\textsuperscript{102}: first came "knowledge of signs" which involved the perceptive faculties and concerned the ability to read, write and numerate; next came "knowledge of facts" which involved the representative facts and here Wilkins noted that although there were facts in everything this was a stage at which object lessons were of particular value; then came "knowledge of laws and relations" at which stage the higher portions of arithmetic, geography and grammar involving as they did the cognitive and reasoning faculties could now be taught; last of all in this

\textsuperscript{100. Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{101. Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{102. Ibid, 36.}
classification were "sentiments", the development of which could in Wilkins' opinion be best provided for through reading, especially reading of poetry.

Apart from this statement of his general curriculum theory, Wilkins also offered what he called "practical" explanations for the prescription of certain of the specific subjects of the course of study, explanations which reveal perhaps even more clearly the role that faculty psychology played in his thinking and its consequence. Of the language group of studies - Reading, Writing, Grammar, Analysis of Sentences, Composition - he claimed that "(t)horoughly taught, these branches w(ould) represent in primary education the educative power of classics, or philology, in the higher". The number studies could produce not only an aptitude in calculation but provide also a moral training by exercising the qualities of patience and readiness of mind and "when taught as a demonstrative science" cultivate the

103. Ibid, 39.

104. Ibid, 40.
reasoning powers. Elementary drawing, caligraphy, construction of geometrical figures - subjects grouped under the heading "Form" - were deemed of value in training "the eye and the hand", the observational and imitative powers, and "taste". Geography was a subject which filled the place occupied at higher levels by Natural, Industrial and Social Science. Music had a special value in cultivating the powers of attention.

The value of this miscellany of comments upon aims, structure and subjects of the primary school course is four-fold: first, it clarifies the faculty psychology which provided the New South Wales elementary curriculum with its theoretical justification and gives some indication of its effects; second, it demonstrates that Wilkins rejected a narrowly utilitarian concept as a basis for the curriculum - it was his own view that the instrumentary studies of reading, writing and numeration were not the whole subject of education; third, it

105. Ibid, 41.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid, 36.
nevertheless indicates that the curriculum was based upon a theory which justified a preoccupation with these basic skills, with memorisation and with facts, for these were the psychologically appropriate studies and aims during much of the elementary school period; fourth, there is a particular value in Wilkins views, for the psychological theory he expounded was to remain unchallenged in New South Wales for the rest of the century, at least as far as the teachers of New South Wales were concerned, because Gladman was their major textual authority and the views he expressed were consonant with those of Wilkins.

THE CURRICULUM THEORY OF F.J. GLADMAN, THE TEXTUAL AUTHORITY FOR TEACHERS

Gladman's views, as expressed in his *School Method*, demand consideration because they were of major importance for the teachers of New South Wales. His

109. Frederick John Gladman was superintendent of the Victorian training school from 1877 to 1884. As a teacher in England his work had been rated most highly by Matthew Arnold (J.O. Anchen, *Frank Tate and His Work for Education*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, 1956, 6 – Anchen rates Gladman as "one of the greatest figures in Victorian education").
text and the Public Instruction Act and its Regulations were the sole works in the field of education that all teachers were expected to study.  

Gladman, like Wilkins and other authorities of the period, was primarily concerned with the mental education of pupils - the general view, in the words of Sully who was an English psychologist of some note, was that "the teacher is most directly concerned with the development of the child's mind and considers his bodily organism mainly in its connection with mental efficiency". The acknowledged rule of mental development was that "the faculties or functions of intellect are strengthened by exercise".

110. For pupil-teachers Gladman and a work on kindergarten were the set texts. Amongst teachers only those who were candidates for a First Class certificate were expected to study anything more than Gladman and the Act and its Regulations.

111. J. Sully, The Teacher's Handbook of Psychology, 3rd Ed., Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1894, II. (It should be emphasised that Sully was not a conservative. He was indeed the "father" of the child-study movement in Britain.)

112. F.J. Gladman, School Method, Jarrold & Sons, London, n.d., 19. (This work went through many editions and revisions, the later revisions being the work of J.W. Jarvis. The references here are to the "124th thousand", c. 1895, a version revised by Jarvis but chosen intentionally because it represents opinion in the 1890's.)
The accepted procedure was "to provide each natural power with suitable exercise, sufficient to ensure its proper development, graduated so as to suit the individual capacity, not excessive, so as not to strain it unduly."\(^{113}\)

The effect of the concept of education as mental training upon the values accorded the subjects of the curriculum has already been exampled from Wilkins' lectures. Gladman expressed similar views; for example, that the value of grammar was "not so much in the absolute utility of its facts as in the mental discipline which it afford(ed)"\(^{114}\), that arithmetic trained the reasoning faculty\(^{115}\), and that the learning of dates in history "provide(d) a useful exercise for the memory"\(^{116}\). But Gladman was more than a faculty psychologist. He was

\(^{113}\) Ibid.  
\(^{114}\) Ibid, 118.  
\(^{115}\) Ibid, 72.  
\(^{116}\) Ibid, 113.
also a utilitarian\textsuperscript{117} to whom the usefulness or "practical value" of the subjects of instruction was important. Consequently the justifications Gladman offered for some subjects were in terms of his dual criterion for curriculum construction: usefulness and mental training. As a result quite contradictory statements were occasionally made. With arithmetic, for example, Gladman on the one hand advocated the use of concrete examples "because the ordinary arithmetical problems of common life deal with such examples, and their use in school tends not only to simplify the school-work, but to give it a practical turn"\textsuperscript{118}. And yet on the other hand Gladman

\textsuperscript{117} There is a real difficulty in selecting an appropriate title for this attitude. "Materialist" would do as well as "utilitarian" and pose the same problem because both terms have been used in philosophy with a different and more sophisticated connotation than is here implied. As a practical solution the term "utilitarian" is employed in the manner defined by E.L. French as "simply the practically useful; the term 'utilitarian' being the abstract noun and devoid of the broader connotation given to it by Hume, Bentham and James Mill" - E.L. French, \textit{Secondary Education in the Australian Social Order}, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Melbourne University, xix.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Ibid}, 79.
saw no objection to the use of abstract numbers in all those exercises which were designed to increase the pupil's dexterity in manipulating figures. With such work the principles of usefulness and reality did not apply. Then again Gladman was well aware that many of the calculations taught in schools could have no practical value and "only be defended upon the ground that the proper study of such subjects (wa)s a useful mental discipline, and that a man (was) likely to be intellectually stronger after undergoing such a training." This was a defence he was willing to accept. The inconsistency in his views is patent.

GENERAL TRENDS AND BASIC CONFLICTS IN LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY EDUCATION

Gladman's contradictory comments upon arithmetic demonstrate one of the real and fundamental problems in education generally and in curriculum construction in

119. Ibid.
120. Ibid, 72.
particular which emerged in the late nineteenth century. In this case it was the problem of reconciling the claims of utility with those of mental discipline. In England there were in fact basic and far-reaching conflicts in educational opinion and the outcomes of these controversies was to profoundly influence education in New South Wales. The traditional classical education of secondary schools and universities was strongly challenged by demands for the inclusion of English, science and modern languages within the course of study. Reform was widely acknowledged to be necessary but opinions differed upon the form it should take. The traditional classical (or "liberal") curriculum had its supporters who, like George Moberley of Winchester, wished to make teaching more effective but saw no need to alter the actual course of study. Moberley even rejecting science as educationally worthless.


Then there were the more slightly progressive who admitted and even supported the claims of science, modern languages and English but like Newman and Matthew Arnold remained true classicists in their assertion of traditional liberal and cultural aims and values\(^ {123}\). And there were the utilitarians and scientists such as Thomas Huxley and Herbert Spencer who were active advocates of science\(^ {124}\). This debate upon the aims and nature of secondary schooling was a reflection of the growth of the middle classes. It also owed some debt to the philosophy of utilitarianism of John Mill. Even more basically it was a reflection of the increasingly technological character of English life. The demand for reforms at university and secondary school level was a part only of a broader demand for increased technical

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123. Ibíd, 139-143. (A more detailed analysis of Arnold's views, of the social background and of the opinions expressed by others who participated in the controversies of the period will be found in W.F. Connell, The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1950.)

124. Ibíd, 146-152.
and scientific education. It was this broader demand which was also to influence primary education.

As early as 1830-36 a House of Commons committee had concluded that the manufactured articles of France were superior to those of England where there was a "lamentable deficiency of taste and artistic knowledge"\textsuperscript{125}, a dependence upon foreign skill and upon designs copied from abroad\textsuperscript{126}. The basic educational problem was the lack of adequate facilities for instruction\textsuperscript{127}. There was nothing in England comparable to the schools of design of France\textsuperscript{128}. Some steps were taken to remedy this deficiency: a Normal School of Design was opened in London in 1837\textsuperscript{129}; financial aid was granted in 1840 for the development of schools of design in other cities.


\textsuperscript{126} C.A. Bennett, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{127} J.C.L. Sparkes, \textit{op. cit.}, 32 (Quoted in C.A. Bennett, \textit{loc. cit.}).

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{129} C.A. Bennett, \textit{op. cit.}, 385.
and towns\textsuperscript{130}. This progress was not equal to the need, a fact which was brought home with the Great Exhibition of 1851\textsuperscript{131}. Government action on a more determined scale was the result. The Science and Art Department was established at South Kensington and the foundations laid for a system of technical education in Great Britain and Ireland. It was then that drawing found a real place in the elementary curriculum\textsuperscript{132}. With this history and its dependence upon grants from the Science and Art Department, its geometrical character and the importance accorded the South Kensington approach during the remainder of the nineteenth century come as no surprise. There were those who commented favourably upon the results achieved subsequently by Britain at the Paris Exhibition of 1867\textsuperscript{133}, but France had responded to these moves by

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid, 386.
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid,
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid, 388.
  \item \textsuperscript{133} H. Kiddle and A.J. Schem, \textit{The Cyclopaedia of Education}, Steiger, New York, 1877, 50 - "at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 England stood in the first rank of artistic nations" (Quoted in C.A. Bennett, \textit{op. cit.}, 388).
\end{itemize}
improving her art instruction further and taking the lead in another field - the inclusion of shopwork as a vital part of the scheme of training in technical schools. This was the background against which the Royal Commission of 1881-84 deliberated and, impressed with workshop training, recommended the inclusion of manual training in English elementary schools. On the English scene this was the background to the actual manual training movement which developed and in which Philip Magnus played a major role. It is the background, too, to reforms which were introduced into the New South Wales elementary curriculum. Utility, with its roots in the socio-economic character of society, was a major force for change. This concept had a direct and immediate appeal. Detailed consideration of the impact of these ideas upon local education is contained in Chapter II, but it is relevant here to note that when Chief Inspector Bridges discussed the public

134. It should be noted that Germany too responded to the 1851 Exhibition. Her response was in the form of continuation schools and her achievements with these was to be a topic of discussion in the latter years of the century.
school curriculum before a group of assembled parents

in 1894 he did so in terms of utility:

Men's nature consists of three parts - physical, mental and moral - and our system provides for the proper training of each. In connection with physical training children are taught the value of fresh air and the importance of pure water; and cleanliness ... is inculcated by precept and example. The mechanism of the human frame is thoroughly explained and children are shown how, by means of careful diet and proper habits, diseases may be prevented. As regards mental training, not only are reading and writing taught, but habits of observation and reflection are cultivated. They are taught to reflect, to weigh, to consider, so that in their future lives they will depend not merely on reading or on other people's experience, but will be able to work out their own conclusions. In regard to moral training - the highest part of man's nature - the Public Instruction Act provides ... (for) ... religious training ... (and) in the ordinary work of the school, the children are taught to be honest and true; to be kind to one another; to fear God and keep His commandments ... Those who are now boys, trained in this way will be qualified hereafter to fill the highest positions with honour and credit ... (But) Teachers must bear in mind not to make education too "bookish". One time it was said "Knowledge is power", now it is "Applied knowledge is power." 135

135. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IV, 7, 1st December, 1894, 123.
Alongside this utilitarianism must be added another factor gradually to exert an influence upwards upon the elementary school - Froebelian naturalism and the kindergarten movement. In 1851 the Ronges had pioneered kindergarten work in England\textsuperscript{136}. In 1854 the Baroness Bertha von Marenholtz Bülow-Wendhausen who devoted much of her life to the popularisation of Froebel's ideas visited England with just this object\textsuperscript{137}. By 1874 sufficient interest in the work and satisfaction with its results had been created for the London School Board to appoint a trained Froebelian, Caroline Bishop, to lecture to the mistresses of its infants' schools and for the British and Foreign School Society to appoint Fraulein Heerwart as principal of a kindergarten training college\textsuperscript{138}. It was in 1874, too, that the

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\textsuperscript{136}. E. Lawrence (Ed.), Friedrich Froebel and English Education, Philosophical Library, New York, 36.
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\textsuperscript{137}. S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boultonwood, op. cit., 155.
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Froebelian Society was founded. By the early 1880's the kindergarten movement had a considerable following in England, some degree of success within the established system and had produced a valuable body of literature. This background and the fortuitous arrival from England of women trained and experienced in kindergarten work was to prove a major factor in New South Wales educational development.

Such then were the legislative, social and educational foundations of curriculum development in New South Wales in the late nineteenth century. On the one hand there were limited concepts of the purpose of education, of an appropriate course of study and of parliamentary responsibility and authority, concepts which were both a reflection and a product of the social and economic conditions of the period. Yet on the other hand society was certainly changing and in the process science and technology were becoming increasingly important. Certainly this was less true of New South Wales than of Europe and America, but the colonists were aware of overseas developments. So on the local scene there were

139. *Ibid*, 239.
soon moves to expand technical education which had an impact upon elementary schooling. At the same time elementary education in New South Wales was governed by the traditions established under the National Board and the Council of Education and by the educational theory of William Wilkins and Frederick Gladman. The history of the development of the elementary school curriculum in the last two decades of the nineteenth century is thus a history of the modification of an already determined course of study operating under established conditions. It is a history, too, of a preliminary encounter of elementary education in this colony with ideas from abroad which were later to figure prominently in the reform movement at the end of the century, a movement described at that later date as the "New Education". To the colonists in the late nineteenth century no such term was known but they were aware of increased popularity of kindergarten work, of the importance attached to "pre-technical" education in the elementary school and of a loose bond between the two. And to these they responded.
CHAPTER II

MODIFICATIONS IN THE COURSE OF STUDY, 1880-1900

The primary school course of study and the accompanying more detailed Standards of Proficiency were not immediately affected by the dissolution of the Council of Education. As a temporary measure most of the Council's regulations, including those governing the curriculum, were reaffirmed\(^1\). Change was required by the legislative stipulation that henceforth the course was to include history but neither this, nor the fact that the current course of study and Standards of Proficiency were virtually the same as those established at the conference of inspectors in 1867\(^2\), produced any real sense of urgency.

\(^1\) Minister's Report, 1880, 1.

\(^2\) V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1867, Vol. 4, 193-197.
Subsequently during the period from 1880 until 1903 there were three major revisions of the Standards of Proficiency, those of 1884, 1890 and 1898. Curriculum development in this period had four main phases: first, the major revision of 1884 with its emphasis upon the essentials; second, the wider vision and promise of 1890; third, the depression and its educational consequences; and fourth, the beginnings of an educational recovery. During this last fourth phase the Department produced its 1898 Standard but it was a phase which also included considerable criticism of New South Wales educational policy. In this chapter discussion of this fourth phase will be restricted to consideration of the Standard of 1898.

THE STANDARDS OF 1884: A CURRICULUM OF MINIMAL ESSENTIALS

Chief Inspector Johnson first seriously tackled the task of revising the Standard of Proficiency in May 1881 when he sought by circular to obtain the opinions of his inspectors on four topics: the alterations they thought to be necessary in the course of study, the changes they
thought should be made to the Standards of Proficiency, the text books they could recommend and the opinion they held of the advisability of introducing more than just a single Standard expected of all schools irrespective of their size. Johnson himself was sympathetic towards the task faced by the teachers of the many small schools scattered throughout New South Wales. A number of inspectors accepted the implicit suggestion contained in Johnson's circular and recommended that the Standard of Proficiency expected of one-teacher schools be made less demanding than that expected of larger schools. Satisfied then that it would be generally acceptable, Johnson made the preparation of a "Standard of Proficiency for a School taught by one Teacher" the first task. It was submitted for ministerial approval on 3rd March 1882 but Suttor decided it could stand over until a general review of the

3. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Circular of Chief Inspector Johnson to Inspectors, 19th May, 1881.

4. Ibid, Bridges to Johnson, 3rd June, 1881; Maynard to Johnson, 27th May, 1881; Morris to Johnson, 29th June, 1881.
regulations was made. Although this special Standard for one-teacher schools subsequently failed to appear, it is significant for it incorporated the recommendation which had come from a number of the inspectors that the basic skills should be accorded increased importance. In particular it incorporated Maynard's suggestion that this be done by "giving marks to the various subjects in proportion to their relative value and to the time and attention required to teach them." This idea of a differential scale of marks for the various school subjects became "the main principle" which guided the 1883 Conference of District Inspectors. And consequently the inclusion of English and Australian history in the Standard as required by statute was the least significant product of the deliberations of 1881, 1882 and 1883. Instead the feature of the 1884 Standard was its emphasis upon the

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7. Ibid, "Public Schools - Report of Conference of District Inspectors", c. 1st September, 1883, 1. (Note: This is a printed document which is filed under the year 1903.)
basic subjects. It was a curriculum of minimal essentials. The differential marking scale was a corrective measure aimed at those teachers who, by taking advantage of the previous policy which had compelled inspectors to award equal marks to all subjects, had used "the lighter subjects to make good the deficiency in reading, spelling, and arithmetic" 

The new marking scale was not the only innovation of 1884 which was designed to increase the relative importance of the basic subjects. The 1883 Conference had also recommended that the study of subjects "of less importance in the lower classes" be deferred until later. Those suggested for omission were grammar, geography, object lessons and drawing. Of these only object lessons had been prescribed for the First Class in 1867 — they were


omitted in 1884\textsuperscript{11}. All these subjects had been prescribed for Second Class\textsuperscript{12} - object lessons were retained but geography and grammar were omitted from the first two half-years of a course now extended from two to three half-years; drawing was omitted entirely\textsuperscript{13}. The inspectors seemed quite unconcerned that in recommending the omission of object lessons they were departing from theories of education which saw sense training as an early step in the educational process. What concerned the inspectors was a more practical problem, the problem of ensuring that children received at least a basic education. Ultimately this 1884 Standard was a concession to those in the community who saw more value in a child's services than in his education. In 1881 both Maynard\textsuperscript{14} and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{11.} Minister's Report, 1884, Appendix XV, 76-80.
\item \textbf{12.} V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1867, loc. cit.
\item \textbf{13.} Minister's Report, 1884, loc. cit.
\item \textbf{14.} Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Maynard to Johnson, 27th May, 1881.
\end{itemize}
McCormack had suggested that the standard in the basic subjects be raised so that a pupil of Third Class could pass the prescribed statutory examination for exemption. This was endorsed by the 1883 Conference. The precise recommendation was that the Standard of Proficiency be so arranged that children could gain exemption certificates after completing a year in the Third Class. It was expected that they would at that stage have been about eleven years of age. The reasoning behind the change was clarified in the Minister's Report for 1883:

As the majority of children do not remain at school long enough to go beyond a third class, the standard has been so drawn that a pupil completing the course prescribed for that class will be able with ease to pass the exit statutory examination.

What Departmental officials sought was a weapon with which to combat the prevailing irregular attendance and early withdrawal of pupils from school. Raising the

15. Ibid., McCormack to Johnson, 11th June, 1881.
17. Ibid.
standard required of the Third Class was their solution. This accepted as a fundamental principle that the basic skills were of such supreme importance that they should dominate the early years of primary schooling. This was a narrow concept of education consonant with public opinion. In justice to the inspectors it should be added that their decision was partly based upon their conviction that such subjects as music, drawing and object lessons were generally so poorly taught that they were "a mere waste of time".

The original "1884" Standard was issued in September 1883 but was very short lived. A new Standard was approved in September 1884. The principal figures who precipitated this rapid revision were Frances Abigail, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and the Reverend Dr. Barry, the Anglican Bishop of Sydney. Abigail argued that the replacement in the 1883 Standard of the old Irish National Board readers by Collins' School Series was tantamount to a Departmental decision to reduce the importance of

19. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Maynard to Johnson, 27th May, 1881.
20. Minister's Report, 1884, 76.
scripture in the school curriculum, and more than this he questioned the Departmental policy on scripture generally. The Departmental reply was that there were two series of Irish Board readers in use, one of scripture and one of reading and since only the latter was being replaced then scripture in the schools would not be affected. But Abigail's attack had exposed the fact that scripture lessons were included in the course of study only for pupils of Third Class and upwards. There was nothing new in this: it had been true of the 1867 Standard. Now however this fact became the focus of a major complaint against the system. A deputation to Trickett, the Minister, which was led by Reverend Barry, "urge(d) that more attention be given to religious instruction in schools." Barry demanded that all

21. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 11, 2419, 20th March, 1884. (Abigail was sufficiently concerned to write a personal letter to the Minister for Public Instruction - Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Abigail to Abbott, 5th May, 1884.)

22. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Chief Inspector to Undersecretary, 12th September, 1884.

23. S.M.H., 20th June, 1884.
teachers should not only provide religious instruction but should be trained to do so in the training colleges. Trickett refused to meet these demands but he did agree to raise the importance of scripture by increasing the marks allotted and by henceforth having it included in the course of study for all classes.

Since Trickett's decision required that the Standard be revised, Johnson decided that it would be an opportune moment "(t)o make important alterations in the mode of teaching Drawing ... (in) accord with the views held by some of the best authorities on the subject". At their 1883 Conference the inspectors had recommended that the course in drawing be "so arranged as to be of subsequent practical utility", but the real forces behind the modifications of September 1884 were the examiner in drawing, Arthur Riley, and the instructor at the Fort Street Training College, John Plummer.

24. S.M.H., 28th June, 1884.
25. Evening News, 28th June, 1884.
26. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Chief Inspector to Undersecretary, 12th September, 1884.
27. Ibid.
During 1882-1884 Riley, who in a part-time capacity was examiner of the Department's teachers in drawing, agitated for reforms. He recommended "the proper establishment of Drawing in our Public Schools, in accordance with the System adopted by Her Majesties (sic) Council of Education". He was convinced that drawing had not the place in the curriculum it deserved, especially for boys who were likely to follow a trade. Inspector J.S. Jones was entrusted with the task of providing an expert critique upon Riley's comments and suggestions. He rejected the charge that drawing instruction was deficient but his own recommendation that "(m)ore attention be given to Elementary Perspective, Practical Geometry and Drawing from Models" was not greatly different in character from those made by Riley. At this point Chief Inspector Johnson and Chief Examiner Gardiner agreed that a scheme recently

29. Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's Files, 1881-1912, Riley to Acting Under-secretary Miller, 19th July, 1883.


31. Ibid, Jones to McCredie, 6th March, 1883.
introduced at the Fort Street Training School by John Plummer who had undergone the same training at South Kensington as Riley should be given a further trial before any action was taken to modify the school curriculum.\(^{32}\)

In July 1884 Plummer himself wrote directly to Trickett, the Minister, of the need for "a properly graduated course of elementary drawing"\(^{33}\) in the public schools. He cited the opinion of the Victorian Commissioners that drawing should be taught as part of the ordinary school curriculum and treated "not as an elegant accomplishment but as a useful art, in order to be of special service to those engaged in trades and manufactures"\(^{34}\). In response Chief Inspector Johnson wrote to both Plummer and Riley asking them to supply the names of suitable text books\(^{35}\). Riley chose in his

\(^{32}\) Ibid, Chief Inspector's marginal note, 7th March, 1883; Chief Examiner Gardiner to Under-secretary, 1st September, 1883.

\(^{33}\) Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Plummer to Trickett, 9th July, 1884.

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) Ibid, Chief Inspector Johnson's marginal note, 17th July, 1884.
reply to suggest the supply to schools of casts and wire models rather than books and indicated that he had the authority of the President of the Board of Technical Education, Edward Combes, to commit its resources to their manufacture and to halve the cost which would be involved. When the Standard was issued in October 1884 it included Riley's scheme of drawing from wire and plaster models for Fourth and Fifth Classes. Thus it affected only the Superior Public Schools and their higher primary courses. It had little consequence for the elementary school curriculum. In a wider sense it was still significant for it was a modification introduced in the interests of "technical education". In point of fact in the field of drawing this was no novelty for South Kensington had provided the model for drawing in the public schools since the days when Joseph Fowles had acted as drawing master to the New South Wales Council of Education in the 1860's and his books used

36. Ibid, Riley to Johnson, 7th August, 1884.

37. Minister's Report, 1884, 78-79.
to define the course of study. In his discussion of secondary education French points out that before 1852 two distinct conceptions of drawing existed: (a) as a polite accomplishment, (b) as a basic discipline for draughtsmen and designers. In the latter half of the century the last, or South Kensington, conception gained ground, its progress fostered by Fowles himself and by the University decision to set examinations based upon this approach. Riley's demand for reform in 1881-84 had been based upon his belief that in too many primary schools drawing was still taught as a polite accomplishment instead of as a discipline which provided a formal training in the fundamentals of practical geometry and perspective. Riley's demand for reform,

38. Two of Fowles' texts, The Elementary Free-hand Drawing Book, c. 1867 and The Sydney Drawing Book No. 1, c. 1867, may be found in the Mitchell Library, Sydney.


40. Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's Files, 1881-1912, Riley's Report on the December 1882 Teachers' Examination, 10th February, 1883; Riley to Acting Under-secretary Miller, 19th July, 1883.
and Plummer's too, was clearly in the South Kensington tradition of providing "technical education". It was also a demand that policy in this state be brought up to date with the latest developments in Britain. Although its impact upon the 1884 Standard was confined to drawing and even there was slight, this call for reform was in fact one dimension of the broader demand for reform in the interests of technical education which was voiced in the colony at about this time. In areas other than primary schooling gains were more substantial - the Board of Technical Education established in 1883 was the major advance. Later there was to be a greater impact upon primary schooling, but this was not to find expression in the Standard until 1890\(^41\).

In the 1884 Standard the victory clearly went to those in the community who saw the object of education as proficiency in the basic subjects. The extent of this victory may best be judged through a comparison of the course approved in 1880 with that of 1884. Such a comparison is presented in Table III.

\(^41\) Vide infra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>I.N.B.* Book I or equivalents</td>
<td>Collins A.S.S.** Primers I and II, Reader I, Reader II to Lesson 24; or I.N.B. Book I and Book II, Sect. I and II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>On slates, the alphabet and monosyllables from copies and dictation</td>
<td>As for 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Notation to 3 places, simple addition, mental operations with results to 60</td>
<td>Notation to 4 places, addition to 6 lines, mental operations in addition and subtraction, &quot;7 times&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td>Domestic animals and common objects</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)

42. Compiled from Minister's Report, 1880, 36-37; and Minister's Report, 1884, 76-80.

* I.N.B. - Irish National Board.

