

**The Influence of Progressivism on
Tasmanian State Primary Education**

1904-20

Grant Rodwell B.A (Hons) Uni. of Tas., M.Ed. (TCAE)

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other higher degree or graduate diploma in any tertiary institution, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Shodwell
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Abstract

This thesis examines the influence of progressivism on the development of state primary education in Tasmania between the years 1904-1920 and attempts an explanation of why its influence was more pronounced in some areas of state primary education relative to others.

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It was a period/which progressivism reached its zenith. Progressivism drew on older traditions of social reform, but also generated many new elements with national efficiency as its fundamental drive. This was a period of a vast intensification of thought, and a period of unparalleled confidence that Western society, with the onset of the twentieth century, was about to enter a new era. Confidence, however, would often lapse into intense anxiety. This for many was to be the dawn of the 'new' man. The Introduction to this thesis examines in general terms the main elements of progressivism and how these affected the development of progressive education. The Tasmanian setting is also examined briefly and in general terms to show how this shaped progressivism and progressive education in state primary schools.

The thesis opens with an examination of the impact of progressivism on educational management in Tasmanian state primary schools. W.L. Neale, a South Australian Senior Inspector of Schools, had been commissioned by the Tasmanian Government in 1904 to report on the efficiency of the Tasmanian Education Department. This marks a logical starting point for the study. Neale's administration, three Royal Commissions of enquiry into his administration and his eventual rejection reveal important elements of study for an understanding of the influence of progressivism on Tasmanian state primary education. The appointment of Neale's successor, W.T. McCoy, and his career until his move to South Australia is then studied.

The impact of progressivism on the state primary school curriculum, early childhood education, school health and hygiene and school architecture is examined. The impact of the progressives' rural ideal, the development of the new psychology, and the rising concern for a special education for intellectually atypical children provide further material for the thesis.

The First World War irrevocably affected the development of progressivism, and so too, progressive education. From now the 'new' men would advance under the banner of science. The thesis is concluded with an analysis of the changing patterns of progressive education in Tasmanian state primary schools during the period 1920-1945.

Abbreviations

ACER	The Australian Council for Educational Research
ADB	<i>Australian Dictionary of Biography</i>
AJE	<i>Australian Journal of Education</i>
AOT	Archives Office of Tasmania
ER	<i>The Educational Record</i>
JPPP	Journals, Papers and Proceedings of Parliament (Tasmania)
MHA	Member of the House of Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
NEF	New Education Fellowship
PPRST	Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania
Rep Prim Ed Tasmania	W.L. Neale, Report on the System of Primary Education in Tasmania
RC 1946	<i>Report of the Committee on Educational Aims in the Primary School, 1946</i>
TJE	<i>Tasmanian Journal of Education</i>
TIER	Tasmanian Institute of Educational Research

Conversions

1 d (penny) 0.83 cents

1 s (shilling) 10 cents

1 (pound) \$2

1 mile 1.6 kilometres

1 acre 0.40 hectare

INTRODUCTION

Progressivism and Progressive Education

To understand progressive education we must understand in broad terms progressivism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Progressives were basically reformists. They drew on new dimensions of human thought. Sidney Webb in 1901 declared that 'during the last twenty or thirty years, we have become a new people'.¹ With a new century looming, sections of society took a new step forwards, shedding much of the cumbersome and antiquated institutions of the past century. In Australia educational reform was in the forefront of this upheaval.

Roe, in surveying the common assumptions of the progressives prefers to associate them with the terms 'vitalism' or 'modernism'.² The thinkers of the early progressive years sought to discover new truths about individuals and society. An assumption shared by these thinkers was that the newly discovered truths would lead to, or even be synonymous with, wonderful and inspiring achievements by individuals and society. Fused with this notion was the belief that the new truths would be achieved through the understanding and exercise of human faculties beyond those as yet little commonly understood and exercised. Typically these thinkers looked beyond the capabilities of rational intellectuality. To realise the untapped potentialities of individuals and society thinkers needed to step beyond traditional modes of thought, thus heightening individuals' and society's achievements. The emphasis on the drive to achieve higher levels of wonder and inspiration justifies Roe's use of the term 'vitalism' to associate the

1 S. Webb, 'Lord Rosebery's Escape From Houndsditch', *Nineteenth Century and After*, Sept. 1901, p. 368

2 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, St Lucia, Qld, 1984, p.3

thinkers of the progressive era. In Tasmania and elsewhere in Australia, J.S.C. Elkington's work exemplifies these thoughts. Progressives, as Roe notes, voiced a staunch anti-liberalism in the sense that the thinkers held reservations against the rational intellectuality of the liberal tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For the progressives John Stuart Mill and people of his ilk premised their philosophy on a rational, or even non-dynamic concept of individuals and society. In this sense the important thinkers of the era were dissolvers of the old consciousness, as well as propagators of the new. William Lewis Neale's Introduction to his 1904 report on the administration of the Tasmanian Education Department provides an excellent example in this thinking.

Common amongst the thinkers of the new consciousness was the drive to find new capacities of human potency. Thinkers like Nietzsche and Ibsen emphasised the strength of the will; Bergson maintained that human potency could be developed and understood in terms of intuition. James and Dewey sought to show how human drives were reducible to individual desires to fulfil needs efficiently. Roe shows that in Tasmania no-one better understood these ideals and their application to society than Edmund Morris Miller, influential amongst Tasmanian state school educators.

'Modernism advanced step by interlocked step with the new psychology', Roe asserts.³ Chief amongst the thinkers of the new psychology were Jung, Freud and Ellis. All, but outstandingly Jung, sought to show that psychic energy was the key to unleashing human potency. Broadly speaking these thinkers called for a cultivation of psychic forces in order that they would become yet more potent. Most, however, argued for individuals to harness or control these

3 *Ibid.*, p.3.

liberating psychic forces, believing that controlled force, by virtue of control, has greater potency than does non-controlled force.

Roe draws our attention to an important complement to the root drive of the quest for new human potential. This was to call upon individuals to assert themselves as never before. From self-awareness to action was a general theme of the thinkers of the new consciousness. The idea had several corollaries. First, action was conceived of as being entirely self-motivated: in no way was it dependent or consequent upon a pre-established mode of values. Here then, we see why the thinkers of the new consciousness were so hostile to any form of determinism of the romantic idealistic Hegelian tradition. Nietzsche postulated the idea most forcefully, but it has been synonymous more generally with what has been referred to as the 'existentialist option' from time to time. Again we turn to Elkington as a supreme exemplar of these ideals.

The second corollary to the drive from self-awareness to action Roe explains, was that it encouraged the elitist idea, either at an individual, group, or social level. Assertion in itself was a desired end: those who asserted most were most worthy. Thirdly, it encouraged the idea that conflict was a necessary and creative facet of life. Assertion and conflict, are of course, very close to being synonymous: again, the idea of an elite almost inevitably entails the idea of forcible dominance over the non-elite. Neale, at every turn manifested these ideals.

Although the thinkers of the early progressive years fundamentally sought to liberate, they often had a strong authoritarian impulse. This especially followed from their adulation of assertion, of conflict, and of elites. The essential idea of the intensification of ideas during the period involved that of power and its use.

Those who seek power, seek an authority for their beliefs. While the thinkers of the new consciousness scorned positivist science and absolute rules, on the other hand they often yearned for and claimed the authority of 'science' based on their own postulates. Neale in Tasmania best exemplifies this. In his 1904 report and in his writings during his short career as Director of Education Neale would twist between a relativist view of knowledge and a view that assumed knowledge existed in an absolute sense.

Progressives particularly were influenced by the results and methods of biological research. Dewey in 1909 claimed that the greatest dissolver of the old consciousness, and the precipitator of the new consciousness was Darwin's *The Origin of Species*.⁴ Most important was the impact of Darwin's biological writing on social thinking. Social Darwinism in the 1890's and the first two decades of the twentieth century was an effort by thinkers on social questions to apply Darwin's theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest to human society. Two opposing schools of thought emerged.

One development was an authoritarian one. Some progressives were attracted to Darwinist theory because of the conflict and competition they saw in it. Nations, groups or individuals who trained and equipped themselves most efficiently to compete with others would succeed while their rivals would be dominated. Competition was the best facilitator of development. Those who held to these beliefs of social Darwinism contended that competition was inherent in the nature of things. Therefore, they felt that they had a moral sanction to their views. Those who succeeded were most worthy of support and encouragement. This view of social Darwinism therefore favoured the cultivation of an elite of those best endowed in intellectual attitude. In business and social institutions

4 J. Dewey, *The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy*, New York, 1951 (1910), p.19.

adherents to this view of society encouraged selective and restrictive policies and practices; they supported hard-line eugenic practices. Anglo protestant work ethic values were dominant. Efficiency was conceived of as being based on struggle and competition. Connell shows how this notion of social Darwinism manifested itself in schools. Social Darwinism accentuated the development of Herbartian educational theory through its emphasis on 'driving force of human will and character'.⁵ Connell also argues that social Darwinism encouraged schools to adopt 'a rigorous examination and promotion system so that only the individuals best fitted to succeed were encouraged to progress into secondary and higher education'.⁶ We will see that William Taylor McCoy as Director of Education in Tasmania pursued these ideals to his fullest ability.

Another view of social Darwinism advocated the ideals of altruism and co-operation, and the capacity to be guided by supernatural ethical principles.⁷ This view of society began with the assumption that human beings were capable of deliberate, sustained and a high level of co-operation unlike any other animal. Therefore humans unlike the other orders of living things had an opportunity to control their environment, and even direct the course of their own evolution. By co-operative effort and by harnessing individual competitiveness to social ends, individuals and society, the advocates of this view of social Darwinism argued, could reach a higher level of fitness and achieve a greater success than by the process of wasteful individual rivalry. Social efficiency still had to be the basis of human progress, but it was efficiency produced by expanding educational opportunities, by the encouragement of altruism rather than harsh competitiveness. Rather than the cultivation of a ruling elite the adherents of this view of society proposed more extensive levels of social welfare. These

5 W.F.Connell, *A History of Education in the Twentieth Century*, C.D.C.,Canberra, 1980, p. 70

6 *Ibid.*, p. 19

7 Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution*, London, 1906

thinkers proposed that all individuals given equal opportunities could raise human potential. Social Darwinism of this type found expression in two distinct but related strands of progressive education: the child-centred and the social reformist. Froebel and Montessori were the chief exponents of the former, it being most commonly associated with kindergartens and early childhood education. Amy Rowntree in Tasmania during our period best understood and applied this form of education. Progressive education of the second variety, wherein the name John Dewey stands supreme, found no exponents in Australian state primary schools during our period.⁸

Bergson's philosophy was akin to the latter form of social Darwinism. Bergson's notion of a life force, or *elan vital*, which he argued was the essence of all things and whose function was that of creation was compatible with much of what the 'humanistic' form of social Darwinism stood for.⁹ For Bergson, evolution could have no predetermined path or end; it followed the creative urge of the vital force. Individuals because of their capacity for intuition, Bergson argued, could tune into and make creative use of it. Individuals by applying to the material world the promptings of the *elan vital* could build their life and society into the most suitable direction. Connell points to the affinity between Bergson's notion of *elan vital* and Montessori's notion of *horme*, the notion of a 'natural striving' found in all children.¹⁰ Roe shows how Miller, who had close connections with the Tasmanian Education Department, championed Bergsonian philosophy.¹¹ We will see how Rowntree, Miller's student and

8 R.C. Petersen, *Experimental Schools and Educational Experiments in Australia, 1906-1948*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 1968 and Lesley Dunt, *John Dewey and the Australian Educators (c. 1880-1946): A Study in the Transmission of Dewey's Educational and Social Ideals*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1974 both support this view. Certainly the findings of our study do not contradict the findings of the earlier research.

9 Henry Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, London, 1907

10 W.F. Connell, *A History of Education in the Twentieth Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 135

11 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 283, 285, 290

pioneer early childhood educator in Tasmania, established Montessori classes in Tasmanian state primary school.

No discussion on progressivism or progressive education is adequate without mention of nationalism. As Stromberg has stated:

Nationalism reached its *apogee*, or *nadir*, in the fateful epidemic of jingoism that accompanied the imperialist movement of the 1890's and preceded the great war of 1914-1918. A powerful social process involving all aspects of history, it cannot be left out of intellectual history...¹²

Or as one commentator put it:

The Press reeked with blood and reverberated with thunder. Every important nation had become acutely and aggressively race-conscious.¹³

It was race-consciousness, for Roe, which distinctly sharpened nationalism under the progressives' banner.¹⁴ Lake traces out the devisive effect that the First World War and its associated jingoistic nationalism had on Tasmanian society, including its schools.¹⁵ We will study the influence of nationalism generally and martial ideals specifically on Tasmanian state primary schools.

Progressives for the main part were concerned with social reform. Basically the drive was to make society more socially efficient. But as Roe states, great difficulty comes with attempting to define the notion of efficiency:

In effect, it becomes synonymous with whatever was virtuous in progressive eyes, and so to define it is to define progressivism - a game of peering into face-to-face mirrors. But at least efficiency meant being imbued with purpose, and bending every nerve and skill to that purpose.¹⁶

12 R.N. Stromberg, *European Intellectual History Since 1789*, New York, 1968

13 Esme Wingfield-Stratford, *The Victorian Tragedy*, London, 1930

14 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, op. cit., p.6

15 M. Lake, *A Divided Society: Tasmania During World War 1*, O.U.P., Melbourne, 1975

16 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, op. cit., p. 11

Progressives, Roe goes on to show us, consequently loathed waste, sloth and 'obsolete tradition'. It comes as no surprise then to read in Neale's 1904 report on the efficiency of the Tasmanian Education Department outrage with the antiquated curriculum, buildings, teaching methods, and careless and wasteful administration. Sloth of this type was anathema to the progressive mind.

The concern for efficiency was the generator of several distinctive traits. It accentuated authoritarian, elitist and even anti-humanist ideas. Supermen would direct and a homogeneous mass would follow. The supermen would learn from science wherein efficiency consisted; society had to apply these lessons through scrupulous organisation. Progressivism, with its mainstay of efficiency, prompted essentially new developments such as eugenics and scientific management, and came to transform such older traditions as social welfare, temperance and public education.

Liberal *laissez-faire* had failed to develop adequate systems of management and organisation for business and the rapidly developing government bureaucracies. The trilogy of science, co-ordination and discipline had to be evoked.¹⁷ This quest gave rise to scientific management whose arch priest was F.W. Taylor. Scientific management was the foundation of corporative theory. Taylor showed the way towards scientific management in the public context by applying there the principles of scientific management which he had developed in the private sector. The application of scientific management to public bureaucracies swelled the call for professionalism in public administration. Henceforth government would be of the people, for the people, but by professional administrators or technocrats. While concerning itself basically with the organisation and administration of institutions, scientific management premised itself on a

17 S. Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift*, Chicago, 1964

particular view of individuals. It maintained that individuals could realise joy and satisfaction through the strain and struggle to meet one's work goal. These assumptions neatly complemented the work ethic and fell within the authoritarian view of social Darwinism.

This is not to suggest that public school administration in most Australian states before the influence of scientific management was less concerned with efficiency. Miller describes how educational administrators in South Australia during the period 1875-1900 rigorously applied measures to combat inefficiency.¹⁸ Miller argues that the prime motive here was social control. The measures included a highly developed examination system, martial drills, the imposition of a standard form of middle class English and middle class knowledge and manners. Our point is that the methods of scientific management pursued these ideals with an added rigour and with the authority of science. Neale in Tasmania was no less concerned with efficiency than McCoy, but the latter increasingly applied the principles of scientific management to achieve these ends.

Three of Australia's most prominent directors of education during the period came to office as a result of royal commissions of enquiry into the efficiency of the administration of their respective education departments.¹⁹ Typically the new directors' style of administration was autocratic, with the director expecting unquestioning obedience from their teaching staff through their inspectors. Teachers were expected to be motivated by a missionary zeal.²⁰

18 Pavla Miller, 'Efficiency, Stupidity and Class Conflict in South Australian Schools, 1875-1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, 24,3, Fall 1984, 393-410

19 For by far the most stimulating biography of an Australian director of education during the period see, R.J.W. Selleck, *Frank Tate: A Biography*, Melbourne, 1982. A.G. Austin *Australian Education, 1788-1900*, Melbourne 1961 is still the most comprehensive account of the period at a national level.

20 Paul Northcott, *Benevolent Czars and Belligerent Missionaries: A Comparison of the Early Careers of the New Directors*, unpublished monograph, TCAE, n.d

Callahan described how the material achievements of industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century were responsible for the saturation of American society with business and industrial values and practices.²¹ Associated with this development was the drive for social efficiency. Callahan shows that by 1910 in the United States a change was about to fall upon public school administration. Reform conscious America was about to discover scientific management. Soon the ideals of Frederick W. Taylor and his fellows would be embraced by the public school administrators. By the beginning of the First World War the same developments would be recognisable in Australian departments of education. Soon teachers in Australian departments of education would be motivated by a system of efficiency marks and classroom, school and education system routines would be codified and regularised to a high level. All workers would know their exact role. The science of management would replace the earlier emphasis on a missionary zeal as the main factor in the quest for efficiency. We will argue that Tasmania's state primary schools underwent similar developments as McCoy came under the influence of the science of educational administration. Roe has shown that Miller was one Tasmanian progressive who pursued the ideals of the application of scientific management to public administration.²²

Recent historians of progressive education, stress the difficulties in generalising about the curriculum and prefer to carefully define subgroupings within the general body of the movement.²³ Certain shared characteristics nevertheless can be distinguished which gave validity to the contention that an international community of thought was perceiving the school curriculum to be an important

21 Raymond E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, Chicago, 1962

22 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p. 291

23 R.J.W. Selleck, *The New Education, The English Background, 1870-1914*, Melbourne, 1968

vehicle in the drive towards social efficiency.²⁴ Of course there were often fundamental differences about what constituted social efficiency, and the exact form which the curriculum should take. Perceptions concerning the nature of social efficiency were reflected in the form of the curriculum. At its fundamental level however the curriculum of the progressive educators was a response to the developments in the new psychology. Now an individual was perceived as a living organism interacting with the environment. James and the other functionalists were to alter for all time the way in which the child was to be understood.

We have seen that broadly speaking the curricula developed by the progressives can be grouped into two categories. On the one hand there was a curriculum developed by progressives who perceived its role as primarily imparting efficiency and utility in the basic subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic. They sought to rid the curriculum of antiquated subject matter and methodology. To this end subjects such as Latin was shed from the curriculum, and methods of rote learning were abandoned in favour of a methodology which aimed at understanding. Herbartian methodology with its central psychology of apperception gave a 'scientific' basis to the curriculum methodology. An important aspect of the quest for efficiency in the curriculum was the measurement of children's progress by traditional means: testing was of paramount importance. Of course, to separate the curriculum from educational administration can be misleading. For example, we have seen how Miller argues that the curriculum was used as a means by which efficiency could be stamped on South Australian state schools by educational administrators. We will argue, along with Katz, that the type of progressive education described here is best

24 Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*, New York, 1964

termed scientific, and best complemented the efficiency drive in state schools.²⁵ It was a scientific curriculum which the Tasmanian educators largely pursued during our period, with the qualification that Tasmanian early childhood educators embraced a more naturalistic form of progressive curriculum. After Katz we shall call this form of progressive education, child-centered.

Child-centered educators were naturalistic in their perception of the curriculum. The child was seen to partake from birth in the potency of nature. It did not passively bear the imprint of its environment, rather it actively moulded the environment to its own needs. The implication for the curriculum was clear: all valid learning was experimental. The teacher began with an individual child already commenced on the exploration of its own individual world. By degrees, the teacher was to lead the individual child through a series of inter-related 'life experiences' towards the greater knowledge and mastery of that individual world. Thus the curriculum placed greater value on manual and creative activities. The curriculum aimed at enabling individuals to more actively and positively participate in a democratic society.

The efficiency dynamic of social reform gave rise to eugenics.²⁶ Eugenics was deeply seated in social Darwinism, and aimed at social hygiene. It held as its basic premise a fundamental inequality between individuals. Through the use of the applied sciences society could become more efficient by the culling out of inferiors. Like social Darwinism there emerged two clearly defined schools of eugenics. On the one hand there was the tough-minded body of thought which advocated both positive and negative approaches to improving the national stock: there was a positive approach which advocated the breeding of superiors; and the

25 Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1971, p. 118

26 M.H. Haller, *Eugenics*, New Brunswick, N.J., 1963

negative approach which advocated measures such as the sterilising of inferiors. On the other hand there was a soft-minded school of thought, which also, although less palpably, ranged from positively encouraging superiority to negatively mitigating inferiority. This latter body of thought placed greater emphasis on the influence which the environment could have on improving the national stock.

Tasmanians became embroiled in the eugenics debates, particularly at the time of the passing of the British Mental Deficiency Act of 1913.²⁷ Miller was influential in eugenics in Tasmania, helping to moderate extreme views. We will trace out how the whole spectrum of the ideals of eugenics affected in some way the development of the schools.

We have seen that the efficiency dynamic in progressivism transformed and regenerated the older social reformist tradition of temperance. Associated with these ideals were those of thrift, but here, perhaps the connection with eugenics becomes much thinner. But certainly temperance in Tasmania was embedded in the broader spectrum of ideals of eugenics. Lake attests to the strength of the advocates of temperance during the First World War, especially during its later stage.²⁸ Our concern will be to discover the extent of the influence of the values of temperance and thrift on the state primary school curriculum in Tasmania. These values were closely linked with nationalism and the quest for national efficiency. Firth has revealed the presence of these values in state school text books in New South Wales During the period of our study.²⁹

27 G.R. Searle, *Eugenics and Politics in Britain, 1900-14*, Leyden, London, 1976, esp. p.p. 106-112; Jayne Woodhouse, 'Eugenics and the feeble-minded: the Parliamentary debates of 1912-14', *History of Education*, 1982, 11,2, 127-137

28 M.Lake, *A Divided Society*, op.cit., p.136-38

29 S. G. Firth, 'Social Values in the New South Wales Primary School 1880-1914: An Analysis of School Texts', R. J. W. Selleck (ed.) *Melbourne Studies In Education*, M.U.P., 1970

The kindergarten movement always was child-centred in its curriculum. But Neale's 1904 report shows that none of these child-centred practices were in place in the infant grades of Tasmanian state primary schools at the time of the writing of his report. Moreover, Tasmania at the time was without any kindergartens. Gardiner shows the influence of progressives on kindergartens in Victoria.³⁰ Hughes' *Froebel's Educational Laws for all Teachers* was prescribed reading for Tasmanian infant trainee teachers for at least two decades dating from about the First World War. These trainee teachers learnt from Hughes that

[Froebel] recognised very clearly the terrible evidence of deterioration and degeneracy in human nature through hereditary, but he believed while the evils brought into human nature may obscure the divinity in it, they can not eradicate it, and that even when the smallest element of divinity in the child is brought into activity in accordance with the Creator's law of evolution, it becomes an uplifting, self-developing, and reproductive force, that with triumph over the evils of hereditary.³¹

While one may be at a loss to substantiate Hughes' claim on Froebel's teachings, the extract leaves little doubt about the influence of eugenics on Tasmanian early childhood teachers during our period. The old concept of the children's garden thus assumed a new dimension when embraced by the Darwinist notion of the determining influence which the environment could have in shaping the growth of an individual. Those who urged the development of kindergartens were often the same people who carried eugenic banners.

30 Lyndsay Gardiner, *The Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria, 1908-80*, ACER, Melbourne, 1982, p.p. 1-7

31 James L. Hughes, *Froebel's Educational Laws for all Teachers*, Appleton, New York, 1910, p.13

Roe describes the potency of the country life movement in Australia during the period we are studying.³² The movement was probably the supreme exemplar of eugenics in its soft and positive form.³³ Advocates imagined that country dwellers belonged to a much more sturdy stock than did city dwellers. Progressives were disturbed by the effect that urbanisation was having on the national stock. Their data, gathered through surveys typically of an anthropometrical type, sought to give scientific evidence to their views. The large majority of the country life followers, however, were not country dwellers. They belonged to the urban middle class, as did Neale who applied many of the ideals of the country life movement to Tasmanian schools. Nature study, of course embodied the ideals of the country life movement. So, too, for kindergartens. Some school architecture manifested the ideals similarly Peter Board's Brighton-le-Sands School in New South Wales is a supreme exemplar of the development.³⁴ Tasmanian educators, too, responded, not only in school architecture, but also in the establishment of rural area schools during the 1930's.

The ideals of public health and hygiene were related closely to the eugenic movement. James had written that the fundamental progressive ideal was to find a moral equivalent to war.³⁵ There is every reason to believe that the public health and hygiene movement did just that. Workers in the field typically worked with a missionary zeal in their fight against infant mortality, impure foods and drugs, and epidemics. Roe's study of Elkington's career reveals the tenacity with which that man pioneered reform in public health and hygiene. Roe describes Elkington's affinity with Neale and the work which the two

32 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op.cit.*, p.p.68-71

33 W.L. Bowers, *The Country Life Movement in America*, Port Washington, N.Y., 1974

34 R.C. Petersen, *Experimental Schools and Educational Experiments in Australia*, 1906-1948, *op. cit.*, chapter 13

35 W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experiences*, Longmans, London, 1903, p. 367. Quoted in M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p. 93

progressives did in school health and hygiene. The assumption was that children needed to be physically fit to be efficient learners.³⁶

Housing reform and town planning were closely related in ideals to public health and hygiene. The ideals of these were to improve the quality of housing and environments, typically for the working class, which would increase national efficiency. James William Barrett, Richard Arthur and George Augustine Taylor were three prominent Australian progressives who were active in town planning.³⁷ The garden suburb of Matraville in Sydney is a testimony to the work done by Arthur and others. The improvement of public architecture such as schools was directly related to progressive town planning and public health and hygiene. These ideals powerfully influenced state school architecture.

The advocates of reform in school architecture basically sought to make school buildings healthy places, allowing in their design maximum access to light and air. This meant ridding school buildings of many of their church-influenced trappings. The provision of expansive playgrounds was inspired by the same ideals as those progressives who advanced the cause of town planning with its associated parks and recreation areas. As with the school-health and hygiene, to date no study yet has explored the connection between the development of progressive school architecture and progressivism generally and eugenics specifically. Neale's 1904 report testifies to the fact that Tasmania was only catching up with most other parts of Australia.

Gillespie's and Connell's studies together show the influence which the new psychology had on progressive education during the early decades of this

³⁶ M.Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, chap. 4

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Chaps. 3,6,7

century.³⁸ We have seen how the progressives looked to the new applied sciences as tools to engender efficiency into social reform and provide it with authority. Progressive education owed much to the new psychology. Miller's career in Tasmania illustrates how that man generated enthusiasm amongst his students and other Tasmanians in the new psychology.³⁹ Studies of the history of progressive education in other countries show how the new psychology strengthened the scientific progressive education tradition.⁴⁰ Bowles and Gintis show how the application of the new psychology to testing and grouping in schools maintained and strengthened the public schools' role in social control.⁴¹ Miller described a similar process in South Australia some thirty or forty years earlier. H.T. Parker, Morris Miller's brilliant student, spear-headed the application of the new psychology in the Tasmanian Education Department.

It was only with the development of the new psychology that progressive educators were able to provide special education for intellectually handicapped children. During the early years of the century state provisions for intellectually handicapped children were advanced from various points of view, all of which were related in some way to the eugenicists' ideal of social purity and overall social efficiency. Rodgers has explored the history of state provisions for intellectually handicapped children in Victoria during the period we have under study, and its connection with eugenics.⁴² Professor Berry who was closely connected with the Victorian developments spoke to Tasmanians on the subject

38 R.R. Gillespie, *Australian Education: Ideas in Transition, 1900-1914*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 1978; W.F. Connell, *A History of Education in the Twentieth Century*, *op. cit.*

39 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 291-95

40 Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools...*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 118-25

41 Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1976, Chap. 7

42 Gwen Rodgers, 'A Question of Policy : is provision of special schools for defectives to be undertaken by this department?' *ANZTES Journal*, 9, 2 Spring 1980 2-54

during 1919. Soon after the Tasmanian Parliament legislate for the provision of special education. The architect of the legislation was Miller.⁴³

At the beginning of the twentieth century progressive education promised much. E.P. Cubberley, America's foremost educational historian during the progressive era, declared in 1909:

We are standing on the threshold of a new era in educational progress. The school must grasp the significance of its social connection and relations, and must come to realise that its real worth and its hope of adequate reward lies in its social efficiency.⁴⁴

Cubberley was responding to the social effects of the rapid progress being made at the time in science, industry, commerce and technology. These developments were concomitant with a rapid growth in the socio-political influence of the middle class. It was this class which had vested political and economic interest in the development of an efficient system of public education. It was the middle class which had assumed political power during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century in the Western world. Social order and efficiency was of paramount concern to this group. Emerging was a rapidly expanding urban working class which was becoming more literate and conscious of their political and economic power. Above all the rapidly expanding urban society was volatile, complex and fluid.

Australian studies draw similar conclusions. Austin, for example, in accounting for the turn-of-the century criticism of state education in Australia sees the depression of the 1890's as being a watershed.⁴⁵ The 'prosperity and careless optimism' of the 1870's and 1880's gave way to a vigorous soul searching by Australian thinkers. 'Probably never before or since have the Australian people

43 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, op. cit., p. 292

44 E.P. Cubberley, *Changing Conceptions of Education*, Boston, 1909, p. 54

45 A.G. Austin, *Australian Education, 1788-1900*, op. cit., p.p. 260-1

people questioned themselves so closely; rarely have they read and argued so earnestly.⁴⁶ Hyams and Bessant, in describing the reforms set in motion in the Victorian Education Department by Frank Tate, sees the motives as being primarily those concerned with trade abroad and business at home: Australia as a part of the British Empire had to develop efficient systems of education to compete in the race for empire against Germany.⁴⁷

The Tasmanian Setting

Tasmania's development of educational reform was similar to the mainland states. However its size of population, isolation as an island, geography and level of economic development were factors which contributed to the distinctive characteristics of educational reform in that state.

The island state of Tasmania is the smallest Australian state in population. In 1901 its population was 172 475. In 1921 it was 213 780. In 1900 2 423 more people left Tasmania than entered the state. In only three years between the beginning of the century and the outbreak of the First World War did immigration exceed out-migration.⁴⁸

Tasmania suffered more than most of the Australian colonies during the general Australian depression of 1890-94. The local land boom came to an end and a typhoid epidemic caused widespread mortality and loss of confidence in the colony's future. Tasmania's biggest financial institution, the Bank of Van Dieman's Land, collapsed in August 1891 bringing disaster to many, and the consequent further loss of confidence in Tasmania reduced its trade with other

46 *Ibid.*, p. 261

47 B.K. Hyams and B. Bessant, *Schools for the People?* Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1972, p. 86

48 Census of Tasmania 1901; *Tasmanian Year Book*, 1983

states. Widespread poverty resulted. Robinson reminds us that the impact of the bank's failure was so great in Tasmania that for many years afterwards "Tasmanians dated events from "the year the V.D.L. Bank went broke".⁴⁹

The 1880's was a decade marked by reformist and progressive legislation in Tasmania. In areas as diverse as forests, protection of females, railways, factory conditions, police administration, care of the poor, and public education the Tasmanian Parliament either debated or passed legislation.⁵⁰ The 1885 Education Act even to Neale's mind contained many progressive measures.⁵¹ Mostly Neale's criticism in 1904 of Tasmanian state education was directed at the way in which the act was being administered.

Robson shows that even during the gloom of the depression of the early 1890's Tasmania pushed ahead with some progressive legislation.⁵² For example, in 1892 the Council of Agriculture was formed. Its formation underpinned the importance of agriculture to Tasmania. Councillors were drawn from all over the island, a government entymologist appointed and the services of a veterinary surgeon procured. Local boards were established and the *Agricultural Journal* published to disseminate progressive methods. At this time the dairy industry at Table Cape in Tasmania's rich north-west corner was begun and a co-operative established. Dairying was beginning to develop in other areas too: from Deloraine north of Launceston through the rich basalt belt to Wynyard on the central north-west coast. Small pockets of dairy farms were also developing around Scottsdale in the north-east of the island. The Agricultural Council deployed a travelling dairy to disseminate new methods of dairying.⁵³ But its

49 L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, O.U.P., Melbourne, 1985, p.67

50 *Ibid.*, p.p. 64, 65

51 D. Phillips, *Making More Adequate Provision*, Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1985, Chap. 1

52 L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, *op. cit.*, p. 71

53 *Ibid.*, p. 70

attendance mostly by wives and children of the dairy farming families highlighted the under-capitalisation of the developing yeoman dairy farmers in Tasmania at the turn of the century.

Robson reminds us of the effect which the 1890's depression had on land re-settlement in Tasmania. Despite amending legislation in 1890 to ensure that farmers were able to stay on their blocks of land, in 1893 a government survey showed that 130 000 acres were unproductive. By the mid-1890's Robson shows that the largest proportion of the best agricultural land remained locked up in sheep and cattle runs. Progressive reform in land ownership and usage was an early objective of the emerging Labor movement and repeatedly advocated through the voice of the movement's weekly *Clipper*.

In Tasmania's midlands and the upper Derwent Valley large sheep and cattle runs dominated the rural sector of Tasmania's economy. This land was mostly unsuitable for agriculture. Here the landless working class was mostly employed as shepherds and station hands.

Independent small landowners, by the late 1890's, were facing an increasingly prosperous future with improved methods of transport and handling of fresh fruit and vegetables. Potato farmers and orchardists along the rich north-west coast, orchardists along the Tamar River to the north of Launceston, in small settlements in the north-east, and in the more populous south at Glenorchy and along the Franklin River and Tasman Peninsula began to secure a foothold in Tasmania's economy. But still these farmers required labour from their families to survive. Children's education would often have to come second to assisting on the farm.

Tasmania, through the work of G.S. Perrin, began, albeit slightly at first, to apply methods of progressive forest management. Tasmanians were beginning to realise the enormous wealth in Tasmania's timber industry if forests were managed properly.⁵⁴

In country and town Tasmanians lived in fear of contagious diseases: typhoid, diphtheria, measles and small pox could strike at any time. The Central Board of Health was successful in having legislation passed which tightened many provisions desired by the board. But to the progressive mind government control was not nearly adequate: sanitary inspection of buildings before occupancy, pollution of streams by water closets, and inadequate disposal of night soil were some examples of poor government control over public health and hygiene.

It was against this backdrop of public health and hygiene that Elkington was brought to Tasmania and was later appointed as Chief Health Officer. Roe has described Elkington's battles with entrenched interests and a penny-pinching parliament. Roe also shows the extent of the support which Elkington received amongst progressives in the state.⁵⁵

During the 1890's Launceston and Devonport grew in size, importance and in civic pride as the northern Tasmanian economy strengthened. Added to the developments in agriculture and dairying which we have described was the wealth which came from the goldmine at Beaconsfield, tin-mining at Mt Bischoff and coal mining at Fingal. Railways opened. Robson highlights the 1892 Jubilee Year report on the Mechanics Institute and Public Library in Launceston

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 72

⁵⁵ M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p.p.93-106

as a measure of progressive development.⁵⁶ Here over 18 000 volumes were housed and the rooms used by a multitude of industrious citizens. To further attest to the measure of Launceston's progressive development we are reminded by Robson of the 1891 opening of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.⁵⁷ Devonport had less to boast in terms of civic achievement, but here a strong Wesleyan yeomanry on the agriculture and dairying country on the north-west coast was strengthening Tasmania's economy.

The conservation and utilisation of natural resources for national ends was a progressive ideal. In 1895 hydro electricity first came to Tasmania, and indeed the Southern Hemisphere, as the Launceston City Council harnessed the surging power of the South Esk. In 1911 the Hydro-Electric and Metallengic Company at the Great Lake in Tasmania's central highlands first turned its turbines. By 1914 the Electrolytic Zinc Company had been established in Hobart to process ores. By 1916 power from the Great Lakes turbines was being used for domestic lights and trams in Hobart and in the mines at Mt Lyell on Tasmania's rugged west coast.

Blainey has described the history of the discovery and development of the vast mineral deposits of Tasmania's westcoast.⁵⁸ The mines at Mt Zeehan, Mt Lyell and Mt Dundas transformed Tasmania's economy, centre of wealth and political makeup. The smelting works at Zeehan and Queenstown, a network of railways over some of the most inhospitable country in Australia, the dredging of Hell's Gates at the entrance to Macquarie Harour in order to open the port for the shipping of ore were all feats of engineering to excite the most progressive mind. Here, on Tasmania's west coast was now a new mining culture in a vast

⁵⁶ L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, op. cit., p.80

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81

⁵⁸ Geoffrey Blainey, *The Peaks of Lyell*, M.U.P., Melbourne, 1954

wind-swept wilderness. Tasmanian society was changing. While still recovering from the shock of the loss of the V.D.L. Bank, Tasmanians looked to a new century with a new optimism. The Tasmanian economy and society at the turn of the century bore little resemblance to that of just twenty years before.

The Boer War at the turn of the century provided Tasmanians with an opportunity to vent their developing nationalistic fervour. Jingoistic nationalism, expressed through flag waving and military parades ushered in a new century for Tasmanians. Tasmanians even experienced the positive economic impact of a foreign war on her economy when Henry Jones and Company, a Hobart jam producer, secured a lucrative contract to supply the British forces with tinned jam.⁵⁹

Tasmania's parliament is composed of two houses. The Legislative Assembly, after 1901 has been elected by universal suffrage. After 1909 the assembly was elected through a proportional representation system, known as the Hare-Clark system, whereby the state was divided into five six-member electorates. Members of the Legislative Council are elected for eight year terms, then with a restricted property franchise.⁶⁰ Members of the Legislative Council have always enjoyed enormous power and placed themselves above party politics, priding themselves on a sense of independence. But while they may have been often independent from party politics, they were seldom independent from parochial and vested interests. Members often had very close links with local government authorities, including school Boards of Advice from the time of the Boards instigation until 1920. If by the turn of the century the Legislative Council

⁵⁹ L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, op. cit., p.p. 90, 91

⁶⁰ W.A. Townsley, *The Government of Tasmania*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1976

remained untouched by the developing force of organised Labor, the Legislative Assembly was not.⁶¹

Davis has traced out the rise of the Labor Party in Tasmania.⁶² Rightly he sees the Hare-Clark electoral system as contributing to, particularly as elections neared, bitter in-fighting in the party. Members and candidates adopted a peculiarly independent stance, and often a deliberate swing to the right. The result has been a very moderate Tasmanian Labor party.

The elections of 1909 saw twelve Labor members elected, four of whom came from the electorate of Darwin (now Braddon) which included the west coast mining centres. Earle from 1916 until 1918 led Tasmania's first Labor government. Earle's always was a tenuous grip on power and government: fronted by a hostile Council and ever aware of the fortunes of the Hare-Clark system, he lurched increasingly to the right, and this was capitalised upon by his opponents in parliament and in the press. Eventually he lost the support of the Labor movement.

Rickard has argued that the Labor movement in Australia has shown 'only a marginal interest in the question of education'. Rickard shows that the 1901 New South Wales Progressive Political League Conference (precursor to the Labor Party) voted for a plank for free education, but 'this pious wish was never promoted as an issue'.⁶³ Davis sees the Tasmanian Labor party as being more committed to education, and at first, free education. With success here, Davis argues that Labor in Tasmania brought state education to the forefront in

61 F.C. Green, ed., *A Century of Responsible Government in Tasmania*, Gov. Printer, Hobart, 1956. The only general history of Tasmania is provided in the biographical section by John Reynolds

62 Richard Davis, *Eighty Years' Labor, 1903-1983*, Sassafras Books and the History Department, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1983

63 John Rickard, *Class and Politics*, A.N.U.P., Canberra, 1976, p. 296

Australian educational leadership.⁶⁴ However, the Australian Labor party, as Rickard states, saw education as being class based. The impulse at times was to pull down 'tall poppies' and at the same time to lift 'shorter poppies'.⁶⁵

Progressive thinkers in Tasmania, as with other parts of the western world, were found in both the Labor and non-labor side of politics. Jethro Brown, the great Australian progressive political theorist, who was for a time dean of law and lecturer in modern history at the University of Tasmania, found a kindred spirit and friend in Andrew Inglis Clark. Roe describes the latter as 'federationist, liberal, lawyer, Unitarian [and] creative modifier of proportional representation'.⁶⁶ To the left of these two on the political spectrum was Dr John Edward Mercer, Bishop of Hobart, a Christian socialist, a powerful force in Tasmania's early Labor movement, and propagator of many progressive ideas in Tasmanian society.⁶⁷ There were many others. Reynolds, reviewing the progressive achievements during the last decades of the century, writes:

The importance of the liberal movement in Tasmanian history has been underestimated. For more than a generation liberalism inspired those who patiently dismantled the conservative stratified society inherited from the early years of the settlement and laid the foundations of the social developments of the twentieth century.⁶⁸

Was there anything characteristic about these Tasmanian progressives? The editor of the *Southern Star* expressed an opinion:

⁶⁴ Richard Davis, *State Aid and Tasmanian Politics, 1868-1920*, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1980 p. 53

⁶⁵ John Rickard, *Class and Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 296

⁶⁶ M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p. 29

⁶⁷ Richard Davis, *John Edward Mercer: A Christian Socialist in Tasmania*, occasional paper, 34, University of Tasmania, 1982

⁶⁸ Henry Reynolds, *The Island Colony*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Tasmania, 1963, p. 283

Tasmanians are quieter in their habits, and perhaps a little less progressive in their ideas than their Australian neighbours.⁶⁹

The expression of progressive ideas can be found across a variety of newspapers which spoke to various elements of the spectrum of political opinion in Tasmania. The Hobart daily *Mercury*, while editorially conservative, published much material of a progressive nature. More parochial and no less conservative were the Launceston daily *Examiner* and the north-west coast daily *Advocate*. The weekly *Critic* was the official organ of the Tasmanian Stock Owners and Grain Growers Association and addressed itself to Tasmania's rural community. The Labor movement was at first represented by the weekly *Clipper* published in Hobart, but later by the *Daily Post* published in Hobart. The *Monitor* addressed itself to Tasmania's Catholics. The *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* spoke to the mining community on the west coast.

