

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 1951

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Mann, Brisbane) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

BRICK-MAKING MACHINE.

Mr. **WHYTE** (Mackenzie) asked the Secretary for Public Works, Housing and Local Government—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to the statement that 1,300 houses have been built in South Africa by means of a new brick-making machine which can be operated on the building site?”

“2. In view of the grave shortage of bricks and brick-making plant in Australia, will he arrange for his officers to make investigations into this new building method by means of which the walls of a house can be built within an hour by the use of interlocking bricks?”

Hon. **P. J. R. HILTON** (Carnarvon) replied—

“1. Yes. I have read the Press report on this matter with interest.

“2. The Commonwealth Building Research Division of the C.S.I.R.O. (which organisation has a liaison with the Building Research Organisation in South Africa), has been requested to obtain and forward full particulars of the type of brick referred to, which was recently reported in the Press as having been developed by two South African builders after twenty-one (21) years' research.”

SALE OF BABINDA STATE HOTEL.

Mr. **WATSON** (Mulgrave) asked the Attorney-General—

“1. What was the date of sale of the Babinda State Hotel?”

“2. What was (a) the name of the purchaser, and (b) the amount of the purchase price?”

“3. Was there any condition attached to the sale in question whereby the purchaser was given a monopolistic right to a liquor license in any area at Babinda? If so, what area?”

Hon. **W. POWER** (Baroona—Secretary for Mines and Immigration), for Hon. **J. LARCOMBE** (Rockhampton), replied—

“1., 2., and 3. The Babinda State Hotel was sold to John A. O'Hagan on 14 July, 1930, the sale price being £50,000. The Minister who approved of this sale was the hon. H. E. Sizer, M.L.A., the then Minister in charge of the Department of Labour and Industry in the Moore Government. From the records available there is no evidence to show that the purchaser was given a monopolistic right to a liquor license in any area of Babinda.”

CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR MILLS.

Mr. **SPARKES** (Aubigny), for Mr. **EVANS** (Mirani), asked the Acting Premier—

“In view of the statements of the Acting Treasurer on Thursday, 25 October, regarding co-operative sugar mills in Queensland, will he appoint a Royal Commission of inquiry to inquire into such statements so as to give persons engaged in co-operatives an opportunity of refuting such charges.”

Hon. **V. C. GAIR** (South Brisbane) replied—

“Whether there is justification for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into matters relating to co-operative sugar mills in Queensland will be determined by the Government at an appropriate time.”

BUFFALO FLY LEVY.

Mr. **SPARKES** (Aubigny) asked the Acting Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“As the control measures under the Buffalo Fly Control Act have proved ineffective and useless and stock owners have to bear the cost of their individual efforts to combat the fly, as well as paying for State control, will he kindly give favourable consideration to the abolition or suspension of the stamp duty payable under the Act in question?”

Hon. **A. JONES** (Charters Towers) replied—

“No. The present position of the buffalo fly would indicate that the control plan now in operation has not only proved helpful in preventing the infestation of our densely dairy cattle populated areas of Southern Queensland, but has also, to a great extent, been responsible for the recession of that pest northwards to a line which represented its southernmost trend four years ago.”

SITES FOR POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. **PIZZEY** (Isis) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“In reference to sites acquired since 1932 for post-primary schools, (a) how many such sites have been acquired, (b) what is the location of each such site and the date acquired, respectively, and (c) on which of such sites have post-primary schools been established?”

Hon. **G. H. DEVRIES** (Gregory) replied—

“(a) Number of sites acquired or in process of acquisition for post-primary purposes, 47. (b) The location of these sites and the years when they were acquired are as follows:—Atherton, 1947; Ayr, 1949; Babinda, —; Bardon, 1949; Bowen, 1951; Brassall, 1950; Bulimba, 1950; Caboolture, 1948; Cairns, 1950; Camp Hill, 1951; Charters Towers, 1949;

Childers, 1948; Corinda, 1945; Dalby, —; Edinburgh Castle Road, 1950; Gladstone, 1950; Cavendish Road, 1947; Indooroopilly East, —; Ingham, —; Innisfail, 1950; Ithaca Creek, —; Kingaroy, 1950; Mackay, —; Malanda, 1950; Maleny, 1950; Mareeba, 1949; Mitchelton, 1948; Mount Isa, 1950; Murgon, 1945; Newmarket, 1945; Nambour, 1945; Pomona, 1949; Proserpine, 1950; Redcliffe, 1945; Rockhampton (North), 1947; Rockhampton (South), 1950; Roma, —; Salisbury, 1949; Silkstone, 1947; Southport, 1947; Toowong, 1944; Toowoomba, —; Townsville, 1945; Russell Street, 1949; Tully, —; Harristown, 1950; Virginia, —; Middle Ridge, 1951. *Note.*—Where a date is not given, the procedure of acquisition has not yet been completed. (c) Post-primary schools have been established on the sites at Ingham, Murgon, and Cavendish Road (Brisbane).

SCHOOL TRANSPORT SERVICES.

Mr. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Leader of the Opposition): I desire to ask the Secretary for Public Instruction whether he has answers to the following questions, which I addressed to him on 23 October—

“1. What is the total number of school transport services?”

“2. What was the total cost of such services for the quarter ended 30 September last?”

“3. Will he kindly supply me with a list of the names and addresses of secretaries of school transport committees in the South-east Region of the State?”

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory) replied—

“1. Two hundred and ninety-four (294).

“2. £20,207 5s. 10d.

“3. I lay on the Table a Statement showing the information desired by the hon. member.”

Paper.—Whereupon, Mr. Devries laid upon the Table of the House, a list showing the names and addresses of secretaries of School Transport Committees in the South-east Region of the State.

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

Report of the State Government Insurance Office, for the year 1950-51.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Ordinance under the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1951 (18 October).

Regulation under the Picture Theatres and Films Act of 1946 (25 October).

Regulations under the Regional Electric Authorities Acts, 1945 to 1950 (18 October).

BUILDING OPERATIONS AND TIMBER AND BUILDING MATERIALS CONTROL ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

Hon. A. JONES (Charters Towers—Secretary for Labour and Industry): I move—

“That the House will, at its next Sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Building Operations and Timber and Building Materials Control Acts, 1945 to 1948, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTS AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

INITIATION.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon—Secretary for Public Works, Housing, and Local Government): I move—

“That the House will, at its present Sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Local Government Acts, 1936 to 1951, and the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1951, each in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. A. Jones, read a third time.

COAL MINING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Power, read a third time.

MINING ON PRIVATE LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Power, read a third time.

COAL MINING INDUSTRY LONG-SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Power, read a third time.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—
FIRST AND SECOND ALLOTTED DAYS.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Farrell,
Maryborough, in the chair.)

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1951-52.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.
CHIEF OFFICE.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I desire to inform hon. members that I propose to follow the practice of allowing full discussion on the Chief Office Vote of each department so far as Consolidated Revenue is concerned and then to confine the discussion to each particular vote.

For the information of hon. members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Public Instruction) (11.15 a.m.): I move—

“That £135,934 be granted for ‘Department of Public Instruction—Chief Office’.”

It will be observed, Mr. Farrell, that the increase in the appropriation over the expenditure for 1950-51 amounts to £23,162. The reason for that increase is the necessity for the provision of salary increases under the General Officers' Award.

Contingencies have increased to the extent of £5,377. This heading provides for postages, petty cash, typewriter machines and repairs, allowances to probationers living away from home, office requisites, telephone rents and charges and temporary clerks, also ministerial expenses and the travelling expenses of the Director-General of Education and other departmental officers. Under the heading of railway fares and freights, printing and stationery there is an increase in appropriation of £357. This item provides for printing and stationery for departmental purposes and printing and postage of “The Education Office Gazette.” The bulk of this amount meets expenses incurred through orders for departmental equipment placed with the Government Printer and the State Stores Board and of requisitions on the Railway Department.

There are contingencies in connection with the decentralisation scheme. It will be noted that the appropriation under this heading for 1951-52 is £3,500 which is slightly higher than the appropriation for 1950-51. As hon. members of the Committee know—I pointed it out in my speech on the Address in Reply—Cabinet has approved that for the purpose of decentralisation of education the State be divided into five educational regions; the northern region has its headquarters at Townsville, the north-western region has headquarters at Hughenden, the central region has headquarters at Rockhampton, the south-

western region has headquarters at Roma and the southern region headquarters at Brisbane. Provision has been made for equipment, materials, postages, petty cash and travelling expenses of the regional directors.

It will be noted that for the cash equivalent of extended and recreation leave the appropriation for 1951-52 is £2,000. Provision has been made for the payment of allowances to officers due to retire as from 31 December, 1951.

Without unduly taking up the time of the Committee I should like to say that I feel a great measure of satisfaction and indeed a considerable measure of honour in being given the opportunity of presenting the Estimates for the Department of Public Instruction for 1951-52. As you know, Mr. Farrell, of late the department has been under fire. I am not going to attempt to criticise those authorities or people, chiefly the Press, who have offered this criticism. Some of that criticism was based on sound premises, but much of it was not. I have listened to statements that have been made in this Chamber by hon. members opposite in criticism of my department as the result of their failure to obtain some concession or some right to which they believed they were entitled, but I feel that the greater part of the criticism that was offered was not of very great assistance to my department in overcoming many of those very great disabilities with which it has been faced during the past few years.

During my short term of office it has by no means been easy for me as a layman to fit myself properly or completely for its duties, but if I have achieved any small measure of success and if I have been able to meet some of the criticism that has been levelled against my department, I want to make it quite clear to the members of this Committee that it has been possible only because I have been able to seek the advice of my administrative officers, who have served this vast State of Queensland faithfully and well for many years.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DEVRIES: I hope that no hon. member in this Chamber will flatter me. I seek no flattery from members of the Opposition. On the contrary, I want them to show me and my Government where we have failed to achieve the things that I am sure they will endeavour to prove we have not achieved. I have travelled this State very extensively. I felt that it was my duty to travel as far as possible, to meet as many teachers as possible, and to visit as many schools as possible, so that I should be able to stand up in this Chamber and combat any criticism that might be offered. I feel that I have a complete answer to any criticism that may be made of my department, but I hope that any criticism that is offered by the Opposition will be constructive. I appeal to hon. members opposite to take due cognisance of the difficulties that face my department. If they believe that credit should be given for anything they should do so, but I am sure that no criticism will be forthcoming that will

convince the people that the Department of Public Instruction has failed the youth of this country.

I propose to be a good listener whilst hon. members speak on these Estimates, and I propose as time goes on to develop my arguments against any criticism that may be advanced by hon. members opposite.

Mr. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) (11.25 a.m.): We should approach the subject of the expenditure by this department dispassionately, fairly, and with a proper regard to the fact that the administrative difficulties it has had to face in the past 10 years will be regarded as the greatest in its history for some time. Let us keep that fact well in the forefront of our minds, but while doing so let us also not forget that neither the Government nor the successive Ministers in charge of the department—and here I exclude the present occupant because he has not been in that office long enough to justify my directing these comments at him—have not contributed to the betterment of education in Queensland to the extent that they should have done, nor have they honoured their duty to contribute to the advancement of the department in the Cabinet room as strongly as they might. It is a well known fact, I think, that from the Cabinet point of view a department depends for its help on the ability of its Minister, not only to appreciate its needs but also to present its case in the Cabinet room so strongly as to gain Cabinet support for the matters it desires to have done. I do not believe that the case for the Department of Public Instruction has been put as successfully as it might have been in the past.

In the course of his introductory remarks today the Minister made the comment that the easiest way to defeat an adversary was to flatter him. I think it will be admitted at once that I am not over-given to flattery in this Chamber, and while I have no desire to flatter the Minister, I should like at this moment to express appreciation of his efforts to have improvements made in education in Queensland. I believe he has given of his best in the administration of his department. I think that will be conceded by every hon. member in the Chamber. He has shown a refreshing and sincere desire to improve education and educational facilities. Hon. members on both sides of the Chamber will acknowledge that fact.

The Minister said that during the past few months his department was more under fire than it has been for a considerable time. That is very true but this, far from being a cause for regret, should be regarded as a healthy sign. I look upon it as an extremely good sign, an indication that the people of Queensland are asking more and more for the greatest possible improvement in educational facilities, and the greater their activities and the stronger their criticism, so long as it is constructive, the better pleased we should be and the better pleased the Minister also should be. The Minister has travelled extensively in order to acquaint himself at first hand with all that the department has been doing. As I said earlier, I do not believe that successive Ministers prior to the present

one have given the attention to this department that they should have given. I shall elaborate that point. Its truth cannot be denied, and it will not be denied by anybody, whether members of the Government Party or Opposition or the Department of Public Instruction itself.

Let me digress here. The very name of the department is entirely wrong. We do not want a Department of Public Instruction, we do want a Department of Education, a department that will concentrate on the training or education of our children for citizenship, rather than a department designed to cram them with knowledge.

It cannot be denied that one of the major ills facing our educational system today is the shortage of teachers. We can examine this aspect of the department at greater length and detail when we get to the sub-departments but I do desire to spend a little time on it this morning and ask the Committee why we are short of teachers today. The first question that naturally enters one's mind is whether our numerical recruitment over the last few years is poorer than it was in the years previously. I do not believe that, substantially, it is. Our numerical recruitment is as reasonably good today as it was years ago. We cannot, therefore, look for the cause of our shortage of teachers there. Then we may say the answer can be sought in the number of teachers leaving the service. On looking back over the previous years, I find there is not a very great diversity in these figures. There is some little difference but it is not an alarming one. I see under this heading in the report that last year the number of teachers who resigned to follow other occupations or to perform domestic duties was 131, 83 being females. We cannot assign that reason for the resignations of the males. The number of men who resigned to follow other occupations was 48, which is a large number, but that can be traced to the economic conditions through which we are passing whereby more lucrative positions are being offered to people than normally. That again we cannot regard as being one of the major factors in our teaching problem.

Mr. F. E. Roberts: Do you know of any other industry or profession employing the same number of people as the Department of Public Instruction where the resignations have been less than 48?

Mr. MORRIS: I do not. I do not regard the number as being unusual or alarming. I merely desire to survey the whole field in order to eliminate those matters that are not unusual and endeavour to discover what is really the basis of our problem. If we spend time, as I am sure many have, in going through the reports presented to Parliament by the Director-General of Education over the past few years, we shall find many interesting facts disclosed therein.

There is one point that has been made year after year by the Director-General in his report—that we must expect a very substantial increase in our pupil population. I do not think he has stressed anything so constantly

or regularly as that fact. May I digress again and say that I noticed in the report submitted by the Secretary for Public Instruction a very glowing tribute to the capacity and ability of the Director-General of Education. Notwithstanding the fact that I have quarrelled once or twice with the Director-General, I agree wholeheartedly with what the Minister said—that we have a Director-General of outstanding attributes. I think he came to this department full of enthusiasm and with the desire to make it something well and truly worthwhile. I do not blame him for the fact that we are suffering the ills we complain about at the present time. Over the years he has consistently pointed out that the school population was growing and would continue to do so for many years. The Government or the Minister have not taken enough constructive action to overcome that problem or prevent its development; therefore I do blame the Governments of the past and the Ministers in charge of the department for not exercising sufficient vision to prevent this problem from arising. It could have been faced and overcome by correct action taken years ago.

In proof of that statement I refer the Committee to the fact that many years ago—I think it was seven; I should not like to be dogmatic on that point—this Government promised that they would increase the school-leaving age to 15, and the Director-General pointed out that not only was our school population increasing but if the Government intended to carry out their promise and increase the school age to 15—a very desirable alteration, I think we all agree—the problem of teacher shortage would be accentuated. Had the position been faced seven or eight years ago we should not be in the position today of having classes of 60, 70, 80 and in some cases 90 pupils, and children not being able to get the attention from teachers that they should get, and teachers not being able to do the job to their own satisfaction. Everybody knows that no teacher is happy in having a class of such a size because all teachers know that in such circumstances they cannot do the job they want to do.

Mr. Devries: Do you agree that a big class is preferable to no class at all?

Mr. MORRIS: Of course, that question could be answered in no other way. There must be education and if we have not enough teachers to enable us to have small classes, of course we have to have the larger classes. That is not my point. My point is that had the Government over the years taken the right action they would have had teachers today. Let me prove that. In England, where they lost more than this country or any other country on our side during the war, they amended the Education Act in 1944 and provided for raising the school-leaving age to 15. But the British Government did in fact put into operation their intention to raise the school age, and because of that they have been forced by circumstances to get sufficient teachers.

Mr. Devries: And their difficulties in connection with teachers are just as great as ours.

Mr. MORRIS: I do not think so. At least they have gone part of the way and extended the leaving age. We have not done that, although the Government promised to do so years ago. We have not been able to overcome the problem to the extent they have in England, and in support of my argument I refer the Committee to “The Courier-Mail” of 1 September, 1951, in which appear the following comments by Mr. David Jordan, M.A., B.Sc., and Mr. H. C. Dent, on their arrival here from England—

“Britain’s teacher needs have been met by great expansion of teacher training facilities, and intensive encouragement of those entering the profession.”

Mr. Devries: He did not say that at the meeting. I attended that meeting and heard what he said. What he said was altogether different from what is recorded in “The Courier-Mail.”

Mr. MORRIS: All I can do is quote this gentleman, who is a very high authority.

Mr. Devries: “The Courier-Mail” publishes many things that are not said.

Mr. MORRIS: In England they are making genuine attempts to overcome their teacher problems.

Mr. Devries: And so are we in Queensland.

Mr. MORRIS: But we are not succeeding here.

The Minister has introduced something for which I give him great credit in making available to the children in the country the opportunity of staying at home and learning to become teachers. That is a step in the right direction, but it does not go nearly as far as we should go. People who are authorities on education in Queensland have advocated consistently over the years the establishment of hostels at teachers’ training colleges. That is probably one of the most successful ways of improving upon the action taken by us to increase our teacher population. It is a well-known fact that there are in the country today, children, young men, and young women, whose parents would like them to become teachers and who themselves want to become teachers but who are unable to do so because they cannot get accommodation in centres where there are teachers’ training colleges.

Mr. Devries: That applies equally to boys who want to become tradesmen.

Mr. MORRIS: That is merely a negative argument. We want teachers, and we should have had infinitely more if we had established hostels at our training colleges. In England, there are 11 hostels attached to one teachers’ training college that I could mention. Those hostels are housing potential teachers who come from districts where there are no training colleges. They would never have been able to enter the teaching profession but for those hostels. Everybody who knows anything at all about this subject

will agree that the establishment of hostels would have helped tremendously in our approach to this problem.

I refer the Committee also to an extract from page 5 of the report of the Agent-General for Queensland for 1950:—

“The recruitment of teachers and teaching trainees to proceed to Queensland under the Migration Scheme has been a little more successful. Altogether 21 migrant teachers have accepted appointments in Queensland State Schools and other cases are pending. Appointments being confined to single men and women is militating against our chance of materially contributing to the alleviation of the teacher shortage in Queensland through migration channels.”

I should like hon. members to particularly listen to these words—

“Other Australian States competing with us in the field of teacher recruitment have found the position difficult, and in the circumstances have extended their vacancies to include married teachers.”

This latter part applied as at the date of this report but the Government might have extended their vacancies to include married teachers.

The general education system of Queensland could be improved under the headings that I will mention as I go along. The first is the need to build hostels at training colleges and the second is the establishment of many more State secondary schools. If one cares to read the report of the Director-General of Education one will see that more pupils are attending other than State secondary schools, than actually attending State secondary schools. The Government should make available more secondary education for every boy without his parents having to pay the additional fees required by other schools.

The next heading I should mention is the establishment of area schools. I know that the Minister is favourably disposed towards it, in principle. It would do a great deal to help education in Queensland.

As I have said before, the education system of this State should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commissioner and a board of three should be appointed. The Director-General of Education should not be subservient to the Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. Devries: Do you want the Victorian system?

Mr. MORRIS: I want a Queensland system and I want to remove the teachers from the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. Devries: Why?

Mr. MORRIS: Because I think you would get a better service within the department. As soon as teachers want any particular improvement in conditions, the rest of the Public Service want their chop too, as the saying is, with the result that one section

of the service is fighting against the other. I shall elaborate on this point at a later stage.

The final point I wish to mention is that the iniquitous scholarship system must go. At a later stage I will quote the case of a lad who got 69 per cent. overall in the examination but because he failed to pass the arithmetic test, did not pass. Surely any system under which a child can get 69 per cent overall and fail because he fails by a small margin to pass in one subject is a ridiculous system! His whole future is spoiled, because he is debarred by that failure from taking advantage of the facilities available to the scholarship-holder. If we are to develop a good system of education we must establish enough secondary schools under the control of the State to give all the children of Queensland who desire a secondary education the opportunity of getting one. That is not so today. I know that a controversy is going on at present about secondary education but I am completely certain that secondary education is the responsibility and the duty of the State and it is the State's job to build sufficient secondary schools to give all our children the opportunity of getting secondary education.

Mr. McCATHIE (Haughton) (11.50 a.m.): In discussing the Chief Office vote of the Department of Public Instruction, I should like to say at the outset that I appreciate the opportunity that has been given to the Committee to discuss these Estimates. I have listened during the past 12 months to criticism by members of the Opposition of our system of education, but I feel that in many instances that criticism was unwarranted; and having listened to the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha, who has just resumed his seat, I say that I have not heard anything from him that would warrant any alteration in the present system. I feel that the Minister and the departmental officials will welcome any constructive criticism and will appreciate suggestions that would improve our educational system, because on our system of education depends the whole future of our State.

In commending the Minister on the introduction of the Estimates, I should like to say that I cannot agree with the statement of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha to the effect that previous occupants of this important office have failed to do what was necessary for the welfare of the department. I have had occasion over the years to approach various Ministers occupying this office and I have always been very well received; their courtesy has been outstanding, and the help given by the department has been remarkable.

The present Minister has taken a great interest in his office, and I should like to thank him and the departmental officers for the courtesy that has been extended to me on every occasion on which I have approached the department.

I should like to make particular mention of the regional system of education, which has proved of such benefit to the State. The teachers are themselves very happy in that

they can approach a high-ranking officer of the department and discuss with him many of the problems with which they are faced. In particular, I should like to mention the work that has been done by the northern regional director, Mr. G. K. D. Murphy, who is at present overseas visiting America and England. Mr. Murphy has done excellent work in the northern region, and all the teachers who have had occasion to approach him have been very happy with the result. He has attempted to deal fairly with all the problems that have arisen in the northern region, and my experience has been that he has been just in all his dealings with teachers.

During the time the Minister has been in office, he has shown a very practical interest in the department by travelling widely to see State schools in operation in the distant corners of the State. He has even been to Thursday Island, which is one of our northern outposts. That practical interest on the part of the Minister is appreciated deeply by teachers throughout the State, who know that the Minister is fully seized of all their problems.

I would not say that there are no problems in this department, nor would I deny the fact that every department has to face major problems. In my opinion, the major problem facing the Department of Public Instruction is the teacher shortage. A way to overcome that shortage may be suggested in this debate, but so far I have found no single solution of the problem.

Mr. Pizzey: What is your solution?

Mr. McCATHIE: I shall deal with that as I proceed.

One reason why the intake of teachers is short of our needs is that teachers are not over-keen on serving in one-teacher schools. When we realise that there are over 1,100 one-teacher schools in Queensland, it must be appreciated that one must have a very deep love of teaching to enter the service with the knowledge that there is a very distinct possibility that one will have to serve in the remote areas in the State.

Mr. Sparkes: Are you against the one-teacher schools?

Mr. McCATHIE: No, of course I am not. If it were not for our one-teacher schools, many hundreds of children in Queensland would not be receiving the advantages of our advanced educational system.

One approach to this problem would be the provision of more amenities for teachers, and particularly the provision of homes at the one-teacher schools. At present many teachers are compelled to live in towns and use a bicycle or some other means of transport to reach their schools. In the course of years this becomes very monotonous and if these small schools must remain because of economic factors, a teacher's residence should be provided at each school where a married man is stationed and in each area where a teacher is compelled to board quarters should be provided. This I believe would help very considerably. Many families are not very happy

about providing full board and lodgings for teachers but if quarters were provided at the schools single teachers would be reasonably satisfied if they could get their meals elsewhere. That was borne out by my experience in the department over the brief period of 10 years.

It will also be to the advantage of the department to embark upon the centralising of schools and in that connection I quote this following report from "The Courier-Mail" of 5 September, 1951:—

"Centralise Schools.

