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M.Ed., May 1969
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LECTURER IN EDUCATION.
STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN NEW SOUTH WALES, 1880-1930:
A STUDY OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE "NEW EDUCATION"

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VOLUME III

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PART THREE

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES
STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1905-1930

IX THE LEGISLATIVE, SOCIAL
AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

X MODIFICATIONS IN THE
UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY
AND IN THE COURSE OF
STUDY

XI CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES
IN THE SCHOOLS

XII CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS,
1880-1930: CONCLUSION
AND EVALUATION
The appointment early in 1905 of new administrative heads of the Department of Public Instruction with Peter Board assuming the office of Director and Under-secretary and James Dawson, on Board's insistence, that of Chief Inspector, was one important step forward towards a number of major educational advances in New South Wales. Elementary education already had its charter for reform. The task for the ensuing period was the clarification, implementation and modification of this against the background of a changing society and of changing educational ideas and practices. This third section of the study of primary schooling between 1880 and 1930 begins with an examination of the local social and political background against which primary education evolved from 1905 to 1930; next the modifications in the underlying philosophy and course of study are examined; then the conditions and practices in the schools are discussed; and finally the study as a whole is concluded with an evaluation of developments over the complete period and of the impact of the New Education.
After 1904 the immediate tasks in elementary schooling were clear enough. Parliament had the responsibility of introducing appropriate legislation to correct the deficiencies of the 1880 Act and the obligation of providing adequate funds for the reform of teacher training and for the improvement of the material conditions of the schools. The Department had the responsibility of ensuring that the rank and file of its teachers were educated in the new doctrines and that these were clarified and revised where necessary. Parliamentary policies form the basis for a state system of education and in addition reflect the prevailing community attitudes and social and economic conditions. These legislative, political, social and economic factors are the backdrop against which education functions and develops. Due consideration of these factors is necessary for a full appreciation of the
changes which occurred in primary schooling and of the difficulties which were encountered in the period between 1905 and 1930.

**LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENT AND POLITICAL POLICIES**

The legislative responsibility of the New South Wales Parliament towards elementary education had been clearly enough established during the late nineteenth century. The reform movement merely reiterated earlier demands for the abolition of fees and for truly compulsory education. Parliament was, however, slow to act and there were further delays before appropriate legislation became law. During 1901-1904 with the reform movement in full cry and with the See Government dependent upon Labor Party support there was some pressure from Labor quarters for the abolition of fees. See did promise the Labor League that he would abolish school fees from 1904\(^1\). He did not do so.

\(^1\) *N.S.W. P.D. (2)*, 8, 4112-13, 4th November, 1902 and 4151, 5th November, 1902 (Rose to See).
This inaction is partly explained on economic grounds - New South Wales was seriously affected by drought and depression during these years \(^2\) - and partly because, as in the past, the political Labor Party failed to exert concerted pressure \(^3\). Once again it was left primarily to Arthur Griffith to attempt to force the Government's hand and once again he failed to secure the support of his Labor colleagues. The debate on the Public Instruction Amendment Bill of 1902, for all of its failure, is nevertheless of considerable significance for here, in the Third Reading on 18th November, 1902, Carruthers announced his opposition to the Labor Party on this measure \(^4\).


\(^3\) The Executive of the Political Labor League censured the majority of the Parliamentary party for its inaction on the 1902 Free Education Bill (*The Worker*, 17th January, 31st January, 7th February, 14th February and 14th March, 1903).

\(^4\) *N.S.W. P.D. (2)*, 8, 4157, 18th November, 1902.
Carruthers had played a major part in initiating the reform movement but the paradox here was more apparent than real. Already he had dissociated himself from this movement. By 1903 and 1904 this dissociation was complete. In November, 1903, for example, he expressed the opinion that "(v)ery little fault could be found with our primary system, except in regard to the training of teachers".5 The basis for this attitude was political expediency. The creation of the Commonwealth and the assumption by the Federal Government of a number of functions previously performed by the Australian states led to major changes in the New South Wales political scene. At the elections of 1901 the policies and promises of the Progressives and the Liberals had been very similar.6 The defeat of the Liberals was attributed by the press to their decision to maintain fiscalism - the protection versus free-trade argument - as a basis for state politics and to the

5. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 13, 3838, 3rd November, 1903.

failure of their party organisation. Carruthers remedied both these defects, creating in the process the Liberal and Reform Party which he led successfully to a narrow victory at the elections of August 1904. The course he charted for this party was that of a conservative, anti-socialist and anti-Labor party. There was much pressure at this time for the states to reduce expenditure and the number of parliamentarians because of their now diminished responsibilities. The major instance was the Kyabram Movement of 1901-02 in Victoria which led to the fall of the premier of that state, Peacock. In New South Wales there were counterparts to this and it was the votes and allegiance of such "reformers" that Carruthers sought. Hence he had no great enthusiasm for the Knibbs-Turner report, nor was his Ministry at all generous financially towards education. Yet, in 1906,

8. S.M.H., 5th August, 1904.
11. Vide infra.
it was this Carruthers' Government which abolished fees for primary schooling. By then however the state was in a very strong economic position. Even more, the moment chosen was politically opportune for elections were due in 1907. There was virtually no opposition to the measure. Introduced by Barnabas O'Connor, the Minister for Public Instruction, on 15th August, 1906, it received the Royal Assent on 5th October.

Amendment of the compulsory clauses was longer delayed and passed amid more contention. Perry, whilst Minister, initiated such a bill but it lapsed, presumably because he failed to gain support for the measure from amongst his colleagues. There is certainly no question of his personal sincerity. In 1906 and 1909 promises were made by the Liberals which came to


13. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 23, 1222-1242. (Only Briner, an ex-teacher, expressed any opposition. The arguments he chose had been Carruthers' own on earlier occasions.)

14. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 22, xii and 1143. (This concession was not extended to high schools until 1910.)

15. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XI, 8, 1st January, 1902, 171.
nothing, despite the fact that Peter Board applied what pressure he could. Board even specifically mentioned the need for amending legislation in his first report as Director in 1905 and detailed the six points such legislation should cover in his 1906 report. Carmichael, who claimed that Board's scheme "would have met with no objection from any section of the House" was critical of the failure of the Liberal Government to implement it. If Carmichael in fact believed there would be no objection then he was in error. This fact emerged quite clearly when Labor assumed office in New South Wales in October 1910 and first Beeby then Carmichael became Minister for Public Instruction. Despite its small majority

19. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 32, 3831, 14th December, 1908.
20. The state of the parties was: Labor 46, Liberals 38, Independent Liberals 6 (J. Rydon and R.N. Spann, op. cit., 124).
21. Beeby left the ministry to form his own small "progressive" party wherein country interests were the main concern.
and a parliamentary session in 1911-12 which ranks amongst the most disorderly in the history of New South Wales 22, Labor did proceed with much important educational legislation. The bill to amend the compulsory clauses was first initiated on 12th October, 1911 23. Perry pledged support but not so Wade, the leader of the opposition 24. After the adjournment of the Second Reading the Labor Party dropped the measure, attempting nothing seriously until July 1915 25. Then Arthur Griffith, now Minister for Public Instruction, moved an adjournment "to consider the expediency of bringing in a bill to establish continuation schools, to introduce certificates of efficiency from schools, to enforce attendance and to require employers to permit certain employees to attend continuation schools" 26. Griffith soon found that he had

22. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 42, in passim - affairs were so disorderly that the speaker, Willis, called in the police on 19th September, 1911.

23. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 43, 1133-34.


25. In each of the intervening years the Labor Party did go through the motions of initiating the bill afresh in the Legislative Assembly but nothing more than this was done.

26. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 58, 792.
an ill-conceived omnibus measure on his hands and it was decided to omit any reference to apprentices or continuation schools. Still the bill was opposed. Waddell protested along well-established lines: first, that the bill could deprive parents of the needed services of their children and create a real hardship in country districts; second, that it would permit inspectors to interfere with the working of denominational and private schools. Objections were not, however, the full measure of the difficulties the bill encountered. The Labor Party itself created others. In particular it was guilty of three faults: first, the bill in its omnibus form was poorly conceived and even when this was corrected it was still ineptly framed; second, the strength of the opposition was never accurately assessed; third, it was unable to muster sufficient numbers to secure the passage of important provisions without amendment. In

the Assembly Griffith was first forced to accept eight years instead of six as the age at which education became compulsory. Then when Holman, in Griffith's absence, recommitted this clause he was forced to compromise with seven, despite his valiant efforts to secure an age range for compulsory schooling of six to fourteen years of age. As if these difficulties were not enough the measure was further delayed and amended in the Legislative Council. There the bill faced considerable opposition from O'Connor, Carruthers and Dick. Carruthers especially objected to any increase in the leaving age until there were adequate facilities for education beyond the primary stage. However, once the basic principle


31. Ibid, 6413f, 10th April, 1916. (Note that Cooke is in error in claiming that Holman changed the age from 6 to 7 on the spur of the moment.)


of compulsory education between seven and fourteen was established by vote 34, the Council with Carruthers at the helm 35 then settled down in a positive and profitable manner to improve the bill by removing ambiguities and adding further valuable provisions 36. And so finally at long last education in New South Wales was free and compulsory by legislation. The struggle had been remarkably long and it was notable that no political party had revealed any great interest or any sense of urgency. All waited, it would seem, for the moment when community opinion had mellowed. There were, of course, recalcitrants for whom the 1916 Act was necessary 37. Still it is the strength of the political opposition to the measure during

34. It was by the narrowest of margins (9 to 8) in a near-empty Council which was characteristic of this debate (ibid, 1752).

35. Ibid, 1853f., 19th September, 1916- Fitzgerald as the Labor leader in the Council was technically in charge.


37. Child slavery in the dairying industry was particularly rife and was the subject of much discussion (Australian Journal of Education, VI, 4, 15th October, 1908, I and VI, 6, 15th December, 1908, 3; Public Instruction Gazette, III, 6, 30th June, 1909, 157-62 and VI, 6, 29th June, 1912, 163-64; N.S.W.P.D. (2), 32, 3831-32; 59, 1253-54, 60, 3319-20.
1915-1916 which is difficult to interpret. In part it was clearly a desire to conciliate those small country farmers to whom their children's labour was still more important than their education. The opposition to six as the age at which compulsion should begin is more imponderable. Perhaps the Liberals thought that thus they would win some maternal support; perhaps it was merely an attempt to limit governmental expenditure. Nevertheless, despite political opposition, the passage of the free and compulsory education Acts, especially in view of the long delay, remains as a commentary upon the changed climate of public opinion. Ultimately the passage of the Compulsory Education Act of 1916 had a much broader significance for primary education than just the community attitude it reflected and the improved attendance which followed. With the leaving age now at fourteen and with increasing secondary school enrolments the primary school was gradually relieved of much of its earlier responsibility of preparing children for entry directly into the adult world. This development of secondary education was related to the changing pattern of the Australian economy which followed with World War I.
THE GREAT WAR AND THE CHANGING ECONOMY

World War I was a turning point for the Australian economy. There was industrial development before 1914. There was even the beginnings of heavy industry\(^\text{38}\). But the 1914-18 War introduced a new factor, for the scarcity of shipping acted as a natural protection and many industrial enterprises therefore developed and flourished\(^\text{39}\). With peace protection continued, now in the form of tariffs and embargoes. And so industry assumed a greater importance in the Australian economy during the 1920's than ever before. Bland records these changes in the following figures:

\(^{38}\) In 1909 the Commonwealth Government granted a bounty on pig-iron or steel from Australian ore and the Broken Hill Proprietary Company entered first into smelting at Port Pirie and then into the manufacture of iron and steel at Newcastle in 1915 (A.G.L. Shaw, \textit{op. cit.}, 133).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL PRODUCTION</th>
<th>PASTORAL</th>
<th>AGRICULTURAL</th>
<th>MINERALS</th>
<th>ALL OTHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>£ 46.7m</td>
<td>£20.7m</td>
<td>£ 8.95m</td>
<td>£ 9.2m</td>
<td>£ 7.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(£27.46 per head)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(16.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>£114.5m</td>
<td>£36.89m</td>
<td>£23.8m</td>
<td>£21.9m</td>
<td>£31.9m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(£29.96 per head)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(27.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>£188.4m</td>
<td>£69.8m</td>
<td>£38.7m</td>
<td>£23.49m</td>
<td>£54m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>£382.2m</td>
<td>£91.47m</td>
<td>£84.18m</td>
<td>£20.3m</td>
<td>£140.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(£67.85 per head)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(41.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fitzpatrick records it in terms of the changing pattern of employment:

### TABLE XXIII: OCCUPATIONS OF AUSTRALIAN BREADWINNERS, 1891-1933 (PERCENTAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENSUS</th>
<th>PRIMARY PRODUCTION</th>
<th>INDUSTRIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Pastoral and Agricultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENSUS</th>
<th>TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>COMMERCE AND FINANCE</th>
<th>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PROFESSIONAL</th>
<th>ENTERTAINMENT, SPORT, AND DOMESTIC RECREATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is objective evidence of the industrial growth of Australia, of the drift to the city and of the increasing demand for skilled and professional men. Here, too, is the basis for the growth of secondary education in New South Wales from an enrolment of 10,521 in 1913 to 26,728 in 1921 and 59,290 in 1930. This important development is recorded graphically in Diagram IV. Certainly many children still left school with no more than an elementary school education — 8,794 did so in 1925 and 8,373 in 1930 — but the changing character of the economy, the increased leaving age and, as a consequence of these, the growth of secondary education did enable primary schools to develop along less utilitarian and more progressive lines.

Following the War there was also considerable change in Australian financial policies generally. Governmental

42. *Ministers' Reports*, 1913-1930.

43. This diagram has been scaled to show the differential rates of development. The relationship between total and secondary enrolments in 1921 has been chosen as a base ratio for this purpose.

Scaled to show differential rates of development, total and secondary enrolments. Year 1921 as base ratio.

Diagram IV. Secondary School
Enrolments, 1913-1930
spending and borrowing increased and ambitious programmes of expansion were undertaken. Financial policy is, however, of such importance as a major factor in the social background against which education must evolve that it requires a review spanning the whole period.

GOVERNMENTAL FINANCIAL POLICIES TOWARDS EDUCATION, 1905-1930

Whilst the reform movement was afoot between 1901 and 1904 economic conditions were most unfavourable and education suffered in consequence. Nor were the prevailing opinions of the community any source of redress for state expenditure was expected to fall now that state responsibilities had diminished. Economic conditions improved at the time Carruthers assumed office in 1904 and continued to do so for some years to come. Unfortunately education did not immediately benefit. So long as Carruthers remained as premier there was no programme

45. Immigration, irrigation, soldier settlement and closer settlement were the major endeavours - A.G.L. Shaw, op. cit., 143-153.
of educational expansion such as was needed to deal with the neglect of the past. Instead this neglect continued. Even then after the election of 1907 Carruthers found it impossible to reach agreement with his own party and so he retired to the Legislative Council. Wade then became premier and there was a somewhat more generous policy, especially towards school buildings which had been shamefully neglected. Not too much credit should be attached to the actions of Wade's Government. Its liberalism was a concession to necessity. During the Supply Debate of 1908 there were trenchant criticisms of the financial policy of Liberals towards education from Carmichael, Beeby and Holman. When Hogue, the Minister, claimed in the corresponding debate of December 1909 that the Wade Ministry "had pretty well wiped out all arrears"

46. The ostensible reason given was a breakdown in health - N.S.W.P.D. (2), 27, 2, 2nd October, 1907.

47. Even Hogue, the Minister, agreed that schools were in "a bad state" (S.M.H., 12th November, 1908).

48. N.S.W.P.D. (2), 32, 3829-3861, 14th December, 1908.

Carmichael did not agree \(^{50}\). The truth seems to be on Carmichael's side and there is no doubt that financial restrictions limited educational development whilst the Liberals were in power in New South Wales between 1904 and 1910. The policy on kindergartens is one case in point. In March 1907 Board explained that "the Department owing to the limitation of funds at its disposal ha(d) not yet undertaken the establishment of kindergarten schools for children under 5 years of age" \(^{51}\). When twelve months later some action was decided upon it still remained most unambitious. Kindergartens were to be established only "in the most populous and poorest localities and even in these to only a limited extent" \(^{52}\). And thus Board and the Department turned their backs upon any extensive involvement in kindergarten work. This was left to voluntary and charitable organisations \(^{53}\).

50. Ibid, 4022-4023.


52. Education Department Archives, P2285, School Files, 1908-9, Kindergarten, Circular to Inspectors, Board, 10th March, 1908.

53. These organisations were aided by a small governmental subsidy.
When Labor assumed office in 1910 its policy was more generous financially and more positive educationally than its predecessor's. It was under Labor that definite steps were taken to introduce a scheme of secondary education\(^{54}\), that "a beginning was made with the erection of a new Teachers' College within the University grounds"\(^{55}\), and that the Compulsory Attendance Act became law. Labor also made a determined effort to overcome the deficiencies in school accommodation. For 1910 the total expenditure upon education had been £1,170,963 of which £191,888 had been for buildings\(^ {56}\). In 1913 the total expenditure was £1,665,509 and that on buildings £347,183\(^ {57}\). The accommodation problem was still far from solved and expedients such as portable classrooms and open-air (or pavilion) classrooms were employed\(^ {58}\); and still, because of the great needs of the system, development was

\(^{54}\) Minister's Report, 1911, 3-7; Minister's Report, 1912, 1-7; Minister's Report, 1913, 6.

\(^{55}\) Minister's Report, 1913, 13.

\(^{56}\) Minister's Report, 1910, Appendices.

\(^{57}\) Minister's Report, 1913, Appendices.

\(^{58}\) Ibid, 12.
occasionally handicapped. Dawson provided a commentary upon the general situation (and, incidentally, upon his attitudes) in early 1914 when he recommended rejection of the applications from Blackfriars and North Newtown practice schools for Montessori tables and chairs. The total cost involved was only some £262 but Dawson thought it "hardly right that these luxuries should be indulged in when so many schools and residences (were) in urgent need of attention".

The War of 1914-18 was responsible for many problems but the greatest problems of all arose from the decision to curtail any great increases in expenditure and from the inflation which overtook the economy. Every increase in the funds available for education was negated by


61. For one thing it aggravated an already existing teacher shortage; for another supplies to schools were curtailed.

62. There was a rise in the Retail Price Index of almost 175% between 1913 and 1920 (*Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1964, 437.*)
increased costs. Whilst the National Government was in power from 1916 until 1920 total educational expenditure kept pace with price rises but not the expenditure on buildings\textsuperscript{63}. This was much more static and so at the end of the War when Labor was victorious at the polls, Mutch, the new Minister found himself with an accommodation problem and a teacher shortage and he strove valiantly to improve matters\textsuperscript{64}. Under his direction the Department prepared an estimate which indicated that "fully £1,500,000 would have to be set aside in order to overtake the false economy that had been practised in previous years"\textsuperscript{65}. Education expenditure continued on its upward path but Mutch failed to persuade his colleagues to increase the vote for buildings. When Labor lost the election of 1922 Albert Bruntnell became Minister for Education in the

\textsuperscript{63} This was deliberate. Amid the conscription controversy the Nationalists curtailed the number of able-bodied men in governmental employ.

\textsuperscript{64} \textit{The Worker}, 22nd April, 1920.

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Minister's Report}, 1920, 2.
Fuller Government. He found that matters were serious indeed 66. A policy of "primary schools first" 67 was decided upon. The re-introduction of high school fees as a part of this was reactionary and perhaps even a political error 68, but the general policy must still be applauded. At last something was being done. Indeed the total expenditure on school buildings during 1923 and 1924 came very close to the estimate of £1,500,000 in Mutch's 1920 report 69.

When Labor returned to power for 1925 to 1927 there were no dramatic advances. Mutch and Lang did not, in fact, work harmoniously together and education suffered in consequence 70. After the elections of

66. S.M.H., 24th May, 1922.
68. H.V. Evatt claims it contributed to the defeat of the Fuller Government (Australian Labor Leader, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1945, 527); G. Cooke argues that this opposition could not be gauged from the press of the day (G. Cooke, op. cit., 328).
69. £628,592 in 1923; £776,019 in 1924; total £1,404,611.
70. Mutch even complained publicly that his department was starved of funds (Daily Telegraph, 14th February, 1927; S.M.H., 30th May, 1927). But the rift in Labor was greater than this. Lang resigned in 1927 to return with a reconstructed cabinet which lasted for four months wherein William Davies replaced Mutch.
1927 a coalition ministry of the National and Country parties was formed and David Drummond became Minister for Education. Soon Drummond was as convinced as his predecessors that "several sections of the educational system were not receiving the financial support essential to their proper development". Investigation showed that over £3,250,000 would be needed over the next three years. Commendably the Government acted and funds almost of this magnitude were granted. With the onset of the depression there was at first an "unavoidable abatement in building activity". Then in 1930 with Lang again in office and Davies Minister came the real crisis: loan funds were soon unobtainable, school building virtually stopped, teachers' salaries were cut, married women teachers dismissed and fewer new teachers appointed.

From these details of governmental financial policy it is clear that at least three factors were at work: the general economic conditions of the state, the particular party in power and the community's attitude. Thus the Liberal's financial neglect of education between 1904 and 1910 occurred when such neglect had become a tradition and when governmental expenditure was automatically a matter for adverse criticism from an influential section of the community. Labor brought with it a more positive approach to education and a more generous trend in finances. This trend continued thereafter irrespective of the particular party in power and it was no coincidence that the community was at the same time broadening its concept of an adequate education, a change reflected in increasing secondary enrolments. It was not till after 1922, however, that social and economic conditions were such that the obvious deficiencies of the system could be attacked with any seriousness. The War had prevented this earlier. Now there was a spirit of optimism abroad and a multitude of ambitious plans for expansion. The wisdom of Australian economic policy generally during this period with its
Diagram V: Educational Finances, 1900-1930

Expenditure

Engagement

Lyne - Sec. Waddell
Cornuthers - Wade
McClure - Holman
Holman
Shorey - Dooley
Fuller
Landy

Retail Price Index 1901 - 1930

Net State Expenditure, 1900-30

Expenditure on School Premises

School Enro
NET STATE EXPENDITURE 1900-30

SCHOOL ENROLMENT 1900-1930

EXPENDITURE ON SCHOOL PREMISES

DIAGRAM V: EDUCATIONAL FINANCES 1900-1930
tariffs and subsidies and continually increasing govern­
mental expenditure and borrowing is open to question. If the plans were not always successful, if in consequence there was some disillusionment, especially after the brief recession of 1923, this overall policy still meant a period of financial magnanimity for education in New South Wales. It was a period which was all too brief. That it occurred whilst conservative governments were in power is both a dimension of the needs of the system and of community opinion. Overall, unfortunately, whatever the justification governments spent too little upon education and "adopted a policy of short-sighted economy." All the effects of such a policy are incalculable. Some specific instances have been cited to illustrate its consequences. In general governmental policy went very little further than this matter of finances. Very few ministers endeavoured to shape education by interfering directly in the work of the schools. Neither was there any positive action from members of the community at large.

75. A.G.L. Shaw, _op. cit._, 144-53.
76. A. Mackie, Editorial, _Schooling_, VII, 1, October 1923, 2.
MINISTERIAL INITIATIVE, PUBLIC OPINION
AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

In the period from 1905 until 1930 there were eight major changes of government in New South Wales and a number of additional reconstructions of the Cabinet. The position of premier changed hands eleven times and that of Minister for Education no less than sixteen. Altogether thirteen men held the Education portfolio. None served, even in total, for as long as four years. Amid such instability few ministers made much of a personal impact upon the primary curriculum. Only Carmichael, James, Bruntnell and Drummond made any real attempt to do so.

Carmichael's contribution to primary schooling was positive and valuable. It was his personal involvement that led to the acceptance almost overnight of Montessori's methods and materials in the kindergarten classes of

77. One, Hogue, had been Minister before under Reid. Two, Davies and Drummond, again held the post after 1930. Davies' further term was brief but Drummond held the office continuously for the nine years from May 1932 to May 1941 and so brought a stability to the portfolio it had never before known.
New South Wales Infants' Schools. It may even be true that local interest in this work was first stirred by Carmichael's own reading of an article on the subject in McClure's Magazine. What is certain is that Carmichael was a whole-hearted supporter of experimentation with Montessori work and therefore deserves considerable credit for its adoption in infant schools and the later extension of its influence throughout the primary school. No other Minister interfered with such happy results. James was a protagonist on behalf of the "fixed doh" system of teaching music from staff notation. His efforts succeeded only in the creation of a "Tonic Sol-fa Association" and maintenance of the status quo.

78. This was certainly the belief at the time - Cf. Education Department Archives, P2412, School Files, 1912-13, Kindergarten, B. MacTavish, "The Montessori Method: Remarks by a Sydney Teacher", September 1912, 12.


80. Vide infra.

81. N.S.W.P.D. (2), 72, 1426, 17th September, 1918.

Music continued to be taught by the "movable doh" tonic sol-fa method. Bruntnell interfered in an endeavour to foster a national, British-oriented, sentiment amongst school children and stirred up a hornet's nest. During the War a ceremony in which the flag was saluted had been a feature of the activities of many schools. In 1922 Bruntnell decided that a formal ceremony conducted each Monday morning was to be compulsory in all state schools. The flag was to be saluted and pupils were to enunciate the pledge "I honour my God, I serve my King, I salute my Flag". Sections of the press questioned the wisdom of this and the Teachers' Federation strongly objected to this form of teaching loyalty. Bruntnell expressed himself "at a loss to understand the objections". The ceremony became a voluntary one once more when Davies became Minister in 1920. Drummond's efforts were

83. *Public Instruction Gazette*, XI, 9, 1st November, 1917, 256. There was also a Ministerial "suggestion" that it be done in all schools each day.