If the 1885 Tasmanian Education Act contained many progressive measures, Tasmania's renewed prosperity during the last part of the 1890's had not brought the measures to fruition. Neale's 1904 report on Tasmania's state education showed that while there was an annual enrolment of 23 000 children, the average attendance was only 17 000. Moreover, according to figures compiled by the Education Department in 1899 there were at least 3 000 children who did not attend school at all. Many children helped out at home or on the farm instead of attending school. Of Tasmania's 500 state school teachers, 350 were untrained. The 150 'trained' teachers had trained under the 'pupil-teacher' or apprentice system. Only a few had studied at the Battery Point Model School. Neale was able to see some schools with a well trained and progressive headmaster and highly competent teachers who had an understanding of progressive educational methods. The Battery Point Model School in Hobart

⁶⁹ *Southern Star*, 23 December 1882. Quoted in Peter Bolger, *Hobart Town*, A.N.U.P., Canberra, 1973, P. 193

was such a school despite antiquated architecture. But for the most part untrained teachers simply resorted to methods that they could best remember from their experience as school children. A new inspector of schools in the early 1900's reported that the teaching of reading was too often done in such a way that it led to a monotonous sing-song intonation, and that the teaching of history was simply a chanting of dates and the names of sovereigns.⁷⁰

To date there has been three major historical studies completed on Tasmanian state education. Phillip's *Making More Adequate Provisions*, while offering a sympathetic account of the history of Tasmanian state education, is a very comprehensive survey, albeit from the government's point of view.⁷¹ Johnston's *Fifty Years of State Secondary Education in Tasmania 1913-1962*, explores the topic thoroughly and from a critical point of view.⁷² For our present study Selth's *The Effect of Poverty and Politics on the Development of Tasmanian State Education 1900-1950* is by far the most important study undertaken.⁷³ Selth argued that

few Tasmanians believed education was important in the early years of the twentieth century, and poverty and conservatism were the most influential forces in society.⁷⁴

This thesis will concur with Selth's finding, only with some qualification. While poverty was an important inhibiting factor at times during the history of Tasmanian state primary education, it was not always so. We have seen how at the turn of the century, at the time of Neale's writing of his 1904 report for example, that the state was enjoying financial growth and optimism amongst the

70 L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, op. cit., p.p. 94, 95

71 Derek Phillips, *Making More Adequate Provisions*, op.cit., p. 95

72 G.L. Johnston, *Fifty Years of State Secondary Education in Tasmania, 1913 to 1962*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Tasmania, 1962.

73 D.V.Selth, *The Effect of Poverty and Politics on the Development of Tasmanian State Education 1900-1950*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Tasmania, 1969

74 *Ibid.*, Statement of Thesis

general population. We have seen how progressivism was able to bear results in Tasmania in a variety of areas during the century's first two decades.

Sixty four years after Neale wrote his report on Tasmanian state schools, Phillip Hughes, a native-born Tasmanian educator in his capacity as Deputy Director-General of the Tasmanian Education Department, chaired a committee which again was concerned with advancing the quality of Tasmania's state education.⁷⁵ Hughes explained the qualitative level of development of Tasmania's state schools in terms of Beeby's stages of educational development theory.⁷⁶

Beeby had theorised that a country's education system moved through four clearly recognisable stages of educational development. The first is 'The Dame School Stage', the second 'The Stage of Formalism', the third 'The Stage of Transition' and the fourth 'The Stage of Meaning'.⁷⁷

Beeby describes the first three stages as follows:

i. Dame School Stage ...the bulk of teachers are ill-educated and are either untrained or have only the sketchiest training. The syllabus is vague and skimpy, and teachers fall back on the narrow subject content they remembered from their own school days. It consists of little but completely mechanical drill on the 3R's, and the memorizing of relative meaningless symbols occupies most of the time. The teacher's confusion and uncertainty spreads to the children, and, after some years of juggling with symbols with little meaning, all except the bright children cease to make much progress. Their first impetus takes them as far as the rudimentary skills in reading and figuring, but, beyond this, the slow accumulation of almost meaningless symbols clogs the mind and seals it off against formal schooling...⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *The School in Society*, Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1968, p. 1

⁷⁶ C.E. Beeby, *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1966

⁷⁷ In 1968 Hughes was concerned with moving Tasmanian state schools to the fourth stage.

⁷⁸ C.E. Beeby, *The Quality of Education*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 72,73

Hughes summarises Beeby's second and third stages as:

ii. *The Stage of Formalism*...The schools are highly organised and have a rigid syllabus to which teachers adhere closely. There is strong emphasis on the 'one best method', on the set textbook and on external examinations. The teacher's formal training is his one security since his general education may be little better than he expects to give his pupils and he thus prefers a closely defined schedule with emphasis on rote learning...There is a rigorous discipline applied in the classroom and this is accompanied by a close system of inspect of teachers. In general such teachers lack the confidence necessary to try unexplored pathways.

iii. *The Stage of Transition*...The official syllabus remains as a controlling agent but is more permissive. The text-book is still fixed but is enriched by supplementary readers. The syllabus is wider although its main emphasis is still on the memorising of facts. Within the narrow limits set, the teaching will be effective but lacking in recognition of emotional and aesthetic values. External controls will be of great significance in the organisation of the school.⁷⁹

We will argue that at the turn of the century Tasmanian state schools ranged from the vast majority being in The Dame School Stage, to at least the Battery Point Model School being in The Stage of Formalism.

The Thesis Stated

This thesis sets out first to describe the extent of the influence of progressivism on Tasmanian state primary education. Second to this description the thesis attempts to explain the nature and extent of the influence. We will argue that the critical factor determining the extent and nature of the influence which progressivism asserted on the schools was the particular level of educational development which the schools were experiencing. We will use Beeby's stages of educational development as benchmarks.

⁷⁹ 'Case Studies in Educational Change' Paper No 1, in P.W Hughes, Australian National Advisory Committee for UNESCO: *National Seminar on Educational Planning*, Canberra, September 1968, Group C, Background Papers

CHAPTER 1

Educational Management Under Neale

William Lewis Neale, in 1904 was asked by the Premier of Tasmania, William Propsting, to report on how the efficiency of Tasmanian state education might be increased without any undue increase in expenditure.¹ At one stage Propsting had been a teacher with the South Australian Education Department, and had taught in a school where Neale was headmaster. In Tasmania he had been promised a free hand in the writing of his report. The report is testimony to his unbridled observations and opinions. Neale was the Senior Inspector of Schools in an education department which Miller shows had reached a high level of efficiency in its administration.²

Perkis's study shows that Neale had established a most impressive reputation in South Australia both as a headmaster and as an inspector. He was possessed of unbounded 'energy and integrity', leading by example and expecting the same from his staff. Perkis maintains that Neale's

keen sense of duty was born of his Methodism and his desire to help his fellow man. He lived by the spirit and the letter of the Wesleyan Rules, and they gave him the strength of purpose to succeed.³

Perkis states that apart from being at times arrogant, Neale was often

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- 1 For studies of Neale's career, see D. V. Selth, *The Effect of Poverty and Politics on the Development of Tasmanian State Education 1900-1950*, op. cit. D.V Selth, 'Trials of W.L. Neale', PPRST, 104, 1970; B. Pirkis, 'The Neale Report on the System of Primary Education in Tasmania', *Veritas*, 3, 1, Nov. 1980; B. Pirkis, 'Mr Inspector Neale: his reports and thoughts', Paper given at the XII annual conference of the Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society, Hobart, 1982; B. Pirkis, *William Lewis Neale: The South Australian Years*, unpublished M.Ed. dissertation, University of Tasmania, 1981; G Rodwell, *W.L. Neale, Director of Education: The Influence of Ideas on the Development of the Tasmanian State Education System, 1904-09*, unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Tasmania, 1980; C. R. Paice, 'The Tasmanian Politico-Educational Scene 1903-4', *TJE*, 9, 1, February - March 1975; Derek Phillips, *Making More Adequate Provisions*, op. cit., chap. 2.
 - 2 Pavla Miller, 'Efficiency, Stupidity...' op. cit.
 - 3 B. Pirkis, *William Lewis Neale: The South Australian Years*, op. cit. p. 109.

... over-zealous and expected too much of teachers and pupils; he was capable of indulging in cant and humbug, and of being hypocritical; and on occasions his holier-than-thou self-righteousness grated as much as his seemingly unctuous piety.⁴

Sometimes in his desire to tell people exactly what he thought of them 'he could be utterly tactless and unmindful of people's feelings'.⁵

Neale was fifty years of age when he wrote his report on state education in Tasmania. He had spent years in zealous and faithful service with the South Australian Education Department. He had spent fourteen years as an inspector, and the possibility of further promotion seemed a long way off. Following two reports to the South Australian Parliament by Neale on teachers' conditions of service and system of promotion Neale had come under considerable public criticism. It is not difficult to understand Neale's motives in accepting his Tasmanian commission. He had a great deal more energy to expend and ambition to follow.⁶

1 State Education and National Efficiency

Neale echoed a common aspiration of progressives-at-large when he urged parliament to recognise the need for a vastly increased government activity in Tasmanian education. Neale argued:

The present 'educational awakening' of the world has come in the region of politics, mostly because men, with widening visions, see that education is an economic question.⁷

Neale went on to state that even conservative employers, who had once opposed increased state expenditure on education, now for economic and

4 *Ibid.*, p. 110

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*, p. 95

7 Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 8

nationalistic reasons, argued for its upgrading, and indeed, sought the establishment of secondary education. No longer could education be conceived of as being 'purely humanitarian' or even 'social': now the question had a stark economic significance.

At the 1908 Annual Conference of the Tasmanian Teachers' Union held in Hobart, the theme of education and nationalism was pursued by Propsting, now the Minister for Education.⁸ Propsting reminded the Tasmanian teachers of the recent phenomenal military successes of Japan over Russia, but 'victories and the strenuous competition of commerce were as hardly won as those between armies and navies'. For Propsting, the country best equipped for internal development, for extending its trade and for increasing its national wealth, was the country 'whose people were mentally, morally and physically best developed'. Propsting went on to argue:

An ignorant community was a poor and backward community; but national education meant progress and material wealth, because these depended upon the general intelligence and resourcefulness of human beings. The competition amongst States was continuous; there could be no standing still without falling behind in the race. Any country that neglected the moral, mental and physical development of its children struck, therefore, a heavy blow at its vital interest.⁹

Two days later, A.J. Taylor, Chairman of the Hobart Board of Advice, progressive, and the Hobart Public Librarian addressed the same group. Taylor was a renowned Hobart publicist who had had a long interest in progressive state education. He had long called for a free, compulsory and secular system of state education. From 1901 until 1903 he had published *The Tasmanian School Journal* for teachers and children.¹⁰ Roe has described his wider

⁸ *Daily Post*, 1 July 1908, 5, 1-7

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ A.J. Taylor (ed.) *The Tasmanian School Journal*, Hobart, Tasmanian News Office, October 1901 - September 1903

progressive interests.¹¹ Taylor, in attempting to heal the friction which existed between Neale and the union, asked the teachers to consider their great purpose.¹² Taylor acknowledged that some teachers had suffered in the past and they might have to suffer in the future, but they should try to realise that they were 'suffering in a work which meant the formation of character and the upbuilding of national life'.

2 W.L. Neale's Administrative Model

Neale, as with the other five directors of education of the Australian states, unquestioningly administered his department using an autocratic model.¹³ The social *milieu* of the time permitted little less. This was the accepted model of administration used in both the private and public sectors. In a sense, it explains the eulogising by Neale and other educators, of the military drill system of classroom and school management.

Neale, the lay methodist preacher, was messianic in his autocracy.¹⁴ He was a resolute reformist and would tolerate little divergency by subordinates from his point of view. For example, at the 1909 Royal Commission of Enquiry into Neale's administration of his department, Inspector A.L. Brockett was asked to testify regarding the function of the inspectors' conferences.¹⁵ One of the commissioners alleged that Neale only called the inspectors into conference as a

11 M. Roe, A.J. Taylor', ADB, 6, 1976, 246-7, A.J.T., (1849-1921) 'Librarian and publicist land redistribution, wider franchise; workers' organisation and self-betterment through trade unions; sexual purity: all these causes received support from Taylor's tongue and pen. He anchored them in a Spencerian-cum-Unitarian faith that promised no eternity for individual personality, but, irrepressible betterment of all mankind.'

12 *Daily Post*, 3 July 1908, 5, 4-6

13 For a comparison of the administrative careers of four of the Australian directors of education of the period see, Paul Northcott, *Benevolent Czars and Belligerent Missionaries*, *op. cit.*; R.J.W. Selleck, *Frank Tate: A Biography*, Melbourne, 1982, sheds new light on the personality and administrative style of one of Australia's pioneering directors.

14 Brian Perkis, William Lewis Neale: The South Australian Years *op. cit.*, chap. 1.

15 *Mercury*, 6 Feb. 1909, 5, 8

matter of courtesy and expediency, and was not bound by a majority decision. Brockett considered that there was nothing wrong with this. Neale possessed most of the facts regarding most issues, and as subordinates the inspectors' role in conferences should only be advisory. As inspectors they expected the same kind of professional relationship from head teachers, who in turn would expect the same relationship from assistant teachers.¹⁶

Throughout the daily reports of the evidence given to the commission there were ample instances where Neale dealt harshly with assistant teachers and head teachers who did not comply strictly with departmental regulations. For example, in an extreme case, he fined a teacher £3 for choosing to take a sick child to hospital, rather than open the school.¹⁷ The child subsequently died, but Neale replied under questioning that he felt justified in fining the teacher because influenza was not included by Dr Elkington, the Chief Health Officer, as a communicable disease.¹⁸ Neale went on to argue that the teacher's first responsibility must always be to the state, who had vested her with the responsibility of educating the children.

3 W.L. Neale's 1904 Report

The organisation of Neale's 1904 report, of course, was determined by the terms of reference given to the enquiry.¹⁹ But the way in which Neale responded to the terms of the enquiry illustrates what Neale conceived of as being efficient public administration in the interests of national efficiency.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1909, 5, 8, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28 Jan. 1909, 7, 1-2

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ JPPP, 1904, paper 49, p.p. 5-6

The aim of the Education Department must be education, Neale insisted. This required that its head be an educator. Neale had strongly criticised the administration of the Tasmanian Education Department where until 1904 teachers held themselves responsible to the Minister of Education and to the local boards of advice, rather than to the director of the department. The Director of Education was little more than a clerical assistant to the Minister. All teachers corresponded directly to the Minister, and not to the head of the department. In fact, the newly-appointed Secretary to the Education Department, who was not a professional teacher, vied for control of the department in competition with Joseph Masters, the Director of Education.²⁰

Neale had a clear vision for an alternative to the inefficient administration of the department. This conception places him at the very heart of the new consciousness: a professional technocrat administering a bureaucracy. Thus, for Neale the Director of Education had to organise his department so that he could most efficiently administer it. He contended:

The work of an effective Director of a modern education system involves the continuous study of the progressive development of educational ideals and methods in other lands, and the stimulation of all members of the teaching staff. To make this possible, the Director must be free to study the workings of the curriculum in his schools.²¹

In 1904 the officers of Tasmanian Education Department comprised a director, three inspectors of schools, a secretary, twenty one clerks, and a messenger. Neale found inefficiency at all levels. In head office the clerical work dominated the director's time. Masters had inherited a system of book-keeping, both in the schools and the head office which was disorganised and time-consuming.²²

20 Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 13

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*, p. 14

Neale found that there was no record of the actual educational work of the schools, other than the inspectors' annual reports. Up-to-date systematically organised data Neale insisted was fundamental to the running of an efficient department. The director should be able to have the information at hand with a minimum degree of disruption to daily routines. Neale declared that the efficient administration of a great department implied that the director sees 'the whole and sees it steadily'. There was no adequate information on the individual teachers. Under these conditions a teacher would be promoted on the inspector's personal knowledge at the moment.²³

In the absence of adequate records there had been no 'yearly stocktaking'. Neale urged that for the benefit of efficient administration the director and the inspectors classify schools annually according to efficiency. Thus, for Neale:

The proportions of efficient, moderately efficient, and inefficient schools have not yet been ascertained. Therefore, the Department has not known if the net result of the year's work was an increase or decrease in the proportion of inefficient schools. And, of course, the Department has been unable to compare its educational position and progress with other States.²⁴

Inefficiency existed at the inspectorial level, too. There were three inspectors to inspect the 332 schools: two were located in Hobart, and one in Launceston. Whereas the staffing of the schools and of head office was generous, compared with other Australian states, the Tasmanian inspectors, according to Neale, were grossly overworked. This led to inefficiency. They had 113 schools each to inspect; South Australia was the next worse off with ninety schools per inspector. Worse, according to Neale, there was no common goal between the inspectors; they simply went their own way.²⁵

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 28

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.p. 16, 17

Neale contended that the lax system of school inspection had resulted in an unsatisfactory classification of children in the schools.²⁶ He argued that when a teacher classified the children in a school this was really an expression of opinion about the condition of the school. This also was the case when an inspector classified the children in a school. In the Tasmanian schools child retardation was rife. For example, in 1904 there were nineteen children of fourteen years of age and over in grade one; and there were thirty two of this age group in grade two. As Neale pointed out: 'it is clear ... that only a comparatively small number of Tasmanian children have the opportunity of being taught in the higher classes.'²⁷ Neale went on to indicate that according to the Tasmanian inspectors' classification of the Tasmanian state school children only four children out of every one hundred had done the work Tasmania prescribed for grade five, and thus were educated enough to proceed to grade six. And Neale stressed that the standard of work prescribed in Tasmania was not nearly as high as other Australian states. For Neale, New Zealand afforded a suitable comparison by which to gauge the efficiency of Tasmania's classification of children.²⁸ For example, the average age of a grade six child in New Zealand was thirteen years, ten months; in Tasmania it was fourteen years, four months. And in New Zealand 12.7 percent of the

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ The history of the Tasmanian and New Zealand educational connection has not been fully explored. R.P. Davis, 'New Zealand and Tasmanian Labor, 1891 - 1916' *Labour History*, 21, Nov. 1971 sketches the political connection between Tasmania and New Zealand which was very strong. The *Mercury* in a series of articles during the last Royal Commission into Neale's administration of the Education Department described the New Zealand state education system: *ibid.*, 'Education in New Zealand, A Concise Statement, The System of Administration', 25 Jan. 1909, 5, 6; 27 Jan. 1909, 3, 2-3; 27 Jan. 1909, 6, 2-6; 28 Jan. 1909, 7, 3-4; 29 Jan. 1909, 7, 6; 30 Jan. 1909, 6, 5-6. That the *Mercury* chose to publish on the New Zealand example of educational administration during a time of crisis in the island state testifies to the strength of the New Zealand influence. Of course, the appointment of the New Zealander, J.A. Johnson to the principalship of the Philip Smith Training College further emphasises the strength of the connection. L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania, op. cit.*, p. 112, also stresses the connection between Tasmania and New Zealand: '...fellow islanders, fellow high-loyalists and as a people who could teach Tasmanians a few tricks about farming'.

children at school were in grade six; in Tasmania the percentage was 4.2, Neale went on to stress that in New Zealand the work was much more difficult.

Neale stated that the reasons for such a small percent age of the children being in the upper grades were:

The unintelligent and lax administration of the compulsory law in most districts, hence, many children do not begin their school life long after the prescribed age of seven years. The teachers are not pressed to make any special arrangements for such laggards and of the dullards. They are also allowed to keep the children in the Preparatory Class and in the First Class for long periods. (I personally found numbers of children who had been three and even four years in Class 1).²⁹

The inspector's annual examination of the children also, for Neale was grossly inefficient.³⁰ He admitted that he was unaware of the origin and the stages of development of the Tasmanian system, but apparently, he suggested, it had two aims: first to test the teacher's classification of the children; and secondly, to trace the progress of the children. Neale assumed that the author of the Tasmanian system was 'anxious to avoid the evils of a "result system"'.³¹ Records made by the inspectors were sent to the head office of the Education Department, but the director was unable to offer Neale any interpretation of the figures. Later, while in conference with the inspectors, the inspector ultimately agreed with Neale that because of the basic faults in their methods of inspection 'all the labour ended practically in nothing'.³²

The Tasmanian teachers, Neale complained, were able to classify children however they liked. For Neale, while this was necessary for teaching purposes, it was disastrous for the purposes of the inspector's examination of the children. Neale explained that the purpose of the examination was to assess

²⁹ Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 29

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

the level of children's progress, and consequently, the efficiency of teaching methods. To achieve this recognised standards had to be reached in specified times. It was the case in Tasmania that an inspector could report that a child was making satisfactory progress in reading, albeit the child may have been in the particular grade for a number of years doing the same thing each year.

To impress upon parliament the inefficiency in school and departmental record keeping Neale quoted Inspector Garrett's 1899 report of a particular school: 'this being my first examination of the children, I have, of course, no means of estimating their progress; I therefore omit the table showing "Progress of Scholars individually".'³³ For Neale, the inefficiency in the system of examination and inspection could be traced to two facts:

a) There [was] no standard of proficiency to be reached at the end of the year's work. There [were] several grades of a 'pass', the lowest meaning that the child [was] only fit to be in the class. b) The teachers [made] wholesale promotions at any part of the school year, sometimes immediately before the date of the Inspector's examination.³⁴

Neale explained that the fault lay in the department's administration where inefficiency was rife. Instead of having the inspectors set different questions for different schools, in arithmetic for example, there was only one set of questions for all schools, for all the year:

There consequently, [has] been nothing to prevent practically every teacher in the State knowing (for many months) of the required tests. How far the sum [had] been passed round one cannot know, but it was a teacher who first gave me the information. I was assured that this had been the method of examination for many years past. It seemed incredible.³⁵

For Neale the system was not only inefficient, but facilitated professional immorality.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

The system of classifying the teachers, too, was grossly inefficient Neale pointed out. Classroom teachers were classified according to knowledge gained in purely literary subjects such as arithmetic and English. The provisions for head teachers were little better. They, too, were examined in purely literary subjects, but were asked to study some educational theory. Such a division of subject matter was anathema to the progressive mind. But, for Neale, certificates in even educational subjects should not be the sole means for a teacher's professional advancement. Efficiency in the classroom was what mattered.³⁶

A lax system of private enterprise supplied the materials and equipment to the Department of Education.³⁷ Progressive education, Neale reminded parliament, required that the children be actively involved in the processes of learning, rather than passively listening to the teacher. This required materials and equipment. In some schools, for example, Neale found that a quarter of the class did not have books; in other cases the whole class did not have these books; in many cases where the children did have books they were the incorrect type. The teachers had told Neale that often parents found the books too expensive to buy, or they were not available for purchase.

At the time a Hobart bookseller had the contract to supply the department and schools with materials and equipment. In South Australia, Neale reported, the Education Department called annually for tenders to supply materials and equipment. There was no long-term contract as existed in Tasmania between the department and the bookseller. Neale compared the price of items in South Australia with that being paid by Tasmanian parents. In the case of some items

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Tasmanian parents were paying three times as much as being paid in South Australia. Neale argued that the Tasmanian Education Department should obtain books through an annual tender system

4 'Seeding' Innovation Through Journalism

When Neale was appointed Director of Education at the beginning of 1905 he was aware that his administrative reforms would meet with resistance both within the Education Department and without it. Many sections of Tasmanian society would soon find reason to oppose his reforms.³⁸

Neale was a journalist before he became a teacher in South Australia.³⁹ The editions of the *Educational Record* started by Neale in 1905 through to when he left Tasmania in 1909 are marked by a strong journalistic quality. They were more than just an instrument to instruct the teaching service of the Education Department. They were very much an instrument of Neale's soul, a medium by which the virtues of the progressive education and progressivism generally, could be propagated. In short, the editions of 1905-09 created a feeling for reform with efficiency as its generator.

An interesting way in which Neale used journalism to seed innovation was to quote for his teachers newspaper articles favourable to the progressive education. For example in the April 1906 edition of the *Record* he published that:

The Hobart *Mercury* writes in its issue of the 17th instant, under the heading of 'A Progressive State School', the following encouraging paragraph: 'A striking result of the progressive system adopted in connection with our elementary education system of late has been achieved at the Battery Point State School. There a fife band has

38 D.V. Selth, *The Effects of Poverty and Politics*, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, explains in detail those who had reason to oppose Neale's reforms.

39 Brian Perkis, *William Lewis Neale*, *op. cit.*, chap.

been formed by Mr G. V. Brooks, one of the recently imported teachers, and 80 of the boys have provided themselves with fifes, and are now in a position to march out, as they have made themselves efficient in several marches ...⁴⁰

Perhaps, in the April 1908 edition of the *Record* there is the best example of Neale's use of journalism to arouse in the Tasmanian teachers a feeling for all the virtues of progressivism, but in particular, unquestioning loyalty, efficiency and service. Neale wrote that Roosevelt, the President of the United States, wanted to send a message to 'the rebel Garcia, who has hidden somewhere in the interior of Cuba'.⁴¹ Somebody, Neale went on, told Roosevelt that 'a fellow by the name of Rowan' could best achieve the task. Rowan was summoned and 'received his order in silence, strapped the letter over his heart, landed on the coast of Cuba, and successfully accomplished his mission in the face of tremendous difficulties'. For Neale this event echoed the fundamental problem facing state education in Tasmania: Tasmania, 'must find "the fellow by the name of Rowan"'. Neale stated that:

... the gorgeous fabric of public instruction must rest on the bent shoulders of the individual teacher. Unless the rank and file are men of brains, of initiative, impulse, of determination, of professional enthusiasm, all attempts at reform will meet with poor success. How is this State to secure such men for teaching, 'the highest of the arts'?⁴²

Neale proposed that the question had never been seriously tackled by state educators. He asked why so many young men commenced pre-service study for the profession, only to use this study as a stepping stone to another profession. This was gross inefficiency on behalf of the state. For Neale an answer could be found in the method of the great American President. He explained:

When the State finds 'the fellow by the name of 'Rowan', and sends him into the schoolroom unhampered by too many instructions, it will have travelled a long way towards solving the problem of problems. 'The world

40 E R, 2, 1, April 1906, p. 2

41 E R, 4, 1, April 1908, p. 2

42 *Ibid.*

cries out for such: he is needed , and needed badly- the man who can carry a message to Garcia.⁴³

Neale's description of the professionally developed teacher anticipated Beeby's teacher in the Stage of Meaning.

5 Increased Efficiency and Authority of the Director over State Education

Neale's administration of the Tasmanian Education Department was largely a thrust at increasing the efficiency of state education by increasing the authority of the state over public education. One of Neale's first tasks was to strengthen the power of the directorship. All head teachers were to communicate directly with the director; and all teachers when communicating with the department were to do so through their head teachers.⁴⁴ A strong directorship entailed efficiency; and efficiency entailed having as much information as possible available. Neale gathered a complete profile on all buildings and teacher residences. He asked for information on

postal and telegraphic communications, the churches in the neighbourhood, the distance from the nearest town or railway station, the method and cost of travelling, and the homes where board and residence may be obtained.⁴⁵

To conclude his 1906 annual report to his director, Inspector A.L. Brockett quoted from Davidson's *History of Education* to express the commonly held assumption amongst progressive educators *vis-a-vis* education and national efficiency:

Education is the only thing that can do away with those internal evils that disturb the peace and threaten the existence of the nation - labour troubles, saloon politics, haunts of vice, slum life, and the like. These things exist because a large body of our people, from want of education to open up to them the world of great movements, and notable interests and employments, are

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ E R, 1, 3, June 1905, p. 50

⁴⁵ E R, 1, 1, March-April 1905, p. 5

condemned to narrow and sordid lives, and petty or vicious interests. We disinherit them of the spiritual treasures of humanity, and then we wonder why they are vulgar, mean, squalid, discontented and rebellious.⁴⁶

The ideal of government controlled mass public education was increasingly being pursued by progressives. Often an underpinning reason for this ideal was social control. Brockett's quotation of Davidson's text reveals that this was as much the case in Tasmania as elsewhere. Social efficiency demanded that the whole of the population be educated and so be able to fully contribute to the nation's production.

Neale's first task was to discover the actual school attendance in Tasmania in both state and private schools. In June 1905 schools were issued with improved attendance returns which aimed at supplying head office with more accurate information on the attendance of each child in each school.⁴⁷ Attendance returns now had to be sent to head office at the end of each quarter. One of Neale's immediate problems was educating many teachers how to accurately complete the attendance return. In August 1905 Neale impatiently complained:

Very many of the returns sent to the school are absurdly wrong. For instance, the average attendance is shown as 43.7, although there are only 31 children on the books. The mistakes in such simple matters entail a large amount of correspondence and much expense.⁴⁸

The new attendance returns had the concomitant effect of impressing upon the head teachers that they were responsible to the director. Neale was quick to make it clear to his teachers that they were responsible for maintaining a satisfactory enrolment. A regularity of attendance and an efficient punctuality, Neale insisted, was a product of a teacher's personality. This required from the

⁴⁶ Thomas Davidson, *A History of Education*, London, 1908, p. 265, quoted in JPPP, 1907, Rep. Dir., paper 10, Report of A. L. Brockett, Esq., Inspector of Schools', p. 13

⁴⁷ E R, 1, 3, June 1905, p. 26

⁴⁸ E R, 1, 5, Aug. 1905, p. 50

teacher 'undeviating regularity and punctuality'.⁴⁹ Yet, Neale exclaimed that 'numbers of teachers report that during the recent wet weather they left their schools shortly after the proper time of opening, because no children were in attendance'. Others '... sent the children home, because only a few were in attendance'.⁵⁰ For Neale, such action was unforgivable. He explained that if parents could depend on the teacher always being present for the whole of school hours, then there would be comparatively few cases of absenteeism. Enthusiastic teachers, Neale explained, attracted attendance. In future, Neale would not accept 'no attendance of children' as an excuse for closing a school during the hours of duty.

Neale warned his teachers that it was the department's policy to pay according to success in teaching, success in managing subordinate teachers and success in attracting good attendance. Neale insisted upon accuracy and zeal from his teachers. He had not been director for twelve months when he admonished the head teachers for the inaccuracy of the information on the quarterly attendance returns. He warned the headteachers, moreover, that when the inspectors visited the schools, the attendance registers would be examined and reported upon. It seemed as if Neale believed that he could change his teachers' attitudes overnight by directives. By the end of 1906, however, Brockett was able to report the school records were being kept much better, and 'badly kept registers, etc. will soon be as difficult to find as they have been plentiful'. In the same report Brockett, as if to caution Neale, touched upon something which was to prove to be central to Neale's eventual demise:

There is still, however, much inexcusable carelessness in complying with plain instruction, and resentment where such cases are called to account, as would be inexplicable were it not remembered that it is not always an easy matter

⁴⁹ E R, 1, 4, July 1905, p. 38

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

for people to adapt themselves to strict and business-like conditions after a considerable experience of an easy going administration.⁵¹

The strongest opposition to Neale's drive to improve the efficiency of school attendance came from local boards of advice. Until 1907, the third year of Neale's directorship, the enforcement of the compulsory clauses of the 1885 Education Act was in the hands of the boards of advice. Thomas Stephens, the first Director of Education in Tasmania, explained in his annual report at the time of the inception of the boards of advice system that the payment of salaries to the secretaries of boards was made 'primarily to provide prompt and regular inquiry into cases of non-attendance and irregular attendance'. Neale explained that the Education Department paid about £500 annually to these secretaries, but there were only two or three who felt any responsibility about the matter, or even felt it their duty to attend to it. Thus, much of the work for which the money was paid remained undone. In Tasmania, as in every other Australian state, 'the experiment of entirely entrusting to local authorities the enforcement of school attendance has hopelessly failed'.⁵² This is not to suggest, however, that all boards of advice failed in their duty. Some, such as the Sorell Board of Advice, worked hard in attempting to get the children in the district to school.⁵³ Nor was the problem confined to country districts. The *Daily Post* condemned the number of school children on the streets during school hours in Hobart.⁵⁴

The attendance returns for 1906 revealed alarmingly low attendance. This was the first year that Neale was able to gather accurate information. The returns showed that there was a total of 24 221 children attending state schools. Added to this, Neale, with the help of his teachers and inspectors for the first time was

51 JPPP, 1907, paper 10, 'Annual Report of A. L. Brockett, Esq. Inspector of Schools', p.

12

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Daily Post*, 10 Aug., 1908, 5, 5

54 *Ibid.*, editorial, 3 April 1908, 5, 5

able to ascertain with some degree of accuracy the number of private schools in the state. These numbered 204 according to Neale's findings.⁵⁵ Neale concluded that there were about 35.6 percent of Tasmanian children between the ages of six and thirteen years not on any school roll. Moreover, he concluded that on any school day there was an average of 5 000 children absent from school. He went on to state forcefully:

It is not however, sufficient to deal with this important question only as it affects the attendance of the children on the books of the State Schools. The complete issues are much more serious, and are of national importance. Unfortunately there is considerable evidence that our State school system has failed to reach many whose need is greatest, and that there are growing up amongst us large numbers who do not continuously come under any adequate educational influence.⁵⁶

One of Neale's answers to the problem of the flagrant disregard for the compulsory clauses of the Education Act was to appoint two additional truant officers, one each in Launceston and Hobart, in addition to the existing officer in Hobart.⁵⁷ Another remedy was to import highly motivated, trained teachers from South Australia so that schools would become more attractive to parents and children. This was despite the opposition from the Teachers' Union. Neale warned those who opposed this move:

... the interests of the children growing up without education and the interests of the State alike, demand that no personal considerations should prevent the proper thing being done; and we cannot afford to delay the action necessary to that issue.⁵⁸

The *Mercury* gave considerable space to reviewing Neale's 1906 report and devoting the bulk of the space to the issue of poor school attendance.⁵⁹ Several

55 JPPP, 1907, Rep. Dir., paper 10, p. 3

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Mercury*, 3 Aug. 1907, 4, 8

58 JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 4

59 *Mercury*, 2 Aug. 1907, 4, 8

weeks later the *Mercury* took issue with Neale's statistics and the conclusions that he had drawn from them.⁶⁰ The paper used the 1901 census figures which showed that there were 51 565 children in Tasmania between the ages of four and fifteen years. The same census showed that there were 53 212 children receiving instruction. The *Mercury* chose not to challenge the glaring disparity between the figures, but argued that if the census showed that there were more children receiving instruction than there were children of school age, then this simply showed that many Tasmanians chose to send their children to school before and after the required age. Thus, the paper concluded that 'practically the whole juvenile population was receiving instruction'. More remarkably, the editorial concluded by stating that it did not matter much after all, if children were on a roll or not, 'provided that they are being educated, and we opine that they are often better educated at home than anywhere else'.⁶¹ The *Critic*, on the other hand, a year later, condemned those parents who allowed for 'so monstrous an army of truants'.⁶² It is, of course, difficult to ascertain the level of support that the *Mercury* received in Tasmania, but the published correspondence resulting from the editorial and lead article all supported the *Mercury's* views. The most interesting published correspondence argued:

Even with the 'ideals' he talks so much about, and his boasted improvements in the schools, Mr Neale has failed to secure a larger attendance at the State schools; and this is in spite of fees being lowered, and abolished for children under seven years, the introduction of clay modelling - which the children are said to take so much delight in - and other attractions ... Mr Neale ungenerously blames Boards of Advice for the small attendance. How often has Mr Neale been absent from his office, looking after these matters, since his appointment? He was given a chief clerk at a high salary on purpose to set him free for a certain amount of inspectorial work. The blame rests not with the Boards of Advice, but upon his own shoulders.⁶³

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* editorial, 4 Aug. 1907, 4, 5-6

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Critic*, editorial, 28 Nov. 1908, 2, 2-3

⁶³ *Mercury*, correspondence, 17 Aug. 1907, 7, 8

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60 *Ibid.* editorial, 4 Aug. 1907, 4, 5-6

61 *Ibid.*

62 *Critic*, editorial, 28 Nov. 1908, 2, 2-3

63 *Mercury*, correspondence, 17 Aug. 1907, 7, 8

Boards of advice reacted strongly to the accusations contained in Neale's 1906 report regarding their parochial and partisan interests in allowing parents to flagrantly disregard the law relating to compulsory school attendance. For example, the Chairman of the Clarence Board of Advice on Hobart's eastern shore stated that Neale 'must measure other people's corn by his own measure'.⁶⁴ The Chairman assured all that as far as the schools under the authority of his board was concerned, he did not allow sectional interests to interfere with his judgement. Another reaction by the *Mercury* to Tasmania's alleged poor school attendance was to obtain figures from the year books of the mainland state governments and from the Commonwealth Statistician to show that Tasmanian school attendance was not as bad as that painted by Neale and others.⁶⁵ These accounts were balanced by various daily news dispatches giving graphic accounts of legal actions brought against parents of truants.⁶⁶ The *Daily Post*, on the other hand, always supported Neale's actions in his fight against truancy.⁶⁷ The paper persistently placed the problem at the feet of boards of advice, the majority of which refused to take seriously their responsibilities, and parents who deprived children of a basic right. In reviewing the 1909 Royal Commission's Report into the administration of the Education Department, the *Daily Post* argued that before addressing itself to grievances of sections of the teaching force, the government should address itself to the ever-present problem of truancy.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10 Sept. 1907, 4, 8

⁶⁵ See, for example, *ibid.*, editorial, 8 Jan. 1908, 4, 6-7; *ibid.*, editorial, 5 Aug., 1908, 4, 5; *ibid.*, editorial, 25 Aug. 1908, 4, 8; *ibid.*, editorial, 28 July 1909, 4, 3; *ibid.*, editorial, 14 Aug. 1909, 4, 5

⁶⁶ See, for example, *ibid.*, 27 Feb. 1908, 6, 4; *ibid.*, 20 Oct. 1908, 4, 6; *ibid.*, 12 May 1909, 4, 8; *ibid.*, 22 Dec. 1909 4, 6

⁶⁷ *Daily Post*, editorial, 11 Aug. 1908, 4, 6 - 7; *ibid.*, editorial, 19 Nov. 1908, 4, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 3 April 1909, 6, 7

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, editorial, 31 March 1909, 6, 3-4

Early in his directorship Neale sought to strengthen government control over public education by persuading the government to legislate to have all schools registered. During August 1906 the Registration of Teachers and Schools Bill was introduced to parliament. The government explained that the main aim of the bill was to combat truancy. This, at one level of interpretation, was certainly the case. With the multitude of private schools it was common for parents to have children enrolled in a school, but in fact not send them to school. The critics of the bill's initial form were many. One correspondent to the *Mercury* charged that its chief fault lay in its not adequately distinguishing between the registration of schools and the registration of teachers. The correspondent claimed that this was because the bill uncritically followed the Registration Act of Victoria passed during 1905.⁶⁹ Another correspondent to the same paper argued that the Bill was a measure devised by the government to 'exterminate' all private schools.⁷⁰ The bill met strong opposition in both houses of parliament. The main amendment concerned the composition of the registration board. The bill was passed during the 1906 winter session of parliament.⁷¹ A registration board was appointed in March 1907. Of its eight members only two, Neale and Richard Smith, head teacher of the Battery Point Model School, were government employees.⁷² While in Victoria during March 1907 Neale spent considerable time studying the functions of the Victorian Registration Board.⁷³ The board effectively removed from the state the many private schools which had become havens of refuge from the truant officers, and where parents enrolled children and paid the prescribed fees, but without

69 *Mercury*, correspondence, 6 Aug. 1906, 3, 7

70 *Ibid.*, correspondence, 17 Aug. 1906, 6, 5-6

71 For details of the parliamentary debates see, *ibid.*, 9 Aug. 1906, 3, 3-6; *ibid.*, 29 Aug. 1906, 5, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 31 Aug. 1906, 5, 2

72 The members of the Board were: Professor Williams, representing the university, Neale and Smith from the Education Department, Capt. A. Parker from the [private] technical schools, the Bishop of Tasmania, the Rev. Father Gilleran, H. Gillet, S. Clunes and the Rev. C. G. Wilkinson from the protestant private schools: *ibid.*, 12 March 1907, 6, 3

73 *Ibid.*, 23 March 1907, 5, 2

any real commitment towards attendance. For Neale the problem of truancy had a national importance. He explained:

One of the tests of the efficiency of a school system is the extent to which it provides education for all those whom private effort fails to reach. Every undeveloped and undisciplined individual is a loss to the State, not only in a moral but also in an economical sense. A substantial number of such persons in a community may become a serious menace to its well being.⁷⁴

Brockett in his 1906 report also highlighted the significance of the Teachers' Registration Act:

With the passing of [the] ... Act a most important step has been gained. Although the Act practically grants a status to all existing schools, good, bad, and indifferent, it is clear that year by year the number of really poor private schools will steadily decrease; and this meant that it will become possible to deal more and more effectively with irregular attendance.⁷⁵

Yet, as Brockett suggested, the Registration Act only went part of the way towards dealing with the problem of irregular attendance brought about largely because of sectional interests. In the same report, Brockett was in accord with Neale when he reported that sectional interests, *vis-a-vis* the local boards of advice, still would be able to hinder complete attendance by children at school.

Neale argued that by making education free, in addition to its being compulsory, parents were more motivated to send their children to school.⁷⁶ Parents also would develop more positive attitudes towards schools. In his 1904 report and in his first three annual reports to his minister Neale attempted to persuade the government to abolish fees. At first he was unsuccessful, but in the 1908 spring session of parliament the bill was finally enacted. The immediate effect of the introduction of free education was, as Neale had argued,

⁷⁴ JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 3

⁷⁵ JPPP, 1907, paper 10, Report of A.L. Brockett, Esq., Inspector of Schools, p. 12

⁷⁶ JPPP, 1907 paper 10, p. 4

improved attendance. The average daily attendance for 1909 was 17 391 which was an increase of 1 139 over the average attendance for 1908.⁷⁷ The move also was supported by the vast majority of teachers who were now relieved of the tedious and often embarrassing duty of fee collection.⁷⁸ The *Daily Post* strongly supported the introduction of free education.⁷⁹ But, significantly for the purposes of our argument, fee abolition enormously strengthened government control over education, at the expense of local boards of advice. Henceforth, the government through its own revenue raising could move with a much freer hand in matters of education.