"It was the Government's intention to institute central schools in the State when and where possible.

"The Education Minister (Mr. Devries) said this in Parliament yesterday."

I agree with that policy and feel that it might be implemented in certain areas of the State. Because of the shortage of material and labour, it would not be easy at the moment to build the necessary schools but we could select one area for centralisation as an experiment and in that way do something to the advantage of the State as a whole. This policy was expounded in the Government policy speech in 1947 and prior to that reports were made by inspectors of schools in various areas throughout the State. At that time I was asked to furnish the District Inspector of Schools in the Burdekin district with a report on the possibilities of centralising schools in the Burdekin area. I supplied that information and the report subsequently went to the department. I followed it up by asking what the intention was and I was told that at that time the Government did not intend to proceed with the scheme, as there was not sufficient accommodation at the Home Hill rural school for the children from the schools on the south of the Burdekin River. I realised that already the accommodation at the Ayr State School was fully taxed. I had been informed that as a result of an agitation by the public, the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Public Works had decided to build a new school in the East Ayr area, with accommodation for at least 150 children, and I suggest that an experiment should be carried out in that area with a view to centralising the schools, at least on the northern side of the river. There are quite a number of small schools in the area and with one exception all have been reduced to the one-teacher standard. In view of that fact and the existence of efficient bus services in the area, the children are attending the State primary schools, intermediate schools, and high schools, and the convent in Ayr. I suggest that the department might very readily agree to conduct an experiment in this area with a view to centralisation of the schools. Rita Island school, 10 miles from Ayr, has been reduced to a one-teacher school, also Jarvisfield, 5 miles from Ayr. The children come in from these areas and in my opinion there is not much possibility that any of these schools will ever become large schools. Jarvisfield has two teachers, but the other schools have all reverted to one-teacher standard because of the operation of the

transport service. In the same area, the school at Anabranck could be accommodated by the bus service already in existence. In the northern section of the district the Pioneer school has already been closed by the operation of the bus service, which has brought children from the Pioneer mill area to Ayr. The Brandon school, too, has been reduced to a one-teacher standard and at present there is no indication that the number of children will reach the standard required to get an assistant teacher. The bus service there is efficient and the people in the area have shown their appreciation of the advantages of education to be obtained at Ayr by paying the children's transport fees to and from Ayr every week. In the Airville and Maida Vale areas a bus service operates to Clare and both these schools could be closed by the extension of that service. Only one school, that of McDesme, a one-teacher school, remains in that area, and the teacher travels to and from Ayr. Both a bus service and a rail-motor service operate; therefore, the Ayr district is quite well served for transport. If the department is considering the centralisation of schools, the northern part of the Burdekin is a place where that system can be implemented.

Mr. Low: Is the transport contractor satisfied with the amount he receives from the department?

Mr. McCATHIE: The bus proprietors get no amount from the department. They are operating entirely on their own account. The parents are so appreciative of the standard of education to be obtained by their children at Ayr that they are willing to pay all transport costs. These men are not under contract to the department.

On the southern side of the river the schools that need to be closed by a policy of centralisation at Home Hill are Inkerman and Iyah on the main northern road, and Osborne and Iona on the other road. Children from all schools are brought into the Home Hill rural school for swimming instruction and the scheme is paid for partly by the department and partly by the school committees. When a request was made to the Department to open schools in the Groper Creek and Down River areas all factors were examined. It was then realised by the Department that the best method of approach was to establish a transport service. At that time I was interested in transport and with the co-operation of the Groper Creek School Transport Committee I established transport in those areas to bring the children to Home Hill. That service is still operating, and operating satisfactorily. I have in mind that the operators would be willing to deal with the department to extend their services as was necessary because of any decision to close the schools I have mentioned.

I appeal to the department to give very serious consideration to the question and if it is going to implement the policy of centralisation to make the Burdekin an experimental area. If that policy is embarked on we shall have a number of buildings available, but we can use them quite readily. We shall have a number of teachers' residences available. I

have no doubt that if some of these residences were re-erected where the need for one-teacher schools is apparent it would be of great value to the teaching profession. I have no doubt, too, that if some of the residences were removed and erected in the larger towns for the use of assistant teachers that also would be appreciated. They, too, are finding it extremely difficult to get accommodation. That is one reason why we find that many teachers do not wish to accept transfer. We must endeavour to provide this accommodation, not only for the teachers but all the officers of the various Government departments. If they are assured of accommodation, they will be more ready to go to the outback.

Mr. Sparkes: What would you suggest should be the minimum attendance at a one-teacher school?

Mr. McCATHIE: I am not prepared to answer the hon. member's question. He knows as well as I do what the regulation is. If the figure is what the regulation requires it to be, the department will provide the teacher.

While I was examining the problem of centralisation—and my interest was not only that of a transport operator; I had 10 years in the department—I got valuable information on the subject from the town of Tipton, in Iowa, in the United States. They brought children to the central school from a distance of 27 miles out and were paying a maximum of 8s. 2d. a child per week to the transport operators. They seemed to be more than delighted with the service provided at the central school. The transport operators were providing a service to the school and the school had a number of busses. So that the provision of transport is not beyond the capabilities of our Department of Public Instruction. It can take the matter in hand if it so desires. An examination of this problem will make the department realise that the provision of central schools will give us some additional teachers and provide for the children who are able to benefit there by the highest educational standard that we are providing in Queensland. Parents are appreciative of what their children are receiving in Queensland, and they have stated definitely that they prefer having their children under the control of one teacher, maintaining that it is very obvious that with the full time of the teacher available better results can be obtained.

Mr. Low interjected.

Mr. McCATHIE: If the hon. member wants to build a home let him go ahead and provide it. If we are going to implement a policy of centralisation it is obvious that we must attack the problem; we cannot stagnate or stand still because it is difficult to get the material and labour that are necessary if we are to provide the accommodation. We cannot ignore the problem; we have to make an attempt, just as we are making an attempt through the Housing Commission, to provide homes for our people.

The decision to send Mr. Murphy to America to study American education methods at the Carnegie Institute with the aid of a

scholarship and at a later stage allow him to proceed to England to study English and other educational methods is a move in the right direction. When we can send our highly qualified officers overseas to study at first hand the methods adopted there, we are doing something for our State. When Mr. Murphy comes back he will be able to pass on very valuable knowledge.

There is another point I wish to comment on—and I have discussed this matter with the Minister on several occasions—and that is the need for the establishment at the Ayr High School of a University Senior class. Five years ago we had what I thought was sufficient to establish this class; five pupils were available to proceed to Senior, but the department did not give us the opportunity of establishing the class. In the intervening years many bodies in the town have approached the department with the object of having it established. Again this year we approached the department. Although this high school is not in my electorate, many of the children who attend it do live in my area, and, as patron of the Citizens' Association of the Ayr High School, and as one interested in the district, I feel that I must urge this suggestion on the Government. Every year we lose children who would proceed to the Senior and probably further if facilities were available to them. Because of the cost involved, many people who are on the basic wage cannot afford to send their children away from the town and pay for their keep for two years while they study for the Senior in order to enter the teaching or some other profession.

I appeal again to the Minister to give this point serious consideration. At the moment we have three children who are certain to go on to the Senior and one aims at making teaching her profession and a boy wishes to study medicine, and even though his parents might be able to afford to send him to another area to take his Senior and even though they might be able to afford to send him to the University, it would be of tremendous help to them and to many others if a Senior class was established at the Ayr High School. Already we have Junior classes and I feel that with one extra teacher we should be able to cope with the subjects necessary to enable the pupils to take the Senior examination. There are 15,000 people in the district now, and their children will be needing this education. Because the district is expanding rapidly and because there is a continuing need for the establishment of this class, I feel that the department would not be let down if it established a class at Ayr, even with the small numbers available now. Early this year, knowing that their children cannot proceed to Senior at the Ayr High School, many parents took the opportunity to get them admission to approved denominational schools in the North. Those children could have stayed at Ayr if the class had been available. I have appealed on many previous occasions for the establishment of this class because I feel confident that once it is established the requisite numbers of pupils will attend. I am confident that the

headmaster and staff of the school will be able to cope with a Senior course, with one extra teacher to handle certain particular subjects required for the examination.

Mr. Low: Did the department turn you down previously?

Mr. McCATHIE: I have been turned down consistently over the last six years, and the organisations in the town that have put forward the suggestion have not achieved any success. If we could have a Senior class established at Ayr we should be doing much for the future of the district. Many young boys and girls have told me that they would have gone on for the Senior if they had been allowed to stay at home. Their parents cannot afford to send them away. We require every child capable of doing it to take the Senior course because our professions are not getting the numbers of entrants that they need. This is especially so with the teachers' service, and I appeal again to the Minister and the department to give the matter serious consideration.

Mr. PIZZEY (Isis) (12.14 p.m.): It was quite interesting to hear the contribution of the hon. member for Haughton. It amounted really to a condemnation of his own Government's inactivity in the carrying out of reforms required in our educational system, such reforms for example as the consolidation of schools and the giving of a higher education up to the Senior standard at high schools. I was disappointed to hear him say that he had not heard a suggestion for overcoming the shortage of teachers that was worthwhile.

The hon. member proceeded to make suggestions that we have been hammering at session after session—the building of more school residences and the consolidation of schools. It is six years since the Estimates of the Department of Public Instruction were before this Committee in 1945, and in his annual report for that year the Director-General of Education referred to the raising of the school-leaving age to 15 years. Six years have gone by and we find that the school-leaving age is still 14, the age it was when Labour took office in 1915.

It is fitting to discuss the Estimates of this department on the occasion of the completion of 75 years of free and compulsory education in Queensland, and I tender my thanks to the Director-General for his comprehensive report on the historical development of the various activities of our educational system. I also take the opportunity of expressing our appreciation to Mr. Edwards for his contribution to the development of education in Queensland and conveying our wishes for health and happiness to him in his retirement. Last year I recommended the sending of senior officers of the department overseas to study modern educational methods and systems, and I am pleased to know that the northern regional director is now overseas for that purpose. The greatest danger to our progress in education is isolation, because we in Australia are so far removed from the other great democracies

of the world. There is a danger of complacency on the part of the Government and their saying, "We have done pretty well, and we are satisfied with our educational system."

Mr. F. E. Roberts: You cannot say this Government are complacent.

Mr. PIZZEY: To a degree. Too few of our senior officers have a first-hand knowledge of modern developments of education in overseas countries. We are spending £6,000,000 on education and surely we could send senior and responsible officers abroad to make a survey of methods in other countries and enable them to come back here better equipped for the job? I am sure that the Minister for Transport is now a better-equipped Minister after his trip overseas, when he had the opportunity of studying the transport systems of other countries of the world.

Educational systems do not just happen. They are the inevitable result of various national factors—racial, linguistic, traditional, cultural, social, environmental, historical, geographical, religious and political. No-one would be so foolish as to suggest that we could go to a country, see a good system in operation, bring it back and impose it *holus-bolus* on this country. What is a good system in one country would not, of necessity, be a good one in another country, but surely there are things that we could learn from other systems to incorporate in and improve our own? Besides studying the other education systems, we could go into factors leading to their development and learn something. Our senior officers should have the advantage of real educational travel. It might cost £5,000, £10,000 or £20,000 a year, but that is nothing compared with the £6,000,000 we propose spending on education in the State. If we want to get the best value out of that £6,000,000 we must have men at the top with the best possible knowledge of education. Very shortly the Director of Primary Education and the principal of the Teachers' Training College will be retiring, and I suggest that the department should select their successors now and give them the necessary overseas experience before they take up their responsible positions.

On the completion of 75 years of free and compulsory education in Queensland, this is an appropriate time to examine the contributions to education in this State by anti-Labour, or Liberal, Governments prior to 1915, and by Labour Governments since then. The education system that was in vogue in 1915, when Labour came into office, was developed by the predecessors of the party on this side of the Chamber, and on that point I should like to quote the Director-General, who said in his recent report—

"One of the most remarkable features of the State Education system in Queensland has been the limited extent to which legislative changes affecting the primary school have been made. With a few minor amendments 'The State Education Act of 1875' still forms the statutory authority for the educational work carried on in the primary schools."

Mr. Devries: There have been administrative decisions that have resulted in altered methods.

Mr. PIZZEY: That is so.

When that Act was passed, it was regarded as the most progressive Act in Australia. Its author was Sir Samuel Griffith, who was our first Minister for Public Instruction.

By the turn of the century the foundations of our education system as we know it today were firmly established; the department had, one might say, reached maturity, and there followed in the five years before Labour came into power the most rapid education advance ever achieved in our history. In 1909 a Bill was passed by the Kidston Liberal Government authorising the establishment of a university. That Bill made provision not only for day students, but also for evening and external students. Ten grammar schools had already been established and were being subsidised by the State, and the year 1912 saw the establishment of high schools at Charters Towers, Gympie, Mount Morgan, Warwick, Bundaberg and Mackay. High school tops, too, were established at Childers, Gatton and Herberton. In addition, provision was made for classes in domestic science and manual training for the fifth and sixth classes of State schools. For example, when I was in the fifth and sixth classes, I received manual training at a little place beside the school of arts. The Central Technical College had been firmly established, and classes in technical instruction were held in most of the larger centres where there were schools of arts. The Gatton Agricultural College had been established, but so far not another agricultural college has been established by the Labour Government. There is no agricultural college in the North. There is an agricultural high school at Nambour, but not another agricultural college has been established since Labour came into power.

The Teachers' Training College was opened in 1914, primarily to train teachers for the newly-established high schools. The Teachers' Training College has been moved a few times, but it is still in temporary quarters, despite the fact that Labour has been in power since 1915.

School medical and dental services had been established before 1915, and the chief dental officer, who was appointed in 1911, still holds that post.

From what I have said, Mr. Farrell, you can see that the real foundations of our present education system were well and truly established before Labour came into power. Moreover, in his report the Director-General says that the basic principles of the schedules of 1905 and 1915 are still the basis of school work. We on this side of the Committee have a great deal to be proud of, because when Labour took office in 1915 the anti-Labour Party handed over an education system that was at that time one of the best in the world; it was recognised as being on the highest plane and the equal of any contemporary education system.

Let us look at any progress that has been made since then. The Director-General in his

report refers to the consolidation and expansion of the syllabus, thereby implying that the facilities already existed and that they had been consolidated and expanded. I will be fair by giving an account of what Labour have done since 1915. It has expanded secondary schools and built a few new ones but not sufficient, chiefly in the direction of new high-school tops. Labour Governments have introduced the appointment of specialists in physical education, music and art. They have developed the very fine guidance and research bureau that we have and as the result of two world wars much advance has been made with technical education. They abolished the itinerant-teacher system, the sending of teachers into the outback, and substituted the Correspondence Classes. In that they did a very fine job. They have established opportunity schools. We find no fault with what they have done but we do complain that it is little enough in comparison with what they have not done. Transport services have been established in many rural areas and the domestic science and manual training facilities have been extended. Adult education has been extended to the country centres and the development of the University has shown rapid progress over the last decade.

All those things are achievements; they are on the credit side. However, let us look at some aspects of contemporary education where Labour have failed. We are not declaiming against what it has done. It has done a mighty job in many respects but it has lagged far behind the leading educational countries of the world. Labour Governments failed to raise the school-leaving age beyond 14. In New Zealand it is 15, Tasmania 16, New South Wales 15, Great Britain 15 and it will be 16. No-one can say that the administrative difficulties are greater in New South Wales or Tasmania than they are here. Those States faced up to the problem. They decided to raise the school-leaving age and set about getting the necessary teachers. They have done that and they have provided educational facilities for all. We are the only State in Australia that provides that the Scholarship examination shall be the only means whereby children shall be entitled to get free secondary education. It is recognised by leading countries that no child's education should be finished until he or she reaches 15 or 16 years of age and that being so there should be post-primary education, preferably from 11 and 12 years onwards. The Minister for Transport said in 1944 or 1945 that he did not think that a child leaving school at 14 years of age had had an opportunity of adequate education. I do not think that any hon. member on this side of the Chamber thinks he or she has had adequate education either.

The Labour Government failed to build a decent Teachers' Training College, an urgent need in the community. They have four in New South Wales, four in Victoria, one in each of the other States, and four in New Zealand, a country with about the same population as we have here. They have found sufficient teachers for their schools. There is no use in saying that they have tried. The

Government will have to do more than that. They will have to go to the lengths of getting them.

The Government have failed to implement their policy of the consolidation of small schools. I do not want the Minister to tell me that I am now suggesting that all small schools should be closed. There are only certain localities in this very vast State where you can have consolidation of small schools, but where it can be done it should be done. We were told today that the department had taken over 147 sites for post-primary schools, for consolidation, but little has been done.

Mr. Devries: Forty-seven.

Mr. PIZZEY: I was thinking about suitable area for consolidation.

In this State only 40 per cent. of the children who attend secondary schools are educated by the State, the non-State secondary schools educating roughly 60 per cent. of our children who receive secondary education. It is high time we provided facilities to enable all who desire to obtain secondary education to get it. If we do not raise the school-leaving age we can see that secondary educational facilities are there so that our scholars who desire to pursue their studies on attaining the present school-leaving age can do so. We can say to them "We will give you the opportunity to pursue your education if you want to."

The department has failed to build a Conservatorium of Music. We hear much from year to year, from Ministers and members of the Government Party, that they are going to establish an institution, but nothing definite has been done. Probably we shall hear it said, "We have a place in view," but the fact remains as yet Brisbane has no Conservatorium of Music.

There are many other points that I could discuss on this vote. It is high time, for example, we established a quarterly "Education Gazette." It should be an attractive gazette, one that would give the teachers and the people the story of modern educational trends to show what is being done elsewhere. In other words we could show educational authorities elsewhere what is being done at the Nambour Rural School, or at some aboriginal mission school, or somewhere else. By this means we should do much to bring our present system up to date by interesting the teachers and letting them know what is going on under the most modern methods of education. Other countries issue such gazettes. In fact, the Government issue gazettes in other departments, such as the cane-growers' gazette, which is a quarterly publication, "The Queensland Government Mining Journal," and "The Queensland Agricultural Journal."

There is one other point I should like to stress. Looking back over 75 years one thing that has struck me in connection with our system is the fact that we do not bring the parents into our educational system sufficiently. We certainly have them on school committees, but their power is limited.

Mr. Devries: The school committee at Abereorn made a mess of it.

Mr. PIZZEY: We have bigger things to talk about than petty little disputes between the teacher and parents at Abercorn. I am talking about bringing parents into our education to advise on our system. In Britain most of the administration of education is carried out by local educational authorities. In New Zealand you have nine zones, or regions, each governed by a local committee, something like our electricity regional boards. Its members meet, advise and recommend certain things to be done in the region. We should examine the position to see whether some way cannot be found to bring parents into our educational system with a view to creating an informed public opinion. In most of New Zealand's secondary schools the administration is in the hands of parents. These schools are controlled by their governors and it is left to them to run their institutions. We have an example in our grammar schools. We must do something to create an active interest by the parents in our system. Too much is left to the State, because the State wants to do it. If we exclude Russia and a few other countries, we find that we have one of the most centralised educational systems in the world. In Russia no Church or other organisations come into the educational system. Here in Queensland we have a dual system running side by side—the State with our denominational institutions. My suggestion is worthy of consideration by the Minister and his Cabinet. Here is a method whereby we can not only get departmental decentralisation but by giving more power to responsible local organisations attract and interest the parents and thus inform public opinion.

There is much that I could say about the new syllabus but I will leave that until we are discussing the State schools. The solution of these problems is not easy. It requires a great deal of thought, careful planning and great determination on the part of any Government. They require not only the co-operation of their administrators and parents but of every member of this Chamber, irrespective of the party to which he belongs.

I pay a tribute to the teachers who are carrying on their work unselfishly and often under great difficulties of staffing and accommodation. Upon them the success or failure of our educational system depends.

Mr. WOOD (North Toowoomba) (12.36 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on his introduction of the Estimates, and despite the fact that he laid it down that he did not want flattery I feel that every hon. member would like to offer some remarks of praise, and the fact that we mean what we say should remove them from the category of flattery. Since first taking over the portfolio of Public Instruction, the Minister has applied himself to the task with sincerity and diligence.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. WOOD: The taking over of such a portfolio by one who has not had an intimate acquaintance with the problems of the department is not an easy job; no matter

how hard one may try, there will always be faults. The other members who have spoken have been very fair in their tributes to the Minister and have referred to his sincerity in endeavouring to administer this difficult portfolio. I do not suppose any Minister has travelled as many thousands of miles as the hon. member for Gregory in the short time that he has been in charge of this department. He started off with one great asset, a liking for children, which is vital to anyone dealing with children who wishes to be successful; without it no teacher can hope to succeed.

I was rather interested in the nature of the two contributions made by Opposition members who have so far spoken. I believe their criticism was offered in the proper spirit, which was in surprising contrast with what we have heard over the past three or four years, when a concentrated attack has been made on our educational system. It is some time since these Estimates were discussed, and from what I have heard and read in the papers I was prepared to find that no credit was given to this department for any of the work it has done. That is the impression that had been engendered in the minds of the people of Queensland and for the past three or four years by some of the speeches made here and some of the articles written in the Press—that there was nothing right with our educational system. As the discussion on these Estimates proceeds, we on this side hope to show that there is much in our educational system of which we have every reason to be thoroughly proud.

I am sure that members were greatly interested in the report of the Director-General. It was only proper, on his retirement after a distinguished and scholastic career, that he should give us a history of education in Queensland since the Education Act was passed in 1875. The historical record he has given us is one that we should read again and again, because it shows that while we have committed faults, while there are many things remaining undone that we feel we should like to do, Queensland has every reason to be proud of the way she has advanced educationally since 1875. I was rather disappointed that the hon. member for Isis tended to develop his speech into a comparison between what was done before Labour came into office in 1915 and what has been done since. I am sorry that he had to put his remarks on that political basis, the very thing he later deplored.

In his very comprehensive report, the Director-General pointed out the marked advance that has taken place since 1875, and he gave us some illuminating figures. He said that in 1876 the enrolment in Queensland primary State schools was 36,271 and in 1950 it had increased to 185,880, that the average attendance in 1876 was 18,534 and that by 1950 it had grown to 127,427, that the schools under the control of the department in the earlier year were 263 against 1,556 last year, that the teachers in 1876 numbered 617, and that today they number 4,708, whilst the cost to the Government had grown from £73,131

in 1876 to almost £5,000,000 last year. We see from that the extent to which our educational system has developed in that 75 years, and in the few minutes that I have at my disposal I want to show just what has been done in some ways in that time. We have much to be proud of. Do not let us fall into the error of thinking there is nothing right with education in Queensland, although occasionally we must be forced to that conclusion if we believe all that we are told.

Look first at the testing point of our education, the child as he leaves the school. If that child, when he leaves our school, is a credit to his State, the educational system cannot be far wrong. One would go far before finding children equal to our Queensland youth. No matter where we went, we should find it very difficult to find children with the qualities, physical, mental and moral, that our Queensland children, the children who have gone through our own Queensland State schools, possess. The first test of the success of any system is the product that system turns out. If the system evolves a faulty product, it must be at fault, but there is very little wrong with the product that is turned out of our Queensland State schools.

Again, the layout of Queensland school buildings has improved greatly and the standard of the schools in which the children receive their education has shown great improvement. I know that in every electorate there are schools that we should like to see improved, but if we are fair we must admit that this or any other State could spend £20,000,000 with advantage in any one year. No matter how we improve our system, or the schools, we should still find ways in which further improvement could be effected. The standard of our schools is improving year by year. The architecture is on more modern lines, although I repeat the suggestion that has often been made here, that in any future designs we should try to eliminate the large school of 1,000 children and endeavour to cater for a maximum of 600, because I believe it is impossible for the head teacher to get to know his staff and his children in the way he should when you get up to the 1,000-pupil mark. It is just as important for the head teacher to know the characteristics of each individual child as that he should know the characteristics of each individual teacher.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. WOOD: I have only a limited time at my disposal and I hope I shall not be considered rude if I take no notice of the irrepressible hon. member for Aubigny.

Teachers today are better trained than they were a few years ago; there are fewer misfits in the teaching service. There is nothing in our life that is more pathetic than for a teacher to go in for a career of teaching and find that he is unfit for the service. Often it is not found out just how unfit he is to teach until it is too late. There are fewer misfits in the teaching service today than ever before.