84. *Education Gazette*, XVI, 6, 1st June, 1922, 131.


86. *Education*, 3, 8, 15th June, 1922, 3.


determined by the sectional interests of the Country Party. He aimed through specific educational innovations to check the drift to the city and redress some of the imbalance between rural and urban development. A measure of decentralisation was added to the educational system by the establishment of Armidale Teachers' College and a rural educational scheme was inaugurated. In this last Drummond's efforts were not unique. There had been similar attempts before which either aimed to provide equality of educational opportunity for country areas or to make agriculture appear a more attractive occupation. In 1906 rural camps had been established wherein city boys could get a glimpse of country life. These had ended with the War. In 1919 composite secondary courses

89. U. Ellis, _op. cit._, 107-08.

90. _Minister's Report_, 1927, 2. (A site was purchased at Wagga at about the same time - _Minister's Report_, 1928, 4).

91. _Minister's Report_, 1906, 19.

92. _Minister's Report_, 1914, 14.
had been introduced into country schools\textsuperscript{93}. In 1923 rural schools had been introduced to provide "a pre-vocational course centred around the farm and its occupations"\textsuperscript{94}. These efforts were not the property of any one political party. Inevitably they failed to check the drift to the city. Drummond sought success where his predecessors had found failure through a more detailed, systematic and extensive scheme. And in 1928 he announced his plans. The special courses included in the Rural Schools were to be reorganised and amplified; Junior Farmers' Clubs were to be established; the nature study syllabus for primary schools was to be reviewed; an organiser of School Agriculture and two assistant organisers were to be appointed\textsuperscript{95}. Whatever the success of Drummond's other plans and intended review of the nature study notwithstanding, the primary syllabus in nature study as reprinted in 1929 was identical with that of 1922. And except for

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{93} Minister's Report, 1919, 3.
\item \textsuperscript{94} Minister's Report, 1924, 3.
\item \textsuperscript{95} Minister's Report, 1928, 5.
\end{itemize}
the vague generality that "Nature Study (was not to be
dissociated from School Agriculture"96 there had been a
conscious elimination of school agriculture from the
primary course. In the earliest years of the century work
of this kind had been actively encouraged but experience
told against it. Already in 1916 the expectations were
quite limited and school gardening received preference97.
Neither Board nor Smith believed that any worthwhile
agricultural instruction was possible at the elementary
level98. And this was the view that prevailed. Drummond's
scheme had no impact upon primary schooling.

From this discussion it is clear that in the period
from 1905 to 1930 Ministers for Education had very little
impact upon the primary school curriculum. Only
Carmichael's interest in Montessori's work could be
considered as educationally significant. Nor did other

96. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction
   for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), 121 and Course of
   Instruction for Primary Schools (First Issued 1925),
   Reprinted 1929), 125.

97. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction
   for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), 70, 76, 80.

parliamentarians or the public generally have very much to offer. Parliamentarians in oppositions attacked the government of the day on the obvious matters - accommodation, salaries, inspection and the costs imposed upon parents. When curriculum issues came up they covered the whole range from the extreme conservatism of Menahan who wanted concentration upon grammar, composition and arithmetic to Gardiner who wanted a broader concept of education and one more founded upon Australian needs rather than upon overseas models. In the press critical comments upon primary education were few and most newspapers simply "carried over their preferences and antipathies for certain parties and interest groups to their estimate of the educational policies of the government of the day". In the 'twenties an intermittent body of criticism of standards and methods did evolve. The Sydney Morning Herald, for example, complained that "the tendency of our age is to make things too easy for the pupil". In essence this was criticism of the New

100. N.S.W.P.D. (2), 60, 3312-16, 4th November, 1915.
102. S.M.H., 5th April, 1923.
Education itself and it was criticism in which some members of the teaching profession joined. It is significant as a reflection of dissatisfactions which were shared by Smith, the Director, and which were important factors in the conservatism in primary education which characterised his period in office. This conservatism was very much a product of the times, for it was a reactionary response from those who saw the 'twenties as a period of decadence where liberty had turned to licence and diligence to indolence. In this general sense primary schooling was always socially determined, but by contrast with the late nineteenth century Departmental officials were now the principal source of curriculum modifications. Within the limitations imposed by governmental finance it was their task to decide just what was an appropriate form of primary education for the children of New South Wales and what were appropriate local responses to such

103. Vide infra where there is more detailed discussion of this phenomenon and of the reaction against the New Education.
major events as World War I and to educational developments abroad. In the process even the charter for reform enunciated by Board in 1903-04 was immediately amended to become more compatible with the socio-economic structure of New South Wales. Later further changes were made in response to the War, to Montessori and the individualism she represented, to the measurement movement, to the growth of secondary education and to conditions which prevailed in the 'twenties.
CHAPTER X

MODIFICATIONS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.S.W. PRIMARY EDUCATION AND IN THE COURSE OF STUDY, 1905-1930

Board's 1904 syllabus was reissued in mid-1905. This was the first of a number of significant revisions during the years to 1930, others following in 1916, 1922 and 1925. There is a very real temptation to divide the overall period encompassed by these revisions into two phases: the first culminating in the syllabus of 1922 as a phase of experimentation and implementation of the New Education and its later manifestations; the second, beginning after 1922, as a reaction against this "soft" pedagogy. The principal advantage of such a view is that the increased concern for efficiency in instruction and for results in the basic skills which characterised the latter phase can be seen as educational response to the 'twenties. And there is, in addition, the coincidence
with Board's period of directorship. There is some truth in such an interpretation, but it is too simple to fit all the facts. The basic difficulty is that the educational philosophy and the curriculum of New South Wales primary schools always stressed the importance of the three R's no matter how progressive it became. It was not just a matter of the New Education having wrought a revolution in schooling against which there was a latter-day reaction. New South Wales primary education was always dipolar. Board himself was no radical and neither was Dawson, the new Chief Inspector. Both made this patently clear as soon as they assumed office. In the process they clarified their concepts of the educational purposes that they saw as appropriate for New South Wales primary schools at the beginning of the century and they emphasised the importance of the basic skills. The principal expression of this philosophy was the 1905 revision of the "New Syllabus". It was supported by additional public statements. Major amendments were involved.
THE 1905 SYLLABUS: A CLARIFICATION
OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The 1905 Syllabus was essentially an instructional
document aimed at the teaching service. The alterations
in course content were minor: a course on drill and
physical exercises was added, ambidextral drawing was
dropped from the art course, the mathematics course was
modified to answer Broome's objections of Easter 1904.1
The most obvious change of all was the inclusion of a
lengthy appendix of explanatory notes. What was more
fundamental, however, were the modifications introduced
into the syllabus statements of educational purpose.
Board may not necessarily have altered his views, but
there was certainly a radical alteration in those he
publicly expressed. In this Dawson, now Chief Inspector,
joined forces with him.

Earlier detailed examination of the 1904 Syllabus
disclosed that there had been no lowering of standards in
the basic subjects but only an insistence upon a more

1. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of
Instruction for Primary Schools, Govt. Printer, Sydney,
1905, 126-29.

2. Ibid, 18-46.
realistic choice of exercises and so a decrease in the level of difficulty of mechanical operations. Through the reports of the inspectors it was evident that some teachers in their enthusiasm for the new had neglected the fundamentals\(^3\). Apparently fearful of the consequences unless this was immediately corrected Board and Dawson both took a decidedly conservative and essentialistic stand in a number of their earliest pronouncements. Thus Board, in his June 1905 address to the Public School Teachers' Association warned against such extremes and errors. He reminded his listeners that "primary instruction require(d) skill in arts that are to a certain extent mechanical"\(^4\), that such skill came "from constant practice"\(^5\), that "memorization ha(d) a distinct place in the work of the school"\(^6\), and that as valuable as the doctrine of interest was it was still necessary to remember


5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.
that "all school work (could) not always be mere pleasure to the child"\textsuperscript{7}. And it was with similar intent to Board that Dawson insisted that "(r)eform, not revolution"\textsuperscript{8} was the watchword. Such was the attitude of the hierarchy and such was the background to Dawson's firm pronouncement in 1910 that "(n)o school (wa)s considered satisfactory unless there (wa)s found in it reasonable proficiency in the Three R's"\textsuperscript{9}. But this was not the only issue clarified in 1905. Board also provided a corrective to the predominantly child-centred exposition of educational purpose of his February 1904 Syllabus and his April 1904 address. Now Board stressed the social function of education. To the Society for Child Study he spoke of education as "the unifying and consolidating influence in a State, bringing about common standards of honour and conduct and common habits"\textsuperscript{10}.

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Minister's Report, 1904, 73.
\textsuperscript{9} Minister's Report, 1910, 37.
Board did maintain that it was not a matter of favouring either a child-centred or a society-centred position. What was required, in his opinion, was "the dual balancing of the two functions"¹¹, but he made no attempt to provide such a balance in his first report as Director. Instead, no doubt conscious of the absence of due stress upon social ends in his statements of 1904, he offered a supplementary interpretation of New Education which emphasised the social objectives of utility, service-ability, citizenship and efficiency:

The New Education ... implies that a branch of knowledge is worthy of study in so far as its contents are of value for useful purposes, and in so far as it contributes to the all-round efficiency of the learner ... (H)is education on its material side ... should be a training for serviceableness ... But the aim of the school is not a merely material one ... (T)he pupil is to be trained in habits of thought and led to the acquirement of tastes that are as essential to his future happiness and welfare as is the ability to earn a livelihood ... (T)hese are all included in an education for efficiency.¹²

¹¹. Ibid.
Dawson joined with Board during 1905 in emphasising the social function of education. To him the school was "the training ground for the future citizen"\textsuperscript{13}, where the subjects of study both fitted the pupil for his future occupation and "develop(ed) habits of neatness, order, patience and perseverance"\textsuperscript{14} and where the individual through contact with his teachers and his fellows "acquired habits of self-restraint, self-respect, obedience and social co-operation"\textsuperscript{15}. There is nothing profound in this but it did lead Dawson to the conclusion that "(t)he school must become a miniature community"\textsuperscript{16} and did explain his favourable reaction towards experiments by teachers in practical civics where pupils were entrusted with minor details of school management\textsuperscript{17}.

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{itemize}
\item 14. \textit{Minister's Report}, 1904, 75.
\item 15. \textit{Ibid}.
\item 16. J. Dawson, "Address delivered at a meeting of the Parramatta P.S.T. District Association", \textit{loc. cit}.
\item 17. \textit{Minister's Report}, 1906, 50.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotes}
The June 1905 Syllabus reflected this greater emphasis upon the basic subjects and upon social ends. In the 1904 preface there had been a vague statement that the purpose of the syllabus was "to make the school a powerful agent in the intellectual, moral, and social development of the child". In 1905 decidedly more detailed and so more unequivocal statements of the purpose of schooling generally and of many of the subjects of instruction were included. Two new paragraphs were added at the very beginning of the preface. These stated the function of schooling in more definitive terms and in terms which endeavoured to strike that due balance between social and individual aims. Now the primary syllabus began with the pronouncement:

The school aims at giving to its pupils the moral and physical training and the mental equipment by which they may qualify themselves to meet the demands of adult life with respect to themselves, the family, society, and the State. By its influence upon character it should cultivate habits of thought and action that will contribute

both to successful work and to upright conduct, and, by the kind of instruction it imparts, it should prepare the pupils for taking up the practical duties of life and give them tastes and interests that will lead to activities beneficial both to themselves and to the community. ¹⁹

And then, in addition, following this there was a new-found emphasis upon the practical purpose of such schooling. Subject matters was to be "so selected as to contribute most effectively within the limited period of school life to the training and equipment required"²⁰. Utility was basic. Children were to be taught what they most needed to know. In the explanatory Notes on the Syllabus there was an elaboration in behavioural terms of just what this entailed, namely that by the end of Fifth class

the pupil should be able to read ordinary English intelligently, make use of his ability to read in further extending his knowledge, express himself in clear and correct language, carry out the most common calculations of trade and business, have a general knowledge of the surface of the earth, some elementary

¹⁹. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, 1905, op. cit., iii.

²⁰. Ibid.
natural phenomena and the main features of the history of England and Australia, have acquired a degree of skill of hand that will assist him in the use of tools, and a training in moral and civic duties that will form a basis for future citizenship.21

Girls formed a slightly different category from boys and so in their case it was expected that the course followed would have been so modified that they acquired knowledge and skill which would afterwards be of use "in domestic and family pursuits"22.

Such behavioural outcomes were expressed in more detail as each subject was discussed in its turn in the appended "Explanatory Notes". Overall there was an assertion of the importance of subject-matter, of the acquisition of knowledge and skill, of drill, of thoroughness, and of a useful, practical and society-centred education. All this was still tempered by the principles of interest, reality and activity for the preface of 1904 was amended by addition, not omission. These features of


22. Ibid.
the New Education were also reflected in some of the explanatory notes. Child interests and the principle of self-activity therefore still determined method and maturation was a factor in grade placement but these were certainly not the source of the content of the course of study. Education was conceived primarily as a preparation for the future. The content of curricular studies was determined on this basis with the emphasis upon efficiency, serviceableness, and citizenship as the end product. It is of some interest that in this the 1905 syllabus was as consonant with English opinion as the original 1904 syllabus. In the Suggestions for Teachers... issued by the English Board of Education was this statement:

The purpose of the ... school is education in the full sense of the word: the high function of the teacher is to prepare the child for the life of the good citizen, to create or foster the aptitude for work and for the intelligent use of leisure, and to develop those features of character which are most readily influenced by school life such as loyalty to institutions, unselfishness and an orderly and disciplined habit of mind.23

Perhaps here was one source from which Board drew some inspiration for his stand of 1905 but there were many other possible sources, including Herbart. What was taking place was the development of a local philosophy of elementary education and to this overseas opinion certainly contributed. So too did local conservatism. The end product was not particularly original. There was nothing unique after all in statements that education had a social and an individual function, that mastery of knowledge and development of skills were of major importance, that education should enable each child to reach the limit of his possibilities and contribute to his future happiness and welfare, that it should be both relevant to, and a preparation for, adult life, or that the school itself should function as a miniature community in which the first lessons in social order and co-operation were learned.

This eclectic and omnibus philosophy of education was not without its problems. In fact it embodied a number of unexplored contradictions and conflicts, conflicts, for example, between individual and social ends, between happiness and usefulness, between character development
and citizenship training, and between child-freedom and an imposed curriculum. There was certainly no unity to be found in such a philosophy. In 1909 Board grouped all these functions under the single proposition that education was "utilitarian" because it was "a preparation for all the phases of complex living". A "utilitarian" concept of education of just this kind was defended by Francis Anderson but this cannot disguise the fact that such an extension of the term leaves no bounds to it at all and that it therefore becomes virtually meaningless. It certainly does not indicate priorities, but conceived more narrowly it was perhaps an apt description of the 1905 Syllabus. For the classroom teacher this eclectic philosophy posed real difficulties. It was quite apparent that results in the basic subjects

24. P. Board, "Recent Developments in Education" (Presidential Address, Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, Brisbane, January, 1909), Public Instruction Gazette, III, 2, 27th February, 1909, 30.

25. F. Anderson, Tendencies of Modern Education with Some Proposals for Reform, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1909, 11-12.

26. Cf. Herbert Spencer's meaningless extension of the term "science" to cover almost every branch of knowledge.
were of great importance. And the teacher was also aware that he must employ "modern methods", more particularly those cited in the syllabus itself. When a revised syllabus was issued in 1916 these basic problems remained unsolved. Fundamentally the amendments to the 1905 Syllabus were a reflection of one unavoidable fact of the times - primary schooling was for many children the gateway to the adult world. Educational aims had therefore to be suitably society-centred and utilitarian. This could only conflict with the naturalistic strand of the New Education. This position had not materially altered in 1916. Of a total school enrolment of 268,360 only 13,941 were in secondary schools\textsuperscript{27}. By 1916 there had, however, been a further decade of educational development.

\textbf{THE REVISION OF 1916: GENERAL}

In 1915 Board announced that the syllabus was to be modified in the light of the experience of the past ten

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Minister's Report}, 1916, Appendices.
Most of the task of review fell to inspectorial committees but the Public School Teachers' Association and its various branches offered many suggestions for their consideration and the inspectors themselves canvassed the opinions of teachers in their districts. Dawson and McLelland insisted that the new syllabus which resulted differed from its predecessor only in matters of detail and that "fundamentals remain(ed) untouched." The reappearance virtually unchanged of Board's preface and many of the explanatory notes from the 1905 syllabus supports such a contention. And it is indeed true, just as this implies, that the 1916 Syllabus was in many respects a mere supplement which remedied obvious deficiencies. A trivial example of one such correction was the renumbering once again of the primary grades.


29. Education Department Archives, P3850, Chief Inspector's File, 1914-1917, "Revision of the Primary Syllabus" and other papers, 1915.


31. The anomaly of First Class as a two-year course was removed by the simple device of making the course for all classes of one year's duration. Sixth Class thereby became the final grade within the elementary school.
More significant examples are found in Nature Study and Manual Work. In the 1905 Syllabus the Nature Study course was brief and tentative. The only course in Manual Work was one of kindergarten occupations and modelling. The 1916 Syllabus corrected these inadequacies. But despite such evidence, the contention that the 1916 Syllabus merely introduced changes in matters of detail requires qualification. A comparison between the length of time allocated for each of the subjects of study in 1905 with that allocated in 1916 as outlined in Table XXIV is itself sufficient grounds for questioning this view.

Here is evidence of something more than alterations in matters of detail. Doubling the time allocated for Art and Manual Work and for Physical Training constituted a major change in educational priorities. It was, in addition, quite tangible evidence of an increased acceptance of the importance of all-round development and of catering for the natural interest of the child in expressive, constructive and active pursuits. On this basis the 1916 Syllabus appears as a supplementary and more progressive extension of the 1905 Syllabus. The
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32. Compiled from Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, 1905, 20 and Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, 1916, 16.
difficulty is that it was also more prescriptive, more concerned with standards and so more conservative than its predecessor. Included in the 1916 Syllabus were such additions as a prescribed spelling list, a detailed scheme outlining the content of the course and the methods to be used in written expression, a greater emphasis upon the importance of drill in mathematics, and the specific commands that copy books must not be used in teaching writing or any reference made to "borrowing" or "paying back" in subtraction.

The 1916 Syllabus is, in fact, a dipolar document which can only be understood as a product of the educational issues and innovations of the previous decade. Some were progressive in character; others conservative.

33. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1916, 40-49.

34. Ibid, 17-21.

35. Ibid, 46.

36. Ibid, 25.

37. Ibid, 51.
PROGRESSIVISM IN THE 1916 SYLLABUS

In Easter 1904 Board had announced that a brief period of trial with the new syllabus had been granted to all teachers. In 1905 freedom for the teacher to experiment had been considerably curtailed and the importance of the three R's reaffirmed. However, the Departmental hierarchy remained actively involved in developmental work and under Mackie the Teachers' College and its associated Practice Schools became centres of research and development. In addition, the general body of teachers was still permitted considerable initiative in the areas of manual work and nature study. Development became a combination of imposition from above and evolution from within as the charter granted during the reform movement was implemented and these new subject pioneered.

On reflection it is surprising that manual work was so inadequately discussed in the 1904 and 1905 Syllabus for it had already been considered at some length and a body of specific recommendations was at hand. Even setting aside those of Knibbs and of Turner as recommendations
from without the system, there still remained those of Dawson and Willis of 1902 and those of Willis, Flashman and McCoy of 1904. Dawson and Willis, it will be recalled, had evolved a fairly detailed scheme of manual work for Second and Third Classes which they presented to the January 1902 conference of inspectors 38. In September 1904 Flashman delivered a paper on manual training to a conference of his inspectorial colleagues which created sufficient interest for a committee comprising Willis, Flashman and McCoy to be appointed 39. As a major part of their investigations this committee observed a demonstration of cardboard modelling by one of the unsung pioneers of education, a class teacher named Taylor 40. McCoy noted the possibilities of such

38. Vide supra.


40. Ibid.
work in schools too small to make woodwork possible.\textsuperscript{41} Flashman was more concerned that the work receive official approval so he carefully pointed out that the cost was so slight that this could be borne by the pupil and that no alteration was required in the syllabus since this already provided for Art and Manual Training.\textsuperscript{42} As a body the committee strongly recommended the introduction of the less difficult paper-folding, cutting and mounting for second class and cardboard modelling for third and fourth classes.\textsuperscript{43} It was also suggested that "any teacher who ma(de) himself expert should be permitted to introduce such exercises to his school and if necessary use the time now occupied in studying such sections of the Art work as Brushwork and Ambidextral drawing."\textsuperscript{44} In practice the policy which evolved was to permit teachers to give instruction in this work, to encourage them to do

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Education Department Archives, op. cit.,} "Manual Training: Report of Committee", 14th November, 1904.
\item \textit{Education Department Archives, op. cit.,} "Intermediate Manual Training: Report of Committee", 29th October, 1904.
\item \textit{Education Department Archives, op. cit.,} "Card-board Modelling: Report upon Mr. Taylor's Demonstration ..., 17th October, 1904.
\item \textit{Ibid.}
\end{enumerate}
so and to provide an opportunity for them to develop their own personal competence in the work. Photographic evidence of some of their efforts were enshrined in the Ministers' Reports as testimony of educational progress. Modelling in plasticene or similar material had been specified in the syllabus and this led the way for a time, but cardboard modelling and woodwork became increasingly popular. As early as 1906 Dawson was able to report that "(e)ducational hand-work had been introduced into a great many schools: paper-folding, paper-cutting, and paper mounting in the junior classes; cardboard work in the middle of the school; and wood-work in the upper classes". As yet the work was not universal, nor was it uniform in character. Some teachers with initiative continued to experiment with such departures as chip carving and bent iron work. In keeping with Mackie's concept of the Teachers' College as


a centre for educational progress and the practice
schools as experimental, Blackfriars Practice School
was in the forefront of these efforts - bookbinding
was introduced by Riley, the headmaster, in 1908\textsuperscript{48}
and wire work by his successor, Davidson, in 1910\textsuperscript{49},
by which date the following programme of work was
being carried out:

\textsuperscript{48} Education Department Archives, P2216, School
Files, 1906-7, Blackfriars, Riley to Dawson,
26th November, 1907.

\textsuperscript{49} Education Department Archives, P2319, School
Files, 1910-11, Blackfriars, Davison to McLelland,
22nd February, 1910. (James Quilkey was actually
responsible for all this manual work. Originally
appointed as an assistant at the Practice School,
he later became lecturer in Manual Arts on the
College staff - Interview, L.J. Quilkey, 9th
August, 1968).
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</table>

50. Ibid.
Blackfriars was not the only school where the work was well advanced, but the informality of these years could not last forever. Manual Work had to become more organised than this. The importance with which the work was regarded overseas was, of course, well known and when Inspector Finney stressed this in his report upon *Educational Handwork in American Primary Schools* ⁵¹ he was only providing additional and up-to-date testimony. It was a logical outcome that the Department advertised in 1908 for a Superintendent of Manual Work "to co-ordinate the work already done in the schools and to extend its scope" ⁵². The wonder is that no appointment was made until 1914 when the post was awarded to John Gardiner. Gardiner had entered the ranks of the teaching service as a pupil-teacher early in 1903. In 1907-8 he had been a student at the Teachers' College and then in 1910 had


⁵² *Public Instruction Gazette*, II, 17, 31st October, 1908, 522-23.
joined its staff as an assistant in Manual Arts to J.P. Quilkey. When Quilkey left in 1911 to further his career, Gardiner took charge of the work. In 1912 Gardiner was sent abroad on a travelling scholarship to study developments in Manual Training in Europe and the United Kingdom as a preliminary to his appointment as Superintendent 53. As Superintendent, Gardiner's duties extended to the supervision and inspection of the work done in the schools, advice and instruction of teachers and the preparation of courses of study.

The course of Manual Work which appeared in the 1916 Syllabus was a second draft, the first having been issued to teachers in 1914 54. It was a course in which aims and purposes were clearly outlined, a variety of occupations suggested, and considerable freedom left for the teacher to evolve his own specific programme of lessons. It was not, however, perfect. As Gardiner saw it, the function

53. Education Department Archives, P4006, Manual Training 1916-1938, Gardiner to Chief Inspector, 14th April, 1921, Application for 1B; Minister's Report, 1913, 40.

54. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Manual Training for Primary Schools, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1914.
of handwork in first and second classes was "expressional". In these grades no attempt was to be made to obtain perfect mastery, the child instead was to be regarded as a child, encouraged to use his initiative and be resourceful, and brought into contact with as wide a variety of materials as possible through which he could express his ideas. The objects chosen had to have appeal to children who would in consequence have a real desire to make them. It was assumed that most children in these grades would be interested in making toys, reproducing objects they themselves saw, illustrating stories and making things useful to themselves or suitable as presents. The course Gardiner actually outlined for these grades was as follows:

**FIRST CLASS:** Stick laying, ravelling or fraying, threading beads, &c. Wood designing, paper-twisting, tearing and folding, card-sewing, mat-weaving, or other occupations.

