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

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It has been customary to date the commencement of the reform movement in New South Wales from Professor Francis Anderson's speech to the Fourth Annual Conference of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association on 26th June, 1901. The genesis of this movement was, as has been shown, in fact of an earlier and more indefinite date and yet Anderson's speech was still of immense importance. Its significance lies in its timeliness, its completeness and its consequences. Uttered at a socially appropriate moment against a background of increasing local interest in educational developments abroad and of a body of professional and parliamentary opinion which favoured reform, Anderson's speech summarised many complaints before heard in relative isolation and provided Carruthers with an expert opinion to which he could refer in his political attack upon the See Government. The public campaign for reform which Carruthers initiated culminated in the establishment of a Royal Commission into almost every facet of state education. This was supplemented by Departmental discussions and by the private and independent report furnished by Peter Board. On the basis of his report
Board was entrusted in 1904 with the preparation of a "New Syllabus" embodying his findings and with the task of explaining its underlying principles to the teachers of New South Wales. Later in 1905 followed his appointment as Director of Education and Under-secretary of the Department of Public Instruction.

The period from 1901 until 1904 is thus most crucial in the development of New South Wales state primary education. These were the years which saw the introduction of that New Education which was to provide the basis of elementary schooling for a long time to come. And so in this section of the study the activities and events of these years will be considered in some detail; the source and character of this New Education will be examined, with particular attention to the specific forms introduced to this state; the roles of such significant individuals as Anderson, Perry, Carruthers, Knibbs, Turner and Board will be discussed; and Departmental and public reaction will be evaluated. The discussion is detailed, for this period has too often been emotionally reported instead of critically examined.
CHAPTER V

THE "NEW EDUCATION" MOVEMENT ABROAD AT
THE TURN OF THE CENTURY:
A FOUNDATION FOR LOCAL REFORM

Each of the important innovations introduced into New South Wales elementary schooling during the late nineteenth century were, as has been seen, based upon overseas developments. So, too, were most of the major constructive criticisms of the system which emerged as the century drew to a close. It therefore comes as no surprise that overseas developments and opinions were major factors in moulding education in this state during that period of the twentieth century covered by this study. It was these, indeed, which provided both inspiration and direction.

At the turn of the century educational reform was in fact a world-wide phenomenon. The efforts of earlier pioneers were accorded a latter-day approval and those of contemporary theorists and experimenters were
favourably received by their colleagues. Education was no longer seen as a matter of the three R's. Wider aims and a broader curriculum were accepted. This movement was ascribed a single title - the New Education. It behoves us to examine its character. Such an examination is best approached primarily through its English form, for English precedent was the major determinant of New South Wales development.

**THE NEW EDUCATION AS UTILITARIAN**

The first feature to be noted is that this New Education was a response to the changed nature and needs of western society. John Dewey was one of those who was well aware that it was "part and parcel of the whole social evolution, and, in its more general features at least, as inevitable"\(^1\). Society had indeed changed extensively in each of the advanced countries. The great technological

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inventions of the eighteenth century had been augmented by a stream of further invention and of scientific discovery to be translated in the nineteenth into a world of international industrial competition, of vast manufacturing centres, of railways and of telegraphs. And, as if the habits of life and thought had not been altered enough by such developments, scientists intent upon unlocking the secrets of the universe challenged ancient moral and religious beliefs with their theories and discoveries. And along with such developments came changes in the social order. Control passed first from the landed aristocracy to the prosperous middle class of industrialists and merchants but by the end of the nineteenth century the mass of the people, too, had emerged as a major political force. The lot of these masses was still no sinecure but the more outrageous conditions of employment and of their life generally were gradually improved. Writers and philosophers like Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and Charles Dickens served as the conscience of society; philanthropists, politicians and agitators as its arm.
Elementary education for the masses had emerged initially as a charitable enterprise and was seen as a weapon against crime, ignorance and immorality. Even in this form it was clearly a response to industrialisation and urbanisation but society changed still further as the nineteenth century progressed. In such changes were the social bases for the development of organised technical education, the entry of the state into the field of secondary education and the transformation of the elementary school. And against such a background the New Education "movement" may be seen from one viewpoint as an attempt to broaden the elementary school course of study beyond the "old" and now socially inadequate education of the three R's. The developments in the state schools of England exemplify this quite clearly.

Work in the English elementary schools was controlled by the conditions and methods by which the government distributed its grants. These conditions were first

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2. R.J.W. Selleck (op. cit.) infers that this was the major unifying feature of the New Education Movement.
systematised in 1860 by Robert Lowe, Vice-President and representative in parliament of the Education Department. Then in 1861 Lowe presented a revised code to the legislature. It was this Revised Code of 1861 which introduced "payment by results". This infamous system was certainly not Lowe's alone, although he must share the condemnation it has earned. Rather it was a product of the times, for elementary education was still considered as a "charity" upon which expenditure should be kept to a minimum. The terms of reference of the Newcastle Commission of 1858-61 make this clear. Its task was to "inquire into the present state of popular education in England, and to consider and report what increases, if any, are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to all classes of the people". The majority of this Commission accepted as an unalterable condition the fact that most children

4. Quoted in S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boulthwood, op. cit., 68.
who attended school did so only for an average of four years. Consequently it was recommended that with such a short time available most attention should be devoted to the basic subjects. And then the following proposition followed:

There is only one way of securing this result, which is to institute a searching examination by competent authority of every child in every school to which grants are to be paid, with the view of ascertaining whether these indispensible elements of knowledge are thoroughly acquired, and to make the prospects and position of the teacher dependent to a considerable extent on the results of this examination.5

Thus the Revised Code was born. The government grant was made dependent upon the two factors of average attendance and the examination success of the pupils.6 The subjects tested were reading, writing and arithmetic with plain needlework added for girls7. The Revised Code did reduce expenditure and attendance did improve8.

5. Quoted in S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boultwood, op. cit., 70.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
but the curriculum had been dealt a serious blow. Studies other than the three R's were neglected\(^9\) and a long campaign was necessary to extend the course of study. Not until 1897 did the last elements of Payments by Results finally disappear and inspection take on the form of an advisory visit and not an examination\(^10\).

The efforts of utilitarians to introduce a broader range of subjects into the English elementary school had been reflected in New South Wales in the multifarious reforms introduced in the names of science and of technical education in 1890. Progress in New South Wales after this initial enthusiasm was slight, however. Such was not the case in England. In 1886, with funds for manual training work denied it by the Education Department the London School Board appealed to the City and Guilds of London Institute for assistance\(^11\). Classes were established under a joint committee. These were so

\(^9\) Ibid, 73.

\(^10\) Ibid.

successful that the London School Board appointed a special committee to investigate the whole question of school handwork. The report of this committee was "the first considered and definite pronouncement on educational handwork by a local authority"\(^{12}\) and because the authority concerned was the largest in England it was of major significance. There were four important recommendations:–

1. The practical activity methods of the kindergarten should be continued right through the primary schools.

2. Manual instruction should be correlated with science and drawing.

3. Instruction should be given by qualified teachers.

4. The time required for practical work should be provided by reducing that assigned to book subjects\(^{13}\).

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12. Ibid, 40.

With this impetus the rate of developmental work in London increased and additional woodwork centres were opened\(^1\). Important developments took place elsewhere, too - at Sheffield, for example, where instruction in metalwork was pioneered\(^2\). Governmental participation also increased and woodwork was recognised in 1890 by the Education Department as a subject eligible for grant\(^3\). It was the London centres where the most significant work occurred, however, for there Solomon Barter developed English Sloyd, a course involving drawing, timber and tool technology and practical work\(^4\). After its publication in 1892 his text, "Woodwork - The English Sloyd", became a standard work\(^5\).

These developments may have occurred for essentially economic reasons, but the inclusion of such manual training was justified on educational as well as utilitarian grounds. There was something of a defence in this and there was certainly a parallel with developments

\(^{1}\) Ibid, 40.
\(^{2}\) Ibid.
\(^{3}\) Ibid, 44-46.
\(^{4}\) Ibid, 48.
\(^{5}\) Ibid, 44.
in the field of secondary education. There the rights of modern languages and science for a place in the curriculum had been justified in terms of faculty psychology and mental discipline. To win its place manual training had similarly to be of educational as well as practical value and so there was much talk of general hand and eye training. For the same reason the testimony of recognised educational authorities was invoked, Froebel among them. And that extension of Froebel's work, Swedish Sloyd, likewise received frequent mention as an example and a model. The real point of such claims for manual training when couched in educational terms was their relevance for the elementary curriculum. The gap between kindergarten occupations for infants and manual work for senior boys was then obviously indefensible. Drawing was hardly sufficient to bridge such a gulf. Awareness of this and acceptance in a general sense of both the social and educational value of manual training produced such


elementary school courses as the paper-folding and cutting and cardboard modelling as was outlined by W. Hewitt in 1892. Such activities are still a feature of elementary school courses. Their Froebelian ancestry is patent.

Science was another major interest of the utilitarians. Object lessons were first introduced by the London School Board about 1871, but science was not actually specified by the Code until 1882 when "simple lessons on objects and on the phenomena of nature and common life, and appropriate and varied occupations" were included in the infants' course and elementary science became a "class" (and therefore optional) subject for grades above Standard I. It was not until 1895 that Object Lessons were made compulsory in Standards I, II and III. Thus New South Wales, through the wisdom of Wilkins and his 1867 Standard of Proficiency, was


22. Ibid, 114.

23. Ibid, 149.
in advance of official English policy. However, opinion and practice in England were at least two steps further ahead by the end of the century than in the colony. Firstly there was the argument for the use of a heuristic method. Professor Armstrong was the chief exponent of this view and his opinions were embodied in the 1889 Report of the Committee of the British Association. Secondly there was the evolution of a "new" elementary school subject - nature study - to replace the formal and stereotyped object lessons. The case for nature study had benefited considerably from Arnold's expressed desire of 1876 to see nature-kunde added to the elementary course. It was also a practical solution to the problem of introducing heuristic science teaching without incurring the expense of scientific apparatus or of specially equipped rooms. It was also a logical enough outcome of the interest of the utilitarians in agricultural science and of the Naturalists in learning from Nature itself.

24. Ibid, 142.
THE NEW EDUCATION AS NATURALISTIC

To approach the New Education as a utilitarian response to the needs of society expressed as attempts to broaden the course of study is accurate enough, but limited. The New Education also had some of the characteristics of a renaissance, for a number of its central ideas were not "new"—many indeed were centuries old. Thus Thistleton Mark could enunciate as the principal characteristic of the New Education "the deliverance of pupil and teacher from the excessive bondage to books, and to learning from books"²⁷ and then briefly trace a history of this view from Rabelais and Montaigne of the sixteenth century to Rousseau and Pestalozzi and finally to Froebel and Herbart.²⁸ Continuity of educational thought notwithstanding, the turn of the century was still a period when public elementary education assumed a "new" character. The ideas may not have been new, but their incorporation within public


education most certainly was. The emergence of Naturalism to such a position of eminence that it became a major theoretical basis for state elementary education is the case in point. Pestalozzian ideas had had a widespread influence upon English education by the 1850's but this influence was confined largely to mechanical and stereotyped methods of instruction. Pestalozzi's own preoccupation with "the method" was certainly a contributing factor, but English educators who ignored his fundamental philosophical position were at fault, too. Somewhat the same thing happened with Froebel. The mechanics of his system absorbed attention and his more fundamental doctrines were neglected even by those who were acknowledged as authorities on the system: Emily Shireff even warned against the "folly of those who would trifle with the order and purpose of the games". Froebel had unfortunately expressed his


ideas with insufficient clarity to prevent such interpretations; indeed his statement of his pantheistic idealism and his educational purpose was an almost incoherent compound of religious mysticism, naturalism and Hegelian dialectic. Anything less comprehensible to a classroom teacher as a guiding statement of pedagogical procedure than the following would be difficult to imagine:

The educator, the teacher, should make the individual and particular general, the general particular and individual and elucidate both in life; he should make the external internal, and the internal external, and indicate the necessary unity of both; he should consider the finite in the light of the infinite, and the infinite in the light of the finite, and harmonize both in life; he should see and perceive the divine essence in whatever is human, trace the nature of God to man, and seek to exhibit both within one another in life.31

In Froebel's view the ultimate aim of education was the unity of man with Nature and with God. The path to this unity was the path of "natural" development and so Froebel insisted (much as Rousseau had done) that

"education ... should necessarily be passive, following (only guarding and protecting), not prescriptive, categorical, interfering". The developmental stages of the individual's growth from infancy to maturity and the characteristics of these stages were therefore of major importance. It was, however, the education at the childhood stage which absorbed Froebel's energies. It was for the young child that he evolved the kindergarten. At this stage the major characteristic of the developing individual was his innate desire to play or "self-activity". This was thus the appropriate pedagogical technique. Although education was therefore to be "passive" and "play" the method, the child's innate tendency towards self-activity was to be directed, following a definite sequence and utilising specially designed materials and occupations whose purpose was to bring the child successively closer to that mystical unity of Man, Nature and God. The basic inconsistency of directed self-activity and the novelty of Froebel's

32. Ibid, 7.
games and occupations explains the inevitable fascination with the mechanics of the system. As the century drew to a close, there were, however, an increasing body of more discerning educators for whom Froebel had a more significant message. These had had their predecessors - on the local scene Crowly was one - but now the coincidence of their views with the broad current of social opinion had a much more profound result. Naturalism, especially the Naturalism of Froebel, emerged to prominence as an element in the New Education. One factor in this was the apparent unity of opinion between the Naturalists and the utilitarians. Both wanted a broader curriculum and were interested in "practical" studies. But this was only one dimension of the coincidence of Naturalist doctrine with the opinions of others. It was probably not even the most significant one.

33. J.J. Findlay (Principles of Class Teaching, MacMillan and Co., London, 1902, 129) makes this point and lists Madame Michaelis, founder of the Froebelian Institute, Ebenezer Cooke of London and Francis Parker and John Dewey as among the enlightened.
It was a basic tenet of Naturalism that the aim of education is the harmonious all-round development of the individual's powers - mental, physical, social and spiritual. Education in the nineteenth century elementary school in England had been concerned primarily with the first and the last - the four R's of reading, writing, arithmetic and religion. In the latter part of the century this changed. The physical education and health of elementary school children began to really concern educators. And it was a real concern above and beyond an acceptance of drill and physical education for its purely disciplinary value. The increasing popularity of both the MacLaren and the Ling systems of training in preference to military movements is one index of this. That such physical training was made eligible for a government grant in 1895 is another. That games themselves were accepted by the Education Department


35. Ibid, 112.
as a suitable alternative in 1900 to drill or physical exercises for the purposes of earning a grant is yet another. But at much the same time that this broader concept of appropriate physical education was winning approval another development was taking place more profoundly indicative of the changing attitude of educational authorities. In 1890 the London School Board appointed a part-time medical officer to examine mentally defective children. Later in 1902 this appointment was made a full-time one and the services extended. By then, however, the Bradford School Board had already pioneered the English school medical service when it undertook the medical inspection of children under its jurisdiction in 1893. It was not until 1908 that these efforts culminated in the establishment of a Medical Department of the Board of Education. They had already proved a point.

38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. P.C. McIntosh, op. cit., 146.
relevant in this present context before this date because from an overall view this interest in the physical education and health of the child illuminates the emergence of Naturalism. It is a moot point, of course, just how far Naturalists themselves were responsible for the creation of a favourable climate of opinion. The child-study movement no doubt played some part, and this was saturated with Naturalism. But the essential fact is that English society (and western society generally) had been radically altered by modern industrialism. Broader educational aims and a wider sense of community responsibility towards its individual members were a part of this change.

THE NEW EDUCATION AS HERBARTIAN

Late in the period a new element of major importance entered the educational field - the English discovered Herbart. Articles on his psychology by G.F. Stout appeared in Mind in 1888, 1889 and 1891, and Herbart's

The Science of Education translated by the Felkins was published in 1892. It was not until 1897 with John Adams' The Herbartian Psychology Applied to Education that a truly influential work upon the subject appeared in England. This was followed a year later by Catherine Dodd's Introduction to the Herbartian Principles of Teaching, but the bulk of English works on Herbart did not appear until after 1900 - Fennell's Notes of Lessons on the Herbartian Method (1902) and Haywards' The Student's Herbart (1903) were two notable examples and J.J. Findlay's Principles of Class Teaching (1902) wherein the ideas of Herbart and his followers were extensively discussed was a third. Nevertheless, although Herbartianism was a late discovery and one still to be more extensively examined, it was by the turn of the century a part of the New Education.

43. S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boulwood, op. cit., 158n.
What Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) gave the New Education was theoretical support for a society-centred aim and a fresh psychology of learning. The purpose of education as Herbart saw it was to prepare the child to live in the existing social order by developing his personal character and his social morality.\(^{47}\)

Herbart rejected the concept of natural development. He also rejected the acquisition of knowledge as the primary object of education. Knowledge was considered important, but it was assigned a secondary role for virtue and an understanding of social obligations came not from knowledge as such but only from knowledge properly organised and interpreted and translated into "will."\(^{48}\) This was the context in which the Herbartian psychology of learning and the Herbartian pedagogy


assumed their significance. Herbart's psychology denied the validity of faculty psychology. It reduced mental processes to association. The mind was thus formed by this process as the simple perceptions of external objects became associated with one another to produce more complex perceptions and ideas. These associated perceptions and ideas produced "apperceptive masses" of experience which constitute the structure of the mind. Such ideas and perceptions did not remain in consciousness but were "stored" in the unconscious. Interest played a part in raising ideas to consciousness. So did the degree of incorporation of the individual ideas in the apperceptive mass. The ultimate object was a unified mind, a single giant apperceptive mass, and the Herbartian pedagogy was expressly designed to produce this. Thus the first step was the arousal of interest, the raising of past ideas and associations to consciousness, the assembly of the apperceptive mass with which the new ideas were to be linked and associated. 49

himself enumerated Cleanness, Association, System and Method as the instructional steps\textsuperscript{50}. The propagation of his theory and its application to the school, particularly in terms of curriculum, was largely left to his successors, however, and it is their neo-Herbartianism which was incorporated within the New Education.

Tuiskon Ziller (1817-1883) was the major figure. It was he who distinguished in the "Cleanness" of Herbart two stages: analysis and synthesis. Analysis was a step preparing the mind for the new material by bringing to the level of consciousness previously learnt material; synthesis was the apprehension of the new material\textsuperscript{51}. It was thus through Ziller that we arrived at the fine Herbartian steps though it was Wilhelm Rein who in fact gave them their traditional labels of Preparation, Presentation, Association, System

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 126-27; J.F. Herbart, Outlines of Educational Doctrine, op. cit., 53-54.

\textsuperscript{51} C. De Garmo, Herbart and the Herbartians, Heinemann, London, 1904, 130.
and Application.  

Ziller's elaboration of the teaching steps, more particularly with Rein's labels, found a wide acceptance but his contribution to educational thought did not end with this. There were also his doctrines of the "Cultural Epochs" and of "Concentration of Studies". The Cultural Epochs was an idea which sprang from Ziller's concept of what should be taught in elementary schools whilst Concentration of Studies was his solution to the problem of co-ordinating the various subjects of the curriculum for instructional purposes. Beginning with a classification of the curriculum into two groups, the humanities and the sciences, Ziller gave the humanities the prime place. The reasoning here followed that of Herbart closely - that morality is developed through absorption of and reflection upon ideas with moral content. And for Ziller such moral content

52. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
was best found in the subjects concerning man himself\textsuperscript{55}. But what principle was to be followed in selecting and developing these subjects? Ziller's answer was the adoption of recapitulation theory, an evolutionary doctrine which claimed that the child as he grew to maturity passed through the same general stages that his race had traversed\textsuperscript{56}. The major cultural epochs of the race thus became the basic material of instruction and teaching on this basis could proceed with a two-fold advantage: first, the national culture could be presented historically; second, this could be accorded with the development of the individual himself and his stage of apperception. It should also be noted that such an approach elevated history and literature to pre-eminent positions in the curriculum. And it should also be noted that recapitulation theory itself was common ground for Ziller the Herbartian, Froebel the Naturalist and Stanley Hall the father of child-study.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, 109.
Having decided upon the Cultural Epochs as the basis for selecting and developing the major subjects, Ziller then sought a base upon which to organise the curriculum as a whole. Essentially this endeavour revolved around the importance attributed to "symmetrical" or all-round development of character and the assumption that this was dependent upon symmetrical and co-ordinated knowledge. It was further assumed that the prospects of such unity of mind would be greatly enhanced if subject matter were presented in as unified a manner as possible. Ziller's own plan was to concentrate the subjects of the curriculum about a core of cultural material which had been selected in accord with the Cultural Epochs principle, about a core that is of history and literature. The most interesting aspect of this plan was Ziller's scheme for co-ordinating the other subjects about this central core. Language studies were disposed of as the formal aspect of the cultural

57. Ibid, 114.

core quite simply but the sciences presented a problem. It was, in fact, a problem left to Wilhelm Rein to try to solve and it is in his work that we can see the idea of concentration worked out ready for practical application. For the first year of schooling, for example, Rein set out the curriculum much as follows:–

REIN'S "CONCENTRATED" CURRICULUM FOR THE FIRST YEAR

MAJOR STUDIES

1. Ethical Core of Concentration: Grimm's Fairy Tales - these form the core about which other branches of the curriculum are concentrated and by which the topics in these other subjects is largely determined.

2. Nature Study: All the subjects that are suggested by the Fairy Tales, supplemented by material from school life and individual experience

SECONDARY STUDIES

1. Drawing ) Objects, etc.

2. Singing ) mentioned in the Fairy Tales

3. Number Work ) provide the basis for selection of content.

4. Reading and Writing

59. Ibid, 143-44.
In general terms the main contributions of Herbartianism to the New Education were its moral and social aim, its support for a broadened elementary course (in particular for history and literature), its doctrine of concentration of curricular studies and its "five steps" of pedagogical method. In the first there was an inherent difficulty of a view which equated knowledge with virtue but the concern with moral instruction and with education for citizenship was one widely shared. One group with such a view was the English Moral Instruction League. Established in 1897 by the Union of Ethical Societies the League conducted an organised campaign "(t)o introduce non-theological Moral Instruction into all schools and to make the formation of character the chief aim of school life" 60. It was sentiments of just this kind which culminated in the acceptance as a part of the New Education the

educational principle that moral instruction could not be left to chance alone and that consequently formal as well as incidental ethical instruction must be included in the curriculum.

THE NEW EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING

An analysis of the New Education as it emerged in England would be incomplete without reference to the Cross Commission which "was a stocktaking of the progress made in elementary education up to 1888". Its most important recommendations in the present context were those for the reform of teacher-training. The pupil-teacher system was severely criticised. It was the opinion of these commissioners that pupil-teachers were still overburdened, despite the fact that since 1884 they had taught less and been instructed at pupil-teacher centres during the day. The existing training colleges


62. S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boulton, op. cit., 78.

were also adversely criticised and it was suggested that training colleges associated with universities and university colleges should replace them. Abolition of the pupil-teacher system was not an actual recommendation and the system was never, in point of fact, ever abolished formally in England, but instead allowed to wither away. Alternative schemes were evolved whereby students with a satisfactory secondary education were recruited directly to training colleges. Such schemes were already at work when the twentieth century began and they became increasingly popular once progress had been made in the field of secondary education. By their inauguration it was tacitly admitted that the character of elementary education had itself changed. Better educated teachers and more mature beginners were now required. This concept was an integral part of the

64. Ibid.
65. Ibid, 374-75.
66. Ibid, 374.
English educational developments and opinions of the late nineteenth century were examined in some detail because they provide most of the essential background to the reform movement which occurred in New South Wales. Where New South Wales educators looked beyond English example they generally did so at second hand or at best looked where the English had looked already. Thus the discussion of English education has already traversed the major features of European education - the theories of Froebel and Herbart and the schemes for manual and physical education. And the passionate fascination of English educators and their New South Wales counterparts with European schemes for technical education, more especially with Germany's continuation schools, has already been emphasised. The case with the United States is somewhat different than with the Continent,
although once again details need not concern us. America had emerged as an industrial nation and her educational development had been moulded by similar forces and similar influences as those which operated in Europe. The curriculum of her elementary schools was broadened in much the same way to include kindergarten work, drawing, science, nature study, manual work and physical education. At times specifics differed somewhat - manual work was the prime example for the Russian system had an important influence upon American developments in this area. Nor is there any doubt that the New Education in America preceded the New Education in England - and here the discovery and popularisation of Herbart's ideas is the obvious example. Amid these


69. Charles De Garmo and the brothers Frank and Charles McMurry were the major figures (but Francis Parker too played a part, if a more minor one). The National Herbart Society was founded in America in 1892 (A.E. Meyer, The Development of Education in the Twentieth Century, 2nd ed., Prentice-Hall, New York, 1952, 22.
essentially parallel developments two figures did, however, emerge in the United States of major significance - Francis Parker and John Dewey.

Francis Wayland Parker (1837-1902) first became a major figure in elementary education when he was appointed as Superintendent of the Quincy, Massachusetts School System in 1875. Parker had travelled to Europe in 1872. There he had spent two and a half years attending lectures at the University of King William in Berlin and travelling widely on the Continent observing the major pedagogical innovations of the day. Quincy provided Parker with an opportunity to introduce features of European practice and theory into American schools and a true adventure in education began.