As the Director-General of Education points out in his report, the syllabus has been broadened. A syllabus sub-committee drafts

the syllabus to meet changing conditions and world events; as each trend in modern life changes so the syllabus committee endeavours to adopt a syllabus suitable to the needs of the citizen. Thus we have seen a great extension of rural work and project clubs, which has proved a matter of great interest and of great practical help in those country schools where the facilities are provided for children. Also, we have seen a great extension of domestic science and manual training and I should like to pay a tribute to the girls in the domestic-science branches and the teachers in the manual-training branches who work so efficiently in that hand work, which is necessary for every boy and girl. The State has provided, where possible, well set up workshops for the boys and domestic-science rooms for the girls and anyone who has not had the privilege of going through these rooms whilst the children are doing this work would have his eyes opened if he spent a couple of hours in those surroundings.

We have seen too, as mentioned by the Director-General in his report, a changed relationship between teacher and scholar. I have said before that gone are the days when children went in fear to school. There are few children today who would miss school, if they were physically able to go to it. It is on rare occasions that children are afraid of their teachers; most children regard their teacher as a friend and the teacher likes to regard his children as those who show confidence in him.

The hon. member for Isis made reference to the extension of an appreciation of music in schools. The State String Quartet and the State Symphony Orchestra are two ways by which children may obtain an appreciation of what is good in music. The appointment of specialist teachers in singing has done much good in areas where the system has been set up to train children in a better way than under the previous system, and my only regret is that the system has not been extended. I should very much like to see children in the less-populated areas of the State receiving such advantages. At the present time the department, with its limited staff, has not been able to extend that scheme in the way in which it would like to, but great work has been done by these specialist teachers of singing and their weekly visits to the schools where this system operates are keenly looked forward to by the children.

Later on in this debate I hope to be able to say something on the establishment of area schools. I thoroughly agree with the hon. member for Haughton, who suggested that the Department should select some places in Queensland—

Mr. Sparkes: On the Downs.

Mr. WOOD: I do not care what part of Queensland is selected, but the department should institute this scheme in some part of the State. Although I realise the present building difficulties, I suggest that the department should begin this area-school scheme in the very near future. Once it is started it will extend rapidly, and I do not think anybody in this Committee will regret its introduction.

The Director-General had this to say in his report—

“I cannot bequeath to my successor a very encouraging position in regard to the staffing of schools.”

He pointed out, too, that this is not a problem that has been met with only at the present time, but that the department has previously, according to times of economic prosperity or depression in the State, gone through similar cycles. I believe that he feels that even if the problem was overcome now, the future would see a recurrence of such cycles.

Many suggestions have been put forward in this Chamber from time to time, with which I have agreed. For example, we have had suggested the provision of hostels, the building of more residences, the liberalisation of allowances for the younger teachers, and so on, and I should like to add one further suggestion, that is, that it is time this Government entered into competition with private employers in their methods of recruitment. When my son was sitting for the Senior, an officer of a private trading bank came to me and pointed out the advantages of employment in that bank. I know, too—and I do not blame that officer for doing so, as he was only doing his duty—that he interviewed every boy in Toowoomba who was sitting for the Senior that year. Therefore, if we wish to get our share of those who pass the Senior each year, we must compete with private employers in our methods of recruitment. I suggest that the department should appoint an officer whose sole duty would be to help in the recruitment of teachers. We know that the inspectors have duties in that regard, and that on their visits to schools, either secondary or primary, they do all they can to recruit promising students as teachers, but I suggest that the department should appoint an officer whose sole work would be the recruiting of teachers. It would not be a very easy job; every trade, every profession, every branch of industry is suffering a shortage of labour, and we must enter into direct competition with private employers if we are to have any success in easing the present teacher shortage.

There is one other matter to which I should like to refer before my time expires. It is a matter that was brought to my notice by an article in the latest “Queensland Teachers Journal,” which is the journal of the Queensland Teachers’ Union. Before referring to the article, I should like to have just a word or two to say on the Queensland Teachers’ Union, which concerns itself not only with the securing of better conditions for its members, but also with the uplifting of them professionally. I know of no other body that works harder to lift its members professionally than it does. I am sure that the Minister and the officers of the department will agree with my statement that whenever any useful suggestion is offered to make the lot of the teachers easier or the lot of the child better or to see that the education given is sounder than he or she

gets at the moment, such a suggestion always has the wholehearted co-operation of the Teachers’ Union.

This issue of the journal dealt with problems of the moment and the future, and spoke of the lack of facilities in outback areas. Some of the figures it mentioned were very disturbing. For instance, it pointed out that in 1950 1,061 students sat for their Senior public examination, being 65 students nominated in the northern region, none in the north-western region, 51 in the central region, and one in the south-western region. So that in the southern region 944 candidates presented themselves for the Senior public examination, while in the four remaining regions only 117 students or 10 per cent. of the total number who sat presented themselves for this examination. It does not mean that all those who sat in the southern division were students who live in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Ipswich, or even the southern and central regions of the State. Many hundreds of children come from the northern region to take out their education in the South. The point that the journal was trying to make was that more high-school accommodation should be provided in the other regions than there is at the moment. A lack of accommodation in the north-western region must be disclosed when not one candidate sat for the Senior public examination in 1950. Obviously it would be useless setting up a high school in towns with a population of, say, 1,000, in Longreach for example, unless hostel accommodation also was provided. Without the hostel accommodation it could cope for only day boys or day girls, pupils who went home every evening. Therefore I put it to the Government that they should investigate the possibility of establishing high schools with hostel accommodation attached in those regions of the State where these facilities do not at present exist. This would help in a large way to stop the drift from the country to the cities that is caused by the anxiety of parents when they find that no secondary school is available for the education of their children.

I congratulate the Minister on the enthusiasm he has shown in the administration of the department under his control. He has always been a great help to me on any educational problem that I have brought to him. I have always found him fair and I am satisfied that the progress of the department will be continued while it is presided over by a Minister who is so sincere and enthusiastic as he is.

Mr. WORDSWORTH (Cook) (2.15 p.m.): The Minister has asked for criticism and has asked that it be constructive. I have a couple of items that have not been touched on so far by speakers on either side of the Committee. The first is in connection with a unified syllabus or unified textbooks in secondary schools. An example came before my notice quite recently in which a son of a public servant was transferred from Cairns to Brisbane. He was doing a Junior course and was sitting for the examination this year. The transfer came in the early days of this year and, with his parents, the boy

moved to Brisbane, to find that the textbooks were different altogether at the high school here from those of the Cairns High School, and that the timetable was at a different stage. The net result was that the parents of that youth sent him back to board with relatives at Cairns so that he could complete his Junior course this year.

There should be no difficulty in obtaining uniformity in these matters. The Minister has stated with some pride that he has decentralised education by the appointment of regional directors. All will agree that is a good idea but there is no need for any director or any individual principal of a high school to have the right to pick and choose as regards textbooks and to alter the timetable or syllabus. The syllabus for both the academic and industrial Junior, as well as other commercial Junior courses, should be laid down centrally in the Director-General's office and a timetable should be set for every high school. There would then be no possibility of a child's going from one high school to another and finding that not only was that school at a different stage of a course for a year but also that he would have to throw away his textbooks, which are too expensive as it is, and buy different ones. The Minister could well give that matter attention; it is something that will cost his department nothing, yet be of great benefit to parents. Parents have to pay for textbooks, which do not get any cheaper as time passes on.

The hon. member for East Toowoomba mentioned that the department should compete with commerce in obtaining students for its teaching service. I heartily agree with that suggestion, I believe today that because of the unattractive remuneration at the commencement of a teaching career many children who otherwise would be interested are drawn into other callings. I know a youth who passed his Junior last year. He was considering teaching. His parents went into the matter and money entered very largely into their decision. No-one can live without money and everyone wants to get the maximum for his services, provided he has an opportunity of progress in the future. The opportunity to embrace the teaching profession was brushed aside by the youth when he passed his Junior, he went into a bank, and within a month was receiving £5 a week. That was for the youth on passing his Junior at the age of 16. Many years ago a youth of that age on entering the service of a bank probably earned only enough money to buy his clothing and his father had to supply everything else for him. The amount paid to pupils who wish to become trained as teachers has not gone up at all in proportion to salaries in the commercial field.

It has been said that the creation of junior teachers' training colleges attached to the various high schools and technical colleges was a move in the right direction. It was, but that move has not been profitable, for the reason I have quoted. People will go to the job that gives opportunity for advancement and also provides an immediate reasonable income that will enable the youth

or girl to keep himself or herself. In support of my statement I mention that I was astounded to hear a couple of weeks ago that the Junior Assistant Training College attached to the Cairns High School and Technical College, they only had one student. That does not indicate that it has been a success. I suggest to the Minister that if he gave consideration to the matter of remuneration to student teachers he may get much better results.

Mr. Devries: You have 8,000 boys in Queensland learning trades.

Mr. WORDSWORTH: Even the apprentice is on a much better wicket today than he was pre-war. When I was a sugar-mill time-keeper the first-year engineering apprentice received 15s. 9d. a week, but today receives well over £2 weekly.

Mr. Devries: You are not saying that is too much?

Mr. WORDSWORTH: No. I say that the student teacher is getting too little in proportion. You asked for it, Mr. Minister!

I had the pleasure of attending a function in the North in honour of the Secretary for Public Instruction, who was visiting the district, and I listened attentively to what he had to say. He pointed out that one of the great difficulties was to get teachers to remain in the country, that after they were in the country a while they applied for a transfer back to the city, and if they could not get it they would threaten to leave the service. That is a big problem with which he has to contend. I heard a suggestion from a country teacher of many years' standing—and he is content to stay there—that if the department would speed up classifications—that is, promotions within the service—for those who served a certain time in the country, it might be a considerable help in keeping teachers in those country areas. It is nothing new, it has been done in the Railway Department for many years; when it took a long time for a railway fireman to get classified as a driver, the period was shortened if he served for a period in the West. I commend that suggestion, which comes from a keen member of the teaching service, 15 miles from here. It may help the Minister to retain his staff at country centres.

More consideration should be given to the provision of amenities for teachers. The matter of residences has been mentioned by two speakers. Not only should the head teacher be found a residence, but a residence should be provided for the use of the assistant teacher; I do not ask the Government to supply such residences free; they could rent them to their teachers. Make sure that they can get houses to which to take their wives and families and you will have more contented teachers.

I refer to another instance in which there is the lack of consideration for the convenience of teachers. The assistant teacher at Cooktown, when she leaves for her seven weeks' holiday at Christmas-time, is not allowed to travel by a plane. The school closes on the Friday for the seven weeks.

The teacher gets a pass to come down by boat from Cooktown to Cairns and probably by rail from Cairns to the South. The weekly boat service between Cairns and Cooktown leaves Cairns on Tuesday morning, arriving at Cooktown on Tuesday evening and does not leave Cooktown until the Thursday morning, arriving at Cairns on the Thursday afternoon. This means that the teacher is required to wait almost a week before she can get away. The same thing applies to her return. School starts on the Monday and she has to come back by the boat that arrives on the Tuesday before that Monday. I draw that matter to the Minister's attention because it is unfair and would seem to me to be the reason for the loss of at least one teacher up there.

Another matter that is of great importance touches the diploma of engineering. Some time ago I had a discussion with the manager of a large workshop here about the desirability of encouraging apprentices to go on for the diploma of engineering. At the moment, an apprentice who is serving his time is required to do a course at the technical college, at which he does practical, theoretical and written work. That keeps him fairly busy at night, and it is found that in proportion to the number of apprentices in engineering there are far too few who are going for the diploma. It is highly desirable that as many of our Queensland boys as possible take this course, for it opens the way to a higher standard of engineering. A lad who is content merely to take his technical college course as an apprentice usually ends up as a fitter and turner, or he may go for a second-class engineer's ticket later, but that really amounts only to a permit to take charge of certain steam plant and so on.

A certain Brisbane engineering firm is desirous of having as many of its apprentices as possible go on to their diploma in engineering. To encourage them to do this, the firm made an offer under which the lad paid for the first year of the course himself, and when he completed that first year, the company would pay for the second year. Then, if the lad completed the second year, the company would pay for the third year, and so on. All the lad had to do was to prove his bona fides by completing the first year and paying for it himself. Unfortunately, only about one out of every 10 lads who took the course completed it, the reason being that the two courses together, the technical college apprenticeship course and the diploma of engineering proved too much for the lads. It did not give them enough time.

The suggestion made is—and this comes from an experienced engineering establishment—that a lad who wishes to take the diploma course should be allowed, after having done the first year of the ordinary apprenticeship course, to do only the practical engineering part, such as fitting, using a lathe, a shaping machine, or a drilling machine, provided he takes the university diploma course. More engineers of this State should do the diploma course. This would give us a higher standard of draftsmen, tradesmen and designing engineers, and it has to be remembered that

the whole of the world is hungry for trained tradesmen who hold university diplomas in engineering.

As certain moneys are being appropriated in the Estimates to deal with agricultural training I should like to say that we are not giving attention to our most important function in this respect, the production of sufficient food for ourselves. Everyone who is an authority on the subject, not only in Australia but throughout the world, foresees a shortage of foodstuffs. It has been forecast that in some of our main primary-producing industries, in which up to the present we have been large exporters, we shall not be able to produce sufficient to supply Australian requirements, and I think that the time has come when there should be a decentralisation of the activities of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College. This work may be carried out on a small scale for a start but there are many areas where farmers and their sons would be glad to avail themselves of technical education in the art of farming and animal husbandry. This science is becoming day by day more important to the farmer and the man who has practical experience, plus the theoretical and technical experience that is necessary in this machine and scientific age, will be the farmer of tomorrow who will be able to produce twice as much on a piece of ground as he could produce today.

In concluding on this subject I should like to repeat a quotation made about 150 years ago by Dean Swift. It was to the point in those times and is apt today. He said—

“And he gave it for his opinion that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before would deserve better of mankind and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together.”

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.33 p.m.): Opportunity is given to members of the Opposition when discussing Estimates in Committee of Supply to put forward a number of grandiose schemes and offer gratuitous criticism of the policy pursued by the Government, but seldom do we find that any of the schemes advanced have any substance in them. Perhaps the knowledge that they will not be called upon to account for the schemes and that they will never have the opportunity to put them into practice enables hon. members opposite to become progressively extravagant in their ideas. For instance, the hon. member for Isis went to the trouble of trying to persuade the Committee that there was an odious comparison to be drawn between the practices of anti-Labour Governments and Labour Governments but he had to go back to ancient times—about 1875—to give grounds for his argument. Perhaps it can be said that by the time Labour came into power in 1915 the people had begun to realise the futility of the anti-Labour policy in the field of education and decided to give a Labour Government the opportunity of bringing forward a progressive policy.

It seems rather significant that all the progressive improvements in education have come about since 1915. Only since that year do we find that education has not been the prerogative of the wealthy few; from 1915 onwards the field of education has been open to all sections of the community and not confined to the few who could afford to pay for it. From 1915 to 1929 there was progressive departure from the principle that education had to be paid for.

We even find in the report of the Director-General, which was referred to by the hon. member for Isis, the following paragraph on page 32.—

“Similar opposition to State control of secondary education was expressed by other prominent speakers during the seventies.”

It was not till the period between 1916 and 1920 that secondary and technical education were introduced and placed completely under State control; in other words, secondary and technical education were made available to the people as a whole.

Mr. Pizzey: Why don't you be honest?

Mr. LLOYD: We on this side always try to be honest.

On page 33 of the Director-General's report we read that in 1916 the high-school department of the Central Technical College gained a semi-independent existence with the appointment of a separate supervisor. From then till the present time, secondary and technical education have developed in this State under the wise and sympathetic administration of successive Labour Governments. After 1932, of course, Labour had to cover a good deal more territory than would otherwise have been so because of the retrogression that took place between 1929 and 1932, when the principle of free education received a severe setback. One of the first Government departments to feel the axe under the Moore Government's regime was the Department of Public Instruction.

Mr. Morris interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: I was very surprised this morning when the speech of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha did not consist of the usual destructive criticism. On the contrary, his suggestions were constructive and I believe that he was quite sincere in putting them forward. Personally, I quite agree that the Scholarship examination is not all that we might hope it to be.

An Opposition Member: Be careful!

Mr. LLOYD: I have no need to be careful. Every member of this party has the right to speak his own mind.

The Scholarship examination imposes a form of nervous tension and strain upon children of tender years to which perhaps they should not be exposed, but whilst we have highly-skilled officers in the Department of Public Instruction who tell us that as yet no substitute has been found for the Scholarship examination, we must accept their advice. After all, we are administering the affairs

of this State for the welfare of this State, and we must accept the advice of the men whom we appoint to those responsible positions. If we accept their advice, we must admit that as yet there is no substitute for the Scholarship examination. Perhaps the periodical examinations that are held in each school during the 12 months of the Scholarship year could be used as a standard, and the children could pass on to secondary education if they reach the standard that is laid down by the school, but at the same time everyone must admit that the Scholarship examination is achieving its purpose in that the children and the teachers are at their very top during that year, and the competitive spirit forms the groundwork for secondary education and for later study at the University.

We have been passing through a very difficult period in the educational as well as in every other sphere of life. There is no reason why education should not meet the same difficulties that are common to every other sphere of our activities, and we must face up to the fact that those difficulties will continue to be with us for several years yet. Since 1945, when there was a big exodus of ex-service men from the armed forces, and with the huge increase in population that has taken place as the result of this country's immigration policy, the educational facilities of this State have been severely strained. It means that the accommodation has been insufficient to meet the demand, and the number of teachers also has been insufficient. The burden has been on the department and the Government, yet the Opposition would take advantage of any difficulty facing the Government in an attempt to discredit them in the eyes of the people, whereas in fact the Government are doing their best to overcome the difficulty.

Mr. Morris: But not enough.

Mr. LLOYD: Most of the schools in the large suburbs have about 800 children in attendance, some of them more but approximately 50 per cent. of them are in the preparatory classes, that is, between the ages of five and seven years. At the Mitchelton school, for instance, there are 800 pupils with 400 in the preparatory classes, and at Stafford State school there are 850 pupils with 400 in the preparatory classes. These are two growing suburbs and as they go ahead it naturally follows that a great number of the children at the schools will be the younger ones. In some cases it is necessary to separate the schools into infants' and primary schools and in most cases this has worked very efficiently. It enables the children between the ages of five and seven years to get a good preparatory form of education, a preparatory education that is a training in concentration and discipline upon which is based the framework of their later education. They get more grounding in psychological teaching than in actual technical teaching. The children themselves come straight from the home to the school and if they are placed in the hands of a teacher in the infants' school who has the necessary training to give them the proper education in those tender

years, she can do a tremendous amount of good for them in laying a sound foundation for their later education.

Mr. Morris: She could do better if she had smaller classes.

Mr. LLOYD: Every teacher can always do much better with a smaller class but can we wave our hand and pluck teachers from the atmosphere? If we could we could give the children all these advantages and put them all into very small classes, but conditions are difficult today.

Mr. Morris: They deserve them.

Mr. LLOYD: Of course they deserve them and every member of the Government party believes that the children are deserving of all the advantages that they can get in education. The Government are doing their best to provide them.

Mr. Morris: They are not.

Mr. LLOYD: The Government are seeing to it that the children get the best educational facilities available to them. They have gone so far as to relax the standard of admission of teachers into the teaching service in order to ensure that the number of teachers shall be increased. They have allowed teachers to continue in the service beyond the retiring age, even up to 70 years, in order that the children may get the necessary education.

Personally, I think that more consideration should be given to children of tender years. I think that where you have a number of children in the preparatory classes and the other grades insufficient attention is given to children of tender years. Where you have a separation of the school into infants' school and primary school you have a stabilised form of teaching available for the smaller children and, as I said before, this provides a very sound and solid foundation for their later schooling.

If we are to develop our education, we must continue to revise our syllabus and keep that syllabus up to date. I was very happy indeed to read within the last few weeks a newspaper article furnished by the Minister in which he said that the teachings of democracy would be included in the school syllabus. Democratic teachings will go a very long way towards ensuring that our younger people will have no leanings later on towards any foreign ideology whose dangers they are unable, in their immaturity, to appreciate. A good solid foundation of schooling on democratic lines will teach our children the advantages of democracy and encourage them to study history on a democratic basis. We can then achieve our purpose of establishing within their minds a resistance to the infiltration of any foreign doctrines such as Communist teachings. We have a very sound example of that democratic teaching in the American Bill of Rights.

If the foundation of any alteration of the syllabus was made along those lines—a very comprehensive cover of all the freedoms that we have in a democracy—we should have no fear for their outlook in the future.

Attention could be given also to the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights, and the United Nations Charter. Education along those democratic lines would form the basis in their minds of future resistance to foreign ideologies and teachings. We often find that the most noted Communists were recruited from the intelligentsia. They thought they could see in some foreign ideology some form of social advantage. They could see suffering and inequalities and, being rather idealistic, they thought there was a panacea for those ills in some new ideology. If the foundations of our education are on a democratic basis, then some form of resistance will be implanted in their minds while they are young that will enable them to view matters in a different light as they grow older. We shall then find that the spread of Communism or of any other foreign ideology will be lessened.

The report of the Director-General of Education is a very lengthy and historical survey of education in this State. That survey reveals that this Government, as well as past Governments, have something to be proud of. We have the framework of an educational system which offers to the people, in the form of scholarships and fellowships, full freedom to embrace them. We have no limitations in what is offered to the people by the department under our educational system.

We are fortunate in having in charge of this department a man of the calibre of the hon. member for Gregory. Since his elevation to that office he has taken a very active interest in the working of the department and I do not think any Minister has been more sincere in his work.

Mr. Sparkes interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: He has endeavoured to study the problems confronting the department and to find a solution for them, and in that he has achieved a great measure of success in the short time he has held his present office. I have no doubt that the Minister will continue to tackle the problems of his department with the same zeal and to overcome them with the same success.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR (Clayfield) (2.51 p.m.): While the Minister does not want flattery, I think all speakers have been agreed that he has shown an enthusiasm in the administration of this department.

I must say that I was disappointed at the Minister's introductory remarks because I did look forward to hearing something from him of the proposed activities of the department; rather has the Minister said, "My Estimates are here before the Committee, the Opposition can criticise them as much as they like, and what I have to say will be said in reply to any criticism." That was disappointing in view of the fact that there is a new syllabus and consequently there has been a new interest during the past year in the education of the children of this State; I do think that the Minister could have

opened up the debate with a short survey, not of the deeds of the past, but of the proposals for the future.

I should like to touch on one or two of the things that are proposed for the future. I have no wish to dwell in the past or to engage in criticisms of the department's activities in the years prior to the Minister's association with it. Last Wednesday night I attended a State school parents' meeting. I have two State schools in my electorate, consequently it will not be hard to guess which one I went to.

Mr. Devries: They are good ones too, they tell me.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: I went to the meeting of the Ascot State School Committee. The attendance is over 1,200 children and the parents are particularly interested in the welfare of the children. All credit is due to the teaching staff, from the headmaster down for the enthusiasm and interest they have shown in their work. Some of the parents said, "What about the new syllabus?" I said, "I probably shall be able to tell you all about that at the next meeting; I am sure that when the Estimates come on the Minister will tell us something of it." The headmaster told me that he knew a little about it. I went round to the school and found out what preparations were being made.

I find that the new syllabus provides for eight grades instead of seven, and that the infants' section is to be quite interesting. This new method of learning by "Look and Say"—I believe that is the official description—seems to be at least novel. I can assure you that if the headmaster had not the close co-operation of the parents in addition to an enthusiastic staff, when this syllabus comes into operation, there will be no implements; in other words, no tools of trade for the teachers. This is the remarkable thing about it. The syllabus is planned on the system "Look and say." The children see a picture and say what it is. Underneath is written a word. There is a picture of a pram, or a cot, or a tub, and underneath the picture there is the word. Just by their observation of these pictures, the children learn the words. But nothing appears to be supplied by the department. Our school sent out an appeal to the parents for these things—

Illustrated papers or magazines.

Picture books.

Cotton reels.

Soft-drink bottle tops.

Large beads suitable for the children to thread.

All varieties of cardboard breakfast-food cartons.

Greeting cards such as Birthday or Christmas cards.

Scraps of cloth for practice in matching for colour and texture.