**SECOND CLASS:** Free-cutting in paper, illustrations for stories, nursery rhymes, &c. Outline cutting, poster work; weaving with paper, wool, raffia, &c; card-sewing, sewing on canvas, &c.; toy-making, paper-modelling, or other approved occupations.56

55. N.S.W. Department of Education, *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916)*, *op. cit.*, 111.

The questions which arise are how far these activities were merely traditional, how far they were expressional and of interest to children, and how far they were appropriate to their age level. Many had simply evolved from the Froebelian occupations and most have never been critically examined even to this day. Probably most children do enjoy tearing and cutting and pasting paper and the manufacture of simple articles. The tedium and intricacy of mat-weaving and card sewing has, however, little to recommend it for in addition to its difficulty the end product is often quite useless. Unfortunately such activities seem to have won a permanent place in the New South Wales course of study, a place justified at times on the grounds that they produce manual dexterity but without any real consideration of the validity of this claim or of possible alternative means of obtaining this end.

From third class onwards unless the circumstances were most unusual girls received two hours instruction

58. Ibid, 381.
each week in needlework and manual work became a subject for boys. At the same time it became a more serious matter. Expectations and aims changed once the child entered the primary school. Henceforth he was required to work more accurately. Measured plan drawings were to be prepared in conjunction with the constructional work, such drawings to be made in special books for the purpose. According to Gardiner the pupils were to do much of this work inductively from a study of a completed model and a development of it which had been prepared by the teacher. This emphasis upon drawing was, of course, a part of the educational tradition.

The actual activities suggested for third class and upwards were divided by Gardiner into two sections -

59. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 16 and 122.

60. Ibid, 111.

61. Ibid, 111 and 121.

62. Ibid.

63. It is still to be found in the current courses prescribed for N.S.W. fifth and sixth classes.
"central" course occupations "which provided for a definite progressive scheme of work"\textsuperscript{64} and "side" occupations "which provide(d) optional exercises ... to be taken up when the teachers (were) competent to give the instruction"\textsuperscript{65}. The central occupations for third class were modelling in paper and thin cardboard, for fourth cardboard modelling, for fifth cardboard modelling and light woodwork, and for sixth woodwork\textsuperscript{66}. As "side" occupations third class could indulge in raffia work, fourth in cane weaving or cord work, fifth in cane weaving or coiled basketry, and sixth in light metal work\textsuperscript{67}. Most of the articles suggested for construction by pupils are still to be found in the syllabus - cardboard trays.

\textsuperscript{64} N.S.W. Department of Education, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916)}, op. cit., 110.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid, 112-14. (Where the facilities were not available cardboard modelling replaced woodwork.)

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid, 112-15. (Those few girls who might be doing manual work were at the sixth class level given a choice of wood or relief carving, repousse metal work and leather work. It was not clear in the 1916 Syllabus whether boys too had this choice. In the 1922 revision it was granted to them without any doubts.)
draughtboards, small baskets. No longer is the same
prominence given to woodwork as in 1916. Then, with many
boys still leaving school at the end of the primary
course it was considered most valuable. New South Wales
was in point of fact on the eve of extending the "centre"
system \(^ {68} \) to provide such instruction for many more boys
than was possible when it was left to individual schools.
Under this system senior boys in populous areas attended
a conveniently located school where facilities were
available. The carpentry shop at Granville Trades School
became one such centre and in 1922 was catering for boys
from Dundas, Liverpool, Cabramatta, Auburn North, Wag Trap
Road, Rosehill, Guildford, Merrylands, Lidcombe, Fairfield,
Canley Vale, and Carlingford \(^ {69} \). At the end of 1928 there
were 19,766 primary boys, 3,500 of them fifth class,
receiving instruction at primary centres \(^ {70} \). Clearly,

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68. Education Department Archives, P4006, Manual Training,
1916-1938, "Reports re Establishment of Manual
Training Centres (Primary) in Sydney, Newcastle,
Maitland", 22nd November, 1916. (Ironically this
move came on the eve of English condemnation of the
system - G. Blachford, op. cit., 74.)

69. Ibid, Papers relating to the centre system, 1922.

70. Ibid, Gardiner to Chief Inspector, 14th November, 1928.
against this background of a decade and more of development and the very dimensions of the work expected, an extension of time for manual training was no more than an official acknowledgement of a fait accompli. The move was still progressive. The trend could after all have been reversed, although this was extremely unlikely in view of overseas opinions and developments. Nature Study was an area where much effort was also expended by teachers upon developmental work but where the results were not so dramatic. The overall time allocation remained identical with that of 1905. This in itself requires some explanation.

Nature Study was a part only of the work prescribed under the heading Nature Knowledge. Geography, too, was included under this general title but was in practice a separate subject; so was hygiene, a new subject introduced by the 1916 Syllabus. Nature Study itself included instruction upon plant and animal life, work in the school garden, and school agriculture. Between 1905 and 1916 informal Nature Study had given way to formal study of elementary science in fifth class but after 1916 such
work was deferred until secondary schooling was commenced. The general principles upon which the work was to be based, as outlined in the 1905 Syllabus, were impressively progressive. They were repeated in somewhat more detail in 1916. Nature Study, the syllabus insisted, was to be "something more than merely sentimental or informing talks." Life histories were to be studied and the parts of plants and animals examined but formal lessons on animal or vegetable physiology and systematic botany were regarded as unsuitable. Ideally the pupils were to be active workers with each lesson providing "its little problem for them to solve" and an opportunity for them to learn from their own observations and so choice.

71. It was possible to give a course in elementary science to sixth classes provided inspectorial permission were first obtained - Education Gazette, X, 5, 1st May, 1916, 183-84; X, 7, 1st July, 1916, 230-38.

72. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, 1905, op. cit., 30.

73. Ibid, 30.

74. Ibid.
of subject-matter was to depend upon the local surroundings. These were the concepts which distinguished Nature Study from the interest in school agriculture which had preceded it during the 1890's but it did not preclude a continuing concern with this more utilitarian subject.

Some teachers at least greeted the introduction of Nature Study with considerable enthusiasm. Gardening became almost a fetish within the Department among teachers and officials alike. In 1905 John Halsted was appointed as Instructor in School Agriculture and henceforth was available to advise the teaching service on its gardening and agricultural activities. Departmental inspectors in their turn reported favourably upon the more outstanding efforts and the Ministers' Reports contained numerous photographs of an impressive character.

75. Ibid., "A New Study - and a Delightful", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIV, 6, 1st November, 1904, 132-33.

76. "School Agriculture: Circular No. 1: Memorandum to Teachers", Public Instruction Gazette, I, 1, 28th November, 1928, 10.

77. Ministers' Reports, 1905-1915.
In theory these gardens were educational - "the most powerful auxiliary any teacher could have"79, was Inspector Henderson's claim. To-day it is their elaborate character and the time they must have taken which is most striking. The accompanying illustration of the plan of the school grounds at Nabiac is sufficient demonstration in itself of these facts. In 1908 a Departmental corrective had to be issued against those who attempted too much and henceforth plots were to be restricted to an eighth of an acre 80. By 1911 Halsted proudly reported that "(t)he value of school gardening (wa)s becoming more appreciated each year, and the subject more scientifically handled by teachers"81, but all


81. (Extracts from Superintendents Reports for 1911), Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 1, 31st January, 1912, 16.
Plan of the School Grounds at Nabiac, 1906 - N.S.W.

Instruction Gazette, I, 10, 28th July, 1906.
observers were not so satisfied with the outcomes.

Thus Inspector Kennedy whilst agreeing that many excellent gardens existed questioned the reason for their popularity:

Too often one cannot help feeling that the real motive at the back of the establishment of the school garden will not bear inspection - the teacher being influenced by his own rather than his pupils' interests.82

More seriously still Kennedy questioned the effectiveness of Nature Study teaching 83. Fine gardens existed because inspectors expected to see them and teachers were aware of this but teachers were less successful with more fundamental matters. Senior Inspector Friend, for instance, claimed that much of the work was too formal and technical, that an unnecessary amount of indoor work was given, and that the local environment with its plants, flowers and marine life was unduly neglected 84. Inspector Grieve saw "many and great" difficulties standing in the way of improvement with the facts that few teachers

82. "Extracts from Inspectors' Reports for Year 1911", Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 4, 30th April, 1912, 95.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid, Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 63.
were "Nature students" and fewer still had "the right point of view" as paramount problems.\(^{85}\)

When the 1916 Syllabus was issued it contained no new concepts but only expanded explanatory notes and greatly increased detail. Over the years Halsted had compiled numerous suggestions and these were included. With "correlation" in mind, lists of literature and of artistic compositions which could serve in this regard were added. The outline course of Nature Study was itself more definite, better graded and more developmental than before. In general the extravagances and failures of the past decade had no major deleterious effects but seem, instead, to have led to an increased determination that the objects of the work should be understood, more appropriate studies undertaken in schools and more effective gardening and agricultural work pursued — in

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85. *Ibid.*, *Public Instruction Gazette*, VI, 4, 30th April, 1912, 95 — In his *Report upon Agricultural High Schools* A.C. Carmichael made a similar point; more he refuted those who argued that scientific knowledge was not a prerequisite to effective teaching (*Public Instruction Gazette*, IX, 5, 1st May, 1915, 101).
each case by more of the teaching service. The educational value of the work was certainly not in question. There was some readjustment of time allocations for Nature Knowledge for particular grades but overall it was not a category which was affected by the extended time allowed for Manual Training and Physical Training. Henceforth ten or fifteen minutes each week or fortnight had to be diverted from Nature Study to the new subject of Hygiene but this, too, had its own progressive features and was in keeping with enunciated concern of the New Education with "all-round development". The aim of this Hygiene course was the cultivation of good health-habits and the creation of "a right attitude of mind" towards such matters. In substance it was similar to part of the course suggested for Domestic Science by a committee of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association and submitted to the

86. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Study for Primary Schools (issued 1916), op. cit., 96.

87. Ibid.
Department in 1915\textsuperscript{88}. There is no gainsaying the relationship between a knowledge and appreciation of hygiene and effective home management nor the influence that this probably played upon those inspectors who were responsible for the inclusion of this work in the 1916 Syllabus. It was, however, decided that hygiene had a more general value than just this alone. It was not regarded as a province for girls only nor was it considered valuable only as a preparation for the future. Instead it was also aimed at the child as he was at the time and so teachers were expected to supervise the daily actions of their pupils and were asked to display a personal interest in their health\textsuperscript{89}. Hygiene thus conceived was more a part of the general concern with physical welfare than a matter of Nature Study or of domestic training.

\textsuperscript{88} Education Department Archives, P3850, Chief Inspector's File, 1914-1917, "New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association Syllabus Revision - Summary of Report".

\textsuperscript{89} N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), 96.
In the *Interim Report* Knibbs had pointed to overseas interest and activity in the area of pupil health and had recommended the appointment of medical officers. From humble beginnings in 1907\(^{90}\) and an anthropometric survey as its first major effort\(^{91}\), the School Medical Service evolved by 1930 into an organisation whose activities included medical inspection of all pupils, of teachers and of students in training, provision of dental treatment throughout the state and of eye treatment in the more remote areas, investigation of "district" diseases and certain physical defects, and some involvement in health education in the schools\(^{92}\). During these years the Service gave valuable assistance when New South Wales was confronted with a smallpox epidemic in 1913\(^{93}\) and an influenza epidemic in 1919\(^{94}\) and by its surveys and special campaigns contributed to the

\[90\] N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *A Brief Description of School Medical Work in New South Wales*, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1914.

\[91\] N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *Report Upon the Physical Condition of Children Attending Public Schools in New South Wales*, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1908.

\[92\] *Minister's Report*, 1928, 11.

\[93\] *Minister's Report*, 1913, 3.

\[94\] *Minister's Report*, 1919, 2.
diminution of opthalmia in the far west and hookworm on the north coast. The development of such ancillary health services were major educational advances in their own right but they were also a part of a more general pattern which included the introduction of Hygiene as a school subject and an interest in physical training. In the 1905 Syllabus military drill still predominated, although supplemented by "free exercises" and "breathing exercises". By 1906 Colonel Paul was able to proclaim that "(c)ombined practice of the breathing and physical exercises is now a recognised institution in all the departments of the public schools". By 1907 Dawson considered that "regular ten minutes' exercises, daily given in the school-grounds, in deep-breathing and in body and limb flexions" had demonstrated their worth.

95. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools, 1905, op. cit., 5-12.


97. Minister's Report, 1907, 42.
Henceforth it was a question of ensuring that this became more widespread and to this end courses for teachers were inaugurated. By 1916, therefore, the Swedish system had become the basis for much of the physical training conducted in New South Wales schools and the extension of time available for this work was but a further acknowledgement of its importance. It is no surprise that the text book prescribed for such physical training was The Syllabus of Physical Exercises for Public Elementary Schools issued by the London Board of Education.

Significant as these developments in physical training were, neither the novelty nor the nature of the changes wrought should be exaggerated. In 1890 school drill had been a subject of discussion amongst local educators and some interest had been displayed in more educational forms of physical training. Even allowing


99. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 123.
that no radical change occurred until the twentieth
century it must be emphasised that these changes too were
developmental and evolutionary rather than revolutionary.
For one thing military drill remained very much a part
of the physical training course in the schools. The
Infantry Training Manual published by the War Office was
still a basic text\(^{100}\) and children were still taught to
form ranks, to march and to turn and wheel\(^{101}\). It was
more than coincidental that much of the supervision
of schools and the instruction of teachers remained in
military hands. After Colonel Paul retired as Superintendent of Drill and Physical Training in 1912 Major
Reddish assumed this office\(^ {102}\). When Reddish retired in
his turn in 1927 this was still the accepted pattern and

100. Ibid.

101. These activities remained an abiding concern of the
Superintendent of Drill (Reddish): Education
Department Archives, School Files, Drill, P2478 (1914-15),
P2553 (1916-17), P2729 (1920-21), P2796 (1922-23),
P2913 (1926-27).

102. Minister's Report, 1912, 23.
Plate XXV. Physical Training, c. 1912 - Minister's Report, 1912, M.L.
Captain Cahill took over \(^{103}\). During this period, too, the instruction of students at the Teachers' College was in the hands of Major Cooke-Russell \(^{104}\).

Physical training was barely distinct from military drill. It too was performed in ranks to numbers, often by the whole school *en masse*. Fortunately organised games and swimming retained an important place in the school curriculum. In general, of course, mechanical or not, the increased devotion to physical training was an educational advance which followed from the general charter for reform approved during 1901-1905. In this, Manual Work, Nature Study and Physical Training shared a common ground. Between them they made a more balanced and less bookish primary education system in New South Wales. Unfortunately potent forces of conservatism were also at work. Foremost amongst these was the issue of retardation. This was to plague the primary school throughout the period under discussion in this study.

\(^{103}\) Education Department Archives, P2913, School Files, Drill. (Cahill had apparently been promised the post by Mutch and Davies kept the Ministerial word.)

\(^{104}\) Thomas rated Cooke-Russell's work as more important than Cahill's (Education Department Archives, P3894, School Files, 1930-1931, Drill, Cahill to Thomas, 26th November, 1930.)
"RETARDATION" AND THE 1916 SYLLABUS

Retardation became an issue in New South Wales following the publication in America in 1909 of Ayres' Laggards in Our Schools\textsuperscript{105}. Ayres' work was sound and scholarly and his conclusions of immense educational significance. He began with a simple definition - a pupil was retarded when above the normal age for his grade\textsuperscript{106} - and he discovered that there were an enormous number of such retarded pupils. Nor was this just a product of the range of ability amongst pupils because "for every child making rapid progress there (we)re eight to ten making slow progress"\textsuperscript{107}. The most serious result of this widespread retardation was that many American children left school without completing the elementary

\begin{flushright}

106. Ibid, 17.

\end{flushright}
Attendance was one factor contributing to retardation, physical fitness another, but Ayres also concluded that courses of study were at fault - they were adjusted to the powers of the brighter pupils and were beyond those of the average and slower students. In addition he pointed to the possible psychological effects of retardation upon the retarded:

"... a large part of all the children in our public schools fail to make normal progress. They fail repeatedly. They are thoroughly trained in failure. The effect of such training should be carefully considered, for the problem it presents is a grave one."

Impressed with the importance of this issue, Mackie of the Teachers' College and Margaret Miller, mistress of the Infants' Department of North Newtown Practice School, made replicative studies and discovered that

108. Ibid, 18.
109. Ibid, 140.
110. Ibid, 131.
111. Ibid, 88.
112. Ibid, 220.
retardation was just as much a matter for concern in New South Wales as it was in America. Mackie obtained the following figures:

**TABLE XXVI: PERCENTAGE RETARDATION IN SEVEN SYDNEY SCHOOLS, 1909 AND 1910 (5006 PUPILS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>1 (YEAR 1)</th>
<th>1 (YEAR 2)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retarded</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE XXVII: AGE-GRADE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN THE WHOLE STATE, DECEMBER 1909**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>1 (YEARS 1 &amp; 2)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retarded</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

115. Ibid, 11.
Mackie suggested that much could be done through an increase in individualised instruction but it is not clear from the context whether at this stage he saw this as much more than individual coaching\textsuperscript{116}. He also thought that the problem might in part be a product of unduly high standards, especially at the fifth class level\textsuperscript{117}. And he saw, too, some need for the creation of special schools for "particular types of retarded child, who could not conveniently be taught in the ordinary primary school"\textsuperscript{118}. The first proposal, individualised instruction, was to receive considerable attention later under the impetus of Montessori's work and its derivatives. The second was to some extent reflected in the 1916 Syllabus. Nothing was done about the third until the 1920's.

Retardation was a phenomenon which immediately stirred official Departmental interest. Dawson himself commented upon it in his 1911 Report, but at that stage

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 7.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, 8.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, 7.
saw it as primarily a result of teacher error, claiming its most common cause was "the fact that a pupil, above the average age on entering a school, (was) made to advance lock-step with those younger than he (was)" 119. And it was his view that much retardation could be eliminated if such pupils were permitted to advance more rapidly. There was some truth in this claim but the issue was hardly so simple that accelerated promotion was a complete solution. Recognising this, Board instructed inspectors in the Sydney and Newcastle districts to embark upon a more thorough investigation of its causes with the object of providing some more definite answers and so a basis for policy decisions 120. Nothing was settled by this particular investigation. The controversy over the causes and remedies of retardation continued for some time but although by 1916 no final or balanced view had yet evolved, this did not mean that this syllabus or

119. Minister's Report, 1911, 42.
120. Minister's Report, 1912, 46-47.
primary schooling generally was left unaffected. It was for one thing still suspected that teachers were themselves in large part to blame. In a special Note on Classification of Pupils they were reminded of their obligation to maintain standards and obtain appropriate results:

Though it is not expected that every pupil will keep up to the prescribed standard, the teacher should, by giving careful individual attention to slow or backward pupils make the exceptions as few as possible.\(^{121}\)

They were also directed to pursue the policy enunciated by Dawson of accelerated promotion\(^ {122} \).

Although this Note did stress that the ages specified in the syllabus for the various grades imposed no obligation to place a child in a class for which he was "manifestly unfit"\(^ {123} \), teachers were told that they must "be able to give reasons for any divergence from the normal standard in individual cases"\(^ {124} \). Quite obviously

\(^{121}\) N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 11.

\(^{122}\) Ibid.

\(^{123}\) Ibid.

\(^{124}\) Ibid, 12.
the pressure was on teachers, especially so since upon analysis there seems to be only slight reductions of curriculum requirements despite either the decreased time allocation or the opinion occasionally expressed that the 1905 Syllabus had itself been overcrowded. Some of the modifications of the 1916 Syllabus did lessen demands upon teachers and students - grammar was one clear case, history another, and probably the new prescribed spelling lists were simpler than words drawn from the reading books. In mathematics, however, although there was some easing of demands in the lower grades, the terminal standards of the primary course were not much altered. And, as against these changes, the 1916 Syllabus was a much more detailed document which imposed a number of fresh limitations upon the classroom

125. (a) Education Department Archives, P3849, Chief Inspector's File, 1904-1913, Senior Inspector Willis to Dawson, 13th October, 1910.

(b) Education Department Archives, P3850, Chief Inspector's File, 1914-1917, Crozier to Wright, 23rd April, 1915.

(c) P. Board, "Recent Developments in Education", Public Instruction Gazette, III, 2, 27th February, 1909, 31.
teacher. The issue of retardation was one factor in this. Another was the desire, shared by Departmental officers and teachers, for greater definiteness. In part, too, it was a reflection of prevailing local educational "fashion". Here pronunciation and writing were obvious examples.

With the New Education and the syllabuses of 1904 and 1905 had come a vital interest in oral expression and with it correct pronunciation. By 1914, however, a new element had intruded - "a general feeling throughout the English speaking world that all (was) not right with (the) current modes of speech" - and it was decided by local officialdom that "(t)he time ha(d) come for more definite and concerted action". When translated into curriculum terms by the 1916 Syllabus this emerged as a prescribed course of daily phonic drill in vowel and

127. Minister's Report, 1914, 47.
128. Ibid.
consonant sounds\textsuperscript{129}. There was behind this an implicit assumption that Australian speech was "bad" and Standard English "good". A decade later this view was to become explicit. From this point in time the whole matter had its amusing side, especially such complaints as that of Inspector A. Smith against the omission of the "r's" from heard, Marston and culvert\textsuperscript{130}. At the time, however, and for some years to come, it was regarded as a serious matter. Writing was a subject which was hardly affected by the 1905 Syllabus. The approach through the copy book which had been evolved in the nineteenth century remained in operation. By 1907, however, experiments were already underway with the teaching of writing without the use of such copy books\textsuperscript{131}. This idea was

\textsuperscript{129} N.S.W. Department of Education, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Revised 1916), op. cit.}, 30-34.

\textsuperscript{130} "Extracts from Inspector's Reports for the Year 1915", \textit{Public Instruction Gazette}, X, 4, 1st April, 1916, 115.

claimed by McLelland to have come to Australia through England from Germany but is reminiscent, too, of Francis Parker's technique. As the outcome of opinion and experiment the copy book was outlawed from New South Wales state primary schools by the 1916 Syllabus and replaced by instruction from the blackboard. The 1916 Syllabus also insisted that a progressive and graded course be followed and implied that the syllabus style as contained in the writing charts which were to be issued to all schools contained the model to be followed.

It was not, however, at this point in time clearly obligatory. In part these reforms were a product of Inspector Clemens highly condemnatory Report on the Teaching of Handwriting in certain of the Metropolitan Schools;

132. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Revised 1916), op. cit., 25.

133. Ibid.

in part they were a product of the increasing fascination with standards, especially in the basic skills. This issue of standards had never been far from the official mind and now it came to the fore once again. The general issue of retardation was certainly one factor in this but it was not the only one. Dawson's proclaimed attitude, inspectorial experience of the past decade and the introduction of the Qualifying Certificate also played a part as supplementary conservative factors.

**SUPPLEMENTARY CONSERVATIVE FACTORS:**
**INSPECTORIAL EXPERIENCE AND THE QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE**

A decade of experience had brought it disillusionments. Faith in the New Education itself was as yet unshaken but the ability of teachers to interpret and implement it wisely was subject to doubt. Board had feared that the basic subjects might be neglected and Dawson had found it necessary to demand "reasonable proficiency in the three R's"\(^{135}\) as a teacher's first

\(^{135}\) Minister's Report, 1910, 37.
responsibility. As the years went by doubts of this character grew. The reports furnished each year by inspectors changed from records of progress and achievement into catalogues of deficiencies. The year 1911 seems to have been a turning point - Grieve complained that school programmes contained "much traditional matter that could well make way for material calculated to meet the real demands of the boy or girl"\textsuperscript{136}; Williams that "methods of teaching ... (were) becoming stereotyped and lifeless"\textsuperscript{137}; Friend that "not a few teachers seem(ed) to think that 'drill' ... (wa)s unnecessary and old-fashioned"\textsuperscript{138}; Lasker that "the majority (of teachers) ha(d) little idea of handling silent reading effectively\textsuperscript{139}; Black that there were "serious faults of enunciation"\textsuperscript{140}; Dennis that "the library (wa)s not, as a rule, brought into

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{136} Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 4, 30th April, 1912, 90.
  \item \textsuperscript{137} Ibid, 96.
  \item \textsuperscript{138} Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 62.
  \item \textsuperscript{139} Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 5, 31st May, 1912, 131.
  \item \textsuperscript{140} Ibid, 133.
\end{itemize}
direct relation with the ordinary instruction"^141; 
Reay that the results in mathematics were "not commensurate with the amount of time devoted to the study"^142; 
Fraser that "Nature-knowledge (was) too often dry, formal, bookish"^143. No wonder with such an impressive array of deficiencies that the 1916 Syllabus was more detailed and more prescriptive. And there were those who thought that many such problems would be solved if only teachers followed the syllabus^144. Others saw the solution in the guidance provided by the Qualifying Certificate examination. And Senior-Inspector Beavis was correct - "the institution of the test (did) give to the school work direction and purpose"^145. But it was not a fortunate direction.

^142. Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 69.
^143. Ibid, 63.
^144. Public Instruction Gazette, VII, 1, 31st January, 1913, 26 (Senior-Inspector Thomas).
^145. Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 61.
The introduction of an examination to mark the end of the primary school course had been recommended by Knibbs in the *Interim Report* and by Board in his *Primary Report*. The first such examination was introduced in 1911. Successful pupils were awarded a Qualifying Certificate marking their fitness to proceed from primary to post-primary education. Henceforth this Q.C. examination began to dominate the primary system. Results were featured prominently in the Ministers' Reports in very much the same fashion as results of the annual inspectorial examination had been featured earlier. The same detail was lacking but the inference was clear enough. Dawson was on leave in 1913 and McLelland, as Acting Chief Inspector, took the opportunity thus presented to sound a note of warning. He was obviously fearful that examinations would again dominate education:

Some teachers need warning again and again of the temptation presented. Pupils are sometimes made to feel that they are now studying English, Mathematics, History and Geography, not so much for the sake of understanding more about these subjects, but because they are to be examined in them...