Discipline for one thing assumed a positive character -

The torture of sitting perfectly still with nothing to do was ruled out and in came an order of work, with all the whispering and noise compatible with best results. The child began to feel he had something to do for himself, that he was a member of society, with the responsibilities that accompany such an important position.70

Teaching procedures were transformed. Instruction no longer began with the speller, the reader, the grammar and the copybook. Reading started with simple words and sentences, not phonetically or with the alphabet. Arithmetic was first approached inductively through objects rather than rules. Geography began with trips over the countryside. Above all schooling became a pleasurable experience for the child. Naturalism had found at Quincy expression at the elementary school level within a public system of education. It was work which immediately attracted attention in America.

Parker moved on from Quincy in 1880, first to a Boston superintendency, then in 1883 to principalship

71. a. L.E. Patridge, The "Quincy Methods" Illustrated: Pen-Photographs from the Quincy Schools, Kellogg and Co., New York, c.1885.
   b. L.A. Cremin, op. cit., 130.

72. The "Quincy System" became to many Americans the New Education. (Cf. Victoria Education Gazette and Teacher's Aid, III, 1, July 1902, 17: This was the first of three "Selected Articles" upon Parker. The others were published in August and September. They were originally American articles and were an appreciative obituary.)
of the Cook County Normal School at Chicago. It was at the Cook County Normal School that Parker formulated his educational theories for presentation to the students-in-training and further developed his pedagogical techniques. It was his avowed intention to move the child to the centre of the educational process and to inter-relate the several subjects of the curriculum so that their meaning for the child was enhanced. He was by all accounts assisted by an excellent body of teachers. In formulating both his theory and his practice Parker borrowed heavily from Pestalozzi, Froebel and Herbart—"Pestalozzi for method, Froebel for his view of the child, and Herbart for the doctrine of concentration." The school itself was organised as "a model home, a complete community and embryonic democracy." The school day began with morning "exercises" in the assembly hall—a Bible reading by Parker, a child relating his experiences, a teacher leading the class in exercises

prepared the day beforehand, and so on. Then the children went to their own classrooms. There the same informality prevailed. Children created their own stories and these in the form of reading leaflets replaced primers and textbooks. Spelling, reading, writing and grammar were thus taught and learned within the context of actual oral and written expression. Science was begun as nature-study with excursions a prominent feature; certain of this study was carried over into laboratory work and thus a beginning made with the sciences themselves. Geography was also begun as a study, first-hand, of the local environment, but in addition this subject was conceived as a "human" geography and so included history and elementary economics. Mathematics was often introduced through the practical work of the laboratory and the workshop.

76. M. Fleming, "Purposes and Values of the Morning Exercise", Francis W. Parker School Year Book, II (1913), 11 (Quoted in L.A. Cremin, loc. cit.).

77. L.A. Cremin, op. cit., 132-33 contains a useful summary based on the major sources.
Throughout the children observed, drew and recorded and made in the workshops much of the equipment they needed for their activities. Always the curriculum was regarded as a vehicle for child expression. To Parker the teachers' task was to understand the child's spontaneous tendencies and follow nature. Thus Parker's work must be regarded primarily as an example of Naturalism applied to elementary schooling, perhaps indeed the pre-eminent example. He was to provide inspiration for those of similar mind in England and, though somewhat later, to educators in New South Wales - but not necessarily directly during the first flush of the reform movement in this state.

Efforts at Quincy and at Chicago did not proceed without adverse criticism and after the Cook County Normal School was taken over by the city in 1896 the

politicians were obstructive. Mrs. Emmons Blaine rescued Parker from such petty turmoil when with a million dollars she provided a School of Education at the University of Chicago and he was appointed its director. Parker died almost immediately, however.\textsuperscript{80} It was poetic justice that John Dewey should succeed him for already Dewey had made a most impressive contribution of his own.

John Dewey (1859-1952) moved to the newly-founded University of Chicago in 1894 as Professor of Philosophy and Chairman of the combined Departments of Philosophy, Psychology and Pedagogy.\textsuperscript{81} In 1896 he established "The Laboratory School". The issue to be investigated he outlined as follows:

The ultimate problem of all education is to co-ordinate the psychological and the social factors. The psychological requires that the individual have the free use of all his personal powers; and, therefore, must be so individually studied as to have the laws of his own structure regarded. The sociological factor requires that the

\textsuperscript{80} He became ill in the autumn of 1901 and died in March 1902 (A.G. Wirth, \textit{John Dewey as Educator: His Design for Work in Education (1894-1904)}, Wiley and Sons, New York, 1966, 217.

\textsuperscript{81} A.G. Wirth, \textit{op. cit.}, 16.
individual become acquainted with the social environment in which he lives, in all its important relations, and be disciplined to regard these relationships in his own activities. The co-ordination demands, therefore, that the child be capable of expressing himself, but in such a way as to realise social ends. 82

The school was to be conducted as a form of community life. The occupations which served man's fundamental social needs - housing, clothing, food - were to form the basis of the curriculum. More precisely the child's own expressive activities in these areas were to be both the starting point and the centre of the curriculum. From such direct modes of expression the indirect modes of speaking, writing, drawing, modelling and so on were to stem. History, geography and science would likewise follow as the significance of these activities was studied and the materials and processes employed were examined. Throughout learning was to be conceived "psychologically" as an indirect product of the child's real purpose - expression of his ideas 83.

82. J. Dewey, Plan of Organisation of the University Primary School, 1895(?) (included as Appendix in A.G. Wirth, op. cit., 297-305).

83. Ibid.
In formulating these plans Dewey was indebted to many sources in philosophical, psychological and educational thought, but he adapted and transformed the majority of such ideas rather than merely adopt the opinions of others. There was, for example, an identifiable Naturalistic and Froebelian element in Dewey's thought but he was no Froebelian. Education had a too clearly social purpose for Dewey to accept the impulses of the child as more than a starting point. Similarly the programme developed at the Laboratory School with the prominence attached to history had some features in common with schemes developed by the Herbartians, but Dewey had not in fact accepted recapitulation or cultural epoch theory, he had adopted an historical method of inducting the child step by step into the complex culture of the modern world.


In a real sense, as Meyer has pointed out, the Laboratory School was where Dewey sought to reconcile in practice as well as in theory the inherent conflicts which faced twentieth century education - conflicts between individual and social aims, between the child and the curriculum, between interest and effort, between school and society. This was the aspect of his work which found such detailed expression in *Democracy and Education* in 1916. The Laboratory School itself was thus much more than an experiment with an activity curriculum although this was probably the more widespread contemporary interpretation - Dewey certainly felt forced to explain his true position in the years that followed. Yet even to approach the Laboratory School with a circumscribed view of its significance was still to be impressed. Dewey himself was certainly satisfied and his educational beliefs were confirmed. His example did

86. A.E. Meyer, *op. cit.*, 41. (Dewey himself made this point in *The Child and The Curriculum, op. cit.*, 5, 9-10.)

87. a. K.C. Mayhew and A.C. Edwards, *The Dewey School*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1936, Appendix II "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment". (This was especially written for this volume by Dewey.)

encourage others to experiment with activity methods and for Kilpatrick to evolve the project method into a basic instructional technique. This was all still in the future when the twentieth century was new. Already, however, Dewey had made his mark as an educator whose opinions were to be considered and quoted even if only to support in a general way arguments for social aims, for pupil-activity, for reality in teaching and for child freedom.

THE NEW EDUCATION - A SUMMATION

The New Education was thus many things. It was certainly not a systematic philosophy or a body of consistent beliefs. It was in part a utilitarian response to the needs of society, in part a reassertion of Naturalism with its respect for the child and its advocacy of all-round development and pupil-activity, in part an advocacy of moral and social aims and of citizenship as an educational purpose, in part a broader

concept of the scope of state educational responsibility
to include school medical and health services. The New
Education was also characterised by the rejection of
faculty psychology, the emergence of Herbartian pedagogy
as an instructional technique, the development of handwork
as an elementary school subject, the replacement of
object lessons by nature study, the elevation of history
and of literature to new importance as vehicles for the
study of mankind, and the inclusion of schemes for
direct ethical instruction in the course of study. In
addition "reality" and "activity" became major teaching
principles, especially in mathematics, nature study and
geography. Children did actually handle things for
themselves, did measure and weigh materials, did plant
gardens, did study their own local environment and did
travel on excursions to see geographical and natural
features at first hand. 89

89. T. Mark, op. cit., may be consulted as a brief,
simple but useful contemporary summary of the New
Education.
The New Education is thus the title for all those genuine reforms which functioned at the turn of the century to radically change state-controlled elementary education. It was inevitable that education in Australian schools would undergo a similar transformation. In point of fact Victoria led the way. There Alfred Deakin and David Syme combined to force the government to establish a Royal Commission on technical education in 1899 with Theodore Fink as chairman. This Fink Commission carried its enquiries well beyond technical education and so changes were recommended in administrative structure and in elementary schooling. Subsequently Frank Tate was appointed to the newly-established position of director, payment by results was abolished and a new course of study for the elementary school was evolved.


In South Australia, too, there was change. There the teacher-training system was modified in 1900 and under the new scheme intending teachers first spent two years as secondary school pupils at the "Pupil Teachers' School", then two years as pupil-teachers in one of the larger public schools, and finally two years as students at the University Training College. It was thus to be expected that education in New South Wales would also feel the impact of the New Education. It was also to be expected that its very eclecticism would pose major problems.


b. South Australia's reforms in teacher-training were described at length by the Inspector-General of South Australian Schools, L.W. Stanton, at the New South Wales Conference of Inspectors and others in April 1904 (N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers and Prominent Educationists Held Tuesday, 5th April, 1904 and Following Days, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1904 62-63).
CHAPTER VI

THE PUBLIC DEMAND FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM, 1901-02

When the twentieth century began education abroad and interstate was under review and already in New South Wales there were numerous criticisms of the system. Reform was therefore inevitable. In Victoria it had come through political agitation and a Royal Commission. This, too, was to be the pattern in New South Wales, but it was coincidental rather than imitative. However, in early 1901 a Commonwealth Education Conference was held in Melbourne and representatives from the New South Wales Teachers' Association attended and this was a significant event in New South Wales educational development. More still it provides a demonstration of New South Wales parochialism and a contrast in concern.
Broome and Benton attended the Melbourne "Federal" Educational Conference as accredited representatives of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association.

This Conference began on the afternoon of 21st January, 1901 and ended prematurely on 23rd January when news was received of Queen Victoria's death. Broome, whose report was published in the March issue of the New South Wales Educational Gazette, observed of the first day's proceedings:

The general trend of these opening speakers, all of whom are politicians, was towards keen and outspoken criticism of the Victorian Education Department, and little good did they appear to see either in its curriculum or its treatment of teachers either materially or intellectually.

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2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 231.

This trend and the quality of this Melbourne Conference were augmented by the inclusion of the Victorian Attorney-General, Isaac Isaacs\(^5\), and W.C. Grasby\(^6\) as speakers. The latter stands from our point of time as a thoughtful and persistent critic of Australian education. In his address, "The Teacher's Personality a Plea for Individuality and a Protest against Bureaucracy", he attacked Australian educational systems and methods generally\(^7\), an attack based upon his observations abroad and consonant with the opinions he had expressed ten years earlier in a pamphlet entitled Our Public Schools\(^8\).

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5. Ibid.

6. Ibid, 231.

7. Ibid, 231.

8. W.C. Grasby, Our Public Schools, Hussey and Gillingham, Adelaide, 1891. (In this pamphlet Grasby attacked the result system and the "stupid, baneful pupil-teacher system" and advocated the introduction of kindergarten, manual, agricultural and horticultural training and the extension of state secondary education. South Australia was his own interest at the time but his comments were relevant to all the colonies.)
Broome records the reaction, especially of officers of the Victorian Department of Public Instruction, to the spate of unfavourable criticism which characterised this Melbourne Conference as "too severe", "often unmerited" and "too overdrawn". In his general reflections Broome also reported, however, that speakers and listeners alike were conscious that Victoria had failed to keep pace with educational progress in England, France and Germany. He seems, with amazing parochialism, quite unaware of the activities of Syme and Deakin and of the Fink Commission, of the consequent turmoil in Victorian education, or of the implications for New South Wales.

A less conservative man than Broome, or a more observant one, may have drawn a parallel between New South Wales and Victoria, given more space to the points of

10. Ibid.
11. Ibid, 231.
12. Ibid.
criticism, reported with less conviction the opinions of Departmental Officers, and certainly drawn more from this Conference than the desire, laudable though it was, that a similar conference be held under the auspices of the Federal Government. But, nevertheless, this Melbourne Conference, with the presence of Broome and his colleague, demonstrates that New South Wales could not for much longer remain immune to developments elsewhere and that these were to be the yardstick by which education in this state was to be measured and found wanting. There had been some awakening to the need for change and an evolving belief that New South Wales had not kept abreast of developments elsewhere but there was no awakening to the extent or fundamental character of the reforms which were required. Early in the new century The Truth was critical of the Departmental inspectors and of "the blighting influences of Wilkins and Bridges, which still sheds its Plutonian bane over the educational system of the colony". In this same

period The Sydney Morning Herald and the Daily Telegraph expressed some concern for the lack of adequate commercial education. But there was not really any public interest in education. It was certainly not a major issue in the election of June 1901. The newly-organised Liberal and Reform Party which rose from the ashes of the Freetraders with Lee as its leader and Carruthers as a major figure featured "reform" in any convenient area as its platform. The possibility of including education under this general reform banner was only belatedly realised and even then was tempered by the party's opposition to free education. Carruthers' own statements during this period were confined to such generalities as the need to extend technical education and the vague comment that although "primary education (was) already well looked-after"17 there might be too


15. S.M.H., 18th June, 1901.

16. Ibid.

17. S.M.H., 26th April, 1901.
much adherence "to old systems behind the times"\textsuperscript{18} and so some need for reform of the curriculum\textsuperscript{19}. Perry, the Minister of Public Instruction, provided similar generalities. His most concrete offer was a promise of more bursaries given to a deputation led by the Labor member, Arthur Griffith\textsuperscript{20}. For the rest, he simply referred somewhat grandly to Australia's new place in the world and looked forward optimistically to the prospect of introducing free education but without committing either himself or his party to this as policy\textsuperscript{21}. Labor, the third of the major parties, had had free education in its plank for some time and there it stayed. But education was not an issue which interested the party as a whole.

Such was the immediate background to the Fourth Annual Conference of the Public School Teachers' Association. This conference marked a new stage in

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{19} S.M.H., 18th June, 1901.  
\textsuperscript{20} The Evening News, 25th May, 1901.  
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
educational development in this state. Already there had been enough of generalities and vagueness. What now was required was a body of specifics. This the 1901 Conference produced.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, JUNE 1901

Although Broome had failed to assess the wider significance of the Melbourne "Federal" Educational Conference it was the Association which he had represented that provided the occasion for education in New South Wales to become a matter for public debate and controversy. Each year the Public School Teachers' Association had gained in strength and for its Fourth Annual Conference it organised a more detailed programme with more guest speakers than ever before. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Frederick Darley, officially opened the conference on the first day, the Mayor of Sydney, Sir James Graham, opened proceedings on the second day, and in addition addresses were delivered by the Attorney-General, B.R. Wise, Professor Anderson and
S.C. Rose.  

Following the official opening by the Lieutenant-Governor came the address from Attorney-General Wise. Viewed from the second half of the twentieth century it is a most remarkable speech to come from a leading member of the Government. A major part of it was nothing less than an exhortation to teachers to agitate for a living wage and for an adequate system of training. Wise supported this by a striking comparison with the unemployed who, on seven shilling a day, were, he claimed, paid more than the £89 a year received by 820 of the 4000 teachers in the service. As for training, here Wise urged teachers to demand a university degree followed by a course of training leading to a certificate of competence as a prerequisite of entry to their ranks. He then concluded with a general criticism of the


23. S.M.H., 26th June, 1901 (Reprinted in N.S.W. Educational Gazette, loc. cit. - as were all proceedings).
educational system. He asked the pertinent question: "Are we an educated people?" The too exclusive concern with the testing of knowledge led him to doubt that they were.

The second day of the Conference maintained the critical trend initiated by Wise. In opening the day's proceedings Sir James Graham suggested "with deference" that much might be done to improve the training of teachers. More moderate than Wise, Graham nevertheless attacked the policy of permitting only a fractional portion of pupil-teachers to attend the training college and the fact that every teacher did not have the opportunity to gain a university education. Graham was followed by Professor Francis Anderson whose address was a challenging enumeration of the major faults of the state's educational system. The Conference

24. S.M.H., 27th June, 1901 (Reprinted in N.S.W. Educational Gazette, loc. cit.).

25. Ibid. The full text of Anderson's address was later published (vide infra).
concluded on the Wednesday, a day which saw further criticism, this time levelled by S.C. Rose, a teacher of long standing with the Department who had recently been abroad. Rose attacked the failure of the compulsory clauses of the Act, compared education in New South Wales unfavourably with efforts in England and on the Continent, pointed to the importance of a fairly accessible educational ladder to the University, and claimed that teachers should have a voice in educational matters.

This Fourth Annual Conference of the Public School Teachers' Association, as a whole, was a most impressive affair. Many questions arise about the selection of the speakers and the apparent uniform decision to criticise educational policy, with teacher training featuring in particular. Was the selection of this impressive guest list an attempt to emulate the Melbourne Conference? Was there uniformly unfavourable criticism only because

26. S.M.H., 28th June, 1901. The full text of Rose's address was later published in N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XI, 3, 1st August, 1901, 54-56.
it was overdue and inescapable? Or was there something akin to a conspiracy in the selection of speakers and topics? These questions may perhaps always remain unanswered. What does emerge from the Conference as inescapable fact is that Anderson's speech was to prove of considerable significance. So important, indeed, is it in the development of education in New South Wales that it itself warrants a detailed discussion and so does the background of Anderson's personal educational interests and activities.

**PROFESSOR FRANCIS ANDERSON**

Francis Anderson, a Scot born in Glasgow in 1858, became a pupil-teacher at fourteen and later at eighteen entered the University of Glasgow where he had a distinguished academic career. In 1886 he came to Australia, initially as assistant minister to the liberal theologian Dr. Charles Strong at the Australian Church in Melbourne. Anderson was appointed lecturer in philosophy at Sydney University in 1888 and in 1890 became its first Challis Professor of Logic and Mental
PROFESSOR FRANCIS ANDERSON, M.A.

Plate XVIII. Professor Francis Anderson, Critic and Reformer - S.H. Smith and G.T. Spaull, History of Education in New South Wales, Philip, Sydney, 1925, f.192, M.L.
Philosophy, a post from which he retired in 1921. Knighted in 1936, Anderson died aged 83 in 1941.\footnote{P. Serle, *Dictionary of Australian Biography*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1949, Vol. 1, 12-13.}

The June 1901 Conference was not Anderson's first interest in wider educational matters than just those associated with his university post. Already he had been associated with the kindergarten training scheme for teachers introduced by the Teachers' Association, with the Kindergarten Union and with the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science.\footnote{Vide supra.} And although these activities are the most pertinent in the present context it is as well to record that in the larger context of Anderson's long life they are part only of the wide and active educational interest he
Anderson was thus certainly more than a mere ephemeral critic. In fact he presented his own views positively on more than one occasion. His clearest statements are fortunately contemporaneous with his 1901 speeches and activities for they were themselves additional contributions he made to the reform movement. Three papers are involved — *On Teaching to Think*, *Psychology and Education*, and *The Teaching of Morality in Schools* — and these are valuable indications of the

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29. He was, for instance, a member of the Council of the Kindergarten College, a supporter of Board during negotiations with the University Senate over matriculation and the Leaving Certificate, a prime mover behind the introduction into the University of such new studies as sociology, the founder of the *Australian Journal of Philosophy and Psychology* and associated over a long period with the Department of Tutorial Classes of Sydney University and with the Workers' Educational Association. (Cf. B. McKelleher, *The Contribution of Francis Anderson to Education in New South Wales*, Unpub. M.Ed. Essay, Sydney University, 1966, Ch. IV.)

30. B. McKelleher (op. cit.) examines only the first two but the analysis offered is most valuable.


educational position from which he launched his attacks upon the public schools of New South Wales.

In *On Teaching to Think* there are many suggestions of an attitude akin to that of John Dewey\(^3^4\). Anderson states his own position as follows:

... in my opinion the greatest defect of our modern education in general is that at each stage, and within each subject, we do not recognise in any effective way, the great end of education. True education is not a process of communicating any number of facts ... It is not "getting up" a certain number of subjects which may have no relation to the actual life of the child. The end of education is the development of the self-activity of the pupil, and that end cannot be attained unless at each stage and by the materials and methods and subjects appropriate to that stage you teach him how to think.\(^3^5\)

Though Anderson here spoke of "self-activity", it was a "self-activity" of a decidedly intellectual kind. The success of educational procedures was to be judged,

\(^{34}\) E.g. "... education is, or ought to be, a continuous process" (p.6).

apparently, by the quality and quantity of the thought demanded and obtained from the pupils. This concept of the end of education, Anderson recognised, created an educational difficulty but one by which he refused to be daunted. The difficulty as he saw it was that strictly speaking "thinking" cannot be taught. But he maintained that there could nevertheless be a selection and grading of curriculum experiences and an adoption of teaching methods which would feature "thinking" almost, it seems, as a skill to be developed by practice. The difficulty Anderson noted has not subsequently diminished.

Psychology and Education provides additional details of Anderson's position. Here he repudiated the theory of man as innately bad and the aim of education the repression of his evil tendencies. He repudiated, too, the converse theory that man was innately good and the function of education the fostering of unhampered "natural" development. He condemned the artificiality of the

36. Ibid, 2.
Herbartian parallel between the stages of civilisation and those of the educational process. And he regarded with suspicion the doctrines of "interest" and "effort". He recognised in the former a justified reaction against repression and the over-emphasis on knowledge, but rejected those interpretations which equated interest with "mere amusement" or used it to defend "a lavish and unnecessary appeal to the senses". He rejected the doctrine of "effort" because this interpretation of the call for self-activity placed too great a demand upon pupils. Self-activity did not imply to Anderson that children should be made to do and learn almost everything for themselves. On the positive side Anderson was willing to accept the aim enunciated by W.E. Channing:

The great end of instruction is not to stamp our minds on the young, but to stir up their own; not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth; not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward strings; not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought, to awaken the conscience, so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is everlastingly true and good.


38. Ibid.
One logical outcome of such an aim was Anderson's insistence that moral instruction should form an important part of schooling. To Anderson the teacher's duty extended further than reading scripture. He must venture forth courageously into the field of general moral training. A further logical outcome of such an aim was a condemnation of rote learning:

What shall it profit the boy, though he gain a wilderness of such facts, if his own mind remains empty and sterile.

But he found a broader basis for sound educational practice in psychology. The view he held was that between "knowing" and "doing" there was a gap which must be bridged by "feeling", where "feeling" was conceived "to include all that world of inner interest and emotion which supplies the motive force of action". The role of interest is thus central and the teacher has the rather Herbartian task of awakening the appropriate interest.


by selection of suitable material\textsuperscript{42}. However Anderson denied that interests themselves could be implanted, insisting instead that their existence implied a prior existence of certain "tendencies to action"\textsuperscript{43}, a term which could perhaps be equated with "instincts" or "drives" or with such innate categories of behaviour as Dewey established for the curriculum of his Laboratory School.

Such, then, was the background of Anderson's educational activities and beliefs. It is not necessary to consider the coherence or completeness of his ideas but rather to appreciate the general viewpoint he held at the turn of the century. His major belief was that the formation of intellectual skills and attitudes is the prime function of education. It is a view in opposition at many points to educational practice in New South Wales at the beginning of the twentieth century.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 9.
It is a valuable basis from which to appreciate Anderson's June 1901 speech and his subsequent activities.

ANDERSON'S SPEECH OF 26TH JUNE, 1901

Anderson commenced his speech to the Public School Teachers' Association with a clear statement of his attitude towards the New South Wales educational system:

... I am unable to join, in what a less sympathetic critic might call, the conspiracy of adulation with regard to its undoubted merits, or the conspiracy of silence with regard to its equally undoubted defects.44

The major criticisms and recommendations which followed were centred upon the primary school. Anderson pointed to the overlarge number of subjects included in the primary course; to the too academic nature of these subjects; to the mechanical methods which were employed; and to the injustice and inadequacy of the pupil-teacher system of teacher training. He claimed that although

44. F. Anderson, Public School System of New South Wales, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1901, 3.
those teachers who adopted the practical measure of grouping subjects to solve the problems created by their large number were on the right track, this did not go far enough. It is reasonable to assume that in the last Anderson was advocating an official reform involving a form of correlation. The criticism of the "too bookish" nature of the course of study was linked to a recommendation for an extended and intelligent use of object lessons as something of a counter, to a condemnation of the manual training given in the schools as "a sham and a delusion" and to an advocacy of sloyd. The methods employed in New South Wales Schools were attacked as "mechanical, and even vicious from the point of view of true education. It was the system, though, which was at fault, not the teachers. They were its victims, too:

45. Ibid, 9.
46. Ibid, 11.
47. Ibid, 18.
The tendency of our whole system is to produce and stereotype the mechanical methods of which I complain ... (And) the iron pressure of the system prevents the introduction of better methods, the spending of time on individual scholars or the proper supervision of the work of pupil teachers.49

With large classes, drill and drill alone was inevitable so Anderson advocated that these be broken up50. He also advocated that freedom from class teaching be introduced for headmasters and headmistresses to allow them time to supervise adequately the work in their schools51. A reform in the examination system was also necessary and here Anderson suggested written tests set by a central body as a replacement for inspectorial examinations52. The criticism which was, in the light of subsequent events, the most significant was Anderson's attack upon the use of the pupil-teacher system for the

49. Ibid, 10.
50. Ibid, 12.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid, 14.
training of New South Wales teachers. This was described as "the greatest defect" and was indeed so badly at fault that in Anderson's opinion New South Wales could be charged with having "no systematic training of teachers which deserves the name". Anderson did not at this stage ask for a complete abandonment of the pupil-teacher system but he did ask for reform in line with developments elsewhere, citing in particular the example of South Australia:

Under the present system gross injustice is done to the pupil, to the pupil teacher and to the headmaster, and what I propose is the bare minimum of what is advocated and often obtained in other countries.