Yesterday morning I went into one room and saw four ladies who had volunteered to help the teaching staff surrounded with thousands of women's journals and pieces

of cloth, hundreds of cartons from breakfast foods, and about a drayload—at least four rubbish tins full—of bottle tops. Then I went across to the teacher who will have the responsibility, in the New Year, of a class of 100 infants in the 4½- to 5½-year-old group and 50 more in the 5½- to 6-year-old group who will be taught through this system of "look and say." The teachers had pasted on cardboard, with the help of the parents, all sorts of illustrations, which the children will have to match.

I was extremely surprised to see that in this scheme of matching, the children of 5 years of age are being taught the first principles of house-house, or, as I believe it is called now, Lotto or Bingo. Ten cards are given out to the children and from a box they have to pick cards to match these cards. Presumably, when a card is completely matched, the child with the first card matched is the winner. Apparently the only difference between that and house-house is that they do not get a prize.

In a school such as Ascot, where there are many willing people who are able to help in the preparation of these methods of training, the scheme will work, but I heard of a different picture at another school. I know the teachers went south to learn all about this new method of training preparatory children and that teachers from various schools have been to other schools to get that knowledge from those who went south, and all schools will have to have these pictures all set up on cardboard, to teach the children according to the new syllabus.

A story told to me was that one teacher in charge of a one-teacher school, a young lady, was preparing all these things, with the help of her parents, at her own expense. When the new syllabus comes into operation next year, that young lady will have those particular implements of teaching. If she is transferred she will take them away because, having provided them at her own expense, they will be her own property. Any new teacher coming to the school will have none of these tools of trade unless, in anticipation, he brings them with him. There was a whole cabinet full of cards and envelopes with jigsaw puzzles and other things that took a tremendous amount of work to get together.

Mr. F. E. Roberts: Did the Ascot school put in a requisition for these things?

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: It has requisitioned for them but will not get them.

Mr. Devries: Did you not hear the reply I gave to a question the other day with regard to the very things you are speaking of? You may have been absent.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: The Minister knows that I am rarely absent.

Mr. Devries: Look at the answer I gave.

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: I shall be pleased to do so. The school appears not to have these things unless it has the help and co-operation of the parents. Judging by the work done in that school, where they are

going in relays every day to help, there is a vast amount for the parents to do. Whilst it may be comparatively easy to do this work in that area, it would not be so easy in others.

I have heard something of a change in syllabus and the extension to eight grades instead of seven, meaning a reduction in the primary school's teaching of mathematics. Whilst boys and girls who go to secondary schools will be required to have the same degree of knowledge of mathematics if they go on to the University, the two years in which they train at the secondary schools will be insufficient. I believe there is a suggestion—and it is worthy of consideration by the Government—that it be three years instead of two years, but I am not in a position to say whether it has been approved. So far as I know, it has not, and I hope the Minister in his reply will tell us something about it.

In the discussion on the Chief Office Vote of the department one may briefly touch on all matters relating to education, and I want to say that at the Ascot State school new classrooms are being built. I had a look through the school yesterday and it was surprising to find that when new permanent classrooms are being built—it is not a temporary structure, as there are double walls—fixed partitions will subdivide the rooms. For instance, if 6th grade wanted to hear a broadcast or a special speaker—and this was something that would interest another grade—folding doors between the rooms would be the sensible things to have. With the fixed partitions in the wooden building this is going to be very difficult. I saw another classroom in the old building that has folding doors, and at the time I was there a broadcast was being listened to by a class of 64 boys and 56 girls. Both classes were able, because of the folding doors in the one long room, to hear this broadcast. I think somebody has made an error. Whether it is an error on the part of the Department of Public Instruction or the Department of Public Works I do not know, but it seems that the latter department decided how the building was to be erected. If the Minister saw what I speak of he would realise how unsatisfactory it was from a teaching point of view.

Mr. Lloyd: Did you bring that to the notice of the Minister?

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: It was only yesterday that I saw it. I am bringing it to the notice of the Minister now. Only the framework of the partitions is there at present.

Another matter that I should like to mention is that whilst paying a visit to the Eagle Junction State school I said to the headmaster, "Why don't you ask for this school to be painted?" He showed me a requisition for painting that had been duly approved in August last year, 15 months ago, but there is no sign that any work has yet been done on it. Does the department follow up these approved jobs, or is the Department of Public Instruction entirely at the mercy of the Department of Public Works? It seems to me that that is a typical illustration of a valuable building crying out for a coat of

paint. It is probably 10 years since it had one. The painting of the building was approved 15 months ago, but nothing has yet been done about it.

Mr. Gair: A coat of paint has a very great effect on the development of the character and the mind!

Mr. H. B. TAYLOR: The Acting Premier should be aware of the fact that it is the duty of his Government to take care of Government buildings and to realise that they are the property of the people. In addition to taking care of the education of the children, he should do something about following up what the Department of Public Instruction has asked for.

The subject of libraries is very dear to my heart and I shall probably deal with them more fully when that vote comes before the Committee. However, I notice in its report that the Library Board is taking great credit for one thing. The report reads—

"Queensland is the only State in the Commonwealth in which large amounts of subsidy are paid on capital expenditure on library buildings."

Queensland is also the only one of the eastern States of Australia that fails to give the people a free library service. I wish that fact had been included in the report in order to make it clear that although the Government take credit for one thing, they are sadly lacking in another.

I have mentioned all those things with which I want to deal at this stage. I shall deal with the sub-departments later on.

Mr. TURNER (Kelvin Grove) (3.8 p.m.): There is no department in the Government service that I appreciate more than the Department of Public Instruction, and at times I have been quite peeved to hear the criticism, particularly in the form of questions, that has been levelled at it. When one realises the ramifications of this department and the work it is doing for the nation in building good citizens, one can have nothing but appreciation for it. One matter that I should like to mention particularly is that the Department of Public Instruction does not discriminate between brilliant and sub-normal children; every child has a place in the department.

I am particularly pleased with the results that have been obtained in our schools by children who are under the care of the State Children Department. Many years ago those children were thrown into industry as soon as they reached the age of 14 years; they did not have the opportunity of sitting for the Scholarship examination and proceeding further with their education. On the contrary, they were thrown immediately into industry and had to battle their way through life.

Mr. Sparkes: And they were some of your best men, too!

Mr. TURNER: I suggest, Mr. Graham, that you should send the hon. member for Aubigny out for a lesson in good manners. This would be a very appropriate time to do that.

In 1950 fifty State children obtained a State primary scholarship, 34 out of 40 passed their Junior and the Public Service examination, and 3 passed Senior. That will indicate how children can be deprived of their opportunities in life if they are not permitted to sit for these examinations. Let me tell of a family that lived near me some years ago. The mother died when the children were very young, and three years later the father was killed in an accident. I had the children put into State homes. The boys went to the Methodist Home at Wynnum and the girls to the Alexandra Home. When the oldest lad reached 14 years, he started work with Overells, and when the other two reached 14 years they went out onto sheep properties. They were not content with their lot and after corresponding the two of them bought a little property a 5-acre block at Brookfield, to go in for pineapple-growing. Then the war came. The eldest boy went to the war. The second, Ian, joined the Air Force, and the third joined the Commandos. On their discharge from the fighting services, two of them took as their rehabilitation course a training for the ministry at King's College, and the other boy took law. Today, two of them are Ministers in the Methodist faith, and the other an articulated clerk with one of the leading solicitors of Brisbane. All of them are doing remarkably well, despite the fact that they were turned out of homes on reaching 14 years of age. It is pleasing to note that since those years educational privileges have been extended to all State children.

The department has given splendid service through its Correspondence Classes. Thousands of young children, and adults too, get their education in this way because no other means are available to them. I am happy to know that 27 out of 39 children passed their Scholarship examination through these classes last year. It is also gratifying to know that one lad who passed his scholarship three years ago, passed his Junior last year with 8 As, 1 B and 1 C. Last year 11 pupils of the Correspondence Classes passed their Junior and received in the aggregate 28 As, 25 Bs, and 31 Cs. It should give people a great uplift to know that the department can spread its activities so wide and far afield with such positive success that children are not only able to pass their Scholarship examination but can pass their Junior as well. It is interesting to note that a young lad who got his primary education for Scholarship through the Correspondence Classes and then passed his Junior was only a few weeks ago selected as the Rhodes scholar for 1951. That was Edward Frederick Henzell. It is proof that the Correspondence Classes are of a tremendous value to this State when young people, with the aid of their parents, are able to use it as a means of gaining the highest academic education.

I was very interested in the remarks of the hon. member for Kedron, who told us of the difficulties and the advantages of some new areas that have been established in the suburbs of Brisbane in the last few

years. I quite agree with what he said—that all our activities so far as new schools are concerned must be extended into the newly-developed suburbs. As the Greater Brisbane area extends, so must our schools be placed where the young folk are in order that they may get their education. All the large schools nearer to the city could then be converted into secondary schools, which are very urgently needed. They are very beautiful buildings and would make admirable secondary schools. A few years ago plans were made whereby we were going to have our primary schools where the young people would get their education from the kindergarten to the fifth-grade stage, and then to the post-primary from the sixth grade right on to their Senior before entering the University. Unfortunately war prevented building activities, but I am looking forward to the day when the scheme envisaged by the department will be an accomplished fact. The department should concentrate on building new primary schools where our youth can be educated up to the fifth grade, thus implementing the policy decided on a few years ago. That will be a tremendous uplift to our education facilities.

I was interested in the remarks of the hon. member for Clayfield. I was happy to learn that the Ascot State School's new headmaster had at least realised the value of a parents' committee. I remember the late Hon. F. A. Cooper, who was Secretary for Public Instruction, telling us of a visit he paid to the Ascot State School when the then headmaster, Mr. Henderson, told him that he was totally opposed to parents' committees in State schools. "But," he said, "the parents have forced one on me. Leave it to me, for in 12 months' time I will kill it." But we have witnessed a remarkable transformation in the outlook of Mr. Henderson, who on his retirement from the post of headmaster on reaching the retiring age immediately set about organising a grand council of State school committees. I do not know whether he was looking for a job or not but he was the keenest organiser of this grand council of school committees, probably with the idea of getting behind the department and kicking it in the pants.

Mr. Morris: The association is a good thing.

Mr. TURNER: I do not think it is; it is perfectly unsound, in fact so much so that the State school committee at Ithaca Creek has at all times refused to be associated with it. That committee has felt that it has got sufficient satisfaction at all times from the department without encouraging the formation of such a body.

I was privileged some months ago, at the request of the Minister, to accompany two educationists from England in Mr. Dent and Mr. Jordan on a visit to the district represented by the hon. member for Cooroora. These gentlemen were so impressed by our country State school buildings that on one occasion they asked the car to be pulled up to photograph one of them. They did something further, they went into the building

itself and talked to the head teacher—it was a one-teacher school—and the children. They also took a photograph of the children.

What appealed to me was the development that has taken place in the primary education of these rural schools—a point made by the hon. member for Cooroora. The most appealing thing was the way in which the boys explained the various projects to the gathering. It was a field day and people had travelled many miles to attend it. Each lad got before the microphone and gave a detailed explanation of the project. As I said at the time, I am sure there are many adults with much more experience who would not have been able to make such an explanation as readily as these boys did. There were seven or eight boys who were introduced by one lad, who made an open address to the gathering. The success of this type of education should be an inducement to the department to extend it to as many parts of the State as possible. Nothing will encourage the young people to stay on the land more.

Mr. Low: You must have the complete co-operation of the parents too.

Mr. TURNER: You have to have that in every phase of education. We cannot afford to leave everything to the head teacher and his assistants. We have to realise that these people are doing their utmost to mould the children into decent respectable citizens, and to teach them everything that goes into good citizenship. If you do not have the co-operation of the parents much of the hard work of the staff will be undone.

I was surprised that the hon. member for Clayfield did not make some reference to the activities of the libraries established by the department in our schools and to the training of librarians. On page 8 of the report of the Director-General of Education, under the heading of Training in Librarianship, we find this:—

“Staff Members: For the third year in succession, classes in librarianship were attended by officers of the Public, Parliamentary, municipal, and departmental libraries. Lectures were also made available to the public for the first time.

“Of the 17 students who entered for the Preliminary Examination of the Library Association of Australia, all passed, three obtaining merits.”

That is a splendid work because Queensland in particular is short of qualified librarians. The department is doing a wonderful job in that direction.

Mr. H. B. Taylor: They have to sit for an examination to get their certificates.

Mr. TURNER: Of course they have. The department need not bother about them. It is interesting to find that at 31 December, 1950, no fewer than 103,383 volumes were in school libraries. That indicates remarkable progress.

Getting back to the teaching question, which the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha

referred to, I find a very interesting statement on page 22 of the report, which reads as follows:—

“With the collapse of the boom conditions in 1888-89 the general inspector, Ewart, wrote that ‘something must be done to check the inevitable filling-up of our schools with adult teachers.’

“His proposal reiterated in subsequent years, was that many pupil teachers should be discharged at the end of their period of pupilage. By 1893 he was concerned in the increase in the number of classified teachers and wrote—

‘It may be unwise to allow, and still less wise to encourage teachers to come up for the higher examinations when there is so little hope of our finding for them large schools in keeping with a higher classification.’”

What a backward outlook! Contrast that with the present outlook of the Director-General of Education, who encourages teachers to take higher and higher degrees in order to make them all the more fitted to teach our children.

The report continues—

“During our present staffing difficulties, it is of interest to notice from old reports that gluts and shortages of teachers have been a regular feature of our educational history. As early as 1864 it was pointed out that there was a shortage of male recruits, as teaching

‘is by no means attractive, either in its immediate gains or in its ultimate pecuniary prospects, to young men who . . . can turn a moderate education to better account in the banks and offices of the city.’”

That is what is happening today. The young men are entering other industries because the remuneration is greater and more attractive. Another reason is their objection to being transferred to country schools. The result of all this is that the Director-General and his staff are worried about the fact that so many of our teachers have been in the remote areas for far longer than it was ever intended they should remain there, and this simply because certain selfish people who should go out to replace them have refused to do so.

In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the department of the work being done for the blind, deaf and dumb. We should be ever grateful to those who have given their lives to educating these people. Any hon. member who has not done so already should take the opportunity of visiting that school and seeing the difficulties under which teachers are doing such an excellent job. It is astounding to see how they can take a tiny mite who has never heard any sound of any kind and, by vibrations on his chest, lips, and nostrils, teach him to talk. It is to the everlasting credit of the department that it has teachers who are prepared to give their lives to the training of these unfortunate people. Of course, in most instances one would never know, merely by looking at them, that they were suffering from such handicaps.

Then we have an even more unfortunate section of people, the sub-normal. One's heart cannot help feeling gratitude for those teachers who are devoting their lives to an endeavour to do something for those poor people who have no hope of achieving anything in life, even after the education we give them. To my way of thinking, the main achievement of these teachers is that they are impressing upon these sub-normal minds a full realisation of the value and importance of hygiene and the Government should express their undying gratitude to the people who are doing this great work.

With the whole of the ramifications of the department in mind, I must say that if anybody finds cause for criticising it he must badly want something to criticise. I think it can be said that the Director-General of Education and his staff are doing their very best in the interests of the people of this State, especially when we have regard to the difficulties under which they are working. If anybody has criticism to offer of the department, the decent thing to do is to go to the Director-General and discuss the matter with him. That officer, from where he is sitting at the moment, gave me my first lesson in criticising his department.

Mr. Sparkes: You are making him embarrassed.

Mr. TURNER: He is too modest to be embarrassed—his name is Edwards, not Sparkes. In my maiden speech in this Chamber I deplored the fact that young females had to be sent out to country schools, and I got the support of the hon. member for Aubigny when I said that. After my speech Mr. Edwards beckoned me over and said, "Don't you believe that girls in the country are entitled to the same education as girls in the metropolitan schools? How could we do that if we sent all our boys out to the country?" I then saw how my criticism was dashed to the ground and that statement of his made me hesitate again to criticise his department adversely. If I cannot offer constructive criticism I will not criticise the department. If there is anything I want to know I go straight to the Director-General of Education; in the information I have received from him I have myself been educated. I regret very much that the time has come for that gentleman to retire from office, an office that he has held with credit to himself and the State. I wish him what he would wish himself in the years to come.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah) (3.33 p.m.): The Minister has given us the opportunity and has invited us to offer criticism or suggestions on the success or failure of his administration of the department. We are always happy to have the opportunity of expressing our views but I am afraid that on occasions our suggestions are not considered as they might be. That hon. gentleman has told us to give credit where credit is due. We express our appreciation of the work carried out by the Director-General of Education because he has given

of his best. We appreciate also the work of that loyal band of men and women in the State who are teaching our children, and we appreciate the difficult circumstances in which many of them have to work and live. I believe that if it were not for a great love of their work, especially when working under adverse circumstances, they would not remain in the service of the department.

We in the inland parts of the State view the difficulties of education from an angle that the Minister should be able to appreciate. He has spent a considerable amount of his time in the inland and I believe that he has visited many parts of the inland and should be able to view our difficulties from our angle. When the Minister made his earlier tours of the State, the problems we are continually bringing before the notice of his department should have been dealt with because he must have realised how acute and how important they were.

Speaking generally on the work of this department, it often appears to me that too much emphasis is placed on the passing of scholarships of various standards in preparing children for a business career. I realise the importance of what is being done, but to me it often appears that too much emphasis is placed on that matter in comparison with other matters. I refer, for instance, to the establishment of additional agricultural high schools in various important parts of our State. We are urgently in need of agricultural sections attached to our rural schools. On various occasions when I have spoken to the Minister, I have impressed on him the importance of visiting country areas and establishing agricultural sections in the various rural schools.

Mr. Low: They have not got the teachers.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That is one very great difficulty I realise the department is facing.

The hon. member for Isis has already pointed out that we have only one agricultural college in this State, and that there is not even one in North Queensland. Everyone must admit that in that respect at any rate this State's educational facilities are sadly lacking. I should like to remind the Minister that we are today confronted with a food shortage in our own State, and in this morning's "Courier-Mail" appeared a tragic article in which an important personage of the United Nations said that very shortly not only certain parts of the world, but the world generally, would be confronted with a serious food shortage. When we realise the huge agricultural areas in this State and the thousands of boys and girls who live in those areas, we can appreciate fully the wonderful opportunity that exists for the Minister to establish agricultural sections in the various rural schools. By that means those thousands of boys and girls who live in agricultural areas could be encouraged not to go in for commercial life in the cities but rather to prepare themselves on very sound and thorough lines for a life in the country areas and to become interested in work on the land.

I feel that the Minister has both an opportunity and a responsibility to do something along those lines for the benefit of this State and its future food supplies, and for the Commonwealth as a whole.

I really think that some of the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Instruction are not flexible enough. I should like to instance the bus services to country schools. This is something that has been pointed out to the Minister over and over again. We who live in the inland areas unfortunately see too much of what is going on. I was rather surprised this morning—and I think the Minister too must have been surprised—to hear the hon. member for Houghton say that the parents of the children attending one school in his electorate financed entirely the bus service to that school. I do not think the Minister could have realised that that was going on, because the department has always told me that there is no need for the parents to subsidise school bus services, as that is the responsibility of the department. Nevertheless, parents are frequently called upon to subsidise the services heavily in order to keep them on the road. They are called upon also to make very heavy sacrifices in time and in the use of their vehicles and I feel that something ought to be done about the matter. And here is where I think the rules of the department in this connection might be made more flexible.

Last night I had a telephone call from a person about the starting of a bus service to one of the schools in my electorate. He pointed out that some of the children lived within two-tenths of a mile of the three-mile radius and expressed the opinion that the department would allow them to be included but I pointed out that I was quite positive that it would not. I went on to point out that repeatedly I had submitted examples of children living at a distance of two and nine-tenths or one-tenth within the three-mile limit and the department had refused to set up a service. In another case there were six children in the one family who lived 2.8 miles from school but the department would not sanction a service in that case. There should be more flexibility in these rules.

Mr. Devries: You are advocating a reduction from the 3-mile limit to the 2-mile limit.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I should be glad if something like that could be done.

Mr. Devries: You have advocated it.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I have always advocated a much greater and more sympathetic understanding of the difficulty of the people in the country. There should be a little more give and take by the department in these out-of-the-way areas.

About a month ago I brought under the notice of the department the position of a teacher in my area who said that she would leave the department if she could not get a transfer. The only satisfaction I got from the department was—I cannot give the exact words—that as she had not served for two

years in the area she was not entitled to any consideration. Quite a number of teachers are being lost to the department in this way.

I should also like to impress upon the Minister the urgent need for more buildings for the teachers. In my area one teacher has to travel 24 miles a day from the nearest place in which he can live to his school and another has to travel 30 miles a day. If it were not for the enthusiasm and the loyalty of the men to their calling they would not be in the department at all. Fancy having to travel long distances like that in a closely-settled area like the Barambah electorate! Fancy having to travel 24 miles and 30 miles a day to school and the department will not do anything in the way of providing them with residences! The Housing Commission can build thousands of homes in the city and it should be a simple matter to arrange for the construction of a dozen or so homes for teachers in the various electorates. It would be a very big step towards making the life of these people easier than it is today.

Mr. Devries: Private building contractors will not help to build them. Can you help?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Whenever I have tried to get local men to do repair work and painting the department has always declined to accept their offers and has handed the work over to the Department of Public Works. We do not get very far on that angle either.

We all appreciate the very fine enthusiasm that the Director-General has put into his work and what he has accomplished. We appreciate the things he has done, but much remains to be accomplished especially as I stressed the setting up of agricultural sections at our rural schools. That is important when we consider the food position. The Minister has a golden opportunity and responsibility also in this connection.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (3.45 p.m.): It might be considered presumption on my part to take part in this debate. Perhaps it might be said that I have not had the opportunity of an education that would warrant my taking part in it, but in my electorate there is a large number of schools, which dictates that I should not remain silent nor be awestruck at the grandiloquent remarks contained in the report of the Director-General of Education. The Director-General makes a contribution to the consideration of this subject that will be of immense value, particularly in years to come, as a historical narrative of the progress of education in Queensland up to the present day. It is unfortunate that in his concluding remarks he uses words such as these—

“I cannot promise my successor that he or the department controlled by him will be free from public criticism.”

I may be a bit sensitive but some of his other remarks look like a warning to critics to keep off, particularly these—

“Others—amateur diagnosticians—are quite prepared to perform major operations on the body educational.”

Those are very nice phrases. They are phrases very much beyond my powers of composition. But I feel that every hon. member on being elected to this Assembly, should not shirk his responsibilities or allow himself to be intimidated into silence on the affairs of such an important subject as education and the department itself. If they merit criticism we should be able to criticise them, so long as we do so fairly, and so long as, where there is room for praise, we are a little more generous with it than with our criticism. It is not because I have anything of major importance to criticise that I make those remarks. I am pleased to say that I am more critical of those remarks of the Director-General than I am of the general conduct of our schools.

From what I have heard and from what I have read we have by and large held our own educationally with other States. It would be a bad day for Queensland, and a bad day for the education of our children if we believed that we had reached a state of anywhere near perfection. It is not destructive criticism for me to say that I should like to see our educational system continue to progress as has been chronicled in the report of the Director-General. When some future scholar, in perhaps another 50 years, feels it his duty to emulate Mr. Edwards and continue from where he left off with this historical account of the progress of education in Queensland, I trust he will be able to record equal if not greater progress than has been recorded by Mr. Edwards.

Perhaps the greatest advance made in our educational system in the past seven years has been the introduction of the school transport system. It may mean very little to the great majority of the people of Queensland, because it is only the small minority who live in the country; but the people who live in the country and whose children benefit by it greatly appreciate it. This is something that is done by the Government to enable the children to attend school; without it many of them would have no possibility of doing so. I have never found out who has been responsible for the introduction of school transport—I understand it is used to a much greater extent in Tasmania and some of the other States—but he has made a wonderful contribution towards education in this State. By the extension of the transport system we can do much to relieve the present shortage of school teachers. Recriminations in regard to the causes of the shortage of school teachers is waste of time; the evil exists and we should come forward with some solution or remain silent.