** Collins A.S.S. - Collins Australian School Series.
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Class</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Class (cont.)</td>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Simple melodies by ear or by tonic sol-fa methods</td>
<td>Simple melodies by ear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Narratives and moral lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Class</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>I.N.B. Book II and Sequel I to Book II or equivalents</td>
<td>A.S.S. Readers II and II or I.N.B. Book II, Sequel I and Book III. Repetition from memory of 50 lines of poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>On slates from copy and dictation; in books text hand from copies</td>
<td>On slates from copy; in copy books - round hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Notation; four simple rules; multiplication table</td>
<td>Notation, four simple rules; multiplication in full; long division; addition; subtraction and multiplication (by two figures) of money; tables of money, weight; dozen's rule; reduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Local geography; uses of a map; definitions; N.S.W. in outline</td>
<td>Local geography; the continents, oceans and chief divisions of land and water on map of world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>(cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Domestic animals and common objects</td>
<td>&quot;to be given ... twice a week&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Simple melodies by ear or by tonic sol-fa methods</td>
<td>Scale exercises, intervals, simple melodies, two-part songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Simple rectilinear figures on slates</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>I.N.B. Old Testament No. 1, Lessons 1 to 18; moral lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>I.N.B. Sequel II to Book II and Book III or equivalents</td>
<td>A.S.S. Book IV or I.N.B. Book IV; synonyms, meanings, derivations, memorisation of 140 lines of poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(continued)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Class</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>On slates from dictation; in copy books - text and round hands.</td>
<td>In copy books - round, half-text and small hands; dictation - 12 lines from reading books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cont.)</td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Compound rules; reduction; tables</td>
<td>Compound rules; reduction; vulgar and decimal fractions; proportion; mental arithmetic including buying and selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Parsing, analysis, syntax of simple sentences, elementary composition</td>
<td>Parts of speech, parsing, analysis, syntax; composition - letters and descriptions of places and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Australia and New Zealand in detail; outlines of Europe</td>
<td>Australia, Tasmania and Polynesia in outline; N.S.W., Europe and Asia in detail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Class Lessons (cont.)</td>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td>Common minerals, vegetables, animals; simpler manufacturing processes</td>
<td>Common minerals, vegetables, animals; the human frame and laws of health; important manufactures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Part singing; Tonic Sol-fa method</td>
<td>Two-part songs, three-part rounds; notation, time signature, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Fowles' Elementary Drawing Books I, II and III or equivalents</td>
<td>Royal Drawing books 7, 8, 9, 10 with miscellaneous free-hand exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>I.N.B. Old and New Testaments Nos. 1</td>
<td>I.N.B. Old and New Testaments Nos. 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1800 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>I.N.B. Book IV or equivalent</td>
<td>A.S.S. Reader V or I.N.B. Sequel to Book IV; 100 lines of poetry from memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>On paper from copies and dicta-</td>
<td>On unruled paper - three hands; ornamental writing; ordinary commercial forms; dictation from reading books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tion; in copy books - three</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Proportion and practice; frac-</td>
<td>Practice; simple and compound interest; mensuration; discount; profit and loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tions; interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Etymology and syntax, analysis,</td>
<td>Parsing, analysis, simple essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>composition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Europe and Asia in detail;</td>
<td>North America in detail; South America, West Indies, Africa in outline; physical geography - ocean and atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>America in outline; elements of physical geography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Natural history; manufactures; elementary mechanics; science of common things; the mechanical powers</td>
<td>Elementary physiology; important manufactures; elementary physical science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Lessons (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Australian - Sutherland Chs. IV-X; English - Nelson's Junior to page 232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tonic sol-fa method</td>
<td>Staff notation; three-part songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Fowles' Drawing</td>
<td>Books IV, V, VI</td>
<td>Royal Drawing Books 11 and 12; Collins' Advanced Drawing Books 1 and 2; Drawing from wire models - cube, cone, prism, pyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td></td>
<td>Euclid - Book 1 to proposition XVI</td>
<td>Euclid - Book 1 to proposition XXVI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>I.N.B. Book V or equivalent</td>
<td>A.S.S. Reader V or I.N.B. 4th Sequel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>On paper, plain and ornamental</td>
<td>Ornamental and three hands; Dictation - on ruled paper, difficult passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Decimals; roots; mensuration</td>
<td>&quot;The Full Course&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Syntax, prosody, analysis, composition</td>
<td>As prescribed for Junior or Senior Exam. of Sydney University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>The world - physical and descriptive</td>
<td>As for Junior or Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>As for Junior or Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td>Arts and manufactures; laws of health; social economy; duties of citizens; the laws; experimental physics</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1880 Standards</th>
<th>1884 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Class</td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Physics or physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Tonic sol-fa</td>
<td>Staff notation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>method</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Perspective -</td>
<td>Geometrical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drawing from</td>
<td>drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>models</td>
<td>from wire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>models -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hexagon,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cylinder,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pyramid,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flat circle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Euclid, Book I</td>
<td>Euclid, Books I, II, III, IV with exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>To simple equa-</td>
<td>Todhunter's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tions of two</td>
<td>&quot;Algebra for Beginners&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unknown quanti-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Smith's &quot;Principia Latina&quot;</td>
<td>Smith's &quot;Principia Latina&quot; (for boys)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Schneider's &quot;First Year French Course&quot; (for girls)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>As for Fourth Class</td>
<td>As for Fourth Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some preliminary comments are necessary before interpreting the details of this table. The Standard of Proficiency which operated in 1880 divided the work of each class into quarter years, four to each class. It would be an error to infer from this that the work of each class was expected to be completed by a pupil in one year. Instead most were expected to spend two years in each class, that is if the age range indicated and the explanatory footnotes are reliable guides. When the Standard was revised in 1884 the division into quarters was replaced by a division into half-years; and although it may seem illogical the Standards for First, Second and Third Classes were framed so that each contained three half-years. Now, however, it was expected that most pupils would complete the work of these classes in the eighteen months now allotted to each.

44. Ibid, 193-94. (In particular footnote 3 to the First and Second Class courses justifies this inference.)
45. Minister's Report, 1884, 77 - The new age range indicated for First and Second Classes supports this contention.
Consequently the age of pupils at the end of the Third Class was expected to be the same as before. With these facts established then the revision of 1884 clearly did not merely increase the emphasis upon the essentials - it also significantly increased the demands upon pupils and teachers in these areas. At the end of Second Class, for example, when children were expected to be not yet nine years of age the New Standard in arithmetic demanded that they be capable of all the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers, of addition, subtraction and multiplication of money, and have mastered the tables of money, weight and measure. True the course had been altered to omit some subjects and so provided more time for the basic skills, but this procedure was fundamentally unsound. With children education is not just a matter of time allocation - maturity is a major factor. It is not enough to allot marks and proportionally distribute the time available in the manner stipulated by the 1884 Standard. Studies cannot be arbitrarily allocated to the various age groups with so little concern for their inherent difficulty.
The experience of the next few years was to demonstrate to Departmental officials that they had made a fundamental error, but temporarily at least they thought they had solved the problem of ensuring that all the children of New South Wales received an adequate education in the minimal essentials. If in the process they set their sights somewhat high it must be acknowledged that the motive behind this was a desire to see the standard of attainment raised generally among the citizens of New South Wales. Many pupils could not, of course, keep pace with these demands.

**THE STANDARDS OF 1890: A WIDER VISION**

There is no doubt that the demands made by the 1884 Standard were harsh. Carruthers acknowledged this in his 1888 Report:

> The present standards of proficiency have been in force four years. - ample time to test the fairness of their requirements and their suitableness. Compared with those formerly in use it must be admitted that they imposed increased work upon both teachers and pupils.46

And the 1880 Report then went on to promise that "the whole subject of standards, as well as other important matters, w(ould), it (wa)s hoped, receive careful considera-
tion and treatment before the end of the year"\textsuperscript{47}. It thus foreshadowed the conference of inspectors and head teachers which was held in December 1889\textsuperscript{48}. Deliberations at this conference produced "slight modifications"\textsuperscript{49} in the course of study – needlework and drawing were added to the course for the Infants' Schools; geography and grammar were omitted from the Second Class course. There were concurrent modifications in the Standard of Proficiency which were considered, at the time, as "more marked and important"\textsuperscript{50}. These modifications included:

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 14.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Conference of Inspectors and Teachers, December, 1889, Chairman's Report - Unfortunately the cover paper only is extant (the contents probably being incorporated in the Minister's Report for 1889). This gives the attendance as 76, of whom 39 were headmasters or headmistresses.}

\textsuperscript{49} Minister's Report, 1889, 12.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 13.
(1) A reduction in the degree of difficulty of the work prescribed in reading and arithmetic for Infants' Schools.

(2) The addition of drill, needlework and drawing to the group of subjects in the Infants' Schools to be allotted marks at the annual inspectorial examination.

(3) In the primary schools the omission of grammar and geography from the Second Class course - but this was the result of reducing the Second Class course from three to two half-years and the extension of the Third Class course to four half-years. So, despite ministerial statements to the contrary, there was no real change. These subjects have previously been required of the Second Class only in the third half-year.

(4) A true modification of the primary school course was effected by allotting marks for the subjects needlework and drill and by increasing the marks given for drawing. 51

Two features are apparent in these modifications:

---

51. Ibid, 12-14.
first, a breath of realism which reduced the demands upon child and teacher; second, a wider concept of education than that of 1884, a concept which expanded the course and sought to increase the importance of writing, needlework, drawing and drill by modification of the inspectorial marking scale. The changes introduced in the numerical importance attached to the various subjects of the course of study are outlined in Table IV.
**TABLE IV: THE STANDARDS OF 1884 AND 1890**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>Infants 1884</th>
<th>Infants 1890</th>
<th>First Class 1884</th>
<th>First Class 1890</th>
<th>Second Class 1884</th>
<th>Second Class 1890</th>
<th>Third Class 1884</th>
<th>Third Class 1890</th>
<th>Fourth Class 1884</th>
<th>Fourth Class 1890</th>
<th>Fifth Class 1884</th>
<th>Fifth Class 1890</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
## TABLE IV (continued)

### MARKS ALLOCATED

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<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
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52. Compiled from Minister's Report, 1884, 76-80; and Minister's Report, 1890, 477-484.

* Latin and French were alternatives, boys usually taking Latin and girls French.
What can be made of these decisions, hemmed about as they were by the annual inspectorial examination and the allocation of works? Two conclusions seem warranted — first, that amongst the basic subjects the importance attached to reading and arithmetic had decreased since 1884 whilst that attached to writing and dictation had increased; second, that these standards certainly represent a move to extend education beyond the "essentials" of 1884. But whence came these reforms? This is the important question. In the 1888 Report the severity of the 1884 Standard had been acknowledged and its modification was no doubt in part based upon practical experience. It was also influenced by two other factors — criticisms of New South Wales education which came from visiting Victorian experts and the increased contemporary local interest in technical education.

THE REPORTS OF THE VICTORIAN VISITORS, 1887-1888

Brodribb, the Victorian Assistant Inspector-General, investigated the school system of New South
Wales during 1887. His visit lasted less than a month. In the report he furnished to his superiors, Brodribb described teaching in New South Wales as freer and more intelligent than in Victoria, a feature he attributed to the absence of payment by results. Overall the report appeared favourable to New South Wales, largely because it was employed as a vehicle by which to condemn the result system which operated in Victoria. It did, nevertheless, contain a distinct barb, for Brodribb said:

I must frankly say that I believe the standard of New South Wales to be somewhat too high for the primary school - too high and too diverse.

It was the Inspector-General, Main, and the Principal of the Training College, Topp, who furnished


54. Ibid.
the second Victorian report upon New South Wales education. They visited this colony in 1888 as a part of an investigation into the efficiency of the school systems of New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria. From the character of its contents it seems fair to conclude that the aim in the section of the report devoted to New South Wales was to blunt the edge of Brodribb's criticisms of Victorian education by rejecting his favourable opinions of education in the mother colony. Main and Topp agreed that a higher standard was demanded in New South Wales but were much more openly critical of the results of this policy. As they saw it, the children's mastery of the work was imperfect. Children also remained in the same class for a longer period of time in New South Wales. The Main and Topp report was so severe that a Departmental

enquiry was held. Bridges, to whom this task was entrusted, accused these men of having come "not as fair and honest enquirers, anxious to ascertain the truth, but as captious and hostile critics determined to find fault wherever possible" 56. No doubt there was a deal of truth on both sides. What is more important is that the opinions of Brodribb, Main and Topp probably influenced the 1890 Standard. Here after all was expert opinion that the 1884 Standard was harsh. This is not clearly demonstrable, however, since the immediate reaction to the Main and Topp report was such indignation that New South Wales refused to participate in the inter-colonial conference upon reading books organised by the Victorian Minister of Public Instruction, Dr. C.H. Pearson 57. It is a refusal all the more striking because New South Wales was itself considering just this step at the time 58. But

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57. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 41, 5029-30, 12th September, 1889.
58. Education Department Archives, P3924, School Books and Supplies, Carruthers' Memorandum, 3rd May, 1890; Minister's Report, 1890, 56-59.
indignation or not, the opinions of these Victorians figure as a factor in the decision to ease requirements in 1890. They had no relevance to the decision to introduce a broader concept of the nature and scope of education which gave drill, object lessons, drawing and needlework a larger place in the curriculum. The bases of this broader concept were diverse with English precedent forming a major part. The subjects concerned actually fell into two groups. Drill formed one of these.

THE NEW CONCEPT OF DRILL

Drill was taught in the primary schools long before the 1890 decision to allocate marks to it at the annual inspection. But there was more to this decision than just a desire to recognise its importance. Drill had long been advocated for its disciplinary value but physical education as it is now understood was almost entirely neglected. In 1884 it was deemed sufficient

59. Minister's Report, 1880, 49.
to teach in a factual way the laws of health and hygiene. By 1889 opinion had advanced. On 2nd March, 1889 the Public School Amateur Athletic Association was established and at the December 1889 conference it was recommended that gymnastics be introduced into schools with half the cost of equipment to be contributed by the Department and half by the local community. This conference recommendation was not accepted and what was introduced was infantry drill, somewhat modified for girls. It was no coincidence that the Cadet Corps had recently been placed under the jurisdiction of the Department. Nor is it a coincidence that agitations in England for the inclusion of some form of physical drill in the elementary schools had led to the introduction of military drill.

60. Education Department Archives, P1847, School Files, 1889 (Drill).

61. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Maynard to Undersecretary, 17th January, 1890, "Subjects Discussed at Recent Conference of Inspectors and Teachers".

62. Minister's Report, 1890, 477-84.

63. Education Department Archives, P1847, School Files, 1889 (Drill).
(as an option) into the English Code of 1871. This drill was conducted by army drill sergeants, usually in drill halls. This move failed to satisfy those who had agitated for reform because two other "systems", the MacLaren and the Ling, were already widely supported. Each was more educational than the turning, numbering and marching of the drill sergeant. These systems were conceived by their proponents as rivals, but both were in essence forms of gymnastics designed to promote a healthy body and physical strength by means of artificial exercises. Their major difference was that MacLaren's system, a local English scheme, made extensive use of apparatus such as dumb-bells, bar-bells, parallel and horizontal bars, whilst Ling's gymnastics, an importation from Sweden, consisted of exercise without


65. Ibid.

66. Ibid, 91 and 96-97.
The first major step leading towards the inclusion of such work in English elementary schools was taken by the London School Board in 1878. Other cities followed until in 1895 the English Education Department was at last moved to make such physical education eligible for a grant.

Against the English background the decisions made in New South Wales in 1889-1890 emerge with increased clarity. Actually there were a number of elements involved. For one thing there is absolutely no doubt that McIntosh is correct when he draws a parallel between the development of organised games in such "public" schools as Rugby and the development of drill and physical exercises in state elementary schools. Organised games had been sanctioned and encouraged in the"public" schools because they met in part the need for better discipline. Drill and physical exercise gained acceptance in elementary

67. Ibid.
68. Ibid, 110.
69. Ibid, 112.
70. Ibid, 113.
schools because they answered the same need. But granting this the choice of drill rather than games remains to be explained. No doubt, as McIntosh claims, it was simply a matter of the restricted space available. A more convincing explanation is that in England the "cult" of athleticism was itself under fire and games for a time were regarded with suspicion. Although true, this explanation, too, is incomplete. The prestige attached to military drill was also an important factor. Finally the acclaimed educational or developmental value of the MacLaren system was of major significance. These last two factors were interrelated for the MacLaren system had become the official form of physical education provided for British infantry. Against this fuller background the introduction into New South Wales of drill with the British "Infantry Manual" as the prescribed text, the link with cadet training and the decision to place an army officer in control of physical education in state schools becomes even clearer.

71. Ibid, 71.
The creation of the Public School Amateur Athletic Association also had its English precedents and parallels. Many teachers who were themselves interested in sporting activities and favoured athleticism organised school sporting activities in out-of-school hours. In just this way, and to cite only one example, the South London Football Association was formed in 1885. It was for essentially the same reasons that the New South Wales Public School Amateur Athletic Association was formed in 1889.

The approach thus adopted in 1890 was the basic pattern for the years which followed. Right through and beyond 1930 physical education in this state was based upon British precedent. Throughout the period, too, military personnel were appointed as Supervisors of Drill. In effect two forms of physical exercise were introduced into the schools, one official and the other officially recognised; the former was concerned with drill and cadet training; the latter with sporting

72. Ibid, 115-117.
events. There was no very clear demarcation of interest or authority amongst those controlling these activities. In practice inspectors assumed a major part of the supervisory tasks in the schools themselves, the Drill Supervisor was primarily concerned with cadet training and the oversight of formal physical exercise, and the P.S.A.A.A. organised school competitions.

A SCHEME OF "TECHNICAL" EDUCATION

The case with subjects other than drill which were granted a larger place in the curriculum by the 1890 Standard was quite different. Here there was an approach which saw object lessons, drawing, writing, needlework,

73. Conflict and ill-feeling were to develop between Drill Supervisors and P.S.A.A.A. in later years because they shared responsibility when large public displays were organised. It was the Drill Supervisors' complaint that the P.S.A.A.A. refused to acknowledge the considerable role they played on these occasions - Education Department Archives, P2729, School Files, 1920-21, Drill, Reddish to Chief Inspector, 18th March, 1921, and Reddish to Under-secretary, 30th March, 1921; P2796, School Files, 1922-23, Drill, Annual Report on Drill and Physical Exercise, 1922, 9.
kindergarten, manual training, cookery and school agriculture as a part of a scheme of "technical education"\(^\text{74}\).

It was at this time, too, that technical education was transferred from the Board of Technical Education to the Department of Public Instruction. These reforms were in part a response to the changed needs of the colonial community, but they were also most definitely a local response to those developments and opinions overseas which Edward Combes recorded in the reports he furnished to the Legislative Assembly. These reports played an important part in New South Wales educational development. Combes himself, the Board of Technical Education of which he was president, and Norman Selfe, who was acting president of the Board during Combes' absences abroad, influenced primary education considerably. In the past this has rarely been adequately acknowledged.

\(^{74}\) Minister's Report, 1889, 39.
EDWARD COMBES, NORMAN SELFE AND THE BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A NEGLECTED FORCE IN THE HISTORY OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Edward Combes was a figure of some eminence in New South Wales at the time he furnished his reports to the Legislative Assembly. A civil engineer by profession, he was also "an artist of considerable merit" who exhibited his work in London with success, a Companion of St. Michael and St. George, an Officer of the French Legion of Honour, a Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1872 and later from 1891 until his death in 1895 of the Legislative Council. Born in the Wiltshire village of Fouthill near Bath, after a training in mechanical and civil engineering Combes emigrated to Victoria in 1851 and prospected for gold at Ballarat and

75. The biographical notes which follow are somewhat more detailed than might be expected because Combes is not treated at all adequately in any of the usual sources.

76. The Bulletin, 23rd April, 1881; S.M.H., 21st October, 1895; The Daily Telegraph, 21st October, 1895.


78. S.M.H., loc. cit.; The Daily Telegraph, loc. cit.
and Bendigo. In 1854 Combes went to Paris for further study in engineering. There he was appointed Victorian Commissioner to the Paris International Exhibition of 1855 and attached to the staff of Prince Napoleon.

Returning first to Victoria Combes moved to New South Wales in 1858. In 1862 he was appointed Government Engineer and Surveyor with Forbes as his centre and in 1865 became Chairman of the Court of Appeals established under the Gold Fields Act. Combes' political career reportedly began in 1859, but he himself did not enter parliament until 1872 when he was returned from Bathurst at the general election. A supporter of Sir James Martin and Minister for Works for a short time in 1877, the "highlight" of Combes' political career occurred on 25th

80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. P. Mennell, op. cit., 102.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid; S.M.H., loc. cit.; The Daily Telegraph, loc. cit.
November, 1874 when he moved a motion of censure against the Parkes Government for granting a conditional pardon to Gardiner, the bushranger, and the government fell. In 1878 Combes was appointed Chief Executive Commissioner to the Paris Exhibition, subsequently receiving the C.M.G. and the Legion of Honour for his services.

Combes' first educational report to the Legislative Assembly was prepared on this occasion. Then in 1883 Combes was appointed president of the newly-established Board of Technical Education. When in 1884 Combes

86. This was the contemporary newspaper estimate (S.M.H., loc. cit.; The Daily Telegraph, loc. cit.). It is the more recent opinion of P. Loveday and A.N. Martin (Parliament, Factions and Parties, Melbourne University Press, 1966) that Combes was naively manoeuvred into this action.


88. The Daily Telegraph, loc. cit.


90. Board of Technical Education of New South Wales, Report of the Board ... for 1888, Pepperday and Sons, Sydney, 1889, 4.
announced his intention to travel abroad again he was commissioned by the government at the request of the Board of Technical Education to "inquire into and report upon the working and constitution of Technological Schools, Technological Museums and other institutions of a like character in Great Britain and the Continents of Europe and America". This report was submitted to the Legislative Assembly in 1887. Later Combes was commissioned to attend the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1889 and to further investigate technical education abroad. His third report was presented in 1891, the year

91. E. Combes, Report on Technical Education to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1887, i.

92. Ibid.

93. E. Combes, Report on Technical Education and Manual Training ..., Acting Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1891. (On this occasion Combes was also entrusted by Parkes with the private task of negotiating with English publishers for the printing of Parkes' autobiography, "Fifty Years in the Making of Australian History" - vide Parke's Correspondence, A879, 52-53, 22432; A920, 539-41, 544-49, 550-51.)
Combes was elevated to the Legislative Council\textsuperscript{94}. After a lengthy illness Combes died at his home, the Glanmere Estate near Bathurst, on 18th October, 1895\textsuperscript{95}. No obituary made any mention at all of his services to education, but they must not therefore be discounted. The three reports he submitted mark Combes as a man of wide educational vision. Many of his opinions were important factors in New South Wales educational development.

The 1880 \textit{Report upon Lighting, Heating and Ventilation of School Buildings} ... ranged far beyond its main subject and serves to indicate Combes' breadth of vision. He included favourable comment upon the kindergarten work he observed\textsuperscript{96}. Impressed also by the quality of teaching in America, a direct result, as he saw it, of the quality of the training teachers there received, he commented:

\begin{quote}
I cannot but feel it my duty to suggest that more attention should be given to the instruction of teachers in pedagogical science\textsuperscript{97}...
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{94} S.M.H., \textit{loc. cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{96} E. Combes, \textit{op. cit.}, 1880, 104 f.
\item \textsuperscript{97} Ibid, 135.
\end{itemize}
Good teachers are not born, they are made. A good Normal School System must be established, for without proper teachers no educational system can possibly be successful.

The overall effect of Combes' 1880 Report is, however, most difficult to assess. He did a little later become chairman of a board which investigated sanitary conditions in schools, but in general the circumstances surrounding its production operated to limit the educational value of his work. These circumstances Parkes explained to the Assembly in June 1879:

Looking through the papers I found a letter dated 4th of May, last year, from the Honourable Member for Newcastle (Dr. Bowker), suggesting that Mr. Combes should be employed while in Europe to make inquiries as to the space allotted to children in the public schools of the Continent ... and I found a

98. Ibid, 140.

99. It was a four-man board comprising (beside Combes) Mackellar, President of the Board of Health and Medical Advisor to the Government, Johnson, Chief Inspector of the Public Instruction Department, and Kemp, the Departmental School Architect - V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1883-84, Vol. 7, 1007. It was to this board that the findings cited by "A Parent" were submitted by Drs. Clark and Mackellar.
minute by my predecessor in office that
Mr. Combes should be instructed to make these
inquiries ... I do not know what he has done,
nor can I find out where he is now ... I have
a suspicion that he will turn up some of these
days and lay claim to payment for services ... 100

Although tinged with venom this statement was basically
accurate. In the circumstances the cost of these enquiries
became a bludgeon with which to batter the political
opposition. Combes became a victim himself, his seat in
the House being declared vacant on the grounds that he was
now in the employ of the state 101. The contents of his
report received scant consideration. In 1880 he was
somewhat of a voice crying in the wilderness but it was
not entirely a lone voice. He was not even alone in
submitting an educational report to parliament. One of
his fellow commissioners to the Paris Exhibition, Professor
Archibald Liversidge, reported upon technical and
industrial museums and upon technical education in


101. There was little real justice in this decision,
for all that Combes claimed and all he received
was an allowance to cover expenses, albeit a
generous one.
relation to the University\textsuperscript{102}. Beyond quoting Huxley's opinion that the best foundation for technical education was a sound elementary education which included science and drawing\textsuperscript{103}, Liversidge's comments had little relevance for primary schooling, but even this minor contribution should not be completely discounted. Then there was the report from the Committee of the Working Men's College of the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts submitted in 1881 which outlined various schemes for extending technical education in the colony\textsuperscript{104}. Included was one from John Plummer who recommended, too, that the course in elementary schools should include "the rudiments of certain branches of scientific knowledge


\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid}, xxvii-xxviii.

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1881}, Vol. 2, 1111-1232.
and a more systematic and practical course of instruction in elementary freehand drawing from the flat"\(^{105}\).

Against this colonial interest in technical education and in developments abroad in this field the Board of Technical Education was established in 1883. Against this background, too, Combes wrote his second and third reports. And because of this background they were of real significance. Combes must indeed be given some of the credit for the innovations introduced in 1889-1890. He recommended the establishment of a sub-department within the Department of Public Instruction to replace the Board. The Technical Education Branch was duly established and Frederick Bridges placed in charge\(^{106}\). He recommended the erection

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106. Although Bridges' experience was with primary education, his selection for this post was not entirely inappropriate, for he was an active member of the Sydney School of Arts and Mechanics Institute - Minutes of the School of Arts and Mechanics Institute, 1863-1876, A4151, Mss, M.L., Sydney.
of an up-to-date technical college and work on the building soon commenced. In addition he recommended reforms in the school curriculum along lines very similar to those proposed by the British Royal Commission of 1881-1884 and at least some of these were implemented.