If pupils spend their time in learning things by rote, and in mechanically applying rules they do not understand merely to pass the Qualifying Certificate Examination, it is simply a reversal to the practice which existed in the days before what is yet called the "New Syllabus". 147.

Unfortunately Dawson was enamoured of just such a policy. The same year which ushered in the revised syllabus found him instructing his inspectors that the reports they made upon each school should include comments upon the previous year's output as shown by the Q.C. examination "with the explanation verbally given by the Teacher where results are not satisfactory". 148. The consequences of such a decision are obvious enough and it is no wonder that Branch complained in his 1914 report that he "sometimes found) less attention paid to art than previously". 149. The Qualifying Certificate examination and Dawson's attitude towards it were a truly potent force.

147. Minister's Report, 1913, 33.


149. Education Department Archives, P2478, School Files, 1914-1915, Drawing, Report for 1914.
The unco-ordinated eclecticism that was the New Education had meant that primary schooling in New South Wales had developed with no guiding principles of curriculum construction and no adequate system of priorities. The outcome was contradictory and bewildering. On the one hand the 1916 Syllabus was more progressive than its predecessor. As a logical culmination of the charter for reform established in the years 1901-1905 manual work and physical education were accorded increased importance. And in addition, although they had no great impact yet upon primary schooling generally, Montessori's ideas were already a factor in determining the curriculum in infant schools. This was, however, only one side of the picture for the 1916 Syllabus was also more conservative than its predecessors. The personal conservatism

150. "Nomenclature of Classes in Primary and Infant Schools: Circular No. 75", The Education Gazette, X, 5, 1st May, 1916, 195. (A direction that the class groups below First should be named Kindergarten or Montessori groups "according as the devices of one or other method preponderate" - and clear evidence of the extension of Montessori work.)
of Board and Dawson, inspectorial experience of a decade, the issue of retardation and the introduction of the Qualifying Certificate Examination had combined to produce by 1916 a syllabus which was more detailed than that of 1905 and a curriculum which as it functioned in the schools once again laid great stress upon results.

What was required more than anything else was a theory of curriculum construction which would enable some balance to be struck between results in the three R's and the broader functions assigned to primary schooling by the New Education. Dawson was apparently thinking along these lines as early as 1910 when in speaking at Wellington he suggested that the work of the school could "roughly" be considered under two heads, utility subjects and cultural subjects. This idea of assigning a dual function to the school did appear in the 1916 Syllabus but only as a brief paragraph amongst the Notes on the English Syllabus:

The Syllabus provides for two definite classes of English teaching - one, the study of literature for the sake of the pure enjoyment it affords; the other, the more mechanical side of language, structure and expression152.

This was not in itself sufficient either to bring order out of chaos or to constitute a theory of curriculum construction. By 1922, however, when the next revision of the syllabus appeared Board had taken this idea and developed it into a theory of primary schooling. But by 1922 this was only one of a number of fresh factors which had emerged to influence elementary education.

THE REVISION OF 1922: INTRODUCTORY

The revision of the syllabus which appeared in 1922 was, in a number of respects, simply continuous with its predecessors and as such was marked by further steps forward along paths already determined. Thus, as Table XXVIII indicates, time allocations for curricular studies

152. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 22.
### TABLE XXVIII: TIME ALLOCATIONS FOR CURRICULAR STUDIES, 1916 AND 1922 (MINS PER WEEK) 153

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>1916</th>
<th>1922</th>
<th>1916</th>
<th>1922</th>
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<th>1922</th>
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<td>300</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>240</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature Knowledge</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>Morals and Civics</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manual Work</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Training</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

153. Compiled from the Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), 16, and Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), x.
were again altered in favour of the "progressive" studies. This was possible only because the mathematics course and the time allocated for its study were drastically curtailed when the test of utility or "practical value" already enunciated as a part of the New Education was more thoroughly applied. The very method of syllabus construction was also a step further forward. Again, as in 1916, inspectorial committees were the principal groups to whom this task was entrusted, but now teachers participated even more fully than they had earlier for it became a matter of highest policy "that all concerned with the work of a syllabus should be consulted in the forming of it". Preliminary work began in early 1920 amongst the inspectors themselves. Opinions were then sought from the teachers, each district submitting a report to representative syllabus committees which took

154. "Revision of the Primary Syllabus, 1921", Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 3, 1, April 1921, 10.

155. Education, 1, 6, 15th April, 1920, 131.
over in November\textsuperscript{156}. Characteristically these last were composed of a teachers' representative nominated by the Teachers' Federation, a member of the Teachers' College staff, and one or two inspectors\textsuperscript{157}.

The underlying theory of curriculum construction upon which the 1922 Syllabus was based, in so far as it followed Board's guiding pronouncements, was similarly a further development of the dualistic concept propounded by Dawson in 1910. Such dualism was also basic to the experimental work inaugurated at Board's personal direction at Brighton-le-Sands. As a theory of curriculum, however, Board's concepts were not adequately expressed until 1920-1921. In September 1920 he outlined them to a conference of inspectors\textsuperscript{158} and in 1921 incorporated them into the report upon elementary education he and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{156} "Revision of the Primary Syllabus, 1921", loc. cit.
\item \textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{158} P. Board (Opening Address to the Conference of Inspectors, September 1920), Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 2, 3, December 1920, 2-8.
\end{itemize}
his fellow Royal Commissioners prepared for the Western Australian Government. In essence Board's views were simple enough. He held that the primary curriculum contained two kinds of subjects - instrumental and educational. The instrumental "subjects" he identified as speaking, reading, writing, composing and calculating. These were of such major importance that alone they justified a school's existence. They were also the minimum which could be expected and had therefore to be provided for first. To his inspectors Board dwelt on these instrumental subjects at length and stressed that the first requirement of the syllabus was that it should give "all teachers the necessary guidance for laying a solid foundation by thorough instruction in each of these six arts". To regard

159. *Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the System of Public Elementary Education followed in Western Australia...*, Govt. Printer, Perth, 1921.


161. Ibid.

162. Ibid.

163. Ibid, 4.
the instrumental subjects as sufficient was, however, in Board's view to live in the past when it had been enough if the mass of the people were saved from illiteracy\textsuperscript{164}. Modern society was so complex that each citizen was required to possess considerable knowledge and understanding and, moreover, the structure of society had changed so that the right of every individual to make the most of his natural capacities was an accepted principle\textsuperscript{165}. A broader education which building upon a solid foundation in the basic subjects included aesthetic training, ethical development and economic understanding, was to Board indispensable\textsuperscript{166}. Consequently in the case of the "higher subjects" of the school course the syllabus had to be so constructed that it served these "educational" ends. Here, however, the range of ability amongst

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{164} Royal Commission \textit{... upon the System of Public Elementary Education ... in Western Australia \ldots}, \textit{op. cit.}, 13.
\item \textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{166} \textit{Journal of the Institute of Inspectors}, 2, 3, December 1920, 5.
\end{itemize}
teachers presented a further basic problem:

... we want some means by which a teacher will not feel his hand tied by the words and letters of the Syllabus in those subjects in which he does not require assistance but at the same time will give him help in the subjects in which he has not shown himself self-dependent.\textsuperscript{167}

It was Board's view that if all teachers were well educated, thoroughly trained and skilful no syllabus would be required\textsuperscript{168}. Clearly a pious ideal this, too, influenced the character of the syllabus of 1922. In fact Board himself was responsible only for the general introductory preface but his curriculum theory and this general attitude towards the syllabus was reflected directly in many features of the 1922 revision. For one thing statements of aims and guiding principles assumed greater significance. For another, the course in English was now clearly founded upon Board's two-fold division - even to listing the five school arts of speaking, reading,

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{168} Board stated this view on numerous occasions at this time: E.g. Royal Commission ... upon the System of Public Elementary Education ... in Western Australia ..., op. cit., 13.
writing, spelling and composing as "one main factor in the child's culture". Again, too, the radical reduction in mathematics reflected Board's theory for this subject was reduced to an instrumentary study where habit formation, accuracy and speed were the major concern, reasoning confined to problem-solving and rationalisation rejected as generally "quite unnecessary, more especially in the lower classes".

The 1922 Syllabus was, however, much more than just continuous with previous developments or a reflection of Board's curriculum theory. It was also a product of social and educational developments. The Great War was the major social event of the period. For local education it had led to governmental economies, some curtailment of development and a heritage of inadequate school accommodation and a shortage of teachers. Socially and economically it had led to the growth of manufacturing

169. N.S.W. Department of Education, *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools* (Issued 1922), Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1922, 2.

and industrial enterprises, a higher standard of living and an increase in secondary school enrolments. Ironically Bruntnell reacted to the growth of secondary education by according primary education first priority, but educationists saw things differently. The stated belief of 1905 and 1916 that "(a) large number of the pupils would not reach a standard beyond that of the Sixth Class" 171 no longer appeared in the 1922 Course of Instruction for Primary Schools. With this gone so was the belief that children's education had to be complete enough by this stage to fit them for the adult world. And throughout the 1922 syllabus the idea of preparation of children for the future was replaced, in theory if not in fact, by the idea of treating them as the children they were and of permitting their natural interests and their actual stage of development determine the form and substance of the work prescribed. History had been conceived as a series of stories with a moral content for some time, now this interesting justification was added

171. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (1905), op. cit., 18; N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), 13.
to the syllabus:

The children, being children, determine largely the nature and scope of the subject-matter. They are interested in stories of great personalities and stirring events. They love colour, romance, movement. They like to be told and to read about boys and girls and men and women of bygone days, to contrast present and past modes of life, and to imagine themselves as living in far-off times. 172

In geography the changes were more startling. Here too, but for the first time, the story form was advocated.

More drastic was the change which saw "the cultivation of interest" proclaimed as the major aim. 173 Such modifications were clearly an extension of the progressive strand of the New Education. There was in such changes a reflection upon the local scene of the contemporaneous developments abroad - those for example of Calwell Cook in Britain to which the 1922 Syllabus itself refers 174. But still this shift in attitude was predominantly a mark of the major social development which had made it possible. New South Wales educators not only accepted that community needs had changed and with these the

172. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 97.
174. Ibid, 10, 36, 37.
function of primary education but also sought to speed the modification of community attitudes. To this end the Qualifying Certificate was discontinued in 1923 to eliminate any lingering belief that its possession exempted children from further school attendance.\textsuperscript{175} Within the broad general context of such social change two educational "movements" existed: individualism and measurement. Both had roots in the preceding decade - individualism in Montessori work and the measurement movement in the perplexing problems associated with retardation - but now these emerged to influence schooling more profoundly.

**INDIVIDUALISM AND THE 1922 SYLLABUS**

The War had for Australian educators a side other than its economic one, a side proclaimed at the Second Conference of Directors of Education in 1918. To these men the War had demonstrated "the necessity of training the whole

\textsuperscript{175} Education Gazette, XVII, 6, 1st June, 1923, 84.
of the people for full citizenship, efficient in capacity to earn a good living, efficient in the power to utilise leisure time well and worthily. This conference but echoed a concern Board had voiced since December 1915 with the problem of devising a more adequate and effective system of citizenship training. At first Board had seen this problem and its solution in terms of the corporate life of the school:

The outstanding problem for the school now is - how can individual self-government be established so that the liberty which follows the school may be prepared for by a training in the use of freedom within the school? ... The more completely the school is regarded as a corporate thing and not as a mere aggregation of individual pupils, the better will it prepare the pupil for self-direction as well as for the subordination of selfish interests that the community demands of them.

A year later the idea of an experience curriculum had emerged:

It is not a question of more schooling as commonly understood. It is not a question of necessary lessons. It is a question of the training of youth in doing the things


we wish them as adults to do skilfully
and in thinking about things we wish them
as adults to think intelligently about.\textsuperscript{178}

Board recognised that such an "experience curriculum"
involved a form of education which did not then exist in
New South Wales. For one thing it required an educational
programme for the fourteen to nineteen year old group
which combined training in skills with training in freedom
and co-operation through "practice in working as members
of self-governing bodies constituted by themselves"\textsuperscript{179}.
And for another it implied a radical change in the primary
and later stages of formal education. At these, too,
the child had to be introduced to freedom. What was
required, said Board, was "wider scope for the full
initiative and spontaneous action of the pupil"\textsuperscript{180}.
These concepts of freedom and self-directed activity were common
to a number of overseas educators but they had also been
directly encountered during local experiments with
Montessori's ideas and methods. This work began in 1912

\textsuperscript{178.} P. Board, "The War and Education" (An address
delivered 18 December, 1916), \textit{Education Gazette},

\textsuperscript{179.} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{180.} \textit{Ibid.}
and by 1916 had made considerable progress in the kindergarten classes of the infant schools of New South Wales. At the time the 1916 Syllabus appeared this work was still confined to such classes and Montessori's ideas were still of too recent origin to find any mention in its pages or to influence its character. It was a very different situation in 1922.

THE INDIVIDUALISM OF 1922 AND THE MONTESSORI EXPERIMENTS

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) won an almost instantaneous world fame for the educational practices she inaugurated in 1907 in Rome amongst the children of the poor who had been rehoused in model tenements by a philanthropic organisation. The source of Montessori's ideas lay within the medical profession of which she was a member rather than to an acquaintance with the educational tradition or to the writing of educational theorists. Nevertheless some of her ideas were compatible with those of such educationists as Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel and with the New Education. They seemed therefore

to be worthy of emulation. This was especially true of her two central doctrines - liberty for the child and auto-education. It was liberty for the child within the educational process which was the fundamental principle upon which Montessori based her system. This in turn was based upon her naturalistic conception of development as an unfolding of the latent powers of an individual from within. She attacked contemporary practices because with their fixed desks, prizes and punishments, limitation of spontaneous movements and imposition of arbitrary tasks, they curtailed the liberty and freedom of children. There were difficulties and inconsistencies in Montessori's fundamental position, for she proclaimed that "the liberty of the child should have as its limit the collective interest: and its form, what we universally consider good breeding" - and this does not follow logically from a naturalistic position but is

183. Ibid, 10.
socially imposed and arbitrary. Yet, even thus limited, child freedom remained as the basic principle. In translating this into practice she introduced her second major doctrine: auto-education. This was a teaching method characterised by teacher passivity and the provision of didactic material "which contain(ed) within itself control of error". This didactic material fell into three categories. Those in the first were designed to train the senses, in the second to train the child in certain practical and muscular skills, and in the third to facilitate instruction in the three R's. All these materials had their fascination for observers and imitators, but what amazed educators most of all were the results she achieved in the skills of reading, writing and number.

Much was at fault in Montessori's system beside its philosophical inconsistency. Her rejection of children's toys as "foolish", of games as "meaningless" and of story-telling as "silly" was reactionary and

185. Ibid, 371.
186. Ibid, 372.
harsh. Her concept of training the senses through repetitive discriminatory exercises was an implicit enunciation of faculty psychology and transfer of training at their worst. The exercises of practical life were valuable in so far as they enabled children to become independent of adults but the use of specially constructed apparatus for such activities made these unnecessarily formal and mechanical. Children working with their eyes blindfolded so that they might train the sense of touch were certainly not engaged in an educative enterprise, but whatever the faults, there is no gainsaying the importance of Montessori's basic principles of child liberty and of auto-education or the extent of their impact upon the educational world.

Montessori work first attracted attention in New South Wales in 1912. By this time Alexander Mackie had established the Teachers' College as a centre for research and the Blackfriars Practice School as an experimental laboratory wherein new ideas from abroad were tested and this determined the subsequent course of events. Wherever the investigation of Montessori ideas had first been
decided upon it was Miss Martha Margaret Simpson, the mistress of the Blackfriars Infants' School to whom this task was officially entrusted. Unlike previous efforts of similar character events moved rapidly. By the end of July 1912 preparations were already under way for the introduction of the work and Simpson had furnished a first Report on the Montessori Method based upon her study of Montessori Methods as translated by Annie E. George. In this 1912 report Simpson pointed to the novelties of Montessori's system - its increased liberty, didactic material, auto-education, sense training and methods of teaching reading and writing. She also pointed out some of its major defects - its limited appeal to heart and imagination and the failure of the didactic material to provide children with scope for originality or creative activity. Simpson did suggest

187. Education Department Archives, P2383, School Files, 1912-1913, Blackfriars, Mackie to Board, 9th July, 1912; Simpson to Dawson, 26th July, 1912.


189. Ibid, 4-6.

190. Ibid, 7.
that the Montessori approach with its auto-education
could well have an application in small schools but
her principal recommendation at this stage was for "the
sending home of one or more experienced teachers, at an
early date, to study the working of the Montessori Schools
and Infant Education generally". Carmichael, the
Minister, personally directed that arrangements be made
"for studying the system as suggested" and towards
the end of 1912 Simpson was sent to Rome. By then much
of the initial work had already been accomplished.
Misses Stevens and Swann had been engaged in the work
since August on lines "as laid down by Dr. Montessori in
her book" with, it was claimed, "the most astonishing
results:

Children broke into writing of their own accord
and without any formal teaching. The phonic
elements were mastered and applied by most
children in two weeks ... Everyone was busy
and happy, and the joy of achievement and delight
shone in their faces.

191. Ibid, 8.
192. Ibid, 10.
194. M.M. Simpson, Report on the Montessori Methods of
195. Ibid.
196. Ibid.
The Staff of the Blackfriars Kindergarten Practising School, at which the Experiments in Montessori Methods were conducted.

Plate XXVI. Staff of Blackfriars Infants' School, c. 1914 - M.M. Simpson; Report on the Montessori Method of Education, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1914, 4, M.L.
Upon her return from abroad in 1913 Simpson furnished a further Report on the Montessori Methods of Education.\textsuperscript{197} Steps were also taken to introduce the work to all infants' schools. Equipment was ordered from abroad and Simpson, appointed "Organiser of Montessori Classes" and told to arrange a course of lectures for teachers.\textsuperscript{198} Her report as published provided additional details of Montessori's theory, practice and didactic materials, an outline of the experimental work at Blackfriars and Simpson's evaluation of the worth of the approach. Her major conclusion was that Montessori methods had proved their value and that the defects of the system were "defects of omission only"\textsuperscript{199} and easily remedied by the inclusion of supplementary activities.\textsuperscript{200} She further

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{197.} Education Department Archives, P2494, School Files, 1914-1915, Kindergarten, Ms. copy of Simpson's report dated 23rd October, 1913.

\textsuperscript{198.} Education Department Archives, P2412, School Files, 1912-1913, Kindergarten, Memo. 30th October, 1913.

\textsuperscript{199.} M.M. Simpson, \textit{op. cit.}, 1914, 42.

\textsuperscript{200.} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
An Australian Montessori Schoolroom.

claimed that it had clearly demonstrated that "(c)lass
teaching must go and individual teaching must be
substituted". On this point she uttered an impressive
eulogy which would gladden the hearts of recent proponents
of the non-graded school:

In the classroom of the future we may see
children of the same age, but at different
stage of development, working away busily and
happily, not cramped up in desks but moving
naturally and quietly about the rooms,
interested and joyous over their work ... The
emphasis will not be as now on the fact that
the teacher is teaching, but upon the much
more important and valuable fact that the
child is learning.

There were a number of important outcomes of these
experimental activities at Blackfriars and of Simpson's
authoritative and favourable reports. Blackfriars became
a mecca for visitors and its staff acknowledged experts
whose services were sought in other states, New South

201. Ibid, 29.


203. Education Department Archives, P2383, School Files,
1912-1913, Blackfriars, Mackie to Board, 1st
December, 1913.

204. Education Department Archives, P2466, School Files,
1914-1915, Blackfriars, McCoy (Director, Tasmania) to
Board, 30th June, 1914; Andrews (Director, Western
Australia) to Board, 15th June and 24th July, 1914.
Wales became a font of wisdom for Australia and New Zealand and Simpson herself was elevated to the inspectorial ranks in November 1917. And then there was the immediate effect upon infant schools. Educationally, however, the impact of Montessori's ideas did not end there alone. They provided the background against which Board evolved a new concept of citizenship training through pupil-freedom and directed self-activity. This idea Board chose to test in practice by the establishment of an experimental school at Brighton-le-Sands.

INDIVIDUALISM AND THE BRIGHTON-LE-SANDS EXPERIMENT

Brighton-le-Sands opened, newly-erected, better designed and better equipped than its contemporaries on 16th April, 1917. There were rooms for kindergarten

205. Education Department Archives, P2412 and P2494, School Files, 1912-13 and 1914-15, Kindergarten.

206. Education Department Archives, P3850, Chief Inspector's Files, 1914-17, Public Service Board Minute, 18th October, 1917.

207. Education Department Archives, P2544, School Files, Brighton-le-Sands, Cox to Dawson, 16th April, 1917.
and Montessori work, domestic science, manual work, and a library, a gymnasium, an extensive garden and a poultry run. Percival Cox, first-assistant at Blackfriars, was selected as headmaster and furnished, in the form of a memorandum from Board dated 16th March, 1917, with details of the scheme he was to implement. Although Crane and Walker make a number of errors in the version of this memorandum they quote, their major points remain basically correct. The principal features of the plan were:

(a) The employment of subject teachers in principal subjects of ordinary school work.

(b) The setting apart of about one half of school time to "executive" or "manual" subjects.

(c) The introduction of a larger measure of self government and freedom of choice than is usually allowed to pupils.

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208. Ibid, in passim.


210. A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, op. cit., 192-95 - The unfortunate feature is that they quote this in full with a multitude of minor errors. For this reason a correct text has been included in Appendix C of this study.

The curriculum was to comprise English, Writing, Nature Knowledge, Morals and Civics, Mathematics and Music as its subjects of ordinary school work and as executive subjects included "Writing, Drawing, Gardening, Modelling, Cardboard Work, Woodwork, Metal work, Poultry Keeping, Cooking, Laundry work, Spinning, Weaving, Sewing".

The avowed purposes of the executive subjects were "to provide more time for occupations, (a) that train the eye, or (b) that employ free time for a definite purpose, or (c) provide training of tastes, or (d) serve any purpose useful in the child's career." There were to be periods for pupils "to spend according to their own choice" in the library or in one of the occupations.

This Brighton-le-Sands experiment encountered practical difficulties from the start which hampered its

213. Ibid, 2.
214. Ibid.
215. Ibid.
216. Ibid.
effectiveness. Some facilities were not complete or not available when the school was opened and later increasing enrolments created a major difficulty as class sizes mounted into the sixties and seventies. Cox, in an interview with Crane and Walker, maintained that despite such problems the school functioned with considerable success. It had, too, a favourable reception in the press as the cuttings in the school's files testify. In addition it was used by the Department as a showplace for visitors and as an example to other teachers in the state service. None of these facts could, however, save the experiment. Board had been the driving force and apparently he lost interest and then other officials, never very devoted to the cause anyway, allowed the enterprise to amble to a close. Such basically is the

217. Education Department Archives, P2544 and P2624, School Files, 1916-17 and 1918-19, Brighton-le-Sands.

218. Education Department Archives, P2624, School Files, 1918-19, Brighton-le-Sands, Cox to Dawson, 8th August, 1919; Ibid, P2710, School Files, 1920-21, Brighton-le-Sands, Cox to Dawson, 16th February, 1920.


220. Large classes, careless transfer of staff and the inaction which forced specialist rooms to be diverted from their original purposes are evidence of this.
conclusion reached by Crane and Walker and there is no reason for dispute. Where Crane and Walker do make an error is in their failure to place the experiment within the broader context of the time and of Board's views. The two-fold division of school studies, was, for instance, a clear forerunner to his curriculum theory of 1920-1921. More importantly it is more than just "interesting to find him recommending that the spirit of the Montessori school ... should be applied to primary classes" 221. This last is in fact of major significance, for it represented a crucial phase in the evolution of Board's thought. It was the beginnings of an individualism which was to have important ramifications for every primary school in the state. Within this context even Board's loss of interest in the experiment is understandable for Brighton-le-Sands was little more than an adventurous interlude. Board moved on to enunciate a curriculum theory which was more traditional and a "solution" to the task of training citizens which was more applicable to schools in general because less radical.

INDIVIDUALISM AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF N.S.W. PRIMARY SCHOOLING

The new solution Board evolved to solve the educational problem of citizenship training was the individualisation of instruction. This had the added advantage of simultaneously solving the retardation problem. Board announced the new philosophy at the Annual Conference of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association in December 1917. He told his audience that the sense of responsibility required of citizens came out of the development of individual personality, that citizens could only be made one at a time and that it was therefore necessary to "get down to the individuals in the class". He prophesised major modifications in the system of class teaching, modifications clearly parallel with Montessori's scheme and with the Dalton Plan:

... the time will come when we shall do very much less class teaching, and when we will have every individual in the class doing a little bit of study for himself, the teacher taking individuals and getting the individual difficulty of each, backing up his effort not by substituting

the teacher's effort, but by supplementing
the pupil's effort by the advice he requires. 223

Recognising that such procedures required much more
in the way of material resources than were then available
Board looked hopefully for more funds for these when the
war was over 224 but he refused to wait until then before
implementing his new ideas. Instead in January 1918 he
issued a directive intended "to place the individual
pupil rather than the class in the focus of the teacher's
interest" 225. Class teaching was still to be the mainstay
but it was to be reduced in amount and supplemented by
individual study and diagnosis of individual difficulties.
Then in December 1918 a further pronouncement followed.
Entitled Individual Teaching: Age-Grade Distribution of
Pupils: Memorandum to Teachers from the Director of
Education the principal subject in fact discussed was
retardation and there was a commendably balanced and
sensible analysis of this problem 226. Teachers were,

223. Ibid, 25.

224. Ibid.

226. The Education Gazette, XIII, 1, 2nd January, 1919, 1-5.
however, directed to attune their efforts to each child's "own natural rate of progress". Board had not relinquished his citizenship aim, but he had turned almost full circle to return to the naturalism he had enunciated in 1904. Board subsequently produced an entirely new preface for the syllabus of 1922 which embodied this re-found individualistic naturalism in the following words:

... the function of the school is to supply the circumstances and conditions most favourable to the growth of each child. The teacher cannot cause the child to grow either in body or in mind ... (T)he school supplies the externals. The active force is the child's own. It is the child's own thinking and feeling and appreciating and imagining that count towards his growth, and not what he is told to think, or to feel, or to appreciate, or to imagine.