I understand the principle of the amalgamation of small schools has been more or less adopted, but for some reason that I am at a loss to understand, it has not been implemented. I think the quicker it is done and the sooner action is taken in this direction the further we shall get in our efforts to reduce the shortage of teachers. That would be only one of the benefits that would arise from the extension of the transport system and the amalgamation of the smaller schools. I have not the statistics here, but I know

from observation travelling in my electorate, which is typical of most country electorates, that there are schools that are not much more than 3 miles apart and the country roads are trafficable for the greater part of the year; there are very few school days on which a motor-car could not travel over these roads. They may be rough, but I am not ashamed to say that our bush children are tough. Indeed, I am proud to be able to say that. I have small boys of my own and I am not ashamed to think that they are tough. In fact, I think they need to be a bit tougher because we may not always have a Labour Government in Queensland. We have seen political accidents happen before, and if ever these boys are faced with this tragedy, the tougher they are the better will they be able to resist the effects of that sorry happening.

I do not suggest that we should wait until we can amalgamate all these schools into one large central institution. I think we should proceed to amalgamate now two, three or even four schools where that can be done. For instance, one school may have 10 or 12 children while the next, only a few miles away, has only 14. By establishing a transport service, these schools could be amalgamated and one teacher could be saved. I do not say that we shall save one teacher for every school we close, because in some cases an extra teacher would have to be appointed to the central school if the number of pupils was increased. In my electorate there are at least 15 or 20 schools that could be amalgamated into about five, with a minimum of effort. Some of the buildings might have to be transferred, but most of the present buildings could cater for double their present number. By these amalgamations the children would gain the advantage of meeting and mixing with greater numbers of children than they do now. That would broaden their minds and, as we all know, children learn from one another. While playing their games they might refer to their lessons and learn in that way. Today we have the spectacle of teachers with one or two in one class and the same number in another. In my opinion, the children in those classes would not do so well as they would if they had more competition. I have given this matter a good deal of thought. I have discussed it with teachers and parents but have never yet heard of one disadvantage a child would suffer from the amalgamation, and that, after all, is the most important consideration.

Then we have to consider the teachers. I am sure a teacher would be much happier teaching 25 children than he would teaching only 12. In addition, as the school grew it would eventually require an additional teacher. This would open up the possibilities of promotion. A further advantage would be the psychological effect on the teacher, who would have another adult to work with. This must be beneficial to him.

An unfortunate incident took place at one of our country schools recently—and it received quite a lot of publicity in the Press—that would have been avoided had it been a two-teacher school. I am not taking sides on this question or dispute, but say that it is

regrettable that the incident occurred. I am not condemning one-teacher schools because these schools would still be necessary no matter what system was brought in. It will be impossible to arrange transport services satisfactorily in all areas and one-teacher schools will have a place in our community in the future, and they will, as they did in the past, play a noble part in the education of our children whose parents are forced to live in the bush. The establishment of a school removes one of the greatest disabilities of bush life, and I am sure no-one begrudges any child the right to go to school in the area in which he lives.

Teachers, and particularly those in the one-teacher schools and the smaller schools, have made an immense contribution to the building up of the State and the education of our children. I am sure that every person looks back with pleasure to his school days. It is nearly 40 years since I left school, but I can remember the details attaching to the little country school that I attended. I have still great respect for the efforts and patience of those teachers who did their best with the limited amount of material at their disposal to give me the knowledge that would enable me to take my place in life.

I can remember when a "good manners chart" hung in my schoolroom, and I regret to say that it is no longer an ornament on the walls of our schoolrooms today. Most hon. members will recall the chart of 12 good rules; it measured about 4 feet by 5 feet and was hung in a conspicuous place in my schoolroom, and in fact in every schoolroom in the State. Whoever has been responsible for the withdrawal of those charts has done our education system a disservice. I can still remember the words "Be honest, truthful, and pure," and I suggest that it would not be out of place if such a chart were hung in this Chamber. I regret the withdrawal of these charts, and in all seriousness suggest that education is the poorer for it.

In conclusion, I should like to pay a compliment to the Minister, whose sincerity in administering this department has impressed us all, I am pleased to say, on both sides of the Chamber. I am sure that he will continue as he has been doing and, in being guided by his advisers, will see that education in Queensland makes the progress that we all desire it to make.

I should like to record my appreciation, too, of the work of Mr. Edwards, whom I have visited on quite a number of occasions. He leaves the department with my good wishes and my respect. In him Queensland has produced a scholar of whom she can be justly proud.

I should like also to pay a tribute to the Deputy Director-General, who has always been very obliging and very helpful to me and, I am sure, to every other member who has come in contact with him in the course of his duties.

I should not be so foolish as to say that there is nothing wrong with our education system in Queensland—I know it is not perfect—but it compares very favourably

with that of any other country, and as a Queenslander I am very proud of it. I trust that it will continue to carry on the good work.

Mr. DEWAR (Chermside) (4.7 p.m.): In speaking for a short while on these Estimates, I should like at the outset to express my sincere thanks to the Minister, who at all times has received me very courteously. At any time when the case that I presented to him was justifiable, I can honestly say that he dealt with it in a very sympathetic fashion. From the point of view of education, the Chermside electorate is the better for the Minister's sympathy.

I should like also to express my appreciation of the work that is being done by the departmental officers, and particularly the humble teacher. The work that our teachers put in in teaching the youth of our State does them credit.

Rather than engage in any major criticism of the department, I intend to discuss for a short while what I believe to be a disability under which the Minister and his department are working. If we turn to page 32 of the Estimates, we find the following entry—

"Repairs, Painting, Alterations, Furniture, &c.—

	£
State Schools	140,000
Technical Colleges	16,000 "

In the Loan Fund Account on page 113, we find this entry—

	£
"State School Buildings ..	682,300
"Technical Colleges, State High and Post-primary Schools	149,200 "

Those amounts of money, however, do not appear in the Estimates for the Department of Public Instruction but in those for the Department of Public Works. The department must obviously be working at a great disadvantage in that, firstly, it has not its own constructing authority, and secondly, if after discussing this matter Cabinet decided that such a system would be impracticable, the Department of Public Instruction does not have the responsibility of spending grants that are made for the building of schools and the repairing of schools.

Many things can be said in criticism of the present set-up and I propose to make reference to one or two aspects of it. I believe in direct control. If a man is running a business or a department, no matter what it is, unless he has full control over the things that happen in his business or his department there must inevitably be some degree of chaos at some time or other.

Take the business man who depends on another person for the supply of one of the major services that enable him to produce goods for the consuming public. Let us suppose that the second person breaks down in his guarantee to him. He must then break down in his guarantee to the consuming public. I feel that the Secretary for Public Instruction must of necessity be in this position at times.

Let me give one or two cases in support of my view. I am offering no criticism of the Department of Public Works but in the light of my 20 to 30 years' experience in business, a small business it is true, I am trying to make a case for the Department of Public Instruction. I have made some study of business methods and I feel that the Department of Public Instruction should have its own constructing authority or at least the power to spend its own money on new buildings and repairs in order to maintain educational facilities throughout the State. There are many ways in which we could go about it. First of all, the Department of Public Instruction should have its own constructing authority. Naturally the arguments that will be advanced against that proposition would be that in view of the shortage of labour and materials there would be competition for them between the two departments and generally a scramble to get materials. I do not think that we need be bothered very much about that aspect of the matter because after all the Housing Commission has its own constructing authority which buys its own material, and has its own staff, but it does not compete with the Department of Public Works. It comes under the same ministerial head. I believe that the education of the children is just as important as housing. In the first place you must have a house for your family but you must have also educational facilities to educate the family if they are to make good citizens. Therefore I believe that the Department of Public Instruction should have its own constructing authority just as the Housing Commission does. Then the Minister could keep his eye on particular projects in which he was specially interested.

Mr. F. E. Roberts: Do you think the Department of Health and Home Affairs should have its own constructing authority to build hospitals?

Mr. DEWAR: If I were to debate that matter I should be out of order. What would be the position if a parent company gave an order to a manufacturing company and the manufacturing company decided when and where it would supply the goods? That would leave the parent company holding the bag and in many respects the Secretary for Public Instruction must frequently be in the same position. For instance, a member of Parliament may make representations to him about the erection of a fence round a school building. Upon due investigation it may be reported to the Minister that the building of the fence is essential and in due course the member is advised by letter from the Minister that the erection of the fence has been approved and the matter referred to the Department of Public Works for its attention. Some time later a further letter comes to the member from the Department of Public Works, again intimating that the erection of the fence has been approved and that some time in the future it will be built. That might go on indefinitely. Had the Minister his own constructional authority he could plan and allocate work to the various sections of the State, and that plan could be made according to the construction staff and

materials available. He would at least be in the happy position of knowing what work was proceeding, a fact that he does not know today unless he has a liaison staff between the Department of Public Works and his own department. If such a scheme is impossible, surely it is not impossible for the department to have authority over its own expenditure? Why is it necessary that we should allocate £1,000,000 from loan funds for building and repairing schools and that work should be handed to the Department of Public Works?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DEWAR: It is not sensible that a certain amount of money should be allocated from one source for the construction and repairing of schools, and that that sum should not appear in these Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in discussing that matter on these Estimates.

Mr. DEWAR: The position is that the Department of Public Instruction has not the right to spend its own money.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DEWAR: The Minister's hands are tied. The point I am making is that if the Department of Public Works is not able to construct a particular project for the Minister he has no power to go outside that department.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot deal with public works on this vote. He must deal with them on the Estimates of the Department for Public Works.

Mr. DEWAR: I find it very difficult, Mr Farrell, to enlarge on the point I wish to make.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has made his point in regard to the organisation of a constructing authority.

Mr. DEWAR: Very well, I shall have an opportunity of developing it at a later stage.

I want to support the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha in his advocacy for the implementation of a scheme, which has not been tried or not to any extent, to attract more persons to the teaching profession. He advocated the setting up of hostels in teacher-training centres. I am a supporter of this idea and strongly endorse his contention. The Queensland Country Women's Association has student hostels of the type advocated by the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha attached to primary and secondary educational institutions in Tambo, Stanthorpe, Warwick, Nambour, Ipswich, Charters Towers and Roma. These buildings have been erected on the basis of a 50-per-cent. subsidy from the Government and repairs to these buildings are made on the same basis. The staffing of the hostels is arranged by the Q.C.W.A. The setting up of hostels for student teachers in teachers' training centres would be an advantage and likely to attract persons to the profession.

If hostels could not be set up independent of the Q.C.W.A. they could be established in conjunction with that association.

I commend the suggestion to the Government as a very definite and positive step to attract teachers to the service.

Hon. G. H. DEVRIES (Gregory—Secretary for Public Instruction) (4.20 p.m.): When I moved this vote I made it very clear that it was not my desire to occupy too much time of the Committee. I rise now merely to make a few observations, particularly on the statement made by the hon. member for Clayfield. I was surprised to think that the hon. member had the idea that I should give a complete exposition of the workings of the Department of Public Instruction. In particular, he seemed to express disappointment because I had not made any reference to the altered syllabus. As I pointed out, Mr. Farrell, most of the problems of the department will be dealt with when the votes appertaining to them comes before the Committee.

I was very surprised to hear the hon. member make the statement that the pre-school child was being taught the art of gambling. I do not think I misunderstood the hon. member. I took the opportunity of visiting that infants' school at Yeronga and I was very impressed by what I observed there. The hon. member for Clayfield may have been absent from the Chamber when the hon. member for Sherwood asked the question whether any provision had been made on the Estimates for pre-school requisites. I replied that provision had been made on the Estimates for them. I found on visiting that school that the devices provided for the children were many and varied, and I was also satisfied that the teacher, Miss McKenna, was an expert in the teaching of infants. I pay that compliment to her sister also, who is at Junction Park. They are two splendid ladies who have devoted their lives to the tuition of children. They had all kinds of devices. Cards were used to enable the children to count correctly. There was a fish on one side of the paper and when you turned it over there was a number on the other side. These boys and girls would pick up the pieces of tin and turn them over and see the number on them. The greater the number of catches they had, the greater the numbers they had to count. I observed that they were being taught to count by means of the hop, step and jump, and by means of quoits. What did agitate my mind was where we had to start and finish. Teachers from the various schools would come along and observe the method of teaching at this centre and I should say that the methods applied by one teacher would be varied by another teacher. We do not want the system to become static. We want the teachers to use their own initiative. We do not want to give them all one idea. We expect the teachers by means of their own creative faculty to introduce ways and means of teaching the children to count, read and print. The hon. member for Clayfield is a very kindly gentleman at any time and I

respect his opinion, but I am surprised at his charging the Government with introducing methods that would encourage young children to gamble.

I come now to the statement made by the hon. member for Chermside. The position is not exactly as he said. So that there will not be any misunderstanding, let us assume that the Department of Public Instruction had its own works section. The hon. member for Chermside said that a certain amount of money had been allocated for building, painting, and repairs to school buildings. That amount is included in the Estimates for the Department of Public Works. If I had power to use that money for the painting, building and repairing of school buildings, I should find myself in conflict at times with the Department of Public Works. Other States of the Commonwealth are in a similar position. Many hon. members have referred to Victoria as an example that we should follow, and one has suggested that we should do something because it is being done in Tasmania. The fact is that the Victorian department is not its own constructing authority, although it does have power to expend up to £1,000 a year on repairs and so on. In New South Wales the department has the right to erect pre-fabricated buildings up to a certain value. If the Department of Public Instruction in Queensland became its own constructing authority it would at times come into conflict with the Department of Public Works in that we should have to barter and buy on the same markets as it does.

Another point is that every tradesman we employed would mean one more taken from either private enterprise or the Department of Public Works, and in the end we should be no further advanced. We make recommendations to the Department of Public Works and it has the right to veto those suggestions—

Mr. Low: And it does it pretty often.

Mr. DEVRIES: The hon. member for Cooroora should know better than that. The Department of Public Works does not veto my suggestions—

Mr. Kerr: But it procrastinates a good deal.

Mr. DEVRIES: I think that hon. members should be fair. I can appreciate the desires of the hon. member for Sherwood and other hon. members, not only on the Opposition side but on this side of the Chamber. I know what is running through the mind of the hon. member for Sherwood because he, like many others, would like to see septic systems in the grounds of the schools in his electorate. The pan system is deplorable; it is shocking. But we have to be realists and we have to find the material and the man-power to do these things.

I can assure hon. members that these things will be done. They must not get away with the idea that if the Department of Public Instruction was a constructing authority we should get out of the difficulties we are in. The Department of Public Works

has done everything possible to meet the position. It is true that I have been disappointed sometimes because I have not been able to have done the things I should have liked to have done, but if I had the right to do them myself I doubt whether I could have got them done.

Mr. Dewar: But you would know where you stood.

Mr. DEVRIES: I know now where I stand. Every demand made by my department on the Department of Public Works has, in the majority of cases, been given effect to although I admit that there are some cases in which matters have been deferred—not vetoed, but deferred.

Mr. Morris: Do you not think that the Secretary for Public Instruction should have the right of setting down the order of priority?

Mr. DEVRIES: I have the right. My departmental officers formulate a works programme—

Mr. Morris: But they ignore it.

Mr. DEVRIES: No. It is verified by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. My works programme for 1951-52 is formulated and sent on to the Co-ordinator-General and officers of the various departments meet and decide the order of priority.

Mr. Morris: You should decide.

Mr. DEVRIES: In the majority of cases the wishes of the Department of Public Works are respected.

Mr. Morris: That is the trouble.

Mr. DEVRIES: I listened with interest to the various matters put forward and I am satisfied after listening to the speech made by the hon. member for Isis that he has failed to give me a lead as to how to get teachers.

Mr. Low: He made a splendid contribution.

Mr. DEVRIES: I am not denying that because he is experienced as a teacher. My colleague, the hon. member for North Toowoomba, is also a teacher and I am looking for a lead from the man who has been trained in that position. The hon. member for Isis mentioned the creation of teachers' hostels but I do not think that is going to help us. I could easily give a solution to the whole problem, but whether it would be acceptable to my Government is a different matter. I could give the Committee a scheme that probably would get over the difficulty. One such scheme would be to deal with the question of salary.

Mr. Morris: Of course it is.

Mr. DEVRIES: But where do we begin and where do we end?

There has been a good deal of controversy this afternoon about the very trying conditions that have to be endured by teachers in the outside areas, but nobody is more conversant with those difficulties than I. Give them good living accommodation, either in

hostels or flats. And thirdly—and I am coming now to the matter that is often mentioned by the member for Isis—give them immunity from being transferred away from the city areas. They are the three points. In the same way as everybody else, the hon. member for Isis knows that if you could give an assurance to young teachers, particularly females, that they would not be sent away from the metropolitan area, there would be no difficulty in getting teachers.

When I was travelling round the State with the Director-General of Education, I used to make it my business, whenever I entered any school, to ask the girls and boys in the seventh grade particularly how many of them intended to be teachers. I used to be amazed at the fact that none of them wanted to be a teacher. I said to one young lady, "Why is it that you have no inclination to be a teacher?" She replied, "There is too much hard studying to be done." Only recently the hon. member for Isis suggested that once a teacher becomes qualified he should not be expected to go any higher; that he should not be called upon to graduate. I cannot agree with that.

Mr. Pizzey: That does not mean that he should not graduate. He should not be forced to graduate before he gets higher emoluments.

Mr. DEVRIES: We do not force teachers to graduate. Let us examine this thing quite calmly. There is no compulsion. If the hon. member for Isis and the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha are so anxious to get our secondary schools started, it is quite obvious that we cannot reach that pinnacle unless there is a diploma of some kind.

Mr. Morris: Hundreds of teachers who have graduated are at present teaching in primary schools.

Mr. DEVRIES: I am quite sure that the hon. member for Mount Coot-tha would not suggest that a teacher does not need a diploma to teach in a primary school.

Mr. Morris: No. I am merely answering your argument.

Mr. DEVRIES: Not many graduates are teaching in primary schools. If there are many, it is only because we cannot use them in secondary schools.

I am quite satisfied that that is the problem that is facing this Government at the present time. After all, what has happened in the past does not matter very much; it is what will happen in the future that is important. Those people who are serving in the outlandish and remote areas of this State are the ones who realise that that is how they can get promotion. The hon. member for Isis gave us the example of an engine-driver in the Railway Department who, when he is seeking promotion, has to go to the western areas. He serves a certain time in the West and then is brought to the coast.

Mr. Low: They do not always take their families with them.

Mr. DEVRIES: They cannot, because of the housing difficulties. My department

receives many applications for schools with residences attached from young male teachers who intend to marry.

Mr. Pizzey interjected.

Mr. DEVRIES: It is not a question whether we are going to build homes for them. I know the isolation that some of these people have to contend with. Let the hon. member go to such places as Port Douglas and Daintree. That is where we see the teacher who is doing a great job in the one-teacher school. The hon. member mentioned something this morning about having a conservatorium of music in Brisbane. There is a danger that many people become Brisbane-minded. There are other places in this State besides Brisbane. What about a conservatorium in Townsville or Cairns, or in Longreach or Emerald, or in any of those far-distant places? We could establish them throughout the State. We could also establish State high schools throughout the State. I entered this Parliament in 1941, and I was able to create a high school top at Longreach, which opened with 8 boys and 3 girls. From 1941 to 1944 its numbers dwindled to 2 boys and only 3 girls, and by the end of 1945 it had only one student. It is all very well to talk of secondary education for the West and the North-West. I was no exception to the rule. I was like many others, probably because I could afford it. I sent my boy to a college—the old school tie. The high school top of the State school was not as attractive as the Brisbane Boys' Grammar, the Church of England Grammar, or Nudgee, or a similar school. The inclination was to send the boys down to college. I remember the time in Longreach when a religious organisation established a hostel at its own school, for the use of the children of graziers who came to Longreach to complete their education. Unfortunately that fell by the wayside, and today it is used as a boarding-house.

Mr. Hiley: Do you think it was because of the high wool prices?

Mr. DEVRIES: It does not matter what you do in the western areas. If you give secondary or tertiary education in western areas, do not believe for one moment that that means that the children will remain in the West. I remember recently coming into conflict with the president of the University Students' Union. He criticised me because I ventured the opinion that once a boy was educated to the secondary or tertiary standard in the western areas he would migrate to those centres where there was most demand for his services. He said in reply, "Mr. Devries should recognise the fact that it is in those areas where his profession is most in demand that he will be asked to serve." I remembered the old saying, "Step in to learn, step out to serve," and I asked him "To serve whom?" Who would suggest that the boy or girl with even the Junior or Senior standard of education could find employment in Longreach? The business houses there can employ only a given number of people. Consequently the boys and girls, after they have been educated to a

certain standard, naturally turn to the field of lucrative employment; that is human nature.

I do not want to delay the Committee unnecessarily. I am looking for a lead. I am looking to people to tell me where we have failed, and in what way we have failed. What was the strength of the case of the hon. member for Barambah? He said he was disappointed in not getting some little road transport service. I know that the hon. member is always little in mind. I always look upon him as being little in mind. I do not say that lightly. I have sat in this Chamber and I have watched his performance, and I have told him that he very seldom handles the truth properly. When I get up and make those statements I do not make them lightly. If they want a brawl with me, they can have it.

The hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha said that the teacher problem in Great Britain had been overcome. In the House of Commons recently representations were made to the Minister of Education asking him to take immediate steps to increase the facilities for primary schooling. It was obvious then that the primary school classrooms there must have been somewhat overcrowded.

Mr. Morris: So are ours.

Mr. DEVRIES: I am not denying it; I am admitting most of these things, not only what members of the Opposition are complaining about but the members of the Government too.

Recently I was in the territory of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha. Hon. members talk about area schools and it is true that area schools could be established. I know, too, that the electorate of the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha is only a stone's throw from Brisbane. It lends itself admirably to consolidation. Away back in 1946 a scheme for consolidation was propounded. I have perused those files although I have not been able to go through them all. The belief was that the Government, wherever possible, would introduce area schools. The whole of the State had to be surveyed.

Mr. Morris: But the Government have not created area schools.

Mr. DEVRIES: Let us look at why they have not done so. The consolidated school would mean the closure of certain schools. Children from those schools would have to be accommodated in the building where the central school was established. A great deal of inconvenience would be suffered by both the teacher and children. I am sure hon. members realise there is no good talking about consolidation of schools if we cannot keep up with the provision of the additional classrooms that are required today.

Mr. Pizzey: You have to make provision for them.

Mr. DEVRIES: Let us find ways and means of getting them. If the Opposition

can show me how that can be accomplished I can assure them that this Government will pay attention to their suggestion.

Mr. Morris: You will admit that your difficulties in regard to teachers are greater than those of buildings?

Mr. DEVRIES: I am pointing out that even though we obtained the teachers desired we should have to make a complete review of the position. It is true that we are suffering from disabilities for the time being but we can surmount those difficulties. The teacher shortage is not as acute as the Opposition would lead people to believe. (Opposition interjections.)

I listened with some surprise to the hon. member for Isis talking about building teachers' hostels. In the early part of this year I asked the various regional directors to find out how many students would attend a teachers' training college if one was established at Townsville, one at Rockhampton and one at Bundaberg, where the students were attending their own State High School or denominational school. It was amazing to find the small number, particularly in a town like Rockhampton, who were willing to attend a teachers' training college if it was established there. Who would suggest building colleges or hostels costing £100,000 for 9 or 10 students?

Mr. Pizzey: I did not suggest that; I suggested we should establish them here first, before you started to decentralise them.

Mr. DEVRIES: Every assistance is given to a person who comes to Brisbane for the purpose of attending the Teachers' Training College. The principal of the college, and our officers, spare no efforts to find reasonable accommodation for the students. I am satisfied that is not preventing us from getting teachers. I am not satisfied that the allowances we are giving to student teachers keep people from following the teaching profession.

Mr. Pizzey: It is not one thing in itself, but all together; each plays some part.

Mr. DEVRIES: There seems to be an idea in the minds of the Opposition that the trainees in the colleges are receiving a salary; they are not; it is an allowance.

Mr. Morris: We realise that.

Mr. DEVRIES: Will the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha argue seriously that the boy who becomes indentured to a trade should be paid a high rate of wages by his employer? If you said to the employer, "You have to give that boy a high rate of wages," what would he say? He would say, "I am teaching him a trade." It is the same with the girl who enters the nursing profession. She receives one rate for the first year, another for the second year, and others for the third, fourth, and fifth years.

Mr. Low: You are only recruiting from the children of rich people; working-class people cannot afford to let their children go in for teaching.

Mr. DEVRIES: I am surprised that the hon. member should state that we are only recruiting from the rich people's children. If he does believe it, he should not say so. I am surprised at the hon. member's making that statement.

Mr. Low: I believe it.

Mr. DEVRIES: The hon. member should not forget that he does not represent the majority of rich people.

Mr. Morris: In England the grant provided 35,000 teachers in the post-war period.