As with the Registration of Schools Act, arguments for the abolition of school fees were advanced during the 1885 education debates.⁸⁰ The issues surrounding the introduction of free education bit deeply into Tasmanian society. It was the last Australian state to remove school fees. The debates raged for over twenty years, with three discernible groups: the Protestant conservatives, represented by the *Mercury*, who opposed the move for economic as well as religious reasons; the Roman Catholics, represented by the *Monitor*, who opposed it for fear of Protestant domination of education; and a progressive group of unitarians and the rising Labor party which had its most articulate exponent in A .J. Taylor, and represented through the *Clipper*.⁸¹

Conservative sections of Tasmanian society argued forcefully against the introduction of free education. For example, the *Mercury* made its position clear. In an editorial, it argued that the introduction of free education into the

77 JPPP, 1910, paper 3, p.

78 *Mercury*, 2 July, 1908, 6, 3-4

79 *Daily Post*, editorial, 11 Sept. 1908, 4, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 16 Sept. 1908, 6, 5-6

80 R. P. Davis, *State Aid and Tasmanian Politics*, *op. cit.*

81 These points are developed by R.P.Davis, *State Aid...*, *ibid.*, p.p. 51, 52

states would cost Tasmanians £20 000.⁸² At first the paper opposed the very doctrine of free education.⁸³

Neale urged the government to reduce school fees as a step towards their abolition. During January 1906 the government promised to reduce fees during the forthcoming financial year and standardise the rate. Neale sought to centralise and standardise the system and rate of payment. Teachers henceforth would not be allowed to alter rates according to their own tastes and judgement.⁸⁴

Protestant Tasmanians sensed that free education would provide a powerful lever against the Catholics. During the estimates session of parliament in September 1906 the *Mercury* commented favourably on the new system and the new rates, and, indeed signalled the inevitable introduction of free education. The editor of the *Mercury* claimed:

The effort of the Government in taking a step towards free education will be duly appreciated, for it must be borne in mind that the best heritage of the people is the mental equipment to enable them to make use of opportunities that offer, and the culture which under our ever widening system of government will help to extend individual freedom and promote the eternal safety and happiness of the community.⁸⁵

The government during the budget session of parliament in September 1907 announced that it intended to introduce a bill for free education, and that free education was to take effect from the beginning of 1908.⁸⁶ The *Clipper* responded by claiming that there was 'great jubilation' amongst the Lyell

⁸² *Mercury*, editorial, 29 Sept. 1905, 5, 3

⁸³ R.P.Davis, *State Aid...*, *op. cit.* p. 53 explores this point in detail.

⁸⁴ *Mercury*, editorial, 10 Jan. 1906, 4, 2

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 14 Sept. 1906, 4, 2

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 12 Sept. 1907, 4, 8

miners, many of whom had large families and earned only 7/6 a day.⁸⁷ The Catholic position was precarious. Bishop Delaney responded by interrupting a trip to Victoria and returning to Tasmania to lead the Catholic cause against the move.⁸⁸ The Catholic cause for government subsidy was lost.⁸⁹ After initial postponement brought about by opposition to the bill in the Legislative Council, a bill to abolish school fees were enacted in November 1908, six months before Neale resigned his directorship. In June 1909 the *Daily Post* summarised its impressions of the development of legislation providing for free education in Tasmania:

Like Rip Van Winkle, the authorities in this State one day awoke from the soporific influence of customs born of tradition, and discovered that they were years behind in the matter of education. It was public feeling, however, that aroused them. A system of free education was the popular cry; but the wheels of progress moved slowly. Year in and year out the question of free education, not alone for those who certified that they could not pay for education but for the classes generally, was discussed, in and out of Parliament, until the new system was no longer a nebulous dream but a thing of reality.⁹⁰

Using monthly attendance returns from the schools, the *Daily Post* showed that the introduction of free education was associated with a net average increase in state school enrolments of 1 600 children; for example, during March 1908 there were 15 400 children on state school rolls, compared with 17 000 for March 1909.⁹¹

A revitalised inspectorate was to spearhead the new education in the state and further strengthen the director's control over the Education Department. Efficiency and energy were to be the guiding principles. Neale spent considerable time during early 1905 in conference with his inspectors,

⁸⁷ *Clipper*, editorial 21 Sept. 1907, 2, 6

⁸⁸ *Mercury*, 23 Sept. 1907, 3, 6-7

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 14 Oct. 1907, 5, 6-7

⁹⁰ *Daily Post*, 4 June 1909, 3, 3

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

determining common goals; the pattern was to continue during the next four years.

During mid 1905 Neale warned his teachers of the new examination and inspection requirements. There is every indication that he intended to tread carefully at first. He explained that the inspector's visit was to examine the children, to ensure that their grades were entered in the inspector's register, and to write reports on assistant teachers. Neale reassured teachers that the inspectors would not examine beyond the standard prescribed in the regulation; indeed, for 1905 teachers need not fear nearly as searching examinations as the regulations required. 'Every consideration will be shown by the inspectors.'⁹² Their main purpose in visiting the schools during 1905 was to indicate to teachers what would be required in future. Neale went on to explain that while the regulations were detailed, and, 'to those unaccustomed to thoroughness', may appear formidable, teachers could be assured that inspectors did not intend 'to place undue importance upon the children's proficiency, as tested by examinations'.⁹³ The real value in the inspector's visit, Neale added, was 'to deal with the higher aspects of school life, and to assist the teacher in many ways'.⁹⁴ As Neale put it:

The development of the 'good will' - the formation of character generally - is the final aim of the school work, but this is not inconsistent with reasonable progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic.⁹⁵

The principles of professionalism and the efficient use of the school day prompted Neale to warn his teachers that he would not tolerate record-keeping during the school day, although he would allow five minutes each day for the

⁹² JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 26

⁹³ E R, 1, 3, June 1905, p. 26

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

roll to be called and for the receipt of fees.⁹⁶ Even during the first two years of Neale's directorship the quality of classroom management had improved so much that Brockett reported favourably on the results.⁹⁷

Neale's notion of efficiency was stricken with a basic tension at times: it was meant to liberate, but it could imprison an individual. Perhaps the tension between the liberating ideals and the imprisoning ideals of the quest for efficiency is no better illustrated than in the use of military drill in day-to-day school routines. The efficiency resulting from military drill was illustrated to the teachers by Neale at the school of instruction held in Launceston during January 1906. Neale reported:

Those who have not used [military drill] both in the playground and the schoolroom have no conception how easy it makes control. The new curriculum will prescribe a little military drill for every class, and teachers are strongly advised to begin at once teaching falling in, attention, the turnings, marking time, the halt, marching in file, and changing direction while marching in file.⁹⁸

Neale was thus the unconscious perpetuator of an ideal which would send these children-cum-youths in their thousands across the seas during the Great War to continue these routines, albeit with much more horrific consequences.

Neale made sure that the principles of efficiency and zeal carried through to classroom management. The inspectors were to instruct teachers in the principles of constructing and using timetables. Here, again, complete uniformity of method was not the ideal. Neale was asked to publish specimen timetables. He hesitated, fearing that teachers would blindly copy them, without regard to understanding the educational reasons behind the structure of the timetables. He explained that it was not his ideal to have every school teach

⁹⁶ E R, 1, 4 July 1905, p. 389

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ E R, 1, 11, April 1906, p. 13

'the same subject at the same time'.⁹⁹ It was Neale's desire to allow for 'the widest possible latitude for the teacher's personality'. No two teachers could work in exactly the same way. Neale adopted a relativistic stance when he explained that 'there is no single method that is right while all others are wrong'. Teachers should remember, Neale retorted, that there is a 'method for the subject', and a 'method for the child'. A 'true teacher' Neale explained, was a professional who knew principles and applied them as occasions arose. An imitator who simply followed routine prescribed by another was 'at best, a lower-grade mechanic or tradesman'. Neale concluded that 'it is better to constantly fail in a thoughtful attempt to construct a school routine than to succeed by imitation in getting the appearance only'.¹⁰⁰

A major task for Neale was to classify the Tasmanian state schools, to bring order from chaos, which he did by October 1905. His criterion for classification was annual attendance. He defined a state school as one which has 'an average attendance of 20 or over, and which is in charge of a certificated teacher'.¹⁰¹ These were to be distinct from provisional schools which had an annual average attendance of twelve, but with less than twenty. Schools with less than twelve average attendance were classified as an assisted school. The department would contribute towards the salary of the teacher, and would allow the teacher to retain the fees, but was not responsible for the teacher's full salary. State schools were classified into ten classes. The Battery Point Model School, Hobart and Charles Street School, Launceston comprised the first class, while one-teacher schools with a population of not less than forty comprised the bottom class. Teachers, too, were classified according to academic qualifications, as being either certificated or provisional. Following

⁹⁹ E R, 1, 4, July 1905, p. 39

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ E R, 2, 8, Nov. 1906, p. 108

an examination, all teachers were awarded a first, second or third class certificate, and were eligible for appointment to schools as head teachers or assistant teachers. There was a further group of teachers who were classified as being class IV, licensed teachers and candidates for employment. The latter group were provisional teachers and were eligible for appointments to provisional schools or as provisional assistants at state schools. Promotion should be based on suitability to the position and academic achievement. Brockett commented, again seemingly cautioning Neale in relation to teachers' ability to cope with change. He warned that despite 'the great shaking of dry bones', during the first twelve months of Neale's directorship there was a 'majority [who] are honestly striving to work up to the new ideals'. Moreover, Brockett reminded Neale that many teachers were 'sparing neither time nor money in their efforts to qualify themselves, and to improve their schools'.¹⁰²

Neale warned his teachers that the inspectors, in conjunction with the teacher, would classify the children for the following years work, and that teachers were not to relegate children to lower classes without the permission of the inspector. The aim was to advance each child a grade each year. For every child over eight years of age in the preparatory class the inspector would require a verbal report by the teacher of the reasons for the backwardness. In the past the practice of keeping children in a lower class, although educationally damaging for the child, made the teachers work much easier. Superficially, at least, Neale seems to have disposed largely of the problem of retardation. For example, during 1908 there were only eight children, fourteen years of age and over in the preparatory grade.¹⁰³ That retarded learners may have been languishing in higher grades is another matter.

102 JPPP, 1906, paper 12, 'Report of A.L. Brockett, Esq., Inspector of Schools'. p. 33

103 JPPP, 1909, paper 11, p. 3

Neale further tightened government control over education in Tasmania by introducing a scheme for the bulk buying of textbooks at a much lower cost than previously, and was unchallenged when he commented on several occasions that he had saved the state more by this single scheme than he had received in salary in the whole period of his appointment. The scheme was supplemented by the supply of printed material - copybooks, alphabet cards, etc.- produced by the Tasmanian Government Printer.¹⁰⁴

Neale's initiatives *vis-a-vis* the government production of materials met with some public opposition, most conspicuously from Taylor.¹⁰⁵ Taylor was able to show that the government was making 33 percent profit on the sale of the materials, despite that in some schools up to 60 percent of children remained without materials. Taylor's opposition, however, was shortlived. He soon reverted to being one of Neale's strongest supporters.¹⁰⁶

6 W.L. Neale's Administration: An Analysis of Rejection

Selth has argued that there were three reasons behind Tasmania's rejection of Neale's level of efficiency within the Education Department.¹⁰⁷ We can but agree with Selth; we will analyse his reasons with available contemporary data where we can.

First Neale was an outsider, who had little praise for anything educational that existed before his arrival, and he compounded the problem by bringing more

¹⁰⁴ JPPP, 1906, paper 12, p. 9

¹⁰⁵ *Mercury*, correspondence, 21 Oct. 1906, 3, 5; *ibid.*, 29 Oct. 1906, 3, 3; *ibid.*, 7 Nov. 1906, 7, 3; *ibid.*, 17 Nov. 1906, 7, 4-5; *ibid.*, 27 Nov. 1906, 6, 3

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 13 Nov. 1907, 4, 6

¹⁰⁷ D.V. Selth, *The Effects of Poverty and Politics*, *op. cit.*, chap. 2

outsiders into the island state. Many Tasmanians saw him as an unnecessary intruder who disturbed a hitherto satisfactory 'Tasmanian way' of doing things. Secondly, when Neale accepted the directorship, J.W. Evans, the Premier and Minister for Education promised him 'as free a hand in administration as can be granted'.¹⁰⁸ Even though Neale anticipated a Royal Commission into his administration, Evans reassured him of his full support. Of course Neale exercised this freedom with an autocratic will, and the government support was lacking. Political expediency overran a genuine care for the future of Tasmanian children.

There were, however, sections of Tasmanian society which consistently supported Neale's ideals and strategies for implementing them. The *Daily Post* declared that much of the trouble which had surfaced during the 1908 Annual Conference of the Teachers' Union could have been avoided had the Minister taken action to deal with the leaders who were 'sowing disaffection and preaching disloyalty throughout the service'.¹⁰⁹ The paper went on to declare:

There is an organised revolt and nothing is being done to break it down. Had the leaders been dismissed from the service for disloyalty, as they certainly would in any other State, we would have been saved all the nonsense which has been talked in the Legislative Council of late ... The grievances of teachers - and that some may have reasonable grounds for complaint is not doubted - can be dealt with departmentally. There is ample provision for this being done, and although sweeping statements about harshness and unfairness have been made in the Legislative Council not one of them will stand investigation.¹¹⁰

The paper went on to conclude that the interests of the state's children were being forgotten in the power play and self-interest of teachers and politicians.

108 S.A. Education Dept., 2390 of 1907, quoted in Selth, *The Effects of Poverty*, *op. cit.*, p. 59

109 *Daily Post*, editorial, 3 Nov. 1908, 6, 6-7

110 *Ibid.*

Outside of sections of the teaching service, Neale's strongest opponents were the boards of advice, particularly in rural Tasmania. These mostly were comprised of land owners, the employers of labour, accustomed to ordering the affairs of their district without interference from a bureaucrat in Hobart. These men were also the representatives of their districts in parliament; often they held seats in the Legislative Council. Here, as the *Daily Post* indicated, their grievances were fanned by constituents who feared the loss of cheap child-labour in the face of Neale's efforts to strengthen the powers of the directorate in forcing children to attend school. But it was not always the rural boards of advice with which Neale fell foul. For example, the 'vigorous protest' mounted by the Launceston Board of Advice claimed prominent space in the *Mercury*.¹¹¹ In this case, as in so many others, Neale's complaint against the board of advice was trivial. But Neale was relentless in his effort to wrest control of the school's administration from local interests. In this case the board protested by adjourning its meeting for a month. The *Mercury* reported that one member of the Launceston Board of Advice complained that '... it was a waste of time sitting as a Board of Advice as the Director ignored them'.

The Labor movement had supporters for Neale in parliament. J. Earle M.H.A., from the mining district of the west coast and soon to become a Minister for Education, declared that he had 'nothing but admiration' for Neale. J. A. Jensen M.H.A., from Launceston unhesitatingly agreed with Neale's appointment of South Australian teachers. Other Labor members, however, attacked Neale. Joseph Lyons M.H.A., a future state Minister for Education and a Commonwealth Prime Minister and one of the students at the Philip Smith Training College who was suspended by Neale, was vitriolic in his attacks on Neale.¹¹² C. R. Howroyd M.H.A., condemned Neale's heavy-handed actions

¹¹¹ *Mercury*, 27 Oct. 1906, 7, 2

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 13 July 1907, 3, 5

against teachers.¹¹³ The anti-Neale section of the Labor movement seems to have been the majority despite the support which the *Clipper* and *Daily Post* put behind Neale. Howroyd and Lyons had their constituencies on the north west coast. These were the last members to be elected before the 1909 advent of the Hare-Clark system and belonged to single member electorates. It seems that Labor opposition to Neale came from districts such as the north west coast where we have seen the small independent farmers were dependent upon their children's labour on the farms. This was not so much the case in areas such as the working class suburbs of Launceston and in the mining district of the west coast.

The *Critic* spoke out against the Tory and the Laborite extremes at the time of the first Royal Commission on Neale's administration:

I can understand the mood of the ultra Tories who wish to rid the State of Mr Neale. From their standpoint, they are quite right. They don't want their servants to be better educated than themselves, and if the servants go to a real school it is hard for them not to be. But it is difficult to enter into the mood of those Labor members who seem anxious to join hands with the ultra-Tories. Is it that they know that educated workers would not return them? In any case, it is for the workers to see that their children are not robbed of the culture which will do more to make their lives bright than will all the speeches of all the politicians. Educate the people, and the rest follows, for social form corresponds to social realities.¹¹⁴

The *Mercury* when commenting on the commission's report generally favoured its findings.¹¹⁵ It stated that Neale had committed some unforgivable administrative blunders, but it conceded also that the report mentioned very little of his administrative achievements. The *Daily Post* declared that the commission paid too much attention to the complaints for the teachers and did not sufficiently consider the welfare of the children.¹¹⁶ The commission

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 14 Aug. 1909, 1, 4

¹¹⁴ *Critic*, 16 Nov., 1907, 3, 3-5

¹¹⁵ *Mercury*, editorial, 30 March 1909, 4, 3-4

¹¹⁶ *Daily Post*, editorial, 30 March 1909, 4, 3-4

concluded that Neale had greatly improved school life, and according to the *Daily Post*, Neale was appointed to achieve this. The *Critic* maintained that real losers in the skirmish were the Tasmanian children; the commission had failed them dreadfully.¹¹⁷

The third reason given by Selth for Neale's rejection was that Neale's administration aimed immediately at a high level of efficiency from the teaching staff. This was a teaching staff mostly untrained, the older members feared to lose their income because of their inability to teach and administer their classes in a manner that they did not understand. While the younger teachers imagined that they would lose their promotion opportunities to the 'imports' from South Australia. These were teachers who we have seen were mostly untrained and belonged to Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development.

As an educational change effort Neale's was disastrous. Certainly he realised that Tasmanian schools required teachers in strategic city schools who were beyond the Dame School Stage. But Neale's mistake was that he imported teachers, rather than patiently nurturing the development of Tasmanian teachers to a more advanced level of professional development. Neale proceeded too quickly: it was simply a case of too much, too soon.

The *Mercury's* obituary for Neale stated that, 'he made the mistake of being over-zealous'.¹¹⁸ Opposition however was not immediate: most sections of Tasmanian society at first responded positively to Neale's strengthening of the directorate, and his general administrative reforms. The *Mercury* in an editorial during September 1905 praised Neale's reorganisation of the Education

117 *Critic*, editorial, 3 April 1909, 5, 1-4

118 *Mercury*, 17 Dec., 1913, 3, 3-4

Department.¹¹⁹ The Hobart daily did not expect that in a few months a complete recasting could be made of the whole system, particularly because of the state's financial position, the Education Department's budget was found to be restricted. The *Mercury* went on to praise the government for its development of the department along progressive lines, and noted:

Every attempt to introduce a new system is certain to meet with hostility from someone, and, doubtless, a certain number of the teachers are not inclined to readily fall in with the innovations. But the Director of Education appears to be endowed with a proper amount of firmness, and so long as he can rely on support from the Minister, he will, no doubt be quite able to cope with the difficulties of that sort.¹²⁰

Two years later the same paper in another editorial claimed that Neale 'appeared to be in haste to jump from the extreme laxity ... to the other extreme of severity'.¹²¹

The teacher's opposition to Neale through their union was mostly based on trivial reasons. Certainly, Neale was autocratic and often offensive in his correspondence, demanding a missionary zeal from what was mostly poorly trained and poorly equipped teachers.¹²² The *Daily Post* conceded these points, but referred to Brockett's 1906 annual report in which he stated:

There is still much inexcusable carelessness in complying with plain instructions, and a resentment where such cases are called to account, as would be inexplicable were it not remembered that it is not always an easy matter for people to adapt themselves to strict and business-like conditions after a considerable experience of easy-going administration.¹²³

119 *Ibid.*, editorial, 21 Sept. 1905, 4, 6-7

120 *Ibid.*

121 *Ibid.*, editorial, 15 Nov. 1907, 4, 5

122 C.R. Paice, 'Tasmanian Teachers Unite for Protection, 1905-9', *TJE*, 9, 2, May-June 1975, *op. cit.*, p.p 33-40

123 JPPP, 1907, paper 10, 'Report of A.L. Brockett, Esq., Inspector of Schools', p. 12. Quoted in *Daily Post*, editorial, 9 Nov. 1908, 6, 6-7

The *Daily Post* went on to draw Tasmanian readers' attention to what another inspector had said about the teachers' reactions:

Previously to the changes made two years ago, there was an educational system in this State. Unfortunately, for reasons which need not be discussed here, the rules of the system were not enforced. Teachers who grew up under a do-as-you-please administration may find that strict conformity now insisted on somewhat irksome ... Unless more vigor is displayed, the task before them is well-nigh hopeless. Slowness inevitably begets listlessness and inertness.¹²⁴

The *Daily Post* used the comments made by the two Tasmanians to argue that the cause of much of the trouble amongst the teachers, and their accusations of discourtesy by Neale, would probably be found to be nothing more than a very firm insistence that his instructions had to be carried out. The paper stated that there must be discipline in the department and a supreme authority to exercise it. Other sections of Tasmanian society exhibited ambivalent feelings towards Neale. The *Monitor* condemned Neale's role in the Registration of Schools Act, which it perceived as an attempt to shut down private schools.¹²⁵ But the same paper condemned those sections of Tasmanian society which prevented Neale from having time to complete his reforms.

When the findings of the third Royal Commission into Neale's administration were handed down in March 1909 it was concluded by the Chairman and four other commissioners, all Tasmanians, that it 'would be distinctly detrimental to the best interests of the Education system' for Neale to maintain his directorship.¹²⁶ Although they placed on record 'their appreciation of his high ideals, his zeal, and his untiring industry', Peter Goyen, the sixth commissioner, and an inspector of schools from New Zealand, in a dissenting

124 JPPP, 1907, paper 10, 'Report of A. W. Garrett, Esq., M.A., Inspector of Schools', p. 14. Quoted in *Daily Post*, editorial, *op. cit.*

125 *Monitor*, 24 Aug. 1906, 3, 3

126 JPPP, 1909, 'Royal Commission on the Education Department of Tasmania, paper 1

sentence, agreed with the report in all respects except the sentence recommending the termination of Neale's directorship.

Peter Goyen was interviewed by a representative from the *Daily Post* on his return to New Zealand. Goyen's comments, free from a Tasmanian influence, and coming from an educator of some repute, are valuable in assessing Tasmania's rejection of Neale. Goyen stated that Neale came to Tasmania when the central office and the schools were in a dreadful mess. The system was very centralised, and few localities took any interest in their schools. Neale apparently thought that no one in head office was capable of directing the correspondence but himself, and accordingly undertook the work. He had written over 20 000 letters in this attempt to govern the department from head office. Neale

... put on the brake [of a lax administration] too severely, and in many instances with severity. Mr Neale occupied the position of absolute dictator.¹²⁷

Undoubtedly Neale's administration was autocratic, but even an autocrat needs a support base. And Neale's only real support base was that small group represented by the *Daily Post* and the *Critic*. There were some schools in Tasmania which were moving beyond Beeby's Dame School Stage to the Stage of Formalism. Typically these schools were found in Launceston and Hobart where support for progressive education was strongest. But generally, Tasmania was simply not ready for an educational messiah preaching Neale's brand of administrative efficiency. The lesson was plainly written for the next Director of Education: he must build a solid political base in the government of the day, whatever its political persuasion. This would require great tact and diplomacy, and in fact, render the directorship much more of a political

¹²⁷ *Daily Post*, 10 April 1909,3,4-6

appointment. Teachers needed clear statements of what was required from them, clearly stated objectives and monetary rewards when these objectives had been attained. A method of educational administration which was to be strongly influenced by scientific management could move Tasmanian state school teachers beyond the Beeby's Dame School Stage and beyond the notion of efficiency based on a missionary zeal.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Gerald Grace, *Teachers of the Urban Working Class: socio historical locations in Gerald Grace, Teachers, Ideology and Control: a study in urban education*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1978, p.p. 10-13 explores the idea of English state school teachers being indoctrinated with the missionary ideology during the second half of the nineteenth century in order to sustain social control over the urban working class by the middle class who were assuming political control in England.

CHAPTER 2

Educational Management Under McCoy

William Taylor McCoy was the Tasmanian Government's second choice for Neale's successor. William Rooney, the Principal of Claremont Teachers' College in Perth was appointed, but the death of his wife, and the special care needed for his eldest son forced him to retire.¹ Early in 1910 McCoy was appointed to the directorship at the age of forty three years. McCoy, like Neale, was raised in a strict Methodist household. He was one of seven children.²

Significantly, McCoy's referees for the position highlighted his tact in dealing with the public and teachers, his business-like manner, his organisational ability, and particularly, his faithful execution of the aims and objectives of the New South Wales Education Department.³ It has been stated that 'McCoy's career [in New South Wales] had seemed to include most of the activities likely to meet with departmental approval, such as organising school concerts and cadets, and little of those actions likely to incur censure.'⁴ The *Mercury* reflected the common call in Tasmania for a man with these qualities. In an editorial the paper declared:

What is wanted is a good administrator, a man with sound ideas, and with high ideals, to which he will endeavour to work up the system, but yet with discretion, tact, and, above all, common sense.⁵

At a valedictory smoke concert held in Aaron's Hotel, Sydney, on the eve of McCoy's departure to Tasmania, attended by Frank Tate, Director of Education

1 For the only published biographical study of McCoy see B.K. Hyams, W.T.McCoy, Director of Education, Tasmania, 1910-19; South Australia 1919-29, in C. Turney(ed.), *Pioneers in Australian Education, Vol 3*. Sydney 1983, p.p.30-60. See also Derek Phillips, *Making More Adequate Provision, op. cit.*, p.p. 110-146

2 *Mercury*, 22 Jan. 1910, 6. 3-4

3 B.K. Hyams, W. T. McCoy... *op. cit.*, p.34

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Mercury*, editorial, 8 Dec. 1909, 4,5

in Victoria, J. Dawson, Chief Inspector of Schools in New South Wales, Alexander Mackie, Principal of the Sydney Teachers College and Peter Board, the Director of Education in New South Wales. Board enthused over McCoy's suitability for the Tasmanian directorship. He

... congratulated [McCoy] on his appointment, and offered condolences for the difficulties with which he would be faced. It was a singular thing, he said, that almost every Director of Education in Australia had obtained his position as the result of a crisis in the educational work of the State. Western Australia, perhaps, was the only exception. With every period of reform must come a period of strain and stress. New South Wales had had it. Victoria had had it. Queensland had had it and South Australia had had it, and now the little island of Tasmania was going through the ordeal. Mr McCoy was about to apply the necessary remedies. After these periods of strain and stress there came periods of peace and progress and the speaker looked forward to the time a few years hence when education in Tasmania would enter upon a path of peaceful progress. Mr McCoy had many of the qualities which the position of Director required. He had a strong sense of justice, an extremely level head, and was gifted with the somewhat uncommon quality called common sense.⁶

Only in Hobart for a few weeks, McCoy soon revealed his highly-developed skills of public relations. When interviewed in January 1910 by the *Daily Post*, McCoy tactfully stated that although he had not met the various members of the staff of the Education Department, he understood them to be capable men and women. Basically, he saw his task as an administrator. His first task was to formulate the educational policy of the state and then to get out amongst the schools, in company with the inspectors, and assist them and the teachers to carry it out. He stated that he wanted to get to know the members of the staff, and to encourage them in their 'arduous work'. Most importantly he wanted to bring the parents and teachers together into a common purpose. 'Education', McCoy declared, 'is a citizens' question', because, he went on to explain, the

⁶ *Ibid.*,

education of the children was of much more importance to the parent than to the teacher, and although the teachers were paid to do part of the work they brought to their task more zeal and enthusiasm when they knew that they had the confident support of the parents.⁷

At the Annual Conference of the Teachers' Union in July 1910 McCoy in addressing the teachers touched again on the need to bring the school and the community together. The *Daily Post* enthusiastically threw its support behind the ideal.⁸ Specifically, the paper looked to the excellent work being done at the Trinity Hill State School by the headmaster, G. V. Brooks, in establishing a common purpose between the school and the community it served. The *Daily Post* went on to praise the firm resolve which McCoy clearly manifested in his desire to achieve his goals. Twelve months later at the 1911 Annual Conference of the union, the *Daily Post* again praised the excellent tone of McCoy's address, and the warm rapport he was establishing with the rank and file of the teaching service.⁹

McCoy's tact, diplomacy and administrative skills won the support of most sections of the Tasmanian community. For example, at the 1912 annual conference of the Teachers' Union the *Critic* praised McCoy's efficiency in administration, and particularly the firm control he had over the teachers, a control which resulted from mutual respect.¹⁰ In 1914 the new Labor Government Minister of Education, J.A. Lyons, on the occasion of his return to his old school at Stanley, declared that 'the Director had done wonders for the State in the matter of education ...'¹¹

⁷ *Daily Post*, 24 Jan. 1910, 5,5

⁸ *Ibid.*, editorial, 7 July 1910, 2-3

⁹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 26 July 1911, 4, 7

¹⁰ *Critic*, editorial, 5 July 1912, 2,3

¹¹ *Daily Post*, 30 April, 1914, 5,6

McCoy had developed and honed his administrative skills in Peter Board's New South Wales Education Department. Gollan has shown how the New South Wales Education Department was administered during the period by long established procedures employed elsewhere in the public service in New South Wales, other Australian mainland states, Britain and New Zealand.¹² This was the application of classical administrative theory, and involved a chain of administrative authority from the department head 'down' through supervisors, or district inspectors, to head teachers and finally to teachers. There were three important elements to this system of administration. First, detailed instructions were required. These came through memoranda and gazetted instructions. Secondly, a thorough supervision of subordinates was necessary. Thirdly, feedback of performance through examinations or some other similar procedure was necessary at regular and predictable intervals. Scientific management did not radically break from these traditions, but sought to compliment the three main elements by introducing 'science' to these principles.¹³ The new psychology was introduced to administration, emphasising the importance of stimulus and response psychology, to motivate workers to higher levels of achievement. Moreover, use was made of statistics as a necessary part of evaluation of workers. We will see how McCoy in Tasmania moved towards the ideals of scientific management.

1 McCoy and Scientific Management

During the same year as McCoy's appointment as Director of Education in Tasmania there appeared in the *Mercury* a lengthy article explaining F.W.

¹² K. Gollan, *The Organisation and Administration of Education in New South Wales*, Sydney Teachers College Press, n. d.

¹³ Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behaviour*, 2nd ed., Macmillan, New York, 1957

Taylor's and Frank Gilbreth's developments of scientific management and its use in various sections of American industry.¹⁴ The effects of the application of business management values and techniques generally, and scientific management specifically, on the public schools of the United States has been documented.¹⁵ At the very outset of McCoy's appointment there was a developing interest in Tasmanian society concerning the science of management. This was concomitant with the changing economic bases of Tasmanian society.

The Tasmanian Government established the Hydro-Electric Department in 1914, and in 1915 its Chief Engineer delivered its first report. He outlined the possible establishment of an electrolytic zinc company in Hobart to meet Australian and British wartime demands for zinc.¹⁶ Tasmania's first government-developed hydro-electric scheme was operational by May 1916.¹⁷ Two weeks later it was announced that an electrolytic zinc company was to be established in Hobart using government supplied hydro-electric power.¹⁸ Herbert W. Gepp, general manager of the Electrolytic Zinc Company of Australia, a notable Australian progressive fully utilised the principles of scientific management in the new factory.¹⁹ Gepp, naturally in a small city such as Hobart, and through the increasing demands for technical education, was often in close contact with McCoy.

By 1916 there was a developing community of thought centring on scientific management in Tasmanian society. For example in May 1916 Morris Miller

14 *Mercury*, 8 Oct. 1910, 3, 3

15 R.E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, *op. cit.*

16 *Mercury*, 9 July 1915, 4, 3-7

17 *Ibid.*, 8 May 1916, 3, 6-7

18 *Ibid.*, 23 May, 1916, 3, 5

19 Anthony J. Burrows, *An Examination of the Town Planning Idea of the Garden Suburb and Its Application to Industrial Management in the Early 1920's at the Electrolytic Zinc Company*, unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Tasmania, 1978.

delivered a public lecture at the Philip Smith Training College on 'Business and Psychology'.²⁰ In the lecture Miller outlined the influence that psychology was having on administrative theory and practise. He outlined the main features of scientific management and the development of the movement in the United States. The publicity given in Tasmania to the great 1917 railway and tramway workers strike in New South Wales brought Taylor's system of scientific management to the minds of most Tasmanians, albeit often in a distorted way.²¹

Early in his career in Tasmania, McCoy showed that he was alive to the ideals of business in his management of the Education Department. The *Mercury* responded to the prompt and the efficient presentation of McCoy's first annual report by declaring:

Mr McCoy's report in all respects is a very business-like document. It states plainly what has been done in the way of reorganisation, changes that have been effected, what the schools have cost, and the progress in average attendance.²²

The influence of business values and methods generally, and the values and methods of scientific management specifically influenced the development of the administration of the Education Department. The developments truly can be labelled progressive. Yet they are an example of how progressives in search of efficiency generated many negative and restrictive developments in education. Except for his annual reports to his minister McCoy committed himself to print on few occasions. Thus, we must sift through his administrative actions for close similarities between these and the values and methods of business and scientific management.

20 *Daily Post*, 5 May 1916, 3, 5. For Miller's role in advancing the cause of scientific management in Tasmania see M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-2.

21 *Mercury*, 2 Aug. 1917, 4, 8; *ibid* 4 Aug. 1917, 8, 5; *ibid.*, 11 Aug. 1917, 7, 7-8; *ibid.*, reprinted from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 Aug. 1917, 7, 4-5.

22 *Ibid.*, editorial, 6 June 1911, 4, 3-4

At the beginning of his first full year in office, McCoy systematised the organisation and administration of the head office of the Education Department.²³ Now the department was divided into three branches: the clerical branch, under the secretary; the accounts and statistical branch under the accountant; and the correspondence and records branch under the chief clerk. Nowhere does McCoy make reference to Taylor's principles of scientific management, nor is there any mention of the principles in the Education Department's literature of the period. But, McCoy's basic administrative measures in the organisation of the department were at once compatible with the basic principles of Taylor's scientific management; that is, to organise the administration into sections of common purposes, so that each worker had clearly defined tasks that were compatible with the objectives of the particular section of the administration.

By 1916 the net enrolment in Tasmanian state schools had increased to 32 689 children from 25 294 in 1910. The pressures that this increase brought on the central administration of the Education Department meant that McCoy was able to convince the government that a new head office building was needed. In September 1916 McCoy and his administrative staff moved into a new building in Macquarie Street, Hobart.²⁴ It perhaps, was fitting that an educational administrator of McCoy's standing should have had such improved administrative space. McCoy wrote that for many years the efficient administration of the department had been hampered by a lack of suitable accommodation. He explained that the new offices not only formed a handsome addition to Hobart's public buildings, but provided 'commodious, comfortable, airy, and well-lighted rooms that are much appreciated by the staff

²³ JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 2

²⁴ JPPP, 1916, p 3, p. 16

... The improved accommodation ... certainly resulted in greater efficiency.'²⁵ Certainly, the new building was evidence of the growing importance of state education, the Government's developing commitment to it, and particularly, McCoy's standing in Tasmania.

2 Increased Efficiency of the Inspectorate

At the beginning of 1910 McCoy placed the inspectorate on a more professional and efficient level, with an increased devolution of authority to the schools, or at least to the head teachers.²⁶ The new role was completely in accord with the role assigned to supervisors under Taylor's system of scientific management. Gone was the inefficiency of the inspector's annual role of examining and grading every child in the state schools. For all grades, other than those participating in terminal examinations, the head teachers examined yearly progress. There were sound educational, as well as administrative reasons for McCoy doing this. McCoy explained:

It often happened that the good pupils failed through nervousness or over anxiety to do well, or sickness, or some other cause.²⁷

Under the new scheme the teacher was encouraged 'to do his best work in his own way', thus encouraging more resourcefulness and initiative by teachers throughout the school year, and discouraging cramming at the time of the inspector's annual visit. Now, the teacher's efficiency was no longer gauged by the percentage which children gained during the annual inspection. During these visits the inspectors could concentrate on reviewing the overall efficiency of the school administration. But, McCoy warned, still the ultimate measure of

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 2

²⁷ *Ibid.*

a school's progress would be by the children's progress in the three R's.²⁸ At the end of 1911 McCoy was able to report that, 'the better teachers bring greater intelligence and more resource and initiative into their work'. He further observed 'a marked improvement ... in school management'. Some inspectors could complain about poorly kept records and programs, but generally teachers were as Inspector Davis put it, 'now more business-like'.²⁹

The changes in the method of inspection met with caution from the *Mercury*.³⁰ It agreed with the substitution of inspection for examination, and the placing of the onus of promoting children on teachers rather than the inspector was a radical change in accordance with modern tendencies. The Hobart daily agreed that marks gained at an inspector's examination was a poor test of the teacher's or children's efficiency. It liked the ideals of an inspector acting as a supporter, adviser and an evaluator rather than an examiner. For the *Mercury* the system would depend on adequately trained teachers, 'such as we hope to see in a very few years in all our schools. The cracking of the inspector's whip should rarely be necessary'.³¹

3 Efficiency Through Examination, Certification and Classification

During 1910 McCoy issued new regulations dealing with the methods of entering the teaching service, and for the classification of teachers.³² The regulations were drawn up in concert with J. A. Johnson, the newly appointed Principal of the Philip Smith Training College who had come from New

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ JPPP, 1912, paper4, p. 3

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Report of Inspector Davis esq. p. 29

³¹ *Mercury*, editorial, 6 June 1911, 4, 3-4

³² *Ibid.*

Zealand.³³ The inspectors would also attend. All the applicants for the position of provisional teacher now were required to do an entrance examination and to undergo a course of three months preliminary training at either the East Launceston Practising School or the Elizabeth Practising School in Hobart. This group of teachers were, of course, separate from those undertaking the A, B, C and D courses at the Training College. McCoy was well aware of the shortcomings of such a brief period of training, but he explained that, 'the exigencies of the Department are such as to prevent a very desirable extension of the term at present'.³⁴ Moreover, McCoy assured his minister that 'special care was being taken with the selection of candidates'. With the increased number applying for the position, many were 'of a superior type to those offering in former years'.³⁵ This point does not suggest that McCoy was consciously applying the doctrines of Taylorism, but Taylorism demanded thorough-going selection procedures for personnel at all levels of an organisation.

For those teachers in the schools McCoy introduced a scheme of an efficiency and a service mark for the purpose of classifying teachers.³⁶ The cumulative mark gained according to these criteria determined salaries and promotion opportunities. Now, McCoy claimed teachers had a clear incentive to improve their professional efficiency and literacy attainment. Teachers could not expect to be promoted on grounds of seniority alone. The service mark 'was introduced to help the old earnest and efficient teachers'.³⁷ This group of teachers, however, could not 'rest on their oars', depending on their service

³³ Derek Phillips *Making More Adequate Provisions op. cit.* p.p. 91-96 for Johnson's earlier career

³⁴ JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 6

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ JPPP, 1916, paper 3, p. 7

mark alone for advancement. They would find themselves 'beaten in the race for preferment by some younger and more progressive brother'.³⁸

McCoy's task was a difficult one at the outset. It was a hostile teaching body which had backed the reactionary elements in the Tasmanian Parliament which had brought down Neale. The *Mercury* reminded McCoy of his precarious position after he had been in Tasmania only three months. As the Hobart daily put it:

It is only fair to Mr McCoy to point out that he might have remained in the service of New South Wales, without any risk, and with all the chances of promotion, while failure in Tasmania as Director must hurt him badly in his future career.³⁹

As the *Mercury* stated McCoy was grappling with one of the most difficult problems of the service. And for the *Mercury*, he was going about it the correct way:

... he has made an attempt to establish a proper system of classification ... every [teacher] has an absolute right to know his or her position, and the main cause of all past troubles has been the want of classification.⁴⁰

McCoy met with teachers in the north and south of the state during March and April 1910. It was reported that his scheme for classification and efficiency marks met with solid approval amongst the teachers.⁴¹ Generally, these regulations seem to have been well accepted by the teachers' union throughout McCoy's directorship. From 1914 the ambitious Brooks was president of the union, and there seems to have been a conscious effort by him to cultivate a much closer rapport between the union and the department than that hitherto realised.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Mercury*, editorial, 11 March 1910, 4, 6-7

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 21 March 1910, 6, 4; *Ibid.*, 11 April 1910, 6, 2-3

The idea of an examination system, of the Education Department's finished product being progressively examined at regular intervals was compatible with a basic principle of Taylorism: that is, the administrator should be able to ascertain the effectiveness of his administration in terms of the quality of the finished product. The devolution of authority from the inspectorate to the schools in relation to examinations did not mean a lessening of emphasis on examinations in the yearly work of schools, nor a lessening of the inspectors' interest in them. It did mean, in part, a more efficient use of the inspectors' time. Now the inspectors were better able to supervise the schools' quarterly examinations, and follow up weaknesses shown in the terminal examinations of the primary and secondary schools. McCoy's administration was a period of increased emphasis on the value of examinations as an instrument to measure the efficiency of schools. Inspectors' annual reports to McCoy, and McCoy's annual reports to his minister are testimony to the value placed on examinations during the period. Collectively these reports supplied an awesome array of statistics on children's and schools' progress.

By 1912 McCoy was recording in detail in his annual reports individual school achievement and outstanding achievement by children of results in the qualifying certificate examination for grade 6 children, and the junior public examination for fourteen year olds. With the inception of the Hobart and Launceston high schools in 1913, and the Burnie and Devonport intermediate high schools in 1916, the eulogy of examinations was intensified. The provision of the Bursary Act of 1915 ensured that the cult of efficiency as measured by examinations was enhanced. McCoy called the passing of the act,

'the most momentous educational event of the year', because of its provisions for free secondary and tertiary education for selected country children.⁴²

The qualifying certificate examination was particularly important as a litmus test for the overall efficiency of the Education Department. McCoy explained that it

... performed a triple function. It is the examination which decides the award of junior bursaries; it determines whether children are fitted for admission to the State high schools; and it serves to show teachers the weak points in their work.⁴³

McCoy published a diagram to illustrate the way in which examinations were used to compartmentalise the overall organisation of the Education Department.