The British Commissioners\textsuperscript{107} had emphasised the part which could be played in any broad scheme of technical education by "pre-technical" training in elementary schools. Combes reiterated this opinion, supporting it by citing an imposing list of authorities.

All the distinguished practical educationists of the present day have been impressed with the necessity of introducing the teaching of hand work in the rudimentary instruction of youth. Rabelais, Montaigne, Comenias, Locke, l'Abbe de Saint Pierre, Rousseau, Condorcet, Salzmaun, Pestalozzi, Froebel, all perhaps of different opinions and periods, have all been entirely in accord on this point.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{107} These were Bernard Samuelson, Professor Henry Roscoe, Philip Magnus, John Slagg, Swire Smith and William Woodall (M. Argles, \textit{South Kensington to Robbins}, Longmans, London, 1964, 31-32).

\textsuperscript{108} E. Combes, \textit{op. cit.}, 1887, 145.
On this issue Combes received the support of his colleagues on the Board of Technical Education, more particularly the support of Norman Selfe who acted as president during Combes' absences abroad\textsuperscript{109}. Selfe had emigrated from England where he was born in 1839 to New South Wales in 1855. A civil engineer, he attained considerable prominence in his profession in this colony. He was also a member of the Royal Society of New South Wales and delivered a number of papers at its meetings. He was actively interested in the cause of technical education long before his appointment to the Board of Technical Education and is credited with the establishment in 1865 of the first classes in technical instruction at the Sydney School of Arts. He died an acknowledged leader in his profession and an

\textsuperscript{109}. Selfe was Acting-President from 12th January to 18th April, 1887 and then from 27th August, 1887 until the Board ceased to function on 1st November, 1889 - Blue Book for the Year 1887, 79; Blue Book for the Year 1888, 76; Blue Book for the Year 1889, 92.
educationist of note in 1911\textsuperscript{110}. Whilst Acting-President of the Board of Technical Education Selfe became a principal colonial spokesman for the claims of technical education and science within the primary school curriculum. He frequently cited the opinions of the British Royal Commissioners and of Huxley and Spencer to support his argument for a "remodelling of our primary school system as a preparation for the practical work of life, and as an introduction to the higher schools"\textsuperscript{111}. The approach thus derived from Britain and jointly advocated by Combes and Selfe was directly concerned with drawing and manual training, but in a more general sense had a wider impact upon the elementary curriculum.

\textsuperscript{110} These brief biographical details are derived from \textit{The Australian Encyclopedia}, The Grolier Society of Australia, Sydney, 1962, VIII, 71-72. Selfe's career is well outlined, though briefly, in a number of places but his contribution to education in New South Wales is worthy of a more detailed study.

\textsuperscript{111} N. Selfe, \textit{Three Addresses on Technical Education ... Delivered at the Annual Meetings of the Sydney Technical College in 1887, 1888 and 1889}, John Sands, Sydney, 1889, Address of 1889, 13.
In all eight areas were affected - kindergarten, object lessons, school agriculture, drawing, writing, manual training, needlework and cookery. It is as well to begin with kindergarten.

THE EXPERIMENTS WITH KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten work was no longer new to the colony when the December 1889 conference of inspectors and teachers conveniently included it within the Departmental "scheme" of technical education. It had failed to develop when first introduced to New South Wales in the 1850's but the fortuitous arrival of teachers with experience in the 1880's and its increased stature in Britain led to its revival and ultimate incorporation into elementary education. In 1881 £1,000 was voted towards experimentation with kindergarten work. Sutter was Minister at the time. Later in opposition in 1884 he voiced the conclusion that it was too expensive to adopt the whole

112. N.S.W. P. D. (1), 6, 2324-25.
kindergarten system. He claimed that as much of it as was possible to introduce had already been adopted - after all the infants were taught to read and write and were given object lessons "and what was this but a part of the Kindergarten system?"\textsuperscript{113} Although the Stuart Government defended the system rather ineptly\textsuperscript{114}, despite the inability of inspectors to understand what was being attempted\textsuperscript{115} and notwithstanding the Trickett's report in 1884 that "two attempts made by the same teacher within the past two years to introduce the Kindergarten pure and simple (had) proved abortive"\textsuperscript{116}, the Department continued to experiment. The Department was conscious that they might well be accused of having neglected Froebel. They even felt bound to incorporate a formal defence into the Minister's Report for 1884 which claimed

\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{113}]	extit{N.S.W.P.D. (1)}, 11, 2447, 20th March, 1884.
\item[\textsuperscript{114}]	extit{Ibid}, 2448-49.
\item[\textsuperscript{115}]	extit{Ibid}.
\item[\textsuperscript{116}]	extit{Minister's Report}, 1884, 20.
\end{enumerate}
that for over thirty years the important principles of kindergarten method had been incorporated into the public school system. It was a defence which concluded with these words:

Pestalozzi, Froebel's teacher, laid down the principle that to teach naturally and rationally we should proceed from the concrete to the abstract, and the Pestalozzian method is in general use in our schools.\footnote{Ibid.}

Readers were apparently expected to accept the implication that Froebel had contributed nothing uniquely his own to educational theory and practice.

Much of the Departmental sensitivity on this issue must be attributed to the publicity and favourable support that the experiments at Crown Street and Castlereagh Street had received. This was especially so since the Department itself chose to condemn them\footnote{These experiments have been traced through the columns of the \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} by M. Walker (\textit{The Kindergarten in Australia}, Unpub. M.Ed. Thesis, Sydney University, 1964), but as useful as the discussion in her work is it remains incomplete, for it fails to place these efforts clearly within the context of the broader educational developments of the period. It should be noted that no record of these experiments exists in the Education Department Archives.}.
This work had been conducted by A.C. Crowley and had for a time won the support of the *Sydney Morning Herald*\(^{119}\). Combes, too, congratulated the Department upon its initiative. At the same time he increased the importance of this work in the public mind by describing kindergarten as a valuable first step in the broad scheme of technical education\(^{120}\). Crowley herself undoubtedly had a sounder grasp of the real significance of Froebel's work than most educators of the time. She maintained, correctly by our standards, that a distinction should be made between his principles and his methods and claimed that "(t)he principles of Froebel (sic) admit(ted) of application to other stages of education ..., and there (wa)s no stage to which they might not be applied with advantage"\(^{121}\). She further claimed that it was the principles and not the "practical methods" which were important and hence


maintained that no slavish adherence to method was required, but only to the principles Froebel had derived from his observations of child nature\textsuperscript{122}. Activity, observation, constructiveness, love of the beautiful, a social tendency, playfulness and a growing moral sense were what Froebel had found characterised childhood and so these were what should characterise education. Unfortunately although Crowley's grasp of theory was excellent, her practical achievements were open to question. Perhaps one followed from the other, but whatever the reasons, the children under her care were unable to handle the kindergarten materials with skill. Trickett was so unimpressed when he paid a surprise visit to Castlereagh Street on 15th May, 1884\textsuperscript{123} that her work was terminated\textsuperscript{124}. The \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} fully

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{S.M.H.}, 16th May, 1884 \textit{(Vide also S.M.H., 20th May, 1884 and V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1883-84, 497.)}

\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Evening News}, 22nd January, 1885.
supported Trickett's decision. It was argued that although the system was popular overseas, experience had shown that it just did not fit in with the educational regime in New South Wales where "the basis of education must be literary, not mechanical". The Evening News took a contrary stand and was severely critical of Trickett's action, claiming that the Minister and the Department were too ignorant of the system to judge it fairly. As a corrective for this ignorance the Evening News went to some pains to present the fundamental principles of kindergarten work before the public:

The leading principle established by Froebel in his system was the spontaneous development of a child's powers, bodily as well as mental, by means of plays, games and occupations of various kinds adapted to his faculties.

The favourable opinions of the work by Joseph Payne, the English educator, were the touchstone for the Evening News which argued that kindergarten work "must be judged by its own standards".

125. S.M.H., 21st January, 1885.
126. Ibid.
127. Evening News, 9th June, 1884.
129. Evening News, 9th June, 1884.
Thus Crowley's work, although itself unacceptable, did engender considerable interest and support. And the system was after all widely employed overseas. Some explanation for the Departmental attitude was therefore required. Hence the public defence. More importantly when Minnie Hooper arrived from England in late 1884 the Departmental experiments with kindergarten work recommenced. Hooper reportedly had considerable experience with this work and it was Johnson's decision that she be appointed to Crown Street Infants' School and "permitted to use that method ... in the same way and to the same extent that she employed it in her late School under the

130. It was hardly mere coincidence that the Tasmanian Royal Commission of 1883 displayed an interest in technical education, object lessons and kindergarten at just this time (Royal Commission on Public Education in Tasmania and Neighbouring Colonies, Report of the Commissioners with Evidence Taken and Other Documents, Govt. Printer, Hobart, 1883, xliii-xlv). There is no reference in New South Wales to this Commission and the coincidence of the views expressed with subsequent reforms in this colony must be attributed to the influence of British ideas upon both systems.

131. Education Department Archives, P1789, School Files, 1884, Crown Street, Hooper to Trickett, 4th September, 1884.
London School Board"132. This Johnson felt would provide "an opportunity ... to ascertain how far they might be worthy of adoption here"133. It was on the basis of this work and on the previous efforts of Crowly that the Department concluded that whilst kindergarten "pure and simple" was unacceptable and its results "from an educational point of view, extremely poor and disappointing"134, the form introduced by Hooper was worthy of adoption135. So in March 1885 study of kindergarten method was introduced for pupil-teachers136. Then in October 1885 demonstrations and lectures on the work were incorporated within the course for the students of the Hurlstone Training School137, these being given by Emma Weaver138. Subsequently in 1886 kindergarten work was

132. Ibid, Johnson's note, 22nd September, 1884.
133. Ibid.
135. Minister's Report, 1885, 22; Minister's Report, 1886, 21.
136. Minister's Report, 1885, 23.
137. Ibid.
138. Education Department Archives, P4002, Training School File, 1884-1905, Everitt to Under-secretary, March 1887.
introduced into the Infants' Department of the Superior Public School at Wickham\textsuperscript{139} and in Sydney the Riley Street Kindergarten Public School was established under Miss Elizabeth Lindsay Banks\textsuperscript{140} who had trained in Germany and England\textsuperscript{141}.

Elizabeth Banks was to become the Departmental authority on kindergarten work during the late nineteenth century. She was another fortuitous arrival in the colony having accompanied her invalid sister to New South Wales with the intention of returning to Scotland "after a sojourn of a few months"\textsuperscript{142}. Her sister recovered and so she stayed, applied to the Department for a position and was entrusted with the establishment of the Kindergarten School at Riley Street. Later

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{139} Minister's Report, 1886, 22.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Ibid; \textit{Education Department Archives, P1820, School Files, 1887, Riley Street}.
\item \textsuperscript{141} \textit{Education Department Archives, P1837, School Files, 1888, Riley Street}, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Sydney Teachers' College Kindergarten Society, \textit{The Story of Kindergarten in New South Wales}, T. Wright, Sydney, 1911, 6.
\end{itemize}
during 1887 when Emma Weaver accepted the post of head-mistress of the Greymouth High School in New Zealand

Miss Banks assumed the task of lecturing to the students of the Hurlstone Training School. In 1889 she was transferred to a newly established Kindergarten Department at Fort Street where she gave lectures to the male students of the Training College. By 1890 the kindergarten system had been extended to more than seven schools and Miss Banks had become the acknowledged expert upon an accepted scheme of education for young children.

Success had not come to Miss Banks without attendant difficulties. The building at Riley Street had been little more than "a badly constructed and somewhat poorly furnished wooden shed". And Chief Inspector

143. Education Department Archives, P4002, Training School File, 1880-1905, Everitt to Maynard, March, 1887.

144. Education Department Archives, P1848, School Files, 1889, Fort Street.

145. Minister's Report, 1890, 34.

146. Education Department Archives, P1848, School Files, 1889, Fort Street, Bridges to Under-secretary, 17th April, 1889.

147. Sydney Teachers' College Kindergarten Society, loc.cit.
Maynard was not at all disposed towards the work. He even added to the initial difficulties by declining to recommend the purchase of appropriate materials\(^{148}\).

Johnson, now Under-secretary, was much more co-operative and when in view of Maynard's attitude he personally took charge matters improved considerably - equipment including an organ and specially constructed desks was provided even though the official machinery still turned rather slowly\(^{149}\). Later responsibility in this area was entrusted to the Deputy Chief Inspector, Bridges. Without doubt this was a happy choice. But whatever her difficulties, Miss Banks was successful and in token of her achievements she was rewarded with increases in salary in 1888\(^{150}\) and then again in 1889\(^{151}\).

\(^{148}\) Education Department Archives, P1820, School Files, 1887, Riley Street, Requisition for Materials, 12th March, 1886.

\(^{149}\) Similar difficulties were experienced by Maggie Miles at Wickham - Education Department Archives, P1859, School Files, 1889, Wickham, "Report on Kindergarten Work for 1888", Miles to Under-secretary, 29th January, 1889.

\(^{150}\) Education Department Archives, P1837, School Files, 1888, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888.

\(^{151}\) Education Department Archives, P1848, School Files, 1889, Fort Street, Executive Council Minute, 30th April, 1889.
Miss ELIZABETH LINDSAY BANKS,
First State Kindergarten Teacher (now Mistress at Fort-street Infant School).

The concepts which Elizabeth Banks, this Departmental authority, held of kindergarten work and the programme followed by her pupils were outlined in the Minister's Reports of 1889 and 1890. She enunciated three underlying "principles" - first, kindergarten lessons should be interesting to little children and provide constant work which had the appearance of play; second, kindergarten occupations produced unconscious habits of industry; third, kindergarten work was the best preparation for primary schooling\textsuperscript{152}. The third point was suitably phrased for the moment to stress kindergarten's value as foundation training of "eye and hand". The programme of work which she introduced in the new department at Fort Street in 1889 was outlined as follows:\textsuperscript{153}

1. The Babies' Class

(a) Gift 1 - Woollen balls

(b) Bead-threading.

\textsuperscript{152} Minister's Report, 1889, 23-24.

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid, 22.
2. The Lower First Class

(a) Gift II - sphere, cylinder and cube

(b) Gift XIV - stick laying

3. The Upper First Class

(a) Gifts III and IV - building boxes

(b) Gift VII - planes of wood for tablet laying

(c) Gift X - paper-plaiting or weaving

(d) Gift XVIII - drawing on chequered slates.

At Riley Street the kindergarten work had occupied three-quarters of an hour a day. This approach no doubt continued at Fort Street with the work granted a place of its own on the time-table just as were the subjects prescribed by the Standard. Fundamentally, then, although the English form of kindergarten brought "play" and some enjoyment into the classroom and gave the children materials to handle and manipulate, schooling still remained decidedly formal even at this early age.

154. Education Department Archives, Pl837, School Files, 1888, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888.
The acknowledged textual authorities on the subject provide additional confirmation of this.

Amongst the earliest works available in English was J. and B. Ronge's *A Practical Guide to the English Kinder-Garten* first published in 1855. This book seems to have established a long-standing pattern for books on the subject. James Laurie's *Kindergarten Manual*, which became the text for New South Wales pupil-teachers in 1889, was almost identical in form and so too was the locally published *Handbook for Teachers of Infants' School and Junior Classes* which appeared in 1898.

Each of these works contains a detailed explanation of the precise procedures which were to be followed with each of the gifts and occupations. Interwoven with this was some Froebelian theory. Even in the early work by the Ronges there is more theory than Walker in her study


156. Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's File, 1881-1912, Amended Regulations, 17th December, 1889.

157. Published by Angus and Robertson.
concedes, but nevertheless her major point is well founded. Beside the details of procedure the theory does appear insignificant. The correct manipulation of equipment was presented as if it held the secret of kindergarten. It will be recalled that Crowly had very plainly stated her opposition to such a view. It was also attacked vigorously in the text initially prescribed for study by pupil-teachers in New South Wales, The Kindergarten Principle by Mary Lyschinska, a work which could still be read with considerable profit\footnote{M.J. Lyschinska, The Kindergarten Principle, Isbister, London, 1880. (It is a point of some interest that the copy of this work in the Sydney Teachers' College Library was at one time the property of Frederick Bridges) - Lyschinska's stated object was "to ask readers to direct their attention beyond the mere use of occupations and games ... to the more important application of Froebelian principle" (p. 3).}. It seems Miss Banks was one of those mechanists to whom method and equipment were the very essence of kindergarten work. For one thing Banks became the lecturer on the subject in 1887 and in 1889 Lyschinska's work was superseded by Laurie's feeble Manual. Then again she treated
kindergarten as one subject among many to be allotted a place on the time-table rather than as an educational philosophy whose spirit was of major significance. And again it was her own testimony that when instructing the students-in-training she taught them as she herself had been taught - by having them go through the mechanics of paper-folding, stick-laying and the games and this must raise some doubts about the adequacy with which the underlying theory was treated. All this in turn leads to the conclusion that the Department, too, adopted a basically mechanical interpretation of Froebelian kindergarten - that, in fact, this was the only interpretation they found acceptable.

OBJECT LESSONS, DRAWING AND MANUAL TRAINING: AN EDUCATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL

The alterations made to the courses of study prescribed for object lessons and drawing by the 1890

159. Education Department Archives, Pl837, School Files, 1888, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888.
Standard of Proficiency and the pioneering work with manual training which began at this time were innovations specifically made to meet the demands which had been made for the inclusion of science and practical training within the elementary curriculum. In the 1890 Standard object lessons once more became a part of the first class course and in second, third and fourth classes the marks allocated to the subject were increased. These reforms were a victory for science and for the opinions of Huxley, Spencer, the British Royal Commissioners and for the demands made locally along similar lines within the colony. Combes, Selfe and the Board of Technical Education played the major part in the local campaign. The Board seems to have taken quite seriously the request made to it when it was first appointed "to report, among other matters, as to the propriety and best methods of including as a part of the Primary School system some kind of rudimentary training in subjects leading up to Technical

160. Minister's Report, 1890, 477-84.
Education"\textsuperscript{161}. One consequence of its activities in this direction was some unfortunate disharmony, especially between Selse and Johnson\textsuperscript{162}. Other consequences were more fruitful. There were significant changes and innovations in primary education for which the Board was directly responsible.

As early as 1883 the Board had recommended reforms in the teaching of science. To this end it republished Science Demonstration in Elementary Schools, a work by W.L. Carpenter originally read before the Physical Society of London on 14th April, 1883, in which a scheme of expert itinerant science teaching employing demonstrations and oral teaching was outlined\textsuperscript{163}. This effort by the Board was a failure. The publication was ignored by the New South Wales Department of Public Instruction

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{161} N. Selse, \textit{op. cit.}, 1889 Address, 20.
\item \textsuperscript{162} Ibid, 14-24.
\item \textsuperscript{163} W.L. Carpenter, \textit{Science Demonstration in Elementary Schools ...}, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1883. (The scheme Carpenter described had originated in Liverpool and further developed in Birmingham.)
\end{itemize}
when it formulated the 1884 Standard and although in 1890 a larger place was granted to science the basic reform from teaching from the book to teaching by practical illustration and experiment was omitted. The changes introduced in 1890 were changes in content of the course in object lessons, not in method. It is very doubtful if this was a successful solution. Object lessons were a Pestalozzian contribution to the primary curriculum. These in theory were designed to train the powers of observation. In practice they were poorly handled by teachers and their purpose widely misunderstood. In 1880 Inspector W.H. Johnson seemed to summarise the opinions of many of his colleagues when he said:

Object lessons in the hands of some considerable number of teachers, consist wholly of their telling their pupils all the information they can gather about certain animals, plants, and minerals. That which should be the main object sought in giving these lessons, viz., leading the pupils to observe intelligently the various things and phenomena they see about them, and using the information they already possess, to find out for themselves the reason and the wherefore of such things seems little to be thought of.\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{164}. \textit{Minister's Report}, 1880, 58.
Whilst inspectors therefore struggled to ensure a wise selection of objects, explanations which the children could follow and the use of an inductive approach, the inclusion of object lessons as a part of the elementary schools' contribution to technical education was an undue inflation of the Department's efforts in this area. If anything, the changes in content in 1890 to feature more science can only have aggravated the difficulties and contributed to a further decline in the methods employed. Object lessons may have become the chief medium for instruction in science, but Bridges' comment of 1896 that he "should like to see more variety in selection of subjects and greater originality in the way they were presented" 165 is indicative of the result. Such difficulties were to be expected with a teaching body inadequately prepared for the task. It was Bridges' view that "(e)ven in the lower classes children may

learn the explanation of the mechanical phenomena of nature, and applications of the same principles in invention, as, for example, gravitation in falling bodies, the part it plays in the pump and the pendulum". This was hardly a modest expectation.

One aspect of science education which received particular attention around the time of the 1890 Standard was its application to agriculture. Indeed agricultural education generally was an important issue. In 1884 Henry Edmunds writing in the *Sydney Quarterly Magazine* had pointed to the need in this area and recommended the establishment of "Technical Agricultural Schools endowed with land for use as Model Farms". At about the same time the Board of Technical Education made a similar suggestion. The Department itself enquired into the

166. *Ibid*.


subject in 1888. The general opinion of the inspectors was that little agricultural education was at that time being attempted in the public schools. A number thought that if it were introduced few teachers would be competent to provide it. A scheme was nevertheless prepared and submitted to the Minister, who approved it in January 1889. This scheme acknowledged its debt to the British Royal Commissions on technical education and to English, Welsh and Irish precedent. It contained nothing very radical, merely recommending that up to third class the course in object lessons remain unchanged, that in third class itself the object lessons on plants and animals be given "with particular reference to agriculture", that in fourth class these lessons

169. *Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Instruction in Agriculture in Public Schools, 1888.*

170. One, J.H. Murray, said he would welcome it, but his comments are of interest largely because of his reference to the successful work by Board at Gunning with work of this nature (*Ibid*, Murray to Chief Inspector, 15th November, 1888).

171. *Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Instruction in Agriculture in Public Schools, Ministerial Minute, 10th December, 1888.*
include the chemical and physical principles involved in agriculture and that in fifth this be continued with "fuller details". It was also recommended that where the facilities existed the teacher and his pupils should be encouraged to establish and work a small garden or farm. This last recommendation was implemented in a manner reminiscent of payment by results - a monetary bonus was introduced for those teachers who were most successful. The establishment of Arbor Day as an annual school event accompanied this interest in agriculture and agricultural science.

The full extent of the reforms introduced into the object lessons course by the 1890 Standard may be judged by consulting Table V where the 1884 and 1890 Standards in this subject are presented comparatively. This table is at the same time an index of the influence of the reformers who campaigned so actively on behalf of science and of agriculture.

172. Ibid.
173. Minister's Report, 1890, 294-95.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>STANDARDS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1884</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1890</td>
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<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Not prescribed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>&quot;Object Lessons should be given to the Second Class twice a week&quot; - presumably on common objects, materials, animals and vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Common minerals, vegetables, animals; elementary lessons on human frame and laws of health; elementary physiology; important manufactures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Elementary physiology; important manufactures; light, heat and air in relation to health; elementary physical science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Natural Science: Physics or physiology</td>
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175. Compiled from the Ministers' Reports for 1884 and 1890.
Drawing in the primary school had been associated with technical education since Fowles had introduced the South Kensington approach to this subject in the 1860's. Further modifications to bring the work up to date had been made in 1884 following submissions from Riley and Plummer. Yet the subject still remained "very poorly taught" in 1889. Accordingly it was decided to appoint a Superintendent of Drawing to take charge of this strand of the school course. Frederick Woodhouse of London was appointed and when he arrived in the colony he immediately began to produce a revised drawing course based upon that then in use in London schools. Woodhouse took advantage of the *New South Wales Educational Gazette* which began publication on 1st June, 1891 to present a series of explanatory articles before the teachers of the colony. In the first of these articles he emphasised the importance of drawing "as an educator of the eye"


177. *Education Department Archives, Pl829, School Files, 1889, Superintendent of Drawing.*
and explained that it was essentially a drill subject to be taught through collective blackboard teaching\textsuperscript{178}. A decade later on the eve of his departure for England, Woodhouse critically discussed this 1891 course. It consisted of freehand drawing, outline model drawing and elementary plane and solid geometry and had originally been introduced into London schools with the specific aim of improving the skill of future workmen and designers. Its approach Woodhouse defended; its deficiencies he recognised:

\begin{quote}
It was ... devised to improve the standard of design in the first place, not by teaching design, but by providing facility in drawing and keeping good types before the children's eyes. Its aims may have been narrow, but it had an aim, and it recognised that the power to draw is universal. The teaching, however, became mechanical, the Freehand work was practically limited to outline; the forms, however beautiful, were not such as to appeal to young children, and the faculty was only the imitative, never the creative.\textsuperscript{179}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{178} \textit{N.S.W. Educational Gazette}, 1, 2, 1st July, 1891, 8.

\textsuperscript{179} F.W. Woodhouse, "The Teaching of Drawing", \textit{N.S.W. Educational Gazette}, XIII, 2, 1st July, 1903, 35.
It is important that neither Woodhouse, nor the London scheme, nor even South Kensington precedent be held alone responsible for the mechanical and formal character of the work in drawing. This was the widespread concept of the appropriate subject matter and method in this aspect of the curriculum. Pestalozzi, Froebel and their followers also advocated a predominately geometric and graded programme of instruction which began with the straight line, moved on to squares and triangles and then to curved lines. Thus these eminent educationists added their support to the prevailing belief that drawing instruction should be a form of technical education with a rather narrowly utilitarian aim.

The reforms introduced into the writing course were related to drawing, for caligraphy was regarded as a subject to be taught on very similar lines, even as a

form of drawing itself. Combes, for example, thought that writing should be taught in connection with drawing. Thus the increased importance accorded writing in the 1890 Standard was also in a sense a concession to the demand for "technical education". And the reasoning behind the rather startling directions that "in future every pupil ... must regularly write in ruled copy books ... and the Inspectors will mark each book a failure where no attempt is made to imitate the copies given" is apparent. Drawing was taught by rule and from graded copies - writing was to be taught the same way.

Manual training for boys was strongly advocated as a further reform which should be introduced into the primary school in the interest of technical education. Combes and Selfe drew attention to the recommendation


182. Minister's Report, 1890, Appendix XII, 169.

183. E. Combes, op. cit., 1887, 145.

made by the British Royal Commission that workshop teaching in elementary schools should be encouraged. In 1885 the Department of Public Instruction demonstrated that it was aware that such teaching had been introduced in one of the schools controlled by the London School Board but Johnson saw very little value in such work. It was the Board of Technical Education which then assumed the initiative and pioneered manual training in the schools of New South Wales. This began with Selfe's suggestion in 1886 that a beginning could be made by a number of the older scholars attending the Board's Kent Street workshops on Saturday mornings. When the Department failed to respond the Board itself introduced such teaching in 1887 "by the formation of afternoon carpentry classes in the Kent-street workshops for the pupils attending St. Philip's Grammar School".