Such, then, were the major criticisms. Although

53. Ibid, 23.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid, 26-27.
56. There were other lesser points. Anderson expressed his disappointment that education was not, in fact, either free or compulsory, his puzzlement that different fees were charged in Superior Schools from those in High Schools, and his personal feeling that the separation of boys and girls had been a false step. Upon publication he could not resist adding as a note two further points - first, that the conditions and salary of inspectors should be improved; second, that New South Wales should do something similar for its deficiency and backward children as did those countries which provided special schools for them.
they stand in Anderson's speech as a catalogue of deficiencies they are more than this. They are founded upon comparisons with efforts elsewhere. They are also based upon his concept of the aim of education. Rote learning of facts, cramming as a teaching method, a preoccupation with examining and poorly trained teachers are condemned because they are inconsistent with Anderson's view that education should be concerned with the development of intellect and character. The plea for a less academic emphasis and for the inclusion of manual work is a plea for increased pupil freedom and activity, a plea lodged because freedom and activity were seen as necessary conditions for the attainment of the aim. The relevance of Anderson's involvement in the work of the Kindergarten Union and his indebtedness to the spirit of Froebel is apparent.

As isolated points of criticism of New South Wales education few of the ideas Anderson expressed were new. What was new was their aggregation and integration into a single argument. Here was no isolated attack upon cram, or the inspectorial and examination systems, or large classes, or bookish studies, or the failure to
incorporate general principles of technical education in elementary school. Here was a sustained argument, based upon a knowledge of developments overseas and interstate and upon a higher sense of educational purpose than the inculcation of facts and skills. Here was an argument which culminated fittingly in a condemnation of the pupil-teacher system as it existed in New South Wales.

REACTION TO ANDERSON'S SPEECH: THE PRESS

Portus gives an entertaining description of the reaction of the audience to Anderson's speech purportedly provided by an eyewitness:

Women were standing on chairs waving their handkerchiefs and parasols, men were stamping and shouting and shaking hands with perfect strangers.\(^{57}\)

There is some corroborating evidence of this enthusiasm in the concluding words of the report of Anderson's

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\(^{57}\) G.V. P(ortus), "Francis Anderson — Professor and Citizen", Hermes, XXVII (New Series), 3, November 1921, 159.
speech published in the *Daily Telegraph*\(^{58}\). However, the impression created by such reports, and by Elkin's claim that Anderson's "arrowed words hit the mark"\(^{59}\) should be recognised for the extravagance it is. The most with which Portus and Elkin could be charged is that their overly emotive prose encourages the interpretation that reaction was more immediate than in truth was the case. The similar fault in Crane and Walker is more serious. Here it is maintained that:

Anderson's speech received wide publicity from the morning papers, which having no great love for either See, the Premier, or Perry, his Minister of Public Instruction, immediately began a loud cry for reform ...

The opposition lost no time in making political capital out of the Anderson-inspired criticism. The press kept up its barrage against the Government. John Carruthers, Leader of the Opposition, and formerly Minister of Public Instruction under Parkes, advertised a public meeting in the Sydney Town Hall for the evening of 13th November, 1901, with the Lord Mayor

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59. A.P. Elkin, "The Emergence of Psychology, Anthropology and Education", *One Hundred Years of the Faculty of Arts*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1952, 8.
of Sydney, Sir James Grahame, in the chair. Anderson was to be chief speaker.60

The first major claim contained here is that the morning newspapers began, immediately after Anderson's speech, to agitate for educational reform. And there is also the implication that these newspapers were therefore largely responsible for initiating the reform movement. Neither claim can be substantiated. An examination of these papers, the Sydney Morning Herald and the Daily Telegraph, in the months which followed exposes the error.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported Anderson's speech61 as they did others given at the Conference62 and considered the topic of teacher training important enough to justify an editorial, but not until 5th July63.

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60. A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, Peter Board: His Contribution to the Development of Education in New South Wales, A.C.E.R. Research Series No. 71, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, 1957, 14. (Note: Some correction of the "minor" errors in this passage seems desirable - Carruthers' name was Joseph, not John; he was not yet leader of the Opposition. Graham's name was spelt without an "e"; Anderson was not the "chief speaker".)

61. S.M.H., 27th June, 1901.
62. S.M.H., 27th, 28th, 29th June, 1901.
63. S.M.H., 5th July, 1901.
Anderson wrote off a letter commending the editor on this interest. It was published on 12th July and there the issue ended. There were further editorials upon education in the next few months. They were inspired by such events as the English Education Bill, Teece's speech to the Chamber of Commerce on "Commercial Education," and a speech by Cardinal Moran, but none could be construed as a cry for reform. The only slight suggestion of Anderson's influence were three informative articles, two entitled "What is Sloyd?" and the third a report of teacher training practices in North America. But these were published without comment and the first glimmerings of any demand for educational reform in the Sydney Morning Herald cannot be found until the report of 31st October of the

64. S.M.H., 12th July, 1901. (It was dated 6th July.)
65. S.M.H., 20th July, 1901.
66. S.M.H., 5th September, 1901.
67. S.M.H., 23rd September, 1901.
68. S.M.H., 24th August, 1901 and 7th September, 1901.
69. S.M.H., 16th August, 1901.
Legislative Assembly supply debate of the previous evening\textsuperscript{70}. But then these demands for reform were made by members of Parliament, with Carruthers making a strong claim for an extension of technical education. All that the \textit{Herald} did was report them. Among the outcomes of this parliamentary criticism was Perry's announcement of his intention to initiate reforms. Broached in part during this Supply Debate\textsuperscript{71}, more details of these plans were given in a press release of 4th November\textsuperscript{72}. It was proposed to summon a conference of inspectors which would consider the State's educational requirements and to dispatch two experienced Departmental officers to England. The editorial comment of \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} upon these significant decisions was its first since the Supply Debate. It displayed an extremely limited view of the function of the state in the education of its citizens, an unsympathetic attitude towards

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{S.M.H.}, 31st October, 1901.
\item \textsuperscript{71} \textit{N.S.W. P.D. (2)}, III, 2930, 30th October, 1901.
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{S.M.H.}, 4th November, 1901.
\end{itemize}
educational change and discounts any claim for a primacy in the movement for reform:

Once the rudiments are imparted thoroughly, once a boy or a girl knows how to read, write, and cipher accurately, the State's work is done. Of course, the manner in which this work is done may be improved, and there are certain defects in the pupil-teacher system and in other departments which might be remedied, and for which apparently two conferences are now being talked about. But none of these defects are so important as to require the despatch, as suggested, of two or more commissioners to find out what is thought about educational systems in other parts of the world. All the information they could obtain is now available in the handy form of reports, and the money which such a commission would cost might with greater advantage be devoted to the payment of truant inspectors. 73

The second "conference" referred to in this quotation was the one organised by Carruthers for 13th November. The Herald's reaction to the outcomes of this meeting was more favourable than might have been expected from the tone of its editorial on 4th November. It expressed opposition only to the demand for a Royal Commission 74 and when the Committee appointed at this

73. S.M.H., 4th November, 1901.

74. S.M.H., 14th November, 1901.
meeting went on to prepare its list of fourteen points for reform the only adverse comment, and it was a just one, was that some were rather "vague". Henceforth the Herald was to report with moderate support demands for reform. This support was founded upon its political opposition to the Progressive Government. It was not founded upon educational zeal. There was not in the Herald an assumption of initiative.

The policy of the Daily Telegraph, the Herald's chief rival, between 26th June and 30th October was even less vigorous. Only three editorials appeared featuring education during this period and none was related to the issues raised by Anderson. However, once the demand for reform was voiced in the Supply Debate the Daily Telegraph responded more rapidly, more favourably, and more extensively than did the Herald and considerable space was devoted to the reform movement. A series of relevant editorials appeared from October 31 onwards

75. S.M.H., 21st November, 1901.

76. The Daily Telegraph, 13th August, 1901; 11th September, 1901; 24th September, 1901.
and, though at first there was an insistence that the trend in education must be towards "practicabilities and productive requirements"\(^77\), it was not long before there was support for the wider issues raised and for the reform movement generally. This is well illustrated by the editorial comment, on 12th December, that the reform movement was one which should be persisted with despite any unfortunate exaggerations in the claims put before the Premier on 10th December\(^78\) and also by the space devoted in its columns from 27th December, 1901 to 3rd January, 1902 for a series of five articles contributed by Professor Anderson under the general heading "Our State School Education".

The policy of the *Evening News* was less vigorous than either that of the *Herald* or the *Telegraph*. After Perry announced his plans on 4th November it merely reminded him that education should be a drawing out of the powers of the child\(^79\). There was no awareness

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of the need of major reform; indeed, the Evening News found the whole purpose of Carruthers' meeting of 13th November rather a mystery. In its view Perry was aware of the position, prepared to exercise his responsibility and so should be "given his head". And the other papers were even less interested. The sole contribution of Freeman's Journal was to label the public meeting a failure. The Bulletin disdained to comment at all.

Thus although the Daily Telegraph pursued a policy favourable to reform after 30th October and the Herald was mildly sympathetic to the cause from November onwards, there is absolutely no justification for regarding the press as initiators of reform. The truth is that they occupied an equivocal position. The Herald, for example, agreed with those teachers who at a meeting in December defended the pupil-teacher system and warned against the sending of faddists overseas.

80. Evening News, 14th November, 1901.
81. Freeman's Journal, 23rd November, 1901.
82. The Bulletin finally commented in 1903.
83. S.M.H., 18th December, 1901.
And the *Evening News* issued a warning against revolution on 24th December. This refutation of a pioneering role for the press as initiators of reform who responded promptly to Anderson's speech is a rejection of the views of Crane and Walker which are so patently inaccurate. There is, however, no refutation of the claim that Anderson's speech was important in generating a demand for reform. It does mean that we must look elsewhere for evidence of its influence and it is amongst the politicians that we find it.

**REACTION TO ANDERSON'S SPEECH: PARLIAMENT**

After the election the prospect of educational reform was first suggested by the government, not the opposition. And it was broached at the earliest possible moment, for

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85. In Crane and Walker the whole account of the events of the years 1901-1904 is in fact grossly inaccurate. They seem to have given far too much credence to the testimony of C.B. Newling who would himself have been very much on the sidelines at the time.
it was one feature in the Governor's opening address to Parliament, item 29 of which was as follows:

Recognising that the success of our educational systems must depend upon the capacity and enthusiasm of our school teachers, you will be invited to give your earnest attention to improving the position, education, and training of teachers. You will also be asked to give greater attention to the subject of technical education, and to establish a chain of bursaries which will enable a child to pass from bush schools to the University. 86

It was during the Supply Debate that Perry added to this announcement by providing details of his plans for an investigation of New South Wales state educational requirements. The issues which Perry at that stage saw as important were the training of teachers - and here he posited the idea of a university degree for every teacher - the problem of improved vocational education and the possibility of introducing continuation schools 87.

87. a. N.S.W.P.D. (2), III, 30th October, 1901, 2930f.
   b. S.M.H., 4th November, 1901.
It would be unfair to Perry and the Government and an exaggeration of Anderson's influence to suggest that these plans were a purely defensive gesture occasioned by the Professor's June speech. Perry was personally interested in improving the work of the Department; witness his unsuccessful struggle to introduce legislation to deal with the truancy problem. Nor were the ideas he expressed necessarily attributable to Anderson. Wise had been the speaker who featured degrees. Neither these nor vocational training had been included in Anderson's remarks. Continuation schools seem to have been Perry's own idea. But undoubtedly the major point is that in announcing these plans the Government also announced acceptance of the general principle that there were weaknesses to be remedied and yet at the same time voiced its intention to defer discussion for some time. Here was an invitation to the Opposition to embarrass the Government.

The attack began at once. Robson opened the Address-in-Reply in the Legislative Council on July 24 and referred to the recent speeches by the Attorney-General
and Professor Anderson upon teacher-training and expressed the opinion that if the training of teachers can be brought under the supervision and direction of the highest scholastic institution we have - the University - we shall be doing well for this class of teachers.88

But it was Carruthers who fired the major shots. These too were launched in the Address-in-Reply but in the Legislative Assembly this was protracted and Carruthers did not rise to speak until July 3089. He argued that the Government's proposals did not go far enough and called for a thorough-going reform. There was an indebtedness to Anderson, implicitly acknowledged for some of the arguments but Carruthers was also motivated by a personal interest in technical education and teacher training, if only to the extent of vindicating his own earlier activities whilst Minister of Public Instruction under Parkes. The points made and the attitude

88. N.S.W. P.D. (2), I, 24th July, 1901, 14. (Note: "this class of" was a verbalism. Robson was referring to teachers in general.)

89. Ibid, 30th July, 1901, 123f.
maintained formed the basis of his activities during the months which followed and it is therefore best to quote him at length to allow his views to be adequately represented. The crux of these was as follows:

I would suggest that the whole question of educational reform should be taken up, not in a piecemeal fashion, but by means of a royal commission to inquire into the subject. To speak in homely language, I do not think there is any good to be derived by messing and tinkering with the subject. ... Reforms should begin in the public schools, and they should begin in the first place, in the training of the teacher himself ... I think the curriculum of our public schools might be much improved. Whilst great alterations have been made in England, America, and Germany, we still keep in the old groove. Instead of adopting modern methods we stick to old methods. No doubt good has resulted from those methods; but there are better methods which give better results. 90

This interest by Carruthers in the question of reform was to prove of great moment for education. For a time the tariff issue, though a Federal matter, absorbed his and his party's energies 91 and education was

90. N.S.W. P.D. (2), I, 30th July, 1901, 134-35.

91. A glance at the press, July-October, 1901, will demonstrate the prominence of this issue.
not again subject to any significant attack in Parliament until the Department of Public Instruction estimates were debated on October 30. The *Sydney Morning Herald* regarded Carruthers' speech on this occasion as the most important of the evening. In itself it does not justify this conclusion. It contained none of the appeal for broad educational reform characteristic of his Address-in-Reply but instead concentrated upon technical education. On this occasion it was left to others to demand wider reform.

After the Supply Debate the political campaign for educational reform was centred not in the Legislature but in the public arena. Before considering this public campaign, a number of points must be made about these parliamentary activities. First, the Government and its Minister of Public Instruction had demonstrated a desire


93. *N.S.W. P.D. (2)*, III, 30th October, 1901, 2908f.

94. Ashton stated this most clearly and his remarks demonstrate the continuance of Anderson's influence (*Ibid*, 2937).
to improve the educational system. Second, the Opposition, with Carruthers its principal spokesman, could thus embarrass the Government politically by supporting its general premise yet claiming its proposals were inadequate. Third, there was the opportune criticism of Anderson and Wise to support the Opposition claim. Fourth, the political balance of the House was that of three major parties, about of equal strength, with the Government in power by the grace of Labor Party support. Fifth, among the critics of Governmental educational policy were a number of members of this Labor Party, including McGowen, its leader. Sixth, after the Address-in-Reply and the Supply Debate opportunities for criticism within Parliament were limited to Question Time. Seventh, the only possible parliamentary opening was to enter a motion upon the notice paper. Eighth, the alternative approach was to embarrass the Government by initiating a successful public campaign.

Carruthers decided to follow both of the last courses of action. He entered the following manifesto for reform upon the parliamentary notice paper:
That in the opinion of this House, -

1. The time has arrived when a more progressive policy of education on modern lines should be carried out by the State, and that features of that policy should be -

(a) a training college for teachers affiliated to the University;

(b) a revised curriculum and improved methods of teaching in the Primary Schools, especially in regard to kindergarten and technical methods of instruction;

(c) a wider and more systematic system of technical instruction, with results for technical scholarship, in the form of degrees, to be conferred by the Technical College on an improved course of instruction and examination;

(d) the closer association of the technical education of the State Colleges and the University;

(e) the extension of the system of bursaries, to enable talented children of poor parents to obtain higher education at the High Schools, the Technical College, and the University;

(f) the abolition of the fees for the public examinations and for the University.

2. A Royal Commission should be appointed to investigate into, and report upon, the best method of carrying out the above reforms.95

There was no real prospect that this motion would be discussed before prorogation. At best therefore it simply made Carruthers' stand clear. However, Carruthers was not content with this. Instead he decided to launch a public campaign for reform. The outcome was of truly major importance for education generally and particularly so for elementary schooling.

THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN

For his public campaign Carruthers secured considerable support. The Mayor of Sydney, Sir James Graham, willingly assumed responsibility for convening a public meeting in the vestibule of the Town Hall on the evening of 13th November. Graham, it will be recalled, had himself been critical of the state's policy on teacher training at the June Conference of the Public School Teachers' Association. It is well to point out, too, that he was a fellow member with Carruthers of the Liberal Party and had been a parliamentarian until defeated at


the July 1901 elections\textsuperscript{98}. Graham's ready co-operation and his willingness to act as chairman are therefore easily understandable. Initially there seems to have been some doubt whether Professor Anderson would be available\textsuperscript{99}. His name was not mentioned when Carruthers first announced his plans\textsuperscript{100}, and his attendance was mentioned by Graham only as a possibility\textsuperscript{101}. Anderson did lend his support and so did a number of other professional educators, many of whom were members of the Teachers' Association. No Departmental officers were included, nor any Departmental teacher. These, even if they had the inclination, were prevented from participating in such an obviously political and public meeting called to criticise the work of a government department. And any doubt of its political character was settled by

\begin{itemize}
\item[98.] \textit{The Daily Telegraph}, 4th July, 1901.
\item[99.] \textit{S.M.H.}, 6th November, 1901.
\item[100.] \textit{The Daily Telegraph}, 5th November, 1901.
\item[101.] \textit{S.M.H.}, 6th November, 1901 - The position was even more confused when in the advertisements which began to appear from 9th November onwards his name was omitted in error. This error was corrected only for one of these notices - that in \textit{The Daily Telegraph} on 13th November, 1901 and this was the day of the meeting.
\end{itemize}
Plate XIX. Joseph Carruthers, Political Leader of the Educational Reform Movement, 1901 - Review of Reviews, 20th February, 1904, 152, M.L.
the support Carruthers received from his political colleagues. But the real political coup was the attendance of members of the Labor Party, for now the meeting posed a real threat to the See Government.

The principal speaker at the meeting was Carruthers himself. The main subject for his criticism was the pupil-teacher system. The selection of this issue may have been due to Anderson's emphasis in June that this was "the greatest defect" of the New South Wales system, but in substance Carruthers' speech owed more to Graham's June address. The main complaint was that though the system was founded upon the ideas of Kay-Shuttleworth these had never been introduced into this state in their entirety. Carruthers concluded this address with a

102. Sir Arthur Renwick and James Hogue were amongst these and so counting Carruthers there were three past incumbents of the position of Minister for Public Instruction (S.M.H., 14th November, 1901).

103. S.M.H., 14th November, 1901; The Daily Telegraph, 14th November, 1901.

104. S.M.H., 14th November, 1901; The Daily Telegraph, 14th November, 1901.
general motion calling for reform and for the appointment of a Royal Commission. Included as a part of this motion was the nomination of a committee of forty members which was to appoint a deputation to the Government.105

Anderson, who followed Renwick in supporting the motion, expressed with neatly provocative phrasing the issue that had to be faced:

The question was whether the people should wait until hard necessity forced them, or whether they should seize the present opportunity to bring about the reforms. In Victoria and South Australia they were putting their houses in order. Was New South Wales to wait until she was known as the educational Rip Van Winkle of Australia?106

105. Ibid - Those listed as members of this Committee were: Ms. L.C. Renwick, Cullen, Kethel, Backhouse; Ms. L.A. McGowen, Carruthers, Hogue, Gilbert, Griffith, Quinn, Price, Cohen; Professors Anderson, Wood, Warren, McCallum, David; Messrs Graham (Sir James), Hammon, Teece (Richard), Teece (R.C.), Piddington, McManamey, Henerie, Campbell, Peel, Selfe, Dowling, Carpenter, Hanslow; Mesdame Nolan; Mles Dickson, Manning, Wright, Scott, Edwards, Kellick. (Note: There is the intriguing possibility that this is a list of all who were present and perhaps even of some who were not!)

106. The Daily Telegraph, 14th November, 1901.
The committee met on 20th November, exercising its powers by adding another fourteen gentlemen to its number \(^{107}\) and preparing the following list of fourteen points to accompany the general motion when it was submitted to the Government:

1. That the present method of training and apprenticing teachers be reconsidered.

2. That a thorough organisation and extension of technical education be advocated.

3. That compulsory attendance at schools be enforced.

4. That the granting of exemption certificates be reconsidered.

5. That the extension of the Kindergarten system by the State be considered.

6. That the system of school fees and fees at the University be reconsidered.

7. That the curriculum of the primary school requires revision.

8. That the question of establishing continuation schools be considered.

9. That it is expedient to appoint a Council of Education to advise the Minister.

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107. S.M.H., 21st November, 1901. The additional members were F.E. Winchcombe, J. Hawthorne, J.C.L. Fitzpatrick (Ms.L.A.); A. Kethel, M.L.C.; Revs. S.S. Tovey, J.E. Carruthers (a brother of J.H. Carruthers), Prescott; Professors Liversidge and Pollock; Messrs. A.B. Weigall, H.J. Carter, R.H.K. Bligh, J.A. Dobbie.
10. That female education should be more specialised and women appointed as inspectors for certain subjects.

11. That the system of the classification and promotion of teachers be considered.

12. That the method of inspection be considered.

13. That the question of home lessons (be considered).

14. (That) The principle of school boards (be considered).

Little is to be gained by an attempt to trace the original sources of the ideas expressed in this list. It is sufficient to acknowledge that some had been recently stated, although not necessarily for a first time, by Anderson, Graham, Carruthers, and even Perry, whilst others, such as the question of exemption certificates, were long-standing dissatisfactions.

Evidence could not be found to substantiate directly the claim that these "(f)ourteen points were put before another meeting on 29th November, and all were unani-
mously supported". It is probable, however, that a

108. Ibid. Items 13 and 14 were incomplete as published.

The deputation was ultimately received by See and Perry on 10th December and introduced by Renwick and Carruthers. There were speeches by Professor and Mrs. Anderson and Norman Selfe. Knibbs did not speak but instead handed in a paper containing a case for the establishment of a Royal Commission\(^{115}\). Although this deputation was reportedly greeted with "derisive laughter"\(^ {116}\), this was most certainly a newspaper exaggeration and rather than laughing the propositions to scorn Perry and See were both on the defensive. In truth Perry found himself in a difficult position. He agreed without much hesitation that changes were required but was unwilling to grant too much ground to a deputation led by his political opponents. When he stated his own position he first acknowledged that Anderson had been influential in his own decision to call a meeting of inspectors\(^ {117}\) and then he went on to answer some of

\(^{115}\) S.M.H., 11th December, 1901.

\(^{116}\) Ibid.

\(^{117}\) If this is true it demonstrates Perry's own concern, because this was planned before any real agitation was underway. This is consonant with the Governor's opening address, however.
the specific points raised by the deputation. Perry said he would meet the demand for an Advisory Council by in future having more frequent conferences of inspectors and other Departmental Officers; defended the pupil-teacher system, although agreeing that it "might be amended in some particulars"\textsuperscript{118}; admitted the value of kindergarten work and that this could well be extended but not until adequately trained teachers could be provided; granted that technical education was the one issue which might justify a commission, but insisted that it would best be composed with the greater number of members Departmental officials.

See, too, admitted that changes were necessary. He refused to commit himself to the appointment of a Royal Commission and as the main point of his remarks attacked Anderson. He "took exception to the emphatic and wholesale condemnation heaped upon the educational system by Professor Anderson"\textsuperscript{119} and claimed that he had no understanding of the state system.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{118.} S.M.H., 11th December, 1901.

\textsuperscript{119.} Ibid.
\end{footnotesize}
When reviewing the proceedings the *Evening News* expressed the opinion that Anderson had overstated his case\(^{120}\) and the *Daily Telegraph* the fear that by its exaggeration this deputation may have prejudiced the prospect of reform\(^{121}\). Such a fear was dispelled by Perry's announcement that the government had conceded to the demand for an enquiry and although he avoided the term "Royal Commission" the implication was clear\(^{122}\).

**DEPARTMENTAL REACTION TO THE REFORM MOVEMENT**

With the decision to appoint a Royal Commission Carruthers had achieved his major announced objective and the reform movement had made its first major advance. If Carruthers perhaps had mixed feelings because as a political move his activities were obviously mistimed, then Anderson and those with an unequivocal interest in educational progress could well be satisfied with

\(^{120}\) *Evening News*, 11th December, 1901.