Interestingly, during a period in early 1912 the educational worth of examinations was aired in Hobart. The *Mercury* pointed out that examinations were a comparatively recent educational development, except for China where their development had reached a logical conclusion whereby students were locked up for days on end while the examinations were in progress.⁴⁴ Even the Greeks and Latins who furnished so much material for contemporary examinations did not engage in exams. The *Mercury* concluded with the view that no matter what people thought of examinations, they only lasted two or three hours, and the whole thing was over in a week or so. S. R. Dickinson, deputy headmaster of Leslie House School in New Town, Hobart replied to the *Mercury* article in the same paper some weeks later. He argued that examinations were a necessary evil in a progressive society. Prizes, exhibitions, and scholarships were awarded on the results on them. And the rivalry between schools ensured the survival of the fittest. Dickenson agreed

⁴² JPPP, 1916, paper 3, p. 9

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Mercury*, 6 Jan. 1912, 5, 7-8

that examinations did not constitute all that was education, which to most teachers meant 'all-round development'. Dickenson went on to argue:

The great trouble here is that the 'all-round development' cannot be set down in the actual market value of pounds, shillings, and pence, whereas a prize or scholarship is a tangible thing that can be fingered in each value and is in consequence much better understood.⁴⁵

The *Mercury* in an editorial in the same issue as Dickenson's article agreed fully with Dickenson's views, parting company only to argue that a school's reputation was not built on examinations alone.⁴⁶

4 Efficiency Through the Use of Statistics and the Standardisation of Procedures and Outcomes

Roe shows that progressives 'were ardent collectors of data'.⁴⁷ The use of statistics as a management tool in Taylorism is well known. McCoy's 1910 annual report contained four statistical appendices. Eight years later McCoy presented his minister with eighteen statistical appendices to his report, along with six tables of statistics contained within the body of the report. The use of statistics as a management tool had an economic purpose as well as an educational purpose.⁴⁸ Often, too, statistics seemed to have had a political motive for McCoy: for example, he could show how the quality of teaching, or educational expenditure was apportioned throughout the state. During the period McCoy increasingly used statistics as an instrument to expose weaknesses in the organisation which he directed, and therefore exposed areas requiring remediation and increased funding. He also used statistics as an agent

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 22 Jan. 1912, 2, 3-4

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, editorial, 22 Jan., 4,

⁴⁷ M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p. 11

⁴⁸ For the role of statistics gained from surveys and their general place in the efficiency drive in the public schools of the United States during this period see R. E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 112-20.

to facilitate competition between the various schools within the Education Department. During the period the *Record* increasingly became an organ of instructions, reports, and statistics concerning departmental and public examinations for children and teachers, thus accentuating competition between schools. At the same time the journal became less an organ for the propagation of educational ideas. An examination of some of the statistics used in McCoy's 1918 report will illustrate the way statistics were used as a tool for efficient administration.

McCoy in his 1918 report tabled a vast array of statistics on the terminal examination for primary schools covering five years.⁴⁹ He showed the number of children sitting for the examination for each of the five years, the number of passes, the percentage of passes, and the percentage of passes in the separate subjects. Then in a separate table he showed how each primary school throughout the state fared in gaining secondary school bursaries from their efforts in the qualifying certificate examination. No doubt the competition which this engendered between the schools was intense. But also in the larger schools which had several grade 6 classes, the publication of statistics on children's achievements in the examination must have fostered intense competition between class teachers.

Statistics were published by McCoy on school attendance during 1918 and the previous four years.⁵⁰ Gross enrolments and net enrolments for the state were shown alongside average monthly enrolments, average daily attendance, and the percentage of the average daily attendance over the average monthly attendance. Then followed a table showing the achievements of each board of advice in gaining convictions for truancy. Alongside each board of advice was the

49 JPPP, 1919, paper 4, p. 4

50 *Ibid.*, p. 5

number of prosecutions for the year, the number of convictions, the number of withdrawals and the number of adjournments. In an appendix the report detailed a vast range of statistics for each school in the Education Department relating to attendance. A school's, or an individual teacher's achievement *vis-a-vis* children's attendance influenced their efficiency mark. Thus there was a financial as well a professional incentive to maintain high attendance.

An interesting set of statistics which illustrates how the Education Department during the war came to play an increasing role in corporate state planning was that illustrating the probable occupation of children leaving school during the year.⁵¹ The table showed the likely occupation of boys and girls leaving high schools and primary schools. Primary schools were categorised into city, agricultural towns, mining towns, and small country centres. No doubt these statistics influenced the Education Department annual estimates, in view of the fact that some occupations had greater wartime and postwar importance than others.

The public interest in educational statistics can be judged from the fact that the *Mercury* published annually, following the establishment in 1909 of the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics, a lengthy analysis of national educational statistics.⁵² The *Mercury* in an editorial comment on the quality of McCoy's annual reports, left no doubt about its opinion on the report and its use of statistics. It maintained:

There is no other department of the Public Service which performs functions comparable with those of the Department of Education, and the report issued by the Director of the work accomplished each year is always

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, appendix XIV, p. 39

⁵² See, for example, *Mercury*, 31 May 1911, 4, 5

worthy of study by people who take an intelligent interest in the advancement of the State and of the race.⁵³

We have seen already how McCoy standardised the school hours in Tasmanian state schools. All state schools worked to a standardised routine. When McCoy introduced the uniform system of school hours in October 1910 he released a press statement explaining to the public the reasons for his actions.⁵⁴ He explained that when he took charge of the Education Department he found that schools opened and closed at various times throughout the state. McCoy could discover no adequate reason why this was so. He thus introduced a regulation requiring uniformity in school hours. But, McCoy did not explain why he required standardisation of school hours. The thrust towards efficiency through standardisation seems to have been an unquestioned assumption by McCoy.

The place of standardisation in Taylor's organisational theory is well known, and its application to educational management in the United States has been described.⁵⁵ McCoy introduced a vast range of regulations aimed at standardisation of procedures during his directorship, but the major changes occurred during July and September 1910.⁵⁶ Relevant to our thesis is McCoy's regulations to standardise the duties of the Boards of Advice, which in effect reduced their influence, bringing them more directly under the control of the Education Department. The new regulations stipulated quite clearly that boards of advice had no more than an advisory role and that the internal management of schools was a state government responsibility.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 18 June 1913, 4, 5

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 6 Oct., 1910, 7, 7

⁵⁵ R.E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 79-9

⁵⁶ These were detailed for teachers in the various editions of the *Record*; for some of the media reporting of them see *Mercury*, 16 July 1910, 6, 3-4; 13 Sept. 1910., 5, 5-6

McCoy in September 1910 issued a detailed new curriculum to his teachers.⁵⁷ As the *Mercury* observed, 'the old syllabus [was] set out in less than two pages of the regulations, while the new occupies six pages of the "*Record*"'.⁵⁸ In addition to the new curriculum McCoy issued instructions which aimed at standardising the organisation of timetables and the grouping of classes. The *Mercury* observed that, 'much more guidance is given to the teacher, and less is left to his own discretion and imagination'. In fact, what had happened, was that McCoy had by regulation standardised the aims and methods of all teachers under his direction. There only remained for him and his officers the task of perfecting the techniques for testing or examining the teaching methods and the end products of the system.

In his 1913 report to his minister McCoy made it clear what he conceived the role of the terminal examination for primary schools to be:

The Qualifying Certificate Examination discloses weaknesses in the teaching of spelling and grammar, and the percentage of passes in mathematics was below the standard ... The results of this examination are a very fair indication of the character of the instruction given in a school and are viewed as such when estimating the efficiency of a teacher.⁵⁹

At their following annual conference the Tasmanian state school teachers protested at what they considered to be the harsh standards placed upon their methods. McCoy's reply to them was to state that the teachers should further improve their teaching methods so that the test of efficiency that he placed upon them would not seem so harsh.⁶⁰

Certainly McCoy never altered his conception of examinations. Moreover, there is ample indication that teachers began to look for increasing guidance and

⁵⁷ E R, 6, 4, Sept. 1910, p.p. 52-56

⁵⁸ *Mercury*, 16 July 1910, 6, 3-4 *op. cit.*

⁵⁹ JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 6, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ AOT, ED 343/1914, 'Resolutions of Teachers' Conference'

direction under such a rigorous examination system.⁶¹ Teachers who exercised individual initiative and creativity towards the curriculum would be penalised through the efficiency mark. So, for example, we find at their 1918 conference, a resolution being put forward to McCoy through the office of the minister 'that in order to make the scope of geography more definite the department be asked to prescribe books showing the work for each grade'.⁶² McCoy replied that he would be prepared to do so if the teachers' union could nominate one that the department considered to be suitable.

5 Increased Social Efficiency Through Improved School Attendance

Like Neale before him, McCoy was fully in accord with the progressive drive towards social efficiency. This meant maximumising the state's authority over education. The underlying assumption was to fully utilise state controlled education to harness the state's resources and guide its evolution along a pre-determined path. This meant greater public expenditure on education and, above all, the abolition of truancy.

The *Mercury* which was always careful in its support for increased public expenditure in 1910, expressed its views regarding increased government spending on education to increase state efficiency:

The State has altered the old condition of things, and decided to do the work, but it is not doing it. It cannot do the work unless it is prepared to devote more money to education, and this it ought to at any sacrifice, for education is the basis of all. Money can be found for building houses for people on the land, for roads, and a dozen other things, but education is pinched and starved, because the State is pretending to be doing what is not

⁶¹ JPPP, 1919, paper 4, p. 3, *op. cit.*

⁶² *Mercury*, 18 July 1918, 8, 5-6

done. It is quite as important to grow good men and women as to grow wheat or sheep.⁶³

The following year the *Mercury* again pushed for increased government authority over education by declaring that 'we should indeed, like to see the educational system much beyond its present scope'.⁶⁴ The *Daily Post* joined arms with its rival in pushing for increased provisions for state education. The state must act to get children to school. Commenting on an address given to the Congress of the National Council of Women during February 1910 by Johnson, the *Daily Post* asserted that truancy was a social evil in Tasmania which compared with the past practice of 'blackbirding' in Queensland. But, unlike 'blackbirding', truancy in Tasmania could arouse no widespread social conscience. With truancy

there can only be one result, and that is the physical and mental deterioration of the race. Worn out children can never make good citizens.⁶⁵

The *Critic*, decried the prevalence of truancy, declaring it to be

... the modern educational destroyer, and unless it is suppressed the present free Educational system of Tasmania must continually encounter heavy seas and stagger along under lower topsails.⁶⁶

Condemnation of truancy was sustained from all sections of the Tasmanian press during the pre-war years of McCoy's directorship. For example in June 1910 the *Mercury* ran a lengthy article on irregular school attendance and truancy. The Hobart daily observed that despite the abolition of school fees, and the provision for state assistance for the purchase of learning materials for the children of poorer parents, free education, whilst increasing the number of younger children attending school, had not appreciably increased the attendance of older children. The *Mercury* went on to explain:

⁶³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 9 June 1910, 4, 2-3

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, editorial, 30 November, 1911, 4, 2-3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 9 June 1910, 4, 2-3

⁶⁶ *Critic*, editorial, 27 April 1912, 2, 4

Irregularity of attendance of children at the State-schools is an evil which the returns in possession of the Education Department show is rife, and actually on the increase throughout the State, with a few notable exceptions here and there in country districts, where boards of advice discharge their duty well. In other country districts these boards are not imbued with the importance of education and adopt a 'let it alone' attitude, seeming to care for nothing, an officer of the department put it, but to have as much Government money as possible spent amongst them.⁶⁷

The *Mercury* in an editorial follow-up to the report reminded Tasmanians that 'the law has fixed a certain standard of efficiency, and a certain school age, with the deliberate intention that every child shall get at least a smattering of education'.⁶⁸

The *Daily Post* was relentless in its condemnation of the sections of Tasmanian society which condoned the flagrant disregard of the Education Act. In a series of editorials and lead articles the Labor daily exposed 'the greedy and thoughtless parents, the indifferent boards of advice and the magistrates' who continually refused to bring even moderate punishments to offenders.⁶⁹

The *Critic* was particularly critical of boards of advice which refused to act against offending parents. In an editorial during 1911 the paper condemned boards of advice for refusing to act in the interests of children.⁷⁰ The following year its tone had sharpened. The editor declared:

No one holds the Director of Education responsible for this kind of thing. Mr McCoy is an able man, and what he does not know about the administration of his department is not worth while taking the trouble to

⁶⁷ *Mercury*, 4 June 1910, 7, 3-4

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, editorial, 4 June 1910, 4, 3

⁶⁹ *Daily Post*, editorial, 17 June 1911, 4, 7; *ibid.*, 24 July 1911, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 18 Aug. 1911, 3, 5; editorial, 18 Aug. 1911, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 29 Sept. 1911, 7, 2-3; *ibid.*, editorial, 30 Sept. 1911, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 31 May 1912, 6, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 17 March 1913, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 20 March 1913, 3, 6-8

⁷⁰ *Critic*, editorial, 5 Aug. 1901, 2, 2

ascertain. He cannot be held responsible for the laches of Boards of Advice, who should take the truant bull by the horns, and cause parents to do their duty to their children - the coming citizens of the future.⁷¹

During McCoy's administration of the department the compulsory clauses of the Education Act were administered by fifty one boards of advice, with the aid of two truancy officers, based in Launceston and Hobart. Following pressure initiated from the Hobart Board of Advice the Education Department regulations were amended to allow the police to assist when requested.⁷² McCoy pursued the problems of the parochial influence of the boards of advice over attendance at schools with a zeal characteristic of his whole administration. His constant concern was the legislation which only allowed for legal proceedings to be undertaken at the behest of the chairman of the boards of advice. McCoy complained that 'there is no available record to show the number of defaulting parents who have been prosecuted'.⁷³ Public consciousness, however, by about 1911 was beginning to mount against truancy. Following the action by the Hobart Board of Advice, came further action by Municipal Association, the umbrella organisation for local government bodies. At its annual conference in 1912 a resolution was passed which urged the state government to amend the Education Act so that parents or guardians, who were found guilty of allowing their children to miss school, be imprisoned.⁷⁴ A few months after the conference the Education Act was amended to allow for imprisonment of defaulters.⁷⁵

McCoy was able to have the Education Act further amended in 1913 to have the school leaving age raised from thirteen years to fourteen years of age, in conjunction with the inception of secondary education in Tasmania. He was

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 27 April 1912, 2, 4

⁷² *Ibid.*, 28 Nov. 1911, 2, 8

⁷³ JPPP, 1915, paper 4, p. 7

⁷⁴ *Mercury*, editorial, 23 May 1912, 4, 6

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 12 Sept. 1912, 4, 5

successful in having the average monthly enrolment increased from 25 368 in 1912 to 30 329 in 1918. This last figure, of course, included children at the four high schools. But significantly, he was able to have the percentage of average daily attendance over average monthly attendance raised from seventy percent in 1911 to eighty percent in 1918. All this was possible, he proudly announced, because of

... the increased efficiency and popularity of the schools, to the policy of annual promotions, to the institution of the qualifying certificate examination, and, above all, to the increased zeal, enthusiasm, and ability of the large majority of teachers.⁷⁶

6 An Enlarged State Education System

If a flow chart existed for the Education Department when McCoy arrived in Tasmania in 1910 it would have shown only the primary school sector and the training college. McCoy in his 1913 annual report was able to illustrate, with the development of kindergarten and infant classes and the high schools, a much enlarged education system. In the best tradition of scientific management the diagram shows various compartments of the education system as the children progressed through it.

Increasing the state's authority over education required an increased number of country children to come under its authority. There had long been a public cry for a greater number of country schools.⁷⁷ Following the New South Wales example, McCoy established a further category of schools in 1912 - the subsidised schools.⁷⁸ Provisional schools catered for the teaching of children in localities where an average attendance of ten to twenty children per day. But

⁷⁶ JPPP, 1919, paper 4, p. 8

⁷⁷ See, for example, *Mercury*, correspondence 11 Feb. 1910, 2, 6; *ibid.*, correspondence, 6 July 1910, 7, 2

⁷⁸ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 4

as McCoy reminded his minister 'there were still small groups of settlers in isolated or in sparsely-settled parts who were unable to obtain the means of education for their children'. Thus, the government had framed regulations which subsidised private teachers at a rate of £5 per child per year, but were not to exceed 50 per year for any individual teacher. The subsidised teachers also had to comply with strict department regulations concerning the content of the curriculum and record keeping. The *Mercury* commented that 'these arrangements [are] most liberal, and should meet the needs of many small communities in isolated parts of the country ...'⁷⁹ Thirteen subsidised schools, with a total of 138 children attending them existed at the end of 1912.⁸⁰ By 1918 the initial category of subsidised schools had become full-time schools under government regulations; subsidised schools by 1918 were schools with a enrolment of less than 10 children. In 1918, 57 of these schools existed with an average daily enrolment of 480 children.⁸¹

In 1914 the first state Labor government, with Joseph Lyons, the Minister for Education promised increased government expenditure on rural education.⁸² The more liberal definition for a subsidised school and their consequent increase in number was a result of Labor government initiatives for country children. Another result was the maintenance of a travel allowance for isolated children, despite the increase in subsidised schools. These were initiatives which were bound to please the yeomanry of Tasmania's north west coast: Lyons's constituents. During 1912 there were 363 children who received a conveyance allowance for travelling by boat, vehicle or train. In 1918 this figure had fallen only to 342 children despite the increase in subsidised schools. The introduction of state correspondence education for children unable to attend

⁷⁹ *Mercury*, 19 July 1912, 5, 6

⁸⁰ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 4

⁸¹ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 4

⁸² *Mercury*, 6 April 1914, 5, 6-8

schools because of distance must be seen as a logical development of McCoy's provisions for country children, and as another facet of his grand scheme for social efficiency.

During McCoy's first year as director his major changes to the Education Department Regulations provided for a super-primary class, a grade VII, in the state's large primary schools.⁸³ The *Mercury's* cautious editorial indicated the doubts which existed in certain sections of Tasmanian society when the state first attempted to provide education for the age group of children which hitherto had been educated by private schools.⁸⁴ This was not the case with the proposed provisions for state kindergartens, because up until 1910 only two non-government kindergartens existed in the state. The establishment of state kindergartens in 1911 and state high schools in 1913 coincided with the growing support for the Labor Party in state parliament. By 1912 when the government announced its plans for the establishment of two high schools in the state, at Launceston and Hobart, the *Mercury* had altered its view. Now it saw the generation of competition between state and private secondary schools as being conducive to general educational efficiency:

... the experience elsewhere has been that a stimulus has been given to higher education, and that actually the competition of the Government has led to increases in the number of children attending the secondary schools, while has also compelled the latter to keep up a high standard of efficiency.⁸⁵

The passing of the Bursaries Act in 1915 may be seen as another provision by the government to harness working and middle class children of both city and country districts into secondary and tertiary education.⁸⁶

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 13 Sept. 1910, 5, 5-6

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, editorial, 6 Aug. 1910, 4, 4-5

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 17 Aug. 1912, 4, 4

⁸⁶ JPPP, 1916, paper 4, p. 1

The closing of the ragged schools in Hobart in 1910 and the enrolment of the 160 children attending these schools was another example of the strengthening of direct state control over public education and an attempt to discipline the working class population of Hobart.⁸⁷ For a number of years sections of Tasmanian society had pressed for their closure and the enrolment of the children attending them into the state schools. The Rev. James Barry, hon. secretary of the Free Schools Association explained to the *Daily Post* that he knew that Neale was opposed to the schools. McCoy was opposed to them, and made no secret of the fact. There was 'considerable opposition' to them on the part of some members of the government, especially since the introduction of free education.⁸⁸

Certainly, the underlying reason for the closure of the ragged schools was economic, but this was closely related to the issue of social efficiency. An analysis of the issue by the editor of the *Daily Post* sets their closure in context.⁸⁹ The editorial explained that the original intention was to provide an education for children whose parents could not afford to pay the fees which were once charged by the state schools. Since the introduction of free education there was nothing to warrant their continued existence. Their administrative funding came from government subsidy and public subscription. All this could be put to better use if the children were sent to state schools. The free schools were not under the direct control of the Education Department. Although they were inspected by officers from the Education Department, they reported to the Chief Secretary not the Minister for Education. Although his reports were

87 Vicki F. Pearce, *The Lowest Common Denominator - Children, State and Society, Tasmania, 1896 - 1920*, unpublished B.A (Hons) thesis, University of Tasmania, 1983

88 *Daily Post*, 30 June 1910, 3, 4. The 1910 annual report of the (Hobart) Free Schools Association showed that attendance at these schools was: Lower Collins Street, total number on roll 63, average attendance 45.6; Watchorn Cascade School, total number on roll 63, average attendance 52.2

89 *Ibid.*, 30 June 1910, 3, 4; *ibid.*, editorial, 30 June 1910, 4,5

mostly favourable the *Daily Post* observed those who had the opportunity of seeing them mostly agreed that they did not reach the standard of efficiency of state schools, which were more effectively staffed and provisioned with buildings and equipment. In the interests of state efficiency, the *Daily Post* maintained the children would be better attending state schools.⁹⁰

7 Analysis of Acceptance

If McCoy needed to, he certainly heeded the Mercury's advice given in 1910 that Tasmania needed a Director of Education first with administrative ability, tact and commonsense. McCoy came to understand the Tasmanian political and educational system very quickly. Not only did he strengthen the support which Neale's supporters had shown for progressive education but he also won over Neale's opponents.

Lyons, who had been so outspoken against Neale, worked hard in McCoy's support both as a M.L.A. and as a Minister of Education. Lyons' support was critical, not only because McCoy needed a powerful ally in parliament, but because he needed the co-operation of the growing number of yeomanry along the north west coast whom Lyons represented. These farmers were least inclined to send their children to school because of their need for assistance in developing their small holdings. The *Daily Post* praised McCoy's efforts in this regard as did the *Mercury*.

McCoy also won over the support of the Teachers' Union. The astute Brooks as president of the union, established a firm accord between the union and the

⁹⁰ For contemporary accounts and editorial opinions on the closure of the "free" school from a socialist perspective see *ibid.*, 1 July 1910, 2, 4-5; *ibid.*, editorial, 16 Sept. 1911, 6, 5; *ibid.*, 22 Dec. 1911, 5, 5

department. Brooks may have been keen to show politicians and McCoy that he, too, had the necessary administrative ability and tact to become the next Director of Education. Certainly, he set the union on a moderate path of close accord with the department from which it seldom strayed over the next seventy years.

Tasmanian teachers were being professionalised in ways that have been described by Bledstein, Ozga and Lawn. We have already seen how Tasmania's economy had been since the 1890's changing from a predominantly rural economy to a mixed rural, mining and industrial economy. Bledstein, Ozga and Lawn have argued that professionalisation occurred in societies which were being industrialised: this Marxist view argues that the middle class provided the state with professionals who could control and socialise the working class. The professional class also provided an example of mobility.⁹¹ Teachers were not alone in their struggle: the state co-operated for its own ends. Teachers, in their developing professionalism, became increasingly dependent on the Education Department and much more submissive to its demands of unquestioning loyalty and service.⁹²

Under McCoy's leadership the Tasmanian state primary schools moved forward from Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development. This is not to say that there were not still country schools under the control of untrained teachers which lingered in the Dame School Stage. An indication that a majority of Tasmanian schools had advanced to Beeby's Stage of Formalism was McCoy's new use of the inspectors' role as supervisors and assessors of

91 Burton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism*, Norton and Co. New York, 1976; Jennifer Ozga and Martin Lawn, *Teacher Professionalism and Class: A Study of Organized Teachers*, Falmer Press, London, 1981

92 Gerald Grace, *Teachers of the Urban Working Class...*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 13-18 explores this idea in relation to English state school teachers during the same period.

teachers, rather than examiners of children. The latter was now a role which McCoy perceived head teachers were capable of carrying out. Of course, this administrative measure may have engendered sufficient professional self-respect amongst some head teachers to further their professional development away from the Dame School Stage. There was other evidence, too, of professional development amongst teachers which we shall explore in latter chapters. There were several reasons for this qualitative development.

First there was a growing number of trained graduates from the Philip Smith Training College in schools. This is not to suggest that the graduates were any more educated in independent and critical thought than were graduates from the mainland teachers' colleges. Hyams has shown that these graduates simply received an education from their respective colleges which would ensure that they were efficient and faithful servants of the state.⁹³ The Tasmanian graduates were simply better equipped to faithfully execute the Education Department's instructions than were their colleagues who received no such training. Secondly there was a growing number of better qualified and educated teachers in the state who had been recruited to staff the four new high schools. These could act as a benchmark for the primary school teachers' professional development. Thirdly, there were the imported trained South Australian teachers who added to the body of Tasmanian primary teachers. These teachers had been already installed in key senior positions in schools in Tasmania's larger towns and cities without McCoy having to suffer any rebuke as did Neale. All were faithful executors of departmental instructions. There was none more accomplished than Brooks, the head teacher of the Elizabeth Street

⁹³ B. K. Hyams, *Teacher Preparation in Australia, 1850-1950*, ACER, Melbourne, 1979, chap. 4

Practising School in Hobart, close to McCoy's and the minister's watchful eyes.

McCoy was a master educational administrator, who understood and applied the progressive measures of scientific management. Here, all subordinates, through the system of efficiency marks, were motivated to strive towards a greater level of efficiency. What constituted efficiency was clearly defined for teachers through the departmental instructions and regulations posted in the *Record*, and orally by the frequent visits of the inspectors. There was a predictable and understandable system of assessment of subordinates. A Classification List, ranking all teachers and head teachers in order of efficiency was published annually in the *Record*. All teachers knew exactly where they stood in comparison to other teachers. Moreover, Brook's appointment as Director of Education on McCoy's resignation in 1919 was testimony that the system worked: through a diligent quest for efficiency, a one-time despised South Australian 'import' had risen through the ranks to become Director.

By the time of McCoy's departure to South Australia in 1919 a system was firmly established in the Tasmanian state primary schools which ensured that, for the main, Tasmanian progressive education would proceed along a course of development which was distinctly scientific as opposed to the child-centred variety. Why Tasmanian early childhood education was able to remain out of this broad current of development, and develop child-centred progressive education, we will explore in later chapters.

CHAPTER 3

The Curriculum Under Neale

Neale at the beginning of 1905 set off on a program of educational innovation in Australia's island state. Neale was an outsider who already had put many Tasmanian teachers off side with his critical assessment of the condition of Tasmania's state education system. Much of the existing ill-feelings could have been alleviated, however, by some form of material support for the new methods the teachers were asked to employ, and a more sympathetic understanding of the change process.

1 W.L. Neale and Progressive Education: the 1904 Report and its Basic Assumptions

The Introduction to Neale's 1904 report on Tasmanian state school education stands as Neale's credo in the new education and its relationship to progressivism-at-large. He opened the report to the Tasmanian Government with a summary of the new consciousness of the twentieth century. Neale proclaimed that 'the progressive evolution of personal life and national life has developed extremely complex relationships, and revealed infinite possibilities in human nature of adjustment to such relationships'.¹ For Neale, the complexities and infinite possibilities of society did not square with the world view held by traditional thinkers. He declared:

The inner significance of life both individual and national are coming slowly to be under stood ... full life is many-sided because humanity itself is complex: many-sided,

¹ Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 8

like-wise, because its environment (whatever that may be) is also complex.²

For Neale, the old liberal tradition did not allow for the complexity of society, nor did it generate an educational philosophy which unleashed hitherto unrealised human and social potency. Neale stated that governments and educators had a moral responsibility to the nation to tap these potencies. They must look to the developing applied sciences to achieve these ends. He explained:

The bases of this appreciation are the conceptions of human nature given by modern psychology and the related sciences.³

Neale was close to Jamesian thinking in arguing that individuals were motivated by a need to fulfil needs efficiently. He had already posited the view that 'fulllife is many-sided' because the relationship between society and its environment was complex.

Neale went on to assert:

A system of education that does not recognise this many-sidedness, and so does not prepare for complete living, tends to produce lack of balance and sanity.⁴

So, for Neale individuals possessed an innate compulsion to fulfil the multi-faceted desires or drives which made up their personality. The state had an obligation to provide schools for all children, and, moreover, had the further obligation of ensuring that the curriculum prepared children for 'complete living'. Schools had to provide a curriculum which went beyond the three R's. There was, moreover, no absolute body of knowledge which children had to possess on leaving school.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

Neale placed himself in the mainstream of progressive educators in maintaining that the old assumptions of the positivist sciences ought to be rejected. The old view that knowledge existed in an absolute sense negated an individual's and society's potential for complete development. In fact, throughout Neale's report, there is an assumption that all knowledge is subjective. Neale claimed that 'the significance of life lies within'. In this sense, Neale was in accord with the subjectivist notion that an individual determined truth according to individual needs, through interaction with the environment. He thus was sympathetic to a broad stream of the progressive educators in maintaining that the old assumptions of absolute truth associated with the notions of the positivist sciences ought to be rejected. For Neale, the new applied sciences could provide the means to tap the inner truths and vitality of humanity, what Neale called the 'appreciation of the marvellous possibilities of the human soul'.⁵

Neale was staunchly anti-utilitarian when arguing for the purposes of schools in society. He maintained that

... a real education system must develop every side of a child's nature towards complete realisation of all he is intended by nature to be and can be, and it prepares him for all his ethical, moral, social and civic relationships. It gives him the power to think rightly on all questions, and to act rightly in all relationships. Education is thus a preparation for *complete* living; it is thus the generation of power both in thought and action; it is thus a process of self-realisation. (emphasis in original)⁶

The utilitarian objectives of the traditional education of the past century had no place in Neale's scheme. For Neale, education was a means to enrich the soul, to bring forth its full potential for the individual's own sake, but also because of

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

the need for the individual to be able to fully participate in society for the good of the nation.

Neale drew on Herbartian psychology to explain why it was important 'to develop every side of a child's nature ...' He argued that

... the child's many-sidedness may be expressed simply, and not altogether inaccurately by saying that there are three aspects to his consciousness feeling, knowing and willing. Ordinarily we think of these aspects as the emotions, the intellect and the will.⁷

This was central to the neo-Herbartian psychology of learning, central to progressive education, and a considerable step from the faculty psychology and antiquated methods of the past. Of course this tripartite concept of mind can also be found in, for example, Augustine's writing.⁸

For Neale, the aims and methods he had observed in Tasmanian schools, belonging as they were to another age, had to be condemned. Children, in order to develop the three facets of their mental makeup had to be brought into direct confrontation with nature, the more aesthetic aspects of life, and particularly the processes of knowing how, rather than the dry content of facts.

As Neale put it:

In the real life of the world in which primitive men gained their education, all the sides of their nature were developed more or less harmoniously. The sphere of modern education is the school rather than life. The tools are books rather than the revelations of Nature- the imperfect records of the world's accumulated store of men's knowledge rather than Nature's first hand records. The school is divorced from real life ... the modern school concerns itself mostly, if not wholly with the 'knowing'.⁹

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ William Boyd, *The History of Western Education*, eighth ed., Adam and Charles Black, London 1966, p.p. 75-77

⁹ Rep. Prim. Ed., *op. cit.*, p. 6

Neale maintained that an educational program which simply developed rote learning, ignoring the more profound appreciation of what existed 'below the surface of things', was totally damaging to children. Children had to be taught to reason properly; and this could only happen through first-hand learning experiences. There were other aspects of children's growth which the new education insisted be developed: the education of the emotions and of the will had been shown by the neo-Herbartians as being a vitally necessary component of the school curriculum. As Neale explained:

... [progressive education] therefore tests an organised system not only by its methods for informing the mind to think properly, but also by its provisions for educating the will to desire to do good; and by its provisions for educating the emotions to become an impelling force to good conduct.¹⁰

Clearly, then, Neale, in his break from absolutist views particularly in the area of knowledge, still believed that schools existed to maintain desirable moral norms, and that there could be no question that moral conduct could be relativistic or subjective.

Neale was in complete accord with progressives the world over *vis-a-vis* the adulation for the assertive, active, and above all, heroic life. There was no question in Neale's mind that schools should propagate these ideals through the curriculum. He stated that

[progressive education] asks whether its young people feel more reverence to truth and more deeply the obligations to duty; whether their attitude to the home, to the brotherhood, and to the State is sweeter and saner; whether they choose for their companionship the best of people and the best of books; whether they see the significance of life, of work, and of sacrifice; whether they have more initiative and more independence; and whether in trial, adversity, and suffering they are braver and more patient, more heroic.¹¹

¹⁰ Rep. Prim. Ed., *op. cit.*, p. 6

¹¹ *Ibid.*

It is significant that progressive education was conducive to the development of 'a sweeter and saner' attitude to the state, because clearly Neale was completely at one with the Progressive's adulation of nationalism. Here Neale's statement clearly posits his views regarding what progressive education should do to further the cause of nationalism. For Neale, it was an ideal to be heroic for an individual's own ends, but it was just as noble an ideal to be so for the nation. Neale clearly states the role of the school curriculum towards this end:

Soon or late soon to those who have eyes to see individual and national disasters come. There are national and social aspects to education: there are personal and individual aspects. And neither is first nor is either last, for 'there is no great and small'.¹²

All these assumptions influenced Neale's view on the curriculum: the inner-complexities and untapped potencies of individuals and society; a belief that the applied sciences would be the tools to carry society into a new age; the abandonment of an absolutist concept of knowledge, and the embracing of a subjectivist concept of knowledge; the beliefs that the narrow objectives of utilitarian education had to be abandoned for the broader goals of self-realisation; his embracing of neo-Herbartian psychology as a keystone for a science of education; his belief that the first-hand experiences of nature was a far superior medium for self development than books; and his adulation for the active, assertive life.

Neale put great faith in the doctrine of transfer of learning. In almost every subject area he ascribed a desirable outcome in terms of some form of transfer of learning to another of the mind's supposed faculties. For example, history was supposed to develop character, conduct and patriotism; manual work would develop 'lifelong powers ... and mental discipline'.¹³

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 40

It is very difficult to categorise Neale's brand of progressive education. Of course, his many references to neo-Herbartian assumptions suggest that his tendency was towards the scientific strand of progressive education. But this initial supposition is outweighed by Neale's many references to the importance of a naturalistic form of education. Nowhere does Neale suggest education should aim at social reform, rather he states it should aim at better equipping individuals to take their place in existing society. Neale's brand of progressive education then was a blending of scientific with childcentred, with a heavier leaning towards the childcentred, naturalistic form.

Neale gave no indication that he was aware of the tensions existing between the scientific and the child-centred strands of the ideals which he had described; indeed, he did not suggest that he was aware that there were diverse elements in his proposed curriculum. First, there was a tension between the ends which state education served, whether they were national, or individual. Neale argued that, collectively, each individual being educated to their potential would serve the national good. This view, however, could hold only in a very general sense. When people disagreed about what constituted an individual's potential, the argument fell apart. For example, many Tasmanians argued that individual's potential centred on education in the three R's, and such subjects as art had little to contribute to educating individuals to their fullest potential. Another tension existed between the perceived individualising and socialising roles of education in society. On one hand, Neale argued that subjects such as nature study would lead a child to a greater understanding of the self and a greater freedom of the individual spirit.¹⁴ Then, on the other hand, he argued for the necessity of military drill to achieve instant mass obedience.¹⁵ In

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42

Neale's curriculum there was a tension between knowledge and values which were argued to be relativistic, such as an individual's perception of nature gained through art and nature study. Then there was a vast amount of knowledge and values which Neale considered to be absolute. Much of the knowledge and values as expressed in sacred history were held to be absolute. A tension existed between the perceived self-liberating roles of the curriculum and its force to engender self-efficiency. Again the physical education element of the curriculum manifested this tension. Neale argued that the curriculum should contain, on the one hand, physical culture, the main aim of which was to liberate the self. Also included in the physical education curriculum had to be military drill in order to achieve mass obedience to commands. The objectives of much of Neale's curriculum were truly democratic. For example, one of the outcomes of manual work was to allow individuals who may have been less successful in more academic subjects the opportunity to achieve creditable results.¹⁶ Opposed to the democratic ideals were ideals which were extremely elitist: for example, the content Neale prescribed in the history course furthered the values of the ruling class of the anglosaxon protestants.¹⁷ A further tension existed between the intellectual ideals of Neale's curriculum as manifested in the content and methods of the language element of his curriculum, and the life-oriented elements as manifested in manual work. These tensions could be categorised broadly as being between the ideals which were premised upon an open-ended, self-disciplined, or 'natural' view of individuals, and the ideals which were premised upon an ordered or bureaucratic view.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43

2 Progressive Education in Tasmanian Society

There was a developing support in Tasmania for progressive education. The *Mercury* described in positive terms the aims and methods of the school of instruction held by Neale during the early years of his directorship.¹⁸ The Hobart daily described at length the great Imperial Education Conference held in London during the northern summer of 1907.¹⁹ In an editorial the paper maintained that the conference once and for all destroyed the arguments of those who conceived of education for mere utilitarian ends.²⁰ The *Critic* spoke in glowing terms of Neale's education exhibition held in Launceston during late 1907.²¹ The article opened by declaring that there was no more 'imperative voice' in the contemporary society than that of education. The *Critic*, in fact, proved to be one of Neale's unwavering allies. It praised his educational work to the very end, condemning the often contradictory stand taken by the *Mercury*. For example, following the second annual concert held at the training college, it praised the work being achieved by Neale and the progressive educators in the Education Department.²² The *Daily Post*, too, from its inception in May 1908, strongly supported the ideals of progressive education. For example, in an editorial just prior to the handing down of the 1909 Royal Commission report on Neale's administration of the Education Department, the paper argued strongly for the need for Neale's initiatives with progressive education in Tasmania to be continued.²³

18 See, for example, *Mercury*, 16 June 1906, 6, 2; *ibid.*, 20 June 1906, 4, 8; *ibid.*, 22 June 1906, 6, 3

19 *Ibid.*, 10 April 1907, 6, 1

20 *Ibid.*, editorial, 15 July 1907, 4, 3

21 *Critic*, 14 Dec. 1907, 3, 4-5

22 *Ibid.*, 16 Nov. 1907, 3, 35

23 *Daily Post*, editorial, 12 April 1909, 6, 2-3

Progressive education formed the subject of a lecture given by a prominent figure in Hobart intellectual society, Mrs A. McAuley, at the Hobart Women's Club.²⁴ The substance of the lecture revealed generally a very positive understanding of the ideals of the new education. McAuley, the wife of a medical practitioner and who had no direct role in education, showed that she had at least a superficial understanding of the relationship between progressive education and Herbartian psychology by contending that, 'it is impossible to separate entirely the various kinds of education, for moral and physical education are merged in, or are branches of, the intellect'. McAuley explained to the group of Hobart women that society had accumulated such a vast store of knowledge that it was the educators' task to choose the curriculum content which had the most intrinsic appeal and relevance for the children. Often this would mean the discarding of subjects such as Latin. McAuley preached the virtues of teaching geography and natural science through heuristic methods. She attributed the American and German economic supremacy to the heuristic methods developed in the classrooms of these two countries. Time spent on 'dreary Grammar lessons' could be replaced largely by children's own written expression. Art and music were especially for children's total development. Civics and history would lead every child 'to feel that government is for the good of all'. These subjects should 'breathe altruism and high-mindedness, inculcating patriotism and the subordination in matters affecting the community, of personal advantage to the welfare of country and fellow man'.²⁵ McAuley concluded her paper by a call for more physical culture in schools.

Johnson addressed the Royal Society on progressive education during his first winter in Hobart.²⁶ His address was more specific than McAuley's in linking

24 A. McAuley, 'Some Thoughts on Education', E R, 4, 9, Dec. 1908, p.p. 97-99.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 98

26 J.A. Johnson, 'The New Education', E R, 2, 6, Sept. 1906, 78-82

progressive education with the psychological theory of apperception. Johnson praised the demise of faculty psychology which largely had been responsible for so many meaningless and dreary classroom methods. Johnson stressed the close relationship between progressive education, the child-study movement, the Quincy and Kindergarten methods based on the spirit of Froebel's methods. He explained the relationship between natural science and geography; how the two subjects were brought together, among other reasons, because of the need to develop children's powers of observation. He explained the reasons behind the importance of handwork in the curriculum, of how an hour or two spent on some manual activity each week ensured children's all round psychological development. In these lessons, Johnson explained, children of average, or below average ability often excelled. He went on in Darwinian terms to predict and to assert:

Such work in our primary schools will lead to a much higher level of national intelligence, and we know that a high average intelligence is the only safeguard of democracy.²⁷

Johnson, thus, squarely placed the purpose of progressive education in the overall purpose of national efficiency.

Support for progressive education also could be found in Hobart's nonstate schools. Dickenson began his written contribution to Hobart's community of progressive educational thought about the time of Neale's arrival in Tasmania.²⁸ One of his continual themes was the need for teachers and the public to perceive education as a science as well as an art. Dickenson argued that Herbartian psychology had ensured the laying of a 'scientific' basis of education. He maintained that Herbart, above all other educational theorists had laid the

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ S.R. Dickenson, 'The Right Point of View', *E R*, 4, 6, Sept. 1908, p.p. 53-54

theoretical foundation to broaden the curriculum so that 'all sides of a child's mind' were developed, thus ensuring a 'well-rounded' personality.

There were some Tasmanians who believed that improved state educational provisions for the working class would rid Tasmania of the growing Labor movement. The *Mercury* in 1906 wrote on the issues associated with the state's responsibility of instituting a system of free, compulsory and secular education.²⁹ Whether the state liked it or not, the Hobart daily wrote, it would eventually have to come to grips with these issues because, 'semi-education is the most dangerous form of education'. All 'semi-education' did was to make people dissatisfied with the guidance and culture of tradition and experience. This led to 'a spread of extravagant social theories'. The *Mercury* saw socialism as a symptom of the disease of semi-education which was

... beginning to warp the faculties of the most intelligent men of the working classes; and from them it is probable that it will soon be communicated to the masses. The leading minds among our lower orders are commonly of an admirable type. They have some stirring qualities of character, and for these all the credit is due to themselves; they have also some mischievous ideas, and for these the persons concerned in our system of popular instruction are partially responsible.³⁰

The article went on to explain that many of the leaders of the working class came to school with sense of curiosity, and left with their potential unfulfilled. Had their potential been realised, the article explained, these men would not have been led to such 'mischievous' political ideas as socialism. What was needed for the masses was a curriculum which was practical enough to satisfy the thirst of their curiosity, and traditional enough to ensure that the masses respected the traditions established by the ruling class.

²⁹ *Mercury*, 1 June 1906, 7, 7

³⁰ *Ibid.*

During Neale's directorship, then, there was an emerging body of thought in Hobart at least, which Neale could find supportive in his attempts to develop progressive education in the Tasmanian Education Department.