186. N. Selfe, op. cit., 1887 Address, 12.
187. N.S.W. Board of Technical Education, loc. cit.
188. N. Selfe, loc. cit.
Neither these activities of the Board of Technical Education nor British precedent could be ignored, but Departmental action came slowly. It was in 1890 that it finally decided to introduce such work at Fort Street. This move came only after Combes' 1887 Report and its pointed recommendations, two of which seem to have determined Departmental policy. These pertinent recommendations were first:

That recognizing the necessity that manual training should be an integral part of any system of general education, inasmuch as it contributes to develop activity, observation and intuitive perception, I recommend that it be introduced into all public, primary or elementary schools as soon as possible.

And second:

That manual training be taught as an integral subject at the Fort Street Training School, and that in future all the Training School students should be examined in manual training.

189. Minister's Report, 1890, 43.


192. Ibid.
The first Departmental steps were the erection of a workshop at Fort Street early in 1890 and the instruction of the students of the Training College in carpentry and the use of tools. This instruction was then extended to the senior pupils of the Fort Street School and later to pupils of some of the other large schools. At Fort Street by the end of 1891 a "carefully prepared programme ha(d) been arranged embracing separate courses of instruction for boys in the Public School and students of the Training College". Two hours a week were devoted to the work and for both groups this was outside school hours. Apparently the Department was unwilling to endanger the results achieved in the subjects prescribed in the Standard by varying the time-table and so chose to

193. Minister's Report, 1890, 43f.
194. Ibid.
195. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, I, 7, 2nd December, 1891, 141.
copy the procedure followed in Britain\textsuperscript{196}. Nevertheless it must also be fairly concluded that the training provided for student-teachers indicates that the Department contemplated a later extension of this work.

The claim was made that the purpose of this work was not to teach trades but through a system of eye and hand training to create a basis for subsequent industrial occupation and training\textsuperscript{197}. Such a view, it was maintained, was in keeping with overseas dictum\textsuperscript{198}. It was also, of course, in keeping with the concept of education embodied in faculty psychology. And it was in addition a basic principle of the form of manual training which had been developed in Sweden by Otto Salomon and entitled "sloyd".

When first introduced into Sweden the purpose of sloyd education was as much social and economic as

\begin{flushright}
\begin{tabular}{l}
196. Department of Science and Arts, Form 813, Manual Instruction, 5th June, 1890 (Quoted in G. Blachford, \textit{A History of Handicraft Teaching}, Christophers, London, 1961, 50.)

197. Minister's Report, \textit{loc. cit.}

198. \textit{Ibid.}
\end{tabular}
\end{flushright}
educational. For generations during the long winter nights it had been customary for men to cut and carve and women to knit and weave. These home industries were the original sloyd and these had long been an important feature of the Swedish economy. The development of the factory system provided a competition which threatened this home industry unless it became more efficient.

Various private individuals opened sloyd schools with this precise purpose. In 1872 August Abrahamson joined this group, opening what was to become the most important of them all at Naas. Under the direction of Abrahamson's nephew, Otto Salomon, Naas became a centre of international renown. There Salomon developed "educational sloyd" and provided a training for teachers in its principles.


and methods. Salomon had toured Finland in 1877 where he was impressed by the efforts of Uno Cygnaeus to introduce a programme into the schools which included not only Froebelian kindergarten but also work along these lines suitable for older pupils. On his return to Sweden he set about elaborating sloyd into an educative system whose contribution to general education would justify its inclusion in the curriculum of the primary school. The formative rather than the utilitarian aims of this system were therefore stressed and a distinction drawn between carpentry and sloyd work in these terms. On the same grounds it was insisted that teachers who understood the educational process and not artisans should be employed as instructors. Not that

202. Ibid, viii.
204. O. Salomon, op. cit., ix.
205. Ibid, 1.
206. Ibid, Ch. XI.
sloyd had no utilitarian value; rather it was possible to divide its aims into two classes, the formative and the utilitarian. The list of aims which Salomon produced leaves no doubt, however, where he placed the emphasis. The formative aims were: (1) to instil a taste for and a love of labour; (2) to inspire respect for rough, honest, bodily labour; (3) to develop independence and self-reliance; (4) to train in habits of order, exactness, cleanliness and neatness; (5) to train the eye and sense of form, to give a general dexterity of hand and to develop touch; (6) to accustom to attention, industry, perseverance and patience; (7) to promote the development of the physical powers.

The utilitarian aims were more modest—(1) to give dexterity in the use of tools; (2) to execute exact work.

With such aims there was no reason why sloyd principles could not be applied to any manual skill, activity

207. Ibid, 2-7.
208. Ibid, 7.
209. Ibid.
or materials. Salomon himself decided that the most practical approach was to restrict his work to sloyd-carpentry and the course he evolved consisted of an orderly series of models useful in the home. Such things as a letter-opener, pin tray, marking gauge and a small table were included. There were no abstract lessons in sawing, chiselling or planing; instead these were incorporated as a part of the construction of the models. A graded sequence of such skills was however carefully maintained which ranged from cutting with a knife to the more complex task of producing a concealed dovetail.

Sloyd did make a contribution to the manual training movement in Britain. Over two hundred teachers from England and Scotland were trained at Naas between 1875 and 1893. In 1888 the Sloyd Association of Great Britain was founded.

211. Ibid, Ch. XII.
212. Ibid, Ch. XII.
213. Ibid, 147.
Britain and Ireland was formed, later to be followed by regional associations. Much of the manual training in Britain was certainly not sloyd, but sloyd did lend a general support to all those who argued for the inclusion of manual training as a part of the elementary school curriculum and did provide some theoretical basis for linking kindergarten, manual training and technical education in a single continuum. Although Combes had described sloyd most favourably its contributions to developments in New South Wales in 1890 were limited to this general character. It provided none of the details of the local programme. The colonial scheme was a course of simple carpentry which included such tasks as using a chisel, a bradawl and a hammer, sharpening these tools, and fixing locks and hinges. Any claim that such a course would develop a general manual dexterity cannot be countenanced. And this has nothing to do with the psychological problem of transfer. It is just that the course was too obviously designed to impart some useful

214. Ibid, 150.

215. Minister's Report, 1890, 43f.
knowledge and teach a few simple skills.

In the final analysis there is absolutely no doubt that the credit for the introduction of manual training into New South Wales primary schools lies largely with Combes, Selfe, the Board of Technical Education and with British opinion and precedent. It was an important innovation but it cannot be claimed that the scheme had any profound effect upon primary education as we to-day understand this. Such instruction was only provided to a few privileged senior boys in grades where a form of secondary education was provided. Even in the few schools where manual training and kindergarten work were both to be found there remained a large gap in "technical" education bridged only by object lessons and drawing. It is as well, however, to record that alongside this innovation of manual work for boys there were complementary reforms introduced for girls. Just as manual work for senior boys was introduced in some of the large schools, cookery was introduced for senior girls\textsuperscript{216}.

\textsuperscript{216} Ibid, 48.
This work even had the advantage over manual work of being actually specified in the 1890 Standard\textsuperscript{217}.

Needlework underwent a thorough change comparable with that introduced for drawing. It was henceforth demanded of all classes and marks for it were awarded at the annual inspectorial examination\textsuperscript{218}. In keeping with its increased stature as a school subject a Directress of Needlework was appointed to supervise the work\textsuperscript{219}.

In point of fact, then, the girls came out of the 1890 Standard with more "practical" training than the boys. Significantly nowhere were there lengthy discussions of the educative value of this work. The motive was clearly utilitarian and the value of useful studies was not disputed.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{217} Ibid, 483-84.
\item \textsuperscript{218} Ibid, 48; 478-84.
\item \textsuperscript{219} Ibid, 48; Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903. "Subjects discussed at the Recent Conference of Inspectors and Teachers", Maynard to Under-secretary, 17th January, 1890.
\end{itemize}
THE BREADTH OF THE VISION OF 1890

Overall, then, the influence of the "hand and eye" movement upon the New South Wales curriculum was extensive. It led to reforms in drawing and object lessons, to allied reforms in writing and needlework, to the introduction of manual work for senior boys and cookery for senior girls and to an official stamp of approval for kindergarten work - all in the interests of "technical education". A wider vision of educational purposes and content was created which was in the nature of a prelude to the New Education whose introduction to New South Wales ten years later was surrounded by so much drama. Selleck has chosen to incorporate the parallel occurrences in England within his study of the New Education Movement in that country. This interpretation involves some difficulties. Most of the reformers who championed the cause of technical education

220. R.J.W. Selleck, op. cit., Ch. 4, "The New Education - The Practical Educationists".
had as their object the modernisation of the course of study. Science, drawing and manual training were useful studies just as the three R's were and this was their main justification. These champions of technical education did not hesitate to invoke the testimony of eminent theorists to support their case, but it was support they primarily sought, not inspiration. At that, these "practical educationists" benefited more than the kindergarteners of this period. It is ironical that these strengthened their position by linking their endeavours with the hand and eye movement. Their work was founded upon Froebel's naturalism which was child-centred and so a challenge to the utilitarian concept of educational purposes. Thus in furthering their case on utilitarian grounds their position was compromised. Yet in the context of the period there was value in this - here was a point of contact with the prevailing concept of education and a chance to gain popular and official acceptance of kindergarten work. But here is the very difficulty - it was the Froebelian principles which were
to give the New Education much of its character and these were temporarily obscured during the late nineteenth century. But whatever the difficulties of incorporating the efforts of 1889-90 within the ambit of the New Education, it is nevertheless impossible to ignore the connection. There was during this period a preliminary encounter with many ideas and practices later incorporated under this head. One thing is certain: the period 1889-90 was one of genuine educational awakening in New South Wales. Other plans were formulated at this time which demonstrate the considerable breadth of the educational vision of these years. One directly relevant to this study was the attempt through public competition to provide more suitable text books than those then in use. Australian history was a particular problem and this competition was designed to find a replacement for the text by Sutherland. A prize of £300 was offered

221. This competition seems to have been personally initiated by Carruthers, the Minister - Education Department Archives, P3924, School Books and Supplies, Carruthers' Memo., 3rd May, 1890.

222. Minister's Report, 1890, 58.
for a complete work and one of £150 for a section devoted to citizenship. Both were awarded to H.L. Lusk²²³ but in a remarkable series of events the work remained in a continual state of revision for the rest of the century, events which in themselves were a commentary upon the educational policies pursued during the economic depression which began in 1892-93²²⁴. Equally indicative of the depth of the contemporary interest in educational advancement and similarly fated for inaction with the onset of the depression was the plan to build a teachers' college within the University Grounds. Already provision had been made for students in training to attend university lectures²²⁵. The proposed building was intended to make this more practical but was at the same time an acknowledgement that well-qualified teachers were both an asset and a necessity²²⁶.

²²³. Ibid, 59.

²²⁴. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 52, 616; 72, 120 and 813; 83, 1042; 88, 1926; 95, 2418; 97, 856-57; 99, 683.

²²⁵. Education Department Archives, P4002, Training School File, 1884-1905, University Registrar to Under-secretary, 24th April, 1889.

²²⁶. N.S.W. P.D. (1), 49, 5488, 21st November, 1890 (Carruthers).
These additional projects indicate the extent of the educational activity in New South Wales whilst Carruthers was Minister for Public Instruction in the March 1889 to October 1891 Parkes Government. Carruthers' efforts were remarkable for so young a man. He seems moreover to have really enthused Departmental officials who inaugurated the New South Wales Educational Gazette to add impetus to the movement. The political element was, in fact, a major factor behind these reforms and activities of 1889-1891. This was Carruthers' first ministerial post and it seems he was determined to make his mark. But the political element was even broader than this. The Trades and Labour Council had agitated for increased provision for technical education and the creation of the Board of Technical Education had been in part a concession to its demands. The press chose

227. Joseph Hector Carruthers was 32 years of age in 1889.

to give increasing space to the subject and there were, too, the activities of the Board of Technical Education. Thus by 1889 technical education was important enough politically to be featured as a part of the platform of the Liberal (free trade) Party. It was thus logical that this should therefore be "the area in which Carruthers would try to make his mark". To this end he presented a detailed scheme to Cabinet in September 1889 which included provision for preliminary technical work in primary schools and the establishment of evening continuation schools and colleges. It was proposed that the work in primary schools would consist of -

229. E.g. Daily Telegraph, 23rd December, 1885 and 10th April, 1887; Evening News, 2nd April, 1886; 3rd July, 1886 and 10th September, 1887.


... Kindergarten and object lessons for infants' and junior classes, of elementary science lessons for more advanced classes, of drawing for all classes, and of practical horticulture and manual training in the use of ordinary tools, in all schools where suitable arrangements can be made. The girls will also receive instruction in needlework and cookery.

The date of this ministerial minute for Cabinet and its contents are both of major significance. It is clear from these that the important policy discussions were made months before the conference of inspectors and teachers of December 1889. All that was left for this body in the area of technical education were matters of detail and implementation. There can be no doubt that Departmental officers assisted Carruthers in the preparation of his minute but there seems little doubt either that he initiated this action. Once moved these officials did respond to produce a new Standard which was a considerable advance upon the old. And there was promise of even further advance.

232. Parkes' Correspondence, A890, Johnson to Parkes enclosing Carruthers' Cabinet Minute, 12th September, 1889.
There were those at the time who viewed this educational awakening with reservation. Knefft, the curator of the Australian Museum, wrote personally to Parkes warning against a precipitate policy towards technical education:

There is little success to be expected when anything is forced into existence. A country like Australia should be contented with such a system of education as it has at the present day and allow this system some natural development. 233

Here was a man who recognised that grand plans for technical education inspired by developments abroad might be inappropriate in a colonial society where industrialisation was limited. The criticisms from Bella Guerin were educational rather than socio-economic. She saw rightly enough that with the increasing emphasis upon science and useful knowledge the broad purposes of education could be forgotten and general education, that valuable product of classical studies, neglected 234. Even


if such reservations are accepted, the period commencing in late 1889 still ranks as one of distinct educational promise. In the area of the primary curriculum some reforms were made because they were a realistic adjustment of a Standard which was too difficult; others were a more truly progressive if delayed response to overseas developments, opinions and innovations. Unfortunately much of the promise of these years was to be unfulfilled for the economic depression commenced before the programme was far forward. Conditions during this period were quite unfavourable and progress ground to a halt.

**EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND THE DEPRESSION**

With the fall of the Parkes Government on 19th October, 1891, Dibbs succeeded to the premiership and Francis Bathurst Suttor became Minister of Public Instruction for a third time. Confronted with the

235. On both earlier occasions Suttor had held this position under Parkes.
depression of 1892 the Dibbs Government introduced a system of economies which brought educational development to a standstill and destroyed the promise of 1890. There was a prelude to the more serious measures which were to follow in the Supply Debate of 1892. On this occasion there was a rise in the funds allocated for school buildings from £45,000 for 1891 to £120,000 for 1892 - explained by Suttor on the grounds that whereas Carruthers had intended to raise a £250,000 loan the Dibbs Government had decided to use consolidated revenue - and yet there was still an overall reduction in state expenditure on education. In the years which followed this trend continued. Economy was essential. Reid succeeded Dibbs

236. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 57, 6024 - Three additional comments must be made: (1) The Parkes Government had voted a loan of £280,000 in 1889 (V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1889, 3, 211); (2) Loans were also voted by the Parkes Government in 1890 for a lesser £80,000 (V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1892-93, 2, 924); (3) A loan of £50,000 was voted by the Dibbs Government in 1892 which was the last for public schools until 1900 (V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1892-93, 2, 924; V. & P. N.S.W. Legis. Assembly, 1900, 3, 801).
but neither the fact that whilst Reid himself had been Minister from 1882 to 1884 finance had been liberal nor the presence of Carruthers as Secretary for Lands in the Reid Ministry could alter the hard truth.

In the circumstances it is no surprise that the scheme to build a training college within the University grounds was abandoned. But worse, educationally, was to follow. Parkes, aware of the plans afoot, rose on 4th May, 1893 to challenge the proposed policy of the Dibbs Ministry\(^\text{237}\) which had decided (a) to dispense with attendance officers and transfer to the police the responsibility of enforcing the compulsory clauses; (b) to raise fees for pupils in primary schools who were above the statutory age of fourteen to a shilling a week; (c) to increase fees in high schools from eight to twelve guineas a year; (d) to refuse admission to school to children below six\(^\text{238}\); (e) to generally reduce government

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\(^{237}\) N.S.W.P.D. (l), 65, 6715f. (Parkes had earlier informed Dibbs of his intentions - Parkes Correspondence, A916, 252, Parkes to Dibbs, 25th April, 1893.

\(^{238}\) Sutter's personal directive to his Departmental officers dated 9th January, 1894 to implement this part of the policy is contained in the Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903.
expenditure on almost every educational item - in some cases drastically so. Parkes claimed that such a policy would "do much to modify, if not to wound and nearly destroy, the system of public instruction." He reviewed the purpose of the 1880 Act and declared:

I cannot for a single moment allow that the importance of cutting down the public expenditure should be so carried out as to militate against the provisions of this act of Parliament.

In reply Suttor maintained that the Act was perfectly safe in his hands but insisted that the time had come to curtail "the enormous expense which (took) place under it." It would be possible to sympathise with a plea of necessity but what emerged in Suttor's statements was an attitude towards education reprehensible in a Minister for Public Instruction. To him the state's financial responsibility could be conveniently restricted to a primary education which was confined to the essentials.

239. _N.S.W. P.D._ (1), 65, 6715-16.
240. _Ibid._
241. _Ibid_, 6719.
242. _Ibid_, 6721.
This attitude was incorporated within each justification he invoked for the proposed policy.

In some areas the blow to education was extremely severe. The vote for technical education was halved and classes in a number of subjects closed down. Teacher training, too, was a major casualty. Not only was the plan for a teachers' college abandoned but the Fort Street Training School was amalgamated with the Model School and J.W. Turner placed in charge of this dual unit. Of more educational consequence was the reduction in the number of students admitted to the training schools in the years which followed. Suttor also decided that in future all primary school pupils from the fourth half-year of Third Class upwards would be examined at the annual inspection for the certificate of exemption provided for under the Act. It was claimed by some that the object and result of this innovation

243. Minister's Report, 1893, 20. (Turner had been headmaster of the Model School since 28th October, 1889 - Education Department Archives, P1848, School Files, 1889, Fort Street.)
was to induce parents to remove their children from school once the certificate was obtained$^{244}$. This could well be a correct estimate of Sutter's motive, but Bridges who conducted an official enquiry into this charge in 1896 was not satisfied that it was an accurate statement of its effects. Instead he considered that it had produced at least as much benefit as harm by inducing some parents to keep their children at school until the certificate was obtained$^{245}$.

The Dibbs Ministry resigned on 28th July, 1894; in October the minimum age of entry was reduced to five$^{246}$; but the basic policy of economy continued. The tasks of

$^{244}$ N.S.W. P.D. (1), 69, 1163, 28th February, 1894; 106, 4143, 18th October, 1900.

$^{245}$ Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, "Exemption Certificates", Bridges, 23rd May, 1896.

$^{246}$ Minister's Report, 1894, 4. (Bridges had recommended a return to the previous policy of no minimum age and offered the opinion that if six were retained the result upon kindergarten work would be disastrous (Education Department Archives, op. cit., Bridges to Under-secretary, 17th August, 1894).)
Maynard who became Under-secretary on Johnson's death and of Bridges who now became Chief Inspector were hardly to be envied. Statistics of the results of the depression are provided in Table VI which follows.

### Table VI: Education and the 1892 Depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students in Training</th>
<th>Teacher to Pupil Ratio</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Average Cost per Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>195,241</td>
<td>2423</td>
<td>4149</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>632,433</td>
<td>3.14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>205,673</td>
<td>2457</td>
<td>4427</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>693,652</td>
<td>3.17.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>210,643</td>
<td>2502</td>
<td>4636</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>690,871</td>
<td>3.14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>210,277</td>
<td>2520</td>
<td>4527</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>641,952</td>
<td>3.8.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>206,265</td>
<td>2508</td>
<td>4453</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>590,361</td>
<td>3.5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>216,396</td>
<td>2563</td>
<td>4477</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>628,507</td>
<td>3.5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>221,603</td>
<td>2574</td>
<td>4442</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>576,441</td>
<td>2.18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>226,157</td>
<td>2577</td>
<td>4626</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>618,711</td>
<td>3.1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>227,561</td>
<td>2602</td>
<td>4759</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>656,829</td>
<td>3.4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>233,233</td>
<td>2641</td>
<td>4884</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>658,722</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>238,382</td>
<td>2697</td>
<td>5063</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>697,722</td>
<td>3.5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

247. Compiled from Minister's Reports, 1890-1900.
School enrolment actually fell only in the years 1893 and 1894 and a number of small schools closed as a result. In other areas the depression had more extensive results. The conditions of the schools themselves deteriorated, the number of students in training fell and the teacher to pupil ratio rose. The blackest year of all was 1896 when drought conditions combined with the aftermath of the depression to bring the financial provision for education to a very low ebb. Rather than concur too readily with the faint praise sometimes granted to the Departmental officials of this period as able administrators but men of limited vision, their efforts should be measured against the prevailing social and economic conditions. Amid the financial difficulties of the times Departmental energies were channelled into maintaining the status quo. Success was not always possible even in this.

248. N.S.W. P.D. (1), 91, 4730f. (Supply Debate, 17th November, 1897; Minister's Report, 1902, 71 (Chief Inspector Bridges)).
The "myth of excellence" which was so roundly condemned by Knibbs in 1902 was revived at just this period. The "myth" itself was not new: it had been invoked by both Wilkins and Parkes when furthering the cause of the national system and had been used politically by Parkes' party in 1889. Now, however, the "myth" was employed as a device to obscure the truth about public education in this colony. Garrard, for example, typically claimed that "the public school system of this colony was one of the best, if not the best, and most complete systems of public education, in the world". After Parkes died in 1897 this sentiment was linked with lavish praise for him as the man chiefly responsible.


251. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, V, 8, 2nd January, 1896, 182.

252. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, VII, 10, 1st March, 1898, 231.
Garrard's ministerial successors, Hogue and Perry, were happy to follow his lead and continued to present a public image of a colony doing "a great work"\textsuperscript{253}.

The effectiveness of this essentially political device was probably smaller and much more limited than Kribbs imagined. Take as one example the state school teachers who were a part of the system thus lauded and no doubt anxious to create a favourable impression of their efforts - these were certainly conscious that the system was not perfect. Bent speaking as chairman at the First Annual Conference of the Public School Teachers' Association in April 1898 made this quite clear\textsuperscript{254}. And within Parliament the "myth of excellence" was given decidedly little credence by those in opposition. Joseph Cook even used the substance of the myth itself as a point of departure for a major criticism of education in New South

\textsuperscript{253} N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 12, 2nd May, 1900, 293-94.

\textsuperscript{254} N.S.W. Educational Gazette, VII, 12, 2nd May, 1898, 271.
Wales, describing this as "splendid in its possibilities rather than its perfection". If the "myth" was significant at all it was because its revival was an admission that all was not well with education and at the same time a refusal to grapple with its problems. The danger was that governments, ministers and Departmental officials might convince themselves by such specious argument.

With drought following depression there was little Departmental action. Some improvements did occur towards the end of the century. In 1897 expenditure on school furniture was increased, the funds going mostly to the country where "the old, cumbersome locally-made desks and forms (were) removed and replaced by those of the pattern used in Sydney". In 1898 there was increased expenditure upon school buildings. Most of the educational developments during this period of depression

255. *N.S.W. P.D. (1)*, 102, 3399, 13th December, 1899.
257. *Minister's Report*, 1898, 64.
Wales, describing this as "splendid in its possibilities rather than its perfection". If the "myth" was significant at all it was because its revival was an admission that all was not well with education and at the same time a refusal to grapple with its problems. The danger was that governments, ministers and Departmental officials might convince themselves by such specious argument.

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255. *N.S.W. P.D. (1),* 102, 3399, 13th December, 1899.


257. *Minister's Report*, 1898, 64.
were the product of semi-official activity - the decoration of classrooms and Inspector Kevin's school library movement being the major interests. Only late in the period was there official action of an educational character. This took the form of new Standards of Proficiency which were introduced in 1898.

THE 1898 STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY

The appearance of a new Standard indicates that Departmental officials thought that at last the moment was propitious to turn from logistical to educational issues. The Standard which was produced was a strange admixture of reaction and progressivism. The 1884 Standard had emphasised the essentials by eliminating the "frills" from the courses prescribed for the junior classes; the 1890 Standard with its broader concept of an adequate curriculum had expanded the courses provided

and redressed the emphasis upon the basic subjects by altering their proportional value; the 1898 Standard increased the value of basic subjects by an alteration of marks and yet it also contained innovations of a progressive character.

The conservatism of the 1890 Standard is evident primarily in the maximum marks allocated for the various subjects. These form the substance of Table VII.

A comparison with Table IV: The Standards of 1884 and 1890 is in order, but the trend is more accurately indicated when the proportional value of each subject in each particular grade is the yardstick. This has been presented graphically in Diagram II and there the generally renewed emphasis upon the basic subjects is clearly revealed. Reading in the lower grades is a striking case in point. Writing follows a middle pattern for lower grades but in the upper its importance is

260. Vide supra.
**TABLE VII: THE 1898 STANDARD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>MARKS ALLOCATED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needlework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin *)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Latin and French were alternatives.*
Diagram II: Relative Importance of the Basic Subjects, 1884 - 1898

Diagram showing the percentage of total marks for different grades in Reading, Writing, Dictation, and Arithmetic for the years 1884, 1886, and 1898.
increased. In arithmetic the relative value of the work was reduced in the lower grades but from second class onwards restored to the eminence it had had in 1884. Dictation is an exceptional case. Its relative value had been reduced for the lower classes and increased for the upper in 1890; in 1898 its importance in the lower grades was restored and in the upper slightly reduced. But it was still maintained at a fairly high level. No lengthy or detailed discussion of these changes is possible, for there are no records of relevant contemporary discussions. Yet they remain even in themselves as a valuable commentary upon the aims and purposes with which the century ended. If the basic subjects were not considered as sufficient in themselves they were nevertheless regarded as the major concern.

Accompanying this conservatism there was, however, a true element of progressivism. Minor modifications were made in the courses prescribed for English history so that it was conceived now in terms of simple biographies and stories rather than as a prescribed number of chapters to be studied and pages read from the stipulated
text-book. Similar minor modifications were made with geography so that in Fourth Class New South Wales became the important study and in Fifth the course was a human, economic and Empire geography concerned with trade and trade routes. The major progressive modification was, however, the stipulation that henceforth kindergarten work was officially required of all Infants' Schools. Chief Inspector Bridges was probably personally responsible for this decision. He had been impressed by the work done by Miss Banks in the past and had outlined the value of kindergarten work at some length in his 1896 report. He seems, too, to have been somewhat surprised by its failure to develop outside the Infants' Schools themselves. In July 1897 he enquired of his inspectors whether teachers were actually aware that

262. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, loc. cit.