\(^{121}\) *The Daily Telegraph*, 12th December, 1901.

\(^{122}\) *The Daily Telegraph*, 13th December, 1901.
the results of their endeavours. Reforms could now be anticipated. In December 1901 these could be expected to come from two sources: the Royal Commission, whose report would not follow for some time, and the Inspectorial Conference which Perry had organised for January. Unfortunately, but understandably, Departmental officers reacted to the demand for reform with indignation. Taking their lead from See this was expressed openly as an attack upon Anderson and his statements of 10th December in the semi-official journal, the New South Wales Educational Gazette:

The Professor's condemnation extended into every nook and corner of our organisation - kindergarten, school inspection, training of teachers, the pupil-teacher system, the Technical College, and the school curriculum were all vigorously denounced. Now, we have no intention of trying to refute the learned gentleman's statements; indeed, he so glaringly overstates his case that it is somewhat difficult to take him seriously, but we extend to him a cordial invitation to visit our schools, to stay there long enough to really understand what he sees and hears, and not to accept as gospel the statements of persons who happen to be unfriendly to our system of education.123

123. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XI, 8, 1st January, 1902, 169.
It has been suggested that Departmental indignation had wider and worse consequences than this, that in fact it extended to adversely affect the attitudes, proceedings and outcomes of the Department's own conference during January 1902\(^{124}\). Interpretations which emphasise that there was at this Conference more defence than reform and more pleaded support to the old than interest in the new\(^{125}\) add to the drama of the period, but are inaccurate because they do not include all the facts.

At this Conference the members did react conservatively on a number of issues: Bridges was quite satisfied that what had already been done in the matter of kindergarten methods was sufficient and those present accepted this\(^{126}\); Board's suggestion that conveyance subsidy along the lines of Victoria's example might be introduced brought no positive response\(^{127}\); and the retention of the

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124. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *Conference of Inspectors and Departmental Officers, Held Tuesday, 21st January, 1902, and Following Days*, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1902.

   b. G.F. O'Regan, *op. cit.*

126. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *Conference of Inspectors ... January, 1902 ..., op. cit.*, 124-25.

pupil-teacher system "with modifications" was recommended.

This last has been the cause of much adverse criticism, some rightly deserved, but all the circumstances must be kept in view. The first point is the very specific instruction upon this subject given by the Minister, John Perry:

I want you to know that whatever suggestions may be offered to me must be such as financial considerations will enable the Government to entertain.129

The second point - or series of points - is that the modifications recommended were not insignificant; they included a raising of the age of entry from 15 to 16130, the provision that "every successful pupil-teacher be required to undergo a preliminary training at the District Model School, or other specially selected school"131, and the additional provisions that the period of such preliminary training be "for not less than six

128. Ibid, 4.
129. Ibid, 14.
130. Ibid, 4.
131. Ibid, 5.
months"\textsuperscript{132} and "that pupil-teachers' schools be established"\textsuperscript{133}. To reject these suggestions out of hand is to expect the unreasonable in view of Perry's instruction. Yet, and this is the third point, there was clear evidence of Departmental faith in the value of the pupil-teacher system, even if this faith was moderated by the knowledge that under this system as it existed at the time too much was demanded of the pupil-teacher\textsuperscript{134}.

It is even more important still to acknowledge that the Conference did make a number of major and worthwhile suggestions for reform - for the introduction of District Model Schools\textsuperscript{135}, Commercial and Continuation Schools\textsuperscript{136}, written examinations at the end of the Fourth Class\textsuperscript{137}, a Departmental grant for science apparatus\textsuperscript{138},

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{133} Ibid, 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{134} Ibid, 21-25.
  \item \textsuperscript{135} Ibid, 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{136} Ibid, 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{137} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{138} Ibid, 3.
\end{itemize}
for the appointment of a teacher with a knowledge of ambidextral drawing 139, for the reissue of the 1890 circular on agricultural education 140 and for the introduction of "eye and hand" training to Second and Third Classes 141. The Conference also produced a detailed Standard, but most of the reforms it contained were of a very minor character 142. There was one exception: the proposal for manual training instruction. The scheme for this in detail, was as follows:

**Hand and Eye Training: 1902 Proposal** 143

**Second Class:** Paper folding, cutting, and mounting; clay and wire modelling.

**Third Class (First Year):** Drawing and cutting geometrical forms in cardboard; modelling in clay and cardboard.

**Third Class (Second Year):** As for first year of Third Class "and, where practicable, the use of simple tools, as the foot-rule, saw, chisel and hammer".

**Fourth Class:** "The Public School Manual Training Course as laid down by the Department".

Subsequent Departmental activity during 1902 included a conference of Infant School mistresses and school inspectors on 25th July\textsuperscript{144}. In his opening address Bridges expressed the opinion that although the state's infant schools had upon the testimony of Wyld, a visiting His Majesty's Inspector of Schools from England, already reached a high degree of proficiency there was still room for improvement. The directions Bridges suggested for suitable reforms were disappointing but in keeping with his January attitude. He recommended for consideration by the conference the freer use of the blackboard in reading, the introduction of recitations, the use of copy books, the employment of pen and ink as soon as possible, the cultivation of originality in drawing, the inclination of object lessons towards nature study, the cultivation of correct and adequate oral expression, the wider extension of kindergarten games, the introduction of more action songs, and the teaching of scripture in

\textsuperscript{144}. "Conference of Infant School Mistresses and Inspectors, 25 July, 1902", \textit{N.S.W. Educational Gazette}, XII, 3, 1st August, 1902, 49.
the form of "children of the Bible". Although the changes suggested were too piecemeal to promise much improvement, they should not be dismissed as insignificant. Bridges was thinking ahead and the directions he suggested were in a number of instances those later followed. And so there is no doubt at all that as early as 1902 Departmental officials were on the side of reform. What they did not appreciate as yet was that a new "philosophy" of education and a new attitude towards the individual, whether he be child or teacher, was required. But the commitment was real, a point further demonstrated in 1903 when a new drawing syllabus and an altered inspectorial process were introduced. In 1903, too, certain individual inspectors included statements reminiscent of Anderson in their annual reports. By then the Royal Commissioners and Peter Board had been abroad and had returned with much clearer statements of the changes which were sweeping throughout the elementary schools.
The reform movement of 1901-1902 was a challenge to the adequacy of nineteenth century educational practices. It centred upon the detailed list of deficiencies produced by Anderson and Carruthers and was to lead to a Royal Commission, a series of reports from Peter Board, a reformed syllabus and a momentous public conference. These latter items were, together with nineteenth century precedents, to form the basis for twentieth century developments in primary schooling and are the next considerations. Before moving on it is as well to pause and consider the notable roles played during 1901-1902 by the three men - Anderson, Carruthers and Perry - each in his own way devoted to the cause of reform.

In assessing the role of Anderson it is an error to emphasise too exclusively his speech of 26th June, 1901. Other speeches given at the same conference were equally critical of educational practices in New South Wales. Certainly Anderson's June speech provided some
inspiration to Carruthers and his political associates. Certainly it was evidence from an independent expert which could be profitably employed during attacks upon the government. And certainly there is sufficient justification for using it as a convenient point in time from which to date the commencement of the demand for reform. But Anderson's total involvement must not be neglected in consequence of any emphasis upon June 26. His valuable support to Carruthers, his contributions to the list of fourteen points prepared by the reform committee, his contentious public statements, even the antagonism directed against him personally, all these were important. And though many reforms which were to be initiated both before and after the Commissioners' Report do invite a comparison with the June criticisms, they should not be associated only with that day, nor, it must be added, only with Anderson.

There is no doubt that Carruthers was the man who forced the government to act. The establishment of the Royal Commission was a concession to his demands and was
a notable victory. His success was attributable to three factors: his decision to make the issue a subject of public controversy; the favourable press these activities received; his success in securing support. That some of Carruthers' support came from the Labor Party was a notable political achievement and a significant factor in the success of the campaign. That some also came from private school teachers and university professors whilst important was decidedly less so.

The Minister for Public Instruction, John Perry, cannot be neglected. Nor can the government of which he was a member. Perhaps sensitive to the criticisms levelled by Anderson, but more probably a man basically interested in the work of his Department, Perry pledged himself and his government to a programme of educational improvement. But this programme was somewhat limited and indefinite and it was the combined efforts of Anderson and Carruthers which served to broaden it.

Anderson, Carruthers and Perry were the principal public figures during the years 1901-1902, but behind them were the Departmental officials who were compelled
to silence by regulation. But they were not, in fact, silent. And they were not inactive. Initially they reacted with indignation but they did not react negatively. And it is their positive attitude which explains the subsequent speedy reform of the elementary curriculum. And so a campaign which began in the political arena as primarily a concern with the extension of technical education was to revolutionise education in New South Wales. The most immediate and direct effects were at the elementary school level.
CHAPTER VII

THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON PRIMARY EDUCATION
OF G.H. KNIBBS AND J.W. TURNER, ROYAL COMMISSIONERS

Having granted the demand for a Royal Commission the next task for the See Government was the selection of suitable commissioners. Choice of George Handley Knibbs and John William Turner was announced on 8th March, 1902\(^1\). Knibbs and Turner received their warrants on 11th April\(^2\), sailed the following day and arrived back in Sydney on 23rd February, 1903\(^3\) after having travelled "through the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Bohemia, Austria, Hungary, the United States and Canada"\(^4\).

1. The Daily Telegraph, 8th March, 1902.


3. Ibid, 2.

4. Ibid.
This choice of Knibbs and Turner was a neat compromise. The selection of Knibbs satisfied the reformers, for he was one of them, whilst that of Turner maintained in part the enunciation by Perry that Departmental officers of experience were desirable.

THE TERMS OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

The terms of the 1902 Commission were very broad, namely:

... to proceed to Europe and America for the purpose of inquiring into existing methods of instruction in connection with primary, secondary, technical and other branches of education, and of recommending for adoption whatever improvements you may consider might with advantage be introduced into the State of New South Wales. 5

And they were supplemented by additional "directions" of questionable validity dated 8th April, 1902 6 from Perry through Under-Secretary Maynard. These "directions" expressly aimed to limit the activities of the Commissioners,

5. Ibid, f. title page.
to make them answerable to the Under-Secretary in their day-to-day activities, and to produce from them a report in which the Department was featured as favourably as possible. With echoes of the *Sydney Morning Herald* these directions opened with the limitation that "(i)t (was) not desired that you (the Commissioners) should report on the general systems of education in force in the towns or countries you visit, as such information can be obtained from official reports open to all readers". This was followed by instructions to supply the Under-Secretary with a fortnightly diary and a brief monthly interim report "for the information of the Minister" and by the enumeration of the specific issues that Perry and the Department wished investigated. It was no doubt expected that with such direct control the Department would emerge as favourably as possible, but no risk was taken and just to be sure two additional directives were included. The first required that "(i)f you find the

advantage in any subjects is on the side of this State, you should report why in your opinion this is so"10 and was patently designed so that features reflecting credit upon the Department would be included in the report. The second was only slightly more subtle. It directed Knibbs and Turner not to divide their work in making enquiries and instructed them that "both should be present at every visit or inspection"11. Turner was most certainly expected to act as a foil to Knibbs12.

Fortunately for education in New South Wales these directions from Perry and Maynard were rejected by Knibbs who maintained, instead, that "mere observation of educational detail, such as has been suggested, with a view to grafting some particular items on to an existing system ... (was) quite inadequate"13 and that "the subject

10. Ibid, 1.

11. Ibid, 2.


had to be studied in its entirety"\textsuperscript{14}. On the other hand, Turner does seem to have permitted these directions to influence him in the execution of his task. Explanations for the generally more mundane, conservative and circumscribed character of those sections of the report for which Turner was responsible have cited his personal qualities and his previous experience within the Department but have ignored the directions he received from his superiors\textsuperscript{15}. In the circumstances Turner's display of independence upon the pupil-teacher issue has not been accorded the recognition it deserves. Yet it is still nevertheless true that it was the marked independence of Knibbs which prevented the Commission from becoming little more than a Departmentally-controlled enquiry. And from this truth stemmed such differences in approach and outlook that the recommendations of Knibbs and Turner must be considered separately.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14.} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{15.} A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, \textit{op. cit.}, 17 and 23.
\end{itemize}
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF G.H. KNIBBS

George Handley Knibbs was forty-three years old and a lecturer in surveying at the University of Sydney at the time of his appointment as Commissioner. The Daily Telegraph attributed his selection to the recommendation of Edgeworth David and other members of the University staff. Knibbs possessed in his wide knowledge of Romance languages one obviously valuable attribute for the task he faced. Of less apparent relevance was his considerable activity as a member of the Royal Society of New South Wales. It was before this body that Knibbs, impressed by the scientific development in other countries, had expressed anxiety lest Australia be left behind whilst these marched ahead. He suggested that this country

16. The Daily Telegraph, 10th March, 1902.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Journal of the Royal Society of New South Wales, Vols. XXX (1896), XXXI (1897), XXXIII (1899), XXXIV (1900) and XXXV (1901) – All these contain papers Knibbs presented before the Society.
Plate XX. George Knibbs, Royal Commissioner, 1902-1904 - Review of Reviews, 20th May, 1904; 499; M.L.
could profit especially by studying and following the example of Germany\(^{21}\). A parallel attitude to this was adopted by Knibbs when he faced the task of educational commissioner. His reports were founded upon the beliefs that national development was linked directly to the quality of a country's education\(^{22}\) and that the least at which New South Wales should aim was equality with the best in other countries\(^{23}\). Knibbs was not, of course, any more unique in holding this opinion than he was in his appreciation of Germany's progress.

Knibbs' interest in education generally seems in 1902 to have been of recent origin, for he was recruited as a supporter of the Carruthers' reform movement at a late date\(^{24}\). Possibly Knibbs' immediate associates were

\(^{21}\) Ibid, 38f.

\(^{22}\) Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, Interim Report ... on Certain Parts of Primary Education ..., op. cit., Summarised Report, 9, Extended Report, Ch. I.

\(^{23}\) Ibid, Summarised Report, 57.

\(^{24}\) Vide supra.
aware of a broad interest in education; and possibly
this was the explanation for his inclusion in the
delegation of 10th December and his selection as
commissioner on 8th April. But despite this very real
possibility, few of his contemporaries could have
predicted that he would feature so prominently as he
did an analysis of educational theory as he searched
for principles upon which to base his recommendations.
Viewed after the event Knibbs' approach is quite under-
standable - he was both a scientist and a man of con-
siderable intellectual brilliance. The outcome was that
those sections of the report for which Knibbs was res-
ponsible contained a valuable evaluation of the best
features of educational practice abroad, an academic

25. Knibbs' intellectual brilliance had already been
amply demonstrated and it was also to characterise
his later life. He was Commonwealth Statistician
from 1906-1921 and first director of what is now
the C.S.I.R.O. from 1921-1926. His achievements
in both positions were widely acclaimed (F. Johns,
An Australian Biographical Dictionary, Macmillan
analysis of the theory upon which this practice was based, and a detailed plan for reform in New South Wales. Knibbs began by reporting without equivocation that education in New South Wales was by international standards gravely deficient:

It would have been a most agreeable task had it been possible to return with the report that the educational system of our State was excellent, or needed but slight amendment or insignificant additions. Unfortunately to so represent it is quite out of the question, for it has been made evident to the Commissioners that the citizens of this State have educational opportunities falling far short of those in other parts of the world.

And he further claimed that the defects were so radical that "mere mechanical changes ... (would) not suffice". Consequently Knibbs argued that "the supreme need (wa)s a deeper understanding, not so much of educational mechanism, as of the spirit and philosophy of European and American systems. And so Knibbs sought as he

28. Ibid, 8.
29. Ibid, 57.
30. Ibid.
travelled abroad a detailed programme for reform which was securely based upon sound and modern educational principles. In this he was remarkably successful, producing over a hundred recommendations in the Primary Report alone. And, moreover, these were notable not only for their number but also for their integration.

The integration which Knibbs achieved is best demonstrated when consideration of his views and recommendations on primary schooling begins with the detailed plan he presented for a co-ordinated educational system. The plan he proposed incorporated education from kindergarten, through primary and higher primary and secondary and on to technical and university education with each important stage terminated by an examination.

This scheme included provision for the mentally and

31. In the Summarised Report there were 108 and here Knibbs did not include all of those listed in the Extended Report. And then there were all those of the Secondary Report and the Technical Education Report in addition.

32. Vide Diagram III.

A CO-ORDINATED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Diagram III: Knibbs' Scheme for Education
physically handicapped. And since the point at issue to Knibbs was the development of a national system the scheme incorporated private and denomination schools. This last suggestion trod upon dangerous ground and some bitter words were spoken as a direct result at the April 1904 Conference by the clergy who attended as representatives of their faiths.

This detailed scheme for an educational system Knibbs supplemented by the opinion that "a complete educational organisation requires also that a definite guiding programme for each path should be elaborated". And it is with the guiding programme (or "philosophy") which Knibbs suggested for primary education in New South Wales that this study is concerned. In part it was based upon local defects and of these, commencing from the lowest stage, the "more conspicuous" were:

34. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers, and Prominent Educationists, Held Tuesday, 5 April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 26f. and 84f.

(1) The general absence of Kindergartens in charge of teachers of higher professional training

(2) Inadequacy in the system of professional training of primary school teachers

(3) Unsatisfactory character of the curriculum

(4) Indifferent paedagogical (sic) equipment of schools

(5) A wrong system of building schools, consequent on a regime, involved by the extensive employment of untrained teachers

(6) Defects in school hygiene

But Knibbs' guiding programme was founded upon firmer ground than the mere treatment of such outward symptoms of educational retardation. The first step forward, he maintained, was a realisation of the national significance of education; and the next was an adequate conception of the purpose of education. And

36. Ibid, 4.


he then offered the opinion that "however much unthinking popular views may differ therefrom, educationists are practically in agreement that moral education of the will is the highest purpose of education". This was the philosophy of education Knibbs suggested for New South Wales. When he freed himself from Herbartian terminology Knibbs expressed this in a slightly different form, namely: "the supreme aim of education is the development of personal character". But in fact Knibbs was deeply indebted to the Herbartians, most especially to Rein, and was content to accept much of the Herbartian view as his own. Consequently he quoted Herbartian theory as if it were an established body of fact and referred at length to the education of the "will", to the importance of "apperception" and to the desirability of the co-ordination and concentration of studies.

40. Ibid.
41. Ibid, 8-11.
42. Ibid, Ch. XVI.
43. Ibid, 12.
44. Ibid, 10.
But as important as Herbartianism was in Knibbs' educational thought, it was the simple distinction he made between "empirical" and "rational" concepts of education which contributed most to producing a unified body of recommendations 45.

To Knibbs an empirical approach "did not concern itself with the organic function of education" 46 and the result was that anything which seemed "useful" could be added to the curriculum. At the same time the test of efficiency was most often merely the ability to pass examinations 47. To "the superficial observer" 48 rational examination might appear to be no way different from the empirical for the distinction between them was not in terms of curricula, equipment or administrative

45. Ibid, 12. (Knibbs acknowledges no source for this distinction. By rational he meant scientific - and it was no new idea that education might become a science. Herbart himself wrote of the inadequacy of an empirical approach - Outline of Educational Doctrine, op. cit., 2-6).

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

machinery but in the "cultural" character of rational education. This term "cultural" was used in a special sense which is no longer current. At the turn of the century education was "cultural" when it consciously sought to develop (or cultivate) powers of the mind and favourably mould (or cultivate) character. The individual was still a Pestalozzian plant and the teacher an agriculturalist who pruned, shaped and moulded. This distinction between empirical and rational approaches to education was in Knibbs' opinion of particular relevance to education in New South Wales. He was convinced that local education was largely empirical and exhibited all the associated deficiencies. There was, first, of course, the fundamental fault of an inadequate concept of educational purposes and there were accompanying and derived faults of more specific character: namely, inadequate conceptions of the function of the subjects of instruction, of the structure of the curriculum, of appropriate teaching methods, of an adequate preparation for teachers, of suitable inspectorial and examination procedures - and this list
covers virtually every major aspect of education just as Knibbs intended.

Concerning the subjects of instruction the major fault of empiricism, as Knibbs saw it, was that it regarded their function as solely informative. The advance with rationalism was the emphasis this approach placed upon their additional and more important formative function both immediately upon the individual and ultimately upon the national character. It was also claimed that this advance could be made and all that the empiricists wanted still be secured. Along with this argument Knibbs presented a claim for a more enlightened system of curriculum construction, once again expositing his view by a comparison:

Empirical education grows by accretion of elements, while rational education grows organically. In the former, subjects are added; in the latter they are incorporated. This difference is fundamental ...

50. Ibid.
52. Ibid, 12.
And, of course, it grew "organically" by employing the principles of co-ordination and concentration of studies.  

The argument was then further extended, logically and coherently, to stress the importance of employing modern teaching techniques based upon an appreciation of the underlying theory and philosophy of education and upon a knowledge of the psychology of learning. And the argument was then extended further again to the major emphasis of the report, namely that the teacher must be adequately prepared for the task thus imposed, the consequent categorisation of the pupil-teacher system as "the most serious defect in the educational system of New South Wales" and the recommendation that it be replaced by a system of previous training. And lest there be any doubt Knibbs insisted that a retention of the pupil-teacher system would be nothing less than a conscious, premeditated decision to maintain in New South Wales an educational system which was decidedly

54. Ibid, 12.
55. Ibid, 14.
56. Ibid, 10 and 13.
57. Ibid, Summarised Report, 16.
58. Ibid.
inferior to the systems of Europe and America 59.

Knibbs' discussion and recommendations upon the individual subjects of the primary curriculum sustains the argument that New South Wales should found its education upon rational principles, but here he also exploited the principle that this state should aim for equality with the best offered elsewhere. This was the dual basis upon which he recommended the introduction of truly Froebelian kindergarten, of ethical training along French lines, of the originally Swedish schemes for physical and manual education, of the Swiss and German treatment of natural science, and of the Continental approach to mathematics, geography, drawing and languages.

Knibbs was greatly impressed by the formative value and moral influence of kindergarten 60. He regarded it as "the proper initial step in all education" 61 and one which must be included in a state system 62. He recommended for New South Wales that in this field reform of the

59. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
system which operated in this state be the first step and that this then be followed by its extension. Reform was required because missing as it did the fundamental principles of child freedom and self-expression the New South Wales system was not proper kindergarten but "belong(ed) rather to the transition from kindergarten to the primary school". What Knibbs' advocated was "modified Froebelian kindergarten", a system which avoided mere mechanical manipulation of the gifts and which although it included reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry and geography, treated these subjects informally through play. He was careful to emphasise that "(t)he course should not be allowed to become charged and burdened merely with primary work, which, of course, would destroy its Froebelian character". In similar vein Knibbs saw kindergarten as a valuable foundation step in technical education just as the inspectors of 1889 had done but insisted that this was a result and not a prime

64. Ibid, Extended Report, 31.
65. Ibid.
purpose. Consequently the aim of general manual dexterity was one which should not be permitted to distort kindergarten work either.

Knibbs therefore suggested that children between the ages of three and six be allowed to attend schools conducted upon these lines in an environment permitting of pupil movement. Fixed desks were rejected and he suggested that adequate equipment and an infants' garden be provided. He insisted that the classes should be entrusted only to "properly educated and properly trained teachers," for it was most important that the work reflect the true spirit and principles of kindergarten.


67. Ibid.


69. Ibid, 24-25.

70. Ibid, Extended Report, 32.

71. Ibid, 31.
So important indeed did he regard this last principle that he even advocated a delay \(^{72}\). To him it was essential that before parents were induced to send their children along the kindergartens should be adequately designed, equipped and staffed \(^{73}\). And it was on the same basis that he advocated the establishment of a central kindergarten training college for the preparation of teachers for this work, listed appropriate entrance qualifications and subjects of study and insisted that professional practice "should be arranged in connection with any properly organised kindergarten, but not in a school that has only the transition stage from kindergarten to primary school \(^{74}\).

There is no doubt that Knibbs grasped the essence of the Kindergarten and consequently evaluated correctly the practice and the need in New South Wales. His recommendations were moderate and were consequently endorsed by the April 1904 Conference with a minimum of discussion \(^{75}\). The subsequent failure of the State to

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73. *Ibid*.
75. *Vide infra*. 
implement these recommendations is an issue for later consideration.