3 Values Underlying the Curriculum

Social Darwinist assumptions, so centrally linked with progressivism, unquestionably underpinned the curriculum during Neale's directorship. Nowhere else is this better revealed than in Inspector S.O. Lovell's 1905 annual report.³¹ Lovell devoted a paragraph to children's language acquisition, the importance of which he said was central to any curriculum. Lovell argued that language was not merely an instrument of thought, rather it was thought itself. Lovell used strong Darwinian similes to establish his argument:

As bare vocabulary, to say nothing of literature, [language] is crystallised thought, fossil poetry, accepted philosophy, preserved wisdom, accumulated experiences, a treasury of ready-made thinking.³²

To sustain his argument, Lovell quoted at length from Harris's *Moral Evolution*.³³ Here it was argued that our ancestors transmitted to us both the results and the means of obtaining fresh results. According to Lovell's interpretation of Harris's work, children inherited the 'mechanical skill' and 'the logic' of obtaining results. Environment, according to Lovell's reading of Harris's work, modified the means of obtaining results. Lovell, following on from Harris argued that all infants started at the same point of intelligence, but because of experience, or environmental influences, each generation acquired the preceding generation's accumulated wisdom. Hence, the importance of

³¹ E R, 2, 9, Dec. 1906, p.p. 118-20

³² *Ibid.*

³³ W.T. Harris, *Moral Evolution*, New York, 1998;, *Psychological Foundations of Education ;an attempt to show the Genesis of the Higher Faculties of the Mind*, New York, 1901

language: it was conceived of as being the vehicle which conveyed this inheritance. According to Lovell's interpretation of Harris's work, language contained signs by which things were remembered, and provided a medium of exchange. Language was the means by which logic, science, philosophy and religion was preserved. Some modes of communication were genetically acquired. These were most evident in the animal kingdom. Other modes of communication were environmentally acquired. The latter, both in oral and written forms, provided the means by which the traditions of literature, poetry, philosophy, science and religion of all past ages were '... heaped up in the lap of the latest generation, and by them in turn, with some accretion, made over to their successor'.³⁴

Even though the whole spectrum of social Darwinist assumptions and values infiltrated the Tasmanian educators beliefs at various levels, this is not to say that the curriculum itself was geared thoroughly to these values. An examination of the content of the religious history and history sections reveals that the orthodox views of Genesis prevailed. There were, however, progressive sections of Tasmanian society which urged that these sections of the curriculum take into account, in a more direct way, basic Darwinist beliefs.

The *Clipper* cried out:

The average school teacher knows all about the War of the Roses ... [but] Directors of Education by this time ought to find themselves up against the fact that they must very soon have some rudiments of the theory of evolution taught in schools, or admit the incompetence of the teachers. They can no longer bury their heads in the departmental inkpot and pretend ignorance of the contest between Genesis and Geology.³⁵

Temperance, as we have seen, had strong links with eugenics and progressivism. During Neale's directorship there were pressures building up in

³⁴ E R, 2, 9, Dec. 1906, p. 20, *op. cit*

³⁵ *Clipper*, 19 Jan. 1907, 2, 12

Tasmanian society to bring the values of the temperance movement into the curriculum. At the annual convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Movement held in Hobart during October 1907 it was argued that children should be given the knowledge of the nature of the effects of alcohol.³⁶ The convention bemoaned that although it was of greater importance to children than many subjects taught them, it was not made available to state school. At the 1909 interstate annual conference of delegates of the International Order of Good Templars Grand Lodges of the Commonwealth held in Hobart a report was read on 'The Liquor Traffic, the State, the Child'.³⁷ The paper stated that in the social evils of alcohol the weak link was the lack of instruction on these evils which children received at school. A systematic curriculum on scientific temperance should be developed in all state schools. The paper attempted to add weight to the argument by stating that this was the case in 'English and American' schools. A resolution was passed at the conference which sought to have 'scientific temperance teaching' instituted in Tasmanian state school.

There is no mention in any of Neale's annual reports to his minister, or in the inspectors' annual reports to indicate that the ideals of the temperance movement were ever officially included in the curriculum during Neale's directorship. It is, however, a reasonable belief that some of the female teachers in state schools were associated with the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and some of the male teachers, head teachers and inspectors were members of a masonic lodge, and that they were committed to the ideals of the temperance movement. Certainly the ideals of temperance would have been a part of the value systems, or the 'hidden curriculum' of many teachers, head teachers and inspectors. This is not to suggest that temperance was only linked with protestanism and

³⁶ *Mercury*, 9 Oct. 1907, 3, 6

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16 Jan. 1909, 3, 3

the masonic movement But it does indicate a source of influence of these values on state education.

The values of thrift, as we have seen, were closely associated with temperance. There is an obvious link between the ideal of thrift and the pursuit of national efficiency, which in turn was central to progressivism. The values associated with thrift underpinned much of the curriculum in Tasmanian state schools. These values, like those of the temperance movement, were strongly linked with social class, while the target for the reformers was often working class mothers. Neale had reprinted in the article a report by an English 'lady inspector' on the thriftlessness of working class mothers of children attending the English Board schools.³⁸ The report claimed that a 'cursory inspection' of the dustbins put out in the street ready for collection provided an insight into the thriftless habits of many working class mothers. Streets inhabited by 'the careful clerk and better-class artisans' possessed rubbish bins of 'well-sifted cinders and no cooked food thrown away as waste'. In working class districts the opposite was the case. The same thriftlessness found in the kitchens of the poor, the report went on, was to be found in the maintenance of the dress of the working class. Working class mothers chose not to repair worn out clothing, but rather chose to purchase cheap substitutes. This was particularly so with the clothes of their children. By reprinting this report and drawing teachers' attention to the 'interesting facts' contained in it, Neale fully endorsed these values which no doubt permeated through to the value bases from which teachers imparted knowledge in state schools.

While it is possible to argue that support for a citizens' militia in an isolated country with a small population may be commonsense, in Tasmania militaristic

³⁸ E R, 1, 8, Nov. 1905, p. 95

ideals interlocked with nationalism and was strongly associated with progressivism. Our purpose is to trace out the link between nationalism and militarism in Tasmania which we have already seen was powerfully evident at the time of the Boer War. Our concern is to see how these values influenced the curriculum in state schools in Tasmania.

Neale was quick to instruct his teachers that the 'new order' of his regime did not signal the substitution of physical culture for military drill. 'At assembly and dismissal, and in all changes in the schoolroom, simple military drill should always be used', Neale stated.³⁹ Teachers were encouraged not to forget that 'military drill is an aid of the highest value in securing economy of time, and the mechanical side of good discipline'.⁴⁰ It was with these beliefs Neale lectured his teachers at a Summer School of Instruction held in Launceston early in 1906. He warned the teachers then, that with the impending 'new curriculum' he would prescribe a little military drill for each class. 'Those who have not used it in both the playground and in the classroom have no conception of how easy it makes control', Neale enthused.⁴¹

The advocates of militarism in schools could not have been happier than when the Deakin Commonwealth Government in November 1905 legislated to fund voluntary school cadet corps.⁴² We have seen that Neale was a strong advocate of militarism in schools. In the wider community he was supported by Senator Dobson and W.B. Propsting. The Peace Society headed the groups opposed to militarism in schools. During 1908 Tasmanian society became divided over the issue.

³⁹ E R, 1, 2, May 1905, p. 15

⁴⁰ E R, 3, 2, May 1908, p. 29

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² For details of the Commonwealth Cadet Corps regulations see, E R, 2, 1 May 1906, p.p. 19, 20

Children of parents who opposed militarism were segregated and victimised in at least one school. In one Hobart school a parent complained to the local board of advice that because a boy had refused to join the school cadet movement he had been insulted and ridiculed by the teacher in front of the school and then made to walk behind the girls.⁴³ Mr Mather, the Chairman of the Hobart Board of Advice, assured his board that the teacher had been reprimanded and subsequently apologised. Mather went on to reassure the board that there was nothing compulsory about the cadet movement, that no child was compelled to participate, and that such behaviour by a teacher would not be tolerated by the board or the Education Department. He said he understood the strong social and professional pressures which were coming to bear on teachers and encouraging them to behave in such a way.

The Peace Society in Tasmania pitted itself against militarism in state schools. However the strong social attitude in favour of militarism in schools is evidenced in a *Mercury* editorial, where the paper condescendingly stated that none could doubt the good intent of those who supported the Peace Society's ideals, because its members were 'all perfectly honest and sincere'.⁴⁴ The editorial complained that it was unfortunate that the objectives of the cadet corps seemed so little understood. It certainly was not to develop in children a warmongering attitude, but it was the state schools' responsibility to enhance citizenship amongst the children who attended them. Citizenship always implied a desire to defend one's borders, '... and to this extent, we must insist that good work is being done, and that they are learning one of the first duties of citizenship'. Moreover, the Hobart daily insisted, anybody who had undergone military training would agree on the effect it had on an individual.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 9 July 1907, 3, 5

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, editorial, 23 March 1908, 4, 3

The *Mercury* maintained that military training encouraged smartness and quick movement: children's minds were alert to catch the words of command '... and their bodies are strained to act in concert with the mind'. And, for the *Mercury*, the unity of mind and body was a principal aim of progressive education, with all sorts of devices being used in other areas of the curriculum to achieve the same end. According to the editorial, perhaps the most important effect of all was the reduction to discipline '... even of those who may resist the most stereotyped methods'.

The Labor movement, too, supported military instruction in schools. The *Clipper* condemned the opponents of military instruction:

Schoolboys when learning drill and marksmanship to make them efficient citizens soldiers, cannot help growing up to a useful realisation of this power as well as soldiers.⁴⁵

The *Clipper* argued for militarism in schools for reasons of protection of the social class, or political movement it represented. It saw military instruction in schools as a means of breaking down class distinction and preventing military expertise being the prerogative of the 'privileged classes':

The military spirit is only dangerous when bearing arms becomes the special cult of the privileged classes. The atmosphere of our State schools is not conducive to privilege'.⁴⁶

A similar view was taken by the *Daily Post*. It contended that the Peace Society could be credited with three things:

The possession of some impracticable ideas, or either incapacity to understand the great international problems of the day, and a laudable desire that every man shall 'sing the merry song of peace to all his neighbours'.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *Clipper*, 28 March 1908, 4, 13

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Daily Post*, editorial, 25 Aug. 1908, 4, 45

Despite some small gains the overall influence of the Peace Society on the Tasmanian state school curriculum was losing out to the forces of militarism by the end of Neale's directorship. During July 1909 Joseph Cook, the Minister for Defence in the Commonwealth Government issued a report on physical training in Australian schools. The report came as a result of an interstate conference on the subject.⁴⁸ The Commonwealth and all states except Tasmania were represented. That Tasmania did not send a representative may have been due to the turmoil that the Tasmanian Education Department was going through following the three royal commissions of enquiry into Neale's administration, or simply that the Tasmanian government already was committed to the ideals in principle, and would comply with any decision made. The conference report recommended: the appointment of a supervisor of physical training for all school children in Australia; the appointment in each state of expert teachers to carry out the training of instructors for the cadet forces and of teachers for the schools; the establishment of permanent training centres, properly equipped and staffed; that facilities be afforded to teachers to attend the training school; that a system of physical training be included in the curriculum of schools; that 'experts should be selected' to direct the training of teachers; that a manual of physical training be compiled; and that certificates of competency be issued to trained teachers in military drill. Thus, the school curriculum by the end of Neale's directorship was taking a decided step towards the integration into it of martial ideals.

4 Progressive Gains in the Curriculum

During Neale's directorship there were developments in the state school curriculum, but some of these could not rightly be labelled as being of a

⁴⁸ *Mercury*, 3 July 1909, 10, 2

progressive nature. For example, the teaching of music greatly improved during the period, but there was little in these developments which could be argued as belonging to progressive education.⁴⁹ The sheer amount of space which inspectors devoted to reporting on the progress made in the three R's in their school districts showed that they considered the most important aspects of the curriculum to be the basic subjects. There is no doubt that schools devoted most of the curriculum to teaching children to be literate and numerate. Our concern, however, is with the developments of the progressive elements of the curriculum. A convenient starting point is to look at physical education.

Christian Bjelke-Petersen was employed part-time by the Education Department to conduct classes of the Swedish style physical culture for teachers.⁵⁰ He conducted classes in Launceston and Hobart at advanced and elementary levels. A course in physical education was included with military drill as a necessary ingredient for the teachers' certificate.⁵¹ Neale's attitude towards Bjelke-Petersen's system of physical culture was ambivalent. He recognised in it progressive elements, principally children's physical development in unison with mental development. He, however, could never imagine it replacing military drill. Neale reminded teachers 'that military drill is an aid of the highest value in securing economy of time, and the mechanical side of good discipline'.⁵² Certainly, it was military drill which Neale stressed in preference

49 B. Somssich, *Music Education in Tasmanian Primary Schools, 190575*, unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, Uni. of Tasmania, 1976, chap. 2

50 Chris Cunneen, E.A. McLeod, 'Christian Bjelke-Petersen', *ADB*, 7, 1979, 300 (1872-1964) 'physical culture teacher ...opened a physical education institution in Hobart in 1892 ... The Education Department employed him in 1906 to train teachers in a project of physical culture 'carefully based on physiological principles' which he had devised to replace military drills as a compulsory subject in the state schools. His scheme, for both boys and girls, stressed the importance of breathing exercises, deportment drills, physical culture games, and rest between exercises; he argued that 'National Physical Culture would give to the coming generation increased ability to do work with body and brain, and therefore greater prosperity, better health, and ... greater happiness.'

51 *E R*, 1, 1, March/April 1905, p. 4

52 *E R*, 1, 2, May 1905, p. 16

to physical culture at his first summer school for teachers.⁵³ But Bjelke-Petersen and Neale quarrelled over the former's salary, and the steady demise of Bjelke-Petersen's brand of physical culture seems to have been due as much to personal as to educational factors.⁵⁴ But, the tide of development was on the side of the advocates of physical education in preference to military drill.

By the end of Neale's directorship physical education was becoming more closely linked with the school health and hygiene. This is not to say that military drill was to experience a demise, but rather that physical culture was becoming more systematised and accepted by educational authorities as an essential part of the curriculum. Tasmanians were alerted to future developments through their daily press.⁵⁵ The English Board of Education, in issuing its new physical education syllabus, had declared emphatically that 'the true aim of education' was not only to train the mind, but also the body, the development of each being mutually dependent.⁵⁶ The concurrent development of a healthy mind and body required physical exercise as well as proper nourishment, effective medical inspectors and hygienic surroundings. Tasmanians were told that the effects of increasing urbanisation on children's lives had brought about the need for a more systematised program of physical education in the school curriculum. The new English Board of Education's physical education curriculum, according to the *Mercury*, was based on the Swedish model, which also was being used by the British army and navy. A feature of the new curriculum was the beneficial effect it had on physically defective and weakly children. Tasmanians learned that the new curriculum

53 E R, 1, 11, Feb. 1906, p. 116

54 AOT, Ed. 13/102/343; Ed. 9/10/287

55 *Mercury*, 11 Oct. 1909, 6, 6

56 *Ibid.*, The physical education provisions made by the English Board of Education resulted from the 1907 Education (Administration provisions) Act which empowered the local education authorities 'to make such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board of Education for attending to the health and physical condition of children in Public Elementary Schools.'

possessed added dimensions, apart from those leading to physical and mental development. The curriculum would enhance moral development as 'the child unconsciously developed habits of discipline and order, and [learnt] to respond cheerfully and promptly to the word of command'. Memory, too, was strengthened, 'as the exercises become more advanced there [was] an increasing demand on the powers of concentration and initiative, and also of indurance and determination'. Citizenship was developed through 'the constant call for self-control and self-restraint, for co-operation and harmonious working with others'. To this end outdoor organised games played a large role. The English Board of Education also maintained that their physical education curriculum would allow for a healthy outlet for the emotions through self-expression achieved through free bodily movements. The Board argued that these aesthetic deals existed in ancient cultures, and in primitive cultures, but urbanisation and suppressed them in modern society.

Domestic economy has been called domestic science or domestic arts, the labels simply reflected the particular values underpinning society at the time. It was the female equivalent of what the boys received: manual education or sloyd work.⁵⁷

The idea of commencing a private domestic economy school in Hobart was aired at a public meeting held in January 1905, where a Miss Glennen, a Victorian, who had established a similar school in Melbourne, addressed the meeting which was attended by the Governor, Sir Gerald Strickland.⁵⁸ In reply to Glennen's address, the Governor expressed support for Glennen's proposal. He did so because of the utility of the subject, and also because of its value in

⁵⁷ For the history of this movement in Britain from 1870-1914 see R.J.W. Selleck, *The New Education*, *op. cit.*, chap. 4

⁵⁸ *Mercury*, 5 Jan. 1905, 3, 45

relation to social hygiene, especially its role in combatting infant mortality. The next day the *Mercury*, in an editorial supported the concept of establishing a domestic economy school in Hobart, and again, for reasons of utility. The Alexander College of Domestic Economy and Hygiene was established in 1908.⁵⁹

The *Mercury*, in reporting the London *Outlook's* strong support for domestic economy in public schools, expressed its support for the inclusion of the subject in the school curriculum, because it taught a generation of girls how to cook properly, and 'a boy's brains cannot do its work properly unless it is properly nourished.'⁶⁰

Neale early in his directorship had convinced the government of the need for domestic economy classes in Hobart and Launceston.⁶¹ At the beginning of 1906 two female teachers were sent off to the Domestic Economy Training College in Melbourne for a six month's course. Perhaps to alert Tasmanians to the narrowness of their government's provisions for domestic economy compared with recent developments in New South Wales, the *Mercury* described how in the senior state the new subject being introduced into the curriculum was called domestic science because it incorporated cookery, laundry, housewifery, hygiene, millinery and dressmaking.⁶²

The Hobart and Launceston state cookery schools opened in May 1907. In Launceston the cookery school was located in a room near the old Technical College, and in Hobart in a remodelled room in the old Murray Street Central

⁵⁹ *Mercury*, 26 June 1908, 5, 8

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 Feb. 1907, 7, 3

⁶¹ E R, 1, 4, July 1905, p. 37

⁶² *Mercury*, 12 Dec. 1906, 6, 2

School. The influential *Mercury* threw its weight behind the development.⁶³ The Governor, his wife, the Minister for Education, Neale, and a *Mercury* reporter visited the Hobart Cookery School at the end of its first month of operation.⁶⁴ The reporter wrote enthusiastically on what he saw. There were six classes, of twenty girls each. The girls were selected by the teachers from city, suburban and the country schools which had access to rail travel. Instruction and materials were free, and children who travelled beyond two miles had their fares paid. Girls attended the school for six months courses. Neale hoped to provide a six months course for every girl who was able to attend school. Girls were taught how to choose and buy food, based on nutrition and value; how to prepare food for the table; how to clean and how to keep domestic accounts. The girls were given theoretical as well as practical work. For example, every girl had to plan and purchase what she needed, account for the money, prepare the food and the table. Next to the school was a dining-room where the girls served the meals to members of the public who had subscribed, or bought tickets. Children who wished to do so were able to buy their own meals for threepence.

The *Mercury* continued to publicise the Hobart school. A month after the opening it hailed the dining room as a great success, and declared that there was no difficulty at all in the school serving to a full house each day.⁶⁵ Initial reaction amongst a section of the Hobart community was hostile. Letters to the editor of the *Mercury* condemned the exercise as another of Neale's fads, except that this one brought with it more harm than just to children: it put hardworking caterers out of business.⁶⁶ Another correspondent linked the concept in negative

⁶³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 4 May 1907, 4, 8; *ibid.*, editorial, 6 May 1907, 4, 5

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10 June 1907, 8, 4

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 15 June 1907, 5, 2

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, correspondence, 6 July 1907, 3, 3

terms to 'those imported South Australian teachers'.⁶⁷ There was only one correspondent to the Hobart daily press who supported the school; the correspondent supported the venture not for its educational value, but because of the cheap government subsidised food.⁶⁸ Support for the school also was expressed by the Hobart Board of Advice under the chairmanship of Taylor.⁶⁹

Public opposition seems to have been shortlived. In April 1908 support for the schools was sufficient for the government to state its intentions of extending the provisions to five north-west coast schools.⁷⁰ A kitchen was to be attached to five schools along the coast and an itinerent teacher appointed to serve the five schools. Children would travel from neighbouring schools to one of the five schools with a kitchen.

In the state schools manual work for girls was limited to needlework. The educational value of needlework was never elaborated upon by Tasmanian educators. Its educational value was only ever alluded to by inference when the Tasmanians spoke enthusiastically of the educational values of manual education. When the Tasmanians used the term, 'manual education' they were mostly using the term specifically associated with boys' manual activities in schools.

At the Tasmanian educational exhibition held during 1907 in the Launceston Albert Hall the only mention of girls' manual work was a report of an exhibition of some interesting needlework from the girls from the Conara school.⁷¹ The

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, correspondence, 6 July 1907, 6, 7

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, correspondence, 8 July 1907, 6, 3

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 9 July 1907, 3, 5

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 April 1908, 4, 8

⁷¹ *Mercury*, 7 Dec. 1907, 6, 6-7

Tasmanian inspectors only twice in their annual reports, and, only very briefly referred to the developments in needlework in their schools.⁷²

By the end of Neale's directorship the development in domestic economy in Tasmanian state schools was limited to the establishment of cookery classes in Hobart, Launceston and some north-west coast schools. There also was some development in needlework in the state schools. These developments were associated with a singular lack of discussion concerning the pedagogical reason underlying the inclusion of the subject in the curriculum. Its value was largely attributed simply to its utility. Certainly, there was none of the educational discussion which centred on the inclusion of manual or sloyd work in the curriculum for boys. Significantly, social pressures had led to the establishment of a private school for domestic economy and hygiene in Hobart, with a decided leaning towards the eugenic movement.

Neale was as much captured by the uncritical enthusiasm of the pedagogical possibilities of manual, or sloyd work as were his British counterparts.⁷³ During February 1906 he invited a Victorian inspector of schools and expert on manual education, J. Byatt, to give a public lecture on the subject in Hobart.⁷⁴ The Victoria Hall, with Premier Evans in attendance, was packed full. Byatt enthused that the subject was so vast and manysided it was very difficult to adequately deal with it in one lecture. Byatt contended that every child was actuated by a desire for knowledge, and possessed a desire for activity. To the Victorian educator, manual training meant a 'carefully thought out system of handwork in wood, paper, clay, card, metal, glass, or other material, as would

⁷² E R, 2, 12, April 1907, p. 152; *ibid.*, 4, 4, Aug. 1908, p. 34

⁷³ R.J.W. Selleck, *The New Education*, *op. cit.*, chap. 4

⁷⁴ *Mercury*, 24 Feb. 1906, 6, 3

aim not so much at developing a special dexterity of hand, as contributing to the child's total education.'⁷⁵

Neale drew to the attention of the Tasmanian teachers some further reasons for the inclusion of manual education in the curriculum. A major argument advanced by the enthusiasts for the subject in Britain was 'the hand-eye argument'.⁷⁶ He explained that 'the training of hand ... is also the training of the brain and the mind'.⁷⁷ Another reason advanced by Neale was that the subject provided 'an opportunity for self-expression in material form. Many boys find themselves in wood and metal and clay ...'⁷⁸ Finally, Neale drew on an argument which grew out of social Darwinism, and was being developed by John Dewey in the United States. The argument was to have special appeal to supporters of the eugenic movement. Its essence was that the inclusion of manual education had been rendered imperative by the urbanisation of society. In the past when societies were largely rural-based, children, by way of their life style, were able to experience every aspect of manual education which contemporary proponents advanced for it. A failure to implement manual education in the schools would bring about national disaster: '... if human intelligence was not to shrivel, some substitute for the old home education must be found, and work fell upon the schools, which met the demand at first indifferently.'⁷⁹

75 Byatt, like most of the supporters of the new education at the time used the titles, 'manual education' and sloyd work' interchangeably. He did, however, give to the Hobartians, an historical account of the development of sloyd work in the curriculum. He explained that sloyd was the Swedish word for manual training. The word was derived from Icelandic word, slog, an adjective meaning skilful, or dexterity. Hence the noun Sloyd, literally meaning skillfulness or dexterity.

76 R.J.W.Selleck, *The New Education*..., *op. cit.*, p. 116

77 E R, 1, 10 Jan. 1906, p. 119

78 *Ibid.*

79 E.A. Riley, 'Effect of City Growth on Education', E R, 1, 7, Oct. 1905, reprinted from AJE, undated; ER, 4, 1, April 1908, p. 2; *ibid.*, 4, 1, April 1908, p. 4. The first article cited is by Dewey's most significant contemporary Australian exponent (see Lesley Dunt, John Dewey and the Australian Educators, c. 1880-1940: A Study of the Transmission of Dewey's Educational and Social Ideals *op. cit.*)

To further advance the cause for the inclusion of manual education in the curriculum Neale appealed to the findings of the new applied sciences of sociology and psychology.⁸⁰ He claimed that these findings showed that the manual education developed resourcefulness and adaptability in children; it also 'cultivated judgement, reasons, and the powers of observation and application'.⁸¹ Neale did not detail the source of these findings. He further claimed :

Its true end is the attainment of the complete life, the unfolding and the perfection of the human spirit; and this end it proposes to gain by recognising to the full the principle of cause and effect, and by setting into operation agencies adequate to bring about such large results. These agencies are organic. They have to do with the person of the child. Such work cannot be exterior. It must be done in the blood and tissue. It means a refining and sensitizing of the organism - a nicer adjustment of the bodily powers.⁸²

Indifference blended with ignorance seems to have been the initial reaction by the Tasmanian teachers when asked to teach the subject. During his first few months as director Neale issued new timetable forms which had a space on them labelled, Manual Work. Neale wrote in the *Record* that many teachers responded by enquiring what was meant by Manual Work.⁸³ He explained that an hour a week at least should be given to the subject. He then listed some suitable activities such as woodcarving, punchwork and carpentry. Neale explained to his teachers that the children had to actually do the work, and not watch demonstrations performed by the teacher. He reassured his teachers that the subject was not a fad, as some 'ignorant people' had suggested.

⁸⁰ E R, 2, 8, Nov. 1906, p. 106

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² E R, 1, 4, July 1905

⁸³ E R, 1, 1, March-April 1905, p. 4

Early in his first year as director Neale announced his intention to follow Victoria's example and establish woodwork centres in the major population centres.⁸⁴ In a meeting with teachers in Devonport in June 1905 the Premier announced the government's commitment to sending two male teachers to Melbourne to be trained for six months at the manual education centre attached to the Melbourne Teachers' College during 1906. The teachers were to teach in the two new woodwork schools which were being established in spare rooms at the Murray Street Central School in Hobart and the Wellington Square State School in Launceston.

An index to the growing commitment to include manual education in the curriculum came when Premier Evans addressed the House during 1906. Apart from the actions which the government had taken in establishing a cookery school and a woodwork school, and the training of the four teachers, Evans spoke on the pedagogical reasons why the subject should be included in the curriculum of state schools. While Evans added nothing new to the reasons already advanced, he stressed the role of the subject in developing intelligence.

There were Tasmanian state school teachers who positively responded to Neale's call to include manual education in the curriculum. Those who did were rewarded by having their name and work recorded in the *Record*.⁸⁵ Neale devoted a considerable amount of time to in-service education in the subject at his summer schools.⁸⁶ The newly appointed art master to the Education Department, Lucian Dechaineux, followed up these sessions with detailed notes in the *Record*.⁸⁷ At the state schools exhibition held in Launceston during

⁸⁴ Examiner, 19 Oct. 1906, 5, 26

⁸⁵ See, for example, Thos. Alexander, 'Chip Carving at Wellington Square State School', E R, 2, 3, June 1906, p.p. 33, 34

⁸⁶ See, for example, E R, 2, 7, Nov. 1907, p.p. 89, 90

⁸⁷ See, for example, E R, 2, 9, Dec. 1906, p.p. 106-07

December 1907 many schools featured the products of children's manual education. The *Mercury* wrote that chip carving seemed to be a favourite pursuit of schoolboys. To reassure any doubting members of the public that all this was not a 'fad' and a waste of money, the *Mercury* enthused over the work being done by the children at the Hobart Woodwork School during its first few months of operation.

Seldom did the Tasmanian inspectors mention the progress of manual education in their schools. One senses from reading their annual reports that they were almost indifferent to the subject, and it was not something which they encouraged their teachers to develop. If the inspectors did mention manual education in their annual reports it was always very briefly, and at the conclusion of their report. Mostly, the inspectors' mention of manual education comprised some form of rhetoric on why the subject should be included in the curriculum. Sometimes the reports were in a negative vein, blaming the lack of progress of the subject on indifferent or incompetent teachers.⁸⁸ Garrett was more enthusiastic about the results in his district.⁸⁹ Perhaps, this was because his teachers had been able to come under Neale's, Johnson's and Dechaineux's influences more than teachers in other parts of the state. He stated that undoubtedly the subject had come to stay, and

wherever [it] had been introduced in an intelligent spirit and with an open mind, teachers had found it their best allies in the fight with inattention and irregularity of attendance ... they know by direct experience the brightness and eagerness which are brought into school life through these channels for the children's selfactivity.⁹⁰

Nature study was very much a creature of the country life movement. In reviewing Bailey's *The Nature Study Idea*, Neale wrote on what he considered

⁸⁸ See, for example, *ibid.*, 2, 12 April 1907, p.p. 1467

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, 10, Jan 1907, p.p. 125-6

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

to be the ideals of nature study.⁹¹ Like Bailey's book, it was impossible to lay down prescriptions for the curriculum. Nature study was not science, knowledge, nor fact:

No set programme can give any educational value to the lessons; no book can unlock the mystery of nature. The teacher is the Prospero that is destined everywhere to set free the imprisoned Ariels of nature: the legend of the Sleeping Beauty may be re-enacted in every rural school, the teacher imprinting the kiss that awakens to life and strength and renewed hope.⁹²

Neale maintained that nature study, by necessity, was shrouded in this mysticism. It was education in its most basic form, resting on a set of highly individualised impressions, feelings or assumptions. These were more recognizable than definable. Neale maintained that to understand what nature study meant required an understanding of its origins. Neale maintained that it was the only aspect of progressive education actually to grow out of primary schools. All other aspects of the primary school curriculum had been imposed on primary schools by either society or the universities. Neale maintained that the spirit of the movement had its source in the educational theory of Comenius; from here it gathered strength through the teachings of Rousseau and Pestalozzi. The years from about 1895 to 1905 had seen 'the whole atmosphere of the primary school permeated by this new educational ozone'.⁹³

Neale explained to his teachers that nature study did not have the heavy knowledge bias of so much of the remainder of the curriculum. Unlike the object lesson of old, the nature study lesson was not hungry for facts, but rather

91 For Bailey's contribution to the development of nature study in the schools of the United States, and the connection between nature study and the country life movement in the United States, see Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School, op. cit.*, p.p. 75-85. The work to which Neale referred was L.H. Bailey, *The Nature Study Idea, Being an Interpretation of the New School Movement to Put the Child in Sympathy with Nature*, New York, 1903

92 E R, 3, 4, July 1907, p.p. 45-6

93 *Ibid*, p. 46

sought the interpretation of facts. The teacher of the object lesson, having the children classify and memorise the facts, happily concluded his lesson. The teacher of the nature study lesson would never dare write *finis* to the lesson.

Early during Neale's directorship there was evidence of a growing public support for the introduction of nature study into the curriculum of Tasmanian state schools. The Tasmanian public was made aware of the views expressed in the new American publication, *The Nature Study Review*. The *Mercury* in reviewing the publication, noted that "'Nature Study" in its many phases is each year coming to occupy an increasingly important place in the curricula of American elementary schools'.⁹⁴ The *Mercury* maintained that *The Nature Study Review* had special interest for readers in Tasmania because of Neale's attempts to introduce the subject into the primary school curriculum. The article followed with a detailed account of the work being done in nature study in a school in Massachusetts. The Hobart daily followed this article up with an editorial late in 1906, again supporting the introduction of the subject into the primary school curriculum. The editorial quoted from the English journal, *Windsor Magazine*, 'from which a valuable hint may be taken for imitation in this part of the world'.⁹⁵ The article described work in nature study at the Jones Allen Girls' School in Dulwich. The editorial concluded by commending '... the article to the school teachers of Tasmania ... in the hope that they might be stimulated to introduce something of a similar kind ...'

The *Clipper* on this occasion linked arms with the *Mercury* in applauding the way in which Neale was using the *Record* to disseminate curriculum reform; in particular the *Clipper* applauded the nature study notes being included in the

⁹⁴ *Mercury*, 6 June 1905, 6, 56

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 13 Dec. 1906, 4, 3

editions of the *Record*.⁹⁶ A correspondent to the *Daily Post* declared that nature study was engendering a new spirit into education: 'it is essential to industry, to morality: and these two beget greatness.'⁹⁷

Charles R. Long, the Victorian Senior Inspector praised the original pen and ink sketches of Tasmanian birds and bush, submitted by Latrobe State School at the Melbourne Educational Exhibition.⁹⁸ Long claimed that these in particular attracted much attention. Other exhibits included pencil drawings of Tasmanian berries, wild briars, and various other specimens of flora. Closer to the ideals expressed by Neale, when reviewing Bailey's work, was the work undertaken by A.O. Walker of the Wellington Square State School in Launceston. The *Mercury* enthused over nature study excursions, where children from the school travelled to the spectacular Cataract Gorge near Launceston to study the native fauna.⁹⁹ At the Launceston State School Exhibition held in December 1907 there was a great deal of work in nature study exhibited, particularly as it was ingrated with art and needlework.¹⁰⁰

Some of the Tasmanian state school inspectors did not share the same positive feelings as shown by the *Mercury* towards the efforts of the Tasmanian teachers' efforts to teach nature study. Brockett wrote in 1906 that he had heard 'much nonsense' spoken about under the name of nature study:

Oh those leaves! and those 'too French, French beans!'
One would really think there was nothing in Nature
outside pods and leaves.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ *Clipper*, 4 March 1905, 3, 12

⁹⁷ *Daily Post*, correspondence, 26 June 1908, 6, 2

⁹⁸ C.R. Long, *Record and Review*...., *op. cit.*, p. 87

⁹⁹ *Mercury*, 10 March 1907, 5, 3

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 6 dec. 1907, 6, 7, *op. cit.*; *ibid.*, 7 Dec. 1907, 6, 2

¹⁰¹ E R, 2, 9 Dec. 1906, p. 94, *op. cit.*

It seems, from Brockett's perspective, nature study for many teachers only amounted to growing beans in containers in the classroom. Garrett, in the same year wrote in the same vein as Brockett.¹⁰² Garrett reported that 'something resembling nature study' could be seen in some schools, but 'in too many instances the lessons do not soar above the humble level of the old object lesson'. Still for Garrett where there was an enthusiastic teacher, he found 'children delightedly and carefully interested in the lives of butterflies, grasshoppers, frogs, and other small things'. It seems that 1906 was the only year that the state school inspectors chose to comment on nature study. Neale's enthusiasm seems to have had some early, if only temporary effect on his immediate subordinates.

When Neale explained why art should be included in the curriculum, his first point was that the subject provided for children the means of character development.¹⁰³ It was all important, he explained, 'that the child's play be made the mould of good habits'. But, Neale went on to insist that work, too, 'could deepen the character'. Thus, 'each child when old enough should be trained in some sort of work and be required to do it in a neat and orderly way'. Further, Neale insisted that art should be include in the curriculum because of its spiritual impact on children. It complemented scripture lessons. As he put it:

A box of pigments ... will sometimes do more than all the catechisms to save a boy. While a boy is drawing a flowing line, his soul is tending towards the divine beauty ... While a boy is shaping a heap of clay into a Hermes, he is shaping his own soul towards the ideal of all loveliness.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² E R, 2, 9 Dec. 1906, p. 96, *op. cit.*

¹⁰³ E R, 2, 4, July 1906, p.p. 48-9

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49

Added to this, Neale contended that art could develop civic attitudes in children. As he put it, 'a crayon pencil may save a child from a crude companion'. Moral attitudes, too, could be developed through art. Neale explained that, 'while a boy is drawing a straight line he is forming the habits of exactitude that speaks the truth.'¹⁰⁵ Neale also appealed to science as a justification for the inclusion of art in the curriculum: 'it is the scientific investigation of the object which is compelled in drawing when properly taught which constitutes much of its importance educationally.'¹⁰⁶ Finally, it was the utilitarian outcomes of the subject which justified its inclusion in the curriculum; and as a corollary to this outcome was its role in national development:

It is the future *workmen*, who will need to have the aesthetic training more than the man of wealth. If the prosperity of the country depends on its production so does the sale of those productions depend to a great extent upon the taste exhibited in their preparation and presentation. How true this is with anybody who is closely in touch with the industrial conditions will agree. The lack of taste in our work is responsible for the loss of thousands of pounds, which find their way annually to Sydney and Melbourne, ... under conditions of suitable education, could be done with ease and cheapness here.(emphasis in original)¹⁰⁷

Neale concluded by pointing to the work being done in art education in the state schools of Sydney and Melbourne, which he argued formed the foundation of their technical education.

During his first few months as director Neale advised the Tasmanian teachers that he intended to introduce art into the curriculum as soon as he was able; the subject was soon to become a compulsory subject in every class in the state schools. To this end he encouraged teachers to attend classes conducted by

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ E R, 4, 3 June 1908, p. 26

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Dechaineux.¹⁰⁸ During 1906 Neale issued a new curriculum in drawing.¹⁰⁹ This was to be the only curriculum which Neale introduced covering the preparatory grade to grade 6.

Dechaineux wrote detailed notes on the new curriculum for the teachers.¹¹⁰ For Dechaineux, art in the primary school required a great deal of skill development and imitation by children. Lloyd Morgan's *Psychology for Teachers* was his guide. Dechaineux quoted from Lloyd Morgan's work to explain that primary education was mainly concerned with the imparting of skills.¹¹¹ The development of these skills required much imitative work by the children from the teacher. There was a strong appeal to faculty psychology:

We build things upon the natural faculty of imitation. We must show the child how a skilled action is to be performed, and get him to imitate what to do.¹¹²

Dechaineux detailed notes described six main elements of the art curriculum: spontaneous drawing, drawing from nature, ambidextrous drawing, geometrical drawing, clay modelling and brushwork. The notions of faculty psychology determined much of the method and content of the course. Dechaineux stressed that in drawing from nature it was necessary that children's accuracy of mental concepts were sharpened through close observation, and also it was necessary 'to train the mind to judge correctly of spaces, and to train the hand to follow the dictates of the mind.' Further, children were required to draw ornamental borders to facilitate the faculty for decorative design. The notions of faculty psychology also determined much of the method of the ambidextrous drawing section.

¹⁰⁸ E R, 1, 1, March/April 1905, p. 5

¹⁰⁹ E R, 2, 4, July 1906, p.p. 467

¹¹⁰ Lucian Dechaineux, 'The Drawing Course', E R, 2, 4, July 1906 p.p. 50-1

¹¹¹ Lloyd Morgan, *Psychology for Teachers*, London, 1894, p. 160

¹¹² *Ibid.*

It was only in clay modelling and spontaneous drawing that Dechaineux allowed for the development of children's selfexpression.¹¹³ The extent to which the ideals of self-expression expressed in the spontaneous drawing section of the curriculum were realised may be judged through a description of a spontaneous art lesson conducted at the Invermay State School, Launceston, and observed by Dechaineux. It is clear that Dechaineux, while judging the children's work to some extent by adult standards, did encourage the element of self-expression. He explained that a botanist or an ornithologist may not agree with the accuracy of the drawings, but that

the child has endeavoured to give an idea of their differences; ... there is in the clumsy drawings an appearance of life and movement of astonishingly good drawing, especially with regard to size of drawing, freedom and strength of line ... unconscious observation shown in these drawings *convey their meanings* unhesitatingly, and that is all that we can ask of either a child, a teacher, or a great artist. (emphasis in original)¹¹⁴

The extent to which art education was becoming accepted as a necessary element in the curriculum can be gauged from the fact that some young ambitious teachers were seeing it as a springboard to assist in their upward mobility in the profession. At the in-service courses conducted by Neale, and at the summer schools, art was deemed to be worthy enough subject for an 'imported' teacher from South Australia to service professionally. Brooks conducted most of these classes.¹¹⁵

There was a section of the Tasmanian public which was enthusiastic about the innovations in art education. For example, when reporting the events of the

¹¹³ E R, 2, 4, July 1906, p. 49, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ See, for example, E R, 1, 10, Feb. 1906, p. 157

end-of-year breakup ceremonies of the Battery Point Model School, the *Mercury* boasted that the art course being developed there was 'the most up-to-date system used in any of the States.'¹¹⁶ All credit, according to the *Mercury*, had to go to the newly-appointed Art Master to the Education Department, and to the teacher at the Model School who was responsible for developing the course, Brooks. The paper described how the old style of copying had been replaced by children's direct study of nature. Children brought flowers and leaves to school, drew them in their copybooks, painted them on art paper, drew them from memory on the blackboard, and finally modelled them in clay. Also, young children were trained in spontaneous drawing, where impressions of drawings were reproduced on the blackboard. According to the *Mercury*, some excellent illustrations were reproduced in this way. The *Critic* pronounced that it was a pleasure to find that the old method of work on perforated card and paper mosaics, 'that occupied the perverted energies of the last generation of children' was giving way to 'freearm' work in various media.¹¹⁷ At the 1907 Launceston State School Exhibition children's art work abounded.¹¹⁸

The Tasmanian state school inspectors' attitude towards art education was ambivalent. Garrett maintained that where the subject had been introduced 'in an intelligent spirit and with an open mind' teachers found that it was their best ally in the fight against truancy and inattention. But, he doubted 'whether they [could] appreciate their higher educational values, of which science tells them'.¹¹⁹ Brockett, decried the lack of system generally in art education, and

¹¹⁶ *Mercury*, 21 Dec. 1906, 8, 2

¹¹⁷ *Critic*, 14 Dec. 1907, 3, 45, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁸ *Mercury*, 19 Dec. 1906, 6, 35, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁹ E R, 2, 10, Jan. 1907, p. 126

feared that much of the children's work was rushed up a few weeks before the annual inspection.¹²⁰

During Neale's directorship there was a developing opinion within the education department which was supported by a section of Tasmanian society which ensured the inclusion of art in the curriculum of state schools. In some of the city schools, staffed by teachers who were ambitious and who were in close professional contact with Neale and Dechaineux, and who were more closely influenced by the progressive elements in Tasmanian society, art education was reaching a high level of development.

5 Rejection and Acceptance

It is clear then that progressivism impacted upon state primary education in Tasmania during the Neale years through the values which the teachers brought to school and which they imparted to children in a variety of ways such as discussions, choices of stories and topics for childrens' writing. Values associated with social Darwinism, temperance, thrift and militarism as an expression of nationalism were important values associated with progressivism.