263. Ibid.

264. Education Department Archives, P1837, School Files, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888, Bridges' note; P1848, School Files, 1889, Fort Street, Bridges to Under-secretary, 17th April, 1889.

kindergarten materials could be requisitioned for primary as well as infants' schools. Most inspectors reported that they themselves, let alone teachers, were unaware of this. In August therefore a circular was despatched clearly outlining this policy. It would seem then that the stipulation of this work for all infants' schools was but a first step and that its later incorporation into the course for First Classes in the larger schools was anticipated. Teachers themselves placed this interpretation on events, for they approached the Department through the Teachers' Association with the request that Miss Banks provide a series of lectures on Saturday mornings.

Despite the dualism of the 1898 Standard the fundamental structure, content and approach did not alter significantly. Nor was there any fundamental change.

266. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Circular to Inspectors, 23rd July, 1897.

267. Ibid, Inspectors' replies to Circular of 23rd July, 1897.

268. Ibid, Circular to Inspectors, 16th August, 1897.

269. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, VIII, 7, 1st December, 1898, 152.
when the 1898 Standard was slightly modified in 1901. The worst feature of the depression was the general inaction which was generated. Without the impetus of a buoyant economy there was none of the activity which had characterised the period from 1882 to 1891. Possibly the knowledge that Victoria had fared even worse from the depression lulled officials into waiting patiently for times to improve. Possibly they were complacent, happily accepting laudatory comment such as that from Henry Hill, an inspector who visited New South Wales in 1893. What was basically lacking were external social pressures upon the system. In this context the 1898 Standard represents little more than a stock-taking. It could more generously be interpreted as an attempt to start the process of development anew, albeit a feeble one. Certainly by 1900 Bridges was prepared to voice the opinion that it was time to move ahead once more. In his report as Chief Inspector he asked rhetorically,

"What should be done to keep New South Wales in the forefront of educational progress?" In his answer he directed attention to the need to extend and diffuse technical education, manual training and cookery and for commercial schools in Sydney and Newcastle. Then in his 1902 report Bridges turned to school buildings, quoting his own earlier opinion that a special grant of £100,000 was needed to correct the neglect of previous years. Bridges' remarks indicate the Departmental interests - material progress and those areas dormant since 1892.

When reviewing educational policy and the modification and development of the course of study between 1880 and 1900 a number of generalisations have clearly emerged. The liberal faith in universal elementary education provided only a limited concept of an appropriate education and of an adequate course of study. This

271. Minister's Report, 1900, 73.
limited concept restricted the purpose of education to the socially useful and the scope of the course to a few basic subjects. Augmenting this as a basis for the curriculum was a Pestalozzian heritage of theory and practice and the doctrines of faculty psychology and mental training. These complementary and sometimes contradictory factors formed the background against which the curriculum of the colony developed during this period. At no time were Pestalozzian ideas or faculty psychology formally rejected but they were neglected. Curriculum changes were made primarily for utilitarian reasons against a broader view of what was indeed useful in an increasingly industrial world. Naturalism, too, played a small part, but it was the naturalism of Froebel's kindergarten and of sloyd in a mechanistic and utilitarian form.

It is also clear that the four main phases of curriculum development in New South Wales during this period from 1880 until 1900 were directly related to the social and economic conditions which prevailed. The
first phase with its emphasis upon the essentials was a response to a community whose idea of an appropriate education for most children was limited to reading, writing and arithmetic. The continuing attendance problem is sufficient to demonstrate the prevalence of this view right through the period and beyond. The concurrent, although at first uncertain, interest engendered by kindergarten work indicates that some of the colony's educational leaders were not fully in accord with such a limited concept of education. The wider vision this implies emerged as policy in the Standard of 1890.

By then British Opinions of the role of primary education in the field of technical education had become a major influence upon developments in this state, largely because they had been so ably championed locally by Combes and Selfe of the Board of Technical Education. And by then technical education had become a matter of political importance, especially to Carruthers who had obviously chosen to make his work in this field. The beginnings made at this time in favourable economic circumstances were, however, clearly hesitant. Results
and marks still dominated the system. Consequently the depression, the third phase, produced havoc in two areas: the material and the ideational. The material was obvious, the ideational more serious. When there was economic recovery around 1896 the Departmental interest was in improving the material conditions of the schools and in recapturing some of the promise of 1890. Unfortunately for New South Wales educational ideas and practices had elsewhere moved far ahead in the interim leaving a considerable ideational gap to be bridged. To provide a truly adequate dimension of this gap it is necessary to examine the conditions and methods which characterised New South Wales education between 1880 and 1900.
CHAPTER III

CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The material conditions of learning and the methods employed are an important part of the curriculum of the school. Despite the spread of kindergarten ideas from 1884 onwards and the innovations of 1890 there were no fundamental changes introduced in these areas until the educational reforms of the early twentieth century. The nature of the classrooms in which pupils laboured, the methods which were employed and the discipline which was imposed are the major concerns but inevitably the quality of the teachers employed, the nature of their professional training and the effects of the inspectorial system must be discussed.

THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF LEARNING

Chief Inspector Johnson indicated a number of the characteristic material features of the learning
situation in the late nineteenth century when in his 1883 report he detailed the then acceptable proportions of schoolrooms¹. These were to be from twenty to seventy feet long by sixteen to twenty-four feet wide. Allowing, as was stipulated, eight square feet of floor space per child it is a simple calculation to conclude that such schoolrooms were expected to accommodate from forty to two hundred and ten children. It is similarly a simple calculation to conclude that rooms of comparable size were expected to seat approximately twice as many children as are those of today. During the enthusiasm of 1890 sketches and plans for a full range of schools were appended to the Minister's report. Enough of these are included here to portray the full range of the late nineteenth century ideal of a school building and its internal arrangement. The tiered galley is indicated quite clearly. So, too, is the limited number, small size and indiscriminat placement of the windows —

¹. Minister's Report, 1883, 53.
features to be particularly noted, for these ignored most of the recommendations made by Combes in his 1880 report\textsuperscript{2} and were later to be criticised by the 1902 Royal Commission. And verandahs notwithstanding, it is evident that the walls of the small country schools were inadequately shaded from the summer heat. As for the larger schools for town and city, these although rich in ornamentation were no better in design and contained no adequate provision for the staff.

It should be emphasised that the plans prepared in 1890 represent an ideal. Practice often fell far short of this. Some of the country schools, especially, were extremely primitive; in many cases mere slab huts which had originally been erected by local communities seeking a provisional school\textsuperscript{3}. The extreme was exampled

\textsuperscript{2}E. Combes, \textit{Report on Lighting, Heating and Ventilation of School Buildings} ..., \textit{op. cit.}, 129-33. Combes' recommendations were based on "the great German authorities". They included the stipulations that window space be one-fifth the floor area, that light fall over the left shoulder, and that window openings continue as near to the top of the room as possible.

\textsuperscript{3}Minister's \textit{Report}, 1889, 6.
TIRRANNA.—Designed for a 9th or 10th class school, constructed of wood, and giving accommodation for 20 or 30 pupils. Cost, £15 12s.

MARSDEN PARK.—Designed for an 8th class school, constructed of wood, and giving accommodation for 40 pupils. Cost, £228 5s. 3d.

Plate V. Turranna and Marsden Park - Minister's Report, 1890, M.L.
Plate VI. Floor Plans Tirranna and Marsden Park - Minister's Report, 1890, M.L.
ROBBINSVILLE represents a 4th class school, accommodating between 200 and 300 pupils. The building is constructed of brick, and the class-room is divided from the main room by a glass partition. Cost, £ 1.450.

Plate VII. Robbinsville and Neutral Bay - Minister’s Report, 1890, M.L.
Plate VIII. Floor Plans of Robbinsville and Neutral Bay — Minister's Report, 1890, M.L.
SURREY HILLS SOUTH represents a 1st class school of three departments, affording accommodation for from 600 to 1,000 pupils, with all necessary class-rooms, lavatories, &c. These buildings are constructed of stone. Cost £15,615 15s. 6d.

Plate IX. Surry Hills South - Minister's Report, 1890, M.L.
Surry Hills South

Plate X. Floor Plan of Surry Hills South - Minister's Report, 1890, M.L.
by Rae's description of Grong Grong, a building twenty-four by fifteen by twenty feet high with an average attendance of thirty, which was "utterly without lining ..., built of weatherboards so much shrunk that the wind and dust came between the boards ... (with) no fence around the school, no shelter, no verandah". Lest it be thought that Rae, as politicians will, unduly exaggerated then the examples the Department found for itself in the early twentieth century corroborate his general proposition. The Department was aware that such unsatisfactory conditions existed and gradually "the old slab makeshifts (were) replaced". Unfortunately the depression left a heritage for the twentieth century of much left still undone.

School furniture was improved somewhat during the period. The long desk and backless form remained the most widespread seating arrangement, but dual desks


5. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Three Years of Education, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1913.

made their appearance in a few privileged schools. Originally this dual desk was introduced along with kindergarten for these with their top surface ruled in squares were regarded as a fundamental piece of equipment\textsuperscript{7}. Some advance was also made with the general environment of the school yard. At the time of the demand for school agriculture Arbor Day had been introduced. With less success there had been an attempt to increase the size of school playgrounds\textsuperscript{8}. These efforts brought some improvement. Late in the century an inspectorially supported movement improved the interior of many of the schools, often at the teachers' own expense. Bridges applauded these efforts in his 1900 report and at the same time censured the Department for its failure to provide financial support\textsuperscript{9} - a strange public comment with implications of personal discontent.

\textsuperscript{7} Education Department Archives, P1820, School Files, 1886, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 27th July, 1886.

\textsuperscript{8} Minister's Report, 1890, 6.

\textsuperscript{9} Minister's Report, 1900, 69.
In general equipment for schools was meagre. Reading books, a few maps and diagrams, slates and pencils were the main items. There were attempts to improve the quality and quantity of this equipment. School books were the subject of public competition in 1890\(^\text{10}\). Charts of Australian birds and animals were prepared\(^\text{11}\). Kindergarten equipment was made generally available towards the end of the century\(^\text{12}\). A significant development was Inspector Kevin's school library movement, for it was a feature of this that the purchases were made entirely from local contributions to individual schools\(^\text{13}\). The idea that parents should accept responsibility for some of the expense of education was not novel but Kevin's movement assumed a new character. Here there was official

10. Vide supra.

11. Education Department Archives, P3924, School Books and Supplies, January to September, 1891; various correspondence on the subject.

12. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, 1880-1903, Circular 16th August, 1897.

approval, if implicit at first, of a policy of actively soliciting local funds for educational requisites which were hardly "extras" but which the Department was itself unable to supply. Kevin's endeavours, later extended to include natural history cabinets, firmly established a pattern of community, school and Departmental relationship which led inexorably to the replacement of School Boards by Parents' and Citizens' Associations.

As well as these general features of nineteenth century schooling, it should be understood that there were important differences between the learning conditions which existed in the larger staffed schools of city or well-populated town or suburb and those which existed in the more numerous schools controlled by one teacher. This was more than just a difference in size. It was more, too, than just the difficulty of instructing children of a wide range of age and attainments. There were differences more unique to the late nineteenth

century. In the larger schools pupil-teachers were an important part of the staff, responsible during school hours for the ordinary work of instruction. At Macdonaldtown, for example, in 1890 whilst Peter Board was headmaster there was a staff of twenty-two for a school whose enrolment was 1300 and average attendance 897. Of these twenty-two teachers, one was a workmistress and twelve were pupil-teachers\(^\text{15}\). Moreover in such schools classes were large with the work conducted in large schoolrooms in which teachers and classes worked side by side. The 1880 Act had provided that public schools where the attendance was fifty or more should have classrooms attached\(^\text{16}\), but until the twentieth century it was the schoolroom which was the important unit. It was a useful arrangement for within these large schoolrooms the pupil-teacher, like the monitor before him, could work under the supervision of more experienced teachers.

---

teachers. How these large schoolrooms with classes and teachers working side by side functioned in practice is not difficult to imagine. Writing in 1943 R.A. Irwin, who had been a teacher from 1881 until 1916, pointed to the particular difficulty they imposed upon the young pupil-teacher for whom the task of controlling a large class "in a room of that character, with perhaps a noisy teacher on either side of him, was no sinecure".\(^{17}\)

In the smaller and more numerous schools of the colony where the attendance was less than fifty, one teacher only was employed. He was assisted by his wife for this was required by regulation. One of her duties was "to be present at the assembling and dismissal of the pupils and to take charge of the female children".\(^{18}\) She was also required to teach needlework to the girls "during at least four hours each week".\(^{19}\) It was clearly stated that "in forming an estimate of the efficiency

\(^{17}\) A. Cousins (Ed.), Some Experiences of the 1885-6 Session of Fort Street School for Teachers, Typescript in possession of the Mitchell Library, Sydney, 1943, 7.


\(^{19}\) Ibid.
of Schools, the competency and usefulness of Teachers' Wives and the time they devote(d) to school duties (would) be taken into account. For all these services a wife's efforts were judged worthy of £12 per annum, payable to her husband. This was not an additional sum, instead single men had their salary reduced by this amount. Not all such small schools were staffed by married men, nor were all provided with residences. The problem of obtaining suitable accommodation in remote areas was a real one.

The characteristic features of the school environment - large schoolrooms and large classes in staffed schools, the problems of instructing many grades in the small schools, the pupil-teacher system, the cramped accommodation for children, the immobility thus imposed and augmented by the standard long desk and form,

20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Education Department Archives, P4002, Training School File, Deputation to Carruthers, 9th January, 1890.
limited equipment, unattractive and even primitive classrooms and surroundings - these were both determinants and reflections of school practice. They functioned as determinants as the teacher struggled grimly in the face of the difficulties they imposed. Their continued existence for so long reflects their almost unquestioned acceptance. This acceptance was partly imposed by fiscal policies. It was also a consequence of the limited nature and slight professional content of the training teachers received and of the intrinsic weakness of the prevailing system of continual inspectorial examination of teachers and their pupils. To progress in the service a teacher had to do two things: please his inspector when this gentleman visited his school, and succeed at the teachers' classificatory examinations. Inspectorial expectations therefore determined much of classroom practice, whilst the system of teachers' examinations provided the major form of professional training. Both were determinants of the curriculum in action.
INSPECTORIAL EXPECTATIONS

The annual inspection upon which a teacher's future progress depended included as a major feature an examination of his pupils in every branch of the course of instruction. The results obtained went to determine a teacher's "practical skill mark". Although this was not payment by results it was something very akin to it. The procedure underwent minor variations from time to time but typically it involved four steps: the detailed examination of every class and a calculation of a Proficiency Mark for each; the use of these marks to then calculate the Average Attainments of the school, the determination of the teacher's Practical Skill Mark; and last its translation into a verbal description. Each of these steps is illustrated in Table VIII, The Mathematics of Inspection, which follows.
TABLE VIII: THE MATHEMATICS OF INSPECTION

Step 1: Calculating the Proficiency Mark

Example: A Second Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Lessons</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>460</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspector's Total: 299

Proficiency Mark = \( \frac{\text{Marks Gained}}{\text{Possible Marks}} \times \frac{10}{1} \)

= \( \frac{299}{460} \)

= 6.5

Step 2: Calculation of the Average Attainments of a School

Example: A small school with a First, Second and a Third Class where the inspector had granted Proficiency Marks of 5.6, 6.5 and 4.0 respectively:

(continued)

23. Adapted from Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's File, Inspector's Conferences Reports, 1883 and 1890.
Table VIII (continued)

Step 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Proficiency Mark</th>
<th>Pupils Present</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8, 27</td>
<td>32.0, 147.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Attainments of Pupils = \( \frac{147.4}{27} \) = 5.5

Step 3: Calculating the Teacher's Practical Skill Mark

The following weighting system was employed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainments of Pupils</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To complete the example of 1883, it was supposed that a teacher had been awarded 8/10 for organisation and 7/10 for discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>8 x 1 = 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>7 x 2 = 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainments of Pupils</td>
<td>5.5 x 7 = 38.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total = 60.5

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Description</th>
<th>Numerical Value</th>
<th>Appropriate Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good to Excellent</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Fair</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>IIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair to Very Fair</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>IIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>IIIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerable to Fair</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>IIIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerable</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>IIIC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 4: The Verbal Description

The Practical Skill Mark was converted to a verbal description. Each such degree of skill was considered appropriate to a particular grade or classification.
As well as details of the marks awarded to individual teachers, each inspector forwarded to Head Office a detailed abstract of the results obtained by the pupils in his district in each of the subjects of instruction. These results were collated and the averages thus provided were prominently featured in all Ministerial Reports from 1881 until 1902. They were intended to demonstrate the efficiency of the Department. It is difficult to assess the extent to which they were regarded as the absolute measures their careful tabulation seems to imply. Consider, for example, the contradictions in this statement:

It cannot be expected that these officers (inspectors) will in all cases agree in their estimates of the pupils' work, but it is expected that they will endeavour to conduct their examinations so as to ascertain as far as possible the true values of the teachers' labours.\(^{24}\)

The important point was that since to most teachers the inspectors seemed mainly concerned with results, then it was results that the teachers sought. Cram was the

\(^{24}\) Minister's Report, 1896, 10.
order of the day. Reputations were established on the number of pupils who were successful at the public examinations. Teachers in Superior Public Schools devoted time before and after school hours and on Saturday mornings to the instruction of scholars in the Fourth and Fifth Classes. It is clear that the inspectorial staff was never as narrow-sighted as many teachers thought them to be. Chief Inspector Johnson, for example, commented in his 1880 Report:

> It is to be feared that too great anxiety is manifested to cram pupils for the yearly examinations, rather than to cultivate their mental faculties by judicious arrangement of the subjects of instruction, and a skilful application of the most appropriate methods in teaching them.

In his own report for the same year Inspector J.S. Jones added in even more progressive vein:

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25. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, IX, 8, 2nd January, 1900, 175-76.

26. Ibid.

The instruction requires to be more objective and pictorial, and requires a closer relation to the pupil's physical and social surroundings, their range of experience, and their powers of comprehension. Their memory is exercised too much in advance of their understanding, and their knowledge is found upon examination to be one more of words or rules than of things and principles. The inductive method ... admits of wider application ... 28

Over the years similar corrective comments were made and are adequate evidence of a wider view of education than merely the production of results. For the teacher the issue was unfortunately no means clear cut. It was certainly confused by the importance that these marks had for him personally. Every teacher was expected to obtain the mark appropriate to his classification. Failure to do so produced an official request for an explanation and if this was considered unsatisfactory a warning and a possible demotion in grade and salary. For those teachers who wished to progress the marks obtained by their pupils and the Practical Skill Mark they thus personally obtained was even more critical. If this

were not enough there was a strange mixture of the pro-
gressive and the conservative in those to whom they
were ultimately responsible, the three Chief Inspectors
from 1880 until 1902, Edwin Johnson, John Maynard and
Frederick Bridges.

Johnson, Chief Inspector from 1880 until 1884 and
Under-secretary from 1884 until his death in 1894 29,
deprecated "cram" 30, actively supported the early
experiments with kindergarten 31, supported Miss Banks 32,
introduced university graduates into the inspectorial
ranks 33 and personally sought to lighten the task of
teachers in small schools 34. But he was also a

29. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, III, 12, 1st May, 1894.
31. Education Department Archives, P1789, School
Files, 1884, Crown Street, Minnie Hooper to
Trickett, 4th September, 1884, Johnson's marginal
note, 22nd September, 1884.
32. Education Department Archives, P1820 and P1837,
School Files, 1887 and 1888, Riley Street.
33. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief
Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Johnson to Under-
secretary 26th July, 1880; Johnson to Under-
secretary 14th June, 1883.
34. Ibid, Chief Inspector to Inspectors, 19th May, 1881;
"Standards of Proficiency for a School taught by one
Teacher", 3rd March, 1882.
Plate XI. Edwin Johnson: Chief Inspector, 1880-1884; Under-secretary, 1884-1894 - N.S.W. Educational Gazette, III, 12, 1st May, 1894, M.L.
conservative man of his times. He opposed the introduction of technical education "pure and simple" into elementary schools \(^\text{35}\), ignored or rejected suggestions that itinerant teachers of science and drawing be appointed \(^\text{36}\) and regarded teachers' examinations as an appropriate form of teacher training \(^\text{37}\). Maynard, Chief Inspector from 1884 until 1894 and Under-secretary from 1894 until 1902, was apparently more conservative than Johnson. He opposed expenditure on kindergarten \(^\text{38}\), assumed a major role in establishing the 1884 Standard as a curriculum of minimal essentials \(^\text{39}\), opposed abolition of corporal punishment \(^\text{40}\) and insisted that copy books

35. Vide supra.

36. Vide supra.

37. Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's File, 1881-1912, Jones to McCredie, 6th March, 1883, Johnson's marginal note, 7th April, 1883.

38. Education Department Archives, P1820, School Files, 1887, Riley Street, Requisition from Banks for materials, 12th March, 1886; Maynard's explanation to Inglis, 12th April, 1887.

39. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Maynard to Johnson, 27th May, 1881.

Plate XII. John Maynard: Chief Inspector, 1884-1894; Under-secretary, 1894-1903 - Portrait Collection, P3/M, M.L.
must be used and carefully followed. He was Chief Inspector during the promise of 1889-1891 but there is no evidence that he provided any of the initiative. He was Under-secretary during the Department's most difficult years and its failures are a serious reflection upon his ability. When he retired in 1902 he was accorded only the briefest biography in the professional journals and until an intensive study is made he must remain a nebulous figure of questionable effectiveness in his various official roles. Of Bridges, who succeeded to the Chief Inspectorship after 1894 and was Acting Under-secretary from 1902 until 1904, much more can be said. He entered the service in 1852 at the age of twelve as the first male pupil-teacher appointed by the National Board and died 52 years later still in the service of public education. He was a

41. Ibid, Maynard to Under-secretary, 12th March, 1890.
42. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIII, 5, 1st October, 1903, 106.
43. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIV, 7, 1st December, 1904, 145-50.
strange mixture of the progressive and the suspiciously conservative. He claimed for himself a pioneering role with kindergarten work and with school libraries. Other actions and attitudes are more certain. He had for one thing actively opposed Wilkins during one of the latter's most authoritarian moments and had been suspended for his pains. He was most favourably impressed by the work of Miss Banks. He was interested enough in the welfare of teachers to applaud salary rises. He publicly berated the Department for its failure to support the attempts by teachers to improve

44. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers and Prominent Educationists ... April, 1904, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1904, 139.

45. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 10, 1st March, 1900, 232.


47. Education Department Archives, P1837, School Files, 1888, Riley Street, Banks to Johnson, 25th August, 1888, Bridges' note.

48. Minister's Report, 1900, 70.
through decoration classroom conditions. Then towards the end of his career Bridges sought to drive policy forward once again by pointing to the important gaps in the system and to the need for increased finance. None of these is the action or attitude of a conservative and yet this same man was a harsh judge of those ex-students who deliberately flouted the regulations by calling a public meeting in 1886 to draw attention to their grievances, recommending the dismissal of the principals. And Bridges was suspicious, too, of quite simple changes in school procedure. He sounded a warning against scribbling when in some of the

49. Ibid, 69.

50. Minister's Report, 1902, 71.

51. Minister's Report, 1900, 73.

52. Education Department Archives, P4002, Training School File, 1886, Public Meeting of ex-Students, Bridges' recommendations, 22nd September, 1886.
Plate XIII. Frederick Bridges: Chief Inspector, 1894-1903; Acting Under-secretary, 1903-1904 - N.S.W. Teacher and Tutorial Guide, I, 4, October 1903, f. 64.
large schools arithmetic began to be worked upon paper instead of slates\textsuperscript{53}. When in 1902 teachers began to make innovations in the method of distributing materials he was very wary:

A new departure has been observed in a few schools in the method of giving out the books and other materials before the commencement of the lesson. These are placed by the teacher or monitor at intervals along the desks instead of in one lot at the end, to be passed by the pupils. When this is done before the pupils enter the classroom the object no doubt is to economise time in commencing work. The practice, however, is open to grave objection, as in the cultivation of habits of order and precision in class movements the passing of the materials at the beginning and close of a lesson forms a very important part of school drill, and its performance in a quick, quiet, orderly manner is a pleasing feature of discipline.\textsuperscript{54}

Unfortunately the conservatism displayed on this somewhat trifling matter permeated the service and classroom methods. The inadequate professional training teachers received could provide no counter.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Minister's Report}, 1896, 67.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Minister's Report}, 1902, 75.
In terms of their professional training three broad groups of teachers staffed the schools of New South Wales. One group began their careers as pupil-teachers, served an apprenticeship of at least four years and were then appointed as teachers in charge of small schools or as assistants. A second group began like the first as pupil-teachers but at the end of their apprenticeship were successful at the competitive entrance examination and were admitted to a training college. Relatively this group was small in number. Their advantage went beyond their additional training, for they were accorded a higher classification upon completion of the training college course than they would otherwise have obtained. Some were permitted to attend university lectures and were later able to complete their degree by attending in the evenings. The third group of teachers consisted of those who entered the service at a mature age. These adult entrants were a heterogeneous group. Some were experienced teachers from other systems and their status was determined by their success at examinations.
prescribed for the teachers of New South Wales. The majority of these adults were, however, native born and inexperienced. They staffed many of the small schools as teachers-in-charge after a "training" received by observing an experienced teacher at work for just one month. Some did not even have this advantage. These teachers were graded as "unclassified" and their future depended upon their ability to successfully struggle through the system of teachers' examinations. When the figures are examined the remarkable feature of the nineteenth century is the high proportion of the staff which were either so insufficiently trained that they did not warrant a classification or else youngsters still in training as pupil-teachers. Together these formed almost half the teaching staff.

Nor should it be thought that to be classified meant to be well trained. Classification depended upon success at examination and the subjects prescribed at these examinations provided the content of professional training for the great majority of teachers. Table X summarises the examination requirements for pupil-teachers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1887</th>
<th>1893</th>
<th>1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classified Teachers</td>
<td>1261</td>
<td>2026</td>
<td>2421</td>
<td>3117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified Teachers</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Teachers</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>1147</td>
<td>1093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in Training</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Mistresses</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Teachers</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>2558</td>
<td>3814</td>
<td>4527</td>
<td>5063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No separate figures were available.

55. Compiled from Minister's Reports, 1881-1900.
## TABLE X: SUBJECTS PRESCRIBED FOR PUPIL-TEACHER EXAMINATIONS, 1885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Marks Allocated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>50 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Management</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry (for Males)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra (for Males)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin (for Males)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French (for Females)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needlework (for Females)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Class IV (the lowest) only. Dictation was not prescribed for Classes III, II or I.

56. Compiled from N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Subjects of Examination for Classification of Teachers, Sydney, 27th March, 1885.
The interesting feature of this table is the small weight attached to subjects of a truly professional character. During the formative years of pupil-teachership the study of School Management was allocated only five or six per cent of the total marks awarded at each stage and the contents of this course comprised only Gladman's "School Method" and an elementary work on kindergarten. For teachers generally the position was not so very different. Consider the details which are summarised in Table XI.