Board was far from alone in reviewing educational purposes, in initiating experiment or in enunciating individualism. His efforts and the philosophy he evolved fall within a broader context of local and overseas

227. Ibid, 5.

228. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., v.
activities of a similar character. On the local scene Simpson's efforts at Blackfriars certainly fall within this category and Alexander Mackie, his staff, the inspectors and some members of the teaching service were also involved in discussion and experimentation.

Mackie was no more of a radical in education than was Board, nor were his ideas very different. He too echoed the prevailing sentiments of the day. Thus in 1918 he defined the function of the school as the welfare and happiness of the individual\(^{229}\), but qualified this with the opinion that "no one c(ould) make the best of himself except in a life of social service, as a member of society occupying a definite status and discharging its corresponding duties"\(^{230}\). Thus he had no quarrel with the contention that the school must prepare its pupils for future citizenship although he fervently insisted that the individual was to be regarded as an end in himself and not merely as an instrument for the furtherance of the

\(^{229}\) A. Mackie, "The Aims of Schooling", Schooling, 2, 1, September 1918, 7.

\(^{230}\) Ibid, 8.
welfare of the state. There was in this, just as there was in the popularity of individualism generally, a reaction against German educational policies and practices as a reaction against the war. Mackie certainly took great pains to enunciate his belief that "the good citizen (was) identical with the good man or woman" and he also shared with Board the opinion that instructional procedures should be reformed to make the individual the locus of educational effort. He was himself instrumental in initiating a trial of one such individualised approach at Darlington Practice School during 1921. Mackie's colleagues in general shared his views just as he shared Board's. Any differences were certainly slight.

231. Ibid.

232. Ibid, 10.


Under the impetus of the interest shown by their Director and an impending revision of the syllabus school inspectors and members of the teaching service also turned to consideration of educational purposes. Most provided but an echo of sentiments already expressed. Harkness warned that to be too solicitous of the future was "often a fatal error in education"²³⁵, but with this proviso was content that "(t)he ultimate aim of all good teachers is ... the fitting of the pupil for the highest duties of citizenship"²³⁶. Simpson from her background of kindergarten and Montessorian endeavour stated that "(t)he conscious aim of the educator should be to provide the individual with a proper environment for his development at each stage of his growth"²³⁷. Riley expressed a similar view to Simpson²³⁸ but then added:

²³⁶. Ibid.
The aim of education is to help the child to achieve those things which the age-long experience of the race has proved of most value - whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.239

Such essentialism as this was more often implicitly accepted than openly proclaimed. Only Telfer saw enough danger to it to dissent from contemporary trends. Telfer thus felt it necessary to warn his colleagues that "(u)ndiluted, the principle of self-determination in child education (wa)s a pernicious one"240. But at this stage such dissenters were few. Individualism was accepted. It had an effect upon content but its prime implications were for teaching method. And it was for this reason that Lasker thought that when the syllabus was revised "(t)he materials of instruction should be reduced so as to enable attention to be concentrated on the method"241. Dennis argued for somewhat similar

239. Ibid.


reasons that if education were to achieve its purposes then it was necessary "to set down plainly how the subject matter m(ight) so be treated as to fulfil such aims" 242. Board disagreed because he feared that the syllabus would then become "a stereotyped guide" 243. His preface therefore still granted teachers freedom of choice but in practice this was now even more restricted than in the past simply because the syllabus now contained an even larger body of "suggestion".

The emergence of individualism to eminence had not been a local phenomenon for on this issue New South Wales opinion had as in the past been founded upon overseas ideas and developments. The lead came from Montessori in Italy and Margaret McMillan, Homer Lane, Miss Finlayson, Norman MacMann, Caldwell Cook, Edward Holmes, John Adams and Percy Nunn in Britain 244. The Americans


244. Cf. S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boulwood, op, cit., Chs. X and XI.
were never mentioned in local discussions of individualism and appear in the 1922 Syllabus in this connection only in a brief elliptical allusion to the Project Methods in the notes for geography. Dewey's more balanced interactive position was actually forgotten, although the phraseology of the preface was reminiscent of his opinions; as for more recent American thought on the subject, this was ignored or unknown. This was consistent with past dependence of New South Wales upon British precedent but the strange feature of the period was that in concurrent discussions of measurement and quantitative research on the basic subjects it was the Americans whose influence dominated and was reflected in the 1922 Syllabus.

THE MEASUREMENT MOVEMENT AND THE 1922 SYLLABUS

Investigations into the basic subjects took three principal directions: the development of norms or scales, error counts of pupils' work, and quantitative assessments

245. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 112.
of the real needs of the adult world. Americans such as Ayres, Thorndike and Starch took the lead in these activities with British investigators such as Ballard quick to follow. In New South Wales as a consequence of the interest created, of the acceptance of overseas findings and the results of local replicative studies, the measurement movement had a profound effect upon the 1922 revision of the syllabus.

In his research upon spelling Ayres employed a new concept of utility which had a major effect upon the content of the syllabus. There was nothing novel in his assumption that schools should deal with the words likely to be most needed and therefore most valuable in later life. What was novel was the determination of these not by subjective opinion but objectively and quantitatively by word counts which really revealed the most commonly employed words. One result of these endeavours, Ayres' List of 1,000 Common English Words, was included in the 1922

Syllabus for the general information of teachers\(^{247}\). The similar list of Jones' 100 Spelling Demons was also included\(^{248}\). These lists were not, in 1922, prescribed for study but later in 1925 they were. After this they remained an integral part of New South Wales primary schooling until 1952.

The concept which Ayres had introduced for spelling – proven utility – had a wide ramification. This was accepted by those responsible for the revision of mathematics. True, the reforms were subjectively determined but the "test of practical value"\(^{249}\) was applied with much more rigour now than ever before. Board's relegation of mathematics to an instrumentary study was also an important factor in this. The syllabus committee of Boxall, Meldrum, Dennis and Margaret Miller\(^{250}\) shared the view that "(n)o other subject ... (wa)s so burdened with dead material as Arithmetic"\(^{251}\). A number of

\(^{247}\) N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 55.

\(^{248}\) Ibid.

\(^{249}\) Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 3, 1, April 1921, 11 (J. Dennis).

\(^{250}\) Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 3, 1, April 1921, 10.

\(^{251}\) Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 2, 3, December, 1920, 17 (J. Dennis).
sweeping changes were therefore made. The four operations in weights and measures were eliminated; the four operations in fractions and decimals were restricted to simple exercises that could be performed mentally; there was no mention of practice, proportion, ratio, averages or balancing accounts; the work on percentages and interest was simplified; literal symbols and a greater part of the geometry was cast out. The committee resisted "(t)he insidious claim on behalf of some of the rejected features, that they could be easily taught and easily learned, and that children liked them". And the out-dated concept that mathematics had "value as a discipline" received no countenance.

These reforms were subjective, but mathematics was at this same time the subject of empirical study at the Sydney Teachers' College. Such work began in 1916 when

252. Ibid, 11-12.
253. Ibid, 12.
Cameron applied the Ballard tests in the four fundamental operations to 1500 girls in Sydney schools and commenced a study of the common errors in subtraction and short division. More major study began when an "Investigation Committee" comprising Cameron, Meldrum, Roberts, Willcock and Phillips was formed from amongst the College staff in 1919. This committee set out to discover the actual errors children made, to account for those which occurred most frequently and so formulate suggestions for the improvement of teaching, and to establish norms in arithmetic for New South Wales children. The speed tests of the Survey Committee of the Cleveland Foundation of 1915 were used to determine children's errors and the preliminary results, first published in 1921, were included in the 1922 Syllabus. It was not until 1922


256. Ibid.


258. Ibid.

259. N.S.W. Department of Education, *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922)*, op. cit., 60-62.
that work on the preparation of local norms began. They were issued to schools in 1924.

Interest in the analysis of errors and in norms was actually quite extensive. Before the arithmetic norms appeared Spaull and Martin, beginning in 1918, upon the basis established by Thorndike, evolved a group of writing scales which were issued by the Department in 1922. Vivian tried to determine what to teach in composition by an error count, also in 1918. Riley applied Starch's spelling tests to seven Newcastle schools in 1919. In 1921 Lewis set out to determine the "practicability of standardising tests of spelling."

264. J. Vivian, "What to Teach in Composition", The Education Gazette, XII, 9, 2nd September, 1918, 233-35.
And in the 1922 Syllabus teachers were advised to employ the spelling tests of Ayres or Starch. There was also some preliminary work with mental tests at the Teachers' College and by a few individuals in the schools. In 1920 Mackie devoted considerable space in Schooling to discussion of Burt's work in this field. But mental testing was still a novelty and a rarity in 1922. The impact of the measurement movement was thus confined to the impetus it gave towards a more radical concept of utility and through its error counts a greater concern with adequate grading and diagnosis of error. Later, however, its preoccupation with norms and standards was to have less happy results.

THE SYLLABUS OF 1922: AN EVALUATION

The 1922 Syllabus was the most significant departure in the process of curriculum development in New South

267. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 49.
268. Schooling, IV, 3rd February, 1921, 93-100.
269. The Education Gazette, XIV, 9, 1st September, 1920, 189-191; XV, 5, 2nd May, 1921, 80-81.
270. A. Mackie, "Experimental Education", Schooling, 3, 4, May 1920, 98-102; 3, 5, July 1920, 131-34; 4, 1, September, 1920, 4-6; 4, 2, November 1920, 3-10.
Wales primary schools since the New Syllabus of 1904. In one sense it was an extension of the progressivism and naturalism of its predecessors. To this the sequential alterations of the time allocations for the various subjects is testimony. But the increased progressivism and fresh naturalism of 1922 were also a reflection of the changes wrought in Australia by the War, the subsequent growth of secondary education and a consequent re-consideration of the purpose of the primary school. No longer did local educators regard its principal function as preparation for the adult world. The character actually assumed by the new philosophy which evolved owed much to the elevation of individualism to pre-eminence as a response to Montessori's ideas and as a reaction to the War. There was some originality in Board's thought as it evolved from a training for citizenship through corporate life to a citizenship acquired through the development of individual personality through individualised methods. His curriculum theory was too reminiscent of Wilkins and Gladman to be novel but it still had the advantage that it brought a much needed rationality
into discussions of the course of study. It also brought a clear enunciation that the skills came first and thus opened the floodgates to the measurement movement and the "norm", a concept as philosophically at odds with individualism as that of fixed standards. And this was the difficulty of the 1922 Syllabus - its dipolarity. Individualism may have been proclaimed as the philosophy in the preface but utilitarianism was still at least equally important. And utilitarianism certainly dictated a good deal more of the content of curricular studies than logically followed from Board's preface or his theory of curricular structure. Utilitarianism was reasonable enough in the fundamentals, at least logically. But what now was actually the criterion for content selection in other areas? As the various committees turned to their tasks child-centred naturalism, utilitarianism, society-centred essentialism and traditionalism all functioned as determinants of content. The results varied enormously. The Art, Music and Manual Work syllabuses reappeared virtually unchanged. Nature Study was modified by the omission of school agriculture and
the inclusion of hygiene. Needlework now had its own preface and proclaimed aims. Physical education henceforth had less formal activities to supplement its drill and exercises. History was reorganised to include more Australian and international content. Geography was reformed to include stories. Mathematics was curtailed. English was clearly designed to implement Board's curriculum theory; or anyway this was what its preface suggested. The point is that an eclectic or a dualistic theory imposes many problems and a system of syllabus construction by individual committees imposes others. It is too much to expect that the 1922 Syllabus should overcome all these difficulties. It was a worthy document and one of which Board might well have been proud. It would have been even better if the problems which arose from its dualism had been given greater consideration. As it was time did not stand still and the principles of freedom for the child and faith in the teacher upon which the 1922 Syllabus rested so heavily were soon things of the past.
A new syllabus was issued in 1925, appearing as a reprint again in 1928 and 1929. On the surface this syllabus of 1925-1929 appears little changed from that of 1922. The time allocations for the various subjects were unaltered and by far the greater proportion of the courses it outlined and the notes it contained were identical with those of its predecessor. But there were, in fact, important changes which because they were primarily changes in attitude are difficult to detect and evaluate until the surrounding circumstances and opinions have been examined.

The apparent licentiousness of the time and the practical difficulties and obvious deficiencies of the local system with its inadequate accommodation, shortage of teachers and over-large classes were powerful factors for reaction. Educational achievements were subject to public criticism and there were attacks from within

and without the service upon the very foundations of modern elementary schooling - the New Education itself.

In 1926 Murphy blamed "modern soft pedagogy" for the decay of moral standards through its "spurious humanitarianism"\textsuperscript{272}. In 1928 Aisle attacked the very pillar of the local system, Board's 1904 Syllabus:

Mr. Board's fatal "New Syllabus", based upon a hurried observation abroad of very slightly tested revolutionary methods, is the root cause of the very deplorable and very much deplored lack of concentration and mental discipline in our school children. The "New Educators" falsely preached that freedom for both teachers and pupils was essential for a nation's regeneration; we now see ... that this freedom leads to degeneration.\textsuperscript{273}

It was not, naturally, all criticism. The New Education had its defenders and it even had its moment of triumph when the New Education Fellowship held its first local meeting in June 1925\textsuperscript{274}. The existence and severity of such criticism was, however, indicative of past

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{272} P.L. Murphy, "Where Do We Stand?", \textit{Education}, 7, 11, 15th September, 1926, 311.
\item \textsuperscript{273} K. Aisle, "Starter, Re-start Us!", \textit{Education}, 10, 1, 15th November, 1928, ii.
\item \textsuperscript{274} \textit{Education}, 6, 10, 15th August, 1925, ii.
\end{itemize}
policies and their outcomes. The fate of the primary schools was not in the hands of extremists but in those of the new director, S.H. Smith, and his subordinates. These officials adhered to the principles of the New Education and to the form of the 1922 Syllabus, but nevertheless responded to the changed climate of opinion by charting a course towards greater efficiency in the basic skills.

Smith, born 1865, entered the service of the Council of Education when thirteen. In 1902 he was appointed inspector and when the New Syllabus appeared actively assumed responsibility for its implementation in his district. This action not only marked him as a devotee of the New Education, but paved the path to his advancement. In 1911 he was appointed Inspector of Continuation Schools, in 1919 Assistant Chief Inspector, in 1920 Assistant Under-secretary and in 1922 succeeded Board as Director. During this career he had written a number of school texts and a history of New South Wales education, edited the School Magazine and The Education Gazette and featured in the establishment of the
Plate XXVIII. Stephen Smith, Director of Education, 1922-1930 - The Home, 2nd January, 1929, 52, M.L.

Mr. S. H. Smith
conveyance system, the Correspondence School and the
guidance service. When he assumed office as
Director he announced his intention to maintain and streng-
then what had been gained, to develop existing plans
and to initiate new schemes where changing conditions
called for adjustment. On his retirement he paid
tribute to his predecessors who had laid the foundation
for education in New South Wales and then concluded -
"I hope, and I believe, that I will leave it better
than I found it." Campbell, in her detailed study,
concludes that he was, in fact, a relative failure in
this post compared with his success as an inspector.
What Campbell does not make as clear as she might is that
in many matters Smith saw himself as little more than a
disciple of Board or that in many of his statements

details of Smith's career are outlined in
E. Campbell, *S.H. Smith: His Contribution to the
Development of Education in N.S.W.*, Unpub. M.Ed.

276. F. Putland, "From Pupil-Teacher to Director",
*Journal of the Institute of Inspectors*, 12, 2,
August, 1930, 9.


278. E. Campbell, *op. cit.*
there was a complete identity between his opinions and those of his predecessor. The preface of 1925-1929 was little different from that of 1922; publicly Smith spoke of the syllabus as "a necessary evil"\(^{279}\); and he too divided the curriculum into fundamentals and cultural subjects and stressed that the basic skills must not be neglected\(^{280}\). But Smith did not have the same faith in the teaching profession that Board had had. He believed teachers had not used their freedom wisely\(^{281}\) but had neglected the three R's and that he had to take action "to see they received their due attention"\(^{282}\).

The drive towards greater efficiency began in 1924 with a series of addresses to teachers by inspectors upon "Class Methods and Testing of Results"\(^{283}\). As published in 1926 under the title *Teaching and Testing* the contents seem more remarkable for their faith in the


\(^{280}\). Ibid, 3.

\(^{281}\). *Education*, 7, 3, 15th January, 1926, 72.

\(^{282}\). S.H. Smith, "The Syllabus and Other Important Matters", *op. cit.*, 3.

\(^{283}\). *Education*, 5, 5, 15th March, 1924, 102-04 et seq.
New Education than for conservatism or reaction \textsuperscript{284}. But in their concern with testing and results they were a part of the new pattern for primary schooling. This was really set when Departmental officers reported after investigating examination results that "inefficiency in certain essential subjects ... had reached so serious a pitch that there was likelihood of public outcry"\textsuperscript{285}. The first official Departmental action came in the area of English composition. Smith appointed a committee of inspectors which in October 1924 returned the verdict that "the work (wa)s often below standard because the teaching was unsystematic"\textsuperscript{286}, but whose recommendations for improvement gave little assistance because of their vagueness. Writing was the next concern and here the directive of November 1924 was decisive.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{284} N.S.W. Institute of Inspectors, \textit{Teaching and Testing}, Philip, Sydney, 1926.
  \item \textsuperscript{285} \textit{Education}, 6, 2, 15th December, 1924, 39.
  \item \textsuperscript{286} \textit{The Education Gazette}, XVIII, 10, 1st October, 1924, 114.
\end{itemize}
Henceforth the syllabus styles were compulsory. Then in 1925 it was the turn of spelling and grammar. In the case of spelling teachers were informed that henceforth inspectors would look closely at the success with which it was taught and then when they received the new syllabus teachers found that Ayres' list was now prescribed. Also added to the 1925 Syllabus was a formal language course, a move partly designed as a solution to the problem of improving composition and partly a response to pressure from secondary teachers. And still these innovations were not enough. Lasker made this quite clear in his inaugural address to the 1926 series of meetings between inspectors and teachers:


290. They had earlier been advised of this addition in *The Education Gazette*, XIX, 1st July, 1925, 90.

All is not well with the three R's, the Department is not at all satisfied and it wants something done in connection with rectifying the situation. ... There can be nothing more disagreeable to the Departmental mind, than an increase of time and attention to the three R's. The Department considers they should be improved by a decrease of time and an increase of method. ... What the Department really wants is an application of the Fordian method to Education.292

Lasker's concurrent remark that candidates for 1A's had to be mechanicians first293 was reminiscent of Dawson's comment of 1910 and the general concern of Dawson and Board for the basic skills. Now Board was appalled by this new and greater emphasis upon efficiency and he publicly attacked his erstwhile colleague's view—"You cannot educate children as Henry Ford turns out motor cars. Education cannot be done by mass production"294. But whatever Board might say from retirement, the drive for efficiency which now governed primary schooling continued.

There was a spate of activity for which this clearly provided the impetus: another inspectorial publication,

292. Education, 7, 8, 15th June, 1926, 206.

293. Ibid.

Educational Efficiency, appeared in 1928295; there were further discussions between inspectors and teachers296; inspectors investigated their own procedures297; the Teachers' Federation discussed the vexed issues of inefficiency and inspection298; and Smith's annual addresses to the conferences of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation became the platform from which he conducted the campaign. It was at the annual conference of 1924 that Smith announced his general intention of securing efficiency in the basic skills299. In his 1925 address he declaimed the policy of increased prescription300.

295. N.S.W. Institute of Inspectors, Educational Efficiency, Philip, Sydney, 1928.

296. Lasker's address (Education, 7, 8, 15th June, 1926, 206-08) was the first of the 1926 series. Riley opened the 1927 series (Education, 8, 5, 15th March, 1927, 215-16) and Back the 1928 series (Education, 9, 9, 15th July, 1928, 262).

297. Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 6, 2, July 1924 and 6, 3, August 1924.

298. Education, 7, 12, 15th October, 1926, 338-44; 9, 10, 15th August, 1928, 305-12.


In 1926 and 1928 these addresses were announcements of a special interest for the ensuing year — spoken English for 1927 \(^{301}\) and morals and civics for 1929 \(^{302}\).

There was thus a very real change in primary schooling from 1924 which is not adequately conveyed in the 1925 Syllabus or its reprints. English and Music were the only subjects in which there were any major changes in content or in the notes. The steps taken by Smith to obtain improved results in the basic subjects were the most significant curriculum development of the period. They did, as Campbell has pointed out, "constitute his most definite contribution to the primary schools during his directorship" \(^{303}\). Campbell's claim that these were justified \(^{304}\) can only be a subjective opinion but it was

\(^{301}\) Education, 8, 3, 15th January, 1927, 60-65.

\(^{302}\) Education, 10, 3, 15th January, 1929, 102-04. (This concern with civics and morals arose from attacks by the Catholic archbishop, Kelly — E. Campbell, op. cit., 197-99.)

\(^{303}\) E. Campbell, op. cit., 194.

\(^{304}\) Ibid.
widely held at the time that the New Education had gone too far. In the broader history of curriculum development these steps were certainly reactionary and conservative. Equally, however, they were most certainly socially determined.

Discussion in this chapter has covered the modifications in the underlying philosophy of primary schooling and in the course of study after the major public controversy of 1901-1904 during which elementary education had been provided with a broad charter for reform. The task during the next quarter century was to implement this charter and, at the same time, adapt and develop it in response to the changing needs and attitudes of society and to newer educational ideas and practices. Broader purposes had been accepted as one basic feature of primary schooling and a broader curriculum. Nature Study was accorded its place as early as 1904. Manual Work and physical education gained increased status more

gradually. And it was principally the basic subjects which had to make way for them - in 1916 it was English; in 1922 mathematics. Overall the allocation for the three R's dropped from two-thirds to one-half of the total time available. One criterion which was employed for the selection of course content during the process was derived from the measurement movement, that of proven usefulness. These modifications in the basic subjects were not permitted to affect their importance. When Board evolved his dualistic theory of curriculum he emphasised that these instrumental subjects came first. Certainly utilitarianism remained of major importance but once secondary education was established primary schools were no longer seen as the gateway to the adult world. Children could then be treated as children. In the 1922 Syllabus there was an attempt to do just this, for it was then, against a background of local social change and overseas educational developments that the individual became the focus of educational endeavour. The syllabus of 1925-1929 stemmed, too, from the background of social change. Many more children now had to be prepared for
entry to the secondary school and results in the three R's assumed increased importance. The prescription of 1925-1929 reflected this change but it also reflected an ever more general disillusionment with society itself. The transition was one easily made against the background of unabated Departmental concern with results and was facilitated by Board's retirement.

Advancement of primary education, as of public services generally, was at all times dependent upon government policy but it was Departmental officials who principally determined the actual course of study. One of the notable advances of the period was the evolution of a method of syllabus revision which gave the body of teachers some say. The committee system which resulted has its disadvantages: representation is not participation. During Board's directorship this was recognised and a wide canvas made of teachers' opinions. But another basic weakness of the committee system arises from its composition. Independent bodies of experts do not necessarily produce courses which all teachers can handle effectively. When for successive revisions these
committees are composed of the same experts courses may become static or more demanding by accretion. These problems are reflected in the development of the curricular studies from 1905 to 1929. The 1916 Syllabus was a more orderly document than its predecessor and more instructive, but it was also more detailed, more formal and, by inference, more prescriptive. By 1929 the syllabus had become a document of 183 pages. Individual subjects had quite uneven patterns of development. There were few major changes in English, mathematics, civics and morals or geography until 1922 and, except for English, none thereafter between 1925 and 1929. In 1916 a detailed course was provided for Nature Study and for the first time a course for Manual Work was outlined. Neither of these changed very much afterwards, although school agriculture disappeared and hygiene was added. Music was a course where the experts added increasingly more theory and produced an increasingly difficult course, a move consonant with an increased time allocation, but hardly justified. Art remained basically the same throughout the period but there were concessions, if not great ones, to the general trend of education through the addition
of imaginative work in 1916 and drawing of human figures in 1922. With physical training there was a clearer evolution towards broader content until in 1922 infants' work was quite informal and dancing and games assumed a larger place in the course as a whole.

Undoubtedly the evolution of the underlying philosophy of primary education and its curriculum was the major development of the period. It began amid the reform movement of 1901 to 1904 with Board's enunciation of a naturalistic child-centred position. In 1905 this was corrected to social efficiency and citizenship. Then under the impact of social and educational developments, local and overseas, there came in 1922 a reassertion of the child-centred position, now in the form of individualism and garbed in the phraseology of Pestalozzi, Froebel and Dewey. "Growth" remained the aim of the New South Wales educator for the remainder of the 'twenties, but only in theory. In practice it was modified by a drive for results and for conformity to standards which is philosophically foreign to individualism. Skilbeck is highly critical of the theory which
and it is true that there were incompatibilities between individual and social aims which went unresolved. Viewed historically however, Board, Dawson, Smith and Lasker become less theorists and more interpreters of the changing world. There were contradictions and confusions in the philosophy of state education because a state system is not dedicated in a democracy to a systematic philosophy but to the society it serves.