In the field of ethical and moral instruction Knibbs recommended the introduction of a definite scheme or programme of lessons. He accepted the judgment that although unobtrusive and effective moral education was provided during the day-to-day activities of the school and by teacher example, additional specific moral instruction was also necessary. He suggested the French model as a best solution to the apparent dilemma raised by the wide belief that such programmes should have a religious basis. The French scheme was "at once noble, and, as regards religious differences, neutral" and was advocated by Knibbs as an independent supplement to the religious instruction which was to be continued on existing lines. It was, of course, Knibbs' stress upon


77. This was, of course, the "Bourke compromise" and it is interesting to note that Knibbs was in fact now extending this to the field of ethical as well as religious instruction. Both the original compromise and its extension are open to serious philosophical doubts.
the formative function of education, the development of character, which formed the basis for this advocacy of a scheme of ethical instruction on French lines but France provided only the starting point from which to begin. The programme itself was to include instruction in civics as was done in Europe and America and the methods which were adopted were to aim at the development of "will" or individuality, an essentially Herbartian conception. In the brief outline of an appropriate course it was suggested that this embrace the relation of the child to himself, to his fellows, to his country and to the world and that the text-book for this subject which should be provided for the guidance of teachers be written by "a specialist in moral philosophy, having in addition a thorough grasp of modern theory of instruction and of the child mind in its different stages." 78. And impressed by the wall-sheets of the English Children's National Guild of Courtesy he suggested that similar

78. Ibid, Extended Report, 158. (A somewhat demanding requirement, but one which Francis Anderson could have satisfied.)
charts be prepared "containing the fundamental points of the text-book" to "adorn the walls of every school in our State". Instruction in "Civics" was an element in ethical education to which Knibbs made independent reference. This was a minor but excusable redundancy and as he observed the practice in Europe and America this subject was "often taught in close association with history". The object was "to give children an intelligent idea of their rights, responsibilities and duties under the laws of their country" and it was one which gained his approval. Consequently he recommended that civic instruction of this kind should "constitute a part of the ordinary curriculum and, suitably adapted to their age, be given to all school children."

It is apparent that in his examination of ethical education Knibbs assumed without discussion or critical examination that there were acceptable ideals and virtues

81. Ibid.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid, 62.
84. Ibid, 29.
which education must set out to inculcate for both the individual and the national good. He himself lists such traits as rectitude, fortitude, courage, patience, veracity, kindliness, politeness and patriotism. The impression that this creates is that he advocated an education for conformity. But on further examination there was another side to his position which was most apparent in his discussion of the "Education of the Will". Here the claim is for education for individuality through self-expression and by a directive rather than a coercive discipline. Although the problem of where conformity ends and individuality begins remained undiscussed and although the conclusion that "to systematically develope (sic) it (strength of will) in the individual is to develope (sic) it in the nation" 85 , contains some philosophically and sociologically doubtful mathematics, the position is not so different from modern interactive views of the function of education in democracy.

85. Ibid, Extended Report, 158.
Consistent with his general approach Knibbs recommended the introduction of a rational system of physical education "which proceed(ed) at every detail under the guidance of scientific knowledge" of human physiology. Such requirements were, he believed, satisfied by a modified Swedish System where the instruction was both educational and recreational or, in other words, it would contribute to physical development and also be interesting and exhilarating. He applauded the efforts in Tasmania of Christian Bjelke-Petersen along these lines and was critical of New South Wales neglect.

When it came to manual work the recommendations Knibbs made were already familiar opinions in this state, but they had never been effectively implemented. The point that Knibbs made was despite experimental work with carpentry and its extension to a number of centres, "educative manual training ha(d) not been generally

86. Ibid, 162.
87. Ibid, Summarised Report, 30; Extended Report, 165.
88. Ibid.
89. Vide supra.
established"\textsuperscript{90}. And the \textit{educative} system which he recommended was sloyd, that form of manual training developed at Naas by Salomon which aimed to develop character and a general manual dexterity\textsuperscript{91}. Sloyd or some other form of manual training equally directed towards the development of character and manual dexterity through self-expression was, Knibbs reported, considered by overseas experts to be an essential subject of the curriculum and was featured as such in many courses of study\textsuperscript{92}. It was regarded as a natural extension of kindergarten principles to the primary school\textsuperscript{93}. On these educative and comparative grounds Knibbs recommended that manual training be introduced for all primary children between the ages of six and fourteen and, conscious of the principles upon which it was based, that it be taught by qualified teachers and not by tradesmen\textsuperscript{94}. The debt to sloyd is obvious.

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\item \textsuperscript{90} Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, \textit{Report on ... Technical Education}, \textit{op. cit.}, 41.
\item \textsuperscript{91} Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, \textit{Interim Report ... on Certain Parts of Primary Education ...}, \textit{op. cit.}, Extended Report, 177f.
\item \textsuperscript{92} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{93} \textit{Ibid}, 180.
\item \textsuperscript{94} \textit{Ibid}, 179.
\end{itemize}
In the case of geography Knibbs recommended that this "be wholly reformed" along European and American lines where "(t)he old, dry descriptive form, burdened with much uninteresting and useless information, taught without aids, without any careful attempt to make the pupil realise what geography means, ha(d) practically disappeared". The new approach which he advocated was based upon reality, pupil activity, excursions and the wide use of aids, more especially maps and pictures. It was an approach moreover which changed the character of the subject from a physical to a human geography. It also began, as Pestalozzi had wished, from the child's immediate environment and for this reason Knibbs favoured the overseas practice of commencing geography at the kindergarten stage.

Although Knibbs accepted these European and American practices as a model worthy of emulation his recommendation went, interestingly, a step further for the course he

95. Ibid, Summarised Report, 34.
96. Ibid, 104.
97. Ibid, Extended Report, 236.
suggested was much closer to Social Studies than were the sample courses from overseas which he included in his report. His own concept of an appropriate course for New South Wales makes this clear. In essence he approved of the overseas practice of history being taught in connection with geography\textsuperscript{98}, and extended this idea until what he suggested was integration rather than correlation:

The European view, viz., that it is of the first importance to have a realistic and thorough knowledge of one's own country, of its characteristic features, its ways of communication, its touch with the outer world, its natural wealth and its general resources, should govern the teaching of the subject in this State also. By explanations of its historical and commercial relationships, our country should be connected with England, and the possibilities of the mission of English-speaking people should be broadly outlined. Then the relation of the British Empire to the rest of the world could be made intelligible, viz., through subjects giving a real interest in the issues that lie open to any great race. In this way national dignity of character, a very necessary corrective to blind national prejudice, may be developed.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid, Summarised Report, 34.

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.
For this concept he was probably more indebted to Professor Gregory of Victoria\textsuperscript{100} than to any European or American model.

When it came to drawing Knibbs once again condemned the outmoded course used in New South Wales and advocated the introduction of overseas schemes which included free-hand drawing, the use of colour, drawing from "nature" in preference to copying from blackboard models, and formal graded instruction in perspective drawing of "common objects"\textsuperscript{101}. These schemes were intentionally founded upon geometry and were courses in technical drawing rather than in art. There was some scope for originality but it was small. Knibbs missed the point of the developments in French Infant Schools where illustrations of fables and everyday activities were encouraged, reporting these without comment\textsuperscript{102}. The

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\textsuperscript{100} Knibbs specifically mentions Gregory and recommends his suggested reforms.
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\textsuperscript{101} Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, Interim Report \ldots on Certain Parts of Primary Education \ldots, op. cit., Extended Report, 185-97.
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\textsuperscript{102} Ibid, 192.
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programme he recommended was an advance but still decidedly formal and rather arid.

When he turned to science Knibbs condemned the absence of any effective teaching of this subject in New South Wales. He pointed for comparison to the advances which had been made abroad and expressed his agreement with the arguments he cited of Armstrong of Britain and Guex of Switzerland for heuristic methods of teaching. It was logical, then, that Knibbs insisted that steps must be taken in this state to supply adequate equipment and suitably trained teachers with a proper knowledge of science. This was Knibbs' general position; when it came to the primary curriculum he was prepared to accept Swiss and German practices as the model and therefore recommended that general science be

103. Ibid, 255.
104. Ibid, 255-56.
105. Ibid, 257; Summarised Report, 37.
taught through object lessons to pupils from six to fourteen years of age with instruction in formal sciences introduced at from ten or twelve onwards. In many ways this section on science is perhaps the most disappointing of the report, for although it conveys adequately enough the new attitude towards method, the discussion is mostly concerned with science of a formal nature suitable for the advanced stages and there is insufficient consideration of the development of "nature study" as a suitable subject for the lower, elementary levels. Indeed, discussion of just what was appropriate at these levels was replaced by mere description of the programmes in use overseas.

In the field of mathematics Knibbs recommended co-ordination of the separate branches of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and trigonometry. He argued that there was no reason why any one of these need be deferred when they could be taught simultaneously. In the process of reforming the mathematical strand of the curriculum

108. Ibid, 60.

Euclid was to be abandoned and instead geometry taught intuitively and practically with simple demonstrations. Drawing was to have a conspicuous part and at the lowest levels such activities as paper folding and at later stages elementary surveying. During the course of this argument Knibbs made liberal reference to the opinions of the Committee of the British Association of Science. It was the rejection of Euclid by this Committee that established a precedent accepted by Sydney University which subsequently reformed its requirements in geometry for the Junior and Senior Examinations for 1904. Impressed as he was by the opinions of this Committee the fault of Knibbs' discussion of mathematics is the same as he exhibited in the discussion of science. He devoted the bulk of the discussion to what would now be considered secondary work.

111. Ibid, 231.
112. Ibid, 232.
Knibbs' comments upon language teaching are outside the real scope of this study, for they are concerned with the "higher primary" course of instruction, not with the primary course as this is to-day understood. Their inclusion, however, in his report further illustrates the consequence of the unsatisfactory and inconsistent definition of primary education which was then current. At this time secondary education was regarded as the education which was provided for that elite destined for the university. Primary education was in its lower or elementary grades a preparation for secondary education and in its upper grades an alternative for those children who did not satisfy entrance requirements to "secondary" schools or whose parents did not wish them to attend such schools. In New South Wales the issue was further complicated by the fact that Superior Public Schools which might have been expected to provide higher primary education took great pride in their success at the Junior and Senior University Examinations. They were thus a parallel rather than an alternative to the High Schools of the state. This nineteenth century distinction between secondary and higher primary education explains why so many
of the comments in the Commissioners' report were concerned with work now not thought of as belonging in the primary school. Knibbs himself was somewhat uncertain of the precise relationship which should exist between higher primary and secondary education. As one result there was this discussion of language teaching, but there were consequences for mathematics and science too, for with these his detailed remarks centred upon the higher primary stage.

KNIBBS' RECOMMENDATIONS: AN EVALUATION

Such, then, is a brief indication of the wealth of recommendations Knibbs offered for the primary school curriculum in New South Wales. And yet when finally

114. Cf. (i) the primary report where the scheme he propounded went step by step from kindergarten to transition to lower primary or elementary (7-10) to higher primary (12-14) to either secondary or "supplementary" (at trade and continuation schools - Interim Report ..., op. cit., 469); (ii) the secondary report where Knibbs suggested a "secondary preparatory" stage as an alternative to higher primary - and so choice of future became necessary at ten! (Report ... on Secondary Education, op. cit., Summarised Report, 12-13; Extended Report, 7-8).
organised they represented but one of the six sections into which Knibbs grouped his recommendations for presentation in the primary report. Foremost among the recommendations in these other areas which were relevant to primary education were those upon teacher training. Adequately professionally prepared and appropriately mature teachers were essential to effective education as this was conceived by Knibbs. Similarly important were most other sections, at least for the general principles they embodied if not for their details. Knibbs recommended a Director of Education be appointed "competent to direct the details of the great reform movement indicated as necessary"\(^{115}\); that every inspector become an educational expert; that the present system of examination by inspectors be abolished and they become instead advisers to teachers\(^ {116}\); that headmasters of larger schools should be almost wholly occupied in supervision and in assisting the subordinate teachers\(^ {117}\); that

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teachers "be encouraged to aim at thoroughness, rather than quantity, in their work, and should be appreciated in proportion as they are capable of stimulating the self-expression of the pupils, that is the power to think for themselves" 118; that material conditions of learning through the provision of special facilities and increased equipment and the construction of schools be greatly improved 119; that single classrooms replace the school-room 120; that the desks which were "the worst seen" be replaced by ones suitable in size and shape to physical needs 121; that school physicians should be appointed "to secure good general hygiene, to advise ..., and to obtain statistical information" 122; that corporal punishment should be abolished except as a punishment one step short of expulsion 123; that special facilities be provided for the feebleminded 124; that truants be dealt

118. Ibid, 63.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid, 64.
121. Ibid.
122. Ibid, 65.
123. Ibid.
124. Ibid.
with by special Children's Courts — and this is not a complete list. It is though sufficient to demonstrate that Knibbs captured the new outlook in education and that his recommendations were directed by the same general aim. To seek to provide the best curriculum, the best administration and the best conditions of learning was but a more specific expression of his desire to see in New South Wales an education at least equal to the best available elsewhere. And it is no wonder that a man as able as Knibbs with such a conception to guide him produced a detailed scheme for reform. Beside the awesome achievement his reports represent it is natural that upon first consideration any faults seem of a minor nature. Knibbs' ability to grasp principles, his assessment of this state's weaknesses, his identification of practices and procedures to be emulated, his co-ordinated and detailed plan for reform — these testify to the worth of his efforts. That in so short a time he was able to found his

125. Ibid.
recommendations upon educational theory and the psychology of learning is a further source of wonder. But paradoxically this latter achievement is the source of the major fault in his work.

Knibbs accepted, as did many more qualified as specialists in the field than he, the doctrines of the Herbartians. However, "the Herbartian tide had begun to ebb"¹²⁶ in the United States by this time and in Britain, too, it was facing critical analysis, despite its much more recent arrival. It was in Britain, indeed, that Darroch argued convincingly that Herbartianism was not as sound an approach as was thought¹²⁷. In relation to Knibbs' position the most important point which Darroch made was that character-making was much more than the

¹²⁶. A.E. Meyer, The Development of Education in the Twentieth Century, 2nd ed., Prentice-Hall, New York, 1949, 22. (Meyer points out in justification that the National Herbartian Society founded in the United States in 1892 changed its name to the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education in 1902, a change accompanied by a broadening of its scope.)

will-building of the Herbartians, for the latter was merely "the Socratic doctrine that virtue is knowledge stated in terms of a mechanistic psychology"\(^{128}\). It is likely that Knibbs was over-impressed with Herbartianism because it was to him the educational strand of the German scientific development he so much admired. One quite serious result was that although Knibbs' own Herbartianism was leavened by the spirit of Froebel - there was an emphasis in Knibbs upon self-activity and freedom which derived from Kindergarten principles - this was neither sustained adequately nor abstracted clearly. An accompanying and equally serious consequence was Knibbs' failure to discuss, examine or appreciate the "theory" underlying the New Education in the United States. There was a brief mention of Parker's opinions on Geography, but there was no apparent appreciation of the significance of his efforts at Quincy or of the efforts of his successor at Chicago, John Dewey.

\(^{128}\) Ibid, 80.
A second major fault, and one which strikes at the very heart of Knibbs' argument, was his rejection of New South Wales educational practice as empirical without an examination of the psychology or the theory upon which it was conducted. To Knibbs it was as if no such man as Locke or no such concept as faculty psychology had even existed. The most he conceded for New South Wales was a tactful praise for past efforts as a prelude to devastating criticism of current deficiencies.

Other faults of a less major character were Knibbs' neglect of the vernacular (including reading, writing and literature), the almost complete absence of any discussion of music, the faults of the drawing syllabuses he approved, and his concern with the more advanced stages when he discussed science and mathematics. Where Knibbs was at his best in the discussion of the primary school curriculum was with manual work, geography, civics and morals and physical education. But there is no doubt that he was at his very best in matters outside the intricacies of the primary school itself: in the general
discussion of educational aims and teaching methods, and especially in his discussions and recommendations upon teacher training, kindergarten, inspection, administrative structure and general policy.

Knibbs returned to New South Wales dedicated to reform, prepared to accept a responsibility for promulgating the "new" doctrines, and willing to assume a leadership in education. There is no doubt that in this he was offering himself, if informally, as a candidate for the directorship he had recommended. The range of his activities was wide. He was active in the Teachers' Association; took a prominent part in the inauguration and editorship of the *Australian Journal of Education*; became a leading member of the Child Study Association; and addressed conferences of the Public School Teachers' Association.


130. *The Australian Journal of Education*, IV, I, 16th July, 1906, 5. (In themselves inauguration and editorship were quite delicate tasks, for this journal was a joint effort supported by the private Teachers' Association and the state Public School Teachers' Association.)

Association. The major public appearance during this period was, however, the April 1904 Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers and Prominent Educationists where he and Turner were called upon to defend their theses. His appointment as Superintendent of Technical Education and not as Director of Education must have been a major personal disappointment and he soon abandoned this post to become Commonwealth Statistician. He did not later ever become personally involved in education in this state, but the reports he had prepared remained as a plan for development and as a valuable criterion against which to judge local progress. In some areas, and more than fifty years later, they serve as criteria still.


135. E.g. kindergarten and the education of the physically and mentally handicapped which are areas where New South Wales has never accepted full governmental responsibility.
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF J.W. TURNER

John William Turner was not quite ten years older than Knibbs. His career as a schoolmaster was most successful, culminating in his appointment as headmaster of Fort Street Public School in 1889. He was thus, at the comparatively early age of forty, headmaster of the most famous and most successful public school in the state. In 1893 as a retrenchment measure the separate posts at Fort Street of Principal of the Training College and Headmaster of the Model School were amalgamated and Turner given this dual responsibility. This was his position at the time of his appointment as Commissioner. His approach to the task was quite different from the one adopted by Knibbs. Turner was content to report details with a minimal discussion of underlying principles. He was also less critical than Knibbs of New South Wales practices and, either because he accepted

136. F. Johns, op. cit.
137. The Daily Telegraph, 10th March, 1902.
138. The Daily Telegraph, ibid; Minister's Report, 1893.
the directions of 8th April, 1902 or from a pride in the
system he served, or for a combination of both reasons,
he included a deal of favourable comment upon work in
this state. His recommendations were quantitatively
and qualitatively inferior to those made by Knibbs, but
are still important and may, in a practical fashion,
have even been the more significant, for when Turner
criticised he did so against the background of a thorough
knowledge of local practice. The needs and deficiencies
which Turner cited could not be easily ignored, especially
since they were founded not upon a wholesale condemnation,
as was the case with Knibbs, but upon the general conclusion:

... that our Primary Schools and our Primary
Elementary System will take a worthy position
when placed side by side with the schools and
systems of other countries.\textsuperscript{139}

But "(t)here (were), however, some defects"\textsuperscript{140}.

Turner's enumeration of these was not, as with Knibbs,
unified by relating them to principles. The major general

\textsuperscript{139} Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and
Other Branches of Education, \textit{Interim Report} ...,\textsuperscript{op. cit.}, Extended Report, 481.

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
issues with which Turner concerned himself were the attendance problem, inspection procedures, the training of teachers, and the consolidation of small schools. Upon two of these issues, inspection and teacher training, Turner gave unequivocal support to Knibbs. There were points of difference, of course. Knibbs had stressed that inspectors should become educational experts. Turner accepted them as already men whose advice to teachers would be invaluable, especially for those who "ha(d) not been efficiently trained"\(^{141}\) and maintained that teachers would profit best if the inspectors came to them "as a sympathetic force, imparted instruction in methods, and gave general advice according to the needs of those concerned"\(^{142}\). He firmly rejected the argument that it would be dangerous to release teachers from the check on their work provided by the annual inspectorial examination\(^{143}\). The differences between Knibbs and Turner were greater on teacher training than on inspection. Turner,

\(^{141}\) Ibid, Summarised Report, 93.

\(^{142}\) Ibid.

\(^{143}\) Ibid.
in fact offered an alternative scheme. But on the essential point they were agreed - the pupil-teacher system should be abolished\textsuperscript{144}.

Upon the two remaining general issues, attendance and consolidation, Turner was the spokesman for the Commission, since on the first Knibbs deferred to Turner's judgment and upon the latter made no comment at all. The attendance problem was one close to the heart of anyone with experience in New South Wales' schools. Clearly something had to be done. What Turner basically suggested was not new - amendment of the appropriate clauses in the 1880 Act\textsuperscript{145} - but he supplemented this with the suggestion that machinery modelled upon that in use in England be introduced. He even suggested that similar forms which called for a parental reply when a child was absent be employed in this state\textsuperscript{146}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{144} Ibid, 58 (Knibbs) and 96 (Turner).
\item \textsuperscript{145} Ibid, Extended Report, 402. (Note that Turner expressed satisfaction with the bill Perry then had before parliament on the grounds that it "contain(ed) all the essential provisions ... abolished the period of default, and provide(d) for Truant Schools".)
\item \textsuperscript{146} Ibid, 402f.
\end{itemize}
Centralisation, or consolidation, was recommended by Turner upon the basis of his observations in the United States. These convinced him that Board had been right in 1902. As Turner saw it, conveyance to a central school could provide a better and more economical answer to the problem of extending education to "country" districts than the alternatives of small provisional schools, subsidised teachers, or no schooling at all. But Turner took this argument a step further than had Board and argued that the closing of small schools and the introduction of centralised schools would raise the quality of education which was available in remote districts. His point was that with larger schools better qualified teachers could be appointed and consequently higher standards of work produced. He was aware that the success of such a scheme was dependent upon public support.

147. Ibid, 499-500.
148. Ibid, 499.
149. Ibid, 500.
and recommended that steps be taken to secure it.  

When considering the primary school curriculum Turner recommended one or two minor organisational changes and that the Standards be remodelled so they were "brought into line with the best noted in other systems". The minor organisational changes were directed at two long-standing anomalies: the irrationality of having four half-years in Third Class and the inconsistency in expecting much the same course to take four half-years in infants' schools but only three half-years in schools of one department. For the first he recommended a simple change in numeration which took primary education from first to sixth class with a year for each and with the primary course itself ending at fifth. In the case of the second anomaly Turner merely suggested it be corrected; here he did not make the logical suggestion

150. Ibid.
151. Ibid, 481.
152. Ibid.
153. Ibid.
of a further change in numeration at the first class level; if anything he seems to imply that the infants' and first class course should be regarded as pre-primary with primary proper beginning at the age of 7 or 8 and that the class for this age group become known as the first class. There is nothing at all profound about these suggestions but they are interesting because with the 1904-05 Syllabus the primary course was extended to fifth class and the old fifth class work was definitely recast as a higher or post-primary course. At that time, too, the first class and infants' course was made absolutely identical. It was not until 1916 that the last numerical inconsistency was removed. Then the infants' work became a definite two-year course covering first and second classes and consequently the primary school course ended with the completion of sixth class.

154. Ibid.
155. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1905, vii.
156. Ibid, 3-5.
158. Ibid, 9, 17.
The main deficiencies in the course of study in the schools, as Turner saw these, were at the Superior School level and consequently outside the context of this study. There were other, although more minor, weaknesses within the courses of study employed in the primary (elementary) schools. Those areas of greatest need were kindergarten, manual training and drawing. In addition, there were deficiencies in science, arithmetic and grammar for which Turner suggested remedies. Turner's attitude towards kindergarten coincided with Knibbs' in principle but Turner confined his interest to its use in elementary schooling 159. He recommended the introduction of such work into all infants' schools 160 and to those schools of one department with a first class where a woman was employed 161. He considered the introduction of this work as widely and as rapidly as possible to be so urgent that

159. It should be noted, however, that Turner was generally content with the character of the kindergarten work at Riley Street and Fort Street (Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, Interim Report ..., op. cit., 482.

160. Ibid.

he suggested "temporary arrangements" be made to meet the need for trained teachers\textsuperscript{162}. For the long term he recommended the establishment of a kindergarten training college\textsuperscript{163}.

When he examined manual training Turner did not involve himself in any theoretical discussion. Instead he simply stated that comparatively provision in New South Wales was inadequate for at the elementary level the only training of the eye and hand was through drawing\textsuperscript{164}. He therefore recommended that a course of cardboard modelling be introduced for boys which would follow on from the simpler work of the kindergarten\textsuperscript{165}. Such a recommendation had, it will be recalled, already been made at the inspectorial conference of January, 1902, and hence was hardly revolutionary\textsuperscript{166}. Later Turner was to add that in this field of manual training generally

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{162} Ibid, Extended Report, 482.
  \item \textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{166} Vide supra.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
"America ... (was) the best guide for Australia"\textsuperscript{167}.

The case with drawing was different, for here the fault was that the local course was out-of-date. Turner suggested that the problem could be solved by appointing an "Art Master" from England\textsuperscript{168}, a suggestion reminiscent of the recommendation of the January 1902 departmental conference\textsuperscript{169}. Like Knibbs, Turner also missed the point of the efforts in San Francisco's schools and in French infant schools where imaginative and creative work was encouraged.

Turner was much more satisfied with the work in science, arithmetic and grammar. The science programme

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\textsuperscript{168.} Commission on Primary, Secondary, Technical and Other Branches of Education, \textit{Interim Report ...}, \textit{op. cit.}, 483.

\textsuperscript{169.} In point of fact John Branch was appointed from England as Superintendent of Drawing and commenced duty on 1st April, 1903 (\textit{Minister's Report, 1903}, 11; \textit{Education Department Archives, P2181, School Files, 1904-5}, Drawing Master, Branch to McCredie, 8th February, 1904). Turner's recommendation probably had little to do with this.
\end{flushleft}
was basically adequate; at the higher levels more equipment was required; at the lower the object lessons could be more closely associated with nature study. Turner claimed that the latter was the practice already followed in New South Wales by the students at the training colleges and by teachers in the large city schools; and hence he implied that all would be well if this were adopted by all. He saw some value in excursions and outdoor teaching but was more than equally certain that these had major defects. In the subjects of arithmetic and grammar the fault was fundamentally the same - the work was too demanding and abstract. So Turner recommended this be corrected. In arithmetic he wanted the modifications to extend beyond subject matter to method and urged, as others before him had done, that there be more mental work. With grammar

171. Ibid.
172. Ibid.
173. Ibid, 484-85.
174. Ibid, 484.
Turner recommended that parsing and analysis be greatly curtailed and that the time previously devoted to these be spent upon "composition on paper and correct expression in conversation"\textsuperscript{175}.