Once again the small proportion of marks allocated to School Management is immediately apparent. In point of fact the whole examination system was a solution to the major problem of the nineteenth century - the problem of finding a supply of educated teachers when there was no extensive system of secondary education. The solution adopted was that of prescribed private study for teachers and study after school hours under the guidance of the head-teacher for
**TABLE XI**: **SUBJECTS PRESCRIBED FOR TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS, 1885**\(^57\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>MARKS ALLOCATED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Literature</td>
<td>- )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Management</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Science (Females)</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *Alternative Groups:*
  - **Males**: 2000 3000
  - **Females**: 1500 1500

* The subjects in the Alternative Groups ranged through Latin, Greek, French, German, Euclid, Algebra, Trigonometry and a number of sciences.

57. Compiled from N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *Subjects of Examination for Classification of Teachers*, Sydney, 27th March, 1885.
pupil-teachers. The examination and classification system provided a check and an incentive but was in essence the substitution of examination for training. As a system it was to continue until 1943. In the nineteenth century it was remarkable for its relative neglect of truly professional studies. The magnitude and urgency of the task of ensuring that teachers were educated men did not justify the policy of regarding a mastery of Gladman's "School Method" and of the Public Instruction Act and its Regulations as a sufficient professional education for most teachers. Only at the examination for a Class I certificate was anything more than this required. The emphasis was upon practical


59. In addition to Gladman and the Public Instruction Act and its Regulations Class I candidates were asked to master Tate's Philosophy of Education or Morell's Mental Philosophy during the earlier years of the period and later Bain's Education as a Science and Baldwin's Elementary Psychology and Education.
skill, general education, and a minimum of theory. This theory, particularly as expressed by Gladman, was nevertheless significant and must be examined.

THE GENERAL THEORY OF INSTRUCTION

It was Pestalozzi who was the principal source of inspiration for educational practice and school methods in New South Wales in the period 1880-1900. Kay-Shuttleworth, Wilkins' mentor, had modelled his innovations in England upon Pestalozzi's work and that of his followers\(^{60}\). In 1886 Wilkins himself acknowledged the debt school methods owed to Pestalozzi\(^{61}\). As an educational pioneer who contributed positively to the development of elementary schooling, indeed to the very concept of such education of the masses as a right, Pestalozzi has a well-deserved reputation\(^{62}\). But there

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were inconsistencies and contradictions in Pestalozzi's thought and practice. Consequently whilst he should be credited with many contributions of positive benefit, he must also assume his share of the responsibility for some of its numerous defects.

Pestalozzi was first and foremost a social reformer. He accepted the basic doctrine of Rousseau of man as potentially noble. His object was the regeneration of society by the elevation of the individual common man. With all the powers necessary for a happy and virtuous life latent in the individual the task for education was the harmonious development of these powers: intellectual, physical and moral. The practical task was the formulation of a method of instruction which would achieve this end. Rousseau had provided the key—follow Nature—and with it Pestalozzi sought to

64. *Ibid*, 14 and 61.
unlock the secrets of human development and "to psychol-
gize the instruction of mankind". This he did by
analysing the process of development and elaborating a
method in accord with the "natural laws" he thus
abstracted.

Pestalozzi began with the belief that

sensory contact with the outside world is
the only true foundation of human instruc-
tion, because it is the only foundation
of human knowledge.

But sensory impressions were merely the beginning. The
mind had its own active part to play — ideas were to be
formed, ideas commencing from obscure impressions and
graduating through distinct ideas to clear ideas to
definite notions. To this power of the mind and the
mental operations involved Pestalozzi scribed the term
"anschauung". Since Pestalozzi used this term with
varying meanings in different contexts it is sufficient
in the present study to accept that his general

67. J. Pestalozzi, "The Pamphlet of 1880" in J.A. Green,
op. cit., 291.

68. Ibid, 293.
proposition was that the human mind is active and creative. This fundamental concept, allied with the belief that knowledge was founded upon accurate sense-impression and supplemented by the belief that "anschauung" although subject to the natural law of maturation required direction through education if it were to be perfected, was the basis of Pestalozzi's method. It rested upon Pestalozzi's belief that the fundamental elements in cognition were concepts of number, form and language - in other words of how many, appearance and name. These were the basic tools by which the child understood his environment. This was how elementary "anschauung" worked. And it was

69. Cf. K. Silber, Pestalozzi: The Man and His Work, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1960, 138 - "Pestalozzi applies the term to every aspect (or phase) of the mental operations which he considers relevant to the formation of ideas, or concepts. Thus it may mean sense-impression, observation, contemplation, perception, apperception, or intuition, as the transition is made from relatively receptive and unconscious mental processes to full mental awareness and activity".
Pestalozzi's aim that it should work well because the later full functioning of "anschauung" depended upon the quality of the concepts formed during this early stage of development; that is upon how well and how accurately the world was understood. His object and his method Pestalozzi summarised thus:—

I wish to make mere words and talk valueless in men's minds and to give all the weight to actual sensory experience - the best protection against noisy assertion. From the outset I want to put the child into the heart of Nature in the midst of which he lives; ... in general, I hope to substitute physical generalisations for the metaphysical with which we nowadays begin our instruction, and only when the general foundations of knowledge - sensory experience - have been soundly laid shall I begin the difficult abstract studies from books. 70

Here was the explanation for Pestalozzi's decision to base geography and natural science upon the child's own environment, to introduce objects into instruction and to employ the inductive method. These innovations,

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Pestalozzi's broad concept of educational purpose, his insistence that the function of the teacher was to guide the self-activity of his pupils, and his advocacy of careful gradation and progression of subject material were his major positive contributions to education. By personal example Pestalozzi added other positive features for in his hands education was kind and considerate. Love of children, indeed of mankind in general, guided his efforts. But although Pestalozzi therefore rightly deserves acclaim there were negative features in his work which cannot be ignored for these were reflected in nineteenth century practices.

The basis of "the method" was the analysis of cognition into its fundamental elements - number, form and language - and the emphasis was placed upon the mastery of these elements by direct observation as the

first step. This "synthetic" method profoundly influenced elementary school practice. When it was applied by Pestalozzi and his followers to the ordinary school subjects the basic elements were conceived as the simple parts of a more complicated whole, such as a sound is a simple part of a word or a line a simple part of a square. Arithmetic and writing emerged improved from the application of these principles: arithmetic commencing with the counting of concrete objects and emphasising the formation of sound concepts of number through extensive mental work before turning to abstract operations and written exercises; writing emerged as a well-graded series of exercises. Not always was the result as happy as this. Reading, when it followed

73. The alternative, the "analytic", which commenced with the complexity of a unit and proceeded to its parts was considered suitable only for advanced students – Cf. W. Wilkins, op. cit., 1886, 48.


Pestalozzian theory, began with the mastery of simple sounds, was followed by practice with meaningless syllables and it was only after this that actual words were introduced. With drawing Pestalozzi began with straight lines and the naming of them as horizontal, vertical, oblique and then moved on to a similar treatment of angles. Green leans backwards in an endeavour to do Pestalozzi's reputation as little harm as possible, but even he is forced to comment adversely:

... his desire to begin at the beginning and go forward on the principles of the "elementary method" led to the drawing of lines, angles, and geometrical figures, which long remained the standard procedure in the lower classes of the elementary schools. ... (But the mechanism of the "elementary method" survived the spirit which gave it birth ... The books of Schmid, von Türk, Ramsauer and Tobler only served still further to stiffen the formal and, to the child, meaningless nature of the drawing lesson.

Pestalozzian theory and practice thus provided a mixed heritage for the elementary school, a heritage

76. Ibid, 90-114.
77. C.A. Bennett, op. cit., 121f.
78. J.A. Green, op. cit., 280-81.
Broudy and Palmer have portrayed in the following terms:-

In a Pestalozzian classroom we would see a multitude of real things. These were the concrete materials from which would be abstracted, by gradual induction and discrimination, clear ideas as to the properties of these objects and their modes of functioning. But one would also see, if the theory is to be believed, youngsters practicing curves and straight lines preparatory to writing, practicing the sounding of different combinations of letters into meaningless syllables prior to reading, practicing elementary muscle patterns prior to playing games and the like.79

Bain, writing in 1878, was aware of many of the deficiencies of Pestalozzian theory. He dismissed the categorisation of methods as either synthetic or analytic as valueless. He claimed that the meaning assigned the terms was often so hazy that their use could only "produce the utmost confusion in the minds of young teachers" 80. He recommended the use of more expressive and intelligible terms such as description, explanation, abstraction, induction and deduction 81. Subsequently


81. Ibid.
induction and deduction did become widely used. Gladman indeed described the inductive as "the highest form of teaching and ... that which is most usefully employed by the teacher in educating his pupils." The elevation of induction to such a position owed much to Pestalozzi. With Gladman a complicated distinction was involved between "instruction", "true instruction" and "education". The last was the distinctly Pestalozzian process of drawing out the powers of the pupil from within. Gladman's elementary text was not primarily designed to exposit abstruse points of theory, however. Essentially it was designed as a guide for the young teacher. And it was Gladman's recommendations which formed the substance of the professional training of most teachers in New South Wales. When considered against the background of Pestalozzian theory and practice and in conjunction with opinions of colonial inspectors and others Gladman's work provides the basis for a revealing commentary upon the late nineteenth century curriculum in action.

82. F.J. Gladman, *op. cit.*, 21.
METHODS IN THE CURRICULAR SUBJECTS

Of the English subjects, reading was the most important. In the late nineteenth century its teaching was according to Gladman founded upon one of the three alternatives of the period: the alphabetic, the phonic, and the "look-and-say" methods. The first, although considered outmoded by Gladman, was the one in general use in New South Wales until the end of the century; the second then replaced it; the third which, unlike the others was analytic not synthetic, was still virtually unknown until after 1906 when it was employed in the Practice Schools at Blackfriars and North Newtown. Whatever the particular synthetic method employed, during the late nineteenth century the first recommended teaching step was the same - the mastery of the alphabet.

83. Ibid, 37.
84. Ibid.
85. J. Archibald, "A Survey of Reading Methods, and An Account of the Reconciliation of the Jones' Method (Synthetic) with the Word and Sentence Methods (Analytic)", The Education Gazette, XVI, 8, 1st August, 1922, 180.
86. F.J. Gladman, op. cit., 42.
was to be associated with name or sound in an interesting manner as possible. Letters were grouped for this purpose according to form; for example, F, E, L and p, q, d. Gladman also suggested they be associated with objects - "A for Apple" and so on. After this stage the reading course was then a matter of mastering the contents of the prescribed reading books. In the junior classes this was a matter of teacher pronunciation followed by pupil imitation. This involved considerable repetition of the same words and sentences by the class in chorus and by pupils individually. With senior classes the approach was somewhat less tedious, but still involved "go(ing) through the lesson with the whole class", a procedure not unknown even today but one which is no longer approved. Pestalozzi alone, it must be emphasised, had not determined all these features of the reading scheme; many of them were derived from earlier traditions; but these were nevertheless

87. Ibid, 43.
88. Ibid, 44.
89. Cf. C.M. Fleming, Remedial Techniques in the Basic School Subjects, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1943, Ch.III. (This is a brief history of reading methods.)
sanctioned by his concept of reading elements and by his own selection of a synthetic approach, albeit the more advanced phonic one.

As a school subject spelling was associated with reading. It was the words of the reading lessons which were prescribed for spelling and in such works as Collins' School Series each reading lesson was headed by a list of words which students were expected to master. There was no such distinction as that nowadays made between spelling and reading vocabularies. Formal lessons in spelling independent of the reading lesson were a rarity.

Handwriting increased in relative importance after 1890, the year in which the use of copy books became obligatory. Henceforth teaching no doubt improved. Throughout the period it was "Mulhäusers Method" which provided the basis for much of the efficient instruction.

90. Cf. plate XIII: A Page from a Collins' School Reader; vide infra.

91. F.J. Gladman, op. cit., 51.

92. Ibid, 61-64 (Mulhäuser had been a student of Pestalozzi - H.M. Pollard, op. cit, 256.)
AUSTRALIAN READING BOOKS.

FOURTH BOOK.

LESSON I.

GOOD MANNERS.

To do to others as you would like others to do to you, is the golden rule of good manners. In other words, we should endeavour to please others in all those matters in which we desire them to please us; and we should try to avoid giving pain or annoyance by any unnecessary act, that would be disagreeable to ourselves, if done to us. Of course, in laying down this rule, it is proper to remark that it applies only to the ordinary intercourse of life; for there are disagreeable actions which must be performed when they constitute a part of one's duty. A judge is not guilty of a breach of good manners when he sentences a man to be kept in prison, though the act is doubtless very unpleasant to the culprit; nor is a teacher's rule when he chastises a disobedient boy, though the punishment is disliked by the offender. The difference between good and bad manners is illustrated by the following anecdote:—

A stranger, in crossing one of the public squares of a

Plate XIV: A Page from a Collins' School Reader.
In this the elements of writing were identified, much as they are today, as the stroke, the curve and so on and these were taught first. This graded approach to copper-plate demonstrates the Pestalozzian heritage of small steps at its best. Today, of course, more emphasis is placed upon fluency exercises in the early stages but this does not detract from the Mulhaüser method, merely improve it. Ultimately in the period to 1900 the children of New South Wales were expected to master a number of hands rather than just a single style. What was expected may be judged from Plate XIV for the writing there portrayed won the annual writing competition in 1899.

Composition was included in the Standards throughout the period, if unobtrusively. The approach was once more synthetic, beginning with a mastery of the elements through identification of parts of speech and parts of a sentence, sentence building and the intricacies of parsing and analysis. Composition was often a purely formal study indistinguishable from the prescribed work in grammar. Little in the way of original composition was expected
Inverlochly,
Walget.
9th. Feb. 1896

Messrs. John Burt & Co.,
6 Loftus Street
Sydney.

Dear Sirs,

I am sending down a small consignment of wool and skins which I wish placed on the market without delay and shall be pleased to learn that you have disposed of same at fair prices.

Yours faithfully,
Donald Maclean

A Photographic Reproduction of a Page in No. 10 Australian Copy Book Written by Albert Sykes, of Spring Valley Public School, the Premier Gold Medallist for the Year.

Plate XV. Handwriting, 1900 - N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 8, 2nd January, 1900, 191.
from children in the elementary grades\textsuperscript{93} but letter writing was regarded as a more serious matter and mastery of its forms was demanded by New South Wales educators. Grammar itself included much work that could not justifiably be regarded as preparation for composition. Much time and energy that could more profitably have been spent upon the art of written expression was devoted to a detailed and demanding treatment of parsing, analysis and accidence. Bain and others equally enlightened may have regarded grammar as primarily useful when it was taught as a preparation for composition\textsuperscript{94}, but for most teachers in New South Wales mastery of the mechanics of the subject became an end in itself. This was the group whose British counterparts John Adams, with Baconian imagery, described as worshippers of the idols of the den, idols created by the elevation of parsing and analysis into the chief end of man\textsuperscript{95}.

\footnotesize{
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{94} A. Bain, \textit{op. cit.}, 346.
(Bacon had in turn applied Platonic imagery.)
}
By such teachers means were converted into educational ends. Those reforms which were made in 1884 and 1890 were concerned solely with the grade placement of subject matter. The ultimate expectations were unaltered. Much of what was taught is a part of the primary course still but now less detail is required and it is more functional. A great deal of the difficulty surrounding this subject in the nineteenth century is attributable to faculty psychology for what was not useful could always be defended in terms of the mental discipline it afforded. Not all the work that was done was necessarily valueless in a practical sense. Lennie's English Grammar, for example, did teach syntax by rule—a series of thirty-six of them in fact—but these rules were expressed in simple language and a wealth of exercises on the correction of sentences was included. This Lennie's English Grammar was prescribed for pupil-teachers. It is to be hoped that some of the correction exercises found their way into the classroom. One fears that the

rules, formal definitions, identification of parts of speech, parsing and analysis were the more predominant interests.

When arithmetic is considered the most distinctive feature of the work in this subject was its difficulty. Pupils were expected to master such operations as 591 tons, 3 cwts, 2 qrs, 17 lbs 5 ozs \( \div 196 \)\(^{97} \). The usefulness of such work is very questionable, but nevertheless reality was not entirely absent from the course or the methods which were employed. During their very early schooling children did manipulate ball frames and count objects and rational methods rather than "teaching by rule" were advocated for all levels\(^{98} \). Mental work was employed, but never as widely as Departmental officials would have liked. When at their best classroom procedures did include diagnosis and remedy of errors\(^{99} \), but they were

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also founded upon the belief that a rigorous discipline should be imposed. No text was prescribed for use in the schools in any of the Standards of the period but Barnard Smith's School Arithmetic was prescribed for study by pupil-teachers. It is reasonable to assume that Smith's approach was reflected in classroom practice. His text was replete with definitions, for example -

There are two kinds of addition, SIMPLE and COMPOUND.

It is Simple Addition, when the numbers taken together are all abstract numbers; or when they are all concrete numbers of the same denomination, as all pence, all days, all pints.

It is Compound Addition, when the numbers to be taken together are concrete numbers of the same kind, but of different denominations of that kind; as pounds, shillings, and pence; or years, months, and days; or gallons, quarts, and pints.101

It was also replete with rules, for example of the procedure for Compound Division:

100, Ibid, 77-78; E.A.R. _____, "Hints on Teaching Arithmetic", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, I, 6, 1894, 112.

101. B. Smith, Arithmetic for Schools, Macmillan, London, 1890, 4-5. (This work was first published in 1854.)
RULE: "Place the numbers as in Simple Division; then find how often the divisor is contained in the highest denomination of the dividend; put this number down in the quotient; multiply as in Simple Division and subtract; if there be a remainder, reduce that remainder to the next inferior denomination, adding to it the number of that denomination in the dividend, and repeat the division: carry on this process through the whole dividend."\(^{102}\)

Fortunately such rules, of which this is a simple example, were followed by one or two worked examples. There is no such solace available when the level of difficulty of the exercise is examined. Smith included such extraordinary items as the subtraction from 7559030640021 of 699004005679\(^{103}\), the multiplication of 574585614865 by 2837154309\(^{104}\), the division of 60435674536845 by 79094451\(^{105}\) and the simplification of \(\frac{2\frac{1}{2}}{3\frac{1}{4}} + \frac{1\frac{1}{2}}{1\frac{1}{4}} - \frac{5}{6} - 1\frac{2}{39}\).\(^{106}\)

102. Ibid, 114.
103. Ibid, 10.
104. Ibid, 16.
105. Ibid, 23.
106. Ibid, 59.
Fortunately the New South Wales Standards of Proficiency imposed some restriction upon such ridiculous exercises, at least in the lower classes. But still the work was demanding and presented great difficulty to both teachers and pupils. Often, too, it was taught by rule despite inspectorial objections. Overall not faculty psychology, utility, or the desire that a child's education be as complete as possible can be accepted as justification for what was taught and how it was taught but these were the explanations offered.

Object lessons, as has already been indicated, caused the inspectorial staff no little concern. Some saw the choice of subjects as at fault, others the methods of presentation, others still the departure from the original concept of training the senses and the powers of observation. As originally conceived


by Pestalozzi these lessons were inductive, beginning with things and ending with concepts and rules\textsuperscript{111}. At the time this was "a fine corrective for empty verbalism and mindless memorization"\textsuperscript{112}. In the hands of other educators the object lesson did not always function in this fashion and as the nineteenth century progressed there was such a general and marked departure from the Pestalozzian concept that the term "object lesson" was a misnomer. Bain described the approach which had evolved in Britain by 1878 where the typical procedure was to produce a specimen, say a piece of coal, draw attention to its appearance and properties, and then go into its natural history and chemistry\textsuperscript{113}. Such lessons were used "to introduce the pupils to three great fields - Natural History, Physical Science, and the Useful Arts, or the common Utilities of every-day life"\textsuperscript{114}. In the

\textsuperscript{111} H.S. Broudy and J.R. Palmer, \textit{op. cit.}, 115.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Ibid}, 116.

\textsuperscript{113} A. Bain, \textit{op. cit.}, 135 - Note that Huxley and Faraday gave many public lectures of this kind and popularised the style. Faraday's lecture on the candle was a notable example.

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Ibid}, 249.
lower classes they were centred upon the common animals, vegetables and materials; in the upper they dealt with physiology, hygiene, science and manufactured articles. The character of these lessons may be gauged from the following section of the "specimen lesson" on a newspaper which was included in Wiley's locally produced The Australian Object Lesson Book of 1898:

AIM - (a) To cultivate the observing and reasoning powers of pupils, (b) to impart information, (c) to enable the children to read a paper intelligently.

INTRODUCTION - Refer to some recent public event, such as a cricket match, and ask whence the boys received their information. Thus lead up to a newspaper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATTER</th>
<th>METHOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Contents of a Newspaper - The contents of a paper can be placed under the following heads:--</td>
<td>1. Let the teacher have several papers at hand, then the class will be able to see what the teacher is speaking about. Most of this portion of the lesson can be questioned out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Advertisements</td>
<td>3. What is the difference between news and advertisements? ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be added that from this point onwards the teacher progressed to a "discussion" of reporters, correspondents, articles, leaders, sub-leaders, and then the printing process in detail. This was a specimen lesson and he was expected to have on hand not only newspapers but samples of type, and stereotype moulds.

Object lessons were certainly, then, information lessons. In the lower classes their principal deficiencies were that the course given consisted of a miscellany of objects, some of which were only pictorially represented, some of which were not objects at all; that they were often merely vehicles for vocabulary extension and as such did not justify lessons of the type given; and that they detailed facts either of no great interest or value or better taught less formally. The uninspiring list of topics in Wiley's work demonstrates this beyond doubt. Here is a sample of the topics suggested for


117. There was something Pestalozzian in this nevertheless - mastery of the names of objects had been an important part of his pedagogy.
First and Second Classes -

**Objects:** Table, chair, lead pencil, school slate, penny, tea cup, town street, railway station.

**Animals:** Child, cat, dog, horse.

**Vegetables:** Pepper, ginger, grass, cotton.

**Materials:** Iron, copper, tin, lead, silver.

**Miscellaneous:** Axe, spade, horseshoe, gun, "Lost in the Bush", coal.¹¹⁸

The tedium of the work prescribed as "object lessons" for the upper classes may be judged from Walker's *The Handy Book of Object Lessons* ¹¹⁹. The human body formed a large part of the course, traversing such topics as the skeleton, heart, skin and circulatory system. The section on manufactured articles dealt with such things as glue, carpets, butter, cheese and brewing. No wonder Bridges thought that Walker's book should be consigned to the dust heap.¹²⁰ But this opinion came

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late in the period and even so what he wished to see changed was the subject matter rather than the method. Science was what he felt should be strongly featured and he ignored the basic difficulties of introducing a truly effective reform. This was impossible whilst the necessary equipment was lacking and as long as the teaching staff had a poor knowledge of science. Many of the papers on scientific topics in the N.S.W. Educational Gazette were probably intended to remedy one of these defects; nothing was done about the other. Object lessons remained bookish, artificial and unsatisfactory devices for the propagation of knowledge.

Geography was a subject closely linked in theory with object lessons for Pestalozzi had insisted that here too instruction should begin from the concrete. Consequently it was to begin from the immediate environment. The New South Wales curriculum made token submission to this principle in some of the work prescribed for the junior classes, but in actual practice the subject became and was taught as a gazetteer of places and geographical features. It was Inspector Long's
opinion that instruction failed to be of much practical value even in this:-

Classes are met with who display a minute acquaintance with physical features, but are wanting in that knowledge of matters connected with every-day life, such as well-known places ... which their Geographical studies would be supposed to confer.\textsuperscript{121}

Unfortunately much that was worst in geography instruction was sanctioned by faculty psychology's elevation of memory training to a major educational aim. Gladman was aware of the dangers created by this belief. He was aware also of the dangers which arose from the importance attached to results. He knew that the principal evil was the teaching of isolated facts by rote. He described the fate of many a schoolboy thus:

A teacher begins with the coast of a country, points out and names the openings on the East, South, West, and North, writes them on the blackboard, and requires his boys to repeat them simultaneously until they are committed to memory. He then goes on to the mountains, and lakes, and rivers, and so on in turn, until he has taught all the facts he desires and there his lesson ends.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{121} Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Long to Johnson, 4th July, 1881.

\textsuperscript{122} F. J. Gladman, op. cit., 101-02.
Gladman censured such procedures but the alternative he offered - an outline map progressively developed with accompanying description - although more interesting and less a skeleton outline and so a better technique still aimed at the memorisation of names of things and places.

History, the subject to which Wilkins had objected, was as a course simply conceived for most of the period in terms of the available text-books. Teaching was merely a matter of following these and mastering the chronology they embodied. The Standard of 1898 did specify instead of texts an appropriate range of narratives suitable for each grade but this was not a true curriculum innovation. Where the 1898 Standard did depart from prevailing practice was in its direct instruction that henceforth the dates to be memorised could be restricted to the more important. In fact this still

left a great number to be learned, but this direction
does mark a change in emphasis of some importance.
It represents a movement, if only slight, away from
the concept that dates were as important as the
multiplication table and that they were to be similarly
drilled by repetition. This was Gladman's view and although
he admitted dates were not history he regarded them as
"the essential frame-work on which to build up and keep
sustained all the scholars' historical learning".124
And anyway there was always faculty psychology to use
as an additional justification -"(a)part from the actual
value of this knowledge in itself, such lessons provide
a useful exercise for the memory".125 Late in 1897
some brief but heated discussion had taken place upon
the subject of history teaching in New South Wales
schools. It arose around a paper presented by Professor
Wood to the Public School Teachers' Institute.126 Wood

125. Ibid.
126. Professor Wood, "The Teaching of History", N.S.W.
Educational Gazette, VII, 7, 1st December, 1897,
153-55.
first stated his idea of the general objective of education - to make men and women good citizens - and then claimed that after the three R's were mastered history and literature were the most important subjects of all for achieving this end for these were studies of Man himself. He expressed the view that the history course should be presented in three stages: first, as mainly biographical centring on the lives of great men; second, in a chronological order to produce a knowledge of the "great outlines" of history; third, a final stage in which a comparatively short period was selected and studied in greater detail. Wood himself had no experience of school teaching and for this reason chose not to give advice on how this should be taught to children. A number of the public school teachers present responded vigorously to the professor's paper. Swann made the point that the very smallness of the number who reached advanced stages made Wood's scheme quite inappropriate.

127. Ibid, 155.
The alternative he suggested was that more specific attention be devoted to the present form of government and of how it evolved and thus of how to use the vote wisely\(^ {128}\). Walker and Rickards in their comments emphasised the practical difficulties teachers faced - Walker commenting that history was only one of the seventeen subjects prescribed for Fifth Class\(^ {129}\) and Rickard that the scheme was unrealistic because teachers were not free agents to decide content\(^ {130}\). Rickard was nevertheless prepared to accept much of Wood's general proposition concerning the aims of history teaching and on this basis went on to insist that the task of the schools was to train Australians first and Britons only second. He consequently claimed that any history course for the children of New South Wales should be designed and presented from an Australian

\(^{128}\) His view is reminiscent of the intentions of 1890 when a text on the duties of citizenship was considered.

\(^{129}\) *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, loc. cit.