Important progressive gains also were made in the curriculum. Physical education, domestic economy, manual education, nature study and art education developed under Neale's directorship. Public support for Neale's ideals and for the additions to the curriculum in Tasmanian state schools clearly was evident within Tasmanian society. For example, a correspondent to the *Mercury* supported Neale's attempts to broaden the curriculum.¹²¹ The letter revealed a high level of understanding of the new ideals. The correspondent maintained

¹²⁰ E R, 4, 4, July 1908, p.p. 33-4

¹²¹ *Mercury*, correspondence, 8 Aug. 1906, 2, 8

that the three R's could not be taught intelligently without the wider knowledge which came from a wider culture. To subject children to dreary repetitive methods in the basic subjects would lead them to revolt against school. According to the *Mercury* correspondent such a curriculum defeated its own ends, so that almost any addition would be an improvement. Another example to illustrate the wider public support for Neale's curriculum innovations came from the *Mercury*. In a reprint from the London *Morning Post*, the Hobart daily sought to explain how the discontent being experienced with the curriculum by some people within the Tasmanian Education Department and Tasmanian society also was being experienced in other education systems in the western world.¹²² According to the article, the discontent had to be associated with a general upheaval in education brought about by a general questioning of past antiquated curriculum methods and ideals. The *Mercury* itself always supported Neale's attempts to broaden the curriculum, and in fact, early in Neale's directorship, sought to suppress the battery of complaints about Neale's new curriculum being received by the paper. Early in 1906 the paper declared that it was closing its columns to the topic.¹²³

Had Neale shown more sensitivity to his curriculum change, and particularly given greater praise to the positive aspects of Tasmanian education he may have lessened the public criticism which was pitched against him. Letters to the editor of the *Mercury*, often couched in parochial terms, and cloaked in self-interest condemned the Tasmanians who sought to 'throw mud' on Tasmania's past achievements in education.¹²⁴ Many correspondents bundled together the ideals of the curriculum innovations with the 'imported' teachers from South

¹²² *Ibid.*, 18 April 1907, 3, 67, reprinted from *Morning Post*, n.d.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 8 Feb. 1906, 4, 67

¹²⁴ See, for example, *ibid.*, correspondence, 26 July 1906, 3, 8; *ibid.*, correspondence, 27 July 1906, 3, 8; *ibid.*, correspondence, 17 Sept. 1906, 4, 3; *ibid.*, correspondence, 3 Nov. 1906, 3, 4; *ibid.*, correspondence, 8 July 1908, 3, 7

Australia. Many saw the curriculum innovations as the evil ploy of a dictatorial director who battered the foundations of their past methods and ideals. It is difficult to know of course how much of the public criticism was instigated by disgruntled teachers.

We have seen that Neale's progressive education was a blending of what we have called the scientific and the child-centred, with an emphasis on the latter. We have seen how Neale's progressive education possessed many tensions. His progressive education was complex, demanding considerable professional knowledge and skill from teachers. Again, if Neale had been more sensitive to the processes of change which the Tasmanian education climate required, he may have moderated his progressive education and made it simpler and more understandable for the vast majority of untrained and poorly educated teachers.

By 1908 opposition within the teaching profession to Neale's curriculum reforms had reached crisis point. It seems that increasingly his curriculum reforms were becoming a scape goat for his administrative reforms. Many of the latter threatened teachers' job security. At the 1908 state conference of the teachers' union, J. Low, president of the union spoke out against Neale's curriculum reforms.¹²⁵ He was loudly applauded. The substance of his address reflected the major grievances and sentiments of the rank-and-file of the state teaching service. Low opened his address by contending that since 1905 Tasmania 'had vouchsafed to it a kind of educational theophany, in the form of what had been termed the new education'. Low asked the Tasmanian teachers to remember the famous epigram: 'The chief characteristic of these new ideals was that they were not new; indeed, in the whole of the so-called new education what was new was very little of it good; what was good was very little of it

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1 July 1908, 5, 78

new.' Low went on to cite some examples, which to his mind, supported the epigram. Nature study, for example, was only 'another name for the old object lessons', but now 'the old common pump was replaced by the newer, brightly blooming sweetpea, which now did duty for its antiquated predecessor'. Clearly, Low was representing a body of teachers, the vast majority of whom had not moved beyond Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development.

Neither had Neale bothered to understand the Tasmanian political process. Always the Legislative Council was a powerful factor. It would take a Premier with great political strength and determination to withstand the political pressure from the Council. And Neale did not have a Minister of Education or a Premier with these qualities. Three months following the 1908 Teachers' Union Conference a deputation waited on the Premier and the Minister for Education to press for another Royal Commission into Neale's administration of the department.¹²⁶ Only one of the members of the deputation chose to raise the matter of the curriculum. Dickinson contended that a widespread dissatisfaction did not stop at Neale's administration, but extended to the curriculum. Parents and teachers had to have confidence in the curriculum for it to be effective.

As we have argued, not all Tasmanian state schools were still in the Dame School Stage. These schools were supported by communities which supported Neale's progressive curriculum. For example, one correspondent to the *Daily Post* praised Neale's efforts to introduce a progressive curriculum and reminded Tasmanians of the national importance of a progressive curriculum:

No subject is being so much considered at the present time as education, and no subject is of such vital importance. Education is the lever by which the world is being lifted

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 11 Oct. 1908, 3, 24

up step by step on the way to progress. It is essential to industry, to morality: and these two beget greatness. Without education we cannot, as a nation, be truly great, good, or useful, so let us have education, the best we can command, and plenty of it.¹²⁷

When the Royal Commission began its enquiry during early 1909, and when witnesses were put under oath, few, when questioned on the curriculum argued against the effectiveness of Neale's innovations. Richard Smith, praised Neale's innovations.¹²⁸ Brockett unhesitatingly supported all of them too, declaring that in the short span of Neale's directorship children's education had been vastly improved.¹²⁹ Heritage supported these aims.¹³⁰ The worst complaint that the rank-and-file could level at Neale's curriculum innovations concerned the overcrowding of the curriculum. This was a complaint received from a teacher in a small country school.¹³¹ The Commission, when handing down its findings, supported these views, and added that had they not been hampered by such restrictive modes of administration which he inherited when taking office '... still greater improvement would have been effected during his brief tenure of office'.¹³²

The *Mercury*, in assessing the Commission's report, deplored the little space given to the curriculum in it.¹³³ The paper's criticism of Neale, however, stopped there. It had the opportunity to constructively evaluate Neale's curriculum innovations, but did not. The *Critic*, on the other hand, praised Neale's curriculum innovations. It looked to the curriculum innovations in Tate's Victorian state schools and concluded:

127 *Daily Post*, correspondence, 26 June 1908, 6, 2

128 *Mercury*, 18 Feb. 1909, 5, 8-10

129 *Ibid.*, 10 Feb. 1909, 5, 810

130 *Ibid.*, 12 Feb. 1909, 5, 8-10

131 *Ibid.*, 16 Jan. 1909, 5, 8-10

132 JPPP, 1909, paper 1, p. 6

133 *Mercury*, editorial, 30 March 1909, 4, 3-4

Under the stress created by modern competition, and intensified in Tasmania by interstate free trade, the native born falls into the background unless he enjoys the advantages enjoyed by his rivals on the mainland. Victoria is not going to run its schools in the interest of its disaffected teachers; it is going to run them for its children.¹³⁴

The *Daily Post*, too, was unequivocal in its support for Neale's curriculum. It reminded Tasmanians that the Tasmanian curriculum for years was far behind that in other states. Reform was imperative. 'That [Neale] has done well by the children is admitted by such witnesses as Mr Johnson, Principal of the Training College, the majority of the inspectors, and the most experienced of the teachers.'¹³⁵

It is clear, then, that much of the reasons behind the opposition voiced against Neale's additions to the curriculum by teachers and members of the public were interwoven with complaints about his administration. On face value, it seems that hostility towards Neale's curriculum, as it stood by itself was not a major issue. When under pressure from an educational administration which teachers perceived to be insensitive to their many grievances, they then identified the curriculum innovations with the man leading the assault against their salaries, conditions of service, and career prospects. Especially, Neale was at a gross disadvantage when it came to curriculum innovation. He was an outsider, and further he was bringing more outsiders into the Tasmanian Education Department, more outsiders to pluck off the cream teaching positions.

There is no doubt that however virtuous may have been Neale's ideals *vis-a-vis* the curriculum, he seriously blundered in implementing his innovations. His was a paradigm case of too much, too soon. He would have been better advised to refrain from any attempt at curriculum innovation until he had the

¹³⁴ *Critic*, editorial, 3 April 1909, 5, 1-4

¹³⁵ *Daily Post*, editorial, 30 March 1909, 6, 4-5

department on a sound administrative footing. But, deep inside of the Tasmanian teachers' consciousness they must have believed what Neale was advocating for the curriculum was inevitable. They could not have turned a blind eye to what a section of Tasmanian society wanted, and what was happening elsewhere in the education systems of the western world.

Chapter 4

The Curriculum Under McCoy

When Rooney first stated his intention to accept the directorship of the Tasmanian Education Department vacated by Neale, he was interviewed by the *Mercury*, and his educational philosophy explained to the Tasmanians.¹ In relation to the curriculum of the new education, it seems he was as progressive as Neale. The Hobart daily, however, enthused over one of his beliefs: he believed in bringing about change slowly, and from 'within'.² No doubt the *Mercury's* appraisal of what was needed in relation to curriculum change within the Tasmanian Education Department reflected the main aspirations of the bulk of Tasmanians and of state school teachers: Neale had shown that Tasmanian education could no longer remain insular from the mainstream of educational reform sweeping the industrialised world. What they complained about was the manner of the change effort which had been thrust upon them since 1905.

When Rooney finally declined to take up the appointment in Tasmania the *Mercury* responded with a detailed editorial on the qualities which a new director should possess and the general direction which curriculum change should take in the island state.³ The editorial maintained that it was reflecting a very general public opinion 'and one founded on good reasoning'. It maintained that Tasmania did not want another Neale: 'Such a man will begin almost inevitably by putting things in train to carry out his own ideas of education, and the consequences are likely to be rather evil than good.' The paper admitted that finding the right man was going to be difficult, 'though perhaps the discovery is

1 *Mercury*, 23 Sept. 1909, 5,5-6

2 *Ibid.*, editorial, 24 Sept. 1909, 4,6

3 *Ibid.*, editorial, 7 April 1910,4,7, *op.cit.*

less likely to be made among those who have had their minds stuffed to the full with the newest theories and fads about education'.

Apart from organisational and administrative ability the new director, according to the *Mercury*, had to be sympathetic to the existing situation of Tasmanian teachers. The editorial reminded Tasmanians that there were plenty of teachers, especially in small country schools who were more in need of material assistance than advice on new methods. These people with 'honest and honourable toil' had succeeded in accomplishing a great deal more than might be expected from them. These teachers needed more sympathy and understanding than brainwashing with 'new and fantastic things which constituted education'.⁴

If the correspondence to the *Mercury* were correct, there was some pressure on the Minister of Education to appoint a non-professional administrator rather than an educational administrator.⁵ The assumptions appear to have been that the Tasmanian Education Department had sufficient educational leaders of worth, and all the Education Department needed was an administrator to replace Neale. The *Daily Post* in an editorial retorted that this proposition was ridiculous and reflected the poor regard that many Tasmanians held for progressive education.⁶ The *Daily Post* hoped that the advent of a new director would mark the beginning of

... a saner, a more liberal and progressive policy than is advocated by those who want an educational layman for an important professional position, and who decry as fads advanced ideas that they do not understand.⁷

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ See, for example, *ibid.*, correspondence, 2 Dec. 1909, 6, 4; *ibid.*, correspondence, 7 Dec. 1909, 7, 2.

⁶ *Daily Post*, editorial, 5 Jan. 1910, 5, 6.

⁷ *Ibid.*

The *Daily Post* went on to ask why so many Tasmanians interested in education wanted to cling with such tenacity to the three R's when, financially and industrially the state was so backwards. The Hobart Labor daily urged Tasmanians to look at the systems of education in advanced industrial countries such as Germany and the United States, which aimed at bringing their citizens to the highest level of efficiency. Thus the editorial argued:

At the head of the Education Department we must have a man whose view of education is something more than the imparting of the rudiments of arithmetic, the ability to struggle through a newspaper, and to make a signature. He must be a man who recognises that education is a process of development, of bringing out all there is in an individual and raising him to the maximum of the effective power inherent in him, for this directly pertains to the welfare of the State.⁸

McCoy's appointment seems to have satisfied both the *Mercury's* and the *Daily Post's* points of view of what was required in the new director. McCoy was to prove to be more interested and adept at educational management than curriculum innovation. Basically, his ideals for the curriculum were set at a much lower horizon than were Neale's.⁹

1 The New Education: Reappraisal

McCoy made much use of the curriculum development done in other states, particularly in his home state and Victoria. The already strong Victorian influence upon the Tasmanian Education Department was accentuated. In Language, as in other curriculum areas, Long was most influential. It is not

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ B.K. Hyams, W.T McCoy, Director of Education, Tasmania, 1910-19; South Australia, 1919-29, in C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers ...*, vol. 3, p. 34, op. cit., makes the point that McCoy made use of the ideals of the new education to advance himself professionally. There was no place for educational conservatives in Peter Board's New South Wales Education Department

that Long had anything particularly new to say, but he stated his thoughts with system and authority.¹⁰ As one would expect with the onset of McCoy's regime the New South Wales influence would weigh more heavily on the Tasmanian state school curriculum. This influence, though, mostly brought more system and orthodoxy into the curriculum, than a diversity of ideas. This process was simply the transplanting of the official New South Wales curriculum to Tasmanian government schools. For example, when McCoy chose to comment on the criteria by which schools should choose supplementary reading books for the language curriculum, he chose to have reprinted in the *Record* a reprint from an article from the *New South Wales Public Instruction Gazette*. Here the orthodox reasons for the inclusion of literature in the curriculum were authoritatively stated: the love of good literature, like any other form of aesthetic appreciation, was largely the product of habit, and the right courses of action long persisted in would ultimately develop into habits of morality. Children who were constantly presented with the 'beautiful and true' would 'grow up to dislike whatever falls short of the ideals which in these realms he, consciously or unconsciously, sets up for himself. He will cling to Beauty and Truth; he will hate whatever is ugly and false.'¹¹ McCoy put his weight behind the orthodox belief that the state school curriculum was the instrument for the transmission of these virtues.

During McCoy's regime the Tasmanian teachers read what British educators were saying about curriculum matters by way of reprints from British educational journals.¹² Mostly they were reprints of reprints, and in this sense

10 For example, C.R. Long, 'Extracts from a Paper read at the Conference of Delegates of the Teachers' Union of Victoria, Town Hall, Melbourne, 31 March 1910', E R, 6, 5, Oct. 1910, p.p. 73-5

11 B.J. Price, 'Supplementary Reading! What is the Precise Meaning of the Term?', E R, 9, 12, May 1914, p.p. 168-70, reprinted from the *Public Instruction Gazette*, n. d.

12 See, for example, David Masson, 'The Slipshod in Literature; Uni. of Edinburgh, E R, 7, 4, Sept. 1911, p. 54 reprinted from *Education Gazette and Teaching Aid*, n.d.

they had been censored twice before the Tasmanian teachers were able to read them. This suggests that in the Tasmanian Education Department there was very little direct access by teachers to overseas educational journals. None of the reprinted articles from the British journals stated anything which was new or which contradicted existing practices in the Tasmanian state schools. The Tasmanian teachers fared no better with American educational literature. Like the British articles, most of the American articles had been gleaned from other Australian educational journals.¹³

The strict adherence to the prescribed curriculum encouraged little comment by the Tasmanian teachers. When it did come it was without any credit to the author, and with strict editorial comment. For example an article was printed in the *Record* in late 1918. The editor of the *Record* wrote that it was published, 'not as adequately meeting the requirements of the prescribed Course of Instruction in relation to the cultivation of the love of good literature, but as furnishing good illustrations of one of the methods which can be employed with a view to that important end'.¹⁴ Then followed a rather inane account of what poetry could do for children's moral development. It was argued that children who had learned, 'turn, turn thy hasty foot aside, Crush not a helpless worm' were less likely on the way home from school to tread on 'the most helpless of God's creatures'.

The nature study component of the Tasmanian state school curriculum provides a suitable example of how the curriculum was formalised during McCoy's directorship. We need to remember how Neale had used Bailey's *The Nature Study Idea* to inspire teachers to the belief that nature study, as an ideal, could

¹³ See, for example, Lee Emerson Bassett, 'The Teaching of Poetry in Public Schools', Stanford Uni., Col., U.S.A., E R, 9, 2, May 1914, p. 42, reprinted from the *Public Speaking Review*, n.d., reprinted from *Public Instruction Gazette*, n.d.

¹⁴ E R, 14, 10, Oct. 1918, p.p. 139-40

never be developed into graded and systematic lessons. It was essential, according to Neale's view, that teachers developed a love for nature and inspired children to develop the same. Before McCoy had been in Tasmania a year he had reprinted in the *Record* an article by A.E. Massey, a teacher at the Blackfriar's Practice School, Sydney, on how to teach a series of lessons on mosquitoes.¹⁵ This, of course, was the antithesis of what Neale sought his teachers to do. The following two years saw the same type of lessons, although even more detailed, appear in the *Record*. They were reprints of lesson notes by J.A. Leach, Organising Inspector of Nature Study in the Victorian Education Department, which had appeared in the Victorian Education Department's, *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid*. During 1912 McCoy had reprinted in the *Record* an article where Leach explained why he chose to give such prescriptive lesson notes which were contrary to the ideals described by Bailey.¹⁶ With the absence of any editorial comment it is clear that McCoy agreed with Leach's argument. Leach argued that even though he was in sympathy with Bailey's ideals he had chosen to have published prescriptive notes because of the fact that most teachers had received no training in nature study. During 1913 W. Burton from England was appointed to the Tasmanian Education Department as the Organising Teacher for Nature Study. His responsibilities were similar to Leach's in the Victorian Education Department. From the date of his appointment detailed instructions began to appear in the *Record* on the methods and content of nature study for Tasmanian teachers.¹⁷

McCoy obviously had similar feelings about sewing in the curriculum as he did about nature study: it needed direction and system. Midway through 1911

15 A.E. Massey, 'The Mosquito', E R, 6, 7, Dec. 1910, p.p 101-03

16 J.A. Leach, 'Nature Study, A Graded Course', E R, 8, 5, p.p. 71-5, reprinted from *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid*, n.d.

17 See, for example, W.J.P. Burton, 'Outline of a Nature Study Scheme for the Hobart State Schools', E R, 9, 2, July 1913, p.p. 17-19

S. Hughes was appointed as Superintendent of Needlework, and after a visit to New South Wales schools to observe methods of teaching 'and generally enrich her experience' she commenced duty in the Hobart schools in September 1911.¹⁸ According to McCoy, Hughes brought a marked improvement in needlework, and increased interest in the subject.¹⁹ Like Burton, she lectured at the training college, and detailed in the *Record* programs of work and lesson notes for teachers throughout the state.

It would be wrong to suggest that McCoy's directorship was marked completely by the heavy hand of formalism. One development, steeped in the progressive ideals of the country life movement, the vigorous life, and the conservation of nature, was the formation during the war of a school excursion association in Hobart. The formation of the association seems to have been inspired by community pressures. Its executive membership, for example, during 1919 included the Lord Mayor of Hobart, Alderman Shield as president; McCoy was vice-president. The general committee included head teachers of the Hobart state schools. The 1918 annual report of the association gives some idea of the activities of the association. That year marked the second annual excursion by rail to the Mount Field National Park.²⁰ The Hobart state schools walked around the lower portions of the park viewing the beautiful scenery of the Russell and Lady Barron Falls. The children were addressed by leading citizens, 'and regaled with instrumental music'. The association's executive regretted the absence again of children from the private schools. The association also organised excursions for country children to Hobart. For example, early in 1919 the Derwent Valley state school children travelled to Long Beach, just south of Sandy Bay, Hobart.²¹

18 JPPP, 1912, paper 4, p. 4

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Mercury*, 1 March 1919, 5, 7

21 *Ibid.*, 4 March 1919, 3, 6

2 Values and the Curriculum

From 1910 until the war's end all of those values and aspirations which were related to progressivism and which underpinned the curriculum during Neale's directorship remained in Tasmanian state schools, although the war was to intensify some of them. The social Darwinist notions remained. The public press and educational writings abounded in the notions of evolution.²² This was associated with a growing adulation of science. Education was increasingly talked about as being a science. For example, when the Council of the University of Tasmania created a Department of Education, the Hobart press spoke glowingly of the move which would help to establish education as a science.²³

The public call to instil in children the virtues of temperance was sustained during the period, and in fact was increased with the growing influence of the abolition movement during the war. The temperance movement in Tasmania society was greatly strengthened and had become much more vocal by 1915. In that year a temperance column appeared in the *Daily Post*.²⁴ Women's groups such as the National Council of Women spear-headed the drive for reform.²⁵ At the 1917 National Council of Women one delegate spoke on the ever increasing need for schools to instil in children positive attitudes towards temperance.²⁶ Taylor responded to the speech by declaring that it was one of the best that he had heard. At the war's end the children of Tasmania's largest

22 See, for example, *Daily Post*, correspondence, 25 April 1910, 9, 6

23 See, for example, *Mercury*, editorial, 10 April 1917, 4, 7

24 See, for example, *Daily Post*, 11 Jan. 1916, 3, 5

25 See, for example, *ibid.*, 4 March 1916, 3, 4

26 *Mercury*, 20 March 1917, 8, 3-4

and most prestigious state school, the Elizabeth Street Practising School, were told that with the defeat of Germany

there were other evils to be put down, such as the drink evil, gambling and impurity which brought about infinitely more mischief and caused more misery and resolution in homes in Hobart than could have been caused by a German raider reaching it during the war.²⁷

The virtues of thrift always were associated closely with the temperance movement. These became firmly linked with nationalism through the 'Children's Twenty Thousand', a government-organised fund raising effort for the war which used schools as fund-raising agents.²⁸

As eugenics strengthened during the war a more direct influence came on the curriculum. Advocates of social hygiene demanded that sex education be included in the curriculum. During 1914 the *Mercury* responded by arguing that the Tasmanian public had been warned by 'expert facts and figures' that in the interest of 'the individual and of the race' some form of sex education was fast becoming necessary in the curriculum. Children before leaving school should have undergone courses of study which included biological instruction concerning the natural processes among animals, and human sex physiology and hygiene. The dangers of 'sexual irregularities', and diseases should be emphasised. 'Sex biology' should be taught at an early age, and 'sex hygiene' later. The latter would be rationally treated not by itself, but as part of a course on general hygiene dealing with the care of the body, clothing, exercise, nursing, first aid and the dangers of alcoholism, and so on.²⁹ The argument was advanced periodically during the next four years, but was buried effectively when the question was raised at the second biennial conference of

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 July 1919, 6, 1

²⁸ For contemporary newspaper comments on the achievements of the Children's Twenty Thousand see, for example, *ibid.*, 14 July 1917, 4, 4; *ibid.*, 18 July 1917, 2, 1; *ibid.*, 24 July 1917, 3, 6; 8 Aug. 1917, 7, 3

²⁹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 26 June 1914, 3, 4

the Australian directors of education during 1918, where it was resolved that it was not the province of schools to treat the issue of sex education. Presumably the directors felt that such a controversial topic should be dealt with at home.

Nationalism had been from the beginning of Neale's directorship a potent influence on the curriculum, and of course, this influence was accentuated during the war. An indication of the degree to which nationalism was to influence the curriculum during the period was sounded at the Australian Science Congress held in Sydney during 1911 by Dr Harvey Sutton.³⁰ He drew attention to the fact that surveys by school medical officers in state schools around Australia had shown that about two-thirds of school children were born in Australia of Australian born parents. Thus it was right to regard these children as the 'first fruits of the Australian nation'. Sutton went on to claim that with the accurate and uniform data on children's physical development being gathered around Australia by school medical officers, it would be possible to

... determine at the earliest possible moment what influence the environment of the southern land and skies was having on our race so that there was every possibility that the measurements might demonstrate a new national type on the score of physical development.³¹

Nationalism did not mean, of course, a negation of the ideals of Empire, or those human qualities which had brought the Empire together. The Tasmanian state school children were continually reminded of their indebtedness to the Empire. For example, on the occasion of the visit of the Tasmanian governor, Sir Harry Barron, to the schools of Hobart's Eastern Shore, Lindisfarne and Bellerive, the children were spoken to on the subjects of 'loyalty, discipline and

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 13 Jan. 1911, 6, 4

³¹ *Ibid.*

manliness'.³² The Governor told the children that he could remember the king from childhood, 'and even at a very tender age the King understood the meaning of discipline, and this was ... the means of making him fit for the position which he now held'. The Governor then spoke on the virtues of manliness, and to achieve this end the boys could do no better than join the boy scouts. With the onset of the war's dark days the state school had an important role to play in developing the qualities espoused by Governor Barron.

The *Mercury* took the occasion of Heritage's annual report to further highlight to the Tasmanian public some points which the inspector had made concerning the role of the curriculum in developing nationalism. Heritage claimed that the value of history and civics as a means of training in patriotism and citizenship in 'the present national crisis cannot be too strongly emphasised'.³³ Heritage maintained that in the state schools children were taught 'to appreciate the freedom enjoyed by all who live under the British flag, and the struggle of our forefathers in securing that freedom ... throughout the country a spirit of loyalty and patriotism is infused into the ordinary life of the school'.

3 Developments in the Curriculum

In September 1910 McCoy issue a new curriculum to the Tasmanian state schools.³⁴ The new curriculum has been described and analysed elsewhere.³⁵ In this 1910 report McCoy explained that the new course was

... designed to show the scope and nature of the studies for each class. The mother tongue forms the basis of instruction, and great stress is laid on the ability of

³² *Ibid.*, 24 March 1911, 2, 4

³³ *Ibid.*, 11 June 1917, 4, 5

³⁴ E R, 6, 1, Sept. 1910, p.p. 46-51

³⁵ Derek Phillips, *Making More Adequate Provisions*, *op. cit.* p.p. 112-121; B.K. Hyams, W.T. McCoy, Director of Education..., *op. cit.*, p.p. 39-41

children being able to speak and write it correctly. The three R's occupy the great part of the pupil's time, but the need for training him to use his reasoning faculties is kept well in view. The syllabus aims at giving the child power to apply his knowledge, at developing an interest in nature and in his surroundings, at stimulating within him a spirit of enquiry, and at encouraging his mental activity.³⁶

McCoy's curriculum, then, was much more prescriptive and detailed than was Neale's. But it met with immediate public approval. Both the *Mercury* and the *Daily Post* congratulated McCoy on the aims and the subject matter of the curriculum.³⁷ McCoy later declared that the curriculum was very similar to the one in use in New South Wales government schools. The Tasmanian curriculum remained in use with only slight modification until 1926.³⁸ A month after the issue of the 1910 curriculum McCoy issued detailed instructions on how the curriculum should be taught.³⁹

In 1913 Garrett prepared a monograph for the Advisory Committee of the Imperial Education Conference on how the curriculum was used in Tasmanian state schools.⁴⁰ One must consider the document to be a reasonably accurate reflection of what the Tasmanian Education Department expected its teachers to teach in its schools, although of course, we must remember that Garrett was writing for an audience many thousands of miles away, and an audience which he may have felt the need to impress. Garrett stated that reading books were prescribed for all classes in the state schools. Two primers were published by the department for the preparatory class. *The Tasmanian Reader*, Book I was set for the first class; Book II, together with the *Tasmanian History Reader*, Book I, for the second class; and the higher numbers of the *History Reader*

36 JPPP, 1911, paper 4, p. 2

37 *Daily Post*, editorial, 12 Sept. 1910, 6, 5; *Mercury*, editorial, 11 Sept. 1910, 4, 6-7

38 E R, 11, 2, Feb. 1915, p.p. 30-3

39 E R, 6, 2, Oct. 1910, p.p. 62-3

40 *History of the Development of the Curriculum of State Primary Schools in Tasmania*, Educational Monograph, 1, prepared at the request of the Advisory Committee of the Imperial Education Conference, Hobart, 1913. The document is held at the Education Dept. Library, Bathurst St., Hobart. In free hand on the cover is written 'by A.W. Garrett, Inspector of Schools, Tasmania'.

series for the classes above the second. There were separate school papers for the third and fourth classes, and one combined for the fifth and sixth classes. For the fourth class there was also prescribed the *Tasmanian History of Australian Exploration*. All these books, according to Garrett, were similar in character and standard to the reading books used 'in the schools of the Mother Country with local colourings.'⁴¹

The strong emphasis on history as subject matter for children's reading material indicates a Zillerian influence in the use of history as an agent for moral development, and an agent purposefully designed to indoctrinate the country's youth with the values and attitudes sympathetic to the ruling class.⁴² Collectively, the stories in the text books and school paper glorified Anglo-saxon Protestant values. Particularly the stories eulogised the British Empire and the soldiers, explorers, and merchants who were responsible for its foundation. War for the development of the empire was glorified, and temperance and thrift also were inshrined as the social values which cemented the victories. The study of civics, particularly, served these ends. Here topics such as 'justice, patriotism, peace and war, and co-operation' could be treated to ensure that these values were properly transmitted to the country's youth. According to Garrett, these topics detailed the duties owed by the individual to society, the proper regard for public interest and property, and the 'just demands' of the state upon the individual.

Physical training was an example of the 'just demands' that the state placed on the individual. The public cry was strong for increased physical training in the curriculum. In public addresses, educators eulogised its role in progressive

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11

⁴² Of course the exemplar use of history goes back much further in elementary school books than Ziller's 19th century Germany.

education.⁴³ Newspapers ran lengthy articles on the central role which physical training could play in national efficiency.⁴⁴ Editors of influential Tasmanian dailies and weeklies endorsed these ideals.⁴⁵ From 1911 onwards McCoy responded by holding physical training displays involving up to 1 000 state school children on Hobart's Domain.⁴⁶

Through the 1910 curriculum children were encouraged to understand that they had a moral responsibility to the state to keep themselves physically fit. Associated with this ideal was the eugenic ideal: children were taught 'the laws of health and temperance and the elementary principles of morality'.⁴⁷

Cultural diversity was blatantly discouraged. Garrett commented that the few 'non-English speaking aliens' in the schools posed no problem for the Education Department. He contended that 'the few aliens in our schools speak English from the first and are taught to read English only'.⁴⁸ Here Garrett clearly portrayed the Education Department's aim of turning out a standard product.

Garrett waxed enthusiastic about the development of the practical subjects in the curriculum. He showed that he was in touch with the rural ideal when he stated that the main object of nature study was to create in children a love of nature and an appreciation for the processes of nature. Teachers were free to choose their own subject matter for study. In all classes children kept records of their

43 See, for example, a series of addresses given to the Denison No. 1 Branch of the Workers' Political Party by A.G. Waterworth and reported in the *Daily Post*, 4 Jan. 1911, 3, 5-6; *ibid.*, 5 Jan. 1911, 3, 6-7

44 See, for example, *ibid.*, 23 Aug. 1911, 7, 3-4; *ibid.*, 28 Aug 1911, 7, 3-4; *ibid.*, 2 Sept. 1911, 7, 3-4

45 See, for example, *ibid.*, editorial, 27 March 1911, 4, 5; *Critic*, editorial, 12 June 1914, 2, 1-2; *ibid.*, editorial, 19 Dec. 1914, 2, 2; *ibid.*, 22 Sept. 1916, 2, 1

46 *Daily Post*, 11 Nov. 1911, 3, 6

47 *History of the Development of the Curriculum*, *op. cit.*, p. 16

48 *Ibid.*, p. 12

observations, and used drawings for this purpose. Live displays were featured. Drawing, as a separate subject, Garrett stated, had a separate space on the timetable. All drawings were from memory, of actual objects, or from imagination. Flat copies were never used. A variety of media was used: chalk, pencil and brush. Music was included in the curriculum as a compulsory subject, according to Garrett, 'because singing is an instinct with children ... its practice is enjoyable, and ... it is an agreeable change after mental or physical effort'.⁴⁹ Needlework was a compulsory subject for all girls in all grades in the primary school. In addition to needle-work, cookery classes were held for senior girls in Hobart, Launceston, Queenstown, Zeehan, Devonport and Burnie. Children from country schools within reach of these larger centres occasionally visited the centres. Boys in the upper primary grades did manual work while the girls did sewing. Manual work usually included clay modelling, paper folding, cardboard work, gardening and chip carving.

When we come to try to evaluate the development of the practical subjects which were more closely embedded in the progressive ideals, we must consider what inspectors and head teachers considered to be important. Head teachers had a tendency to develop in their schools aspects of the curriculum which most pleased their inspectors. And inspectors concentrated on the basic subject. These were the ones in which the children were examined, the results of which determined a head teacher's or a teacher's skill mark. The children were usually orally examined only, if at all, in the practical subjects. For example, Brockett in his 1916 report devoted only about twenty percent of space to describing achievements in the practical subjects.⁵⁰ Drawing, he reported, was 'usually taken by those teachers who have had special training, and in many schools fine work is shown in brush, modelling and geometrical drawing'.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15

⁵⁰ JPPP, 1917, paper 4, p.p. 23, 24

Brockett was enthusiastic about needlework. He claimed that it continued to improve as teachers' opportunities for training increased. Reviewing the development of the subject over some years, Brockett considered that 'the rise in standard [was] most apparent'.⁵¹ The boys' achievement in manual work was less spectacular for Brockett. He described it as being in a dismal state of development. Gardening of a sort was attempted in some schools; chip carving of inferior quality appeared sometimes; and occasionally he was able to find a limited range of cardboard modelling.

4 Herbart and Pedagogical Science

Perhaps, resulting from the sterile effects of a rigid and uncritical application of the Herbartian method, or perhaps because of the growing rivalry between Germany and England, English educators began to question seriously aspects of the Herbartian method. Prominent among the English critics was John Adams. Soon the Tasmanian educators began to fall into line behind Adams. The period also marked the first signs of a Tasmanian educational literature.

In November 1909 a lead article appeared in the *Record* which critically evaluated German Idealism.⁵² It also assessed the relationship between Herbartianism and Idealism, and particularly the way in which Herbartianism was being translated into teaching methods in German schools. The article was very critical of Herbartianism generally because of its heavy emphasis on method and the way in which it emphasised the prescriptiveness of lesson content. The author declared that what was at issue with Herbartianism was

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24

⁵² E R, 5, 3, Nov. 1909, p.p. 29, 30. The author is not named, but there is little doubt that it was S.O. Lovell who pursued a similar theme in the paper discussed immediately below.

whether the mind should be developed by 'exercise or by instruction' and, the author insisted, that he knew

... of absolutely no thinker of the present day who would not promptly answer that the whole essence of education consists of the exercise of the faculties, not in the filling-in and feeding of the mind through facts and data. Yet the Herbartians fling a decided negative athwart at the stream of modern tendencies; and contend that the whole curriculum of studies which have for object mental culture should also have for object moral culture; that there is no mental growth except by ideas, such as will tell eventually by the community, can be derived only from apperception - the study, through story legend and history, of character on human history; and a study of nature - facts and nature - wonders through the eyes of science.⁵³

The author of the article lent more strongly towards the British Idealists' interpretation of Herbartianism, particularly that brand of Idealism being developed by Adams.⁵⁴ For the author, the truths of apperception were unquestionable. What was wrong with Herbartianism was that it brought too much the stamp of conformity on children, and placed too much emphasis on method, and did not allow enough for an individual child's enquiry through interest.

Lovell continued the same theme of criticism of thorough-going Herbartianism and support for the British Idealism when he responded to Holmes's *What is and What Might Be* in a lengthy address to Hobart teachers.⁵⁵ Holmes certainly was very critical of thorough-going Herbartianism and was strongly influenced by T.H. Green's philosophy.⁵⁶ Lovell maintained that Holmes had written the

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 29

⁵⁴ See particularly, John Adams, *The Herbartian Psychology Applied to Education*, London, 1901

⁵⁵ E.A. Holmes, *What is and What Might Be*, London, 1911

⁵⁶ S.O. Lovell, 'Attainable Ideals in Education', *E R*, 8, 2, July 1912, p.p. 19-22. 8, 3, Aug. 1912, p.p. 37-40

most interesting and the most satisfying book on education that he ever had the privilege to read.⁵⁷ He commended it to all Tasmanian teachers, urging them

... to read it, and re-read it again and again till they get their minds saturated with its educational ideas, aims and principles; and if it does not influence their teaching on the most beneficial lines, then, I am afraid nothing in the way of educational reading will do so.⁵⁸

Lovell seems to have read Holmes's book very closely, understanding Holmes's branch of Idealism very well. Lovell acknowledged Holmes's debt to Mintersburg, who as Professor of Education at Harvard University had espoused a philosophical and psychological theory which had its own shade of Idealism, but which expressed 'the eternal values, the things, that is to say, which have universal worth apart from the desires and interests of the individual'.⁵⁹ Lovell explained how Mintersburg was indebted to Kant and Hegel for his view of Idealism. For Lovell, it was the British interpreters of the German Idealism to which the New Education owed so much for its philosophical direction and purpose. This was so because the British Idealists had shown that 'the aim of education is self-realisation'. Lovell explained that this must be the true aim of education because 'it is the aim and meaning of life itself'. For those who would ask what is 'the self' which is to be realised? Lovell maintained there could be but one answer: 'The self to be realised is the whole composite self -body, mind, and spirit- in all the range of their faculties and potentialities.' Lovell went on to explain how Holmes's book had shown quite convincingly how in the process of self-realisation a person came to understand how 'instincts, desires, powers and aspirations' were developed in an ordered and harmonious, hierarchical order

57 For Holmes's contribution to the new education in Britain and his relationship with British Idealism see Peter Gordon and John White, *Philosophers and Educational Reformers*, London, 1979

58 S.O. Lovell, 'Attainable Ideals ...', *op. cit.*, p. 20

59 *Ibid.*

... ranged on a scale of graduated worth and authority - a graduation which is intuitively revealed to consciousness whenever any of these springs of actions come into competition. At the base is bodily appetency, at the summit is spiritual aspiration - hunger and thirst after righteousness. This then is the supreme ideal of education and the pathway by which it must proceed. To express the same thing in more familiar language, we must say that, 'the function of education is to foster growth'. The end which the teacher must set before himself is the development of the latent powers of his pupils, the unfolding of the latent life.⁶⁰

If the aim of education is growth - free, natural, full, and harmonious - Lovell explained that the impetus for growth must come from within the child. It then followed that the process of education must be in terms of self-education. It must be the teacher's role to provide the ideal learning environment for this life force. Holmes, Lovell maintained, had shown conclusively that children's adjustment to the environment revealed six basic instincts: the communicative instinct, the dramatic instinct, the artistic instinct, the musical instinct, the inquisitive instinct and the constructive instinct. The teacher's role was to provide a learning program which fully provided for these instincts. Lovell then described how Holmes's 'Egeria' had achieved this in her English countryside 'Utopia'. Lovell also was in accord with Holmes's hostility towards orthodox Christianity. This adds to the view that Lovell, and presumably, other Tasmanians of similar ilk, saw in British Idealism much which could fill the vacuum created by the decline of orthodox religion in society.⁶¹

During the period under discussion, at the Training College Johnson, who was responsible for the educational psychology courses, was philosophically very

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the Australian brand of Idealism and the ethical state and its 'secular evangelists', see Tim Rowse, *Australian Liberalism and National Character*, Melbourne, 1978, chaps. 1,2

close to Lovell's position. One states this with some reservation, however, because Johnson committed this thoughts to print only scantily during the period. But there is little evidence to suggest that he moved dramatically from the philosophical position he held in 1912. During that year he delivered a paper to Tasmanian teachers on the subject of children's imagination.⁶² Johnson, in the paper, drew on a source, truly embedded in philosophical Idealism. This was the influential, Welton.⁶³

From the preceding discussion there is almost the suggestion that the Tasmanian teachers escaped the brute formalism of bastardised Herbartianism. This was not so. There is no doubt that the Tasmanian teachers had to know, and had to apply the Herbartian method to progress up the promotional ladder. For example, of the eleven questions set for the Education paper for the Class I certificate, of which eight questions had to be answered, three dealt with Herbartianism.⁶⁴ There is no doubt that Johnson assisted McCoy in the 1910 gazetting of the textbooks which teachers had to master to gain their various certificates.⁶⁵ The textbooks which dealt specifically with educational method were, for the third class certificate, Dexter and Garlick's *Primer of School Method*; for the second class certificate, Raymont's *Principles of Education*; and for the first class certificate, Hayward's *The Student's Herbart*, Adam's *Herbartian Psychology*, and Welton's *Principles and Methods of Teaching*.⁶⁶

62 J.A. Johnson, 'The Training of the Imagination', E R, 8, 1, June 1912, p.p. 3-5

63 James Welton, one time Professor of Education at the University of Leeds, works included, *Principles and Methods of Teaching*, London, 1909, 2nd ed.;, *What Do We Mean By Education*, London, 1918;, with F.G. Blanford, *Principles and Methods of Moral Training*, London, 1909

64 E R, 12, 5, May 1916, p.p. 94, 95: [Question] 4. What do you understand by Perception? by Apperception? Show the relation of Apperception to the 'preparation' step in method. (marks, 15) [Question] 5. What does Adams mean by *Idola Scholarum*? Discuss his point of view. (marks, 10) [Question] 7. Write an appreciation or a criticism of some important point of view put forward by Herbart. (marks, 15)

65 E R, 6, 2, July 1910, p.p. 19, 20

66 F.G. Dexter and A.H. Garlick, *A Primer of School Method*, London, 1905; T. Raymont, *The Principles of Education*, London, 1909; F.H. Hayward, *The Student's Herbart*, London, 1904; John Adams, *The Herbartian Psychology Applied to*

Dexter and Garlick did not touch on the Herbartian method, but the other works all encouraged their readers to be critical of an over zealous application of the method but insisted that its basic principles had to be strictly adhered to. Welton, for example, held a common sense view of Herbartianism. He argued that only the over-enthusiastic Herbartians would try to force every lesson into 'the same cast-iron groove'.⁶⁷ Adams's was the first and most significant British attempt to place Herbartianism philosophically closer to British Idealism, and remove from it the formalism in which it had become entangled. Thus, Johnson and the tests he used for his courses encouraged a critical evaluation of Herbartian method.

The Tasmanian teachers who cared to read the *Record* may have been influenced by what could have appeared to them as being a strong adherence to a formalised Herbartian method by the influential Principal of the Melbourne Teachers' College, John McRae. McCoy had reprinted in the *Record* during later 1909 a lengthy article by McRae on the Herbartian five steps.⁶⁸ McRae opened by pouring scorn on those who would dare criticise the notion of a 'method'. He countered by arguing that Herbart's method was the only method which existed which was 'in full accord with the laws of mind development'. Moreover, its system brought order out of disorder where none, or only inferior methods existed. Another article by a Victorian educator was reprinted in the *Record* during 1914.⁶⁹ Here again, the message was that the Herbartian method was the only method to be used by teachers, and had to be used in all lessons.