The remaining subjects – reading, writing, geography, history, singing, and drill – were according to Turner all well taught in New South Wales\textsuperscript{176}. The most significant improvements which should be made in these areas were material ones – more adequate equipment and materials and conditions more comparable to those overseas where schools were better lit, better ventilated and heated, with more space per child, superior seating, and such facilities as gymnasiums, assembly halls, special purpose rooms, and staff rooms\textsuperscript{177}. Turner's own experience made him pessimistic about the prospects of such parity and he limited himself in his recommendation to a preference for "single class-rooms to accommodate about fifty pupils" and desks of the Swiss type\textsuperscript{178}.

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid, 485.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid, Summarised Report, 95-96.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid, 96.
TURNER'S RECOMMENDATIONS: AN EVALUATION

Turner has been pictured as "a colourless, stolid uncultured man, a dyed-in-the-wool conservative who was striving to undo the habits and ideas of a lifetime in an effort to understand the New Education" 179. Such an impression is fostered by the comparison between his efforts as Commissioner and those of the more brilliant Knibbs. It is this comparison which highlights Turner's failure to found his efforts upon a discussion of educational theory and psychology, the error of his decision to report upon practices he observed descriptively rather than interpretatively, the complacency of his too-ready approval of some aspects of New South Wales practice, and a basic pessimism over the prospects of any radical change. These were Turner's deficiencies as Commissioner 180. Before going abroad he was complacent


180. These hardly justify the epigrammatic inclusion of the adjectives "colourless", "stolid", "uncultured". And neither does his earlier successful Departmental career. Later, certainly, he was again overshadowed by a more brilliant man, this time Peter Board.
and conservative. This he himself admitted within the context of teacher training. On his return he was no longer quite so complacent nor so conservative but of the New Education he captured in most cases only the outward signs. But it must not be forgotten that on the important issues of inspection, teacher training, kindergarten, science, drawing, and the material conditions of instruction, Turner lent valuable support to Knibbs. Nor must it be forgotten that in the case of teacher-training this support was founded upon sufficient personal conviction for Turner to recant publicly his opinions of January 1902 and to face in consequence the considerable ire of his superior, Acting Under-secretary Bridges. And it is equally important to accord due recognition to Turner's specific recommendations upon curriculum. Here he too sought the introduction into New South Wales of the best


183. *Vide infra.* (Turner was aware that his stand could well make him unpopular - *Interim Report, loc. cit.*)
elements from overseas. Certainly his recommendations were expressed within a context of more favourable comment than in the case of Knibbs, certainly they were more limited, and certainly some had already won acceptance within the Department. What cannot be ignored is before long all of Turner's curriculum recommendations did find expression in the primary school course. True, they were sufficiently moderate to assure this, but they were valuable nevertheless.

Upon completion of his task as commissioner Turner slipped quietly back into his role as a Departmental officer. On 8th February, 1905 he was appointed Assistant Under-secretary. When Knibbs resigned it was Turner who replaced him as Superintendent of Technical Education. This was the position he held until his retirement in 1912.

184. Education Department Archives, P3849, Chief Inspector's File, 1904-1913, Public Service Board Executive Council Minute, 7th February, 1905. (Note that Turner's position was junior to that of James Dawson who was appointed Chief Inspector from the same date.)


186. Minister's Report, 1912, 24; Minister's Report, 1913, 18. (Turner retired after expiration of sick leave which began in 1912. He died in July, 1913.)
THE RECEPTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS' PRIMARY REPORT

With the publication of the Interim Report of the Commissioners on Certain Parts of Primary Education the press intensified its demands for reform and its criticisms of the policy of the See Government. The attack launched by The Daily Telegraph was particularly severe and potentially damaging politically and so Perry used the conference of inspectors, teachers and Departmental officials of 14th January, 1904 as a platform from which to issue a defence and a counter-attack. 

Ostensibly the purpose of this conference was to discuss the Interim Report. In fact Departmental officials, inspectors and teachers followed Perry's lead. They too defended the present system and at the same time offered as an excuse for any deficiencies the limited funds which had been available for education. Bridges did not do much more than claim that the Department had done all that the financial position of the state had permitted.

187. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors, Teachers and Departmental Officers to Discuss Report of Education Commissioners, Held 14 January, 1904, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1904.

188. Ibid, 15.
Others, among them Dawson\textsuperscript{189} and Board\textsuperscript{190}, launched a vigorous attack upon the Commissioners and their recommendations. Perry chose to see the problem as a product of the free-trade policy of his political opponents, a policy "which condemns us to be raisers of raw products for other people to manufacture and re-sell to us"\textsuperscript{191}. Politics aside and with it fiscal policy - for Victoria's experience suggests "protection" was no better guarantee of educational progress - there remains still the important point that as long as there was limited industrialisation only a limited education was required.

At this same January 1904 Conference the Commissioners were subject to some carping interrogation\textsuperscript{192}, but there was no true discussion of the report because most of those present had had as yet little opportunity to examine

\textsuperscript{189} Ibid, 10-11.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid, 15-18.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, 8.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid, in passim.
it\textsuperscript{193}. Perry therefore announced plans for a further conference to be held at Easter\textsuperscript{194}. Carruthers had opened the public campaign for reform at the end of 1901 but after the departure of Knibbs and Turner he soon lost enthusiasm for the cause. In 1904 it was Perry now who acted boldly by making education the subject of a public debate at which he presided as a chairman dedicated to the cause of reform. The conferences of January 1902 and January 1904 had been publicly reported but were Departmental by composition. The April 1904 Conference was by contrast a much grander and more widely representative affair than either of these. This time the rank and file of teachers were represented. Inspectors had been given the task of organising meetings at which the teachers of their districts selected delegates\textsuperscript{195}. In addition

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid, 11.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid,
\textsuperscript{195} N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, \textit{Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers and Prominent Educationists, Held Tuesday, 5 April, 1904 and Following Days}, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1904, 24.
the executive members of the Public School Teachers' Association were invited after they requested representation. Invitations were also extended to educationists outside the Department, to university professors, and to spokesmen for the various religious denominations. This Easter Conference was hence an impressive affair and Perry made the most of the occasion it offered. From the chair he intervened in proceedings at will and yet controlled them with a firm hand and by judiciously absenting himself when the pupil-teacher system was under discussion he managed to dissociate himself from any charge of conservatism. This assumption by Perry of the initiative was a fine piece of political expertise — although it did not, as it happens, save his party from annihilation at the elections of 1904. The wonder is that Carruthers allowed Perry to assume command so

196. Ibid.

197. Ibid, 3.

easily. The explanation is political. Carruthers was ready to campaign again on a "reform" ticket, his Liberal Party had evolved already into a conservative party, and he was most certainly wary of the financial implications of any reform movement. Between 1901 and 1904 Carruthers so changed his views that he publicly scorned the results of the very Royal Commission for which he himself had been responsible 199.

Of all the issues discussed at the Easter 1904 Conference the training of teachers was the most contentious and a vehement struggle was waged with Knibbs and Turner on one side and Bridges on the other. The Commissioners repeated their condemnations of the pupil-teacher system 200. Bridges replied that "a more unfair report was never published to the world" 201. Compromise

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200. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held Tuesday, 5 April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 29-33.

201. Ibid, 33.
was reached after Peter Board first announced his agreement with previous training in principle and then moved a series of motions to overcome "the practical difficulties" which had to be faced. After private consultation on the main platform between Knibbs and Board these motions were incorporated in a set of generally acceptable propositions. Even Bridges who had been absent during these negotiations expressed satisfaction with the outcome - more he had Turner move a series of motions on his behalf which were designed to give it "practical effect". Perry then appointed a committee to prepare an interim scheme "for the admission and partial previous training of pupil-teachers and for the remodelling of the conditions under which pupil-teachers were employed" and so the curtain

202. Ibid, 47.
203. Ibid, 57.
204. Ibid, 47 and 57.
205. Ibid, 71-72.
206. Ibid, 71. (It was necessary for Turner to move these motions for Perry was a late arrival that day and Bridges was chairman in Perry's absence.)
207. Ibid, 74.
208. Ibid, 47.
came down upon the drama for which this conference was most notable. Within a few short years the pupil-teacher system was to be a thing of the past. The acclaim for this advance belongs rightly with Knibbs and Turner but Board, in his latter-day conversion and his tactful handling of the situation, earned for himself a share of the credit.

Neither the importance of the teacher-training issue nor the drama of the clash of personalities should completely dominate the opinions which are formed of this April 1904 Conference. Other very important issues were discussed, if in a more serene atmosphere. The feature that was apparent with these, by contrast, was that every major recommendation made by the Commissioners was publicly approved in principle and accepted as a major part of the charter for subsequent developments in primary schools. There were motions upon kindergarten, sloyd, elementary science, nature study, drill, calisthenics, school buildings and school hygiene. Most were

proposed by Knibbs or Turner; few aroused dissension. This April Conference was also notable as the occasion upon which Peter Board emerged to public prominence. When he acted as conciliator between Bridges and Knibbs his intervention came as a surprise to Knibbs, but it was not a surprise to his colleagues. The very next day Bridges publicly approved Board's action but there are grounds for suspecting that the very motions Board made were prepared in consultation with Bridges and that Board had become his protege. Even before this conference Bridges had entrusted Board with the task of preparing a new syllabus based upon the New Education. At the conference itself a full day was devoted for Board to explain and defend this syllabus. Clearly Board had risen to considerable eminence. Even Knibbs recognised this and suggested him as principal of the Training College. No one doubted that Board was the Departmental

210. *Vide infra.*

211. *Vide infra.*

212. *N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held Tuesday, 5th April, 1904, and Following Days, op. cit., 32.*
expert on the New Education and, in retrospect, his appointment as Director of Education in 1905 is no surprise. It also meant that it was Board's version of the New Education which was introduced and that the efforts of Knibbs and Turner became a part, albeit an important part, of the educational background. It is to Board's efforts during 1902 to 1904 that this study, therefore, next turns.

213. In their detailed analysis of the reasons behind Board's appointment Crane and Walker (op. cit., Ch. III) did not raise this issue of Board's eminence amongst his colleagues. More seriously they imply that Bridges and Board were opposed and this is untenable. It is even possible that Board was recommended for this position by Bridges himself who, although he died on 16th November, 1904, was already aware of his illness and soon due to retire because of age.
Alongside Knibbs and Turner at the April 1904 Conference as a harbinger of change had stood Peter Board, Inspector of Schools, also recently returned from overseas and also the author of a report based upon his observations.

Peter Board had by 1903, when he chose to take long-service leave, been in the teaching service of New South Wales for thirty years. Then forty-five, he had, like Turner, already a most successful career behind him. He had reached the pinnacle of a 1A before he was twenty-seven years of age and ten years later had been appointed as an inspector. In the interim between these achievements he had attended Sydney University as an evening student.
and graduated as Master of Arts in 1892\(^1\). As an inspector Board had participated at the January 1902 Conference but although he was more active than some he did not achieve any particular distinction; instead his suggestion that a conveyance allowance be introduced was rejected by his colleagues\(^2\). His trip abroad was to change this and raise him to a position of such eminence that his choice as Director of Education became almost automatic.

Whilst overseas Board made it his business to see at first hand educational practices in Europe and to acquaint himself with the issues then under discussion. Upon his return he discussed his findings with Acting Under-secretary Bridges who advised him to present his observations in the form of a brief report\(^3\) which was

\[1. \text{A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, } \text{op. cit.}, \text{ contains somewhat fuller biographical details.} \]

\[2. \text{N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, } \text{Conference of Inspectors and Departmental Officers, Held Tuesday, 21st January, 1902, and Following Days, } \text{op. cit.}, \text{ 83.} \]

\[3. \text{P. Board, } \text{"The History of the Syllabus"}, \text{ Education, VII, 9, 15th July, 1926, 227.} \]
Plate XXII. Peter Board, Director of Education and Under-secretary, 1905-1922 - N.S.W. Teacher and Tutorial Guide. II, 22, April 1905, f.488, M.L.
immediately published by the Department. This report was the basis of Board's selection as Director and the basis, too, of primary education for much of the twentieth century.

In an address delivered in his Albury Inspectorate Board demonstrated that he had explored some of the newer educational ideas even before he went abroad. Already he saw the purpose of education as fairly broad - "the building up of an all-round human being". He had, too, some conception of the main feature of Herbartianism as a teaching method -

You cannot pack a child's mind as you can pack a Gladstone bag. ... (T)he skill of the teacher lies, not in putting new facts of thought into the child's mind, but in fitting them there in their right relation with one another, and with those already acquired.

4. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Report by P. Board, Esq., M.A., Inspector of Schools, upon observations and inquiries made with regard to Primary Education in other countries, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1903.

5. P. Board, "Address to Teachers (Delivered at Albury, 6th December, 1902)", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XII, 8, 2nd January, 1903, 179.

6. Ibid.
And he already had some appreciation of the importance of "securing the active participation of the pupil" in the educative process. There was at this stage though no questioning of the Standard of Proficiency. All that was necessary in Board's view was -

that the education given shall be such as will lead to the standard attainments being gained by the pupils on a sound intelligent basis, a basis that takes into account the fact that the material the teacher works upon is a human creature with a character to be developed, physical powers to be trained, and a mind to be instructed and edified.

He was to gain fresh insights during his travels in 1903. These, along with the conservatism of a Departmental officer, were recorded in his report.

**BOARD'S 1903 REPORT UPON PRIMARY EDUCATION**

The report Board furnished was but twelve pages in length, yet it included an assessment of the principles upon which the reform movement abroad was founded.


8. *Ibid*. 
In England and Scotland, especially new ideas are "in the air". These new ideas are not new principles in education but modifications of methods in the application of principles long recognised. The fundamental principles are still those of the "old masters"; progressive teachers are harking back to them, and are trying to find new forms of expressing them and new applications of them to suit developing social requirements. The movement is not in any great degree due to new discoveries; it is a renaissance. The main features of this renaissance may be summed up as follows:—

(1). The attention given to the training of the hand and the eye;

(2). the endeavour to correlate studies and to group those which have a common aim;

(3). the assertion of the cultural aim in education as against a purely utilitarian aim;

(4). the postponement of specialisation of study till a groundwork of general mind, hand and eye training is secured;

(5). the attention given to the teaching of moral and civic duties;

(6). the bringing of school life into closer contact with the child's environment.

9. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Report by P. Board ...upon observations and inquiries made with regard to Primary Education ..., op. cit., 3.
This interpretation is, of course, little more than a list of externals. In this it is decidedly inferior beside the analysis provided by Knibbs. It is however superior to Turner's treatment where there was no such abstract of fundamental features. Still Board's interpretation was an over-simplification of what was at issue in New South Wales. It was true that the principles upon which the New Education was based had been espoused by Froebel and Herbart many years earlier but this was not the point at issue. What was important was that Froebel's principles of freedom for the child and self-activity had not in the past been fully appreciated, understood or applied and that Herbart's work was virtually unknown. Against such a background an interpretation of the reform movement as a renaissance of the ideas of the "old masters" is open to serious objection. It was, however, a convenient interpretation. It implied that since the principles were not new, then New South Wales was not drastically out of step with overseas theory and that with the introduction of some of the newer practices from abroad all would be well. This view is quite unacceptable.
Defence of the local system was not, however, the real essence of Board's report and to emphasise this aspect unduly would distort its character and intention. First and foremost the report was a charter for reform which, although conservative, captured the spirit of the New Education and a number of its details. This was evidenced in Board's list of its six features and his recommendations upon curriculum. These latter were the major positive contribution made to New South Wales education in this report and yet they began first with a rejection of the English and Scottish precedent of individual freedom for inspectors, headmasters and teachers in framing curricula. Board justified his conservatism on the grounds that such total freedom was neither necessary nor desirable. It was his view that the first-rate teacher had adequate freedom already within prescribed Standard of Proficiency whilst to the second and third rate this gave valuable help.

10. Ibid.
and direction. To Board the essence of this question was not whether there should be a prescribed standard but what should be the character of that standard, and the attitude of the teacher towards it. He was, however, convinced that reforms were needed. He further suggested that if these were to ensure sufficient freedom, and at the same time secure educational progress upon sound and modern lines then a Standard of Proficiency should be based upon six major principles. It -

(1) should provide for the systematic instruction in all the subjects necessary for an elementary course;

(2) should provide for the addition of other subjects to suit local circumstances, or the special aptitudes of teachers;

(3) should show the correlation of the subjects of instruction;

(4) should provide that one correlated group should be the basis of classification;

(5) should supply a division of work suitable for various classes, expressed in such general terms as to leave details to the initiative of the teacher;

(6) should avoid prescription of methods, and of examination tests.

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
On the basis of these principles Board then advocated a number of specific changes for the New South Wales primary curriculum. He suggested first that the subjects of the course prescribed should be grouped into six divisions or categories - English, mathematics, nature-knowledge, civics and morals, manual work, music - and that the character of the instruction and the content of the courses be radically changed. Board argued that the mechanics of reading should be taught as a means of access to information and the joys of literature, not as an end, and consequently work in this subject should embrace more than just the books of the approved series; that with spelling primacy should be given to that the child's own words; correct speech should be a feature of the course and lessons and "talks" on current topics should be given a place; and that the essential features of geography should be presented "first, in their relation to the child's immediate surroundings; secondly, as various manifestations of what is called Nature; and thirdly, in their relation to man".

Aware that reform in mathematics teaching was being much discussed in Britain, Board preferred no opinion of his own upon this subject. 16

The recommendations on curriculum were supplemented by comments upon the material equipment of schools upon inspection and examination and upon teacher training. Board noted that abroad "the newer buildings provide(d) one room for each class". 17 He was struck by their superior equipment, too, and as tactfully as possible recommended increased governmental expenditure in this area, pointing out that "(e)conomy in this direction mean(t) reduced efficiency". 18 When he turned to the issues of inspection and examination then Board was at his most conservative. He did make one useful suggestion: that a "Primary Certificate" to be issued after two or three years attendance beyond the level of the Exemption Certificate be introduced. 19 But on the more important

17. Ibid, 2.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid, 6. (This was not new. A similar proposal had been made in 1891 and a Cabinet Minute prepared - Education Department Archives, P3898, Examiner's Files, 1881-1912, "Proposed issue of Certificates, after examination, to pupils of Public Schools and others").
matters of inspectorial examinations he rejected any complete reform along English lines. The new form of English inspection was not, in Board's opinion, either sufficiently informative or a sufficient protection against the "laziness" of teachers. He suggested the compromise of inspectorial examinations every second year instead of every year with these confined mostly to English and arithmetic and conducted in the spirit of the reformed curriculum; consequently numerical marks were not to be awarded. This system was, in fact, introduced for 1904. It was subject to almost immediate criticism from Professor Anderson who rightly saw it as akin to serving God and Mammon in alternate years. But still this became the form of inspection and it was thus on Board's recommendation that the inspector became more of an adviser than before but still retained the contradictory function of examiner. This remains a problem still.

21. Ibid.
22. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held Tuesday, 5th April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 39.
It was with similar conservatism that Board suggested retention of the pupil-teacher system, repeating in this context the arguments favouring increased maturity at entry which had been heard at the January 1902 Conference. He found support for his opinions in English and Scottish practice. Fortunately in this area of teacher-training Board abruptly changed his mind before or during the April 1904 Conference, but it still remains true that his 1903 report reflects a considerable conservatism, a conservatism especially evidenced on the question of freedom for the teacher to frame his own curriculum, upon inspectorial functions, in the field of teacher-training and in his interpretation of the New Education as a "renaissance". Yet this report was the foundation for much of the developments which occurred in primary schooling in New South Wales during the next two decades. Fortunately Board's conservatism, a conservatism of a Departmental officer with a faith in

23. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Report by Peter Board ..., op. cit., 10-11.

24. Ibid.
past policies and practices, was not all-embracing. The major recommendations for reform of the primary curriculum were well directed, if superficial. More fortunately still they represented only a stage in the development of Board's concept of the purposes of primary education and of the structure of an appropriate course of study. This is just as well. Although Board's recommendations placed the child more at the centre of the educational process than before, and although the methods he suggested were in themselves improvements upon the old, there was a quite insufficient examination of the function of primary schooling. When Board wrote that the New Education was characterised, among other things, by "the assertion of the cultural aim of education as against a purely utilitarian aim" the purposes of primary schooling may have been vaguely implied but this fundamental question required a more detailed examination than this. And just what was it that was

meant by another of the characteristics of the New Education - "the bringing of the school life into closer contact with the child's environment"? And more importantly still, what about the naturalistic aim of harmonious all-round development of the child? Board gave this last so little thought at the time that he forgot to include physical education in his discussion. Almost certainly Board had some thoughts on these questions. Earlier in his address to the teachers in his inspectorate he had posited a fairly broad aim of education and had stressed the importance of the child's active participation. The omission of such ideas from his 1903 report was a serious deficiency.

THE REACTION TO BOARD'S PRIMARY REPORT

Board's report went unnoticed by the press but within the Department of Public Instruction it was very


favourably received. At the meeting of inspectors on 12th January, 1904, many of Board's points were incorporated in Bridges' directive that the attention of teachers be drawn to the following matters.

1. The utmost importance of inculcating good manners.

2. The mistaken zeal in doing too much for the pupil instead of developing to a greater extent his self-activity ...

3. The advantages gained by teachers and pupils making their own aids to teaching, e.g. sand maps, ... models of cubes, ... illustrations of mechanical powers, ...

4. The desirableness of extending spelling beyond the scope of the reading lessons, and for introducing alternative reading books of a literary character for all classes, subject to the approval of the inspector.

5. Teachers should train their pupils to give their answers in complete sentences in the lower classes, and in extended form in the upper classes.

6. Arithmetic - The abolition of operations with large abstract numbers, and the employment of numbers within the mental grasp of the pupils ...

7. Grammar - Composition to be taught systematically in all classes. The sentence, not the word, to be the unit. Spelling of words of pupils' own vocabulary to be encouraged ...
8. Geography - The natural and human interest to be dwelt upon to a much greater extent.

9. Object Lessons - Local conditions and local wants to have special prominence. Nature study to receive much more encouragement. 28

Clearly the New Education had been officially sanctioned for self-activity and reality had been accepted as basic principles, oral and written expression were to be given greater emphasis, reading was to be broader in scope, geography was to become more human and nature study was to be encouraged. Having made this important decision known, Bridges then also announced that he "thought it desirable to modify the course of instruction and the standard of proficiency, and that advantage should be taken of the experience gained by Mr. Board during his recent visit to Europe to consider the matter" 29. In this official report it was claimed that a committee of inspectors (of which Board was one member) was appointed to prepare a new syllabus 30. Board himself was later to


29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.
claim that he wrote the syllabus himself before showing it to Dawson and McLelland for their approval. The result of these endeavours appeared in February 1904.

THE 1904 "NEW SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION"

The New Syllabus failed to impress The Daily Telegraph and drew vigorous criticism from the Sydney Morning Herald on the ground that it was "a sort of homeopathic antidote to Messrs. Knibbs and Turner" based "on a report by an officer of the department which


32. Cf. S.M.H., 17th February, 1904. It is readily accessible in the N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIII, 10, 1st March, 1904, 234-42 and as an appendix to the report of the April 1904 conference. It is important to note that Crane and Walker present an erroneous outline of the sequence of events during 1904. The syllabus was not prepared after the April Conference as they suggest (A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, op. cit., 37).

33. The Daily Telegraph, 26th February, 1904.

34. S.M.H., 17th February, 1904.

35. Ibid.
ignore(d) the existence of the education commissioners"\textsuperscript{36}. The haste with which this syllabus was prepared and its timely appearance support the contention that its production was, at least in part, designed to blunt the edge of the criticisms aimed at the system by Knibbs and Turner. This was not however the sole reason for its appearance; it was also a sincere and genuine step towards reform. Nor as the \textit{Herald} implied did the syllabus ignore the work of the education commissioners. Despite Board's later claim that he had "never read more than fifty pages"\textsuperscript{37} of the Knibbs-Turner report there is clear internal evidence that some of the many ideas it contained were familiar to Board and his colleagues. Nor would there be any acceptable excuse if this had not been the case. The \textit{Interim Report} had been summarised in the press early in December\textsuperscript{38} and the work must itself have been available to such a specialised

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{36} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{37} \textit{Journal of the Institute of Inspectors of Schools}, 5, 1, April 1923, 2.
\item \textsuperscript{38} \textit{The Daily Telegraph}, 8th December, 1903.
\end{itemize}
committee during January. In addition Knibbs had given a detailed statement of many of his ideas before the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Conference on 30th June, 1903 and of course Turner was available for personal discussions. Despite all this, what correspondence there was between the New Syllabus and the recommendations of Commissioners Knibbs and Turner may still have been coincidental. The point is, after all, that educational reform was the subject of widespread discussion and the Commissioners certainly had no monopoly when it came to suggestions, nor any primacy with the ideas their report contained. Geography demonstrates this point well, for here the New Syllabus seems structured to implement Knibbs' ideas. But Knibbs had quoted Professor Gregory of Melbourne amongst his authorities as later Professor David did; and in his


40. There is no evidence one way or the other of such discussions but it is a reasonable inference.


report Board showed that he understood as well as anyone that the principal change was from a physical to a human geography. Fundamentally whether there was or was not any direct debt to Knibbs and Turner in the New Syllabus is not of any great importance. In the final analysis the inspiration for both was contemporary theory and practice. Agreement on many points was to be expected. Equally some differences in interpretation were exhibited, differences whose nature and significance emerge from an analysis of this New Syllabus of 1904.