CHAPTER XI

THE "NEW EDUCATION" IN ACTION:
CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOLS

The underlying philosophy and the course of study are part only of the curriculum. These have to be translated into practice. The eclecticism of the New Education prevented anything like a generalised theory of instruction but it did provide a number of accepted principles. Board embodied most of these in his statements and syllabus of 1904-1905. Later others were added - some the product of newer educational innovations; many simply the accumulated wisdom of the profession. Alongside these general principles a body of more specialised techniques evolved for the separate curricular studies. Starting with an examination of these general principles and special techniques and then considering the practical problems which were encountered provides the best approach to an evaluation of the curriculum in action and of the impact of the New Education within the classroom.
GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING PRACTICE

The accepted general principles of primary teaching have already been the subject of considerable discussion in this study. Briefly, then, these included the stipulation that teaching procedures were to be adopted to, and based upon, child nature, interests and level of maturation; that they should incorporate activity, direct experience, reality; and, as later additions, that individualised teaching through appropriate materials, "auto-education" and pupil free-choice should be featured. Add to these the contentions that drill was essential, memorisation necessary and that school work could not always be pleasurable - principles extracted primarily from the accumulated experience of the profession - and the picture is complete. Board had expressed just these views. Mackie said virtually the same things in The Nature of Teaching in 1917 and The Aims of Schooling in

1. Vide supra.

1918\(^3\); so did Mackie's colleagues at the Teachers' College\(^4\); so did the inspectorial staff\(^5\).

At the Sydney Teachers' College these general principles were incorporated within a series of general methods or lesson types. Categorisation of these went, in fact, to extraordinary lengths: six main types with additional sub-types were cited until there was the following list: \(^6\)

I Information Lessons
- Type A, Oral Instruction
- Type B, Study
- Type C, Observation
- Type D, Conversation

II Expression Lessons

III Drill Lessons

IV Problem Lessons
- Type A, Inductive
- Type B, Deductive

V Aesthetic

VI Exhortation


4. A. Mackie (Ed.), The Groundwork of Teaching, \textit{op. cit.}

5. "Revision of the Primary Syllabus, 1921", \textit{Journal of the Institute of Inspectors}, 3, 1, April 1921, 6-22.

Such categories aside, Roberts' detailed discussions of these lesson types contained a wealth of practical advice. Completely eclectic, there was a place for oral instruction by the teacher, for a variety of child activity, for problem solving, for direct experience, for dramatisation and play, for direct moral instruction and for drill. Interestingly, reference to Herbart's pedagogy was notably slight but it did serve as the model for Problem Lessons of the inductive type. Associationism with its laws of primacy, recency, frequency and vividness loomed large as the basis for Drill Lessons.

Overall, however, it was child-centred naturalism which was the principal determinant of instructional procedures.

Teachers apparently had considerable difficulty in wending their way through the eclecticism of these general principles to their correct application. They

7. A. Mackie (Ed.), The Groundwork of Teaching, op. cit., 1919, Ch. VI.
8. Ibid, 115-17.
9. Ibid, 104-08.
neglected drill\textsuperscript{10}, selected impractical exercises\textsuperscript{11},
taught from the book\textsuperscript{12}, failed to use concrete
methods\textsuperscript{13}, crammed for the Q.C.\textsuperscript{14} and failed to produce
satisfactory results in the three R's\textsuperscript{15}. When first
retardation became an issue and then individualised
instruction was expected, teachers were in even greater
difficulties. To avoid retardation they crammed even
more than before and so far as individualised instruction
was concerned Montessori work was satisfactorily intro-
duced but beyond the infants' stage there were major
problems. There were a few genuine efforts to
individualistic instruction but there were many more
misconceptions and failures. The experiment at Brighton-
le-Sands was one real attempt - at least it was soon

\textsuperscript{10} The Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 62.

\textsuperscript{11} The Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 4, 30th April, 1912, 90.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid, 93.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, 90.

\textsuperscript{14} Minister's Report, 1913, 33.

\textsuperscript{15} Education, 7, 8, 15th June, 1926, 206-07.
interpreted this way by the hierarchy. There were a series of others at Darlington. These began when the staff discovered that despite the long absences occasioned by the influenza epidemic of 1919 "the year's work was completed ... well enough for practically the whole school to be promoted at the end of the year". It was therefore decided to investigate the possibilities of more rapid promotion and to this end during 1920 "the brighter children were assisted to work ahead of the remainder of the class". The experiment was successful as it stood but in 1921, at Mackie's suggestion, it was re-organised "along the lines of the suggestions made by Burt in his Report on the London Schools". Mackie asked Vout, the headmaster, to introduce flexible class groupings with the pupils


19. **Ibid**.

20. **Ibid**.
reclassified for each of four subject groups, but as implemented the scheme was modified. In the boys' department re-grouping was based upon arithmetic and composition only and a deal of individual work of the monthly assignment type which characterised the Dalton Plan was introduced. Again results were satisfactory. In 1922 the Dalton Plan itself was given a trial with three sixth classes. It was, unfortunately, drastically modified to fit a lock-step pattern. Work was divided into weekly assignments and when a week's work was completed in all subjects any remaining time was devoted by the pupils at their own choice to arithmetic cards and supplementary readers. As for the slow pupils, these either took work home or put in extra time

21. Ibid.
22. Ibid, 157-60.
23. Ibid, 158.
at school to keep up. The time-table was organised so that the mornings were devoted to class work and the afternoons to free periods of activity. A number of the mornings were employed for the introduction of new work by the teacher using conventional methods. Vout noted an agreeable improvement in relations between teachers and pupils and admitted that the Dalton scheme was "a noticeable advance in the direction of more liberty in the School" but he was not very enthusiastic about its possibilities in the hands of the average teacher. Some few teachers apart from those at Darlington also experimented with the Dalton Plan, a number to their satisfaction but these efforts were at best a quickly passing phase. Even in the small

27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
schools where assignment work must inevitably be a feature, Daltonism made only a minor intrusion. Those who attempted to adopt it more fully were not, on Cantello's testimony very successful. Nor was the Dalton Plan the only casualty. The whole movement for individualised instruction was, outside the infants' schools, fairly abortive. Teachers were apparently happy enough to add free periods to the time-table but few really understood what was meant by individual methods. Many, confused by the issue of retardation thought that these meant coaching the backward or slow pupil for the purposes of promotion. And some inspectors only added to this confusion. Thus Inspector Reay reported with approval of a system evolved at North Sydney which was all unwittingly founded upon just this misconception.

32. N.S.W. Institute of Inspectors, Educational Efficiency, op. cit., 286-87.

33. The Education Gazette, XII, 5, 1st May, 1918, 104.

34. The Education Gazette, XIII, 4, 1st April, 1919, 75.
On the basis of the Quarterly Examination records, the pupils in a class are grouped as - (1) Super-average, (2) Average, (3) Sub-average - in Reading, Spelling, Composition, Writing and Arithmetic ... It is found there is considerable incentive to pass from lower to higher groups. 35

By 1928 individualised instruction was conceived as "a judicious combination of class, group and individual teaching" 36 but amounted in practice to little more than the occasional division of the class into three groups - bright, average and slow - and the use of exercises graded to suit each 37. Teachers hesitated to use even this simple technique 38. This was especially so in primary classes. The situation was better in infant schools because there the use of free material had become an integral part of teaching 39.

General principles and general issues in the area of teaching practice, especially when they are so eclectic,

35. Ibid, 76.
36. N.S.W. Institute of Inspectors, op. cit., 1928, 199.
37. Ibid, 199-200.
38. The Education Gazette, XII, 5, 1st May, 1918, 99.
39. Vide infra.
cannot in themselves provide a very precise picture of actual classroom practices. The methods advocated in the particular curricular studies give a clearer indication of these simply because they are more specific. Board may have objected in principle to prescribed methods but from 1905 onwards the various courses of study issued by the Department were replete with an increasing body of suggestion. In essence, indeed, the syllabus became the basic text of method as well as of content. It is the major basis for the discussion of the methods employed in the specific curricular studies in New South Wales primary schools.

METHODS IN THE CURRICULAR STUDIES

With the appearance of the New Syllabus in 1904 and its following revisions, English subjects underwent a number of major reforms in content and emphasis. By comparison with the nineteenth century reading became more extensive, oral and written expression assumed much more importance, spelling became more practical. Along with these modifications there were accompanying
changes in the methods of instruction. The teaching of reading in its initial stages was reformed by the recommendation of the 1905 Syllabus that a combination of the "Look and Say" and "Phonic" methods be employed. By 1911-1915 "(t)he Script Whole-Word Method of teaching the first stages of reading (wa)s in almost universal operation", together with "a more or less definite system of phonic teaching". But synthetic phonic methods still had a fascination for the teaching profession and in New South Wales these soon became at least as popular as the analytic "look and say" approach.

Three systems, in particular, which were evolved by local teachers gained a considerable following - the Ellis, the Jones and the Caldwell.

Lilian Ellis evolved and demonstrated her system at Arncliffe in 1916-1917. Much enthusiasm was aroused,

40. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (1905), op. cit., 22.

41. The Public Instruction Gazette, IV, 4, 30th April, 1912, 98.

42. J. Archibald, "A Survey of Reading Methods ...", The Education Gazette, XVI, 8, 1st August, 1922, 180.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.
so much indeed that the Department published a set of Ellis readers. The words were spelt in the orthodox fashion with subtle variations in the style of type to indicate pronunciation. There was thin type and thick type and gothic type and extra loops and twirls. The accompanying page from an Ellis reader (Plate XXIX) illustrates some of these features. It also illustrates the basic weakness of the system. The invention of an adult mind, it was dependent upon mastery first of individual symbols and demanded considerable visual acuity.

The Jones System was developed by George Jones at Bundurra Public School. This added diacritical symbols to the letters of the alphabet to extend it to 19 "vowels", 16 consonants and one silent letter. A

45. They appeared December 1917 and March 1918 (The Education Gazette, XI, 12, 1st December, 1917, 289.

46. Cf. The Nellie Dale Method which employed varied colours and which was included in the course for infant teachers at the Teachers' College - Teachers' College Calendar, 1908, 50.


Lesson 16.

Babyland:

How many miles to Babyland?
Anyone can tell;
Up one flight
To your right--
Please to ring the bell!

What can you see in Babyland?
Little folks in white,
    Downy heads,
    Cradle beds,
Faces pure and bright!

What do they do in Babyland?
Dream and wake and play,
    Laugh and crow,
    Shout and grow,
Jolly times have they!

What do they say in Babyland?
Why, the oddest things.
    Might as well
    Try to tell
What a birdie sings.

Who is the queen of Babyland?
Mother kind and sweet;
    And her love,
    Born above,
Guides the little feet.

—George Cooper.
special feature was the use of hand play, the position of the hand and fingers corresponding to the particular diacritic. Inspector Thomas was impressed 49 and Jones was moved to Sydney in 1920 so that he could demonstrate his system to city teachers 50. The method had official approval but this was now a period when the Department could only supply "the absolute necessities" 51 and so the necessary charts, primers and readers had to be purchased by the schools or their pupils 52.

The Agnes Caldwell System was as synthetic as either the Ellis or the Jones but differed in that it was in essence a rational set of spelling rules. A series of phonetic charts which embodied these rules had been devised 53. Much of the instruction was simply a matter

50. The Education Gazette, XIV, 12, 1st December, 1920, 253.
52. Ibid.
LESSON 5

SIGNs MEAN LETTERS Revised.

1. Néli has the doll on her lap.
2. She will put her doll in the cot.
3. Then it will go to sleep all day.

HAND-PLAY EXERCISES

No go so raw low hoe toe saw paw raw law lawn dawn pull put wool wood

SIGN READING

d, | \[2^{\text{nd}} | s = | \text{d} \text{ o} \text{n} \text{t} \text{ c} \text{ o} \text{ t} ||
N \text{t} \text{t} \text{r} \text{d} ^{\text{rcv}} \text{d} \text{ o} \text{o} \text{t} || \text{t} ^{\text{rcv}} \text{nt} \text{t} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \text{p} ||
\text{c} \text{c} \text{p} || \text{t} \text{c} \text{c} \text{p} || \text{t} \text{c} \text{c} \text{p} ||

Do you see a doll in a cot?
Néli had the doll. I went to sleep.
Will it sleep all day? Yes it will.

Plate XXX. The Jones System - Adapted from Education, 1, 12, 15th October, 1920, 330-31.
Specimen from TEACHERS' HANDBOOK.

\[ \text{\( \varepsilon \)}, \ \text{\( \hat{o} \)}, \ \text{\( \hat{\text{a}} \)} \]

are the diacritics which when "dressed" (that is supplied with necessary letters) would appear as follows:

| is | was | yes | they |

Plate XXXI. The Jones System - Adapted from Education, 1, 12, 15th October, 1920, 330-31.
of drill from the charts until the rules had been mastered\textsuperscript{54}.

The evolution of these techniques reflected the interest of educators of this period with phonetic methods generally. The syllabuses of 1922 and 1925–29 did not specify any particular method or reading book\textsuperscript{55} but there were a number of other requirements which did have to be met. In the initial stages reading matter was to consist of "easy phonetic words derived from home and school interests"\textsuperscript{56}. Some definite teaching of phonetics was required so that the child would have "a reliable means of self-help in the mastery of new word difficulties"\textsuperscript{57}. Large supplies of objective material were to be used\textsuperscript{58} - a laudable by-product of Montessori and an equally laudable application of the principle of activity. Through such methods it was expected that the child would be able to read simple narrative by the

\textsuperscript{54} Interview, H. Williamson, 6th November, 1968.

\textsuperscript{55} N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 14.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
second year and by the end of the course to read fluently and expressively and have a reasonable command over simple spelling difficulties. In retrospect there is no doubt that methods of teaching reading vastly improved during these early years of the twentieth century. There is also no doubt, however, that phonetic and synthetic methods were over-emphasised. Techniques like those of Ellis and Jones were far too elaborate and complex and were merely ephemeral devices which reflected the interests of the period but had no lasting value. On the other hand supplementary reading materials, individual work and motor or manipulative materials have developed from the foundations which were laid.

Reading in the primary school underwent a material change when the school readers were replaced by school magazines. There had been strong support for the

59. Ibid.

60. Supporters of the Pitman augmented alphabet might disagree but to support this contention is the example of the equally ephemeral devices evolved in Britain at this time - F.J. Schonell, The Psychology and Teaching of Reading, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 2nd ed., 1948, 45 f.n.
introduction of a school paper in New South Wales schools at the April 1904 Conference. This interest arose mainly because of the success such papers had had elsewhere in Australia after the first, the Children's Hour, had been produced in South Australia by John Hartley, the Inspector-General, in March 1889. First this had been a supplementary reader. Later such papers became the basis of instruction beyond the infants' stage in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

Similar action in New South Wales came first in the form of Commonwealth School Paper published by Angus and Robertson in conjunction with William Brooks and Company in July 1904. It was not until 1916 that the Department stopped issuing school readers to primary classes and substituted a School Magazine. Readers and primers

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61. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, Conference ... Held 5 April, 1904 and Following Days, op. cit., 9.


63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIV, 2, 1st July, 1904, 37; XIV, 3, 1st August, 1904, 49.

66. The Education Gazette, IX, 11, 1st November, 1915, 308.
were retained for infants. This *School Magazine* was edited by Stephen Smith but notwithstanding his wide experience as an author of school text-books it was open to a number of serious criticisms. There were faults, too, in the manner in which it was employed. Teachers still persisted in excessive oral reading. Up till 1922 the fault lay as much with the syllabus as with teachers, for it was not until then that there was due reference to silent reading. A similar problem existed with supplementary reading. Teachers knew that this was required. They also knew that its object was to widen the range of interests, to provide a source of pleasure and to lay a foundation for literary appreciation.


68. Reay complained that the items were poorly selected, unsatisfactorily graded and indifferently illustrated: *Education*, 1, 3, 15th January, 1920, 65.


70. N.S.W. Department of Public Instruction, *Course of Instruction for Primary Schools* (1905), op. cit., iv.

But few teachers knew how to conduct the work and much superficial reading resulted. Thus in the primary classes there was probably more continuity with the nineteenth century than change.

Oral and written expression were features of twentieth century primary schooling which had, by comparison, been neglected in the past. The greatly augmented content which was provided was in itself a catalogue of teaching techniques. In the infants' grades there were observation talks, picture talks, free conversations, oral reproduction of stories, dramatisation, sand tray work, floor games and simple written expression of a few sentences. In the primary grades oral work was more formal but talks and dramatisation were continued and lecturettes and discussion of current topics were added to the course for the upper classes. Written expression for the primary grades evolved gradually into an elaborately detailed scheme which covered everything from free composition and

72. The Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 4, 30th April, 1912, 93.

73. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 3-5.

74. Ibid, 6-12.
verisying to formal business letters and telegrams. Throughout correct speech was emphasised. At first it was sought by informal correction of error, but from 1916 a formal course in daily phonic drill was added. Formal language work underwent a similar methodological transition into formalism and together these typify one direction of curriculum development. Other developments exemplify the opposite progressive trend for in this area of expression there was a concurrent advocacy of informality, spontaneity and child freedom. Caldwell Cook's "play way" method was, for example, suggested as worthy of emulation when dealing with dramatisation and lectures.

Spelling instruction changed significantly between 1905 and 1930. Teaching children to spell became partly a matter of selecting the appropriate words for their study and partly a matter of developing appropriate instructional techniques. For first class spelling and reading went hand in hand and this dictated the choice of words.

75. Ibid.
76. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 30-34.
77. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 36-37.
78. Ibid, 4 and 14.
For other grades it was soon recognised that spelling and reading vocabularies differed. The aims of instruction became quite complicated - mastery of the more common English words, mastery of the words the child himself employed, the extension of his spelling vocabulary, and, penultimately, the development of general spelling power.

Much of the instruction was simply assign, test and reassign. Preparatory work for composition during which word lists were compiled and a considerable amount of word building and grouping were expected. This last was designed to inculcate the spelling rules. The method advocated was an inductive one but it is certain that deductive approaches, such as that of Agnes Caldwell or others which began with rules, were extensively employed. There was certainly considerable emphasis upon

79. The Public Instruction Gazette, VI, 3, 30th March, 1912, 64.

80. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit., 46-48.

81. Ibid, 47-49.

82. Ibid, 47-48.
syllabification and enunciation and special spelling pronunciations were encouraged. A more fortunate development was the increasing use of transcription. It was incongruent to impose upon children a list of words culled from the written expression of adults when the syllabus stated that "emphasis ... should be laid on such words as the child requires to express himself in writing"; spelling pronunciations are of questionable value; and there was probably still too much oral spelling. In general, however, the methods employed to teach spelling were commendably modernised.

Handwriting, the last of the English subjects, has already been discussed in some detail in the preceding chapter. The abandonment of the copy book was a prescription of teaching technique and soon a prescription of a uniform style had followed. The method employed was still a graded synthetic one but the individual teacher now had more responsibility. He was to provide the copy and ensure correct posture, grip and positioning of the

83. Ibid, 49.
84. Ibid, 46.
85. Ibid.
writing-book. Fluency was an aim in some finger and wrist exercises were employed but fast writing was prohibited. Much of this was subjective, at best the product of past professional experience, but there was some local experimentation in addition to those at Blackfriars dispensing with the copy books. In 1918 Margaret Miller, at Mackie's suggestion, experimented with manuscript writing at North Newtown Practice School.

Replicative of work in England, these efforts had two aims: investigation of the value of manuscript writing in simplifying the initial difficulties of teaching the subject; and verification of the claim that it led to greater rapidity as the children progressed to higher grades. Children progressed at more than the usual rate and from 1919 the style was introduced gradually throughout the school. Later, again at Mackie's

86. Ibid, 57.
87. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
suggestion, Spaull conducted an experiment with manuscript writing with fifth class boys at Darlington but the results were not so decisive. Because, however, of English precedent and the success of local experimentation, manuscript writing was assured of a place in the infants' grades. There was agreement amongst infants' mistresses and infants' inspectors that it was more rapidly acquired, more legible and the similarity between script and print was an aid to spelling and reading. Some teachers chose also to teach it to primary classes. Technically they were free to do so. In practice, however, primary inspectors demanded that primary children make a transition to the cursive style. The energies of primary teachers were therefore devoted to obtaining correct slope, letter shape, pen grip and posture. Example, then graded drill and correction of error were the basic techniques.

92. J.S. Archibald, loc. cit.
93. The Education Gazette, XVI, 12, 1st December, 1922, 255.
In the methods and techniques employed to teach the English subjects of the curriculum the eclecticism of the New Education and the dipolarity of Board's curriculum theory clearly had their counterparts. There was experimentation by teachers, there was some freedom in choice of method and there were a number of avenues, too, for child freedom, activity, spontaneity, initiative and enjoyment. But there was also much prescription and methods were frequently very formal indeed. In mathematics this general picture was repeated. Yet there were a number of important specific reforms. With mental discipline rejected there was no longer any excuse for long and elaborate calculations. And methods as well as content were involved in this change. Emphasis was placed upon concrete experience, manipulation of objects and actual weighing and measuring. Standards had, however, to be preserved and skill secured so alongside this there was an emphasis upon drill and ultimate

95. Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (1905), op. cit., iv-v and 25-26.
habituation\textsuperscript{96}. Various teachers developed ephemeral devices to assist learning\textsuperscript{97} and the Montessori equipment was featured in the syllabus from 1922\textsuperscript{98}, but the best summary of the contemporary approach is provided by Middleton's \textit{The Ten Commandments for the Teaching of Arithmetic}:

1. Thou shalt thoroughly teach the memorised tables for addition and multiplication ...

2. Thou shalt use small numbers ...

3. Thou shalt give much mental and oral work ...

4. Thou shalt carefully grade the subject matter ...

5. Thou shalt teach the notion as well as the table of length ...

6. Thou shalt not teach addition tables beyond \(10 + 10 = 20\), nor multiplication tables beyond \(12 \times 12 = 144\) ...

7. Thou shalt not give problems in Arithmetic before the number work involved has been mastered ...

8. Thou shalt not give number puzzles ...

9. Thou shalt explain general principles and teach general processes ...

10. Thou shalt not teach Arithmetic by rule or formula ...

\textsuperscript{96} Department of Education, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922)}, op. cit., 58 and 65.

\textsuperscript{97} E.g. Caldwell, Russell, Kearn and Hill.

\textsuperscript{98} Department of Education, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922)}, op. cit., 69-72.

Civics, Morals and History was a course a combination of approved scripture, lessons on civic duty exemplified by worthy individuals and history as it is usually understood, namely, as the study of the past. Once the children were able to do so, they were expected to read the scripture for themselves. With history it was expected that there would be reference to geography and that maps, blackboard sketches, pictorial aids, timelines, literature and songs would be employed. Narrative with illustration was the typical technique. Study lessons were also used and Currey of Sydney Teachers' College pointed out for the more adventurous the possibilities of observation lessons and the Dalton-type monthly assignment.

Geography was as a result of the New Education Movement reformed so that its content became more human

100. N.S.W. Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1916), op. cit., 63.
102. Ibid, 44.
103. Ibid, 47-53.
Plate XXXII. "Realistic" Physical Geography, 1910 - Superior Public School Kurri Kurri, Practical Demonstrations ... May 1910, Ms., M.L.
whilst retaining its physical strand. Teaching methods were expected to become more naturalistic and realistic and permit of considerable child activity\textsuperscript{104}. Weather recording, shadow stick work, excursions and outdoor lessons fitted this pattern. In addition sand tray modelling and the manufacture of large relief maps were included. This was no doubt fun for the children but it was certainly not "realistic" as was at first claimed. Later it was recognised that the value lay in the activity involved in the creations\textsuperscript{105}. From 1922, indeed, pupil activity was the main methodological suggestion: hence the recommendation of the project method\textsuperscript{106}. In theory geography and nature study were parts of the same curriculum strand. In practice they were treated independently just as they were discussed independently in the syllabus.

\textsuperscript{104} Department of Public Instruction, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (1905), op. cit.}, v and 33.

\textsuperscript{105} Department of Education, \textit{Course of Instruction for Primary Schools (Issued 1922), op. cit.}, 111.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid, 111-12.
They did share in common though the belief that reality and activity were the basic teaching techniques. Nature study was in addition expected to be inductive. There has been sufficient discussion elsewhere to indicate that teachers often failed to apply these principles in practice. And there has been enough discussion of the remaining subjects of the curriculum - art, manual work, music and physical education - to indicate that these with their formalism alongside their progressivism reflected the general eclecticism of the New Education.

Many inspectors expressed disappointment with teachers' work. But many of the faults of teachers were not their personal failures but failures of the system itself to provide teachers with the necessary professional education and consequent skill, with clear and unequivocal leadership and direction, and with satisfactory material conditions under which they could labour.

THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OF TEACHERS

The effective functioning of an educational system and the implementation of its philosophy rests with its
teachers. In 1904 the pupil-teacher system was rejected because the New Education demanded greater maturity and professional knowledge than this could provide. It was a major fault of the ensuing years that the state pledged itself in theory to pre-service training but in practice offered this in an inadequate form and relied upon in-service examining and inspecting to make good the deficiency.