Mr. DEVRIES: In Queensland we did not draw a bar against the married men. A teacher who went into the armed forces and came out and took a rehabilitation scheme got more money in the fourth year than did the teacher in England. They have cut out the student teachers in England and they have departed from it in Victoria too. I am satisfied that it is not wages that are preventing us from getting teachers or recruiting boys and girls.

Mr. Pizzey: Tell us what it is.

Mr. DEVRIES: It is not a question of salary. The hon. member for Isis knows perfectly well what is happening. Pick up the Press day after day and see the inducements offered to the boy or girl as long as they get through their Scholarship. The banks say, "Come to us, we will have you before you get your Junior pass." That is what the banks and shipping companies do. In addition to that, they tell them that they do not expect them to pass any further examination. They also point out the excellent superannuation they can offer and the accommodation they can provide.

The hon. member for Cook suggested that we should enter into competition with commerce. If we did that, where should we start and where should we finish? I do believe, however, and I make no apology for saying it, that the Government eventually will have to pay greater attention to salaries and amenities for not only teachers but every other worker in the service.

The hon. member for Isis seemed very anxious to support the move by the Queensland Teachers' Union for the appointment of a Commissioner of Education. For some time now the union has been agitating to get away from the Industrial Court and has put forward the same arguments as those adduced by the hon. member for Isis when speaking on the Budget last year. At that time he said that the teachers want to get as far as they possibly can from the Public Service Commissioner, and that argument was put forward by the Queensland Teachers' Union. When I asked why they were so anxious to cut themselves adrift from the Public Service Commissioner, they said it was because they felt that he did not have a knowledge of the ramifications of the teaching profession. I cannot agree with that.

Let us examine the set-up in Victoria. There they have no Industrial Court; they depend mainly on wages boards, conciliation

committees, and so on. A Commission of Education was set up down there. It comprised three members, an independent chairman, who was a former school teacher, a Government representative, and a representative of the union. When that tribunal was proposed originally, the Teachers' Union down there objected very strongly to a suggestion that the findings of the tribunal in connection with teachers' salary scales should be submitted for Cabinet approval. That seems astounding. They wanted the exclusive right to fix their own rates and conditions without any reference to Parliament. That could happen here. The teachers argued that the teachers' salaries should not be fixed by the Government of the day.

Mr. Pizzey interjected.

Mr. DEVRIES: I do not care how the hon. member for Isis argues. As a matter of fact, he would be opposed to the fixing of salaries by the Government.

Mr. Pizzey: Yes.

Mr. DEVRIES: Regulations containing the salary scales fixed by the tribunal are published in the Government Gazette and laid down before both Houses of Parliament, if Parliament is then sitting, but if Parliament is not sitting then within 14 days after the next meeting of Parliament, and a copy must be posted to each member of Parliament. If within 30 days after any Regulation has been laid before both Houses of Parliament each House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing the regulation the regulation so disallowed shall thereupon cease to have any effect.

Another hon. member whose name I at the moment forget suggested that we should have a Commissioner of Education. According to the wording of this Act Parliament may disallow a regulation but the Parliament of Victoria has not to date disallowed any regulation or sent it back. I know that the hon. members for Isis and Mt. Coot-tha support the Queensland Teachers' Union in the setting up of a separate Education Act, but I am not prepared to let go unchallenged their reflection upon the Public Service Commissioner that he is not competent to deal with the salaries and conditions applicable to teachers. After all, the Public Service Commissioner seeks the advice of the Director-General of Education. Suppose the hon. member for Isis were to go before a magistrate or judge on a particular kind of work. It would not be necessary for the magistrate or judge to be an authority on that kind of work. Most of our judges would not know how to use a pick and shovel. The hon. member for Isis would depend entirely upon the man pleading his case to the judge.

Mr. Hiley: But he would pick his own barrister.

Mr. DEVRIES: The adjudicator gives his decision on the argument adduced. I am not suggesting that because the Public Service Commissioner is not a teacher he is not a competent authority to decide how the Government will pay and what they will pay.

The teaching profession is apart from the general Public Service but members of the teaching profession are subject to the Public Service Act and their rates and conditions are framed and determined by the Industrial Court of Queensland. Is anybody going to suggest that the members of the Industrial Court are biased? Is anybody going to suggest that the Industrial Court does not give teachers rates and conditions that it believes they are justly entitled to? The Public Service Commissioner, accompanied by the Director-General of Education and other officers, appears before the court. It is true that the Commissioner advances a case to the court and presents a case why certain increases in rates should not be given. Nobody is going to suggest that the court would give its judgment on a flimsy case. Whatever the Queensland Teachers' Union—and for that matter all other unions—get from the Industrial Court is got on the merits of the case presented. Many things are arrived at by agreement. I have not heard any sound argument nor am I convinced that the teachers would be better off by isolating themselves from the Industrial Court. We all know what happened in 1929-32 when Macgroarty outlawed the workers and denied them the right to go to the Industrial Court.

Mr. Morris: Nobody has suggested what you are arguing.

Mr. DEVRIES: What do they want?

Mr. Hiley: They want to be taken away from the control of the Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. DEVRIES: The Queensland Teachers' Union, supported by members of the Opposition, want the same form of control as is operating in Victoria.

Mr. Morris: They do not.

Mr. DEVRIES: How can the hon. member dispute what I say unless he has been in my office and has had access to my file? If Opposition members support the Queensland Teachers' Union in their desire to have a Commissioner for Education and a system that is modelled on the Victorian lines, they will have happening here what is happening in Victoria.

I will not take up any more time for the present. I merely intended to make a few observations and I shall be content once again to be a good listener.

Mr. INGRAM (Keppel) (5.7 p.m.): First of all, I should like to congratulate the Minister, the Director-General of Education, the Deputy Director-General of Education, the regional directors, and the staff of the Department of Public Instruction as a whole for the magnificent job they are doing in the education of the children of our State. In Rockhampton we have a regional director, Mr. Copeman, whose ability is outstanding. He can be approached not only by the teachers but also by the parents throughout the region, and he is admired by everybody. He is not content to remain in his office, but

visits the schools and addresses the children both in the schools and at various gatherings. The appointing of regional directors was certainly a step in the right direction. The teachers are very pleased as the result of their appointment, because they have immediate access to the regional directors and can get first-hand information.

Much has been said in this Chamber about teachers' accommodation and teachers' residences, and Opposition members have criticised this Government in every direction. By way of interjection, the hon. member for Aubigny said it was impossible for a child to get into some schools. However, one has only to look at some of the schools that were erected many years ago by the Tory Government to realise that it would be impossible for a mouse to get into them, let alone a child. I have here photos of country schools in my electorate that are a credit to this Government. Members of the Opposition are quite wrong when they condemn this Government for not making available more accommodation and more residences for teachers. I intend to read out a list of the work that has been done by this Government. It may be boring to the Opposition, but I am very pleased to be in a position to show what has been done by the Government in one little portion of this State, the Keppel electorate.

Prior to the redistribution of the boundaries of the Keppel electorate, a good deal of work had been done by this Government in improving schools and removing others to better sites, and in transporting children to schools. Work had been done on schools at such places in the Keppel electorate as Kalapa, Calmorran, Ridgeland, Don River, Five Ways Road, Westwood, Bracewell, and Bajool. Between 1944 and 1949 over £20,000 was spent on removing schools and enlarging schools in the area that previously formed the Keppel electorate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the hon. member that expenditure on the constructing of schools comes under the Estimates for the Department of Public Works.

Mr. INGRAM: I approached the Secretary for Public Instruction to have these jobs done, to have teachers' residences built and schools enlarged. Naturally I thought that they would come under this vote.

However, let me deal with the transport of children to the various schools. I take it that comes under this vote. Before the last redistribution of the electorate we had the transport system from the Raglan district, and from the Wowan and Kalapa districts. They were a boon to the children. These things were provided by a Minister who comes from the western parts of the State but he has given us all these things since he has been in office. There are the Causeway to Yeppoon, Bondoola to Yeppoon, Bungundarra to Yeppoon, and the Marlborough district routes. They are very essential for the children. Nothing like that was ever done by Tory Governments. They did not care a tinker's curse for the children. I congratulate the Minister on having provided these services.

The Government have been criticised for failing to provide school accommodation but I have here a list of many jobs that were carried out by the department consequent upon representations by me. He has approved of the erection of two additional classrooms at Berserker Street State School at a cost of £3,044, a teachers' residence at a cost of £2,645, additional classroom accommodation at Joskleigh State School at a cost of £500 and the erection of a new residence for the teacher at a cost of £2,900. It shows that the Labour Government are looking after the dark children as well as the white population. The department is building a very elaborate residence for the teacher at that school. The Minister approved of a new classroom at the Lake's Creek State school costing £1,617 and a new classroom at the Park Avenue State School costing £1,525. I mention these things to prove that the Opposition do not know what they are talking about and that they are only engaging in political propaganda. They know full well what the Government have done in the interests of the children and the teachers. Not one thing did they do for them when they were in office. They were the good old Tory days when you got nothing. The only thing that they provided for the teacher was the cane. That is how they treated the teachers in those times and they cannot deny it.

I heard the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha say that this Government had done nothing for education in the past 10 years. The expenditure on education by this Government during that period was:—

	£
1946-47	2,744,125
1947-48	3,038,819
1948-49	3,613,538
1949-50	4,080,756
1950-51	4,876,482
1951-52	6,079,041

Does that show that the Labour Government have done nothing for the education of our children and teachers? What did hon. members opposite do when they were in power? Absolutely nothing. Their inaction was a shocking disgrace to those they represented.

The hon. member for Isis suggested that parents should offer suggestions. Most teachers are opposed to school committees, and are also opposed to parents offering any suggestions whatsoever. (Opposition interjections.) That is true. I have teachers in my electorate who do not want anything to do with school committees. On the other hand, the Parents and Citizens' Association has done, and is doing, a magnificent job to help the school children. Hon. members opposite talk about what we are doing and what we are not doing, but what did Tory Governments do many years ago? Did they select good sites for the erection of State schools?

Mr. Sparkes: No, they selected them in swamps.

Mr. INGRAM: They did. Take the Lake's Creek State School, which was erected in 1877. It is only in the last three or four years that this Government, with the aid of

the Parents and Citizens' Association, have been able to make a decent playground and sports ground at that school. Take the school ground at Yeppoon, another boghole, on which a school was built in 1885. It has cost the Government many thousands of pounds in an effort to make a decent playground for the children. Even today it is anything but satisfactory. I am appealing to the Minister to give high priority to the erection of a new school at Yeppoon on a site bought recently by this Government. I am pointing out these things to show what the Government have done for education and the benefit of school children and school teachers in comparison with what Tory Governments did years ago. They did nothing, yet their followers of today are criticising this Government. I am pointing out that the accomplishments of this Government are a credit to them. The Moore Government limited the number of scholarships that were granted and those that were granted were available only to those pupils who passed a competitive examination.

Mr. Sparkes: That is what the Minister told you.

Mr. INGRAM: I looked it up before the Minister told me. (Opposition laughter.)

In a speech that I made last year I quoted the figures of what the Government paid by way of wages to the teachers and what the Tory Government paid. I remember the time when the Tory Government only paid £20 a year to teachers, and paid it quarterly. Now that the Government are giving the teachers a fair salary the Opposition should praise instead of criticise them. Each and every teacher in my electorate is highly pleased with the action of this Government and I am pleased because the teachers in my electorate, of whom I am proud, are doing a remarkable job in the interests of the pupils of this State.

Mr. NICHOLSON (Murrumba) (5.21 p.m.): I join with other members in congratulating the Minister on having his Estimates placed before the Committee. I should like to take the opportunity of thanking him for favours received. Since taking office he has done a great job in straightening out what appears to have been a very difficult tangle. He has proved that not only has he a receptive mind but a very retentive one.

Various subjects have been dealt with during the course of the day, one of which is the subject I dealt with in my maiden speech—the saving of teachers by the establishment of area schools. The suggestion has been discounted on several occasions. I believe it is an answer to the problem of how to save teachers, and the numbers saved depend on what area schools are set up. I believe that at the present time 300 teachers could be saved by the establishment of area schools in areas where it is practicable. I pointed out previously that in Samford, Petrie, Strathpine and Dayborough, no fewer than six teachers could be saved for the department.

The subject of accommodation in those area schools has been mentioned. In past years when an area school was formed the small

schools that were closed were moved in to increase accommodation at the central school. It is within the realms of possibility that that can still be done.

The hon. member for Chermshire spoke of the desirability of giving the Department of Public Instruction its own Works Branch to do its own building. I believe there is something in that.

I believe also that private tenders could be invited for the building of schools. I know it will be said that tenders have been called and none submitted, but most of us must agree that many schools, especially those being built in country districts, are outdated and outmoded, the wooden structures in particular. I believe that tenders should not be called for the erection of types of buildings designed by the Department of Public Works but for schools for certain purposes, the person submitting the tender to design the building. That design could then be examined and approved or modified by the department. A similar scheme is in operation in New Zealand now, and there they have some of the finest school buildings in the world. When I visited that country I had the privilege of being shown over an excellent school that had been designed and erected by a private builder. Under that scheme the children, the teachers and the parents are all happy and I suggest it could be introduced with advantage here.

The Minister has replied to certain suggestions for the encouragement of people to enter the teaching profession. It is well known that the majority of teachers entering the profession come from middle-class families who cannot afford to allow their children to study for the profession on present allowances. This means that many children who would otherwise be attracted to the profession enter trades, where the remuneration in the first year of work is much greater. The Minister has asked for suggestions as to means of inducing children to become teachers and I suggest that one of the greatest inducements would be the abolition of the application of the means test to the payment of allowances, not only to children who of necessity must live away from home but also to those who live at home.

Mr. Devries: No means test is applied in this at all.

Mr. NICHOLSON: A means test is applied in that the payment of the allowance is based on the basic wage and the income of the parents. If that condition was abolished greater encouragement would be given to children to join the profession.

Last year some 400-odd teachers left the service. Approximately 1,000 children passed the Senior examination. To replace the teachers who left the service last year, we shall require 400 of those 1,000 students who passed their Senior examination. That is a large number.

The net increase in enrolment is estimated at 6,000 children each year and this will demand, on a pro rata basis, an average of

150 extra teachers. To make up for the loss of teachers and the extra teachers required 550 students will be required to take up teaching. Also, the 2,000-teacher lag will have to be taken into consideration. The Minister has stated that the position does not appear as bad as we of the Opposition state it to be but to catch up with the lag of teachers alone we should require another 150 teachers, virtually an impossibility. In all, to make up for the extra requirements, to provide for the loss of teachers and the lag already existing we shall require 700 out of every 1,000 students who pass the Senior. That appears to be an impossibility, especially when one takes into account the number of students who go to other professions. The question of easing of the restriction regarding allowances is one approach that should be made to the question.

I shall deal with a number of other subjects when we come to the votes covering them but at this stage I should like to comment on what was said by the hon. member for Kedron about free education and how it was introduced by a Labour Government. The free education that exists today would be greatly extended and its value enhanced and greater advantage taken of it by many students if the Government had proceeded in a more businesslike way with the establishment of more secondary schools. The hon. member for Isis gave particulars of the number of children who attend denominational and private secondary schools and the number who attend State schools. The figures could be reversed if the facilities for secondary education existed. I do not wish to take the political angle in this respect, but a saner approach could be made to the establishment of secondary schools.

I will deal with the transport position later on under another vote; I have some constructive criticism to offer there to the Minister. I am pleased that the hon. member for Port Curtis is in complete agreement with me in regard to the transport of children to school and the establishment of area schools. This debate is going to develop into a very free discourse, and I hope that the Minister will gain some useful information from both sides of the Chamber.

Mr. KEYATTA (Townsville) (5.34 p.m.): I desire to compliment the Secretary for Public Instruction on his excellent administration of his department. Everyone will agree that the Department of Public Instruction is one of the most difficult departments to control. Over the years, however, we find that the standard of education in this State has improved, mainly because of the work of the Minister, his advisers, and the departmental officers generally.

It is with deep regret that I refer to the coming retirement of a loyal and faithful officer in the person of Mr. Lew Edwards, who has made his mark. He is a living testimony to the high standard that he has himself created. When criticism has been levelled at him—as it is levelled at anyone who occupies a high public office—it has been done only because mistakes are made and anomalies creep in, as they do with all of

us; that is one of the frailties of human nature. After all, it is only as the result of criticism that we find our proper level and that mistakes are corrected. When we consider that this department's appropriation for 1950-51 was £4,600,000, that the amount expended in 1950-51 was £4,800,000, and that it is expected that the expenditure for 1951-52 will be over £6,000,000, we realise the burden that is cast on this department in a State that is so vast and that has so many sparsely-populated areas as Queensland with a population of approximately 1,100,000. We know, too, the myriad of departments and sub-departments that this vote covers.

In my opinion, this is one of the most important votes with which Parliament has to deal, because education forms the foundation of our State. It is therefore gratifying that we are able to say that our foundation has been excellently laid. The number of Queensland graduates who have gone to high positions in other parts of Australia and overseas shows the high standard of education in this State. As an example, our marine ticket is considered to be one of the best in the world.

Of course, we all realise that the Department of Public Instruction has room for further development. We hear repeatedly criticism of the department and statements that the various training courses should be widened. The basic consideration is the teachers. No-one has yet suggested where we are to get the additional teachers. No educational system is complete without them; it would be like a ship without captain or crew.

Criticism has been levelled against the scholarship system and in this connection let me refer to some comments by a correspondent. He writes—

“What a lot of exaggerated nonsense has been written and spoken lately concerning the so-called burdensome Scholarship Examination, which, some would have us believe, is making physical and mental wrecks of our children. Ridiculous! No visible proof of this is to be found in our children. The only real bugbear attached to the Scholarship is the parent who is continually harassing and threatening the child of the consequences of his failure and causing him unnecessary fear and worry.

“After all, it is only an elementary examination, and over recent years the syllabus has been reduced to a minimum. Scholarship mathematics, for example, require only accuracy and the knowledge of a few rules and the multiplication table. How is any child who cannot perform this going to succeed with elementary algebra, &c., required even for Junior?”

Mr. Pizzey interjected.

Mr. KEYATTA: The hon. member is a highly qualified teacher and I respect his ability. He has been persistent in his criticism on this point, but he ignores the fact that while he was in the teaching service he refrained from raising his voice in criticism

of the system. I know that in his own heart he feels he did an excellent job in the department and the department gives him full credit for that. There are shortcomings in our educational system, but they will be corrected as time goes on.

I draw the hon. member's attention especially to these comments by the correspondent—

“We hear much about insufficient stress on culture. How can a child who cannot write the requisite 25 lines of composition or correct a faulty sentence appreciate good literature?”

Then we have the broadcast by the Minister in explanation of the new syllabus set up by the special committee appointed for the purpose. I propose to refer to one part of it that impressed me greatly. It said—

“The programme of work prescribed provides for a wide, well-balanced course, intended both to discover what particular talent a child does possess, and, secondly, to promote that all-round development of human capacities which is necessary for happiness and true fulfilment of function in life. Gone are the days when schools can concern themselves with the three R's alone.

“Moral development, character development, social development, physical development and cultural development are now all necessary, and consequently the new curriculum postulates that the social studies, the English literature, music, and arts and crafts, elementary general science as well as health and physical education must be included in the course followed by every child.”

We must build the character of the child as we build our public edifices and education system.

I want to refer to the tribute paid by the Minister to Dr. Edwards. His remarks are a fitting testimony to the worth of a most loyal and capable officer—an officer who has played a great part in not only laying the foundations of our education system but in developing it. The Minister states—

“I believe that teachers, too, have cause to be grateful to Dr. Edwards for the sympathetic consideration which he has given to their needs. Their representatives have always been able to discuss freely with the Director-General the welfare of the teachers and of the schools generally. Individual teachers have found a no less cordial reception for the presentation of their own individual worries. Even when he could not meet the wishes of a particular teacher he managed to ‘temper the wind to the shorn lamb’ so that the teacher left his room without any feeling of resentment. He is regarded as the teachers' friend. To many teachers L.D. is a personal friend of long standing. They respect him for his ability and for his achievements, they like him as a man.

“I join with them in wishing the retiring Director-General long years and much content.”

The Minister is big enough to pay that able tribute to a good and respected officer who has rendered not only an essential but loyal service to this State. I am paying a tribute to a loyal officer who will not be seen again in this Chamber supporting this vote. Dr. Edwards has played a great part in nation-building and many hon. members have enjoyed his sympathy, advice and direction. I doubt whether there is in any State in the Commonwealth, an officer of greater educational and administrative attainments. He represented this State at an international conference and the impression he created there reflected credit not only on this State but upon Australia and himself.

Let me revert to the remarks made by Dr. Edwards in his report—

“As a matter of fact education, does not lend itself to really radical change.” which is quite true—

“Changes should be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. They should not be merely spectacular or fanciful in evasion, but should be designed to meet some real social need.

“I thank the teachers of Queensland for their co-operation and loyal devotion to duty and I hope that, with a continuance of this assistance, my successor, on putting off his harness, may be able to ‘boast himself’ that education, under his guidance, has made sound and steady progress.”

That statement reveals Dr. Edwards as a man of great character, for he pays a fitting tribute to his senior and departmental officers and the staff generally. It is true that our friends are those who support us and play an important part in our administration.

I must refer to the decentralisation policy, which has proved very successful. Mr. G. K. D. Murphy, the regional director in Northern Queensland, has carried out an excellent service and under his command the administration improved considerably. I wish to thank him for his courtesy and help at all times.

I wish to refer also to the need for a new Central State School at Townsville, which I have advocated since I became a member of this Parliament. I am pleased to be able to state that the Minister was sympathetic, and the Secretary for Public Works has informed me that the plans are being prepared and submitted for the next stage in our progress towards our goal. I heard members of the Opposition grumbling because no new schools were provided in their electorates. I notice by the report that many schools have been erected and others enlarged in various electorates. The Central State School in Townsville was condemned prior to 1939. The new one was on the Estimates for 1939-40, but owing to war conditions, over which the Government had no control, all public works were suspended. Since the war there has been a shortage of labour and material and the urgent requirements of housing have prevented the work from going on. A new site has been selected for the new school, which will be larger than the

old one. I urge the Minister to do everything possible to have the work carried out expeditiously. Overcrowding and the growing population make it very urgent that the new school be available at the earliest possible date.

The Government have been consistent in the building of schools, which have been built irrespective of whether electorates were represented by Liberal or Country Party members, and the Government are to be commended for the equal treatment meted out to the various parts of the State as a Government policy.

Another matter to which I wish to refer is radio in schools and visual education which are very important in the teaching of children, and have proved effective in other parts of the world in giving children a valuable general knowledge.

When ordinary teaching methods alone are used, only the children favoured with the greater capacity to assimilate knowledge really absorb what is being taught, whereas with visual education many more obtain excellent results. That this method is successful is demonstrated by the following extract from the Director-General's report—

“Continuing development in the use of radio and film in the schools is indicated by the installation of 74 radiogramophones and 65 film projectors. Purchase of this equipment, which was assisted by the Departmental subsidy (£1 for £1) represents a total expenditure of approximately £15,000.”

That amount could be increased considerably, with advantage to our children. The benefit of education by documentary films was amply demonstrated to hon. members in this building recently. Despite what we had heard and read about evaporation, few of us really appreciated what it really meant until we saw the actual position depicted on the screen at that showing. The Government are indeed to be congratulated upon their policy of visual education in our schools. Many years ago, before the Government introduced the system, a member of the West End State school committee at Townsville, a Mr. James Miller, realised its value and brought it before that committee, with the result that funds were raised in various ways and facilities for visual education were installed at that school.

Another important step upon which the Government are to be congratulated is the introduction of vocational guidance. Originally only two officers were engaged but, so successful has the scheme become that many officers are required. Under that scheme, many children who cannot manage to pass theoretical examinations are given the opportunity of doing practical work and in that way demonstrating what excellent tradesmen they can be. A lesson in the importance and value of practical work is to be had in what our forefathers did in the early days. They had not the benefit of education but the great works they did stand today as monuments to their courage and skill.

Then we have adult education. So many people have availed themselves of this facility that here again staff has had to be increased to meet the needs of the people.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LOW (Cooroora) (7.15 p.m.): I feel that the Estimates of the Department of Public Instruction are among the most important that could be presented to this Committee; the education of our children and their general welfare are very important.