Naturally enough the 1904 New Syllabus of Instruction was based upon the opinions Board had expressed in his 1903 Report, opinions incorporated in the preface where the underlying principles upon which the syllabus was based were set forth. The inclusion of such a statement was in itself an important innovation. The Standards of Proficiency had been bald outlines of expected attainments naked of any statement of aims or purposes. Now the teacher was informed of the intent of the course of study -

43. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Report by Peter Board ..., op. cit., 5.
Besides providing a progressive course of instruction, it is designed to give practical application in the teaching work of schools to the principle of correlation of the subjects of study, to make "the self-activity of the pupil the basis of school instruction", to bring the work of the pupil into closer touch with his home and school surroundings, and to make the school a powerful agent in the intellectual, moral, and social development of the child.44

What was new in this statement was the decision to make "the self-activity of the child the basis of school instruction". This was a most important addition. It was employed as a criterion for the selection and organisation of much of the content of the syllabus. It was also intended to be the major criterion for the selection of teaching methods. This was most apparent from the discussion upon mathematics and on nature knowledge. Of mathematics, for example, there was the comment:-

It is important that the youngest children should not only see but handle the quantities with which they deal, and actually make the measurements on which they are to operate. A valuable educational opportunity is lost if the pupil merely sees the teacher do what he should do for himself. It is here that a means is offered for directing and turning to useful purpose the self-activity of the child. Since throughout the whole course the exercises should be such as may naturally arise out of the pupil's experiences, it will be noted that the syllabus requires the pupil to deal only with numbers that he can comprehend. It also requires that all mechanical processes of calculation should be treated as mere means to serve a real purpose, and further, that as the methods employed in mental calculation are natural methods, mental work should be the basis of the instruction in this subject, written calculations being used merely as a supplementary aid or to give exercise in the expression of processes.45

Crane and Walker discuss this fresh emphasis by Board at some length, attributing it variously to an earlier conscious avoidance of philosophical discussion in the 1903 Report; to Board's "realization of his own conversion to the New Education"46 somewhere between October 1903 and April 1904; and to the influence of

45. Ibid, 235.

Parker's educational ideas upon him, presumably during this same period. This first point is untenable. There had been a discussion of the theory underlying the reform movement in Board's 1903 Report and this would not have been greatly lengthened by the inclusion of the principle of self-activity. The second point is more acceptable, although clearly any "conversion" had occurred by February when the syllabus appeared. The third point demands rather more detailed consideration. In this context Crane and Walker point out that Newling's earlier description of the New Education introduced by Board as "mainly Herbartianism" is only partly true. In this they are well justified. Herbartianism was certainly the force behind the role assigned in the syllabus to correlation but it was naturalism, more particularly the naturalism of Froebel, which inspired the child-centred

47. Ibid, 45-49.


emphasis which was also evident. It is this latter emphasis which Crane and Walker attribute to the influence upon Board of Parker's writings, pointing as justification to his possession of these works and to the later decision to set Parker's *Talks on Teaching* as the text for probationary students, for teachers of small schools and for candidates for a Third Class Teachers' Certificate 50. Four points may be made about this claim. First, Board whilst situated at Albury had been aware of some aspects of the Victorian system and had certainly been in a favourable position to observe the reform movement already at work in Victoria. He may well have looked at this and discovered in the process that in America the New Education was equated with the Quincy

50. Ibid. (Note that this was a piecemeal decision - *The Public Instruction Gazette*, I, 2, 13th December, 1905; I, 6, 28th March, 1906, 54; I, 11, 28th August, 1906, 162; I, 13, 27th October, 1906, 218 - and that Parker's text continued to be prescribed until 1914 - *The Public Instruction Gazette*, VII, 5, 31st May, 1913, Supplement "Examination of Teachers: Easter, 1914, and subsequent years".
Education. He could equally have discovered that Victoria, through Frank Tate, had already laid claim to "reality" as the central idea behind the New Education. Was "self-activity" then just an alternative as Board sought something different to say? Or had Board simply given more careful thought to the implications of his 1902 admonition to teachers to secure the active participation of the child? Or was Board simply following an instruction from Bridges? Was Parker necessarily involved at all? The second point is precisely this. And the fact of the matter is that in 1903 Parker had no monopoly of the ideas he expressed. Board could well have encountered similar ideas whilst travelling abroad, found them in the writings of Dewey and others or in the local pronouncements of Anderson.

51. Victoria Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid, III, 1, July, 1902, 17. (This was the first of three parts of a "Selected Article" upon Parker. The others were published in August and September. American in origin, they were an appreciative obituary.)

and Bridges, or have abstracted them afresh from Parker's own sources of inspiration. And the third point follows: namely, that to accept even indirectly the influence of Parker or anyone else distorts the facts. Crane and Walker are careful to point out that Board's views and those of Parker were not identical. They also admit that other influences were at work but in their emphasis upon Parker they fail to recognise that it was these, namely English and Scottish precedent, which were decidedly more important and more direct. And it is this which is the fourth point and the major one. The evidence for Parker's influence is tenuous at most; that for English precedent in particular is direct and incontrovertible. In this last direction Crane and Walker rightly point to the English Revised Code of 1904 and the accompanying Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools of 190553 but they do not pursue this far enough. This

failure is surprising in the face of Board's own testimony in 1903 and again in 1926 that it was England and Scotland from whence he obtained his inspiration.

Most interesting of all is the Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others ... Although not published until 1905 the ideas it contained had been under discussion for some time before that date. Board would most certainly have encountered them whilst abroad and it is therefore no coincidence that the views contained in this English handbook found expression in the local New Syllabus. The number of such parallels is, in fact, remarkable. As a first example Board's decision to make his syllabus "suggestive rather than specific ... to indicate the scope of treatment, to lay down fundamental principles and lines of direction at various stages of the pupil's progress; but ... not prescribed details

54. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Report by P. Board ... on ... Primary Education, op. cit., 3.


and methods for teaching individual subjects"\(^57\) had its
direct parallel with the Board of Education statement that
"(u)niformity in details of practice ... is not desirable
... (and) each teacher sh(ould) think for himself, and
work out for himself such methods of teaching as may use
his powers to the best advantage and be best suited to
the particular needs and conditions of the school"\(^58\).
Similar direct relationships exist between the New
Syllabus and the English handbook's recommendations that
head teachers assume responsibility for the conduct of
examinations of pupils\(^59\); that "the mother tongue is
the most important part of school instruction"\(^60\); that
special attention be given to oral English through such
activities as "talks"\(^61\); that since the "main purpose
of teaching to read is to enable the scholars to master
printed or written matter for their own information"\(^62\)

\(^57\). "The New Syllabus of Instruction", N.S.W. Educational
Gazette, XVIII, 10, 1st March, 1904, 235.

\(^58\). Board of Education, op. cit., 6.

\(^59\). Ibid, 16.

\(^60\). Ibid, 29.

\(^61\). Ibid.

\(^62\). Ibid, 35.
and "the cultivation of taste and the inculcation of a love of good books"$^{63}$, then, as one consequence, reading was not to be limited to the two or three books prescribed by former Codes$^{64}$; that written arithmetic should be "an appendage to mental work"$^{65}$; that "(t)hroughout the school the instruction (in mathematics) should be made as realistic as possible"$^{66}$ by the use of objects and materials which the children "should themselves handle"$^{67}$; that the "concentric" method was a suitable approach to history$^{68}$; that the subjects of the curriculum should be co-ordinated and taught where possible in connection one with another or even, in some cases, through other subjects$^{69}$. Every one of these ideas has its parallel

63. Ibid, 36.
64. Ibid, 37.
65. Ibid, 40.
66. Ibid, 41.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid, 121.
expression in the 1904 New South Wales New Syllabus of Instruction. There was no break with one tradition: British precedent was the basis of local innovation and reform. But having acknowledged the principal source of the New Syllabus it still remains necessary to examine the extent of the changes its introduction actually wrought upon New South Wales elementary education.

THE 1904 SYLLABUS AND THE 1898 STANDARD: A DETAILED COMPARISON

Just how much was new in the New Syllabus? This is the important question. It can only be answered accurately in specifics: generalities will not suffice. An adequate answer must therefore begin with a detailed comparison of the 1904 Syllabus with the preceding 1898 Standard of Proficiency. A grade analysis of their respective requirements in the major curricular areas with accompanying discussion therefore follows.

70. Compiled respectively from the 1898 Standard and the 1904 New Syllabus of Instruction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE XII: GRADE ANALYSIS OF THE 1898 STANDARD OF PROFICIENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) ENGLISH</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS (1½-2 yrs.)</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (FIRST YEAR)</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (SECOND YEAR)</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>READING</td>
<td>Primers I and II.</td>
<td>Reader II.</td>
<td>Reader III.</td>
<td>Reader IV.</td>
<td>Reader V.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reader I.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: In all classes above the First an intelligent grasp of what was read expected.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERSE</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>Repetition from memory of 30 lines of poetry.</td>
<td>Repetition from memory of 40 lines of poetry.</td>
<td>Repetition from memory of 50 lines of poetry.</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPELLING</td>
<td>From lessons read - eight lines.</td>
<td>From lessons read - twelve lines.</td>
<td>From lessons read - twelves lines.</td>
<td>From lessons read - twelve consecutive lines.</td>
<td>Passages of ordinary prose - fifteen consecutive lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAMMAR</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>To distinguish all the parts of speech in easy sentences.</td>
<td>Parsing and analysis of easy sentences with a knowledge of the rules of syntax; accidence.</td>
<td>Parsing passages of ordinary difficulty; practical instruction in accidence and syntax.</td>
<td>Accidence and syntax, ordinary parsing, simple analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPOSITION</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>To write a letter of not less than 12 lines.</td>
<td>&quot;Composition&quot; (not further specified here or in Class 4 and 5).</td>
<td>&quot;Composition&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Composition&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE XIII: GRADE ANALYSIS OF 1904 NEW SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION

## (A) ENGLISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS (1½-2½ yrs.)</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
<th>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>READING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: <strong>To be based on the &quot;word&quot; method</strong> with practice in the synthesis of words from their elementary sound.</td>
<td>Primer I and II, Reader I. Reading sentences - words from Primers I and II. Blackboard reading - sentences based on conversation of &quot;Talks&quot;. Reading from story book, fairy tales and nursery rhymes.</td>
<td>Australian Reader II. Supplementary reading from approved books. Silent reading for limited period.</td>
<td>Australian Reader III. Supplementary reader as for Class II.</td>
<td>Australian Reader IV. Supplementary reading as for Class II.</td>
<td>Australian Reader V. Supplementary reading from books of a distinctly literary character but interesting to pupils. Exercises in use of dictionary, atlas, books of reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VERSE</strong></td>
<td>Learning simple rhymes.</td>
<td>Learning short poetical pieces.</td>
<td>Learning short poetical pieces.</td>
<td>Learning suitable selections of poetry. Study of literary characteristics of a few selected pieces.</td>
<td>... for the heads of departments to arrange programmes of study for these classes to serve the needs of their own schools. But in every school the course shall include English, another language at least, mathematics, science, and physical education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRITING</strong></td>
<td>Graded lessons associating words with written expression of them. In copy books at earliest appropriate stage.</td>
<td>Half-text in copy books. Careful writing in spelling lists, composition and arithmetic.</td>
<td>Small hand with double ruling in copy books. Careful work in all written exercises.</td>
<td>Ordinary small hand with single ruling in copy books. Careful arrangemental work in all written exercises.</td>
<td>Small hand in copy books (limited to two lessons per week). Careful arrangement and setting out of all written work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPELLING</strong></td>
<td>Words in reading lessons. Words commonly used by pupils. Special treatment of words where sound does not indicate spelling.</td>
<td>Words in ordinary speech of pupils, and reading lessons with special reference to phonetic elements and irregular spelling. Dictation exercises.</td>
<td>Spelling of words in reading course, words used in written composition, common words of irregular spelling. Dictation exercises.</td>
<td>Spelling of words in reading lessons, words used in written composition, and words of irregular spelling. Dictation exercises.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAMMAR AND SPEECH</strong></td>
<td>Correction of errors in ordinary speech.</td>
<td>Correct pronunciation. Sentence building using subject and predicate. Verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb. Correct oral expression.</td>
<td>Functions of all words in a sentence. Combining sentences. Analysis into clauses, subjects, and predicates.</td>
<td>Relations of the several parts of a sentence to one another. Relation of noun and pronoun to the verb.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS (1½-2½ yrs.)</td>
<td>SECOND CLASS</td>
<td>THIRD CLASS</td>
<td>FOURTH CLASS</td>
<td>FIFTH CLASS</td>
<td>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMPOSITION</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The major points which emerge from a comparison between the requirements in English in 1898 and 1904 are five-fold. First, it is apparent that except perhaps in the field of Grammar the demands made in this subject were in no sense lessened in 1904; indeed they appear to have been considerably increased. Second, the principal areas in which the burden was increased were in oral and written expression and in reading. Third, this was consistent with Board's decisions to elevate English to the position of eminence in the course of study, to accept the principle that within this field oral expression and speech warranted greater attention, and to emphasise "self-activity" as a foundation for classroom instruction. Fourth, there was evidenced an extension of this principle to an embryonic project approach to oral and written composition at the Fifth Class level. Finally, the much greater detail provided by the 1904 Syllabus is an obvious feature. Turning to Mathematics, the question to be answered is whether or not these points are also applicable to this subject.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (1)</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (2)</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARITHMETIC</td>
<td>Notation to 1000 and 4 lines.</td>
<td>Notation to nine places and three lines.</td>
<td>Notation to nine places. All the compound rules.</td>
<td>Reduction. Exercises in back rules; household accounts; bills of parcels; simple proportion and practice (money only).</td>
<td>Compound proportion; Vulgar and decimal fractions; simple interest; mensuration of surfaces; Miscellaneous mental arithmetic.</td>
<td>Compound interest; Profit and loss; Metric system; Miscellaneous exercises in back rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy mental addition and subtraction. Multiplication to &quot;7 times&quot;</td>
<td>Multiplication in full. Short division. Mental exercises in simple rules.</td>
<td>Tables: Multiplication to 12 times, money.</td>
<td>Tables (confined to money, length, weight, capacity, time).</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUCLID</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Book 1: Definitions, Propositions to No. 12.</td>
<td>Books I and II.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALGEBRA</td>
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<td>The four simple rules. Simple equations and fractions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XV: GRADE ANALYSIS OF THE 1904 NEW SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION

(B) MATHEMATICS
Mental and Oral Work

Infants' Department and First Class (1½-2½ yrs.)

Quantity, Number, and Forgetting:
Number realization by counting, arranging, etc.; counting to 10, then 50, 100, 200; arrangement in groups. Addition and subtraction. Enumeration and notation to 10, 100, 200.
Measurement of lengths by sticks of equal lengths. Addition and subtraction based on these lengths.
Notion of "time" and "parts".
Multiplication and division.
Construction of table to 10 x 12.
Division of quantities into parts and use of ½, 1/3, ¼, 1/10.
Divided cube used for forms of square, oblong, triangle — drawing these.
Use of foot rule in feet and inches. Division of inch into ½, ¼, 1/8.
Drawing lines of given length in feet and inches.
Mental exercises in four simple operations dealing with measurement and common things, leading to exercises in abstract numbers.
Recognition and naming coins in common use. Relative values of these.

Second Class

Four simple operations within pupils' experience using mental concrete exercises.
Measurement with foot rule: yds., ft., ins., half ins., fourths and eighths.
Use of set squares and ruling to make lines, squares, rectangles and triangles of given dimensions. Exercises in four simple operations based on these measurements.
Tables to 12 x 12 constructed by pupils.
Simple factors.
Square roots within limits of "times" table. 
½, 1/3, ¼, 1/12 of given quantities.
Symbols: +, -, x, ÷, ½, √.
Equivalent values in pounds, shillings, pence, farthings.

Third Class

Concrete exercises on measures, money, domestic accounts and simple business transactions.
Measurement with school playground. Construction of triangles, parallelograms, and circles with given dimensions using ruler, set square, compasses.
Making plans, scales 1 inch to yd or foot based on actual measurements.
Tables to 16 x 12 constructed by pupils.
Common applications of ½, 2/3, ¼, 11/12.
Use of symbols continued. Expression of quantities by literal symbols with symbols of operation.

Fourth Class

Tables of length, area, weight, capacity and time. Mental operations on practical use of these.
Calculations based on actual measurements with foot and yard rule of areas of rectangles, triangles, parallelograms. Drawing these to scale of 1", ½", ¼", 1/8" to 1 ft. Experimental study of properties of these figures. Use of protractor.
Mental operations on extended use of fractions.
Literal symbols of length, area, weight, volume with symbols of operation.
Common short methods.
Decimal notation. Ratios expressed by fractions, decimals and percentages.

Fifth Class

Mental operations in common business transactions as for 4th, extended to wider range.
Exercises on simple fractions, decimals, percentages.
Effect of small errors in the four operations.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES

Vide general comment under 6th and 7th Classes for English.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS (1½-2½ yrs.)</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
<th>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary mental exercises with range of numbers above 10,000; multipliers and divisors to 100.</td>
<td>Supplementary and following same direction as oral and mental - Numbers to 100,000; multipliers and divisors to 1,000.</td>
<td>Based on oral and mental work with extended range of number but avoiding magnitudes not in common use.</td>
<td>Four simple operations with extended range of number. Exercises in measures of value, weight, time, length, and coinage.</td>
<td>Domestic and Mercantile transactions dealing with value, length, time, weight, area. Four operations applied to fractions, decimals and percentages as ratios. Simple interest. Exercises in calculating areas and volumes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding simple column to 10, 50, 100.</td>
<td>Money - four operations with sums to £10, multipliers and divisors to 12.</td>
<td>Money - sums to £100. Simple reduction of money to equivalent values in coins used in this State.</td>
<td>Fractions, decimals and percentages as ratios. Simple interest. Exercises in calculating areas and volumes.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition and subtraction to 200.</td>
<td>Practical application of all written work.</td>
<td>operations in measures of length, weight, capacity, and time to limits above. Simple practical applications.</td>
<td>Four operations in terminating decimals and simplest illustrations of recurring decimals. Simple practice and proportion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divisors to 10, dividends to 200.</td>
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</table>

Note: "None of these operations should deal with abstract numbers until the children are first familiar with their use in dealing with quantities of actual things."
The comparison of courses in Mathematics of 1898 and 1904 shows indeed many parallels with the case in English. Except in the size of the numbers which pupils were expected to handle there was no easying of their tasks. In fact the reverse was true. Geometry was added throughout the course. Algebra was now included in the primary as well as the higher primary course and so was the metric system. Even the Infants did not escape; indeed they may well have been the most affected; and here the increased demand extended to an extension of "tables" from "seven" to "ten times". But to be just, the course was designed to implement the principles of self-activity and reality and incorporated the view that all branches of mathematics could well be treated simultaneously. In implementing this latter concept the course was structured upon a more "concentric" system than New South Wales had previously known. Nevertheless the impression remains of a prescribed standard more difficult than that of 1898, an impression not solely created by the increased detail provided by the 1904 Syllabus, nor dispelled by any claim that the increased emphasis upon reality made it less difficult than it seems.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECT LESSONS</th>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (1)</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (2)</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten exercises.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Class:</td>
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<td>Simple subjects of interest to children of this age.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOGRAPHY</th>
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</table>

- To know the school locality and the cardinal points, to be able to show on a map of the world the continents, oceans and the larger and more important islands, seas, bays and straits.

- Simple oral lessons on the Australian Colonies, Tasmania and New Zealand. (As memory work sufficient to know names and show positions of two or three of chief towns and important rivers in each colony.)

- Simple lessons on Europe, Asia and America. (As memory work sufficient to show position of a few chief towns, rivers and mountain ranges in each country.)


- Commercial routes; products of different countries; forms of government; important manufacturing and mining centres. British Empire.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
<th>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATURE KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Series of lessons on plant and animal life within reach of child's observation; choice depending on surroundings.</td>
<td>Observation talks.</td>
<td>Lessons on plant and animal life and articles in common use.</td>
<td>Observation and recording simple meteorological phenomena and seasonal changes.</td>
<td>Lessons on elementary botany or geology experimentally treated or objects of common use which furnish illustrations of the application of elementary scientific principles (mechanical inventions to be encouraged).</td>
<td>Lessons on agricultural pursuits, dealing not merely with familiar agricultural operations but with scientific principles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observation of the sky.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing of plants and flowers; observation and record of stages of growth.</td>
<td>Lessons in series on plant and animal life as illustrated by objects observed.</td>
<td>Geographical features of school locality, operation of natural forces as illustrated by them.</td>
<td>Lessons based on these observations.</td>
<td>Collecting specimens illustrative of natural history.</td>
<td>A course of experimental lessons in a branch of elementary science, or lessons bearing upon principles involved in processes of local industry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Nature Knowledge</td>
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<td>(C) NATURE KNOWLEDGE</td>
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<td>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS</td>
<td>SECOND CLASS</td>
<td>THIRD CLASS</td>
<td>FOURTH CLASS</td>
<td>FIFTH CLASS</td>
<td>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NATURE KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Series of lessons on plant and animal life within reach of child's observation; choice depending on surroundings.</td>
<td>Observation talks.</td>
<td>Lessons on plant and animal life and articles in common use.</td>
<td>Lessons on elementary botany or geology experimentally treated or objects of common use which furnish illustrations of the application of elementary scientific principles (mechanical inventions to be encouraged).</td>
<td>Lessons on agricultural pursuits, dealing not merely with familiar agricultural operations but with scientific principles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observation of the sky.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing of plants and flowers; observation and record of stages of growth.</td>
<td>Sky phenomena and effect of seasonal changes.</td>
<td>Geographical features of school locality, operation of natural forces as illustrated by them.</td>
<td>Collecting specimens illustrative of natural history.</td>
<td>A course of experimental lessons in a branch of elementary science, or lessons bearing upon principles involved in processes of local industry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short and simple selections of poetry descriptive of natural objects (for memorisation).</td>
<td>Surface features of school locality and geographical terms applicable.</td>
<td>Geographical features of school locality, operation of natural forces as illustrated by them.</td>
<td>Collecting specimens illustrative of natural history.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picture scrap books may be formed.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The "Nature Knowledge" of 1904 is best paralleled by the 1898 requirements for Object Lessons and Geography. And, as with English and Mathematics, it is noticeable that the work remained at least as demanding as before, probably more so, especially as the concept that geography could begin from the earliest stage was incorporated and, from a no doubt laudable desire to make the primary course "complete", what had once been demanded of the higher primary "Fifth" was now demanded of the new Fifth class. The real improvement was of course the emphasis of 1904 upon the self-activity of the pupil and upon the heuristic method, most desirable features but, as with mathematics, insufficient in themselves to dispel the impression of a more demanding course.

71. The parallel is not complete because Kindergarten exercises and Object Lessons were provided as alternatives for the Infants and First Class respectively and the former has its best parallel in the 1904 requirements for Art and Manual Work.
### TABLE XVIII: GRADE ANALYSIS OF THE 1898 STANDARD OF PROFICIENCY

**(D) HISTORY AND CIVICS AND MORALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS’ DEPARTMENT AND FIRST CLASS</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (1)</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (2)</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HISTORY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not fewer than 24 simple stories or biographies, given orally, covering the period from the Roman Conquest to Richard I, e.g. The Ancient Britons, the Norman Conquest.</td>
<td>As for III(1), but covering the period John to Elizabeth, e.g. Magna Carta, Wat Tyler, Wars of the Roses.</td>
<td>As for III(1) but covering the period James I to the present time, e.g. Gunpowder Plot, Raleigh, American Independence, Nelson.</td>
<td>William III to the present time &quot;as treated in any ordinary text-book&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCRIPTURE AND MORALS</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XIX: GRADE ANALYSIS OF THE 1904 NEW SYLLABUS OF INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-INFANTS' DEPARTMENTAND FIRST CLASS-</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
<th>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCRIPTURE</strong></td>
<td>Stories from authorised Scripture lessons. Old and New Testa­ments.</td>
<td>As for Class I.</td>
<td>As for Class I.</td>
<td>As for Class I but to be read by pupils.</td>
<td>As for Class IV.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIVICS AND MORALS</strong></td>
<td>Stories and fables with a moral purpose. Moral attributes of family virtues of truthfulness, politeness, gentleness, control of temper, obedience to parents.</td>
<td>Stories from history, ancient and modern, illustrative of moral attributes.</td>
<td>Stories from history and biography illustrative of self-reliance, facing difficulties, benevolence.</td>
<td>Lessons on personal and family obligations, industry, honesty, patriotism, treatment of animals.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRALIAN HISTORY</strong></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Stories of discovery and exploration.</td>
<td>Public institutions in association with Australian history from 1850.</td>
<td>Historical basis and development of local institutions in Australia to the present time. The franchise. Duties of citizenship.</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRITISH HISTORY</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (1) "Moral teaching should permeate the whole management of the school, and be embodied in the methods of discipline and the treatment of children by the teacher, in the proprieties and manners required from the children and the example of the teachers. The moral influence of the teacher should be felt in a special manner in the freedom of the playground."