Education, London, 1897; James Welton, *Principles and Methods of Teaching*, London, 1909

⁶⁷ James Welton, *Principles and Methods of Teaching*, *op. cit.*, p. 69

⁶⁸ J. McRae, 'The Herbartian Five Steps of Method', *E R*, 5, 6, Nov. 1909, p.p. 74, 5; 5, 7, Dec. 1909, p.p. 78, 80

⁶⁹ J.S. Davis, 'Preparing Notes of Lessons', *E R*, 9, 10, March 1914, p.p. 149, 50, reprinted from *The Teachers Aid*, n.d.

Whereas McRae and others looked to the Herbartian method to bring order and system out of chaos, the method brought rigidity and formalism into educational method in Tasmanian schools. Over-enthusiastic and uncritical exponents of Herbartianism, in their attempt to bring efficiency into curriculum method placed it in a straightjacket of conformity. It has been explained that one of the most pointed examples of the misuse of the Herbartian method was Fennell's, *Notes of Lessons on the Herbartian Method*.⁷⁰ The book has almost two hundred and eighty pages, of which two hundred and seventy are devoted to specimen lessons built up on the model of the five steps. Fennell apparently had not read Herbart's original material too thoroughly, because his presentation of the method is confused, misleading and careless. The steps are outlined incorrectly, the third and fourth steps being confused, and the fifth step, application, being rendered as 'Recapitulation'. This did not prevent the Tasmanian educators recommending the book to Tasmanian teachers as 'an exceedingly helpful book'.⁷¹ The *Record* reprinted many of the lessons during 1910 and 1911.

That the thrust towards a science of education through Herbartian method was achieving its desired end is evidenced by the public response. By 1914 McCoy was being congratulated by the Hobart press for lifting the curriculum to the level of a science.⁷²

⁷⁰ M. Fennell, *Notes of Lessons on the Herbartian Method*, London, 1902

⁷¹ E R, 6, 6, Nov. 1910, p. 90

⁷² *Critic*, editorial, 31 July 1914, 2, 3

5 The Effects of the War on the Curriculum

Inspector G. H. Heritage informed his director at the end of 1917 that the war had caused teachers to rally nobly and enthusiastically to the common cause.⁷³ It was in this spirit that the teachers had been able to generate a new enthusiasm and purpose in the teaching of history and civics. According to Heritage, these brave teachers had cultivated '... an enlightened sympathy, whose bright light shines across the dark shores of war, and represents something retrieved from the debris of our civilisation.' Heritage maintained that the role of history and civics in generating in children a sense of patriotism and citizenship could not be too greatly emphasised. Children were taught '... to appreciate the freedom enjoyed by all who live under the British flag, and the struggle of our forefathers in securing that freedom, and to be ever ready to defend those free institutions which form the bulwark of our national life.' Added to this effect, Heritage went on, was the increased interest and understanding by the Tasmanian children of the physical and social geography of the countries involved in the conflict.

Brockett added that the war had placed another dimension of interest into practical education. School after school sent a regular parcel to the Red Cross Society. It was a 'comparatively common experience' to find girls giving up their recess and lunch breaks in producing the articles for the parcels. Brockett commented that 'knitting, three years ago, threatened to be a lost art; now it is practised everywhere, and in some places even by the boys'.⁷⁴ Practical education was extended in other ways, too. Inspector R.H. Crawford added that in his district boys in many schools had developed garden plots so that the

⁷³ JPPP, 1918, Paper 4, p.p. 17,18

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17

products could be sold to augment local patriotic funds. Other areas of practical education which resulted from the war, according to Crawford was modelling. The military spirit of the age was illustrated in the younger children, 'who when modelling in plasticene (sic.), are anxious to form a gun, a submarine, an aeroplane, or something related to the present-day means of offence and defence'.⁷⁵

By the spring of 1917 some Tasmanians were beginning to think about education and social reconstruction following the war's end. To what extent Tasmanian teachers joined in the debates and discussions is difficult to judge. Certainly, their educational journal, the *Record*, is almost completely lacking any suggestion that Tasmanian educators perceived that schools had a role to play in social reconstruction. Some of those Tasmanians who considered the problem claimed that the stress given by educational authorities to efficiency and standardisation had, in fact, been counter productive. With the stress placed on these elements, the importance of individual development in education counted for less and less, so much so that the education systems did not produce people of diverse development. Thus,

... only rarely is there found the golden teacher who has the faculty and the patient industry, sufficient to bring out of the mind of the pupil that which is latent there to train him to the highest attainment as a sentient or intellectual unit. A schedule of learning is arranged, beginning with the first year of school life and carrying the pupil through to the finish. Each part is standardised, as in each part in some machine which is turned out of a huge factory by hundreds of thousands. Teaching is no longer a matter of individuals - the master and the pupil - it is dealt in wholesale.⁷⁶

Tasmanians were told that the reform of the school curriculum was a necessary part of post-war reconstruction for two reasons. First, the Empire's place in

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.18

⁷⁶ *Mercury* editorial, 16 Sept. 1917, 4, 3-4

international commerce and industry was threatened. The success of German and American industry and commerce was seen as resulting from the level of specialisation that these countries expected from the curriculum in their schools. Tasmanians noted, however, that carried to the extreme, it meant the strictest classification of school children, 'and the adoption of the German principle that the citizen exists for the good of the State'. The *Mercury* preferred a less rigid system which, although it may have produced 'a less efficient machine', it did allow 'for more scope for the realisation of the self'.⁷⁷

The second reason for educational reform lay in the pressures the war was putting on the institutions of democracy. At the centre of these fears was the ugly head of Bolshevism. The *Mercury* maintained that Tasmanians had to recognise that the circumstances of Tasmanian society were now vastly different than when the lines of the existing school curriculum was laid down. The full potential of the English race was as yet unknown, and

... as long as the majority of the people are untaught, uninformed, have untrained minds, and have not developed the faculties dormant in them, no nation is or can be so efficient or so happy and prosperous as it has the capabilities of being.⁷⁸

Tasmanians were told that the British were showing the rest of the world the importance of the role of curriculum reform in post-war reconstruction.⁷⁹ An educational system which had produced such successful men as those of the British nation, and which had caused British men and women alike to behave so splendidly as they had in the great fight for all that was worth preserving in the world could not be very far wrong. But the British people themselves were the first to admit that improvement was still possible. The war, far from preventing reform from being effected, had facilitated it. The *Mercury* enthused that

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, editorial, 25 Jan. 1918, 4, 3-4

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 21 March 1918, 4, 3-4

nothing could be more inspiring for other members of 'the great Empire - Commonwealth' than to note the spirit in which the senior partner approached the great 'after-the-war' problem. The *Mercury* maintained that the recently introduced British Educational Bill, regardless of the children's home environment, would be able to achieve their full potential, thus securing safe their system of democracy.

It was the *Mercury's* opinion that the nature of the curriculum reform must be in the way of clearing the curriculum of traditional subjects such as Latin. New Zealand had shown the way in this respect.⁸⁰ If this 'old and useless lumber' were cleared away there would be more room for 'such special courses of definite practical value as that proposed in the University of Tasmania for commerce and economics'.⁸¹ There would also be room in a school curriculum then for more general instruction in subjects such as art and music, which could lay the foundation for a finer civilisation. People would then be able not only to exercise their general right of being able to choose between demagogues, 'but to exercise real and effective self-government upon enlightened lives.'⁸²

The Workers' Education Association was especially active in Tasmania in propagating the belief that post-war social reform was closely linked with curriculum reform. This was a theme particularly developed at a series of lectures and meetings during the summer of 1917-18 by Meredith Atkinson, Professor of Sociology and Director of Tutorial Classes at the University of Melbourne. The education of democracy was the subject of an address delivered at the University of Tasmania in the middle of December 1917.⁸³ Here Atkinson questioned the effectiveness of the institutions in Australia in

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, editorial, 29 Jan. 1918, 4, 5-6

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 8 Feb. 1918, 4, 5-6

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 13 Dec. 1917, 8, 4

dispersing social justice for all. He said that the W.E.A. sought to develop in Australia through education 'the best conceivable type of man'. He warned his Tasmanian audience that the development of technical and scientific education as a result of the war would not necessarily result in a better democracy for the Australian workers. He explained:

One of the greatest dangers to society to-day was the 'practical man' who always wanted to know what use a thing was going to be, who cared for technical education, and grew impatient when one talked of ideals and humanities, who would rather have cheap clerks than good citizens, and could not understand what the workers are coming to nowadays with all this rot about education, causing nothing but Socialism and industrial unrest. Such a man and such an outlook was a danger to the community.⁸⁴

The same theme was pursued by Atkinson in another lecture in Hobart a week later. This time D.B. Copland, lecturer in economics and history at the University of Tasmania responded by declaring that Atkinson's sentiments were reflected by many in Tasmanian society who sought a better education for their children.⁸⁵ Copland believed that more and more Tasmanians were coming to realise that education was the pathway to self-realisation. The question was, did the schools provide a broad and humanistic education 'that would lead [children] to be at once happy and virtuous?' Copland seriously doubted whether the curriculum provided by Tasmanian state schools could bring about a broad development in children that would be sufficient to lead them as citizens to ameliorate Australia's democratic institutions.

The *Mercury* in an editorial generally praised the substance of the W.E.A. lectures and discussions held in Hobart and Launceston during the summer of

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 22 Feb. 1918, 6, 3

1917-18.⁸⁶ This was a vastly different view than the one it expressed twelve months before, where in an editorial, it poured scorn on the W.E.A., stating that it was out of touch with the aspirations of the mass of Australia's workers.⁸⁷

Many women, in the demand for post-war reconstruction, looked for changes in the school curriculum to improve their own lot. The message from a mainland female educationalist, who in January 1918, had just returned from a twelve months study tour of English schools was printed in the *Mercury*. Here she declared:

A new era is certainly dawning in girls' education, and parents are showing a keenness and anxiety for the girls' progression as never before. They now fully realise that they must grow up educated and efficient citizens, trained to habits of thoroughness, order and accuracy ... In the future education of girls there will be less competition and more consideration for the needs of the individual: teaching will, in fact, be more on Montessori lines. Educationalists now realise that it is fatal to make every girl learn everything.⁸⁸

Later in the interview she indicated what would be the changes in the curriculum for girls in the near future. Her unimaginative response was that girls would receive more domestic science. This seems to have been the common public view of the changes required in the curriculum for girls.⁸⁹ The *Daily Post*, too saw the war exposing an inadequacy *vis-a-vis* the education for girls. In a biting editorial the *Daily Post* contended that the 'totally inadequate' system of educating girls was responsible for the rising number of female suicides, infant mortality and race degeneracy. National efficiency demanded that the curriculum cater more for girl's needs. The *Daily Post* saw the first step toward

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, editorial, 25 Feb. 1918, 4, 3-4

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, editorial, 27 Feb. 1917, 4, 3-4

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 19 Jan. 1918, 11, 6. The educationist was Miss Mallarky, Warden of the Sydney Teachers Training College

⁸⁹ See, for example, *ibid.*, 10 Nov. 1917, 11, 1-2

an improvement in the education for girls coming in the area of domestic economy:

The great importance in domestic training cannot be overestimated in view of its influence on alcoholism, tuberculosis, and infantile mortality, three of the greatest scourges of the civilised world today.⁹⁰

McCoy responded to the social and political pressures for changes in the school curriculum in post-war Tasmania with little heed to the warnings earlier sounded by Atkinson. At the Imperial Hotel in Collins Street, Hobart during a winter's night in 1918 McCoy addressed the local chamber of commerce on the subject of how the Education Department would be responding to the demands for changes in the curriculum.⁹¹ He opened by declaring that the community had a duty to perform to the children in the state. If these children were to inherit an intelligent democracy, a democracy with 'the right standards of life and right conceptions of its civic duties and social obligations, a democracy that could spend its leisure time profitably', a democracy in which the individuals could think for themselves, and not become 'the victims of mass thinking', then Tasmanians must think critically of future directions that their school curriculum might take. McCoy's contribution to such a momentous social change was to outline a new course to be introduced into Tasmanian state high schools, which was to be known as business principles. The course was based on a course developed by the New South Wales Education Department. McCoy predicted that the course would help bring about 'a stabler, more intelligent democracy'. The *Mercury* reported that McCoy's announcement was met with a resounding applause.

⁹⁰ *Daily Post*, editorial, 5 Aug. 1915, 4, 5-6

⁹¹ *Mercury*, 16 July 1918, 8, 3-4

A significant response, for the purposes of our thesis, by McCoy for changes in the curriculum as a result of the call for post-war reconstruction of Australian society came at the 1918 biennial conference of the Australian directors of education, held in Melbourne. The Tasmanian public was told how at the conference an important question was discussed relating to whether or not the present education systems were producing efficient citizens that were needed in a democratic community.⁹² The report stated that class teaching had been developed to a very high pitch of excellence as a means of instruction, but was not in itself an efficient instrument for assisting the development of each child's individuality. The directors agreed that the method of class teaching which dealt with the whole class was particularly unfair to two groups of children: those who were retarded because of psychological or physiological reasons; and intellectually gifted children who were forced to keep pace with the majority of the class. The conference felt that the problem was one of such grave national importance that the attention of all those interested in education should be specially drawn to it.

Back in Tasmania McCoy put it to his teachers that he was so impressed with Peter Board's answer to the problem that he had Board's remedy published in the *Record*, and wanted the Tasmanian teachers to treat it as an instruction. He trusted that an earnest effort would be made 'to so adjust the methods employed in our schools as to give the fullest opportunity for the development of the individuality of each child'.⁹³ Board in his instructions emphasised the need to place individual children rather than the whole class in the focus of the teacher's interest. Board noted that in the past teachers had considered successful class teaching in terms of the class as a whole, and not individual development. Board outlined a scheme to remedy this fault. He proposed that, first, a supply

⁹² *Ibid.*, 17 June 1918, 3, 4-5

⁹³ E R, 14, 7, July 1918, p.p. 102-3

of text-books was required. But he reminded his teachers that the text-books alone did not solve the problem, and that these would not do away with the need for whole class teaching. The second requirement for Board was that the teacher should discover the difficulties that each child was experiencing. He pointed out that while for some children the class lesson was sufficient to gain knowledge, for others, it was not. The latter group of children required individual assistance. It was the teacher's responsibility to find these children, and during the period of the day that Board proposed should be set aside for individual study from the text-books, the teacher should assist the children who were experiencing difficulties.

McCoy's advocacy of Board's scheme, of course, was first an unconscious admission by him that the formalised and stereotyped neo-Herbartian teaching methodology which he had been propagating for almost a decade had surely failed to assist many individual children in their learning. Secondly, Board's scheme assumed that there would be sufficient textbooks available, and presumably at various levels of difficulty to cater for the various ability groups in the class. Thirdly, Board seems to have thought of the difficulties that children may have been experiencing in terms of the amount of knowledge that they had missed out on gaining. He did not suggest to teachers the remedies for the various physiological or psychological problems which may have prevented the children from learning.

The first annual conference for Tasmanian state school teachers after the war gave an indication of the influences of the war on the curriculum. A spokesman from the Temperance Alliance spoke at the meeting.⁹⁴ He began by linking the Temperance Movement with the broader ideals of the eugenic movement, and

⁹⁴ *Mercury*, 4 July 1919, 5, 3-6

went on to explain that prohibition was the ideal of the Temperance Alliance. This could only be achieved through the education of the children in the schools. Copland addressed the teachers and implored them to join the W.E.A. to enrich the rank-and-file of its membership, and to ensure that teachers' socio-political values were embedded in the values of the W.E.A.

The *Mercury* in reviewing the achievement of the teachers conference in a lengthy editorial described the most important role of the teachers in post-war reconstruction. The editorial left no doubt what the real role of the school curriculum was in these turbulent times:

We cannot afford, no Australian State can afford, to have our schools converted into agencies for making Bolsheviks or citizens of any other class that will be prejudicial to the best interests of Australia. All over the world this question of the fruit to be borne by the trees we plant is being looked at in a different way from ever before. Who does not realise in his or her own case the extreme and lifelong importance of the impressions made upon the mind in the early years. If we want people to grow up in our country to give us trouble in the future, citizens who will be anti-Australian, anti-British, anti-religious, anti-moral, anti-industrious, insubordinate, quarrelous, unsteady, lazy, violent, reckless, led by extremists, led by people who hypnotise them or govern them through ignorant fears and silly theories that happiness is always to be in the next world and not this - then we can produce such people easily enough by means of our schools and the teachers our deputed authorities place in them.⁹⁵

With the Armistice only months behind them the Tasmanian public was reminded that the English speaking races were, according to the *Mercury*, characterised by an inborn love of sport, and had played a mighty game in the overthrow of militarism in Europe.⁹⁶ Similar views had been expressed in

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 3 July 1919, 4, 4-5

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 17 March 1919, 5, 7

Sydney.⁹⁷ Tasmanians also were reminded that the nations which practised collective disciplinary sports and pastimes, and which personal initiative, combined with organised movement, were responsible for conquering the Germans, whose recreations had mainly been mechanical and gymnastic in style. Of course, it is difficult to ascertain how widely accepted this view was in Tasmania, but it was used as a premise by the *Mercury* to argue that children's practice in organised games and modes of progress such as walking, running and swimming should be increased in state schools.

At the time of the *Mercury* article on sport, Lieutenant Colonel Christian Bjelke-Petersen, now inspector of physical training for the Australian Defence Department was visiting Hobart.⁹⁸ He was the first to occupy the position which had been created after the 1909 national conference on school cadet corps. Bjelke-Petersen stated that apart from the great number of unfit in Australia there were related problems of national efficiency and health. He did not see the huge profits being made by companies producing drugs and medicines as a national curse, but rather the Australians' general lack of physical fitness which caused them to take the drugs and medicines as the problem. A related problem, according to him, was that of venereal disease. He saw increased organised sport and physical education in the state school curriculum as a remedy for the overall problem of the unfit. The *Mercury* in a stinging editorial endorsed everything which Bjelke-Petersen had said.⁹⁹

97 Geoffrey Sherington, 'Athleticism in the Antipodes: the AAGPS of New South Wales', *History of Education Review*, 12, 2, 1983, 16-28

98 *Ibid.*, 13 March 1919, 2, 6-7

99 *Ibid.*, editorial, 31 March 1919, 4, 5-6

6 Tasmania's Brand of Progressive Education

As was the case during Neale's directorship the values of Darwinism, temperance and thrift which were associated with progressivism affected the Tasmanian primary school curriculum. Indeed, the war heightened their affect. Further aspirations and values which were associated with progressivism and which influenced the curriculum were eugenics and nationalism. The move to have sex education included in the curriculum came from supporters of eugenics. Nationalism, with its associated call for national efficiency, was intensified during the war and influenced the development of the curriculum in Tasmanian state primary schools.

The curriculum under McCoy's directorship became firmly cemented in the tradition of scientific progressive education. We have seen how McCoy's educational administration took a decided step towards scientific management, with its associated quest for efficiency and examinations. Scientific progressive education which was systematically geared towards efficiency and examinations well supplemented McCoy's system of educational administration.

McCoy was well in tune with the public cry for a curriculum which, while being progressive took into account the Tasmanian school's particular circumstances. McCoy needed to bring about change from within. We have argued that at the beginning of McCoy's directorship the vast majority of teachers had not progressed beyond Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development. McCoy's 1910 curriculum emphasised the three R's. It was extremely systematised and formalised. Moreover, it was mainly borrowed from New South Wales where it had been well tried. McCoy drew heavily on curriculum support material from Victoria. With the appointment of Tasmanian

curriculum supervisors the same emphasis was maintained, except that now the support was closer and more personalised for the Tasmanian teachers. In contrast to Neale's brand of progressive education, the curriculum became very stable, predictable and understandable. Through McCoy's administrative measures of examinations and efficiency marks, teachers knew exactly how they were performing in delivering the curriculum. Moreover, they were rewarded for their efficiency through the efficiency mark.

We have seen how the Tasmanian teachers were becoming professionalised, and thus more competent to deliver efficiently the curriculum. The close accord between the teachers' union and the department was a necessary part of the professionalisation, because in a sense it established a dependency by the teachers on the system: the more teachers became professionalised and delivered the curriculum according to the department's wishes, the more they were rewarded, but in turn became increasingly dependent upon the education system. Scientific progressive education when coupled with a scientific system of administration, nurtured teachers who were as predictable and conservative as the curriculum they taught. As teachers progressed towards Beeby's Stage of Formalism they became increasingly the unthinking instruments of the will of the state. In a sense this is the very antithesis of what Neale sought back in 1905 when he asked teachers to realise that nature study was as much a body of knowledge as an attitude or way of understanding the world. No system could ever be prescribed for the teaching of the subject.

Further evidence of the professionalisation of the Tasmanian state primary teachers came with the publication of local educational literature. Its emphasis on neo-Herbartianism is evidence that the Tasmanian teachers' primary concern was to master a highly systematised educational method. At every step

Tasmanian teachers cemented scientific progressive education into their education system.

While Tasmanian teachers had become very efficient in the method of whole class teaching, they were failing to stimulate individual development. McCoy understood this when he returned from the 1918 biennial conference of Australia's directors of education. Clearly, McCoy's directorship had brought the Tasmanian teachers to Beeby's Stage of Formalism in educational development.

CHAPTER 5

Early Childhood Education

The first two decades of the twentieth century witnessed the development of early childhood education in Tasmania. Particularly the development of child-centered progressive education which stood in stark contrast to the scientific progressive education of the primary grades in the state schools. The development of child-centred progressive education began with the establishment of kindergartens.

1 Neale's 1904 Report

According to Neale's 1904 report early childhood education did not exist in Tasmania at that date. His report provides an insight into the existing conditions of infant education in the state and his conceptions of infant education. It is surprising that Neale did not mention in his report anything about Froebellian-Quincy teaching methods. By 1904 these methods were gaining strength in the armament of the progressive educators and Neale certainly had written on their virtues much in the past.¹ Neale restricted himself to being especially critical of the principles and practices employed in infant education in the state: that is of the education of children of seven and eight years of age. He was particularly critical of the way in which the infant grades generally were used to accommodate slow learners. Of the 18 550 children in Tasmanian state schools 5 528 were in grade 1 during 1903. This group ranged in age from 69 four year olds to 19 fourteen year olds.²

¹ Brian Perkis, William Lewis Neale..., *op. cit.*, chap. 4

² Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 33

Neale did not mention the need for kindergartens in his report, nor did he describe the ideal educational climate of infant classes. He did, however, lay down some principles to be followed in the infant grades. Here it is not possible to tease out any distinct trace of Froebel's educational philosophy. Neale's scheme was typically an Australian and, specifically, a South Australian interpretation of progressive education, a blending of its diverse elements in accordance with the Australian experience. Herbart was undoubtedly the educational theorist who was most influential. The development of the tool subjects was of central importance, but concrete and activity-based learning experience, integration of subject matter, the use of creative and manual activities, and the exploration of the child's immediate environment were all a necessary part of the development of the child's many-sided nature.

Drawing, Neale insisted, should be made a special feature in the infant grades. The course should embrace a variety of media and techniques, and should include copies of real life objects as well as drawings from memory. Creative drawing had little scope in Neale's scheme, but he did maintain that the subject was of great value for the child's full development because it enriched the aesthetic side of the child's psychological makeup, as well as involving activity-based activities. Manual work was closely related to drawing in educational value for the same reasons. Here activities should include 'paper folding and cutting, clay modelling, plaster work, cardboard modelling, needlework of various types and brushwork'.³

Neale then, in 1904 at least, saw infant education as lying within the same philosophy and method as primary education. His report concentrated on the development of the efficiency of the methods employed at this level. His

3 *Ibid.*, p. 41

emphasis, however, on children's manual activities was an indication to future developments in infant education under his regime.

2 The Free Kindergarten Movement in Tasmania

A *Daily Post* article during 1908 on how progressive parents should allow children to develop naturally insisted:

It is worse than cruel, it is a crime to crush the childhood out of any life, to suppress the fun-loving instinct, which is as natural as breathing, for no wealth or luxuries in later life can compensate for the loss of one's childhood ... Suppression of the fun-loving nature of a child means the suppression of its mental faculties. The mind will not develop normally under abnormal conditions. There is evidence in a child's nature that play is as necessary to its normal, complete development as food, and if the fun-loving faculties are suppressed, the whole nature will be strangled, its expression stifled. Play is as necessary to the perfect development of a child as sunshine is to the perfect development of a plant. The childhood that has no budding and flowering, or only a partial unfolding of its petals, will have nothing but gnarled and pinched fruitage.⁴

Gardiner has argued that the development of kindergartens in Melbourne during the 1890's was linked closely with the growing awareness of the detrimental affects which urban life had on children.⁵ This was also the case in Hobart during the first decade of the twentieth century.

One of the first expressions of the need for free kindergartens in Tasmania came at the annual conference of the National Council of Women held in Hobart during June 1905.⁶ Next to motions dealing with the housing of the poor and moral lessons in schools, Mrs Mather, wife of Thomas Mather, committee member of the Hobart Friend's School, moved a motion for the establishment

⁴ *Daily Post*, 4 June 1908, 5, 6

⁵ Lyndsey Gardiner, *The Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria 1908-80*, *op. cit.*, p. 2

⁶ *Mercury*, 20 June 1905, 2, 3-5

of free kindergartens in Hobart. Mather centred the free kindergarten movement in the movements of social hygiene and national efficiency. Her motion urged:

That this meeting agrees that it is advisable to institute free kindergartens in the city as a means for instructing the poor children (from two or three years of age) in habits of cleanliness, purity, industry and self-respect.⁷

Mather reminded her audience that in Sydney there were eight free kindergartens. In Froebel House in Sydney there were eighteen students being trained for 'this good and noble work'. At Froebel House, Mather enthused, female students were developing all the attributes of character that made a noble woman. They were being trained to recognise the fact that with the new duties and responsibilities which came with the franchise, there was a need for much larger ideals, 'for a loftier conception of an intelligent, strong, capable, and self-disciplined, loving, generous, gracious womanhood'. But this entailed more than just ordinary accomplishments:

To educate and train the home-makers of a nation was the shortest and surest pathway to the prosperity and well-being of a nation. When one thought of the hundreds of misunderstood, ill-treated, beaten, starved, love-hungry little ones, there would seem to be ample excuse for the citizens to establish and support kindergartens in every quarter of the city. Kindergartens were the surest preventive to lives of crime. It was a trite saying that to form was better than to reform, but the forming process must begin at the very beginning. It was just as much the duty of a nation, and as greatly to the public interest, to educate its embryo citizens from three to six as from six to sixteen. It had been said that the prevention of crime was the duty of society, that society had no right to punish crime at one end of it if it did nothing to prevent it at the other end. Society's chief concern should be to remove causes from which crime sprang, it being as much a duty to prevent as to punish crime. The kindergarten was the preventive at the one end, which made punishment less necessary at the other.⁸

The seconder of the motion spoke of the kindergartens she had seen in Berlin, declaring that 'she had never seen happier children in her life'. Mrs Dobson, a

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

remarkable bourgeois philanthropist and wife of the senator, also spoke of the German kindergarten. For Dobson the German kindergartens had helped purify the nation and generated the strong nationalist sentiment that existed in that nation.

Support for the free kindergarten movement in Hobart as a result of the National Council of Women's Conference came quickly. One correspondent to the *Mercury*, declaring his support for the motion, added that the growth of cities rendered the establishment of kindergartens imperative. The correspondent wanted due regard paid to ventilation and sanitation in the kindergarten building. These factors '... keep the little ones in the best possible health, despite crowded homes, deficient food, and many other deterrents.'⁹

Public enthusiasm for the establishment of free kindergartens in Hobart was sustained throughout 1905. In August of that year Miss Frances Newton, Principal of Sydney's Froebel House, contributed a lengthy article in the *Mercury*, describing the virtues of kindergartens.¹⁰ Newton espoused the Quincy interpretation of Froebel's kindergartens. She had trained in the Chicago schools under Francis Parker and had come directly under John Dewey's influence.¹¹ Under Newton's guidance the kindergarten movement in Australia embraced the progressive ideals. She explained in her *Mercury* article that the value of kindergartens must be considered from a social and industrial point of view. She went on to argue that

... no State can afford to neglect one little child, or he immediately becomes a menace. It is not only the number, but the value of the units that counts when reckoning wealth, either in money or men. Furthermore, real love of one's country means faith in its future

⁹ *Ibid.*, correspondence, 22 June 1905, 2, 8

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 Aug. 1905, 3, 1-2

¹¹ Mary L. Walker, *The Development of Kindergartens in Australia*, unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, Uni. of Sydney, 1964, chap. 5

greatness, and a sense of personal responsibility, a conscious purposeful sort of service to that end.¹²

Newton explained that because of the economic value of kindergartens, businessmen had joined hands in the United States in support of them. She reassured readers:

These are all hard-headed businessmen, and not sentimentalists; they are investing in the future for the sake of their business, as well as for their country and humanity; they are keen enough to see that the welfare of one is the welfare of the other.¹³

From 1906 to 1908 the call for the establishment of a free kindergarten in Hobart came from groups such as the National Council of Women and the National Society for the Protection of Children.¹⁴ Still, there was no free kindergarten in Tasmania. The government, however, was beginning to respond to the public demand. The Minister for Education, Propsting, following a tour of major educational institutions in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney, returned to Hobart full of praise of the work being done in the free kindergartens in these cities.¹⁵ He also had the foresight to connect the work being done in these institutions with the educational programs in the state run infant schools in these cities.

3 Neale's Account of Froebel/Quincy Methods

If the progressive ideals of the Quincy interpretation of Froebelian education philosophy were not expressed by Neale in his report of 1904, it is not surprising that these ideals were soon expressed by Tasmania's new director of education. These ideals were quickly gaining currency in the mainland states. They were, moreover, particularly attractive to the educational messiah because

¹² *Mercury*, 7 Aug. 1905, 3, 1-2, *op. cit.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ For example, see, *ibid.*, 16 Feb. 1906, 8, 2-3; *ibid.*, 19 Feb 1906, 3, 1-3; *ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1908, 7, 6

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 20 May 1908, 5, 2-3

of their emphasis on the spiritual salvation of the young child through the ordered arrangement of the physical environment.

'We must not forget', Neale reminded his teachers in 1907, 'that a vicious theory has dominated our public school system.'¹⁶ He was asking them to consider a view of education which held that for education to be effective, then it must hurt spiritually, mentally and physically. Moreover, proponents of this type of education held that for education to be attractive was both dangerous and delusive.

For Neale, this form of education simply drove children from school prematurely. For ever afterwards, they would look back upon their school life with hatred and disgust. He asked his teachers to imagine the wretched life spent by young children in infant rooms twenty years before. For Neale, the constant and senseless drill and *ex cathedra* teaching methods did not produce mental alertness, 'but numbed brains and aching limbs'. Certainly there was no thirst for knowledge or sense of excitement about the school being a learning environment.

Now, Neale enthused, 'the watchword is normal activity under kind and judicious guidance'. The parent and the school could afford no longer to be pulling in opposite directions, in a state of antagonism. Each must complement the other. Above all the school must generate those humane attributes of caring and sharing. 'The school must become the abode of peace, where forces are at

¹⁶ E R, 3, 5, Aug. 1907, p.p. 61, 62. The article seems to have been written by Neale: it has his robust style. The article was inspired by two books recently published in Melbourne: John Smyth, *A Guide to a Modern Infant Room*, Melbourne, n.d.; and C.R. Long (ed.) *Record and Review...*, *op. cit*. The former work is by the principal of the Melbourne Training College, and is an Australian interpretation of the Froebel/Quincy method; the second book includes examples of the application of Froebel/Quincy methods in Victorian state schools.

work to produce an ideal State system.¹⁷ The school must be in harmony with the child's natural development.

By 1907 Neale was writing at length on the progressive interpretation of Froebel's philosophy. Significantly, for Neale, both Froebel and Parker conceived of their philosophy and methods during campaigns of war: Froebel fighting for Prussia during the 1812-1813 campaigns; and Parker fifty years later fighting for the Union against the Confederacy.¹⁸ Froebel's inspiration came from his great master, Pestalozzi. Both had in common a great love of children. Pestalozzi broke from traditional methods by basing his methods on the use of things and ideas of interest to children, rather than words. As Neale put it, 'words, words, meaningless words were torture to the learner'. But Neale pointed out that Froebel advanced beyond this conception. When Froebel was faced with the problem of what to teach, and how to teach it his starting point was directly based upon an understanding of the child. Neale encouraged his readers to recognise this affinity between progressive ideals and Froebel's educational philosophy.

Froebel saw the child as being an earthly manifestation of God, untainted by the sins of civilization. Neale's interpretation of Froebel's philosophy was:

Everything comes from God; the child is a pledge of the presence of the goodness, the love of God; he yields himself from his earliest years to justice, to right, and to truth; in other words he is struggling to realise the intention of his being.¹⁹

Neale was in accord with Froebel in holding that education, at its most profound level of understanding, sought to assist the child towards these ends.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ E R, 3, 8 Oct. 1907, p.p. 97, 98

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 97

Neale wanted his teachers to accept Froebel's belief that children's instincts are God-given. It was the teachers' role to base their methods on this belief. Thus, education was essentially the process of liberty and spontaneity. Neale here invoked the plant metaphor to explain:

The child grows like the oak tree, from its own divine vitality. Life is but one in all its phases, and education ministers to the roundness and completeness of the whole.²⁰

Neale explained that because each child was unique in its own development, the teacher must have a better knowledge of the child he is teaching than the subject being taught.

From this level of understanding, Neale was able to interpret for his teachers the place which Froebel's kindergartens had in progressive education. He recognised that Froebel had borrowed the idea of the kindergarten from Comenius. As a reflection on Parker's work, but maybe on his own work, or to stimulate his teachers, he argued that 'the genius who borrows "is more original than his originals."²¹ The kindergarten substituted the rote methods for a sympathetic and supportive learning program and classroom environment. Children were nurtured to produce the flower and the fruit that their creator intended it to produce. For Neale, 'children are delicate shoots to be carefully shielded, watered and nourished'.²² All tension and tedious methods had to be abolished. Froebel, from close observation of children, Neale went on, sought to develop their natural aptitude for play. He therefore organised play as the natural foundation of the children's garden. Children loved to work in mud and clay; hence clay modelling. Children loved to build and construct; hence the provision for materials for these needs. Music and rhythmic games are natural

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 98

impulses for young children, thus songs and rhythmic games became an essential part of the kindergarten. Neale then asked:

Can you imagine anyone brought up in the infant school, as Froebel outlined it, growing up selfish, useless men and women? The conception constitutes a revolution in education, which carried out as its founder intended, would revolutionise the whole of life and conduct.²³

Neale alerted his readers to something Tennyson had said: 'Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.' Neale was not suggesting that Tennyson was referring to Froebel's Gifts when he penned this famous phrase, but to the progressive educators of the early twentieth century this was an apt warning. Neale asserted, 'surely the sacred name of "kindergarten" has been a cloak for more solemn tomfoolery than any other catchword in education'.²⁴ He insisted that in other places teachers were attempting to use Froebel's Gifts without any conception of their philosophical meaning. We will see that Amy Rowntree, later, would use Tennyson's words to express the same sentiment.

Neale also later took up the theme of the missionary spirit of the progressive kindergarteners.²⁵ He declared that progressive educational systems the world over were searching for kindergarten teachers. They had a value of national importance. The state which could acquire women imbued with Froebel's spirit would have its social efficiency vastly enhanced. Kate Douglas Wiggin, Colonel Parker's student, and by 1907 a widely read exponent of the kindergarten methods, provided for Neale, an apt description of the necessary character of these women:

The ideal teacher of little children needs strength and delicacy. She needs a child's heart, a woman's heart in one; she needs a clear insight and oversight, the buoyancy

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.* E R, 3, 8, Oct. 1907, p. 98, *op. cit.*

²⁵ E R, 3, 8, Oct. 1907, p. 98, *op. cit.*

of hope, the serenity of faith, and the tenderness of patience. The hope of the world lies in the children.²⁶

Neale took direct steps to develop the ideals of the kindergarten in the Tasmanian Education Department at the beginning of 1906. Of the seven young teachers selected for a year's training in mainland pre-service institutions, one young woman was sent to Froebel House in Sydney for specialist kindergarten training. Moreover, Neale was able to report at the end of 1906 that 'a few good' infant teachers had been obtained. He considered, however, that many more were necessary, because improvements in the infant classes was 'the only hope of complete success in the future'.²⁷ During the three day school of instruction held at Launceston during September 1906 Miss E. Roberts, a lecturer at Froebel House, spoke to the Tasmanian teachers on the principles and practices of the kindergarten and how these may be applied 'to ordinary preparatory class work'.²⁸

4 Neale's Preparatory Class Curriculum and the Development of Early Childhood Education

In August of his first year as director Neale issued a curriculum for the preparatory class: that is, children of six or seven years of age. It was the first attempt to systematically deal with infant education in the state. Neale did not insist that the course be immediately taken up by teachers, although, he did encourage this. He reported to his minister at the end of 1905:

A premature insistence upon a liberal curriculum would only result in mechanical and imitative work and not education. Initiative and individuality in the teachers must be secured before there can be any hope of development of the best in the child.²⁹

²⁶ *Ibid.* The quotation from Kate Douglas Wiggin is unreferenced.

²⁷ JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 4

²⁸ E R, 2, 7, Oct. 1906, p. 89

²⁹ E R, 1, 5, Aug. 1905, p. 51

Neale did, however, insist that the curriculum be fully implemented following the inspector's annual visit to the school.

We have seen that Neale's brand of progressive education was a blending of the scientific with the child-centred. This was also the case in Neale's Preparatory grade curriculum. The course was no doubt influenced by Neale's South Australian experience, but it should also be seen as the first attempt to introduce into the infant grades the ideals of progressive education, and in particular Colonel Parker's interpretation of Froebel's educational philosophy. Yet, the curriculum was based on Herbartian methodology. For example, Neale reminded teachers that the success of any lesson depended on a thorough 'application' of the content.

Nor did Neale's curriculum escape the assumptions of faculty psychology. The very inclusion of such content as poetry, sacred history and moral lessons indicated that Neale believed the lessons learnt from the content of these lessons could be transferred to another faculty of the child's mind, thus rendering the child a better citizen. Significantly the first subject detailed in the new curriculum was sacred history and moral lessons. It was the teacher's role to present a story, without reading it, but with an ample presentation of pictures. The story had to be short and highly attractive, thus being attuned to the children's span of concentration.

The importance of language development was stressed in the new curriculum. Neale insisted that the development of language power in itself was not of paramount value for the progressive educator, but rather teachers should remember 'that [the] expression of thought completes it and gives possession of

it'.³⁰ Neale stated that the subject need not appear separately on the timetable. Language, however, belonged to every lesson; the aim being a clear and accurate enunciation of thought.

Neale told the Tasmanian teachers that the Education Department would produce reading sheets and primers for practical use in the classroom. The old alphabetic method of teaching reading was to be discarded; the methods outlined by Parker would be used. These methods were not phonic, but rather emphasised the teaching of the whole word, a method which presupposed a 'picture thinking' by the child. As in his report Neale insisted that the phonic method was valuable only as an auxiliary. Neale was emphatic that schools should set about raising money through activities such as concerts, so that they might be able to procure the many beautifully illustrated children's books which were beginning to be issued by the large publishing firms.

The 'occupations' or manual training section of the new curriculum was directly inspired by the Froebel-Quincy educational philosophy, as the nomenclature suggests. Under this subject children engaged in such activities as outlining in coloured wool, paper-cutting and folding, mat-weaving, clay modelling, sand-tray work and cardboard sewing.

We have seen that Neale wrote at length on the need to make nature study non-prescriptive in content for the primary grades: the ideal being to generate in children a feeling for nature and a development of an appreciation of the spiritual aspect of nature study. For Neale, this too, was essential in the preparatory grade. The subject needed to be correlated with manual activities.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 50

At the beginning of 1906 when Lucien Dechaineux was appointed as Art Master of the Education Department he issued a drawing curriculum for the preparatory grade and grade 1.³¹ The course encompassed spontaneous drawing, drawing from nature, ambidextrous drawing, geometrical drawing, modelling and brushwork. An introduction to the course, Dechaineux acknowledged Lloyd Morgan's influence on the structure and method of the course.³² There was little scope for encouraging individual children's creativity: the basis of the course entailed the imparting of skills, repetition and imitation. As one would expect with a book published in the 1890's, the work had strong Darwinist tenets, and it was also a captive of faculty psychology. Dechaineux chose the following quotation from Lloyd Morgan's work to establish the basis of his curriculum:

Now a great deal of early education is concerned with the imparting of skill, and I think that it is no exaggeration to say that, so far as this is concerned, an ounce of demonstration is worth many pounds of description. We build here upon the natural faculty of imitation. We must show the child how a skill is to be performed and get him to imitate it.³³

When one searches for an indication of qualitative growth in early childhood educational methods during Neale's directorship, one must look to the methods employed in the teaching of language. The rising influence of the phonic method of teaching reading and spelling in the infant grades during the first decade of the twentieth century reflected the decline in the belief in 'picture thinking' psychology. The phonic method entailed the breaking down of words into their phonetic parts, and the children starting to learn to read and spell by learning the sounds of letters. This method negated the belief represented by

31 Lucien Dechaineux, 'The Drawing Course Preparatory Class and Class 1', *E R*, 1, 5, Aug. 1905, p. 51

32 C. Lloyd Morgan, *Psychology for Teachers*, London, 1894

33 Lucien Dechaineux, 'The Drawing Course ...', *op. cit.*, p. 50. The quotation from Lloyd Morgan is unreference.

the progressive educators such as Neale and Long, that the whole word had a 'power' which imprinted itself on the mind. Neale's attitude to the phonic method changed. He had published in the May 1906 a reprint of an article by Miss Martha Simpson, infant mistress of Tamworth Infant School, New South Wales, from the *New South Wales Educational Gazette*.³⁴ This was the beginning of a long and influential association between Simpson and the Tasmanian infant schools.

In the article, Simpson argued for the thorough-going use of the phonic method to teach reading. The visionary Simpson predicted:

The girl pupil teacher in the Infants' School will no doubt in the future be replaced by women of thought and culture, and then we may perhaps bear out the truth of Col. Parker's statement: 'Teach the child aright for the first four years, and then all formal lessons in reading and writing can be stopped.'³⁵

She argued from James's psychology for the need of first-hand experiences in association with the teaching of reading through the phonic method in infant grades. Simpson stated James had argued that an object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists. Thus, Simpson contended that, for example, if a teacher was going to teach the word 'cat', rather than have the children tediously sound the letters making up the word, the teacher should let the children handle a cat while sounding the letters.