I should like to join with other hon. members in expressing the sincere hope that the Director-General of Education and his deputy will enjoy many long years in their retirement. During their terms of office they have encountered many difficulties and what they have achieved will stand the State in good stead for many years to come; in other directions I feel that necessary improvements might be brought about. I hope that the Minister and the Government, when choosing men to fill these important positions, will select the very best available from either inside or outside the department. Their decision will have an important bearing on the lives of our young people, who will be in their hands for many years to come.

The Secretary for Public Instruction has comparatively recently taken over this portfolio and I hope that at the most convenient time he will make a trip abroad. In fact, I am sorry that he did not accompany Mr. Murphy on his trip. He has tackled his duties with sincerity and I was impressed with the fact that he decided to visit the various centres in the State. I did the same thing when I was elected a member of this Assembly. Wherever possible I go to schools to see for myself the conditions under which the children are receiving education and the conditions under which our teachers are carrying on their work.

I pay my tribute not only to the work of Mr. Edwards and his staff but the teachers in general, as I have a very favourable opinion of their services. I should like to add a special tribute to those associated with the Primary Correspondence Section of the department, because the officers in it have a veritable army of children under their control. There are 100 teachers and 5,116 children are enrolled. That staff are charged with the responsibility of getting in touch with students throughout the State and even outside it; I think that they are doing a remarkably good job, and I hope will continue to do so.

The recruitment of additional teachers is a very serious matter and I repeat what I have said before, that I do not think the amount paid in allowances to our young people at the Teachers' Training College is nearly sufficient, particularly when we remember that the Public Service Commissioner has full control of the department. The intake through the Teachers' Training College is on a competitive basis and there is a remarkable difference between the salaries offered to young people who wish to enter the State Public Service and those who wish to take up teaching as a profession. As I said this afternoon

by way of interjection, the allowances that are at present being paid to students are not nearly sufficient. I say quite definitely that every student at the Teachers' Training College has to appeal to his parents for funds so that he can carry on whilst he is at the college. That should not be so, and I am quite certain that because of it we must be losing quite a number of young people who would like to enter the teaching profession. Further, it is no wonder that we are getting no response from the children when they see the conditions that many teachers have to put up with. Although many members have said that the teachers are quite satisfied, I say emphatically that they are not; their conditions are anything but good. For example, teachers' residences are anything but up-to-date.

Mr. Power: That is a matter for the Department of Public Works.

Mr. LOW: I realise that it is a matter for the Department of Public Works, but it is the little things that count. When you move round the countryside and discuss these things with teachers you find that they are full of complaints about little things that could quite easily be fixed up. When the department builds a residence, I cannot understand why it does not do something about painting the interior and making it attractive. If that was done, both the teacher and his wife would be far more satisfied.

Mr. Devries: As an ex-railwayman, you should know that the Government always allow a building to stand for five years before it is painted internally.

Mr. LOW: I know some that have been up for 20 years and have never been painted. I have also seen some stoves in school buildings that are not fit to be in a galley. I believe that if the Minister would rectify such things as that the teachers would be far more satisfied than they are. Even a blind child could not fail to see some of the conditions that teachers have to put up with at the present time, and they are anything but an encouragement to our young people to enter the teaching service.

Mr. Power: That is pure rubbish!

Mr. LOW: That is just what one would expect from the ex-Secretary for Public Works, who was prepared to offer the teachers such rotten conditions—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are not discussing the Department of Public Works at present.

Mr. LOW: I have made my point on that matter.

I should like now to make some reference to area schools. Some 18 months ago I received a communication from the former Secretary for Public Instruction to the effect that the Government had abandoned for at least 10 years the idea of area schools. The reason given was the shortage of man-power and materials, and the fact that there was no hope of catching up sufficiently with the

building lag in other directions to enable them to introduce the system of area schools. However, if the Government decide to establish area schools, who will pay for the cost of transporting the children from the outside areas to the central school?

Mr. Devries: Who do you think will pay for it?

Mr. LOW: At the present time the Department of Public Instruction is not paying sufficient to cover the transport costs adequately.

Mr. Marsden: The department pays a fair amount of the cost.

Mr. LOW: I agree that the department pays a fair amount, but it is not meeting in full its obligation to the owner-drivers who transport children to the various schools. As a matter of fact, the position has become intolerable. You cannot expect the owner-driver to carry the children to school at a loss. In more than 50 per cent. of the cases the parents of the children are paying considerable amounts to maintain existing transport services. Eventually I think the department will have to provide its own busses and convert the closed small country schools into teachers' residences and employ teacher-drivers. That seems to be the only way in which the area schools will be established on a sound financial basis. With the present rate of progress on the part of the Department of Public Works in providing additional school accommodation at central points, it will be many years before we can even think about the scheme quite apart from carrying it out.

All children who are compelled to travel to another school for vocational training should have free transport for the purpose. In quite a number of centres they are compelled to travel to near-by schools for vocational training and they have to pay their own transport fees.

Mr. Devries: What does it amount to?

Mr. LOW: It does not matter what it amounts to.

Mr. Devries: We pay the child's fare to the vocational centre.

Mr. LOW: No. The Minister has already had a communication from me telling him of a number of cases in which the parents are paying transport of children to the vocational centres.

Mr. Devries: I am having it investigated, because I am not satisfied that what you say is true.

Mr. LOW: It is just a case of the Minister's doubting my word. Because I have the courage to tell him the full facts in writing he says he is going to investigate the matter to see whether what I say is correct or not.

Mr. Devries: You have not given the facts.

Mr. LOW: I have. Every child should have free transport to get vocational training. All children should be on a fair basis and have an equal chance.

The Minister has not given a clear-cut decision on the matter of free bus travel for children attending State secondary schools in Queensland. Children who are compelled to travel by bus where no rail facilities exist are expected to pay their own transport fees when attending secondary schools. The department provides free rail transport for students who have passed the Scholarship Examination and are attending secondary schools but if children happen to live in outside centres where there are regular bus services they must pay their own transport fees. I am making the plea that all children should be on the same footing so that none will have to pay the transport fees. I hope the Minister will give that matter favourable consideration.

The Minister should also consider the question of the department's assuming full responsibility for the supply of all textbooks and school requisites for all pupils. Education is supposed to be free but today the Department is pushing more and more of its financial responsibilities on to the parents. Education today is becoming a very costly matter, particularly when the cost of books, &c., is taken into consideration with the alteration of the syllabus from time to time. Books bought for the older child thus become useless for the younger members of the family. I have pointed out that the cost of books is fast becoming the full responsibility of the parent, that the cost of school transport in many instances is his responsibility too, and that parents of teacher-trainees have to make substantial contributions to keep them at the Teachers' Training College. Therefore, it is not hard to discover some of the real reasons why the Government's policy of getting a sufficiency of teachers is not meeting with the success desired. Where is this free education we hear so much about?

The department should also provide clean and up-to-date lunch rooms for school children. When a playshed is not provided at a school children are compelled to eat their lunches underneath the school building. In many instances the underneath portion of the school is dark, dusty and filthy, yet the little ones are expected to eat their lunches under those conditions. I appeal to the Minister to cement the underneath portion of a school building where no playshed is provided, to enable the children to eat their lunches in comfort and in clean surroundings.

I also suggest that in districts where a telephone service is established all schools be connected by telephone to facilitate prompt attention in case of accident or snake-bite. That is important.

I have previously drawn the attention of the Minister to his refusal to allow the Gympie Q.A.T.B. to solicit donations from school children for the purpose of maintaining the ambulance service. That has been the practice in the district for many years and it has been a source of revenue to the brigade.

In addition, it inculcates in the minds of children the need to give to such a worthy cause. The Minister has decreed that this practice must cease. Naturally the Q.A.T.B. is very sore about his decision, which I hope he will reconsider, because the ambulance provides a service to the children as well as giving a sense of security to those people who are compelled to live in isolated parts of the district. Many accidents happen while children are at school and the telephone service has enabled many of them to receive prompt attention. The policy of the Government appears to be to squeeze the Ambulance Brigade so that eventually they will be compelled to take over the whole system in this State and place them under Government control.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LOW: I support the suggestion made by the hon. member for Chermiside that the department should set up its own works and construction sub-department. It can be done and it would give the Minister the right not only to make his own decisions but to see that they are carried out. It would also cause greater contentment in the department and among its officers.

We have heard about the encouragement of school committees, but if the department would reply to correspondence sent in by school committees much quicker than it is doing it would help those committees considerably. It often takes three months before the school committee gets a reply. There is certainly something wrong with the filing system of the department. The present state of affairs is killing school committees stone dead.

The Department of Public Works is strangling the Education Department—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Works Department does not come under this vote.

Mr. LOW: We have heard of the inability of the Department of Public Instruction to build schools in this State, particularly secondary schools, and the reason given has been shortage of manpower and material. I draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that if you have a look over the State you will find that church schools are being built all over Queensland—they are springing up like mushrooms everywhere, despite the shortage of manpower and materials. The Queensland Country Women's Association is able to build hostels. I am not complaining about their doing this work, but it does clearly show that if private enterprise and contractors can do this work for church organisations and organisations such as the Country Women's Association, there is something wrong with the Government if they cannot build secondary schools to accommodate the children.

Mr. Devries: The Country Women's Associations in Nambour is doing a wonderful job for you.

Mr. LOW: My word, they did a wonderful job; nobody is more behind them than I am. (Government interjections.) I hold the

Country Women's Association in the highest respect. We completed a hostel costing £22,000 to accommodate 40 girls and 40 boys. It was a remarkable effort and it has proved a great asset to the Nambour Rural High School. I happen to be chairman of the school committee and I am proud of it. There are 1,400 children attending the school, which has an agricultural section. Nobody has given the Minister more co-operation than I have as chairman of the committee in an effort to make certain that the educational system of our State is everything that it should be. The school is regarded as the show school of Queensland. I want the Minister and the Government to understand clearly that we are trying to achieve something that will be of great benefit and that can be taken as a guide and copied elsewhere. I do hope the Minister will do all he possibly can to see that we get a new secondary school there. I hope that the Secretary for Public Works will not be lacking in his responsibility. (Government interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss public works.

Mr. LOW: I realise that, but when hon. members opposite interject I must reply. I trust there will be no unnecessary interference by the Secretary for Mines and Immigration. If there is anybody sabotaging the State education system, apart from the Secretary for Mines and Immigration is, I should say he is about No. 1.

Mr. POWER: I rise to a point of order. I want a withdrawal of that statement. It is offensive to me to say that I sabotaged the education system of this State. I do not want him to accept my denial; I want a withdrawal, because it is offensive to me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. LOW: In withdrawing it, I say he has caused me enough trouble inside and outside this Chamber for me to make up my mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. LOW: What statement have I got to withdraw?

The CHAIRMAN: The statement that the Secretary for Mines and Immigration sabotages the education system of this State.

Mr. Morris: He did not say that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not asking the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha to tell me what he said.

Mr. LOW: I will accept his denial.

Mr. POWER: I am not satisfied with that. I want a withdrawal of the statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Cooroora to withdraw the statement.

Mr. LOW: Tell me what statement it is.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member said that the Secretary for Mines and Immigration was sabotaging the education system of the State. All I ask him to do is withdraw those words.

Mr. LOW: You are putting me in a rather awkward position.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want the hon. member to explain anything; I want him to withdraw the statement. If he does not do that, I shall have to deal with him.

Mr. LOW: If it is offensive to the Minister, and if it is usual parliamentary procedure, and if it is shown in "Hansard" that it is so, I withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under Standing Orders.

Mr. LOW: But I still think it.

Mr. BYRNE (Mourilyan) (7.43 p.m.): Listening to the speakers this afternoon, one would be inclined to think that the educational system of Queensland was something outrageous. In actual fact, it is something of which we are entitled to be proud. It is my firm belief—and this is confirmed by very many educationists—that it is superior to those of the other States of the Commonwealth, and I do not think the hon. member for Cooroora was sincere in his criticism. I think he was criticising the system merely for the purpose of having some objection recorded in "Hansard." I am sure he does not believe what he said in his speech a few moments ago.

It is my privilege and pleasure to pay a compliment to the Secretary for Public Instruction. Having had occasion to tour my area with him, I know he is particularly energetic and anxious to see the advancement of the schools in my electorate. I have paid him a similar compliment previously and I now assure him that it is sincere. Those sentiments are supported even by hon. members opposite, who have paid him a glowing tribute for his administration of the department.

The Department of Public Instruction seems to have been singled out by hon. members as one at which they are entitled to throw bricks. It is the biggest of our Public Service departments, it does a huge amount of work and it is doing a great deal for the people of this State. The Minister is doing an excellent job. He is a man who has done a considerable amount of work and is putting into his department his personal interest and good will, and I am sure that at the end of his term the people of Queensland will be very proud of the results he will be able to achieve.

Much has been said about the loss of our teachers, but one can expect that, because in industry today employees are leaving to better themselves by taking the higher pay that is offered to them. This is happening in every industry and the teaching service is no exception. These very high wages

being paid in outside callings are only a result of the inflationary conditions brought about by capitalists and others who see an opportunity of making money, but the time is fast coming when, as a result of the Federal Treasurer's income-tax proposals and the curtailment of the money market, those people who have left the teaching service for employment outside will wish to return to the profession. That teachers are leaving the service is no reflection on the department. Those men and women could easily remain in the service and in the long run they would be better off than by taking higher wages outside in industries that are not likely to last.

One also hears much criticism of our school buildings. In my area we are blessed with a rather fine class of school building, and our teachers are contented. On my visits throughout the district I make it a practice to ascertain their little difficulties and troubles, and I find that without exception they have no complaints whatever to make. They usually say that they are contented and happy in their surroundings, and I say without fear of contradiction that in the Mourilyan electorate our small schools compare more than favourably with those in other parts of the State. We are particularly blessed in that respect, as I have said, and the parents of the pupils going to our schools are, in the main, very appreciative of the services that are being rendered by the teachers and the department. One must admit that because of the great spaces to be served there are times when complaints are made but this is only natural and understandable when we remember that whilst Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales are more closely settled, parts of Queensland are sparsely settled, distances are great, and the homes of our children are scattered. The department is therefore often called upon to provide transport services for a few children, which sometimes makes educational conditions rather trying. However, the department is facing up to its responsibilities and I am of the opinion that if many of the complaints that one hears were lodged with the department or with the Minister himself, the causes would be removed. I am sure that the Minister is very approachable and that he does his utmost to be helpful whenever such matters are brought before him.

The primary and secondary schools in Innisfail and Tully are doing wonderful work. I know the head teachers of those schools particularly well, and the members of the various school committees have made very complimentary remarks on what the Minister and his department are doing for them. I have always received a sympathetic hearing from the Minister and to hear hon. members opposite talk about receiving a poor response to their complaints perplexes me. It would be much better if they would take the little complaints that they air in this Chamber direct to the Minister. Frequently hon. members opposite merely make the department a scapegoat when they wish to engage in a little

criticism, but nothing is so damaging to such a speaker himself as criticism that has no foundation.

Mr. WATSON (Mulgrave) (7.53 p.m.): I join with members on this side of the Committee in expressing, first of all, my appreciation of the Secretary for Public Instruction for permitting us the privilege at least of discussing the Estimates for the Department of Public Instruction. That is not quite what hon. members opposite thought I was going to say when I started, but it is what I mean. When I first became a member of this Assembly, I stepped off on the wrong foot with the Minister. The hon. member for Mourilyan has just told us how he was allowed to visit the various parts of his electorate with the Minister, but I was deprived of that privilege when I became a member. However, I think that matter has been straightened out, because I believe that the Minister now realises that I do not make any statement unless I have sufficient proof to enable me to stand up to it.

The hon. member for Mourilyan has suggested that the people of Queensland are proud of our education system. I will not contradict that statement, because I believe that the Minister who now holds this portfolio is doing his very best to overcome many of the difficulties with which the department is faced. However, it is rather difficult to understand how the Minister or the department can expect any member of the teaching service to remain in the department when he is receiving at least 50 per cent. less than the average man who is working with his hands only, who has never had to study hard, and who works the bare eight hours a day. In the sugar industry he can make up to £30 a week. Can you understand, Mr. Farrell, why a man should desire to remain in the department and give his time to study to get a miserly £12 to £15 a week when another person in a job where no brains whatever are required is receiving £30 a week? When members of the Government party say that the teaching staff are satisfied they are not speaking the truth. I have discussed these matters with the older members of the service and they have told me that if they were not so old they would get out and get some of the money that I have mentioned, but as it is they must perforce of circumstances remain in the department and put up with what they get. However, we look to the future and naturally we want to build our teaching staff up to a high level. Therefore I appeal to the Minister to consider giving to the small country schools increased pay and more amenities in keeping with those in the city areas.

In more distant parts of my electorate the teachers have little to be thankful for. Many female teachers have to ride three and four miles a day on bicycles to reach the schools where they teach and in addition have to pay high boarding charges. You know what travel means in the North in the wet season. Can we expect them to continue in these jobs when they can get high salaries, privileges and amenities in the cities such as we cannot

provide for them in the country? The Government must supply these amenities if they expect to hold their teaching staff.

I brought a matter under the notice of the Minister some time ago and I feel I am justified in repeating it on these estimates. I refer to transport fees in outside centres. I want to make it clear that I am not complaining about the bus services that exist in the Central Division. In my electorate much of the transport to schools is provided by persons who own lorries, dairymen, and farmers, and they have helped the department in this respect very considerably.

Mr. Devries: We appreciate that.

Mr. WATSON: I know that the Minister does but the department is not paying enough to give these men a reasonable income having regard to the fact that both their lorry and labour are involved.

Mr. Devries: It is State-wide.

Mr. WATSON: I know, but unless the Minister does something about it very quickly there will be a dropping off in these transport facilities and the little children in the distant parts of the State will not be able to get to school. I discussed the subject with the Commissioner of Main Roads and I found that the average man with a 2-ton truck can make a minimum of £30 9s. 6d. a week. If he works 2 hours he is paid for four and if he works 4½ hours he is paid for 8. I think the Minister pays 1s. 2d. a mile for the transport of the school children.

Mr. Devries: Various rates.

Mr. WATSON: The Minister will find that these men do not get reasonable compensation for the time spent in doing this work. He may suggest that they travel 20 miles, deliver the kiddies, go home and come back again. The Government pay them for the one run.

Mr. Devries: We pay them for every run.

Mr. WATSON: When they travel to Millaa Millaa and to Malanda the distance is up to 37 miles from outside areas. It is not practicable for them to get back to their farms, therefore they remain in town until the time arrives for them to take the children home again. I have brought this point before the Minister again because unless some monetary consideration is given to these drivers they may not keep the services going.

Mr. Devries: I gave them £12,000 of a lift on 1 August this year by increasing the bus rates 25 per cent.

Mr. WATSON: If I remember correctly, the Minister increased the rate by one half-penny a mile.

Mr. Devries: It cost the Government £12,000.

Mr. WATSON: The Minister must remember that the difficulty I have brought before him will have to be overcome, otherwise there is a possibility that the transport service will be discontinued.

I want to inform the Minister on a matter on which he has not been quite rightly informed so far, that is, an additional area for the playground at Millaa Millaa school on the Tableland. I have brought before him on two different occasions the very real necessity for increasing the area. There are four vacant allotments right alongside the school ground. Two of these allotments have been set aside for many years for ambulance and police purposes, but both the ambulance and police have their respective buildings in the town and consequently have no pressing need for this land. It has been suggested that the residence of the school master be shifted from the far corner of the school grounds and that that piece of ground be levelled. That would cost about £1,500 and it is suggested that the Minister should incur this expenditure although he has four allotments right alongside the school house that can be resumed without any trouble and would provide sufficient area for the kiddies' playground. The spending of the money on this project would be unwise expenditure and one the Minister should investigate. The Minister has intimated that he has visited a considerable number of schools, but if he cares to visit this school he will see for himself that this expenditure of £1,500 is quite unwarranted, and that the money could be utilised for more useful purposes, including the provision of internal lighting in our schools. The heavy rainfall in this part of the tropics creates dull days. It is not the custom of the department to provide lighting to State schools except one point to enable the teacher to obtain hot water. The position at the South Johnstone school has been brought before the Minister on several occasions. Anyone visiting that school at 3 o'clock in the afternoon will find it in near darkness. The department has placed extra windows in the school to provide more light, but the difficulty will be overcome only by the installation of internal lighting. Money is being spent on works which are not in the best interest of the school. The Minister is governed by the report of his inspectors in these small matters and requests such as I have made are usually turned down on the ground that it is not the policy of the department to install internal lighting in schools. I make this suggestion in all good faith, and I hope that the Minister will appreciate that my representations have been made in good faith and give them favourable consideration.

Mr. GRAHAM (Mackay) (8.4 p.m.): The contributions to the debate by hon. members of the Opposition have so far been mostly critical. They have not given any credit to the Minister or the department and one would deduce from their remarks that we have one of the worst educational systems in the world, instead of the best. I would in this respect refer hon. members opposite to this paragraph in the report of the Director-General of Education—

“I cannot promise my successor that he or the department controlled by him will be free from public criticism. Enlightened criticism is to be welcomed.”

Had the Opposition been benevolent enough to give the Minister and his departmental officials the credit that is due to them they would be making a more worthy contribution to the debate than offering the criticism they have done.

The Director-General continues—

“Of course, there will always be people who consider themselves capable of detecting and describing all the ills and ailments from which education allegedly suffers. Some do not suggest remedies. Others—amateur diagnosticians—are quite prepared to perform major operations on the body educational.”

“One sometimes fears that they may remove a vital part and kill the patient. Radical experimentation with young minds is not to be encouraged. There are others, again, who do not specify any particular malady. They suggest simply that the patient does not look well and is in need of a complete overhaul.”

That is the approach the Opposition have made to this department. If we cast our minds back we must realise that Queensland has kept pace in education with other States and we can reasonably say that we have a system that can compare with any similar system throughout the world. In the system in operation we have nothing of which we need be ashamed and the people of Queensland have nothing of which they need be ashamed. The Minister has said that we welcome criticism of our department or any other Government instrumentality, but we expect constructive criticism, not the puerile and paltry criticism that has been levelled at the department by hon. members opposite.

Let us look back and see the progress that has been made under this system and the development that has occurred over the last 30 years since the advent of Labour in this State. I remember that when we had a system of primary education only, unless your parents had money your education was restricted to it. That is not so today, because of the progress made under Labour Governments. The child of today, whether his parents are poor or rich, is able to go from the primary school to the University at little cost. There have been thousands of young men and women to whom secondary and University education has been denied because their parents could not afford to pay for them. It was only the children of wealthy parents who could attend the University.

Mr. Dewar: It is free in Western Australia.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course it is. That is due to Labour Governments. It is the aim of this Government, and it should be the aim of any Government, to provide the best education for the young people, because it is the foundation of our civilisation.

Mr. Dewar: You said it was the best.

Mr. GRAHAM: I say it is the best.

Mr. Dewar: It is free in Western Australia.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is only a point. I remind the hon. member that money does not make a thing the best. Here we have an educational system of which we should not be ashamed.

An Opposition Member: They appreciate it more if they pay for it.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course.

I wish to refer to the remarks of the hon. member who just resumed his seat on the question of transport. In years gone by the parents of the children who lived miles away from school accepted the responsibility of sending the children to school, and many of them had to walk miles, and never missed a day; other children whose parents were better off had bicycles, horses, or sulkies and horses provided for them. Today, because the Government accept some responsibility for transport, there are people who want to capitalise on it; there are many people who want to get more money out of the Government. I believe there is a limit to how far they can go. The Government have done very well to provide the services in existence to enable children to attend school. Then, by passing a qualifying examination, they can take a secondary education and then to the university standard. In addition, the Government provide scholarships and fellowships, so that irrespective of a child's parentage, rich or poor, our system enables him to reach the top if he has the ability to pass qualifying examinations.

Mr. Sparkes: Do you believe in the scholarship system?

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course I do. It has justified itself in this State and we are doing the right thing by retaining it. The Labour Party has been in power in this State for many years and has proved conclusively that it is interested in the education of our people, that it does realise that education is the foundation of our existence. The Minister and his officers have nothing to be ashamed of in the work they have done and are doing.