After an initial transitory phase teacher training at the Teachers' College evolved under Alexander Mackie, the young Scot appointed in 1906 as Principal, a pattern which characterised the work for many years to come. So far as the primary service was concerned the principal feature of this was that teachers received their training in either a "short course" of one year's duration or a "long course" of two years. Initially the short course had been a major step forward, for it constituted a lengthened period of training for those seeking appointment.

to small schools. When, as happened, it became an alternative to a full two-year course it was a serious weakness in the educational system. Mackie was well aware of this and stressed the importance of a longer period of training. In 1923 and 1927 his attempt to limit the numbers enrolled in the short course led only to a contentious exchange between himself and senior Departmental officers. This short course was finally abolished in 1937. The problem it represented may be gauged from the fact that in 1917 no less than 73.5% of the College output came from the short course. A somewhat similar problem arose in connection with the entrance qualifications of the students. Increasingly the Leaving Certificate did become a necessary prerequisite but a number of students were still being admitted during the 1920's who possessed only the Intermediate Certificate.

108. Minister's Report, 1907, 40; Minister's Report, 1910, 2; Minister's Report, 1917, 9; Minister's Report, 1918, 38.


111. M.E. Beatton, op. cit., 151.

Plate XXXIV. Alexander Mackie, Principal, Sydney Teachers' College, c.1907 - From a copy in the Sydney Teachers' College Archives.
and ironically these were invariably placed in a short course.  

Under these conditions and in temporary accommodation until 1925, Sydney Teachers' College pursued its task of educating the future teachers of New South Wales. The philosophies of education espoused by various members of the staff all fell within the ambit of the New Education. None was very pretentious or epoch-making. Nor was there anything novel or controversial in College pronouncements upon method. The College did, however, have considerable influence upon educational development in this state by its replication of overseas research and its dissemination of new ideas from abroad. In general the College was progressive but not radical and students were acquainted as well as was possible within the limitations imposed with the best contemporary thought and with accepted techniques of teaching. Generally, too, the policy of Mackie and his staff and the results achieved

114. Ibid.
seem to have satisfied Board and Dawson \(^{115}\). These did not, however, entirely satisfy their successors. In substance the basis of discontent was the desire that students should emerge with greater competence to instruct their pupils and with a knowledge of the aims and content of the primary syllabus. In these Smith, Lasker and Thomas charged they were deficient \(^{116}\). There was continuity here with the general drive for efficiency and in a sense the College had become a scapegoat. It comes as no surprise that when Armidale Teachers' College was opened in 1928 Smith sought to make it an institution dedicated to mastery of the primary syllabus and the development of practical classroom skills \(^{117}\). Whatever the difference of opinion on policy it was however unreasonable to shift too much of the blame upon the Sydney Teachers' College when the fault was more rightly the failure of the government to provide adequate finance

\(^{115}\) Cf. Board's Preface, 1922 *Course of Instruction*.


for teacher training. Mackie made no pretence that his products were more than partly trained beginners. The Department itself recognised this and maintained the elaborate system of teachers' examinations. Successful completion of a two-year course of the Teachers' College entitled a teacher to a second class certificate, of a one-year course a third class certificate. These had to be confirmed after a period of ex-studentship and further progression was dependent in part upon private study. Teachers' examinations thus did not change the basic role they had performed in the nineteenth century. They did, however, change their character in keeping with the changed needs and conditions of the twentieth century. Standards were raised, especially in professional subjects, and reading lists were brought up to date and greatly lengthened. From 1908 the demands upon candidates for a Class I certificate took the form of original theses written under inspectorial supervision. This system remained in force until 1943. The continual examination grind it imposed was onerous but this does not affect the fact that it was needed and valuable.
The abolition of the pupil-teacher system had wrought no immediate wonders. The realities of the situation are best read in the following tables:

**TABLE XXIX: THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING SERVICE, 1900-1930**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CLASSIFIED TEACHERS</th>
<th>UNCLASSIFIED TEACHERS</th>
<th>PUPIL TEACHERS</th>
<th>STUDENTS IN TRAINING</th>
<th>SEWING AND COOKING TEACHERS</th>
<th>HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3117</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>3594</td>
<td>1810</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>5182</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>8695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>6502</td>
<td>2649</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>1288</td>
<td>12286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE XXX: THE STATUS OF CLASSIFIED TEACHERS, 1900-1930**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>1A</th>
<th>1B</th>
<th>2A</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>3A</th>
<th>3B</th>
<th>3C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>1306</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>1618</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

118. Compiled from Minister's Reports, 1900-1930.

119. Ibid.
The qualifications and the professional knowledge of teachers was, by the nature of their training and the amendments to the examination procedure, much greater than in the nineteenth century. And there was a continuing upward trend. But there was still an unfortunately large proportion of the service with third class certificates.

Classification was not a matter of academic attainments alone. As in the past these were one requirement and appropriate practical skill mark another. Inspectors continued to function as assessors and so the character of inspection and the attitudes and expectations of the inspectorial staff continued to function as a major determinant of the curriculum.

**INSPECTION AND INSPECTORIAL EXPECTATIONS**

Inspectorial procedures had been modified in 1904. They were again amended in 1905. The alterations were such as to permit and require inspectors to play a major role in promulgating educational ideas and innovations whilst still retaining their functions as assessors. In

120. N.S.W. Educational Gazette, XIV, 11, 1st April, 1905, 251-2.
keeping with these new duties new qualifications were required for appointment as an inspector. A number of men of outstanding academic and practical merit were recruited as the Department secured "an effective and enthusiastic band of inspectors" to whom fell the task of ensuring that the New Education was translated into actual classroom practice. Their effectiveness is, however, questionable.

Inspectorial effort was as diverse as the primary education it served. Early in the period there was great interest in nature study, school gardens, outdoor geography, art and manual work, for here were novel studies. Later the issue of retardation captured the Departmental and inspectorial imagination. Then came individualised instruction. Later there was the drive for efficiency. Overall when teachers and inspectors were fellow explorers and workers in a fertile field of new aims and methods

121. Board even introduced an examination for candidates: Education Department Archives, P3849, Chief Inspector's File, 1904-1913, P. Board to Public Service Board, 3rd January, 1906.

there was between them the sympathy of co-workers but
soon the inspector became an inspector again. During
actual inspections "(d)efinite tests (we)re always made
in English ... and mathematics in every class, and
occasionally in other class subjects." The calculation
of the numerical mark which was awarded teachers was no
longer as directly linked with the pupils' performance as
in the past, but these were still of considerable importance.
And, as far as teachers were concerned, all this testing
of their pupils, the wholesale collection of percentage
results, the pressure to reduce retardation and the
emphasis upon the basic skills led them to conclude that
their grading depended upon their pupils' attainments.
The interest of the hierarchy in the results of the
Qualifying examination confirmed them in this belief.
Teachers themselves were so used to the system that they

123. Education, 7, 12, 15th October, 1926, 341-43.

124. N.S.W. Institute of Inspectors, "Investigation into
Inspection Procedures, N.S.W., 1923", Journal of the
Institute of Inspectors, 6, 2, July 1924, 6.

had no real quarrel with inspectorial testing of their work. What they criticised was the failure of inspectors to inspire and to demonstrate teaching techniques. It was left to Alexander Mackie to suggest the more radical step of abolishing inspectors altogether. Perhaps this is still the best solution to the problems which arise from the attempt to combine within the one office the functions of an adviser and an examiner. The practical outcome in the period to 1930 was not much different from the nineteenth century. Teachers were principally concerned with pleasing the inspector. It seemed that what was most wanted was results and these they strove to provide. Norman Drummond, ex-Director of Primary Education, provided some interesting details of his own experiences as a teacher during this period. He spoke of the frenzied preparations as inspections loomed near. Manual work,

126. Education, 7, 12, 15th October, 1926, 338.
127. Ibid, 339.
129. Interview, N. Drummond, 23rd August, 1968.
nature study, art and similar "frills" occupied teachers and their classes during three or four weeks of sustained effort designed to disguise past neglect, a neglect which had followed from concentration upon the "important" subjects. Other ex-teachers told of the widespread practice of giving special attention to any subject in which the local inspector was interested\textsuperscript{130}. Neither of these tactics has possibly changed much but there is a very real difference when ex-teachers testify to the severe discipline which was enforced and of the prevalence of corporal punishment\textsuperscript{131}. Classes were large and had to be controlled if results were to be obtained and this was the method frequently chosen, especially when dealing with boys.

**THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF LEARNING**

School accommodation presented a very real problem for much of the period under discussion in this study and

\textsuperscript{130.} E.g. Interview, L. Kendall, 12th November, 1967.

\textsuperscript{131.} E.g. Interview, J. Forbes, 15th October, 1967.
education was undoubtedly handicapped thereby. Earlier
discussion has indicated that funds were often so meagre
that by the 1920's a virtual crisis had developed which
brought action at last. Shortage of funds is, however, a
relative matter and although the general position was
unsatisfactory, finance of some degree was always available
and old buildings were gradually remodelled and new buil-
dings erected in conformity with modern ideas of suitable
structures. The schoolroom disappeared; so did the tiered
gallery; and the single classroom became the basis of
instruction. Assembly halls were incorporated in new
infant schools. Windows were larger and more satisfactor-
ily positioned. Except in the most junior classes furni-
ture remained screwed to the floor, but at least the long
desk and backless form was replaced by dual and single
desks.  

School equipment was the source of a number of
difficulties. It soon became apparent that the New
Education demanded far more school material than had been

132. Cost influenced the speed of this change. At first
when new buildings were erected only half the rooms
were equipped with dual desks - Minister's Report,
1910, 36.
supplied to schools in the past. Objections were raised in parliament as teachers sought to bridge the gap by thrusting the responsibility upon the parents. The Liberal Party was satisfied with this development and took the view that "(t)he department ought not to be expected to supply every requisite"133. The Labor Government of 1910-16 was more generous but with the War it soon found that it was "not ... practicable to provide certain materials"134. This trend continued and far too often education was limited by the inability of the Department to supply necessary materials. There was Board's own comment, for example, in 1922 that "supply (wa)s not in any degree adequate to the proper carrying out of this syllabus"135.

To poor accommodation and lack of appropriate equipment must be added the further difficulty created

133. N.S.W. P.D. (2), 28, 2109, December 1907 (Hogue).
Plate XXXV. Dulwich Hill and Greenwich Public Schools -
Minister's Report, 1909, 83, M.L.
Plate XXXVI. Newtown North and Tempe Public Schools - Minister's Report, 1909, 34, M.I.
Plate XXXVII. Floor Plan of a Primary School -
Minister's Report, 1909, 79, M.L.
ANNEX A.
LITHOGRAPHIC PLANS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

WEST LEICHARDT PUBLIC SCHOOL: Plan of a Modern Infants' School, with Central Hall for Assembly purposes.

Plate XXXVIII. Floor Plan of an Infants' School — Minister's Report, 1909, 73, M.L.
by the teacher shortage. Here a single concrete example is the best illustration and it is sufficient to recall that at Brighton-le-Sands there were, in 1919, an enrolment of 451, eight teachers and four classes had between sixty and seventy pupils. Gradually there was improvement, the teacher-to-pupil ratio falling from 43.2 in 1900, 39.8 in 1910, 39.5 in 1920 and 36.7 in 1930. Throughout the period class size nevertheless imposed an obstacle to the implementation of the principles of activity and freedom.

In this chapter discussion has centred upon the New Education in action. What has been demonstrated is that there were many obstacles to the implementation of these new concepts. It was a relatively simple matter to introduce a course of study. It was much more difficult to ensure that the spirit of the New Education actually entered into the classroom. In part the difficulty was

136. Education Department Archives, P2624, School Files, Brighton-le-Sands, Cox to Dawson, 8th August, 1919.

137. Calculated from figures in Ministers' Reports, 1900-1930.
inherent in the eclecticism of the New Education itself and in the dipolarity of the local curriculum. Teachers were expected to be master mechanicians and yet still make the child the focus of their educational efforts. The Ellis and the Jones systems of reading illustrate the unfortunate abyss into which teaching could plunge and still receive an official accolade. There was no pause to ask if these methods were in keeping with the nature and capacities of the child himself. But this is only an illustration of the inconsistencies and contradictions of the period which make any simple description of educational practices difficult. The best generalisation which can be offered is that by comparison with the nineteenth century and in the hands of the better teachers there was considerably more freedom for the child, more activity and more enjoyment; that in the best schools equipment was more extensive but often supplied at parental expense or produced by the teachers themselves and that these features were more likely to be found in infants' schools. Possibly few teachers and few

schools actually came within this category. Dart, a country inspector, found little evidence of group work, games, dramatisation, friendly contests, open-air lessons and the use of aids in his district in 1928¹³⁹. If the conclusion is, then, that practice often fell below theory and below the promise of 1901-1905, then it is obvious enough that this was the result of a number of factors. Inadequately trained teachers, over-large classes, insufficient equipment, a dipolar syllabus and the continuing preoccupation with results and standards imposed enormous difficulties. That they existed was a reflection of community attitudes and the innate conservatism of the educational system. Overall, however, the effects of the New Education had been felt and there had been continued progress upward by a path of imitation and adaptation from abroad. Apart from a few local ephemeral devices, there was little originality. And, clearly, much of the New Education had still to work its full methodological effects upon the local scene.

¹³⁹. G. Dart, "Is the Syllabus Functioning?", Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 7, 1, April 1925, 11.
CHAPTER XII

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS, 1880-1930:
CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

Between 1880 and 1930 elementary education in New South Wales developed under the impact of the New Education. The reform movement of the early twentieth century was the most crucial phase in this process. Thereafter the curriculum was broadened in scope and purpose, methods of teaching were modified, the material conditions of learning were altered radically, the pupil-teacher system was abolished and inspection procedures were amended.

Too often, however, interpretations imply a far greater discontinuity between education in the late nineteenth century and this reform movement and its aftermath than was the case. Often, too, there is insufficient consideration of the social and political background against which education evolved. And far too often the actual achievements during the early twentieth century are unduly exaggerated. The truth is that the development of the
elementary school and its curriculum in New South Wales during the whole of this period was determined by elements of the New Education imported from abroad whose impact was modified by local social and economic conditions, by prevailing community attitudes and by established educational practices and beliefs. And to this there is the corollary that local conservatism and parsimony often functioned as factors limiting the extent to which such overseas ideas and practices were actually implemented. And then to this must be added the contradiction that despite this conservatism educational development still occurred as a consequence of enlightened and progressive governmental, departmental or individual action.

CHANGING CONCEPTS OF THE PURPOSE AND THE SCOPE OF PRIMARY SCHOOLING

The legislators of 1880 were pledged to universal elementary education provided that this could be secured without too great a cost or without antagonising the population at large. They saw such education principally as a weapon with which to fight ignorance and the crime
and immorality which accompanied it. There was, too, a belief that an informed and educated citizenry was a national asset but only a rudimentary education was demanded by law and in fact this was all that was actually thought to be necessary for the vast majority. Wilkins rejected such a narrowly utilitarian concept of education. Pestalozzi and faculty psychology were his inspiration and training the mental "powers" an important additional aim. Gladman, the textual authority for teachers, subscribed to the dual principles of utility and mental discipline. In practice mental discipline certainly affected course content but it was never the basis of curriculum change. Utility was; so was naturalism; and so were social conditions and community attitudes. In 1883 educational officials were possessed of the simple utilitarian desire that the prevailing standard of education in the basic skills be raised. Faced with irregular attendance and early withdrawal of pupils and incompetence amongst teachers, these officials created a Standard of Proficiency which emphasised the minimal essentials. Marks allocated to the various subjects were
altered and the course of study was modified. In the process a number of educational principles were ignored. This 1883 Standard was basically a concession to those who valued their child's services more than they valued his education. Then in 1884 community pressure and utilitarianism secured two further reforms: scripture was introduced into the curriculum for all grades following agitation from Abigail and Barry; drawing was modified following suggestions from Riley and Plummer. Abigail and Barry won a lasting victory for ever since scripture has been prescribed for every primary school class. The modification of drawing was neither truly novel nor very radical, but it was significant as the harbinger of a more extensive series of reforms which were introduced in 1890. Then it was Combes, Selfe and Carruthers who were the major figures with pressure from the Mechanics' Institute and the Trades and Labour Council a factor. As with drawing in 1884 it was British precedent which established the pattern of reform. Object lessons, school agriculture, drawing, writing, manual work, needlework, cookery and kindergarten
work were seen as parts of a scheme of "technical" education. The basis for this was the utilitarianism now of an industrial and scientific society. And here was the fallacy. New South Wales was not Great Britain. And this was the reason why the development of the local curriculum faltered when the depression came in 1892.

Although it was utilitarianism which was the major force in the reforms of 1890, it was not the only factor. Alongside this there was a naturalistic or humanistic broadening of the curriculum as evidenced in the case of kindergarten work and school drill and games. The inclusion of kindergarten work within the scheme of "technical" education was at best a compromise. Utilitarians found in Froebel theoretical support and in kindergarten activities a practical example of "hand and eye" training; kindergarteners sought and found a wider acceptance of their work by pointing to the technical education it afforded. And so a link was forged between kindergarten activities and utilitarian manual training. So far as New South Wales was concerned these manoeuvres were viewed from the sidelines and kindergarten work was
introduced in this state because the initial battle had already been fought and won in Britain. When first Crowly, then Hooper, then Banks arrived fortuitously in the colony the Department accepted the opportunities presented for experimentation and, ultimately, the modified English mechanistic form of this work. But mechanistic although it was, there was still enough of naturalism and enough recognition of play and child activity as valuable techniques for this to represent a broader education purpose. And it was significant that in 1897 Bridges was determined that such work should be more widely extended throughout the colony's schools. Drill and the allied interest in games as evidenced in the establishment of the Public Schools' Amateur Athletic Society represented a further dimension of the broadening purposes and scope of elementary education in New South Wales around 1890. Again this followed British precedent and again the outcome was mechanistic. Later the Ling system would displace the McLaren without creating much real change. By 1922 infants' classes did emerge free of the restriction and regimentation imposed by drill but for the primary
grades the pattern established in 1890 was followed with only minor modifications for the next fifty years.

Viewed in retrospect the last two decades of the nineteenth century stand clearly enough as a period during which concepts of the scope and purpose of elementary education included much more than just the three R's, but where development was curtailed by the socio-economic realities of an economic depression and an agricultural society. And the most notable outcomes were a conservative devotion within the Department to results, especially in the basic skills, and community criticisms of attempts to extend the scope and extent of education. As the century ended and Australia approached nationhood constructive and progressive criticisms did, however, emerge. Some were simply the product of local discontent but others were based upon comparisons with progress and developments abroad. When Francis Anderson attacked the local system in 1901 there was little that was novel in what he said but his speech was still of major importance, first because it was founded upon Anderson's own enlightened concepts of education, second because it
co-ordinated and summarised many criticisms heard before only in relative isolation, and third because the moment was fortuitous. And so with Perry, the Minister, and Departmental officials genuinely interested in educational progress, with Carruthers anxious to make political capital of the opportunity to embarrass the See Government, and with the press lending support, the years 1901 to 1904 became a period of major significance for elementary education. It was then that a basic but extensive charter was drafted for early twentieth century reform. The "New Education" provided the substance for this charter. This "New Education" was an eclectic body of ideas and practices derived from utilitarians, naturalists, humanitarians, Herbartians and social moralists. It was characterised by a rejection of faculty psychology, an acceptance of Herbartian correlation and five-step pedagogy, the enunciation of child-interest, pupil-activity, self-expression and reality as basic teaching principles, the development of handwork and nature study as elementary school subjects, the elevation of English to a new importance, the utilisation of history as a vehicle for the acquisition
of moral values, a broader concern with the physical health of children, and dissatisfaction with the pupil-teacher system. Already New South Wales had some acquaintance with such developments. The Royal Commissioners were sent abroad with the express purpose of acquiring further information and Board elected to do so of his own volition. Each of these men added in their own way to the body of knowledge available in New South Wales. The special value of the work of Knibbs and Board was that they identified basic principles and recognised the importance of a "philosophy" of education. Knibbs was so condemnatory of the local system that reform was inescapable, but it was Board who provided New South Wales with its philosophy and its "New Syllabus". Initially this was predominantly child-centred naturalism but following his appointment Board amended his statements so that the purpose of primary schooling was now expressed as social efficiency, citizenship, "utility" and character development. In part a correction of his earlier one-sided emphasis upon the individual, there is no doubt that this altered interpretation was also prompted
by the fact that primary education was at that time the gateway to the adult world for most of the children of New South Wales. As a consequence results in the basic skills were viewed as of central importance. And the issue of retardation and the introduction of the Qualifying Certificate served to widen the gap between a broadening sense of purpose and child-centred pedagogy on the one hand and a traditional devotion to the fundamentals and drill techniques on the other. By 1922 Board was attempting to bring order out of this chaos of eclecticism by expounding a theory of curriculum which encompassed this basic dualism. He spoke of instruction in the "fundamental arts" as the first priority whilst simultaneously claiming that the task of the school extended beyond this into the area of general or cultural education. The principal value of Board's theory of the curriculum was that it explicitly expressed beliefs hitherto implicitly accepted. It did not solve the problem. Neither did it follow that the purpose or scope of schooling need be modified. There were modifications, however, because by 1922 there had been a number of social and educational developments to which Board and his
subordinates responded. One major factor was the development of secondary education. Progress in this sphere should not be exaggerated but increasing numbers of children were continuing their education beyond the elementary school. This reflected the industrialisation and the higher standard of living which came to New South Wales as a by-product of World War I. It meant that educators were freed somewhat from the burden of preparing children for entry direct from primary school into the adult world and there was thus the social situation favourable to a re-assertion of child-centred naturalism. In part this too was a product of the War - more particularly it was a reaction against the society-centred education which had characterised German schooling. It was also a product of the impact of Montessori's ideas upon the educational world. In practice this reversion to a naive form of liberalism was handicapped by misunderstanding, by the lack of appropriate materials and by the simultaneous concern with norms and standards which was an outcome of the measurement movement. Theoretically it was this individualism which remained the official philosophy of New South Wales primary schooling when
Smith replaced Board. Actually there was an emphasis upon proficiency and effort. This too was a product of educational and social change. The development of secondary education may at first have opened the way to individualism but soon it also led to pressure downwards upon the primary schools for higher standards. In addition disillusionment with features of social life in the 1920's produced in some quarters a reaction against the New Education itself. And so the period ended upon a note of conservatism.

OVERSEAS PRECEDENT AS A DETERMINING FACTOR

The preceding resume serves more than just to recall and demonstrate that the development of primary education in New South Wales was a product of overseas ideas and local socio-economic conditions. The dependence upon overseas ideas for inspiration has become patently clear and there has been some indication of the complexity of the relationship between the purposes and scope of primary schooling and conditions in this state. In
connection with the first point, the dependence upon overseas ideas, the reliance upon British precedent is the striking feature. In the late nineteenth century the dependence upon Britain was complete. In the twentieth century there were some departures from this pattern. The impact of Montessori and the American measurement movement upon New South Wales demonstrates this. These were not derived at second-hand from the Mother Country as had been the case in the past. Yet British precedent was still the major factor. It was notable that as soon as Ballard and Burt turned their attention to measurement these Britons were the more oft-quoted authorities. Most notable of all was the almost complete lack of reference to other than British developments in the area of pedagogical techniques. In effect neither the project method nor the Dalton Plan were exceptions, for although these were American they arrived in New South Wales from the United Kingdom. Board acknowledged his debt to Britain for the ideas contained in his 1904-5 New Syllabus and its extent was very considerable indeed. Equally certain is Board's
indebtedness to British educators for the individualism which became the official philosophy of New South Wales education in 1922 despite its Deweyan turn of phrase and the part played by local experimentation with Montessori work and at Brighton-le-Sands.

**DEVELOPMENT AS A PRODUCT OF LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The relationship between the avowed purposes and scope of New South Wales primary schooling and socio-economic conditions has been emphasised in this study. It is simple enough to say that until local conditions changed education remained a matter of the basic skills. This is accurate enough but it is not the complete story. Their outcome was in fact two-fold: on the one hand education was conceived as an instrument for social progress; on the other development was limited by Departmental and governmental conservatism.

There was never anything very profound in the concept of education as a means to social ends. To the legislators of 1880 it meant little more than a vague idea that an
educated citizenry was preferable to an ignorant one. Departmental officials in 1883–4 thought that a citizenry with a better basic education would be better still. The 1890 Standard expressed the belief that a technical and scientific education would pave the way to industrial development and more efficient agriculture. This belief in technical education played a major part in the initial phase of the reform movement of 1901–1904 but the purpose of primary schooling was soon translated into a utilitarian preparation for citizenship by naturalistic methods. Training for citizenship was still the aim in 1930. Individualism had not altered this. All that happened was that the belief evolved that good men and women made good citizens. None of these ideas was ever very critically examined, for official pronouncement were virtually sacrosanct. Nevertheless the general point is unaffected by this or by the naivety of the concepts involved. Aims were related to local conditions and education was regarded as an instrument of social progress. But this was one side of the story. The other consequence of local socio-economic circumstances was educational conservatism.
EDUCATIONAL CONSERVATISM AS A PRODUCT OF LOCAL CONDITIONS

The conservative devotion to results and to proficiency in the basic skills which was one aspect of schooling in New South Wales had British precedent to support it, but it was also a product of local community attitudes, parliamentary policies and educational conditions. The community generally and educators themselves had become accustomed to judging schools by the results they achieved, more particularly in the basic skills. In the late nineteenth century the very process of curriculum reform was conceived in terms of alterations in the marks allocated to the various curricular studies. With the twentieth century schooling was still dominated by examinations and the demand for satisfactory results in the fundamental arts. The Qualifying Certificate and the Primary Final were a part of this but even more important was Board's decision that inspectors should retain their functions as examiners. This decision was evidence of the grip that centralism had on the Australian mind, but it was also testimony that New South
Wales teachers were too poorly trained to be completely trusted. This latter state of affairs was a consequence of community opinion as reflected in governmental financial policy for it was one aspect of this that there was never an adequate system of teacher-training. Few teachers attended a training college at all during the late nineteenth century and during the first three decades of the twentieth century many attended for far too short a period. Nor was this the end of the problems created by governmental conservatism. There were the difficulties created by the refusals to deal with the issues of fees until 1907 and compulsion until 1916. Then there were over-large classes often inadequately accommodated and with insufficient equipment as other products of parsimony. When these were compounded with insufficiently trained teachers anxious to secure results, severe handicaps were imposed upon primary schooling. The very character of the education provided was affected. Under these conditions it was regimentation and obedience to rule which flourished rather than self-activity or child-freedom.
Conservatism was the general characteristic of community attitudes and governmental policies but there was the strange contradiction that governmental or political action provided primary schooling with much of its impetus. Thus the actions of Carruthers in 1889 led to the promising reforms of 1890 and later he played a major role in initiating the reform movement of 1901-1904. Then in 1912 Carmichael's personal interest led to the introduction almost overnight of Montessori work into infant schools. Again in 1922 Bruntnell's action meant that at last something was done about the material conditions of primary schooling. Behind such actions stood the more forward-thinking members of the community. The parts played by Combes, Selfe and Anderson were particularly important but various Departmental officials also functioned as forces for change. Largely too it was these officials who were responsible for the details of the school curriculum. Certainly with the rapidity of political change it was they who provided the system with its continuity. Politicians and others intervened at
crucial stages but it was the officials who largely determined the character of primary schooling within the classroom.