\(^{130}\) *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, VII, 6, 1st November, 1897, 140.
point of view. And he suggested a history of the British Empire course which commenced with the discoveries during the reign of Henry VII.

Thus Wood, Swann and Rickard represent a movement away from the thoughtless perpetuation of the prevailing aims and methods and contents of the history course, a direction in which the Department chose to move itself in its 1898 Standard. And yet the extent of this interest, it must be emphasised, was still slight. Herlihy all unconsciously summed up the prevailing attitude and the basic problem when he gave his idea of the best "system" to adopt, for his system was one of skeleton outlines covering the period 1399-1897 and this represents most of what was wrong with the teaching of history in New South Wales during this period. The University of Sydney must shoulder some of the blame for this. During the discussion upon his paper Wood was himself attacked with some justice because he was an examiner for the Junior and Senior and yet, despite his grand ideas, the character

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131. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, VII, 7, 1st December, 1897, 155.
of the papers set made the "tipping" of likely questions a major determinant of schoolroom aims and methods.

Drawing was a subject which although revised in 1884 and 1890 in the interests of utility still continued to exemplify the worst features of Pestalozzi's "synthetic" approach. Enough has been said elsewhere to demonstrate this. Here it needs only be added that those teachers who thought drawing might encompass free expression and landscape work were considered guilty of unwarranted departures from the prescribed course and the principles upon which it was based. In the earliest stages the approved work was produced on slates engraved in small squares, a device derived from Pestalozzi and Froebel. What this meant in practice may be judged

132. Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's Files, 1881-1912, Riley to Wilkins, 10th February, 1883; Ibid, P3848, Chief Inspector's Files, 1880-1903, Plummer to Trickett, 9th July, 1884.

133. Pestalozzi used slates for this work. (Vide How Gertrude Teaches Her Children, op. cit., 23 and 123 and "The Prospectus of Munchenbuchsee, 1804" in J.A. Green, The Life and Work of Pestalozzi, op. cit., 318.) It was Froebel who recommended that the slates be engraved in squares to expedite "drawing in the net" (Vide F. Froebel, The Education of Man, op. cit., 290).
from Woodhouse's contributions to The *New South Wales Educational Gazette* and Miss Banks' to the 1898 Handbook for Teachers of Infants' Schools and Junior Classes. In 1903 Woodhouse, judging the preceding decade, claimed that the fault with the work was two-fold: what was asked of children was unattractive to them and the methods of teaching became mechanical.\(^{134}\) In the case of the work Woodhouse himself introduced it would seem rather that it was "mechanical" from its inception. It was his suggestion in 1891, for example, that in the early stages of teaching the paper or slates might be divided into squares, nine to the superficial inch. This was a crutch later to be dispensed with but not before the occasional lesson from dictation. His example of just such a lesson began:

> Begin, on the fourth line from the top, left hand side of slate, draw a level line three spaces in length towards the right, at the end draw a line one space upwards ...\(^{135}\)

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2nd CLASS.

Vertical, horizontal, and easy oblique lines.
Patterns made by combining these lines.
Elementary objects.

Plate XVI. Drawing for Infants. 1898 - Handbook for Teachers of Infants' Schools and Junior Classes. Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1898. 24.
As with drawing, so too has the general approach to kindergarten been examined elsewhere. The work remained experimental for almost the whole period and though its expansion was encouraged it was only finally prescribed for all infant schools in 1898. By then, however, although the "aims" of the gifts remained basically the same as ever - for example the purpose of Gift I (balls) was to teach colour and direction, to train the eye, to exercise the hands, arms and feet in play - their use was explicitly "left to the judgment and inventiveness of the teacher"\(^{136}\). This was a step forward in a sense, but really all it records is that Froebel had been partly shorn of his mysticism and kindergarten of a deal of its "mechanisation". Such was the result of impact with late nineteenth century utilitarianism. So there was more freedom of choice for the teacher but there was as yet no discussion in this colony of the real significance of Froebel's work and its general applicability to schooling.

\(^{136}\) Handbook for Teachers of Infants' Schools and Junior Classes, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1898, 10.
Drill was a term with wide connotations in the nineteenth century curriculum. As a subject the expectation was that all pupils would master the movements of the parade ground. With the senior boys this went further; they were expected to master rifle drill as well. Senior girls followed an alternate course of wand and dumb bell drill. There was an interest in bodily exercise as such in all this, but it was conceived in military terms. An 1898 example of what was expected of infants is sufficient illustration of this:

**ARM MOVEMENTS**

**Standing**

**READY** Attention

**ONE** Raise the left arm forward to the full extent above the head

**TWO** Replace it by the side

**THREE** Raise the right arm as at ONE

**FOUR** Replace it by the side

**FIVE** Raise both arms as in ONE and THREE

**SIX** Replace both by the sides

**SEVEN** Raise both arms above the head, and clap the hands

**EIGHT** Lower both arms behind the back, and clap the hands

**ATTENTION.**

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137. Ibid, 37.
Drill of this kind had its social ramifications, ramifications explicit in the associated School Cadet Corps where the motive force was a desire for a patriotic body of citizenry able and ready to defend country, Queen and Empire. This movement was sustained by the Sudan and Boer Wars, but had even broader social foundations which go a long way towards explaining the adherence to this form of physical education for so long. This was once again a repetition in New South Wales of English precedent\textsuperscript{138}. And here, as there, it explains why drill was more than a subject. "Drill" was, in fact, applied to all schoolroom movements and these were expected to be conducted with military precision. "Books, pass! One! Two!"\textsuperscript{139} was the order

\textsuperscript{138} Cf. R.J.W. Selleck, \textit{op. cit.}, Ch. 5. Selleck's examination of the English pattern illuminates local practice although this was not the intention of his study. The same social explanations he offers for English theory are equally tenable in New South Wales. And to this can be added the characteristic colonial policy of awaiting direction and inspiration from Britain before making a change in its own policy or practice.

\textsuperscript{139} "How to Teach Reading", \textit{N.S.W. Educational Gazette}, I, 6, 2nd November, 1891.
of the day. Drill in this sense was a part of school discipline, a general matter rather than one specific to any particular subject but a matter which must rightly be included in any discussion of teaching procedures. Here once more Gladman's advice is a starting point.

**DISCIPLINE IN THE SCHOOLS**

Gladman instructed the teacher to be "courteous, kind yet magisterial" and the overall attitude and approach which was to be adopted he summed up thus:

(The teacher) ought to inspire in his pupils the belief that he is superior to them in every way; wiser, better, and more powerful; that he is aiming at the general welfare of the school, as well as of individual scholars; that his plans have been wisely laid with a view to secure this end, and that it will be useless for anyone to attempt to thwart him.

It was considered important that supervision be thorough, descending to points of detail; that the

140. F.J. Gladman, *op. cit.*, 15.

teacher's law be supreme, and administered without caprice; that rules should be few and well considered with none that could not be enforced; and that "there should be no escape from the consequences if the law be violated" 142. This last rather ominous sounding principle was echoed in Departmental regulation, but there it was tempered by the instruction that the teacher's aim "should be to prevent the necessity of punishment by effecting the improvement of the offender" 143. Corporal punishment was believed by Gladman to be necessary at times but he sounded a warning against its use merely because it was easily applied and immediately effective 144. Within New South Wales schools its use was then as now controlled by regulation and was supposedly restricted "as much as possible to extreme cases" 145. It was the continual testimony of inspectors

142. Ibid, 15.


144. F.J. Gladman, op. cit., 177.

that discipline in the schools was mild and that there
was no undue use of corporal punishment. Contradictory
parental opinions were dismissed.

It is a fact, attested by almost all who have
had experience in the work of teaching in
the Colony, that parents are unduly sensitive
as to the kind of government best adapted to
the right training of children, and their
interference with teachers in the performance
of this part of their duties is at times,
in the highest sense, unwarranted, imprudent,
and mischievous.146

What could not be evaded even by such statements was
that not all teachers were disciplinary experts. Some
administered the cane for dullness or for trifling
offences. Cases of this kind, especially where girls
were concerned, produced an amendment to the regulations
in 1890. Henceforth, by regulation, inability to learn
was not to be regarded as an extreme case and "corporal
punishment (was) not to be recognised as a proper aid
to teaching"147. Carruthers, the Minister, had been in

146. Ibid, 49-50.

147. Education Department Archives, P3848, Chief
Inspector's File, 1880-1903, "Subjects Discussed
at the Recent Conference of Inspectors and
Teachers", Maynard to Under-secretary, 17th
January, 1890.
favour of total abolition of corporal punishment but bowed to the expert opinion of Maynard that this was not advisable\textsuperscript{148}. Keeping in mind the changed social conventions regarding the treatment of children, the human tendency to turn a blind eye to regulations, the large classes, the importance attached to results, and the attitude towards drill and regimentation, it is certain that discipline in New South Wales in the late nineteenth century was harsh and corporal punishment freely used. It would be foolish to regard this too seriously. Society establishes the norms after all.

The prevailing psychology of the period provided no counter to such a policy. Gladman attempted an interpretation of this psychology in his chapter on "Rewards and Punishments"\textsuperscript{149}, abstracting such axioms as the following:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{148} \textit{Ibid}, Lay to Carruthers, 28th November, 1889, Carruthers' marginal note.
\item \textsuperscript{149} F.J. Gladman, \textit{op. cit.}, 170-80.
\end{itemize}
Discipline is maintained by a system of Rewards and Punishments.

Reward is the bestowal of pleasure, punishment is the infliction of pain, in some degree.

Pleasure acts as an incentive, pain as a deterrent motive.

It is the certainty rather than the severity of a punishment that renders it effective as a deterrent motive.

When he applied these axioms to school work Gladman advocated a parsimonious policy with tangible rewards, because, since society itself offered so few rewards for good, correct or lawful behaviour, the school must train children to do the right thing without the incentive of reward. Prizes, then, were to be given "only for positive merit of an extraordinary character in the individual who receives them". With intangible rewards Gladman was prepared to be more generous - commendation, "standing on a form", offices of trust were acceptable devices. Punishments were a subject on which Gladman believed himself on surer grounds. He analysed their functions and came up with

150. Ibid, 171.
three uses: To reform the offender, to act as an example to others, to render just retribution. Whatever its purpose, punishment was always to be just. When intended to reform the offender it was to make such an impression that its repetition was dreaded and was regarded by the recipient as a degradation. To function as an example to others punishment was to produce a dread of suffering a similar fate but must not arouse sympathy. When retribution was involved Gladman was firm that the offender was not to regard it as a squaring of accounts – he was to feel he had degraded himself and that he could only be reinstated (to grace presumably) by watchful avoidance of his fault in the future.

The startling feature of Gladman's recommendations is how atrocious they sound! Almost equally startling is their difference from the views expressed by Pestalozzi, the father of much of nineteenth century education. To Pestalozzi "sympathy" had been a most valuable asset that every teacher should possess. Wilkins had acknowledged the importance of this attribute, though he had added that it was insufficient in itself and required
the supplement of a knowledge of the bases of child behaviour. Deliberate degradation of offenders had certainly not featured as a principle of classroom management in Wilkins' lectures of 1886 and Departmental regulations expressly directed that it should be avoided.

However it should be remembered that Gladman was the teachers' textual authority not Wilkins; and as important as the regulations were they did not provide the same detail as Gladman. In any final analysis it is important above all to see in all the regimentation of this period both a solution to the practical task of controlling large classes and a manifestation of those social purposes which had made elementary education such a theoretical attraction, namely the diminution of crime and immorality. Order and obedience were the object; regimentation was the method.


In general then teaching in the late nineteenth century was conducted under crowded conditions in often primitive quarters. When Henry Hill, Inspector of Hawkes' Bay schools, visited Australia from New Zealand in 1893 none of the schools he saw impressed him as typically modern. Instruction itself was founded upon a complex of concepts of purpose and method. Some of these were derived from the Pestalozzian "synthetic" method, others were centred more upon the concern with utility and the inculcation of useful knowledge, others were the product of faculty psychology and hence directed towards the training of "memory" and "reasoning". Overall loomed the quest for results and the need to satisfy the inspector. Teachers were so poorly or incompletely trained that it was logical that these last two factors were to them the most important in the whole educational process. The Departmental tradition supported them in this. Wilkins made many valuable contributions to Australian education

but had established this quest for results in the process - not that there were not good reasons and ample contemporary precedents for this action. Wilkins also established a pattern of iron rule, extending this even over his inspectors to the point of insisting that they examine schools rather than advise teachers. In keeping with this general tradition and with the social mores of the time, teachers in their turn exerted a similar iron discipline over their pupils. Teachers quaked in the presence of inspectors; pupils in the presence of teachers; regimentation and discipline were the feature of the teaching service at every level. Hill had been struck with this feature and had commented:

I doubt whether a teacher's independence is as great in Australia as in New Zealand, and certainly there is much less room for growth of individuality in Australian schools, because everything in school management and control has to be carried out according to orders issued by the central government.


Others in more recent times have been similarly critical of what is an inherent problem of a centralised system, a problem aggravated during the nineteenth century by the limited liberty permitted public servants even in their private lives.156

The prize-winning programme prepared by Ebenezer Gostelow for the third quarter of the Third Class is a specific example of the schoolwork of the period. Not only does this programme include such examples of arithmetic as 37 tons, 11 cwt., 2 qrs, 9 lbs, 4 ozs x 365, but it also illustrates other equally unfortunate features of the period. It thus serves at this point as a convenient summary. Object lessons were mere sources of information - here of the skeleton and the circulatory system; history was a thing of kings and dates; geography a gazetteer; drawing a matter of formal design; drill the intricacies of the Infantry Manual. When to

156. *The Bulletin*, 22nd May, 1886 - It was the opinion of this paper that the lot of teachers was even worse than that of public servants generally at this time. (*Vide* also *The Bulletin*, 9th November, 1889.)

# Programme of Lessons for the Third Class during the Third Quarter (1895)

**First Quarter of the Second Half-year of Enrolment for the Quarter Ending Sept. 28th, 1895.**

**Specimen**

*Construction to accord with the Standard of Proficiency for a Primary School under one Teacher (Class VII).*

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<th>GRAMMAR</th>
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**Supplement to the "New South Wales Educational Gazette," November 1, 1895.**

*Drawn by the Second Day of July, 1895.*

*From the copy in the Mitchell Library, Sydney.*
this is added Gladman's advice to the teacher to regard himself as a superior being by whom no misdemeanour went unnoticed or unpunished, then what emerges is a portrait of a school which was a miserable place for pupils and teachers. What price now for the ideal Wilkins stated so grandly in 1886? -

The ideal school is one ... in which the pupils spend some of the happiest hours of their lives ..., in which the pupils are ruled without harshness on the one hand or coaxing or bribery on the other; where the pupils love and respect their teachers and see in them their friends ...; where the moral nature of the scholars is drawn out, corrected, and developed ...; where ... all receive appropriate instruction imparted in the most skilful manner, and the faculties of all in due measure and proportion are cultivated and developed in judicious accordance with natural laws; - where, in short, the pupils, each and all are being well and truly educated.158

Rote learning, memorisation and drill dominated. But it would be a serious error to judge the practices of the period outside the context of their own time. To us the schools of the period appear infinitely worse

than they did to any contemporary. As for Wilkins' ideal - it was fine but ahead of its time. The nature of colonial society and the character of the educational system provided no alternative. Fundamentally the practices which characterised the period continued so long because they were appropriate to the needs of the period. And fundamentally those few changes which occurred were also a product of social change. It is indeed a commentary upon the period that Pestalozzian ideas were so readily sacrificed to the quest for useful knowledge.
CHAPTER IV

CRITICISMS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND DEFICIENCIES: AN EVALUATION AND AN INTERPRETATION

The state elementary school system and its curriculum were subject to criticism throughout the period. A number of these criticisms have already been considered; some, like those of Combes and Selfe, contributed positively to curriculum development; others, like those of "A Parent", were conservative and negative but representative of the opinions of the period. The criticisms with which this present chapter is concerned are those which were expressed during the period 1890 to 1900. These have a two-fold significance: first, because they have in themselves a value as contemporary commentary; second, because they form a background to the reform movement of 1901-1904.
COMMENT AND CRITICISM FROM WITHIN THE SERVICE:
TEACHER AND INSPECTORIAL OPINION

Inspection, results, regimentation, obedience - these were the traditions which governed the service. Teachers did protest; some airing their grievances under pseudonyms in the press and even occasionally receiving editorial support; rarely a group presented a petition to the Minister or was received in deputation. Always teachers had to be circumspect in their behaviour, for the regulations governing public servants forbade political, public or religious activity. When a group of ex-students held a meeting at which they paraded their grievances and invited the press to be present, Departmental reaction was immediate. Maynard objected not to the meeting itself, "but to the fact that this


2. *Education Department Archives*, P4002, Training School File, "Petition of ex-students of Training School for a salary rise to £113 p.a.", 29th August, 1894.

one was purposefully made public" ⁴ and for this the organ­isers were punished ⁵. Non-public meetings were apparently acceptable and began to assume importance as teachers evolved such organisations as the Teachers' Institute, a body which later became the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association ⁶. This Association inaugurated annual confer­ences widely representative of state school teachers in 1898 ⁷. Each year thereafter the Association gained in strength. Even the first, the 1898 Conference, was claimed to have culminated in a favourably received deputation to the Department which influenced the character of the Amended Regulations and Standard of Proficiency ⁸. This cordiality characterised relations between the Association and Departmental officials and it is not difficult to see

4. Ibid, "Meeting of ex-students, 1886".
5. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
why this should be so. The Executive of the Association was composed of headmasters and first assistants who were themselves senior officials and reasonably content with the system. With growing confidence therefore the Association obtained the services of the Minister of Public Instruction, Hogue, to open the second annual conference in 1899\(^9\). Hogue was not, however, favourably disposed towards the idea of teachers acting as a body and exerting pressure upon him and his Department and he warned the Conference rather curtly not to be too extravagant in their claims\(^{10}\). The Association was not unduly daunted by this expression of Ministerial ire for in 1900 it looked further afield to no less a personage than the Governor of New South Wales, Lord Beauchamp, to perform the opening ceremony\(^{11}\). Beauchamp chose to speak on one of the pressing educational problems of the day - attendance. This marked an important departure for the Association. At previous annual conferences it had discussed domestic Departmental

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10. Ibid.
matters and in deference to regulation held these "in camera". Here now was a matter of wider educational importance being aired publicly at a meeting of teachers. This new departure, together with developments abroad and interstate combined to make the next, the Fourth Annual Conference of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association, the most important so far and among the most important which has ever been held. Not one, but five, guest speakers were involved, among them Professor Francis Anderson who on 26th June, 1901 delivered an address so highly condemnatory of New South Wales primary schooling that this has henceforth been considered a convenient point in time from which to date the beginning of the momentous movement for educational reform which occupied the early years of the twentieth century.\(^\text{12}\).

There is absolutely no doubt that providing the occasion for Anderson's speech was the most significant contribution of the Public School Teachers' Association

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12. \textit{Vide infra.}
towards the development of primary schooling and of education generally up to this time. The Association was too recent an innovation to have any major impact itself upon educational development. Its own curriculum interests were with points of minor administrative detail and so with the interpretation of the Standard, not more fundamental matters. This was natural enough. All such organisations in any time or place are primarily concerned with salaries and conditions. The youth of such organisations in the late nineteenth century was admittedly one factor which operated to limit its interests, the many material matters affecting teachers was another, and the regulation silencing teachers yet a further. And it must also be remembered that few teachers had either the professional knowledge or the breadth of vision to qualify as competent critics. Under these conditions fundamental criticisms could be expected only from a few rare individuals. Unfortunately

any individual opinions which were expressed at meetings of the Association are unrecorded. For such internal criticisms of the system and its curriculum we must turn elsewhere.

The semi-official journal, The New South Wales Educational Gazette, provided one avenue. Established in June 1891, this journal was not an official Departmental publication, but its editorial staff was composed of the Department's principal officials, including the Under-secretary and the Chief Inspector\(^{14}\), and its content included much that was of an official nature. It also received financial support and when this was withdrawn in 1906 publication soon ceased\(^{15}\).

The purpose of the Gazette was stated in its first number:

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15. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, XV, 9, 3rd February, 1906, 209 - The character of this financial support was undefined. It may well have been payments for the inclusion of official material. After 1905 there was an official medium for these - The Public Instruction Gazette (later The Education Gazette).
The main object the Editorial staff have in view is to draw the various scattered units of the departmental staff closer together, to supply not only information both technical and general, but to open a field for discussion of topics of public interest (not necessarily always the increase of salaries or the revival of the cleaning or fuel allowance), to make us one and all better acquainted with one another, and more ready to sympathize with one another's difficulties, and to bear one another's burdens.  

It was to be a continual complaint of the editors that contributions were too few in number and came from too small a group of individuals, but the journal nevertheless served most useful ends. In addition to official information and official instructions, it included the public speeches of the Ministers and of senior officials at school openings, speech days and prize-givings and was thus an index of their educational opinions. It contained reports of the activities of the Teachers' Institute and the Public


17. E.g. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, I, 12, 2nd May, 1892, 1.
School Teachers' Association. It included articles on
general and educational topics of interest to teachers
and thus disseminated up-to-date knowledge - Woodhouse
employed it in this fashion to place information and
suggestions before teachers shortly after his arrival and
through a policy of reprinting articles from overseas
journals the editors acquainted teachers with such
innovations as "sloyd". And the opportunity did exist,
although rarely used, to criticise current local
practice. There is a small group of articles which
demonstrate that this could be done without necessarily
incurring displeasure. One most interesting article
appeared in April 1892, for example, entitled "What
Should Our Schools Be?", an article presumably from the

18. F.W. Woodhouse, "Drawing: Its Teaching in the
Public Schools", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, I, 2,
1st July, 1891, 7; I, 3, 1st August, 1891, 3f.

19. "History of Sloyd in Sweden", N.S.W. Educational
Gazette, VIII, 2, 1st July, 1898 (Quoted from
School Journal where in turn it had been quoted
from an article in Art Education by Gustaf Larsson).
pen of S.C. Rose. The substance of this article was a plea for educational reform along German lines where "everything (was) taught by object lessons". There was a plea, too, for the schools of New South Wales to be made pleasant places and "not mere workshops ... where knowledge (wa)s made unattractive or even repulsive". And, in addition, Rose, quite ahead of his time but from a similar desire to see education more realistic and less bookish, looked forward to the day "when a magic lantern and a camerawould) be among the ordinary equipment of a school". This article, although brief, is of considerable significance, for here was a man who both criticised current local practice quite severely and looked not to Britain but to Germany for inspiration. Unfortunately Rose stood almost alone at this time. But there is indirect evidence that his

21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
progressive views became well known within the service for he was later selected to be one of Anderson's fellow guest-speakers at the Public School Teachers' Conference of 1901\textsuperscript{24}.

A further interesting article appeared in 1893. This time the subject was "History in Our Public School Curriculum" and the discussion was centred upon the function of this study within the context of the aims of education generally\textsuperscript{25}. Unfortunately identification of the anonymous author is impossible and more unfortunately still this was the last such critical comment to appear in The New South Wales Educational Gazette until 1900 when Murray, headmaster of Kogarah, lodged objections to certain aspects of an article entitled "Examinations" by James Rickard which had appeared a little earlier\textsuperscript{26}. Rickard, who was headmaster

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Vide infra.}
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\textit{G.C.H.\underline{\hspace{1cm}}, "History and Our School Curriculum", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, III, 3, 1st August, 1893, 46; and III, 4, 1st September, 1893, 68.}
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\begin{flushright}
\textit{J. Rickard, "Examinations", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 8, 2nd January, 1900, 175-76.}
\end{flushright}
of Petersham, was himself not completely happy over the influence exerted by examinations upon schooling, but had argued that since they were fashionable it was best to conform. All that could be done, he implied, was to select the least educationally damaging examination and submit the pupils to that. And this he claimed was the examination recently inaugurated by the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, since it was most in accord with "the public school ideal of school work". Murray wrote two letters in response. In the first he attacked Rickard's basic assumption that schools must conform to the prevailing fashion. He maintained that it would be better to change it. It was also his opinion that although only the senior pupils sat for these external examinations all were affected. But the principal danger was that concentration upon examinations might well lead teachers astray from real purposes of education. In a second

27. Ibid.

letter Murray made it clear that he was not opposed to tests as a part of the educational process but he did not retreat an inch from his opposition to Rickard's view:

I am opposed, and very strongly opposed, to the pernicious idea apparently held by Mr. Rickard, that the results of these tests are the crowning points of a public school teacher's effort.29

It was finally left to S.C. Rose to state the problem clearly in its perennial form:

There is no denying the fact that examinations play a very important part in determining the life start of many boys....(I)t naturally then follows that examinations must occupy an important place in the teacher's mind....But examinations do not test many valuable qualities...upon which success and honour in life depend.

At the turn of the century it is thus apparent that some public school teachers were beginning to question the beliefs and traditions upon which their system was founded. It would seem unreasonable to expect more from them than this, especially since their superiors, the school inspectors, expressed only a complacent acceptance

29. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 11, 2nd April, 1900, 264-65.

30. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 12, 2nd May, 1900, 297.
of the system. District Inspector Bradley's remark that
"(t)aken as a whole, the results are fairly satisfactory"\textsuperscript{31}
seems to be characteristic of the opinions of this group
during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

**EXTERNAL CRITICISMS OF THE STATE SYSTEM AND CURRICULUM**

Unconstrained as they were by the regulations governing civil servants or by the traditions of the Departmental service, more open and more trenchant criticism of the state system might well have been expected to come from
the members of the Teachers' Association of New South Wales, for this was composed of private school teachers
and University staff. Formed in 1892\textsuperscript{32}, the Teachers' Association established a journal, *The Australian Teacher*
in 1893\textsuperscript{33} whose contents put an end to any such
expectation for these demonstrate that this Association

\textsuperscript{31.} Minister's Report, 1891, 165.

\textsuperscript{32.} *The Australian Teacher and Journal of the Teachers' Association of New South Wales*, I, 1, 1st August, 1893, 1.

\textsuperscript{33.} Ibid.
was primarily concerned with improving the qualifications of teachers employed in private schools. Indeed its members looked with envy at the state schools where every teacher was trained and the Association established a register and inaugurated teacher training schemes of its own to make good the deficiency. Among the most active in forwarding the Association's teacher-training scheme were Mrs. David, formerly as Miss Mallett first principal of Hurlstone Training College and now wife of Professor Edgeworth David, and Mrs. Maybanke Wolstenholme, the future wife of Professor Francis Anderson. Anderson

34. Mrs. C.M. David, "Practical Suggestions for the Present Training of Teachers", The Australian Teacher, I, 7, May, 1894, 26; and Presidential address by Rev. Dr. E. Harris, ibid, I, 8, September 1894 (Misprinted I, 7, May 1894), 10.


36. The Australian Teacher, I, 11, April 1895, 6. (Kindergarten courses only were ever established, although it had been the ambition of the Association to establish primary and lower secondary as well.)