(2) (Upper Division): "Leading dates as a principle of order in the pupils' ideas should be committed to memory."
The most obvious and important innovation of the 1904 course in Civics and Morals was implied in the title itself. The 1898 Standard had provided for "moral" lessons only to the lowest classes where they were an alternative and a precursor to the Scripture Lessons of later grades. The 1904 Syllabus provided for both forms of "moral" lessons at all levels, introduced formal instruction on ethics and civic duties, and inaugurated in the process a "history" course of the Horatio, El Cid, Gentle Buddha type. The Syllabus also introduced the "concentric" approach to British History and something along these lines, although less consistently applied, for Australian History. But overall the 1904 course was distinguished as broader, more socially relevant, and consciously designed to implement the contemporary interest in the moral, ethical and social function of education and the contemporary opinion that this could best be served by adding formal instruction in these areas to the informal training provided in the day-to-day activities of the school. Was the course more relevant to child needs and interests? Was it less difficult? Perhaps; but it was clearly difficult to teach interestingly and convincingly and without undue polemics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (1)</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS (2)</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRAWING</strong></td>
<td>Straight lines and straight line forms.</td>
<td>Freehand drawing on slates of simple right-lined and curved figures.</td>
<td>Simple geometrical figures, drawn with rulers, freehand drawing of regular forms and curved figures.</td>
<td>As for III(1)</td>
<td>Freehand drawing - foliage, flowers, ornament, vase forms, etc. in outline; and either simple geometrical figures using instruments and including scale drawing of rectilinear objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SINGING</strong></td>
<td>Simple melodies by ear.</td>
<td>Simple melodies; easy exercises on the modulator; strong tones.</td>
<td>Tonic Sol-fa notation scale exercises; easy time exercises; two and three pulse measures; Simple songs and rounds.</td>
<td>Tonic Sol-fa scale exercises; time exercises in four pulse measure, introducing half-pulse, hold-mark, and rest; two-part songs and rounds.</td>
<td>Staff notation, treble clef; 2 and 3 time; 4 and 4 time; time exercises, introducing minim and crotchet, quavers and dotted notes with rests; two-part songs and rounds; structure of the diatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRILL</strong></td>
<td>Inspection drill; simple exercises.</td>
<td>The programme for all classes II-V was drawn from &quot;Infantry Drill, 1896&quot;. It was less demanding for girls than for boys. Nor did girls indulge in such things as &quot;firing exercises&quot;. Instead they spent more time with dumbbells.</td>
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</table>

*(E) DRAWING, SINGING, DRILL*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFANTS' DEPARTMENT OR FIRST CLASS</th>
<th>SECOND CLASS</th>
<th>THIRD CLASS</th>
<th>FOURTH CLASS</th>
<th>FIFTH CLASS</th>
<th>SIXTH AND SEVENTH CLASSES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>In coloured cray-on of fruits and common objects, e.g. turnips, in geometric pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freeline</td>
<td>From the object or nature in outline, e.g. knife, saw, dog. (Where object not available picture to be shown in addition to drawing which teacher made step by step.)</td>
<td>Leaves of simple curves and fairly flat objects, e.g. purse.</td>
<td>From nature and objects requiring little knowledge of perspective.</td>
<td>Eleven drawings from nature and objects. Details of animals, e.g. dog's paw. Perspective, e.g. telegraph line.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>Of similar objects to above in the round; assembling these to form borders.</td>
<td>Leaves; objects in the round; designs from nature to fill squares, rectangles, triangles.</td>
<td>As above.</td>
<td>As for Class III plus more difficult types, e.g. spray of ivy.</td>
<td>Blossoms, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of pitch.</td>
<td>&quot;Pitch&quot; and &quot;time&quot;. Scale exercises to thirds. Time exercises on pulse, half-pulse and hold marks. Easy two-part songs and rounds.</td>
<td>Scale exercises embracing all diatonic intervals. Time exercises on pulse, half-pulse and hold marks. Two-part songs; two- and three-part rounds.</td>
<td>Interval practice of greater difficulty, including chromatic notes, e.g. fe, ta. Time exercises of increased difficulty introducing rests. Easy time exercises in Key C.</td>
<td>Staff notation only.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simple melodies by ear.</td>
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<td>Voice training - open vowel sounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>MUSIC</td>
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<td>MUSIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRILL</td>
<td>No course was specified for this subject.</td>
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</table>
The grade analyses of the subjects of Art and Music demonstrate once again that the courses proposed in 1904 were more demanding than their predecessors. The art syllabus had been prepared by John Branch, but recently arrived from England, and incorporated the latest English ideas. It also incorporated the passing fad of ambidextral drawing; some of the work in free-line was to be performed in this fashion. Still noticeably absent from the course at this stage was manual work. Just as noticeable are the equation of "nature" with leaves and blossoms, the role assigned to mechanical drawing, the lack of provision for creative spontaneity and the teacher's function as a step-by-step demonstrator. It was perhaps as a course a shade more enjoyable for the children because of the variety of media employed but for this very reason was clearly more difficult to teach.

72. Ambidextral drawing was a misguided interpretation of the naturalistic aim of harmonious, all-round, development.
The preparation of the course in music was entrusted to Hugo Alpen and he took the opportunity thus provided to emphasise voice production since this had been the one point criticised by the Commissioners. But he could not resist at the same time raising the standard prescribed.

Physical education was another subject with a specialist in charge; in this case, Colonel Paul. What is most interesting here is that although this subject was listed in the preface of the syllabus as one of the major subject areas there was no indication at all of the course which was to be followed. Perhaps Colonel Paul had as yet no fresh contribution to make. This is understandable but not its total omission. Here was clear evidence of hasty preparation.

THE 1904 SYLLABUS: GENERAL

The general conclusions which follow from this detailed analysis are: (1) there was a new spirit of

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(This criticism was implied by Turner, rather than openly stated.)
purpose, related to the principles of self-expression, reality and social relevance; (2) there was a genuine endeavour to capture not only the spirit of the New Education but also to incorporate contemporary opinion upon suitable structure and content of the courses of study; (3) neither of these first two features resulted in a less demanding course of study, indeed in some directions the sights were raised perceptibly; (4) despite this last fact it was intended that the course assume a less bookish character and it was presumably expected that as the work was more practical and "real" a broader demand was possible; (5) each of the course outlines was much more detailed than ever before, thus in fact limiting the teacher's freedom; (6) despite statements to the contrary, methods of teaching were also stipulated - in the case of mathematics there was virtually no room at all for doubt; (7) there is enough evidence of haste to justify the Herald's claim that it was prepared in part as an antidote to the Commissioners' Report; (8) with so much that was new or different or more demanding, the tasks facing the teachers of the state
and the Department itself were considerable and yet the most important conclusion of all is still (9) that whatever its faults, the New Syllabus captured the principal spirit and features of the New Education: it is a tribute to Board that it did this so adequately and it was logical, indeed, that he should be called upon to explain the new concepts upon which it was based at the Easter 1904 Conference.

BOARD'S APRIL 1904 EXPLANATION OF THE NEW SYLLABUS

Board first emerged to prominence at the April 1904 Conference as a conciliator between Knibbs and Bridges and as the instigator of a practical scheme for the development of teacher-training in the future. This was, of course, of major significance but Board's participation did not end there, for the morning of 11th April was set aside especially for him to explain the New Syllabus to the assembled teachers. Because

74. Vide supra.
75. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference of Inspectors, Teachers, Departmental Officers, and Prominent Educationists, Held Tuesday, 5th April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit.
of the discussion which ensued virtually the whole day was finally devoted to this topic. Board began by enunciating "the fundamental principles upon which this Syllabus (was) based". In the process he began by presenting a persuasive argument for a child-centred activity curriculum. First he paraphrased Adams - "the objective of the teacher's work is not the subject that he teaches but the child to whom he teaches the subject" - and claimed logically enough, just as Adams had done, that the first step must therefore be to understand "the nature of the child, and in what way we can best bring about the development of his mental powers". These were sentiments he had expressed in almost the same words at Albury in 1902 but now he

76. Ibid, 113-36.

77. Ibid, 113.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. P. Board, "Address to Teachers" (Delivered at Albury, 6th December, 1902), N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XII, 8, 2nd January, 1903, 179.
went on to invoke against this background the concept of maturation as a governing principle of curriculum construction 81. True, it was still garbed in Pestalozzian "plant" metaphor and thus lost some of its significance. The direction of Board's thinking became clearer however when he moved on to claim that the syllabus was "based on the natural interests of the child" 82. These "natural interests", which he exampled by the child's desire to communicate to others and his "delight in handling things" 83, were with maturation and self-activity to form the basis of work in the elementary school. Board further claimed that the new emphasis upon children's interests was "very different from what we have hitherto understood as making our teaching interesting" 84.

Although the child became, on the basis of these principles of maturation, self-activity, and "natural interests", the locus of the teacher's endeavours and child study a foundation for curriculum design and

81. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held Tuesday, 5 April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 113.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid, 114.
84. Ibid, 113.
classroom practice, Board's criteria did not end there. Reality or social relevance was also important:

We want to introduce into our practical work as much reality as possible. Hitherto we have often felt that there was a gap between the work that the child does in school and the various occupations with which he comes in contact outside the school. ... Instead of our work being drawn from the text-book, we must endeavour to look to the ordinary conditions of life, the ordinary forms of business, the ordinary domestic requirements, and draw from them material on which we shall frame our lessons.85

When he discussed arithmetic Board further clarified his concept of "reality". The point he made was that in future mechanical work in this subject that did not serve "some useful purpose in the practical necessities of the child's life, or likely to in the child's future life"86 was to be eliminated87. Board obviously still formulating his own concept of the New Education was unaware of a basic conflict between "reality" in these terms and the "natural interests of the child". The

85. Ibid, 114.
86. Ibid, 117.
87. Ibid.
significance of this conflict in Board's thought is that it raises serious doubts about the validity of a description of his position or the 1904 New Syllabus as child-centred. Certainly activity methods were to be employed and the child's interests were to be a point of reference and have some part in determining content. Certainly these were refreshing innovations but the syllabus, although correlated, was still subject-centred. There was most certainly no reorganisation of content in terms of the natural interests of the child such as Dewey had attempted. And yet it would seem that Dewey's ideas had played their part in Board's formulation of his own general position and of the theory underlying New South Wales elementary education. The interpretation of "interest" which Board presented was very akin to that presented by Dewey; the "instincts" Board listed as examples of the child's natural impulses had been

included by Dewey in his own list\textsuperscript{89}; and the notion of seeking inspiration for the curriculum from among the ordinary conditions and occupations of life seems a pale reflection of the principles underlying the curriculum of the Laboratory School\textsuperscript{90}. Nevertheless it still remains true that the fundamental reform introduced into New South Wales was a reform in method. Children were to "learn by doing"\textsuperscript{91}. Reforms in the course were guided mainly by the test of practical usefulness, now or in the future. There remained some compensations for Board's failure to see the theoretical conflict in this. On the practical level the challenge to the teachers of the state to introduce new methods was sufficient without the further confusion which would have been created by a more sophisticated child-centred position. On the theoretical level Board managed, if unintentionally, to avoid the chief error of any extreme child-centred position - the

\textsuperscript{89} John Dewey, \textit{The School and Society} (1915 Revision), University of Chicago Press, 1963, 43.

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Ibid}, Ch. 1, 6-29.

\textsuperscript{91} N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, \textit{Conference ... Held Tuesday 5 April, 1904 and Following Days}, \textit{op. cit.}, 114.
relative neglect of social objectives. There was, however, a difficulty to be faced and a clearer and more unequivocal position had to be established.

There were those even as early as this April Conference who detected some of the outward signs of this basic conflict. The use of literal symbols in third class, for example, raised some doubts. Board agreed with one questioner that it was an introduction of algebra. To another who asked if this was consistent with the avowed concrete character of the syllabus he replied that it was. The syllabus, he claimed, dealt largely with the concrete but "(i)t expressly require(d) that the child sh(ould) be led to deal with the abstract". But to invoke the sanctity of the syllabus was hardly a satisfactory answer to the question. Broome, wielding the principle of maturation as an implicit but cutting weapon, chose to criticise the syllabus directly and to

92. Ibid, 123.
93. Ibid, 125.
94. Ibid.
disagree with Board quite openly. He questioned the wisdom of demanding more than halves, quarters and perhaps thirds in the study of fractions by first class children who after all would average seven and a half years of age. He said he did not know "what earthly reason" there could be for introducing the symbols of squares and square roots to the eight and a half year olds of second class.

And in similar vein, he added:

> Again, I think Mr. Board is expecting too much when he expects lessons on local public institutions. I want to know what local institutions you are going to give lessons on to children of 8½ years of age ... For the same reason I disagree with Mr. Board in the expression of quantities by literal symbols, which mean, if they mean anything at all, introductory algebra, in the third class, the average age of which class will certainly not exceed 10.

For his efforts Broome and teachers in general were censured by Inspector McLelland, but three points had

95. Ibid, 127.
96. Ibid, 128.
97. Ibid.
emerged from his stand. Some teachers, at least, regarded the syllabus as more demanding than the previous Standard of Proficiency and were moved to protest. Some, too, were aware of the contrast between the avowed principles of the syllabus and its actual content. And, third, adverse criticism by teachers was not especially welcome. Perry gave his assurance that "the day has gone by when there is going to be a dictator in the Department who will prevent the teachers thinking and speaking". But more than a Ministerial statement was required to change attitudes.

In addition the discussion also indicated the major practical problems yet to be faced before the New Syllabus, as imperfect as it was, would find expression in the day-to-day work of the schools. Teachers quite clearly regarded the syllabus as a fresh imposition from above to which they would have to accommodate themselves. Broome claimed they were willing to do their best

"if they could only be shown what it was they had to do". Others joined in the plea for definiteness. Wigg, for example, thought the syllabus "rather too nebulous". Knibbs expressed the opinion "that it would probably have the effect of startling the teacher without giving him sufficient detailed information", and suggested that the "type-programmes he had advocated in his report should be prepared as soon as possible". Two features were clearly evident: first, the need to educate the teachers; second, the desire of teachers to have a syllabus in which the work was more clearly specified and the explanations more detailed. It was not enough to announce magnanimously, as Board did, that the next three months would be officially regarded as a period of experimentation.

100. Ibid, 127.
101. Ibid, 131.
102. Ibid, 134.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid, 115.
THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF KNIBBS, TURNER AND BOARD: AN ASSESSMENT

Already in traversing this period of 1901-1904 which was so critical in the development of primary education in New South Wales the role of Anderson has been clarified, the important part played by Carruthers and the political character of his motives have been demonstrated, the sincerity of Perry's interest in educational progress has been indicated, and the existence of a body of opinion within the Department of Public Instruction largely favourable to reform has been established. Now, in addition, the contributions of Knibbs, Turner and Board during this important period may be assessed.

Knibbs made many contributions, but there were three major ones: first, his insistence that the criterion by which New South Wales education was to be judged was the best of overseas theory and practice; second, his blunt condemnation of the state's educational provisions which, following upon the earlier condemnations of Anderson and Carruthers, made reform inescapable; and,
third, his own recommendations which provided New South Wales with a part of its charter for reform. In themselves Knibbs' recommendations were by no means a sufficient charter for progress at the elementary school level, but the general position he adopted was of major significance, stressing as it did that the first step towards reform must be an adequate concept of purpose, the second the provision of an adequately trained body of truly professional teachers, and the third the introduction of worthy practices from abroad. Knibbs' own concept of educational purpose was both individual and social and although the philosophical difficulties of this were unidentified and unexplored the emphasis upon character formation rather than the inculcation of facts and skills remained as a valuable corrective to late nineteenth century practice, a valid assessment of the trend of educational thought, and an important supplement to the child-centred position of the naturalists.

Turner, although he did not distinguish himself by his vision, by referring more specifically than Knibbs to the work of the primary grades, provided a valuable supplement
to the opinions expressed by his more brilliant colleague. But it was Peter Board who shaped the New Education into its New South Wales form. Reform was undergoing such widespread discussion that Board could not, and did not, ignore in substance the recommendations of Knibbs and Turner, but there were some major differences in interpretation. And since the appearance of the New Syllabus did blunt much of the edge of the Commissioners' recommendations upon primary schooling, it is most doubtful if these received the consideration they rightly deserved. Instead it was the New Syllabus which became the principal charter for curricular and pedagogical reform in the primary school. When a full day was devoted to its discussion at the April Conference of 1904 this was clear enough. When Board was appointed as Director of Education in January 1905 there was absolutely no doubt left that it was his interpretation which was to give direction to future developments. Board had still to clarify and perfect his ideas and this was problem enough in itself, but it
was further complicated by Board's conservative adherence to a number of nineteenth century traditions and practices. Nowhere was the conservatism evident more than in Board's attitude to inspection: he could advocate freedom for the child but could not in all conscience extend similar freedom to the teacher. Even Turner had not been this conservative. Nor did Board's conservatism end there: the decision to retain a prescribed standard, the very demands and content of the syllabus itself, and the large debt to British precedent, these too reflected an important force which, if latent most of the time, was still a factor in subsequent developments.

THE NEW SOUTH WALES CHARTER FOR REFORM: AN ASSESSMENT

In 1904 the major theoretical debt in the particular form of the New Education which was introduced into New South Wales by Board's New Syllabus was to Froebel, whose successors had finally emancipated his underlying principle of freedom and activity from the moribund paraphernalia of gifts and occupations. These principles
were Froebel's main contribution to the New Education everywhere, but in New South Wales Froebelian influence did not end there. Increased recognition and provision of kindergarten work and of manual training with Froebelian aims were also demanded, for in both these areas New South Wales lagged far behind. The Department had made an effort to extend kindergarten work in 1898 but neither Anderson nor Knibbs nor Turner was impressed by the results and Perry had even admitted failure to his political opponents. As for manual training, this was confined to a few boys in the higher primary classes. And yet these Froebelian contributions were pedagogical rather than philosophical. With Froebel's concept of educational purpose shorn of its pantheistic mysticism all that was left was the Rousseau tradition of natural development and the Pestalozzian metaphor of an unfolding bud. In this sense there was an element of a renaissance in the New Education, but it was an element with a number of new emphases, not least amongst them the absence of faculty psychology and its replacement by a faith and a hope that child-study would provide information upon
which to base primary schooling.

Herbartianism with its new psychology and its pedagogical theory had had some part in the rejection of faculty psychology. In its socially-orientated aims it had also lent support to Knibbs and those of similar outlook who saw citizenship as among the major aims of a state educational system. Board in 1904 had not seriously considered this function of education. Nor had he seriously considered Herbartian psychology or pedagogy. At this stage Herbartianism had its impact in New South Wales only in the adoption of correlation as a principle of course organisation.

In many ways theory, whilst significant, was of less immediate importance for educational reform than the precedents and models established by specific overseas practices. The sheer example provided by overseas countries and by other Australian states was a most potent factor. There could, after all, be no greater force for reform than the knowledge that elsewhere teachers were better trained, that inspection had changed its character, that schools were better designed and better equipped, that methods and curricula in mathematics were being
revised, that geography had become broader and "human", that science was taught more extensively and experimentally, that kindergarten and manual work were more widely provided than was the custom in New South Wales, that physical education was concerned with the development of a healthy mind in a healthy body, rather than the mastery of parade ground drill, that the drawing syllabus had been revised and that oral and written expression were receiving greater attention and formal grammar less. These were facts that New South Wales educators had to reconcile with this state's educational system. Nor were these developments always directly associated with the theory of Froebel or of Herbart. Mathematics and drawing were cases in point. The reforms in mathematics were certainly based in part upon utilitarianism, the principle of "reality" and a disaffection with faculty psychology. There was as a result an elimination of much of the useless and difficult material from the primary course and a restructuring of what remained. But the reform movement in mathematics in New South Wales mirrored the movement in Britain and there it was centred directly
upon the contemporary debate over Euclid, a debate in which Euclidean geometry lost. Neither this debate nor its conclusion had much to do with educational theory. They were the logical outcome of the invention of non-Euclidean geometries by Lobatchewsky in 1826\textsuperscript{105} and Riemann in 1854\textsuperscript{106}.

With drawing the case was different again, for here what was offered was still similar to the courses framed by Pestalozzi and by Froebel - technical drawing and graded instruction beginning with the "elements". It should no longer have mattered that Froebel had offered such a course himself. What should have been apparent was the contradiction between the spirit of the New Education and the programme inflicted upon children. What of the principles of child interest, reality and psychological order in the face of such courses as that followed at Geneva and regarded by Knibbs as worthy of


\textsuperscript{106} Ibid, 557.
emulation. Consider, as an example, the portion of this course prescribed for the first year of primary schooling where the pupils were from seven to eight years of age:


In concept this did not differ significantly from the English course introduced to New South Wales in 1903 by John Branch although it was significant that an English version was preferred.

The New Education in New South Wales was clearly then eclectic. And this eclecticism rested quite solidly upon a utilitarian approach to education. The important concept of "reality" had appeal on these grounds and many of the reforms introduced in the New Syllabus were in this sense also utilitarian. But eclecticism is not necessarily

a fault and nor is utilitarianism. And it was no fault that by 1904 the problems and outmoded practices of the nineteenth century, a surge of nationalism generating and accompanying federation, the example of overseas and interstate developments in theory and practice, the personal efforts of a number of notable individuals and the conservatism of Departmental officers had combined to introduce the New Education to New South Wales and determine its particular local form. However, although in the area of primary education the drama and the public spectacle was over and the state committed by 1904, this commitment was still mostly in theory. Much still remained to be accomplished.

THE TASKS FOR THE FUTURE

The report of the 1904 April conference had been prefaced with a list of recent achievements: the New Syllabus; the appointment of "an expert" to introduce

108. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held Tuesday, 5 April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 5-6.
ambidextrous and free-arm drawing, brushwork and modelling; the discontinuance of the system of rigid annual examination by inspectors;\textsuperscript{109} the introduction of the modern system of teaching geometry; the appointment by Perry of a lady physician to give instruction in the care of infants and children and on hygiene; the raising of the minimum age of entry for pupil-teachers to sixteen; and the decision to introduce District Model Schools and Central Schools - all were listed. Only in the case of the syllabus and the inspection reforms had anything of importance yet been done and even here much remained to be clarified and some reconsideration was necessary. The responsibilities in the tasks ahead lay in some cases with Parliament, in some with the Department and in others with the teachers themselves.

\textsuperscript{109} At the same time there was a justification of policy on this issue (which was identical with Board's stand) in terms of British experience - "... the Department retains the best features of each system, and will not, as in the case of the London School Board, have to retrace its steps, as recommended by the Board of Inspectors in their 1901 report" (ibid, 6).
From Parliament two things were required - legislative change and increased financial provision for education. The specific legislative tasks were obvious enough: amendment of the compulsory clauses and the abolition of fees. And equally obvious was the need for increased financial provision for education. Funds had to be provided adequate enough to enable the new training scheme to be introduced quickly and effectively, to provide improved accommodation in schools, to build new schools on the new plan of classroom units, to renovate the old schools, and to provide a more liberal supply of equipment and materials for learning. Each of these tasks imposed accompanying tasks for those Departmental officers responsible for advising the Minister, but the problem of most immediate importance for the Department itself, as distinct from its participation in the formulation of governmental policy, was the provision of teachers adequately educated and trained in the new doctrines. It was teachers who ultimately had to assume the responsibility for implementing the new ideas in the classroom and it was upon the success of
their efforts that the success of the Department depended. The responsibility here was a joint one: the Department had to provide the means of teacher education and the teachers themselves had to co-operate in the process. There was already evidence that where they saw a need the teachers were prepared to act on their own behalf. In 1898 there was the request from them for instruction in kindergarten and in 1903 the Public School Teachers' Association and the University had co-operated to introduce University Extension Lectures for teachers. More than this was, however, now required. The New Education had to be understood by every teacher and this was too important a matter to be left solely to voluntary and spontaneous efforts by the teachers themselves.

There were a number of other tasks which were less immediate and less practical but would still have at some

110. *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, VIII, 7, 1st December, 1898, 152.

time to be faced. Board's conservatism and that of his colleagues was the source of some of these problems. In this context they had ultimately to reconcile the nineteenth century concern for results with the twentieth century spirit of freedom. A further long-range problem was implicit in the conflict between the individualistic aims of the naturalists and the social aims of Herbart. And if reconciliation was too much to expect, then it is reasonable to look for recognition of the difficulties involved. A similar theoretical problem hinged upon the utilitarianism of the New Education; ultimately the "useful" would have to be defined with more precision and its implications more carefully examined lest in application the curriculum became so pruned that it was no longer educational. There also existed both a task and a challenge to the Department to never allow itself to fall so far behind developments in other countries as had happened between 1893 and 1900. And with the newly-found status of nationhood came the challenge to look further afield henceforth than Britain for inspiration and precedent. At least there was the lesson that New
South Wales should not continue to await developments reaching Britain first and affect the local scene only after due trial there.

In broad terms, then, although the New Education had become policy in 1904 much remained before it became practice. The next step was clarification of aims, purposes and methods, implementation of the general decision in favour of the New Education through specific legislative, administrative and educational action, and experimentation with the ideas and methods of 1904 and with later developments of these which occurred as the twentieth century progressed. Each of these three aspects of the tasks to be faced was to act both as a test of allegiance to the old or a faith in the new and as a test of the progress achieved in the ensuing years. More briefly, did New South Wales really go forward? If so, did it go forward fast and far enough?