THE CHARACTER OF DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTION AND LEADERSHIP

The principal senior officials of the Department during the period from 1880 to 1930 were Johnson, Maynard, Bridges, Board, Dawson, McLelland, Smith, Lasker and Thomas. Maynard was clearly conservative. So were Dawson, Smith, Lasker and Thomas. McLelland appears to have been the most progressive. Johnson, Bridges and Board were products of their times, progressive on some issues but conservative on others. Board was of course the dominating figure. He personally provided New South Wales primary education with its philosophy and its inspiration. But the roles played by these men have already been examined in sufficient detail. The significant point here is that direction was always equivocal and that to teachers it seemed that results were what really mattered. All the testing of the late nineteenth century left no other
impression and in the twentieth century this practice and impression both were continued. And then add the frequent proclamations to the effect that results in the basic skills were of prime importance. So even under the new dispensation it was the quest for results which dominated much of the work in schools. In consequence "cram" was still a feature of classroom practice even after the New Education had wrought a reformation in pedagogical theory.

TEACHING PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS:
THEORY AND PRACTICE

The theory of instruction which was current in New South Wales in the late nineteenth century contained elements of Pestalozzian "method", of mental discipline and of British associationist psychology. In so far as the outcomes were the use of inductive methods, of techniques which began with the concrete and the known and of graded sequential presentation of material adapted to age and capacity, then it was admirable. There were, however, rather unfortunate results as well as these. Thus the doctrine of mental discipline favoured the inclusion of
much difficult material and much memorisation to exercise the "faculties"; Pestalozzi's synthetic methods often began with "elements" which were simple to the adult but not to the child; British associationism led in the hands of Gladman to an appalling concept of discipline. Within the eclecticism which was the New Education there was a rejection of faculty psychology, a renaissance of the best of Pestalozzi, a recognition of the real import of Froebel's doctrines, an incorporation of the Herbartian pedagogy and, later, an acceptance of the instinct psychology of McDougall and the associationism of the Americans. All these contributed in some part to the avowed principles which governed teaching practice. Thus instruction was to be founded upon the natural interests of the child, partake of the character of play, feature concrete experiences, the manipulation of materials, excursions and other forms of activity, permit the pupil to make his own observations and draw his own conclusions, include opportunities for self-government and various corporate activities, and still embrace considerable drill and memorisation of material selected for its future utilitarian or cultural value rather
than its immediate appeal to the child. The inherent dualism within this body of principles was a counterpart to the concepts of educational purposes and of appropriate curricular studies. The actual outcome was that only a limited progressivism was expected or obtained. The continued use in all but kindergarten and Montessori classrooms of desks fixed in rows to the floor is simple objective testimony of this. It was in infant schools where there was greatest freedom for the child, most use of free and didactic material and of activity methods and where pupil-teacher relationships underwent the greatest change. Yet it was also at the infant level that faulty synthetic methods reminiscent of the worst of Pestalozzian techniques had their greatest impact. It is not that synthetic approaches, as such, are in error: basically the concept of graded step-by-step presentation is after all admirable. The error arises when the elements with which the work begins are inappropriate for the child. It is a question of a psychological versus a logical approach. The fault was that the synthetic techniques employed for reading and enunciation were psychologically unsound. Educators were
apparently unaware that such approaches contravened the principle of basing teaching upon the nature and capacity of the child itself. Here was but another contradiction in primary schooling. In the face of continued regimentation and cram and the faith in such synthetic procedures the reformations wrought by the New Education should not be exaggerated. There were clear advances, of course. There was more freedom and activity and the work was better graded, but there was considerable continuity with the past; a continuity evident enough in theory but even greater in practice in response to the problem of obtaining acceptable results despite large classes.

**FIFTY YEARS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:**
**GENERAL OUTCOMES**

The period encompassed by this study began with the 1880 Act and its belief in universal elementary education. Fifty years later there was a broader concept of purpose and a broader course of study conducted under improved conditions by teachers with greater knowledge of educational theory and more enlightened attitudes towards the pupils
they taught. By then, too, primary schooling was regarded as a preparatory stage leading on to further education and not as sufficient in itself for all but the very few. Elements of the New Education had provided the inspiration and direction for these reforms, enlightened individuals had served as instigators of change, and local attitudes and circumstances had determined the form and conditions of their implementation. The process was evolutionary, not revolutionary. Implementation was always a gradual process. And this study perforce therefore ends with the New Education having only partly wrought its effects upon New South Wales primary schools. Nevertheless a major phase was over. The primary school and its curriculum had been transformed and now there was reaction. Educationally it may be disappointing that progress had been curtailed by conservatism and parsimony but the function of history is to explain not to judge. And the general explanation is simple enough - educational change is an aspect of social change. It is a consequence of those national aspirations and needs which are a product of social and economic circumstances - and it is in turn limited by these conditions.
Appendix A

Governments and Ministers for Public Instruction/Education, 1880-1930

Parkes Ministry
21st December, 1878 to 4th January, 1883
Francis Suttor, 21st December 1878 to 30th April, 1880
John Robertson, 1st May, 1880 to 30th November, 1881
Francis Suttor, 1st December, 1881 to 4th January, 1883

Stuart Ministry
5th January, 1883 to 6th October, 1885
George Reid, 5th January, 1883 to 21st February, 1884
Joseph Abbott (Acting), 21st February, 1884 to 6th May, 1884
William Trickett (Acting), 2nd May, 1884 to 7th October, 1885

Dibbs Ministry
7th October, 1885 to 21st December, 1885
William Trickett

Robertson Ministry
22nd December, 1885 to 26th February, 1886
James Young

* Title changed 1915.
Jennings Ministry
26th February, 1886 to 19th January, 1887

Arthur Renwick, M.D.

Parkes Ministry
20th January, 1887 to 16th January, 1889

James Inglis

Dibbs Ministry
17th January, 1889 to 7th March, 1889

Francis Sutter, M.L.C.

Parkes Ministry
8th March, 1889 to 23rd October, 1891

Joseph Carruthers

Dibbs Ministry
23rd October, 1891 to 3rd August, 1894

Francis Sutter

Reid Ministry
3rd August, 1894 to 14th September, 1899

Jacob Garrard, 3rd August, 1894 to 18th August, 1898
James Hogue, 27th August, 1898 to 14th September, 1899

Lyne Ministry
14th September, 1899 to 27th March, 1901

John Perry
See Ministry
28th March, 1901 to 14th June, 1904

John Perry

Waddell Ministry
15th June, 1904 to 29th August, 1904

John Fegan

Carruthers Ministry
30th August, 1904 to 1st October, 1907

Broughton O'Conor, 30th August, 1904 to 13th May, 1907
James Hogue, 14th May, 1907 to 1st October, 1907

Wade Ministry
2nd October, 1907 to 20th October, 1910

James Hogue

McGowen Ministry
21st October, 1910 to 29th June, 1913

George Beeby, 21st October, 1910 to 10th September, 1911
Ambrose Carmichael, 11th September, 1911 to 26th November, 1911
Frederick Flowers, 27th November, 1911 to 29th February, 1912
Ambrose Carmichael, 1st March, 1913 to 29th June, 1913

Holman Ministry
30th June, 1913 to 7th November, 1916

Ambrose Carmichael, 30th June, 1913 to 5th March, 1915
William Holman, 6th March, 1915 to 15th March, 1915
Arthur Griffith, 15th March, 1915 to 7th November, 1916
National Ministry (Holman)
15th November, 1916 to 12th April, 1920

Augustus James

Storey Ministry
13th April, 1920 to 10th October, 1921

Thomas Mutch

Dooley Ministry
10th October, 1921 to 20th December, 1921

Thomas Mutch

Fuller Ministry
20th December, 1921

Thomas John Ley

Dooley Ministry
20th December, 1921 to 13th April, 1922

Thomas Mutch

Fuller Ministry
13th April, 1922 to 17th June, 1925

Albert Bruntnell

Lang Ministry
17th June, 1925 to 26th May, 1927

Thomas Mutch
Lang Ministry (Reconstructed)
27th May, 1927 to 18th October, 1927

William Davies

Bavin Ministry
18th October, 1927 to 3rd November, 1930

David Drummond

Lang Ministry
4th November, 1930 to 13th May, 1932

William Davies
APPENDIX B

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION/EDUCATION, 1880-1930*

Board, P.  
- Inspector, 1893-1905  
- Director and Under-secretary, 1905-1922

Bradley, J.D.  
- Acting Deputy Chief Inspector, 1903-1905  
- Deputy Chief Inspector, 1905-1910

Branch, J.E.  
- Superintendent of Drawing, 1903-

Bridges; F.  
- Deputy Chief Inspector, 1884-1889  
- Superintendent of Technical Education, 1889-1894  
- Chief Inspector, 1894-1903  
- Acting Under-secretary, 1903-1904

Cahill, J. (Capt.)  
- Superintendent of Drill, 1927-

Cooper, J.D.  
- Superintendent of Technical Education, 1901-1905  
- Principal Senior Inspector, 1905-1909

Dawson, J.  
- Inspector, 1880-1903  
- Senior Inspector, 1903-1905  
- Chief Inspector, 1905-1921

Elliott, W.J.  
- Inspector of Secondary Schools, 1912-

Gardiner, J.  
- Chief Examiner, 1881-1889

* Details only to 1930 are included.
Gardiner, J.R. - Supervisor of Manual Training, 1913-

Halsted, J. - Instructor in School Agriculture, 1905-1922

Harkness, B.C. - Assistant Under-secretary, 1925-1930
- Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, 1930-

Hicks, A.W. - Assistant Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, 1930-

Johnson, E. - Chief Inspector, 1880-1884
- Under-secretary, 1884-1894

Knibbs, G.H. - Superintendent of Technical Education, 1905-1906

Lasker, S. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1925
- Chief Inspector, 1925-1927
- Chief Inspector and Deputy Director, 1927-1930

Lawford, L.E. - Principal Senior Inspector, 1910-1925

McCredie, J. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1901-1903
- Acting Chief Inspector, 1903-1905

McIntyre, W. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1899-1901

McLachlan, A. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1930-

McLelland, H.D. - Assistant Chief Inspector, 1910-1921
- Chief Inspector, 1921-1925

McKenzie, J.G. - Assistant Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, 1930-

Mackie, A. - Principal Sydney Teachers' College, 1906-

Maynard, J.C. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1882-1884
- Chief Inspector, 1884-1894
- Under-secretary, 1894-1903
Miller, G. - Acting Under-secretary, 1883-1884
Morris, R.N. - Chief Examiner, 1901-1911
Nangle, J. - Superintendent of Technical Education, 1913-
Paul, A. (Col.) - Superintendent of Drill, 1889-1912
Reddish, J. (Maj.) - Superintendent of Drill, 1912-1927
Smith, S.H. - Staff Inspector, 1911-1920
- Assistant Under-secretary, 1920-1922
- Director and Under-secretary, 1922-1930
Telfer, J.B. - Assistant Under-secretary, 1922-1925
Thomas, G.R. - Deputy Chief Inspector, 1926-1930
- Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, 1930
- Director and Under-secretary, 1930-
Tollis, B.J. - Superintendent of School Agriculture, 1922-
Turner, J.W. - Assistant Under-secretary, 1905-1906
- Superintendent of Technical Education, 1906-1913
Wilkins, W. - Under-secretary, 1880-1882
Woodhouse, F.W. - Superintendent of Drawing, 1890-1903
APPENDIX C

PETER BOARD'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE
BRIGHTON-LE-SANDS EXPERIMENT*

BRIGHTON-LE-SANDS: Experimental Organisation

I propose that this school shall be organised for experimental purposes on a plan different from ordinary schools.

The experimental working of the school will include the following features.

(a) The employment of subject teachers in principal subjects of ordinary school work.

(b) The setting apart of about one half of school time to "executive" or "manual" subjects.

(c) The introduction of a larger measure of self government and freedom of choice than is usually allowed to pupils.

The following general ideas express what I have in view under each of these heads, though I quite expect to find modification called for in working them out.

(a) In employing "subject" teachers I wish to keep the total staff to the same number as would be employed in an ordinary school, as the cost of working the school is to be a factor in judging the results of the experiment. The "subject teacher" principle is to apply to the classes from 3rd to 6th, i.e. the usual primary classes.

* From the records filed at the Brighton-le-Sands Public School.
The subjects for which a subject teacher would be required are:

(1) English (Reading, spelling & Composition)
(2) Mathematics
(3) Writing
(4) Nature Knowledge, Morals & Civics.

Roughly the lesson periods for each subject teacher would be divided weekly as follows:
(taking 35 lesson periods as the total for a week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (omitting writing)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Knowledge Morals &amp; Civics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Head Master might well be expected to take one of these "subjects".

Each "subject" teacher is to be assigned a class for which he (or she) is personally responsible in the sense that it is to be his special care, though he will not be directly responsible for results in subjects taught by a subject teacher other than himself, beyond giving the general assistance that is essential in any member of a co-operative body working as a school staff. As the "class" teacher he will be responsible for the administrative work of the class assigned to him and for its oversight and the personal interest that will lead the pupils in it to look to him as their responsible teacher. The various
occupations referred to later on will specially call for his attention.

The music may be taken by one of the other "subject" teachers who is found best fitted for it, but group singing should be so frequently resorted to, apart from class instruction, that all the staff should be prepared to join in it, if at all possible.

Each "subject" teacher will have time in which he is not engaged in his subject. He should use that time with his own class, either in assisting the subject teacher or in assisting in the supervision of the children in out-door occupations or in helping individual children or in other forms of supervision of the class that the work of the school requires.

The Head Master will direct the work of the school, but it is clear that the staff of this school must work in a thoroughly co-operative spirit with the Head Master without any spirit of mere perfunctory discharge of duty assigned to them.

Although the time spent in ordinary subjects of instruction appears from the above allocation to be materially reduced, the same standard of attainment as in ordinary schools is to be aimed at. I venture to hope that one result of this experiment will be to show that attainment in school subjects is not gained in proportion to the time directly spent on them but rather to the degree of skill of the teachers' treatment of them, the stimulus the school gives to the pupils' effort and to the effect of well directed "executive" occupations on the intelligences of the children.

(b) The setting apart of school time for "executive" occupations.

One object of the limitation of time prescribed for the above mentioned subjects is to provide more time
for occupations, (a) that train the hand and eye, or (b) that employ free time for a definite purpose, or (c) provide training of tastes, or (d) serve any purpose useful in the child's career.

For this purpose, while some subjects taught by the subject teachers may be called "oral", I would call these, for want of a better term, "executive" subjects. They would include Writing, Drawing, Gardening, Modelling, Cardboard Work, Woodwork, Metal work, Poultry Keeping, Cooking, Laundry work, Spinning, Weaving, Sewing. In the time (about the half of the whole school time) allowed for these "executive" subjects, are included the periods allowed to the children to spend according to their own choice either in the school library or at one of their occupations.

(c) Self government and free choice.

The idea I have in view is that as far as possible responsibility should be placed on the children for the management of various school interests and that this should increase with each advancing class. For this purpose a number of organisations will need to be created within the school. The discipline of the school should leave a great degree of freedom in choice of occupations where such freedom can reasonably be allowed. The children must realise that there are some things they are not free to do or to leave undone, while in others their choice is free. This delimitation of freedom cannot be laid down beforehand, but can be gradually worked out. The object before the teacher will be to secure that free choice is tending to a useful purpose. This involves the carrying forward into the primary school the spirit that marks the Montessori School. The main desideratum is that the pupil shall use all his time profitably. But unprofitableness of occupation must be judged not from the ordinary school point of view, but in the light of the motive that is working in the pupil's mind.
In carrying out some of the "executive" occupations, a distinctly valuable motive will be supplied and a link of connection with the work-a-day world established if opportunity is given to reduce any useful output of work to money value. This may be done with many of the school products and the children led to employ the returns for some corporate school or civic purpose. Whether in certain cases it will be found well to allow individual pupils to benefit remains for later consideration by the Master and his staff.

The whole of this scheme calls for the co-operation of the parents in almost every part of it. I hope to explain it to the parents soon after the school opens, but the Master and his staff will find that the Parents' Association should be kept in the closest possible touch with the work of the school.

In the above, the 3rd to 6th classes have been specially referred to. The first and second classes will need to be based on the work of a well trained Montessori Teacher followed up by a good Infant Teacher.

(Signed) P. BOARD,
Director of Education.

16th March, 1917.
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3. **BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS** (continued)


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3. BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS (continued)


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3. **BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS** (continued)


3. BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS (continued)


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---------- The Principles that Underlie the Art of Teaching, Govt. Printer, Sydney, 1886.


4. NEWSPAPERS


The Daily Telegraph, 1880-1905.


Freeman's Journal, 1881, 1896, 1900-1905.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 1880-1930.

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4. **NEWSPAPERS** (continued)

*The Worker, 1900-1905.*

*Education Press Cuttings, 1898-1913, Mitchell Library.*

*Education Press Cuttings, Sydney Teachers' College Library.*

*Press Cuttings filed at Brighton-le-Sands Public School.*

5. **JOURNALS**

*The Australian Economist, 1888-1898.*


*The Australian Teacher, 1893-1901.*

*The Australian Teacher, 1923-1930.*

*Education, 1919-1930.*

*The Education Gazette, 1915-1930.*


*Journal of the Institute of Inspectors of N.S.W., 1919-1930.*


*The New South Wales Educational Gazette, 1891-1907.*

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* Only those journals which were extensively examined are included in this list and it therefore does not contain all of those which were consulted.
5. **JOURNALS** (continued)


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6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES***


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Archibald, J.S., "Experiment in Manuscript Writing", Schooling, V, 1, September 1921, 3-6.

——— "A Survey of Reading Methods ...", The Education Gazette, XVI, 8, 1st August, 1922, 178-83.

——— "Manuscript Writing", Education, 3, 12, 16th October, 1922, 12-14.

* This list is restricted to articles which were most directly pertinent to this study. It is not a complete list of the articles perused, for general articles have been restricted to a representative selection.
6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)


Bennett, P.J., "Suggestions for Raising the Efficiency of Schools: Headmasters' Viewpoints", *Education*, 9, 10, 15th August, 1928, 305-08.


Board, P., "Address to Teachers delivered ... at Albury, December 6, 1902", *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, XII, 8, 2nd January, 1903, 179-81.


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"Presidential Address to the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science", *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the A.A.A.S. Held at Brisbane, 1909*, 703-12.


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6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)


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Dennis, J., "Inspection from the Teachers' Standpoint", Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 8, 3, November, 1926, 18-27.


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Harkness, B.C., "Retardation, with Special Reference to the Way the Problem has been Handled in the Schools", *Journal of the Institute of Inspectors*, 9, 2, August 1927, 26-29.


"How to Teach Reading", *The N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, I, 6, 2nd November, 1891, 113-15.

"Individual Teaching: Age-Grade Distributions of Pupils - Memorandum to Teachers from the Director of Education", *The Education Gazette*, XII, 1, 2nd January, 1919, 1-5.
6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)

"Information about the Montessori Method", *McClure's Magazine*, 37, 6, October 1911, 702-04.


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Light, M., "A Syllabus Criticism", *Education*, 1, 10, 16th August, 1920, 244-45.


6. JOURNAL ARTICLES (continued)


"The Aim of the Primary School", The Public Instruction Gazette, II, 1, 25th July, 1907, 2-3.

"The Nature of Teaching", Schooling, I, 1, September 1917, 3-14.

"The Aims of Schooling", Schooling, II, 1, September 1918, 5-12; II, 2, November, 1918, 37-41.

"Education for Work and Leisure", Schooling, III, 1, October 1919, 3-10.


"Modern Tendencies in Education", The Australian Teacher, 1, 2, August 1923, 11-15.


"Training the Child", The Education Gazette, XV, 1, 1st January, 1921, 1-2.

"Literature and Nature Study", The Education Gazette, XV, 2, 1st February, 1921, 21-23.

"Revised Syllabus of Instruction: Memorandum to Teachers", The Education Gazette, XVII, 4, 2nd April, 1923, 53-54.
6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)

Mann, C.W., "Writing", *Schooling*, XVI, 3 and 4, September 1934, 74-86.


Murphy, P.L., "Daltonism and Desertion", *Education*, 7, 11, 15th September, 1926, 298-300.

——— "Where Do We Stand?", *Education*, 7, 11, 15th September, 1926, 310-12.

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6. JOURNAL ARTICLES (continued)

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"The Proposed Course of Free Instruction", Victoria Education Gazette and Teachers Aid, II, 9, June 1902, 131-38; III, 1, July 1902, 44-54.

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Rickard, J., "Examinations", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, IX, 8, 2nd January, 1900, 175-76.
6. JOURNAL ARTICLES (continued)


"The Primary Curriculum", Schooling, IX, 3, April 1926, 81-82.


R(ose), S.C., "What Should Our Schools Be?", N.S.W. Educational Gazette, I, 10, 1st March, 1892, 215-16.


"Individual Teaching in the Infant School", Journal of the Institute of Inspectors, 1, 1, April 1919, 13-16.

6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)


_________ "The Syllabus and Other Important Matters", *Education*, 8, 1, 15th November, 1926, 2-4.

_________ "Address ... at the Opening of the Teachers' Federation Conference on 26th December, 1926", *The Education Gazette*, XXI, 1, 1st January, 1927, 3-5.


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_________ "Farewell Message to Inspectors", *Journal of the Institute of Inspectors*, 12, 2, August 1930, 4-6.

6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)


Telfer, J.B., "The Middle Course", *Journal of the Institute of Inspectors*, 12, 1, March 1930, 17-23.


"Ideals of Education", *Education*, 12, 2, 15th December, 1930, 57.

(Address to N.S.W. Teachers' Federation Annual Conference, December 1930), *Education*, 12, 3, 15th January, 1931, 73-76.

"Training of Citizens: Circular to Teachers No. 85", *The Education Gazette*, XII, 2, 1st February, 1918, 33-34.


"Visit of the Chief Inspector to the North", *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, IV, 7, 1st December 1894, 122-23

Vivian, J., "What to Teach in Composition", *The Education Gazette*, XII, 9, 2nd September, 1918, 233-35.
6. **JOURNAL ARTICLES** (continued)

Vout, W., "An Experiment with the Brighter Pupils at Darlington School", *Schooling*, V, 5, July 1922, 155-60.


Woodhouse, F.W., "Drawing: Its Teaching in the Public Schools", *N.S.W. Educational Gazette*, 1, 2, 1st July, 1891, 7-8; 1, 3, 1st August, 1891, 3-4.

7. INTERVIEWS

Teachers and ex-teachers were most generous in their willingness to discuss their personal experiences and valuable comments on general features of education in the period were forthcoming. Much of this discussion was informal but, in addition, the following formal interviews were conducted:

Argue, M. - 17th January, 1968
Back, J. - 12th October, 1968
Black, W.E. (junior) - 10th November, 1968
Bruce, M. (nee Peters), 10th October, 1968.
Caldwell, Agnes - 20th January, 1968
Cantello, George - 4th November, 1967
Casimer, Thomas - 9th January, 1968
Currey, C.H. (Dr.) - 3rd November, 1967
Drummond, Norman - 10th November, 1967
Forbes, John - 15th October, 1967
Kendall, Louis - 12th November, 1967
McKenzie, Lilia (nee Vallender) - 27th November, 1967
McMullen, Ray - 12th January, 1968
Martin, Robert - 10th January, 1968
Newling, C.B. - 15th November, 1967
Olive, Victoria - 18th November, 1967
Quilkey, Leonard - 9th August, 1968
Shrubb, Alfred - 12th January, 1968
Skillen, Elizabeth - 25th January, 1968
Stevens, R. - 14th January, 1968
Williamson, Harry - 6th November, 1968
8. UNPUBLISHED THESES AND ESSAYS


8. UNPUBLISHED THESES AND ESSAYS (continued)


O'Regan, G.F., An Examination of the Necessity for a Royal Commission on Primary Education in 1903, Unpub. B.A. Thesis, Sydney University, 1963.


8. UNPUBLISHED THESES AND ESSAYS (continued)