Mention has been made of the fact that we are not attracting new teachers to the service. One does not need a particularly bright intellect to realise that one of the greatest reasons why we are having difficulties in staffing our schools is the repeated attacks being made on our staffs by private enterprise, which by dangling tasty plums before them entice our teachers from the service. We admit that there are some disadvantages in the department, one of them being the fact that a teacher may be stationed out in the country in charge of a one-teacher school. Many of those people who, under normal circumstances, would enter the profession are being attracted by private enterprise, by the banks and commercial houses.

The hon. member who has just resumed his seat tried to compare the salaries paid to teachers with the remuneration paid to a man engaged in the sugar industry. There is no analogy between the two. The teacher has security of employment and he receives a salary for 52 weeks of the year, while the

man engaged in the sugar industry is lucky if he gets 14 weeks' work in a year. After that, what does he do? Thousands of men are leaving the sugar industry because of insecurity of employment. The Government cannot be blamed because we are having difficulty in staffing our schools. The department is doing everything possible within its means to encourage young people to join the service.

Another important point is that the environment in which our people are being reared is not conducive to their entering the teaching profession. School-teaching is a profession, not an occupation, but there are still many who enter it today and endeavour to make an occupation of it.

Mr. Morris: I do not agree.

Mr. GRAHAM: There are many misfits in the department.

Mr. Morris: Your colleague said there are fewer today than there have ever been.

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not concerned about what my colleague said; I am giving my opinion. I say that there are a number of misfits in the department today but they are people who accept their employment in the educational service purely as an occupation. In years gone by—and it applies to some extent today—the men and women who joined the service were imbued with the idea of taking up teaching as a profession, and unless they approach the problems of education from a professional point of view they will be misfits in the department. There are many in the department who could be put in that class. They are the people who are trying to bring about trouble in the department and who are continually complaining about conditions.

Mr. Morris: That is an unfair attack on teachers.

Mr. GRAHAM: It is not. I say that the majority are honourable, upright professional men and women who devote their lives to the welfare of our children. I am pointing to the few within the department, because I know of them and so does the hon. member. They are continually finding fault and trying to drive the union to force the Government to do this and that. If one looks through the numbers of teachers within the department one will find that 95 or 99 per cent. of them are of the right type, the real professional men and women who make teaching a profession and who are doing an exceedingly good job. Compare the standard of education in Queensland with the standard of 30 or 40 years ago and one must admit that the standard today is higher than it was in those days. But we have not yet reached the peak of our attainments, because as additional facilities are provided so every child will have the opportunity to do greater things. It is the responsibility of the Government to provide those facilities in order that our children will have the opportunity to gain much that has been lost because of the existence of one-teacher schools. I am in agreement with the remarks of other speakers about the development of

area schools, which would overcome many of our problems and do away with a lot of the discontent that exists amongst teachers. If area schools can be developed—and I know it is a problem—it would be for the betterment of education generally.

Much has been said about accommodation and despite the problems the Government have had to contend with there are few areas that have cause for justifiable complaints in regard to accommodation. Many of our schools are perhaps overcrowded but in a country with a climate like Queensland many of our children could be as well educated in the open air as in closed rooms.

Mr. Sparkes: How would you like to be out in the open air with a temperature of 114 in the shade?

Mr. GRAHAM: I am not suggesting that nor would I say that children should be taken out in cold climates but there are areas where education outside would be all right. From my own knowledge of the accommodation question the department has met the position to the best of its ability, and it has to be realised that every request put forward for increased accommodation cannot be met overnight. Many factors have to be considered before these problems can be solved satisfactorily. I think that the Department of Public Works, under the direction of the Department of Public Instruction, has met most of the requests made for the building of school rooms.

In our consideration of these Estimates we must give the Secretary for Public Instruction credit for his careful handling of his department; to the Director-General and the whole of the teaching staff also we must give credit. And a section of the community to whom great credit is due is the school committees that are operating throughout the State. Some of them are known as school committees and some as citizens and parents' committees. All those people are working in the interests of the schools and are performing a very worthy service.

Mr. Sparkes: Why do you not tell that to some of your people?

Mr. GRAHAM: Why should I have to tell it to some of my people? I will stake my reputation that more people connected with the Labour Party are associated with school and citizens and parents' committees than those belonging to the hon. member's organisation. These school committees are operating throughout Queensland and they are doing an excellent job. However, there is much room for improvement in that many more parents should take an active interest in the educational welfare of their children. I know that during the many years I was associated with school committees in Mackay, there were hundreds of parents who never came inside the school gates and who showed no interest at all in the school lives of their children. All the work was left to the few who were prepared to devote their time and energy to raising funds for providing amenities for the children.

In conclusion, I say that credit must be given not only to the Minister but to the Director-General and his staff and to every member of the teaching service throughout Queensland, and to the school committees, who have done a magnificent job in helping to provide amenities for the schools and making the school-life of the child much more pleasant than it would otherwise be. If we continue to raise and develop the educational standard of Queensland as we have done over the last 25 or 30 years, we shall be doing only what is expected of us and discharging our trust for the people of this State. No Government would be worthy of their hire if they did not continue to improve the educational facilities that are the right of every parent and every child of this State.

Mr. LUCKINS (Norman) (8.23 p.m.): During the many years that I have been a member of this Assembly I have seen many Ministers of this department come and go. The present Minister, however, has shown a certain amount of enthusiasm for his job.

A good deal has been said today about the depletion of our teaching staff as the result of resignations and such things as marriage, but one of the main causes of our troubles—and I have said this on many previous occasions—is that this Government have always been a low-wage Government. When I say that, I am blaming not the various Ministers, but the policy of this Government. Many brilliant young men and women have taken up the teaching profession only to find that their salaries were not sufficient to meet their commitments and leave them with a little to put by for the time in their lives that means so much to them. The result is that they are attracted outside the teaching service. I know one young man in particular who said to me, "I am sorry. I like the profession of teaching, it is a very fine profession and I should like to attach myself to it for the rest of my life. However, I cannot stay in it because the wages and conditions are not satisfactory. I have been offered an attractive job outside with more money and in an attractive place where I can enjoy all the amenities of life." The result is that the department loses the services of young people such as that, and it is a good deal poorer as the result. Whether in private enterprise or in Government departments, if you want to maintain a high standard you must pick your man and pay him properly. If the department will revise its standards of payments it will be able to attract to its teaching service the young men and women it requires.

One thing that concerns me and I think every other hon. member is the neglect of the cultural side of our education. The Director-General is a man of high qualifications and one must speak well of his ability and his capacity to direct the education system in Queensland. However, I am sorry to say that I believe the cultural standard of education has been neglected and I ask the Minister and the Government party generally to carry out the promise of a previous Minister and Governments for many years, to build a Conservatorium of Music in this State. I suppose that this matter will be paraded by

the Government party for electioneering purposes in the near future and that again it will be made a political football but I am prepared to support this proposal against all others in the interests of the community and the children generally.

I am not complaining about the standard of education in general—I believe it is fairly good. I am satisfied that the men responsible for our system of education are well qualified to attend to it and I specially pay a tribute to the young ladies who formulated the syllabus for the kindergartens. If my memory serves me correctly, one of the lasses came from my own home town. I hope that the department will at least acknowledge publicly what these ladies have done in formulating the syllabus now used in the kindergarten classes in this State.

I did not intend to speak at length on this vote. I shall have opportunities for constructive criticism when the votes for the various sub-departments are under consideration. I am not in a critical mood tonight but rather am I out to help the Minister. I said before that I had seen five Ministers in this department pass through this Assembly since I have been here. I am not going to say who has been the best but if enthusiasm and the desire to help the boys and girls count for anything, the present Minister will go a long way towards having his name remembered for his work for the welfare and interests of the younger generation. Owing to peculiar circumstances over which I had no control, during the redistribution of the electoral boundaries on the last occasion I have only one school in my large electorate. For many years I asked for the establishment of a domestic science and manual training classes at the East Brisbane State School. I am not going to blame the Director-General of Education or any of the officials of the Department for the fact that although I have asked for these classes for two or three years or more they have not been granted. When the last redistribution of boundaries took place this school was taken out of my area and put into the electorate of South Brisbane and no time was lost before the new domestic-science hall was built and opened with a blare of trumpets. You would think that it was the man of the hour who was interested in domestic science and manual training at the East Brisbane school. I had occasion to complain in this Assembly that because the people of Maree elected me in preference to a Labour man that school was neglected. I still say that up to the time I ceased to be the representative of that area it was neglected. I am sorry to admit that because the people in that area had elected me as their representative in preference to a Labour man they were denied these privileges for a number of years. I am pleased that the people now have those facilities and I desire to thank the Minister and the Director-General for creating them for they will be a Godsend and a blessing to the girls and boys who now receive the benefit of them.

I want to make one or two suggestions for the better working of the department. We

are slaves to tradition in our education system. We have men inspectors. Why not appoint one or two of our brilliant women who have attained to the highest posts in the department to give special attention to girls' schools, kindergarten and infant schools? I hope my suggestion will receive the consideration of the Minister and that he will appoint some lady inspectors and break from the old tradition that men are the best fitted for inspectorial work. It has been said that when you educate a man you educate an individual but when you educate a woman you educate a nation. There is a great deal of substance in that saying because in the main women have the welfare of our children at heart and are a great help to the school teachers and by forming the minds of little ones and helping them in their lessons and homework in no small measure help us to attain the standard of efficiency we have attained today. I pay tribute to the mother more so than the father, because the mother has a greater influence on the home life of the child. The mother is a hard-working, industrious woman; she is an underpaid and an under-privileged type of citizen, yet is the mother of our nation.

I hope that the Minister and the Director-General will so arrange the curriculum that the cultural side of the children's lives will not be neglected. I refer particularly to the classics and all those things that go to make the lives of our school children very beautiful and interesting. I am amazed sometimes when I listen to our wireless. It is very unfortunate that the censorship of our wireless stations does not prohibit those rumpus-room clubs and similar things that are broadcast on Sunday afternoons where the children are brought together and sing such items as "Abba-dabba Honeymoon" and such rotten importations from America whose educational, classical and musical standards will never compare with British or European standards. I refer to the classical side of music, particularly such old masters as Tchaikovsky, and those from southern Europe and Germany. Go to France and similar places and you are able to listen to the music of the giants instead of the trash that we hear. I believe the original of this trash was introduced to America by the negroes in the slave days. Nothing is more depressing to an adult than to find children singing the songs that are nothing more than the sexual filth that comes out of America. "Slipping Round" is a song that should be excluded from any decent home. Let us have instead the poems of Burns, who portrayed the beautiful home-life and character of the Scottish people. Let us have the poems of Thomas Moore, of Ireland. That is a type of culture our schools are badly in need of. We have the English classics also and the English poems, but it is to Robert Burns that I pay the greatest tribute of all, because he was never in a university. As Oliver Wendell Holmes said—

"He has gone to a higher glory;
He left this land its sweetest songs,
The earth its saddest story."

Anybody who knows the life of Robert Burns will realise the great handicaps that Burns

suffered by not being able to mix with society, nevertheless he gave us some of the most beautiful songs that we have today.

I want the Minister and the Director-General of Education to try to bring into our system of education some of the beautiful stories and poems and some of the great music of the old masters. I include English, Scotch, Irish, and I am not forgetting the Welsh, because I understand the Director-General who has made his way to the highest office in his department is a Welshman, and from Wales we get the beautiful carols.

I will leave hon. members with those few impressions. I wish the Minister well. In the words of Charlotte Brontë—

"May his footsteps be guided with special care,

And his future crowned with success."

I should like to give hon. members some proverbs of China if I had the time. I spent a number of years in that country, where the educational level of the people was terrible beyond belief. It was a relief of the dark ages. Nevertheless their lack of education has not been such a great handicap. I have seen in this country foreigners who could neither read nor write English, but who were able to cope with anyone who tried to put anything over them in deals involving money. One of the Chinese proverbs to which I referred a moment ago could be followed with advantage by those who are in difficulty and who hold offices charged with high responsibility. It is—

"Walk softly and go far."

Mr. BROSNAN (Fortitude Valley) (8.41 p.m.): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has taken us on a veritable Cook's tour. He has taken us through the classics, we have been hepped with jive, and solaced with Confucius. I am sorry that he could not get on to his pet subject, the railway crossing at Woolloongabba.

I feel confident that the hon. member could overcome many of the problems he mentions in connection with listeners' programmes if he would only accept the advice offered from this side and tune into 4KQ. Not only that, but his education would be advanced considerably. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BROSNAN: They do not worry me, Mr. Farrell. As the hon. member for Carpentaria said, we can get round the paddock with the bulls and heifers, just as well as the hon. member for Aubigny can, and we do not need any stockwhip or horse.

The vote before the Committee is one of immense importance. The value and advantages of education are evidenced on all sides. One does not need to be clairvoyant to appreciate and realise what advantages accrue from education; one does not need to be very observant to see what our education system has meant to the people of Queensland. Before proceeding to deal with it, I should like to pay tribute to the Ministers

who have controlled this department, to the present Minister in particular, because he has shown a great deal of ability and has made himself conversant with all facets of it. No doubt he will agree with me that his Director-General, Mr. Lew Edwards, has been a very co-operative and loyal officer and he in turn has had a very loyal and helpful staff.

We are fortunate in having the staff we have at the head of our Department of Public Instruction and I think the hon. member for North Toowoomba described the position aptly this morning when he said that the product was proof of the efficiency of our system of public instruction. I believe that the product is worthy of production, that our system has stood the test of time, that it is being improved and will, by evolutionary processes, continue to be improved, and we shall not be stampeded, as hon. members opposite would like us to be.

Speaking of the product of the system, my thoughts turn immediately to technical education, the product of which in Queensland is equal to any in Australia or for that matter, now that we are having a number of tradesmen coming from overseas, equal to any I have seen from overseas, and I have seen many of them in my position as organiser of the Electrical Trades Union before entering this Parliament.

The Apprenticeship Executive and Committees and the office that administers that section are worthy of consideration and recognition. Possibly hon. members are conversant with the set-up but I think it would not be inopportune to record and make reference to it. As this Committee knows, there is a chairman who is also the chairman of the group committees, some 26 in number. The bigger groups are the building trades, the engineering and electrical groups, and the employer and the employee have equal representation on these committees of which the permanent head in the office is chairman. These group committees determine the curricula that apprentices will take in their technical courses. The committees examine the papers set at the end of each year and the final year and have the opportunity of altering, amending or referring back anything they think is not part of the training; that the apprentice has had or is contrary to the curricula laid down. It is important to appreciate that at all times the employer and the employee alike, through their representatives, have not only access to the administrative side of the Apprentices and Minors' Regulations but access to the college and the apprentices. This is important, particularly when we realise that in the Brisbane area for the year ending 30 June some 1,147 apprentices were enrolled and indentured and for the country 1,331, a total of 2,478.

It is interesting to note that a demand is being made in Southern States through the A.C.T.U. for a better system of education for apprentices in those States and it has been suggested that the Queensland Act and the Queensland method of administering the apprenticeship office should at least be taken as the basis. I believe that the unions will

not be satisfied with anything less; it would be very satisfied with that system if it could get it, even if it does not get anything more. I do not think any more is necessary because in addition to the manual colleges we have in Queensland, we have an excellent correspondence system and it is not until one gets into country areas—and country members should know this—that one realises to the full just what these correspondence courses mean. I want to mention and emphatically draw the attention of hon. members to this point: that the technical education of apprentices is designed to help them to know and understand why they are performing their respective tasks at the trades they are learning. Since I became a member of this Chamber I have heard hon. members opposite slanging the technical-education system because of some shortcomings in apprentices. It is the employer's job to teach the apprentice his trade and that fact should not be forgotten. We must not get away from the fact that it is the employer's job to teach the apprentice his trade. The apprentice is indentured and the indenture is legally binding on the employer, the apprentice, and the guardian.

All the protection that the employer needs is in the indenture, but some employers, merely because the apprentice has to go to college in the day-time, say to him, "That is where you learn the trade. They will teach you down there," and they would be prepared to use him merely to boil the billy if it were not for the fact that they were kept up to scratch by the industrial inspectors and the union organisers. That is not true of all employers, but unfortunately it is true of some of them. That is why I emphasise the necessity for employers to realise and discharge their responsibilities to apprentices.

The technical training that apprentices receive is second to none in the Commonwealth of Australia, and a tribute must be paid to the teachers, both full-time and part-time. One of the unfortunate shortcomings of group apprenticeship committees is that with the exception of once a year, they come into contact only with delinquent apprentices, to the extent that each month they deal mainly with apprentices who have either failed in their examinations or who are not up to the mark in their attendance, behaviour, or diligence at their classes. At the end of each year, however, the opportunity is offered to inspect the work that is done by the apprentices at the Central Technical College. That opportunity is offered also to members of this Assembly, and last year particularly I noticed how few hon. members availed themselves of it. Apprentices generally do their work well and pay strict attention to their instructors, but there always will be a percentage of lads who do not come up to scratch and consequently have to be dealt with. In accordance with the regulations, the committees are empowered to withhold increases in the wages of apprentices. At one time they could punish them by withholding increases altogether, but now if an increase is withheld

and the lad makes good, the money that he would have received as the result of the increase is held in trust, and the committee can order the payment of it to the apprentice, so that in effect he loses nothing in the long run if he plays the game.

The work that is done by the welfare officer at the Apprenticeship Office is, I feel quite sure, neither realised, appreciated, nor recognised. He does a good deal of work either at the behest of the chairman or as the result of complaints by employers or as a result of a check of college records, which unfortunately, because of pressure of work he very seldom has the time to do. He spends a good deal of time in seeing the apprentice at his actual place of employment, conversing with him and his employer and in ironing out any troubles that arise. The value of this work cannot be underestimated and, as I said, I do not believe that it is either realised or appreciated. Only this morning I heard the manager of a firm complimenting the present welfare officer for a job that he did last Thursday. Apparently the apprentice in question was not doing all that he might have done in the matter of attendance at college or in connection with his studies, and matters had reached such a state that he felt that in returning to the college he would not be acting correctly from the viewpoint of his mates. He felt that he had played up a little and that to return to the college would be an indication of weakness. The welfare officer got in touch with him, pointed out the error of his ways, reminded him of his obligations, then interviewed his employer and finally the employer and the apprentice together. Now the lad is back at college again, a happier lad with a full understanding of the wrongs he had done. He has returned in time to redeem himself, to carry out his apprenticeship with good feeling all round. That is very important. There is no bitterness, no nastiness on the part of either the employer to the apprentice or the apprentice to the employer.

The welfare officer has more work than he can cope with. There are 1,100-odd apprentices in Brisbane and a percentage of them need personal attention. I suggest to the Minister in all seriousness that he consider the appointment of another welfare officer because two welfare officers attached to the department would make all the difference. They could to a large extent reduce the delinquency that is ever present and always will be, but which can be nipped in the bud, if the lads are spoken to by men who are positively adapted to their job. They perform a meritorious service unheralded and unsung.

I know it will be suggested that we should do something about the country apprentices but they have the benefit of all the help of the industrial inspectors. I know of no more noble band in any section of the Public Service than the industrial inspectors who travel the vast areas of the State. I am sure that the hon. member for Warrego, who like myself has just left the industrial field, will agree that the industrial inspectors do a mighty job regardless of what field they

operate in. The apprentices come under their jurisdiction and they handle them well. The industrial inspectors are handling the apprenticeship problems on behalf of the Apprenticeship Committees in the country areas of the State. In Brisbane the 1,100-odd apprentices have the help and guidance of one welfare officer, and could well do with another.

I have touched only briefly on the subject of the Apprentice Executive Office. Hon. members should give some thought to the inspection of the work of the apprentices this year when it is set out at the Central Technical College. If they did that then they would appreciate the value of the work. They would understand what is being done in the matter of technical education and what is being done by the officers at the Apprenticeship Office. Then when the Estimates of the department are submitted again next year they would have a full realisation of technical education and their criticism would be constructive rather than destructive.

Mr. LLOYD ROBERTS (Whitsunday) (8.59 p.m.): When the Minister submitted his Estimates today he asked for constructive criticism, and that is as it should be, but it is to be hoped that the constructive criticism he is getting will not be like water on a duck's back.

There is not the slightest shadow of doubt that constructive criticism has been offered from this side of the Committee today in a form that will help the Minister in the administration of his department and it is with this in view that I rise to participate in the debate. The particular matter I wish to speak on is the establishment of a diploma course in engineering, which was briefly touched on by the hon. member for Cook. I was interested to hear the figures quoted by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who stated that there were 1,147 apprentices in this city and 1,331 in the country. It should be the ambition of the majority of these apprentices to go further in their respective callings. A number of apprentices in the city have that opportunity, because of the facilities afforded at the Central Technical College. The apprentices in the country are very much at a disadvantage in that respect.

Mr. Devries: The percentage of passes of boys in the country is better than that of the apprentices in the city.

Mr. LLOYD ROBERTS: I would not doubt that; I am firmly of the opinion that the intelligent people come from the country. The correspondence course available to the people in the country is a very difficult one for them to handle, especially when they have no-one to coach them. This is not a matter that I am merely bringing up in this Committee, for I discussed it with the Minister personally over 12 months ago, since when we have carried the matter along a step further by correspondence. We are endeavouring to have a diploma course in engineering established in Mackay and district. I

do not know whether such a course is available in Rockhampton or Townsville or any other country centre, but it is with a view of having this course instituted in country centres that I am bringing the matter before this Committee. In February last I wrote to the Minister giving him the name of 10 apprentices who were prepared to take such a diploma course and that was not the total number available in the Mackay district. We have eight sugar mills in the Mackay district, apart from such engineering firms as Walkers Ltd., C. A. Hodge, Dunn and Son, and others. These 10 apprentices come from the Pleystowe, Farleigh, Plane Creek, and North Eton sugar mills, and I know that many of the other mills are interested too. I took this matter up with the Minister and with the various sugar mills, as they are particularly keen on having this course established. The chamber of manufactures in Mackay is also keenly interested, as well as Sugar Research Ltd., which stated that in the very near future it would have a number of highly-qualified officers on its staff, and it was prepared to make these officers available to the classes for lecture purposes and the like if they were required. So you can see that the district as a whole is solidly behind this proposal.

The position as it stands at the moment is that if one of these lads does the diploma course by correspondence he must spend the last year in Brisbane. We have heard much about the drift to the city. Will not a system that compels a youth to spend the last year of training in Brisbane accentuate that drift to the city? By the time he is ready to do the last year the youth is possibly approaching his early twenties, and if he spends 12 months down here it will be hard to get him back to the country. The present system of correspondence, which forces these lads to come to the city for the last 12 months' training, is denuding the country of skilled qualified men.

The letter I wrote on the matter was dated 16 February, 1941, and on 29 March I received a reply from the Minister in which he said he was having the matter investigated and that he had put questions on the matter to the principal of the Mackay Technical College. That indicated to me that the Minister appeared to be keen to do something along the lines I suggested. I was quite buoyed up with the idea that this might come about, but on 15 May I received the following letter from the Acting Secretary for Public Instruction:—

“With further reference to your inquiries in the matter, I desire to inform you that the fullest inquiries have been made in regard to the possibility of commencing oral Diploma Courses at Mackay Technical College.

“In order to commence such classes, even for the first two years of the course, it would be necessary to provide well-equipped drawing rooms. The present accommoda-

tion is scarcely adequate for the existing apprentice classes and every effort is being made to extend the present facilities.”

(Government interjections.)

For the benefit of those ignorant members who do not understand, the apprentice must attend at least two or three nights a week. That is the normal apprenticeship class; it has nothing to do with the diploma course in engineering.

The letter continues:—

“Moreover, the number of students offering is so small that it is extremely doubtful if a standard-size class could be formed for any one stage.”

I had 10 names and there was a further number, which would have made the number up to 16, or 18 or 20. Even if it was a small number, would it not have been possible to organise a similar thing in Rockhampton, Mackay and Townsville? With the advent of plane travel that we have now the tutors could quite easily travel from one town to the other during each week and pass on their valuable knowledge to those young people. They say further that there was no room and they would have to provide well-equipped drawing rooms and that the college was not big enough. It is a crying shame if that is so. I do not know of any outside enquiries that were made. There are various halls and perhaps other places that could be used for a purpose such as this.

Too little consideration has been given to the formation of diploma classes in the country and I beseech the Minister and his Cabinet to go further into this question of helping those apprentices who are desirous of going further in their trades. It would add to the prestige of the State as a whole if we could produce a greater number of qualified men than we have now, and I repeat that it would be another check to this drift to the city, besides encouraging the further decentralisation of those industries that urgently need qualified men.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.13 p.m.