37. The Australian Teacher, I, 7, May 1894, 2f; and I, 11, April 1895, 6.

38. Mrs. Wolstenholme was a member of the Council of the Association (The Australian Teacher, I, 1, 1st August, 1893, 8).
himself became intimately involved with the scheme through lecturing the few trainees on "Psychology Applied to Education".  

Thus occupied with its own concerns the Association had little itself to say about state primary schooling or the primary school curriculum. Only two addresses relevant to state education were reported in the journal and both were delivered by guests. One came from A.B. Piddington, who was a member of the Legislative Assembly; the other from Sir Evelyn Oakeley, who was a distinguished visitor from abroad.  

Piddington began his own address by reference to a paper on education which Miss Edith Annesley Badham had delivered before the New South Wales Economic Association over twelve months before. Since


42. A.B. Piddington, *op. cit.*, 6. (For some reason Piddington chose not to identify Miss Badham by name.)
Piddington's remarks were in essence a list of the deficiencies of the public school system supplementary to those provided by Miss Badham it is best to consider her statements first. Miss Badham was a daughter of the late Professor Charles Badham of Sydney University and principal of the recently established Sydney Girls' Church of England Grammar School. Ostensibly a comparison of the public and private school systems, her speech was a vitriolic attack upon the Department of Education and the work of the schools it controlled. These were "nothing more nor less than cramshops" where the work was dominated by the "minutiae" of the Standards and by "teaching from the book", where esprit de corps was notably absent, where there was


47. *Ibid*.

no room for teaching reverence and modesty\textsuperscript{49} for "that wholesome friction of individual mind with mind"\textsuperscript{50} or, indeed, for education "in the true sense of the word"\textsuperscript{51}.

Miss Badham's remarks were motivated in part by her conviction that education was "the training of a young mind so as to bring out all that is good or useful and likely either to be a source of pleasure to the possessor or of benefit to his fellow creatures"\textsuperscript{52}, a view which coincides to some extent to the naturalism of Pestalozzi. In this context her attack upon cram and teaching from the book has real substance. But her remarks were also motivated by two other factors: her belief that the state was pursuing a deliberate policy of repressing private and denominational schools\textsuperscript{53} and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49} Ibid, 609.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Ibid, 607.
\item \textsuperscript{53} S.M.H., 2nd September, 1896.
\end{itemize}
her desire to be controversial\textsuperscript{54}. There is no doubt that as a result Miss Badham exaggerated the deficiencies of the public schools. The \textit{Evening News}\textsuperscript{55}, the \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}\textsuperscript{56}, Professor Scott of the University\textsuperscript{57}, Giles of Sydney Grammar\textsuperscript{58} and Miss Tiley of the state teaching service\textsuperscript{59} all agreed on this. But Miss Badham's address did initiate some worthwhile discussion and in the process more, and more valid, criticisms of the system and its elementary school curriculum. The

\textsuperscript{54} Four facts point to this: (1) an earlier speech to the Economic Association entitled "Women and Womanhood Suffrage" in which she opposed extending the vote to women (\textit{The Australian Economist}, IV, 14, 23rd April, 1895, 479-84); (2) her apology for the embarrassment to Garrard; (3) her more temperate statements on 1st December, 1896 (\textit{The Australian Economist}, V, 34, 21st January, 1897, 3-6); (4) her extravagantly provocative choice of title for her address and her equally provocative turn of phrase during its delivery.

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Evening News}, 2nd September, 1896.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{S.M.H.}, 3rd September, 1896.

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{The Australian Economist}, IV, 31, 21st October, 1896, 620-22.

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{The Australian Economist}, IV, 32, 21st November, 1896, 627.

response from the press was, it is important to note, decidedly conservative and reactionary. The *Evening News* thought that the most basic fault was that the system had become over-ambitious - the object of education was to equip pupils for the battle of life and the fault was that no "private soldiers" were produced, only "generals".\(^{60}\) The *Herald* chose to fasten upon Miss Badham's charge of cramming and offer a defence of current educational practices upon sociological grounds:-

... it would be pleasant to realise a fanciful picture of scholastic quiet in which the young mind might be trained effortlessly and effectively by the simple stress of intellectual surroundings and sympathy acting on a receptive and docile mind. But such a state of things does not fit the conditions of life as we know it, and an ideally perfect system of education is unhappily as far removed from the region of the attainable as an ideally perfect anything. The age has certain educational wants and these must be supplied even if the process does now and then suggest somewhat of a policy of cram.\(^ {61}\)

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Professor Scott chose to be more positive. It was his opinion that if there were faults then these must be the result of the system of teacher training, more particularly of the pupil-teacher part of the system which he charged was bad for the children and bad for the pupil-teachers as well. Giles agreed with Scott on this point and this opinion apparently spread widely among the groups they represented for later Professor G.C. Henderson in an address at the Y.M.C.A. argued for better qualified teachers.

When Piddington chose to revive the charges made by Miss Badham he added more of his own, attacking senior Departmental officers because they held "teaching knack" in high esteem but had a contempt for "high substantive attainments", the large size of classes, the presence of more than one class in a single room, and the use of


64. S.M.H., 4th August, 1900.

inexperienced pupil-teachers. He also favoured higher salaries and reduced hours for teachers and an increase in the standard of their education and in the education of inspectors. He also spoke, too, of the need for "a permanent officer of the highest calibre and attainments". And so, then, there was a growing list of complaints against the public school system as the century neared its close. Piddington's was not the only parliamentary voice raised in protest as we shall see, but this is equally true of the teachers in private schools and of University staff for Miss Badham's speech was not the only occasion for a spirited protest. Certainly the activities of their Teachers' Association as such were limited, but there were related activities of much more significance. None was more important than the work of the Kindergarten Union.

THE KINDERGARTEN AND CHILD STUDY MOVEMENTS

The field of kindergarten work and the related child study movement were a major interest of a number of

members of the Teachers' Association. Nor were they completely independent - witness the training scheme for kindergarteners launched by the Association. Amongst those principally concerned with the Kindergarten Union were Mrs. Maybanke Wolstenholme and through her Professor Anderson. Mrs. Wolstenholme pioneered private kindergarten work at her Maybanke School and later became vice-president of the Kindergarten Union when this was established in 1895. Anderson was actively involved on behalf of this Union. He gave a number of speeches in its support including one at the Y.M.C.A. Hall on 23rd July, 1896 which was presided over by the Governor, Lord Hampden. During this speech Anderson condemned kindergarten as it operated in the public schools as "not education at all ... (but) cramming education into


69. Lady Hampden had accepted the office of president of the Union (ibid).
children"\textsuperscript{70}. This speech therefore stands as a prelude to Anderson's more damning utterances of 1901. It is extremely unlikely that these 1896 remarks had any direct impact upon the primary curriculum. It was not till a year later that Bridges endeavoured to further the progress of this work in the public schools and even then there was no suggestion that its form would be changed. However, it is a fact that the Kindergarten Union itself gained increasing support\textsuperscript{71} and it may well be that it was this that stimulated Bridges to action.

This development of private kindergartens and of the Kindergarten Union with its charitable interest in the under-privileged was a reflection of an increasing interest in the child and his welfare throughout the Western World at this time. The emergence of scientific child study demonstrates the generality of this interest. Credit for inaugurating this in the Anglo-Saxon world

\textsuperscript{70} S.M.H., 26th July, 1896.

\textsuperscript{71} Mrs. Francis Anderson, \textit{op. cit.}, 22f.
is usually given to G. Stanley Hall of Clark University in the United States who established the journal *Pedagogical Seminary* in 1891\(^ {72}\). Growth of this movement was sufficiently rapid for a first International Congress for Child Study to be held in Berlin in 1906\(^ {73}\). It is no coincidence that those actively involved with the work of the Kindergarten Union were also involved in the inauguration of a Child Study Association in New South Wales.

Walker credits the introduction of the child study movement to New South Wales to Ridie Lee Buckey who had trained at the Cook County Normal School\(^ {74}\). She also relates, however, how the Child Study Association actually evolved in a formal sense from a proposition put before the first meeting of the Kindergarten Alumnae Club in August 1898 by Professor MacCallum\(^ {75}\). The first meeting

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\(^{74}\) M. Walker, *op. cit.*, 195f.

\(^{75}\) *Ibid*. 
of this new association was then held in October, Dr. Carroll was elected president and a programme upon the American pattern which aimed to gather anthropometric information about child growth and development was approved. Child study, both here and abroad, was a field rich with promise but still too new to have anything specific to contribute to the school curriculum. Yet in a general sense child study was significant, for it reflected and reinforced the growing concern of the community with the health and physical development of children. It was consequently one expression of a broader concept of responsibility and of educational purpose. In New South Wales in the late 1890's the Child Study Association contributed nothing concrete, but it did provide a useful avenue for discussion amongst local educators and for the dissemination of overseas ideas. Later the Association had a brief period of glory when Knibbs, Turner and Board actively participated in its meetings.

76. Ibid.
EDUCATIONAL OPINION AND NATIONALISM

In 1888 the first meeting of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science was held and henceforth there was an opportunity for New South Wales educators to become involved in national as well as local discussion. The range of subjects covered at the meetings of the Association was impressive, the interest sufficient for "Mental Science and Education" to become a new section in its own right from 1893, and the addresses informative and pertinent. Among the most active participants from New South Wales were Percy Robin, Mrs. Wolstenholme, John Plummer, Margaret Hodge and Professor Anderson - all delivered papers and Anderson had the additional honour of being president of the Mental Science and Education section in 1895. Unfortunately senior officials of the New South Wales Department of Public Instruction took no part in these activities until the twentieth century. It is difficult to gauge the effect of these discussions upon the state system and the elementary curriculum partly for this reason, and partly
because so few of the addresses were reported in print — in most instances all that is recorded in the official Association reports is the name of the speaker and the title of his address. But these educational activities of a national character form a part of developing opinion and activity during the '90s.

Nationalism of a different sort found expression in the New South Legislative Assembly. Within parliament most serious discussion centred upon school fees, attendance and the retrenchments introduced in 1893, but in addition positive and valuable criticism with a distinctly nationalistic bias was heard from James Hogue in 1896 and Joseph Cook in 1899. Each, as might be expected, was in opposition at the time. Hogue chose to attack the books in use in the public schools on the grounds that they were hopelessly out of date, lacked essential local colour, failed to recognise Australian matters in any adequate fashion and were grossly inaccurate. He

77. Other issues were of course raised - country members, for example, continually complained of the expenditure of funds on palatial buildings for the city to the detriment of educational development in the country.
recalled derisively the inaction since the public competition of 1890 and proposed that reforms be made in the reading books in use to provide "a larger measure of recognition of Australian history, biography, literature, science, and local subjects generally." 78

Nationalism also emerged in the criticism preferred by Joseph Cook in the Supply Debate of 1899. 79 Here the argument was a more significant one, because the stand was comparative. Aware of overseas developments and achievements, Cook said that there were important lessons in these for an Australia which soon was to compete with other countries as a nation. He wished to see similar reforms introduced into New South Wales to those made overseas so that this country would "thus keep pace with the older and more civilised portions of the world." 80

78. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 83, 1482, 14th July, 1896.

79. N.S.W.P.D. (1), 102, 3395-3399, 13th December, 1899. (Cook was Prime Minister of Australia in 1913. In 1899 he had recently been displaced as a minister, having served in the Reid Government. On his entry to parliament he had been a member of the Labor Party.)

80. Ibid, 3399.
Two features in particular impressed Cook: the attention given to industrial education on the continent and the recent reforms in the English inspectorial system. At this time there was a growing awareness of Germany's impressive industrial development and a willingness at the same time to link this directly with her educational system and particularly with her practice of "combining the elementary principles of technical education with ordinary school instruction"\textsuperscript{81}. There was accompanying this a resurgent demand for effective technical education in New South Wales\textsuperscript{82}. This demand was now expressed in terms of its national value - earlier it had been advocated in terms of its value to the individual. And, most importantly, the source of inspiration was no longer just Britain. No doubt there was some radical nationalism implicit in this but there was too a quite seriously considered opinion that Britain had fallen behind Germany industrially because she had fallen behind

\textsuperscript{81. Ibid, 3409 (Meagher) - vide also 3403 (Spence).}

\textsuperscript{82. Ibid, 3395 (Cook).}
educationally. Britain had, nevertheless, as Cook pointed out, introduced some worthwhile educational reforms of her own that were worthy of local emulation. What impressed Cook most were the reforms which had been made in the inspectorial system. The examination of classes for percentages had stopped there and Cook thought that "it was about time it was stopped here also". The new scheme he claimed was more appropriately designed to estimate the teacher's success in attaining the true end of schooling, the education of the powers which were latent in every child. Cook's 1899 sentiments were already among the most important of those expressed during the late nineteenth century, but he added to them in the Supply Debate of 1900 by asking, in substance, the

83. Ibid, 3409 (Meagher).

84. Ibid, 3399.

85. N.S.W.P.D.(1), 106, 4143-4145, 19th October, 1900. (He again pointed to English reforms - this time the introduction of day release to girl pupil-teachers. And he added, finally: "We are at a standstill educationally in this colony ... (W)e should keep up with the rest of the world in the constant adoption of means to ends in connection with the teaching of youngsters in our public schools").
same comparative question that Bridges posed, namely, "What should be done to keep New South Wales in the forefront of educational progress?"86 That this question was asked at the same time as the approach of federation is surely no surprise. Such was the impact of nationalism on education. It was phrased comparatively against a background of increasing interest in overseas developments.

**COMPARATIVE COMMENTS**

During the 1890's there was increasing discussion of educational developments abroad. In 1892, for example, Violet Mackenzie addressed the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science at the Hobart meeting of that year upon "Physical Education and Exercise in Schools" detailing recent English opinion, commenting upon the Swedish system, illustrating her discussion with displays by children and concluding with the proposition that "(e)ducation in its fullest and widest sense means the development of the entire physical, intellectual,

86. Minister's Report, 1900, 73.
and spiritual capacities of the pupil". A more significant index of the growth of professional knowledge in New South Wales itself is provided by the address delivered by Percy Robin of Sydney at this same 1892 meeting. In the course of his speech on "Secondary Education in Australia" Robin detailed for his audience recent developments in psychology during which Herbart, Bain, Sully and Spencer were specifically mentioned. Robin made three major points: first, these developments had hardly touched Australia; second, few teachers had any scientific knowledge of the theory of instruction; third, that teachers and the universities must assume the initiative - and he suggested in this context the appointment of professors of education, citing in


justification German and Scottish precedent.\textsuperscript{89}

In 1898 Margaret Hodge provided her listeners in New South Wales with detailed and specific information of German progress in the subject areas of geography, science, languages, drawing and manual training\textsuperscript{90} and of the latest developments in England and Germany in the education of the mentally handicapped.\textsuperscript{91} At the same time she made it quite clear that in her estimate the secret of Germany's educational success was that the system there was based upon the "complete comprehension of the meaning of education and the intense appreciation of its value."\textsuperscript{92}

More detailed information of progress in England was provided in the lecture delivered by Sir Evelyn Oakeley when he visited this colony in 1899. This

\textsuperscript{89} It was this address, incidently, which stirred the Teachers' Association of New South Wales to embark upon its registration and training schemes.

\textsuperscript{90} M. Hodge, "Technical Education in Germany", The Australian Economist, VI, 4, 25th April, 1898, 25-29.

\textsuperscript{91} M. Hodge, "A New Educational Experiment; 'Special Schools' in England and Germany", A.A.A.S., Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Held in Sydney, 1898, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1898, 1107-13.

\textsuperscript{92} M. Hodge, "Technical Education in Germany", op.cit., 29.
address was an ornate affair: Premier G.H. Reid was chairman and upon the platform were Hogue, the Minister of Public Instruction, Dr. MacLaurin, Chancellor of Sydney University and Member of the Legislative Council, Professors David and MacCallum and the Reverends Tovey, Stiles and Walker. Oakley drew much applause when in his address upon "The Progress of Elementary Education in England Since 1854" he referred to the recent modifications to the pupil-teacher system. Oakley thus added to the increasing fund of information on developments abroad but he chose not to make any public pronouncements on education in New South Wales itself. There were, however, a few visitors who did so, among them the Victorians, Brodribb, Main and Topp. And in 1892 there was the New Zealander, Henry Hill, some of whose remarks have already been considered earlier in a more appropriate context. In general Hill was


94. The modification in question was the establishment of pupil-teacher centres and concurrent day release from teaching.

95. Vide supra.

96. Vide supra.
impressed with what he saw and rated New South Wales as ahead of both New Zealand and Victoria. It must have been most comforting for local officials after the earlier report from Main and Topp to read Hills' comment that:

Neither in the matter of primary education nor in the training and preparation of teachers can Victoria be compared with New South Wales. 97

New Zealand was not an advanced nation educationally and Hill was incapable of judging New South Wales in international terms. Few for that matter who came to these shores were, or if they were, did. Certainly it became more common to offer comparative judgments as the century drew to an end and federation loomed closer, but this was often at second hand or else informative rather than critical. One Australian educator who was both comparative and critical was W.C. Grasby, but his prime concern was in furthering the cause of educational

reform in his own state of South Australia. Most certainly his criticisms were far-reaching and were general enough to apply to all the Australian colonies, but his influence upon New South Wales just cannot be assessed - perhaps educators in this colony were familiar with his work 98, perhaps they were not 99. But Grasby aside, there was still a body of comparative criticism evolving within New South Wales. In the circumstances it might well be expected to find this reflected in the public press.

THE CHARACTER OF PRESS COMMENT

An examination of the local press in the late nineteenth century is disappointing, but nevertheless illuminating. Enough has been said elsewhere in this study to demonstrate that The Sydney Morning Herald, the Daily Telegraph and the Evening News became increasingly conservative, especially where expenditure or the

98. Grasby's principal published works were a pamphlet entitled Our Public Schools (Hussey and Gillingham, Adelaide, 1891) and a more substantial work, Teaching in Three Continents, 1891.

expansion of education beyond the basic subjects was concerned\textsuperscript{100}. The \textit{Evening News} had been progressive in its comments upon kindergarten in the 'Eighties but it was characteristic of the 'Nineties that Miss Badham's remarks did not produce much of a stir and that what reaction there was had been predominately defensive and conservative. It was also characteristic, as Cooke has pointed out, that some sections of the press had a particular interest they occasionally aired\textsuperscript{101}. The \textit{Bulletin}, for example, was always on its guard against the obtrusion of religion into the curriculum\textsuperscript{102} and was prone to support teachers against Departmental tyranny\textsuperscript{103}. And \textit{Freeman's Journal}, with bitter memories of the 'Sixties and 'Seventies was critical of Wilkins and "Wilkinism"

\textsuperscript{100} Vide supra.


\textsuperscript{102} E.g. \textit{The Bulletin}, 14th June, 1884.

\textsuperscript{103} E.g. \textit{The Bulletin}, 22nd May, 1886.
and of the state system generally when the opportunity presented itself\textsuperscript{104}. Correspondents to the papers made few comments upon education. Religion was always likely to get a mention; now and again there was a teacher with a grievance; and corporal punishment was always a popular topic. Sometimes these contributions or a news item produced editorial comment, especially if it revealed a case of excessive brutality\textsuperscript{105}. Fundamentally it seems the press and the public generally were satisfied that the educational system and the school curriculum were quite appropriate. If anything the general opinion was that the system was too ambitious\textsuperscript{106}. Such an opinion provides a broader social explanation for what at first glance seems simply Departmental complacency or concession

\begin{itemize}
\item[104.] E.g. \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 23rd May, 1881; 13th June, 1896.
\item[105.] E.g. \textit{The Bulletin}, 6th November, 1897.
\item[106.] E.g. \textit{Evening News}, 2nd September, 1896. (The exception was the Sydney Chamber of Commerce which wanted to see commercial education extended and improved.)
\end{itemize}
to economic circumstances. Yet despite this public and
press apathy a number of quite significant criticisms
had emerged of the state system and of the elementary
curriculum. For the most part comment in each case was
restricted to one or two facets of schooling, but such
criticism has a two-fold importance: first as a commen-
tary upon education as it was practised at the time;
second as a prelude to the more significant criticisms
of 1901-1904 to which they are a background. In brief
and in sum, criticism had been levelled: (a) at the system
for its autocracy, its failure to make education either
free or compulsory, its use of inexperienced pupil-
teachers, for the size of school classes and for the
character of the accommodation and facilities; (b) at
inspection for its preoccupation with examining and
testing for percentages; (c) at the curriculum for its
domination by examinations and neglect of technical
education; (d) at methods because they were mechanical,
predominantly a matter of cram and unappealing to the
student. This study so far has shown clearly enough that
each of these charges and more besides were justified,
but it is necessary to say more than this when evaluating the work of two decades.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND DEFICIENCIES: AN EVALUATION AND AN INTERPRETATION

Many of the weaknesses and deficiencies of late nineteenth century education were the consequence of weaknesses and deficiencies in the 1880 Act. Others were the product of Departmental administrative traditions and the systems of inspection and teacher training which had evolved. Some stemmed from the theoretical heritage of Pestalozzi and of faculty psychology. Indeed, curriculum development during the period had been a contest with a defective psychology and the worst features of Pestalozzian methods on one side and a demand for useful knowledge, science, "technical" education and the better aspects of Pestalozzianism and Froebelianism on the other. In terms of subject matter the victory was gradually but clearly going to utilitarianism. By the turn of the century actual progress had been slight. The struggle was still in progress with the participants largely
unaware of its dimensions or ramifications. Almost unconsciously much of the earlier theory of education and of psychology had been abandoned but the major revolutions in thought were still to come. As always change had first to take place abroad and then New South Wales made aware of it. Part of this process, too, had begun before the century ended and more was to follow until a fuller local awareness resulted.

In the midst of such developments Departmental officials may seem to some to have been "proponents of a past pedagogical creed"\textsuperscript{107}, but it is important to remember that many of these men were prepared to experiment and did look forward to further developments. If they waited for a lead from England, if it were English experiments they duplicated, should this be a surprise? Should they be damned with faint praise as careful administrators\textsuperscript{108} and it forgotten that


administration was itself a particularly difficult task after 1893? Should it not be recognised that if these officials were conservative then centralisation and "Wilkinism" were reaping their harvest? Or, to put it more generally, should not late nineteenth century education in New South Wales, the curriculum of the elementary school, the training system for teachers, the patterns of administration and the characteristics of the administrators themselves be simply seen as reflections of the society in which they operated? To take such a view is not to accept that all was well with education, but is to relate its faults to broad socio-economic determinants. After all there was considerable progress to record at the end of twenty years: school enrolments had increased from 114,811 to 238,382; the average attendance had risen from 71,999 to 153,844; the number of schools had increased from 1357 to 2697; teachers had increased from 2558 to 5063; the proportion of unclassified teachers fell from twenty per cent to fourteen and the proportion of pupil-teachers from twenty-six per cent to twenty-one; and despite the
failure of high schools, secondary education had been extended through the alternative of the Superior Public Schools of which there were 263 by 1900. And it must not be forgotten that policy rested finally with governments not the Department and that except when Carruthers was Minister and Parkes Premier governments had little to offer. For most the issue had been settled in 1880. At the turn of the century governmental policy was most fragmentary. Small increases in salary were granted to some teachers and at the direction of the Minister, John Perry, minor modifications were introduced in the Standard of Proficiency. Perry also raised with officials the possibility of establishing central or "Model" schools to provide facilities for higher primary education in country districts. An unsuccessful attempt


110. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIII, 5, 1st October, 1903, 102. (Details of Perry's record after four years in office, 102-06.)

111. Ibid.

was made to deal with the attendance problem by legis-
lative amendment but the bill encountered difficulties\textsuperscript{113}. Funds for education were increased, but it was characteristic of the period that the Lyne Government refused support for Griffith's bill to abolish fees\textsuperscript{114}. There was at the best estimate only a small response to Bridges' pleas for reform.

Yet even when all these qualifying facts are duly recorded, there still remains one valid and damning criticism of nineteenth century Departmental policy and in particular of the officials who administered it: conservatism governed almost all action. In all the twenty years from 1880 to 1900 there was only one innovation directly attributable to Departmental officials - the emphasis upon the "minimal essentials" in the 1884 Standard. Kindergarten was introduced because Mrs. Crowley and Combes brought it to public notice and the

\textsuperscript{113.} \textit{N.S.W. Educational Gazette}, XIII, 5, 1st October, 1903, 103. (The bill was still before Parliament.)
\textsuperscript{114.} \textit{N.S.W. P.D.} (1), 107, 5100, 13th November, 1900.
press gave it support. Drawing was reformed because of the agitations of Riley, Plummer, Combes and Selfe. Scripture was revised as a concession to an influential section of the public. Manual training was introduced only after the Board of Technical Education had first taken the initiative. Object lessons were recast in response to demands from the advocates of science and agricultural education. The course in the three R's became somewhat less difficult after the Victorian visitors had commented adversely. At no point during the period did Departmental officials display the initiative and leadership which could rightly have been expected of them. And even when Departmental officials did finally commit themselves to action, progress was extremely slow. It was sixteen years between Crowley's efforts and the 1898 Standard which made kindergarten work obligatory in infants' schools and more than ten years had then passed since Miss Banks' work had been officially approved.

The conclusion which logically follows is that although Bridges might plead for reform something much more dramatic than this was required to stir officials, politicians, the press and the public from their
conservatism and complacency. The prime problem was that the concepts of education embodied in the 1880 Act appeared to too many to be still adequate although twenty years had passed. This was why such departures as kindergarten and manual work made such slow progress. The function of education had been conceived as the diminution of crime and immorality. As products of ignorance and disorder these were attacked by the three R's, by submission to rule and by regimentation. It was quite well known that there were broader educational aims and more enlightened practices, but these seemed largely irrelevant to local needs. Hence the brief promise of 1890 came to almost nothing with a change of political, social and economic circumstance. It is a moot point, too, whether this reversal of educational policy was not after all an appropriate educational response to changed social conditions for whatever the industrial promise of the late 1880's, the depression soon put an end to expansion and development. However towards the end of the century it was becoming increasingly apparent that whilst education in New South Wales had been at a standstill it
had continued to move ahead abroad. England had always been the major source of inspiration and there a major movement coalesced under the title of the "New Education". New South Wales could not ignore this, especially since national pride had emerged as a real force with the approach of federation. A local reform movement of some kind was inevitable and had, in fact, already begun. Already most of the elements of any argument were at hand although it still remained to forge them together. What was definitely lacking was any real sense of urgency, especially in the public mind. This changed when

115. O'Regan (An Examination of the Necessity for a Commission on Primary Education in 1903, Unpub. B.A. Thesis, Sydney University, 1963) points only to the deficiencies of the system and the conservatism of Departmental officials when he argues that a Royal Commission was indeed required. He fails to relate these factors to the opinions, attitudes and character of society generally or to admit that whilst a public reform movement was necessary there was no reason except a political one for a Royal Commission as such.
Professor Francis Anderson and Joseph Carruthers joined forces in a major public campaign which led in turn to truly major reforms in elementary schooling in New South Wales. This reform movement and the "New Education" it brought to this state are the subject of Part Two of this study.