Neale's conception of teaching language to early childhood classes changed during his three years on the island. Responding to the Launceston exhibition of

34 M.M. Simpson, 'In the Infant School - Reading', *E R*, 2, 2, May 1906, p.p. 22, 23. For a history of Martha Simpson's contribution to early childhood education in Australia see Mary L. Walker, *The Development of Kindergarten in Australia*, *op. cit.* and R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians: M.M. Simpson and L. de Lissa* in C. Turney (ed.) *Pioneers of Australian Education*, vol. 3, *op. cit.*

35 M.M. Simpson, 'In the Infant School - Reading', *op. cit.*, p. 22

state school work in January 1908, he wrote in relation to the phonic method of teaching reading that this was 'the only rational one in the early stages of teaching reading'.³⁶ Neale's purpose was to publicise the progressive methods being developed in the Queenstown school by J.F. Jones, who was later to become an inspector. Neale explained that Jones had 'several original items that proved most attractive to those who thronged to the exhibition'. Here at Queenstown graphical work was receiving special attention from the infant grades upwards. There was a variety of illustrations of this, but it was Jones's 'picture letters' as an aid to the teaching of reading in the infant grades which attracted most attention amongst the teachers and public.

Neale contended that it was recognised by all exponents of the new education that the most successful method was the one which had grown out of personal ideals, and which had a personal enthusiasm behind it:

A method that one teacher finds to be supremely successful often becomes a stumbling block in the path of the imitator ... the good teacher takes all methods to be his province, but he must become slave to none. He must exercise that originality of mind that breathes life into the dead bones.³⁷

Neale insisted that conservatism in school work meant death; and every teacher had to be an idealist and a non-conformist. Nothing was more certain, for Neale, than that there was no absolute educational philosophy or method. All methods were relative to a teacher's own determined purpose; and that purpose must grow from an appreciation of the child. Jones's 'picture letters' as an aid to the teaching of reading fulfilled these ideals.

Jones's method, Neale observed, was based on a child's psychological needs. Neale offered a Jamesian explanation of how an 'average child' of five years of

³⁶ E R, 3, 3, Feb. 1908, p.p. 129, 130

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129

age had a mind stored with an immense number of experiences and impressions. As an infant, the child began with its mind as a blank. The first impressions it received came slowly, and were produced only by constant presentation and representation of stimuli. These impressions, once established, assisted in the interpretation of others, and these, in turn, of others; and thus knowledge accumulated in ever-increasing volume. Thus, effective learning required that the teacher move from the known to the unknown. If a teacher provided learning experiences that did not take into account a child's previous experience, and which did not have any intrinsic appeal, then there could be 'no hold'. 'The mind, true to habit, searches for some analogy, or some kindred sensation, and, finding none, its activities are paralysed.'³⁸ Neale contended that this was so under the old alphabetic method of teaching reading. Jones's 'picture letters' illustrated the ideals of the modern infant room. Here the learning of sounds was a delight to the children. The children were able to look at a picture, sound the word which represented it, and then hear interesting stories in relation to it.

Neale's conception of early childhood education may have been influenced by Johnson when he was appointed the principal of the training college. Johnson was supportive of child-centred progressive education in the infant grades. An example of Johnson's concept of the Froebel/Quincy methods can be judged from the address he gave to the Royal Society during the winter of 1906.³⁹ In his address he placed the modern kindergartens in the perspective of progressive education. He explained that the child study movement had done much to popularise modern kindergartens. An intelligent blending of kindergarten and Quincy methods had led to a revolution in infant schools, and should have meant the end to much of the 'mystical nonsense' that gathered

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130

³⁹ J.A. Johnson, 'The New Education', *op. cit.*

round the 'gifts'. Johnson paid credit to Parker's role in vitalising Froebel's kindergarten methods, but much of the credit, for Johnson, must rest with 'the divine vitality of the hundreds of infant mistresses who are quietly and unostentatiously performing the noblest work in the profession'. Johnson went on to show how the 'blunders of the past' where immature pupil teachers had been put to train infant classes, had been righted by the present practice whereby 'the best and most sympathetic women in the service are ... secured for this work'.

Other than the influences from the mainland which we have already alluded to a strong influence on the development of early childhood education in Tasmania came from her nearest neighbour. Frank Tate's Victorian education system provided another significant example for the Tasmanian progressive educators. Dr J. Smyth, Principal of the Melbourne Teachers College had earlier published *A Guide to a Modern Infant Room*.⁴⁰ Neale asked all his teachers to read this work.⁴¹ He wrote that a study of this work would illustrate that the infant classroom is the 'cornerstone of the primary school system'. Should the aims and methods be wrong here, 'the most earnest effort in after years will fail to remedy the early defects'. The ideal infant room provided an environment that was simply an extension of the home. Indeed, here 'many of the pupils are introduced to conditions better than their homes can provide'.

Smyth also described one of the Victorian model infant rooms in the *Souvenir Book* of the state school exhibition held in Melbourne during 1906.⁴² Neale published the methods described in the book at length. Gone were

the closely packed galleries of olden days, the long uncomfortable desks, the poor appliances, and the

⁴⁰ John Smyth, *A Guide to a Modern Infant Room*, *op. cit.*

⁴¹ E R, 3, 5, Aug. 1907, p.p. 61, 62

⁴² Charles R. Long (ed.), *Record and Review ...*, *op. cit.*, p 35

insufficient open spaces ... and, in their place, you have comfortable dual desks, decorated walls, open spaces, and plenty of fresh air and light.⁴³

Neale explained to his Tasmanian teachers that the long, single rooms, inspired by traditional church architecture had been replaced by a series of classrooms surrounding a central hall, and enclosed by large glass screens. Here the infant mistress could supervise the teachers and children without entering a room. Around the central hall, at children's height blackboards were placed, so that at different times during the day whole classes could move freely and give vent to their expression. Above the blackboards in the central hall there were shelves upon which ferns, plants, aquaria, terraria, collections of shells and objects of nature, to inspire nature talks, reading, or language lessons. Above the shelves were pictures of educational value. Along one wall there were sand-trays, sufficient in size for forty children at a time to work. In one corner there was an aviary.

Neale paraphrased Smyth's description of a typical day in the Model infant room. The morning began with the children marching into the classroom from the central hall. Once inside, and without direction, they gathered around the teacher. Whether by teacher initiative or child initiative, a conversation began; and this led into a game. There was a complete absence of 'all awkward restraint'; all children expressed themselves freely, but there was 'instant obedience to the will of the teacher'. Another class might be involved in a nature study lesson. Here each child had a specimen; and all children had before and after school been observing the plant or animal life being studied. At their own level there was an intensity of observation and discussion, and hence language development, because the children were intrinsically motivated in their work.

43 E R, 3, 5, Aug. 1907, *Op. cit.* p. 61

Need the formalist or traditionalist worry about the 'three R's?' queried Neale.

As with Smyth, he retorted:

The reading and writing and the number-work will answer for themselves. Ask the teacher in charge, and she will smilingly tell you that the 'three R's' were never so well taught, and were never so well understood by children, as at the present. At least, she says, we know how to teach these subjects as the child would desire to learn them.⁴⁴

Neale quoted Smyth, who asked, 'Is it fairyland or school?' Neale's reply was that it was both.

It is too much to have expected Neale's message concerning early childhood education to have brought instant change to the class-rooms of the Tasmanian state schools. After all, during his directorship there were only two teachers from the Tasmanian Education Department who were trained in infant methods. Several were imported from South Australia.⁴⁵ But it is clear that by 1909 there was developing support within the Education Department for the ideals of the progressive infant school.

5 The Establishment of Free Kindergartens and State Kindergartens

By 1909 a kindergarten had been established at Leslie House School at New Town, Hobart. On the occasion of the midwinter open day in August 1909 Dickenson, revealed that there was a difficulty in keeping to 'pure kindergarten methods' because of the late age at which children were sent to school in Tasmania.⁴⁶ He added that although the correct age for children to be at kindergarten was between four and seven years, often kindergarten methods were asked for by parents for the children who were often aged from eight to

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ The trainee for 1908 was forced to retire due to ill health: see *ibid.*, 28 Jan. 1908, 4, 8

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 23 Aug. 1909, 3, 3

ten years. Such was the level of understanding by some of the Tasmanian clientele. Dickenson, however, had a clear conception of kindergarten methods. The kindergarten, he stated, was not a device to amuse children and keep them out of mischief, but 'an integral and indispensable part of education'. There is little doubt that the kindergarten under Dickenson's authority at Leslie House School performed the role of a lighthouse for the development of free kindergartens and consequently, state school kindergartens.

By May 1910 the ex-senator Henry Dobson, whose wife had so strenuously pushed for the establishment of kindergartens in Hobart five years before, had invited Mrs Champlin, a pioneer in the free kindergarten movement in Melbourne, to Hobart to propagate the cause.⁴⁷ On her arrival, Champlin, an American-trained kindergartener, congratulated McCoy on his understanding of the kindergarten movement. At a public meeting organised by Dobson in Hobart several days later, chaired by A. J. Taylor, Champlin explained the role of kindergartens in society.⁴⁸ Not least were the roles of social control and national efficiency:

What was aimed at in kindergarten method was form, not reform, and the finest form of philanthropy was the saving work amongst the children ... This was a distinctly citizens' movement to form the character of children from three years old to six years old ... given the right kind of instruction, no child will ever lose the principles of kindergarten that have been formed. Statistics showed that in Chicago, where the method had been adopted for many years, during fifteen years, no child trained in their schools had ever come before a police court, and these children were drawn from the slums. They could take a child from any environment they liked ... and they could do what they liked with it.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *Mercury*, 23 May 1910, 6, 3

⁴⁸ *Daily Post*, 29 Aug. 1913, 4, 3. 'As far back as 30 years ago Mr Alfred J. Taylor, public librarian, advocated in the local press the introduction of the free kindergarten system of education for the state schools of Tasmania.'

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 25 May 1910, 3, 6

Champlin went on to explain that Sydney had eight free kindergartens, Melbourne, nine, Brisbane, two, and Adelaide, three. The New South Wales government had voted £1 000 annually as a subsidy; the Victorian government had promised the same.

This same message was pushed at another public meeting held in Hobart several days later, but this time attended by McCoy, Johnson, Lovell and E.A. Solomon, the Minister for Education.⁵⁰ Here a proposal to establish a free kindergarten in Hobart received strong support. Funds were subscribed and a committee formed. Lady Barron, wife of the Governor, accepted the position of Patroness and gave enthusiastic and practical assistance. The piano for the first kindergarten was to come from Government House.⁵¹

Following Champlin's visit evidence of an increased interest in the free kindergarten movement came in the form of an increased amount of correspondence in the Hobart press concerning kindergartens. For example, there was correspondence concerning the origins of the word 'kindergarten'. By far the most revealing correspondence came from Dickenson's pen.⁵² He explained that he was most encouraged by the public enthusiasm following Champlin's visit. Dickenson went on to state that although his school had a kindergarten there was still 'a widely prevalent misconception of its purpose'. It, therefore, had attracted little attention. Dickenson explained that a common notion was that it was a kind of 'junior benevolent asylum where tiresome little ones may be sent to, to be kept out of mischief'.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 27 May 1910, 3, 1-2

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2 July 1910, 2, 7

⁵² *Ibid.*, 6 June 1910, 6, 5

Further articles in the Hobart daily press, which were lengthy reprints from the Sydney daily press argued for kindergartens in terms of national efficiency.⁵³ While another article explained the influence of Darwinist thought on modern kindergartens:

The influence of Darwin's teaching may be traced in the modern movement dealing with child-study; and, apart from its scientific side, its practical bearing in the work of education is of distinct value in pedagogy.⁵⁴

The article went on to explain the importance of the social Darwinist principle of the environment fashioning the individual which the modern kindergartens adhered to:

We recognise that the surroundings of a child should conduce to its physical health - that air, and light, and warmth, and the gratification of the senses are of primary importance to its development.⁵⁵

By the end of October 1910 the Hobart Free Kindergarten Association under the presidency of Henry Dobson opened its first free kindergarten in the old Ragged School building in Central Street. Miss E. Ramsay, a graduate of Froebel House was in charge.⁵⁶ The association had raised £100, and the government gave assistance pound for pound.⁵⁷ The government further rendered its support by having the Governor officially open the kindergarten in March 1911. The government made the school the venue for important visitors for a number of years.⁵⁸

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 20 Sept. 1910, 3, 4-5, reprinted from *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, n.d.

⁵⁴ *Mercury*, 22 Oct. 1910, 8, 2-3, reprinted from *Sydney Morning Herald*, n.d.

⁵⁵ *Mercury*, 12 Dec. 1910, 6, 6

⁵⁶ *Daily Post*, 27 Oct. 1910, 5, 3. The foundation committee comprised Henry Dobson (president), mesdames Dobson, Walker, Harcourt; Walter Taylor (hon. secretary); Messrs T. Stephens, A.J. Taylor, J.A. Johnson.

⁵⁷ *Mercury*, 7 March 1911, 2, 4

⁵⁸ See, for example, *ibid.*, 23 Nov. 1911, 4, 8

During 1910 a free kindergarten was opened in Launceston, and a separate association was formed.⁵⁹ The kindergarten moved to new premises in Frederick Street in February 1911, and Miss D. Rosner, another graduate from Froebel House took charge. The movement aroused much enthusiasm in Launceston and the 'local shopkeepers' donated most of the furnishings for the new building.⁶⁰ Rosner was succeeded by another Sydney graduate, Miss I. Tinberry in 1912.⁶¹

Following a visit to New South Wales to inspect kindergartens, McCoy announced that a kindergarten was to be established in the new Hobart Elizabeth Street Practising School.⁶² He announced that Peter Board had agreed to lend him a trained kindergartener while a Tasmanian underwent twelve months training at Sydney Teachers College. While in Tasmania, the New South Wales kindergartener was to train a small number of Tasmanians for the task.

In his 1912 annual report, Johnson, described the room and its operation. 'The room is splendidly equipped and the work admirably organised by Miss Helena Rutherford.'⁶³ A *Mercury* reporter visited the new kindergarten twice during 1912 and these reports provide us with a more detailed account of the work being done there by Rutherford. When the *Mercury* reporter arrived in March 1912 he found Rutherford seated at the piano and the forty five children were 'indulging in a little music'.⁶⁴ The children, the *Mercury* noted, whilst they were being interested and directed in the kindest manner by Rutherford in what were ostensibly play experience, in fact, they were unconsciously learning to count draw, make little toys, design things, sing sweetly, and to speak nicely:

⁵⁹ *Examiner*, 19 Aug. 1910, 3, 1-2

⁶⁰ *Australian Kindergarten Magazine*, 1, 4, April 1911, p. 11

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 3, 3, Jan. 1913, p. 12

⁶² *Daily Post*, 1 Oct. 1911, 3, 1; *ibid.*, editorial, 2 Oct. 1911, 4, 5

⁶³ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 25

⁶⁴ *Mercury*, 29 March 1912, 7, 6-7

Nature studies of flowers, animals, and birds play a prominent part in interesting and instructing them, while numerous marches and exercises tend to physical development. The means adopted for interesting these infants are, indeed, almost too numerous to mention. When they are learning to count they count how many are in the class; one little chap is put to count how many have come with clean boots; then they take out their handkerchiefs, and a little girl will count the clean ones (the dirty ones are not allowed to be counted), another counts how many have got clean finger nails, and so on. Thus, whilst learning to count, they also learn the importance of cleanliness. A similar system obtains as to many other things. In connection with their dolls, they learn how to make dolls' clothes, with the aid of the large sand tray a well stocked farmyard of poultry, sheep, cattle, horses, etc., is disposed of in 'runs' and 'paddocks', and they learn a lot about country life; similarly, they learn about the baker making bread (they recently visited a bakery in the city in this connection), and with organised little tea parties they learn all about tea, sugar, etc., and habits of cleanliness at the table. 'Kindergarten' means child-garden, and the idea is that, just as flowers and plants are suited by a wise gardener to grow naturally in a well-regulated garden, so the children from a very early age have every side of their natures awakened their thinking powers and faculties generally are developed, good habits are formed, their sympathies excited, and their characters and understanding built up in the right way ...⁶⁵

On the occasion of the Governor and Lady Barron's visit in December 1912 the *Mercury* gave a detailed description of the physical environment of the kindergarten.⁶⁶ The room was 'a large, cheerful, airy apartment, provided with plenty of that which is characterised as the two noblest of things, sweetness and light'. The room was furnished with little tables and chairs. There was a piano and ample storage spaces, a sand tray and doll's house, a small aviary full of canaries, and an aquarium with gold fish. There were vases of flowers all about. In a corner there was an Indian tepee, 'in keeping with a frieze on the wall representing scenes from Longfellow's "Hiawatha"'. Other friezes represented little Dutch girls driving geese. On the walls also were many copies of 'good paintings'.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1912, 6, 6-7; *Daily Post*, 5 Feb. 1912, 3, 2-3; *ibid.*, 14 Dec. 1912, 6, 3-4

Earlier during 1912 H.D. McLelland, Deputy Chief Inspector of Schools in New South Wales was a guest of the McCoys in Hobart.⁶⁷ He spoke to teachers and was widely reported in the Hobart daily press on the virtues of the Froebel/Quincy kindergarten methods. Particularly he stressed the values of kindergartens as guardians against vice, slums and saloon politics. By 1912, it seems, kindergartens had been firmly imbedded into Tasmanian society. Certainly there was a growing demand for kindergartens by parents.⁶⁸

During 1912 under Rutherford four students were trained in the Froebel/Quincy ideals. The course was a twelve months course. During the mornings the students attended the practising school, spending six months in the kindergarten, and the other six months in the preparatory classes. During the afternoons they attended lectures at the college. Students were selected 'on account of their special fitness and natural aptitude for the work', and had a bond of four years service with the department in return for their training. During their service they had to display an ability to manage a class of sixty infants, be able 'to play simple accompaniments and marches on the piano, and to sing the songs required in infant school work'. A pass in the Junior Public Examination or some higher examination of the University of Tasmania were pre-requisites for entry.⁶⁹

The theoretical course at the training college was developed around the sources advocated by Neale some four or five years previously. For psychology and child study, James's *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* was used. For

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1912, 6, 6-7; *Daily Post*, 5 Feb. 1912, 3, 2-3

⁶⁸ *Mercury*, 12 March 1912, 5, 4, being the report of the first annual meeting of the Hobart Free Kindergarten Association. Ramsey stated that there was sufficient children to have three additional free kindergartens in Hobart.

⁶⁹ E R, 6, 9, Feb. 1911, p. 129

kindergarten principles, gifts and occupations, Kate Douglas Wiggin's works were used. The infant school management and methods drew on Parker's *Talks to Teachers*, and Smyth's *Guide to the Modern Infant Room*. Collectively these works emphasised story telling, morning chats, picture lessons, observation work, nature study, games, finger plays, and the phonic method of teaching reading, and writing, poetry, oral language, number, and drawing.

Johnson felt strongly about the ideals of the new work. He reported to McCoy at the end of the first year that

I should like to place on record my belief that the good influence of this work is not confined to the few in special training for it, but that its spirit will react on the methods of all the students. I am satisfied that there has been no more potent influence at work during the year to give young teachers the right attitude to their work.⁷⁰

7 Amy Rowntree and the Introduction of Montessorian Methods

During 1912 news began to filter back to Tasmania of the work of 'a remarkable Italian woman'.⁷¹ Tasmanians were told of Dr Maria Montessori and her system of education which had attained remarkable results. It was prophesised that 'much will be heard of it'.

During 1911 Board had taken steps to establish Montessori methods in the New South Wales Education Department infant schools.⁷² McCoy was not to be too greatly outpaced by his progressive colleague in New South Wales. He was intent on introducing the Montessori methods in Tasmania as soon as possible,

⁷⁰ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 25

⁷¹ *Mercury*, 26 July 1912, 3, 6-7

⁷² R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians...*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 231-249

and, of course, as cheaply as possible. Towards the end of 1912 McCoy invited Martha Simpson now of Blackfriars Training School, Sydney to report on the developments in kindergartens which had taken place under Rutherford, and to lecture on the Montessori methods which she had seen in Rome:

I need not tell you [McCoy wrote to Board] that her presence in Tasmania is a very great help to me and will clear the ground in regard to Montessori experiments which I hope to make next year after the efficacy of the tests made in your wealthy State has been proved.⁷³

Simpson was interviewed while in Hobart.⁷⁴ She said that Rutherford's kindergarten at Trinity Hill was the best she had seen and was ripe for further developments along Montessorian lines. She then detailed the work of the Montessorian classrooms in New South Wales and the work she had seen Montessori perform in Rome.

At the beginning of 1913 the Elizabeth Street Practising School was reorganised by McCoy having it divided into two departments: an infant department and a primary department. The infant department was headed by a mistress of method, and for 1913 at least, she had a staff of two demonstration teachers and a kindergartener, in addition to the students attending the training college. The mistress of method also was responsible for the theoretical courses at the training college. Miss Amy Rowntree held the first appointment of Mistress of Method.⁷⁵

Rowntree was chosen by McCoy at the beginning of 1911 to undertake a two year training course in kindergarten method at Blackfriars Training School under Simpson.⁷⁶ Obviously, Rowntree was intellectually and professionally

⁷³ Blackfriars files, 70200: 17/9/12 McCoy to Board 10/9/12, cited by Petersen, *The Montessorians...*, *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ *Mercury*, 14 Sept. 1912, 5-6, 8-1

⁷⁵ JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 6

⁷⁶ AOT, Ed. 183, 0269.40

attracted to the groundswell of support for the kindergarten movement which was receiving intense interest amongst progressives in educational circles during these years.

The two years study at Blackfriars brought great distinction to Rowntree.⁷⁷ She passed all subjects with honours, gaining an aggregate percentage of eighty one. In her study as in her work she seems to have fulfilled those ideals which Neale had described. Surely, here was a disciple who could continue to nurture the seed which Neale had planted.

Significantly, it was during Rowntree's two years at Blackfriars when reports about Montessori's work with young children in Italy began to filter back to Australia. One of the first progressives to react to this was Simpson. She was instrumental in having the New South Wales Minister for Public Instruction cable Rome for a copy of her book, *The Montessori Method*, published in 1911. In August 1912 the method was introduced at Blackfriars Training School.⁷⁸ Thus, Rowntree, as a leading senior student must have been close to these developments.

We have seen that Montessori's method was very closely akin to Bergson's philosophy.⁷⁹ There was a sufficient number of progressive minds in Hobart interested in Bergson's philosophy to warrant a lengthy article on 'the new phase in philosophy'. The article explained in simple terms the relationship between the philosophy of James and Bergson. It explained Bergson's notion of *elan vital*. The article concluded:

77 AOT, Ed File, a large Education Department document, 'Personal History of Staff', 1904-1913

78 R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians...*, *op. cit.*, p. 234-8

79 For a brief account of the relationship between the Montessori method and Bergson's notions of *elan vital*, see W.F. Connel, *A History of Education in the Twentieth Century*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 135-6

Speaking generally, it may be said that Bergson has given us a new doctrine of life, and a fresh conception of time; and that he has elaborated both with characteristic novelty and vigour. His doctrine of life is the philosophy of the forward push ...⁸⁰

It remained for Rowntree to gather the 'forward push' of the Montessori method in Tasmania.

When Rowntree took up the position of Mistress of Method at Elizabeth Street Practising School her energy and time were consumed fully in the establishment and administration of the new infant department, with its several hundred children. Consequently the establishment of Montessorian methods did not eventuate during 1913. But McCoy was intent upon establishing an awareness of the new methods in the Tasmanian educational community. In the April, May and June editions of the *Record* during 1913 there appeared a lengthy reprint of parts of *The Montessori System of Education*.⁸¹ By 1914 the awareness of the Montessori method was sufficiently developed, in the broader Tasmanian society at least, for the call by the National Council of Women insisting that a start be made in it.⁸²

Rowntree's first year as Mistress of Method of the Infant Department at Elizabeth Street Practising School was praised by Johnson.⁸³ He reported that while it was too early in the history of the work to make categorical statements about the results he believed that there was a strong evidence of 'a much higher ideal' in the work being done by the trainees. Now they left the college much better equipped for their 'arduous work'. Johnson believed that 'there is no doubt about the earnestness and enthusiasm displayed by the young women under Miss Rowntree's charge'.

⁸⁰ *Mercury*, 21 Sept. 1912, 3, 4

⁸¹ *E R*, 8, 11, April 1913, p.p. 188-191; *ibid.*, 8, 12, p.p. 203-4

⁸² *Mercury*, 15 Jan. 1914, 6, 3

⁸³ *JPPP*, 1915, paper 4, p. 24

Further impetus for the application of Montessori's ideals came the following year. Simpson was invited by McCoy to visit Tasmania between 24 and 29 August 1914 to inspect the infant school work of the largest schools and to give addresses on the Montessori system in Hobart and Launceston. Simpson had spent six months during 1913 on a study tour of English and European infant schools, three weeks of which she spent inspecting Montessori's work in Italy 'under the personal supervision' of the *dottorressa*.⁸⁴ It is clear that the Tasmanian community was responding increasingly to the Montessorian ideals. The *Mercury* now perceived of Tasmania as being in the vanguard of educational reform. It was

... absolutely the first place in the British Empire to undertake a scheme of national education for its people, has also been the first Australian State to avail itself of the New South Wales expert, Miss Simpson, who was sent to Rome, and trained by Dr Montessori herself.⁸⁵

A three column article on the Montessori system appeared in the *Daily Post*, part of which was an interview with Simpson. Here she connected the ideals of open-air schools with Montessori education.⁸⁶ At the training college, under the chairmanship of Premier Earle, Simpson addressed 300 teachers and interested citizens.⁸⁷

The next two years of Rowntree's administration of the infant department at Elizabeth Street were years of adjusting the Montessorian ideals with the progressive interpretation of the ideals of the Froebelian kindergartens. Rowntree remembered well Neale's warning from Tennyson that 'lest one good

⁸⁴ E R, 10, 3, Aug. 1914, p. 204. R.C. Peterson, *The Montessorians...*, *op. cit.*, p. 237, states that Montessori's and Simpson's time spent together was only occasional during Simpson's three weeks in Rome.

⁸⁵ *Mercury*, 9 Sept. 1914, 5, 10

⁸⁶ *Daily Post*, 4 Sept. 1914, 8, 5-8

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 Sept. 1914, 5, 6

custom should corrupt the world'. She echoed Neale's urging that 'the genius who borrows "is more original than the originals"'. And so the messiah's refrain was sustained. At first the Montessori work was limited to the kindergarten room. At the end of 1916 McCoy reported that Elizabeth Street Practising School had a combined kindergarten and a Montessori room.⁸⁸ Following her visits to the infant teachers around the state Rowntree reported to McCoy:

There are no signs of paralysing self-satisfaction ... The work is noticeable for its freshness and for an entire absence of cramped adherence to old-fashioned methods ... The teachers are young and enthusiastic, and are still interested in working out the problems of individual adjustment in conformity with the principles of Froebel and Montessori.⁸⁹

Each year the trained infant teachers spent a week at the Elizabeth Street Infant Department 'in order to freshen or enrich their experiences'. Rowntree reported that this week was particularly valuable because it enabled the trained teachers to 'see the practical working out of the principles of Froebel and Montessori', so that they could be inspired 'to further effort in their own schools'.⁹⁰

A principal publication used by Rowntree in her training of the students and discussions during the in-service training week with teachers was Simpson's *Report on the Montessori Methods of Education*.⁹¹ This work stressed those same ideals of the adjustment of Montessori's ideals with those of the progressive Froebellian ideals: the very blending of ideals with which Rowntree and her group were grappling. There is no doubt that Simpson's publication greatly assisted Rowntree in arriving at her own ideals of infant education.⁹² The main advantages which Simpson saw in the Montessori system was the

⁸⁸ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 7

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ M. Simpson, *Report on the Montessori Methods of Education*, Sydney, 1914

⁹² AOT, Ed 183, General Correspondence, esp. file 310, 1916 Infant Teachers Amendment of Regulation 232

The main advantages which Simpson saw in the Montessori system was the increase in liberty and so independence and self-reliance in the children, the provision of sense training, the substitution of individual for class teaching with resultant opportunity for every child to progress at their own rate. For Simpson other important advantages for children under the Montessori system were improved health, lack of mental strain, and the fact that it appeared to 'minimise' if not 'altogether wipe out the problem of retardation'. There was outstanding progress made by children in reading and writing, and its value would be manifest in small, one teacher schools with a wide age range. Simpson pointed out that the introduction of Montessori's system would require smaller classes, larger classrooms, new furniture, more freedom allowed to the teacher to 'experiment and carry out her own ideas'. There also would be a need for an adequate course of teacher training by means of summer schools, lectures and observations. She emphasised that the Montessori system should be 'introduced with a proper understanding of the principles and by way of evolution not revolution'.⁹³

The only criticism contained in the report was that the Montessori system made no provision for literature and artistic appreciation. This, Simpson attributed to Montessori's strong objection to 'passive learning'. Just as the spirit of Froebel's principles and methods should be used by teachers, without a blind adherence, so too should the spirit of Montessori's work be applied in the classroom. Simpson declared:

Dr Montessori is the least dogmatic of persons. She should be the first to deplore any blind or mechanical adoption of her method. All she wants is a thorough mastery of her principles of liberty, and an intelligent application of the principle to all school subjects.⁹⁴

⁹³ M. Simpson, Report on the Montessori Method..., *op. cit.*, p. 28

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37

Montessori, however, was often considered to be an utterly dogmatic person, and Simpson should have known this.⁹⁵ Simpson, however, was asking her readers to understand Montessori's fundamental principles, and then to apply these to the Australian educational environment. Simpson concluded:

Based as it is upon liberty, the Montessori system is particularly well suited to the educational needs of a free, democratic country like Australia, whose self-reliance, individuality, resource, originality, and freshness of thought are qualities much to be desired in the future citizens.⁹⁶

There are interesting parallels between the careers of Montessori and Rowntree. Montessori was fifteen years older than Rowntree, with the former dying ten years before the latter. Both achieved significant firsts in their fields: Montessori was the first woman to take a degree in medicine from the University of Rome; Rowntree was the first women inspector of schools in Tasmania. Standing, Montessori's friend and biographer, writes that she possessed 'a massive and unassailable strength of character - like a mountain unmoved by the storms which beat against it'.⁹⁷ This description, too, fits Rowntree. From discussions with Tasmanian infant mistresses who worked with her over a long period, one is struck with the impression that she was similarly possessed with these attributes of character. Both educators showed themselves to be women of enormous determination. Once having formulated their ideas, each displayed enormous ability and tenacity in propagating them. Both commanded great loyalty and devotion from their immediate associates, and were able to stimulate lasting impressions on teachers. The secret of both educator's success lay in their sincerity of care for children, both making children's needs and interests the centre of their respective educational philosophies and methods. Montessori was a deeply religious person,

⁹⁵ R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians...*, *op. cit.*, p. 245

⁹⁶ M. Simpson, *Report on the Montessori Method...*, *op. cit.*, p. 45

⁹⁷ E.M. Standing, *Maria Montessori, Her Life and Work*, New York, 1962, p. 83

belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. Rowntree was a life-long member of the congregation at the St George's Church of England, Battery Point. There is in that church a plaque commemorating her work in the church. With both educators the spiritual aspect of children's life played an important part in their respective educational beliefs.

Clearly, it was more than just the superficial application of the Montessori materials to learning programs in the classroom which attracted Rowntree to the Montessorian ideals. Montessori was a creature of the new consciousness. She had said that the principal aim in education was 'to aid the spontaneous development of the mental, spiritual, and physical personality' of children.⁹⁸ The teacher's role was to understand the process of the child's natural development, and to provide a learning environment in order that this development could be enhanced. Further, the teacher had to provide the means by which children could steadily increase the control over their own development. For Montessori, her methods if properly understood, would 'produce a better type of man, a man endued with superior characteristics as if belonging to a new race: the superman of which Nietzsche caught glimpses'.⁹⁹ Children, if educated in an ordered environment which allowed for freedom of development, vigorous and spontaneous growth, would develop into a new generation of 'powerful men'. The advancement of modern society would then be guaranteed.¹⁰⁰

Montessori's view on the process by which children grow was derived from Bergson. She believed that children grew because of some life force within them, what Bergson labelled *elan vital*, and which Nunn later called *horme*, a

98 Maria Montessori, *The Montessori Method*, trans. Anne E. George, London, 1912

99, *Peace and Education*, London, 1932

100, *The Montessori Method*, *op. cit.*, p. 101

term which Montessori borrowed from Nunn. This view embraced the idea that children developed tendencies with which they were born. Montessori wrote of the mysterious powers which existed innately within the child and which 'unfold according to mysterious laws'.¹⁰¹ While there is no evidence to show that Rowntree ever attempted to develop a similar philosophical view, her propagation of so many of Montessori's ideals during her educational career requires this understanding of Montessori's view of education and child development. Both educators maintained that teachers should provide a learning environment whereby children could grow with a minimum of adult restraint. This meant that teachers should encourage children to proceed in a learning program at their own pace. Both educators continually condemned *ex cathedra* teaching methods which forced children into passive obedience, which were based on extrinsic modes of motivation, and which held that subject matter was of greater importance than child development.

Rowntree also was inspired by Montessori's insistence that all learning programs should be basically experimental, albeit, not strictly scientific in any sense. Like Montessori, Rowntree insisted that her teachers base the following day's work on observations of the children in the class and the way in which they interacted with the learning program. For both there was no experimentation in the sense that teachers selected appropriate samples of children and attempted to control the variables with which they were dealing. And certainly Rowntree did not insist that her teachers go to the extent that Montessori required. For Montessori, science was largely the art of observing and ordering observations. Observations had to be analysed, classified, and synthesised; and, from that process of ordered analysis, a teacher might formulate generalisations and conclusions upon which to base further learning

101 , *The Absorbent Mind*, trans. C.A. Claremont New York, 1949, p. 83

programs. For Rowntree, teachers had to make observations of the development of individual children in the class and record this weekly. These weekly 'reviews' formed the basis of future programs. Thus, Rowntree was even less 'scientific' in her educational method than Montessori.

McCoy was aware of the need to publicise fully the Montessorian developments at Elizabeth Street Practising School. A 1917 *Mercury* report is evidence of this, but it also illustrates that there was an audience and a ready acceptance for progressive education in Tasmanian infant schools in the Tasmanian society-at-large. The *Mercury* article illustrates the early emphasis on an aesthetic and artistic classroom environment, in Elizabeth Street Practising School at least. The report began:

A visit was first paid to the kindergarten, where a certain portion of the day is set apart to the Montessori method. One was particularly struck by the bright and cheery appearance of the room, decorated in autumn tints, and with artistic drawings, executed by the staff, adorning the walls...¹⁰²

The utility of many of the learning experiences in the kindergarten room would have had much appeal to the Tasmanian parents:

On first entering the school, a child is encouraged in what are known as the 'exercises of practical life', such as buttoning, lacing boots, fastening patent snaps and hooks and eyes, and tying ribbon bows, operations which occur during the process of dressing every day.¹⁰³

Many of the activities in the kindergarten room at Elizabeth Street Practising School were purely Montessorian. For example,

perception of sound is taught by means of duplicate sets of six cardboard cylinders containing different substances - sand, flax, seeds, corn, gravel, pebbles, stones - which when shaken, produce graduations of sound according to the contents of each cylinder. Exercises in the perception of weight are given by the means of tablets of wood of the same size and thickness but of different

¹⁰² *Mercury*, 7 May 1917, 2, 5-6

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

weights. The wood used is mahogany, oak, and poplar.

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But, it was the intrinsic appeal which many of the kindergarten learning activities held for the children which caught the attention of the *Mercury* reporter:

In the kindergarten all the children - with the exception of one small group sitting around Miss White, the teacher, deeply interested in learning their letters on the phonetic principle - were busily but quietly playing one or other of these games, which combine pleasure with instruction for the little ones.¹⁰⁵

The use of Montessori methods in the higher infant grades was conveyed to the Tasmanian public by the *Mercury* reporter. Here, in the Montessori room

... the children, in charge of Miss Watson, are entirely taught on the Montessori system. The room has been open about a year, and splendid results have been accomplished. In this room the day is commenced with a Scripture story, to hear which all the children gather round the teacher.¹⁰⁶

In the Montessori room the simplicity of the learning experiences the duration of which was pitched directly to the children's interest span, caught the notice of the *Mercury* reporter:

The teacher will give a ten minutes' reading lesson, never more, to a group composed of about one-third of the children, and two other groups for the rest of the scholars will be held later in the day. This is practically all the formal reading, and there are similar groups during the day for other subjects.¹⁰⁷

The low level of restraint on children's movements and the relation of intrinsically motivated learning experiences to children's interests was further conveyed to the Tasmanian public:

For the rest of the time the youngsters are practically free to follow their own inclinations, and they were enjoying one of these free periods when 'The Mercury' representative looked in. And there was not one idle. Some were learning their letters and sentences, and how

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*

106 *Ibid.*

107 *Ibid.*

to write them, others were busy with figures, and still others were found of their own free will poring over primers, which in ordinary schools are not exactly popular as a rule.¹⁰⁸

The success of Rowntree's methods soon became apparent. McCoy warmly reported to his minister at the end of 1917:

Apart from its work in training teachers, the school has demonstrated that such an organisation means a much higher efficiency and, to a large extent, overcomes the problem of retardation which has long vexed the department.¹⁰⁹

But, there were other factors, too working in favour of Rowntree's group.

McCoy went on to report :

The increase in the attendance of the largest schools, combined with the absence of male assistants who are at the front, has rendered the largest first class schools unwieldy, and it is clear that the headmasters are quite unable to give adequate attention to the preparatory and first classes, with the result that in some schools children are kept in these classes for three or four years.¹¹⁰

McCoy, therefore, decided to establish separate infant departments, as at Elizabeth street, in all the first class schools of more than 600 children. In charge of the infant departments would be a trained infant mistress who would be responsible for the matters connected with the organisation, discipline, and methods of instruction employed in the schools.

During 1917 the requirements for the infant teacher's certificate also was changed.¹¹¹ The principal changes were in the area of infant school management and method. In the place of Partridge's *Quincy Method*, and Parker's, *Talks on Teaching* came Montessori's *The Montessori Method* and Simpson's *Report on the Montessori Method*. Now the teacher's

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ JPPP, 1918, paper 4, p. 4

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ E R, 13, 6, June 1917, p.p. 90-1

understanding of Froebel/Quincy method, during their formal training, could only come through Wiggins's works which were still used for kindergarten principles.

In his last report to the Minister for Education in Tasmania, McCoy left no doubt about his opinion of the development of infant education in Tasmania under Rowntree. During the year new infant departments were established at Albueria Street, Hobart, and at Charles Street and Wellington Square, Launceston. McCoy claimed:

It can be truly said that in our best infant schools ... the successful application of modern ideas and methods is more marked than in primary schools. The schemes of work are prepared with a view to developing the child's individuality and self-expression, and his sense of responsibility, young though he is, and the marked evidences of cheerful co-operation and affection on the part of the pupils leave no doubt as to the good work that is being done.¹¹²

Endorsing the views expressed by their director, the Tasmanian state school teachers at their annual conference in July 1919 resolved that every school with an infant department should have a kindergarten.¹¹³ Here it was unanimously agreed that a kindergarten was of greater use to the state in post-war reconstruction than were high schools.

7 Child-Centred Progressive Education

Rowntree, a third generation Tasmanian, was able to further the ideals of child-centred progressive education so forcefully enunciated by Neale a decade before. But unlike Neale's attempt, Rowntree brought about 'change from within'. Rowntree's uncle, Gilbert Rowntree had been a Labor party candidate

¹¹² JPPP, 1919, paper 4, p. 3

¹¹³ *Mercury*, 4 July 1919, 5, 3-6

for the Legislative Assembly in the division of Dennison in 1909 and had been a party organiser during its formative years.¹¹⁴ This brought her close to an understanding of Tasmanian politics so essential for success in Tasmania. Rowntree's was a pioneering career in Australian early childhood education in company with Martha Simpson and Lillian de Lissa.¹¹⁵

Progressivism influenced the early ideals and activities of Tasmanian early childhood education. Kindergartens were established amidst the cry for social hygiene and national efficiency. Proponents of kindergartens saw them as a means to combat the evils of city life: poverty, crime, poor health and general child neglect. Early childhood education was more closely related to these ideals than were the other primary grades, and perhaps this helped to ensure that Tasmanian early childhood education employed generally child-centred progressive education methods. The care and education of Tasmanian infants was closely related to other progressive developments in the Tasmanian Education Department, particularly the influence of public health and hygiene on school architecture and the curriculum, and medical and dental care for children. There was a sense that the Tasmanian educators, and the Tasmanian society-at-large was sympathetic to, and even expected the development of Montessori methods in the infant grades, with its appeal to science.

Another reason for Tasmanian early childhood education falling within the broad stream of child-centred progressive education was its temporal distance from the grade 6 terminal qualifying examination. This is not to suggest that examinations did not play a role in Tasmanian early childhood education during the period, but examinations were less important than they were in the other

114 R. Davis, *Eighty Years' Labor, 1903-1983*, Sassafras Books and the Uni. of Tasmania, Hobart, 1983, Appendix 1

115 R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians ... op. cit.*,

grades. Indeed, until the young children had developed sufficient literacy and numeracy skills it was impossible to / ^{formally} measure their progress. Thus the pressure of examinations did not encroach on early childhood education: scientific progressive education was always relatively distanced from the early childhood grades. Moreover, the kindergartens always provided a model for the child-centred progressive educators in the other early childhood grades. And Rowntree received her training for the most part in kindergarten method. Thus she was always in a position to lead other teachers in child-centred methods.

This is not to suggest that the Tasmanian early childhood teachers were any more advanced in terms of Beeby's stages of educational development than were other Tasmanian state school teachers, who we have seen, for the most part, had reached Beeby's Stage of Formalism. The Tasmanian teachers of early childhood grades followed Rowntree's instructions just as formally as the primary teachers executed McCoy's instructions.

When the Froebelian variety of child-centred progressive education was challenged by the more modern Montessori method the Tasmanian teachers were asked to adjust their methods. The degree of adjustment, and the extent to which the Montessori methods were successfully introduced into the Tasmanian early childhood grades, will shed more light on the nature of Tasmania's child-centred progressive early childhood education. The 1920's witnessed this adjustment.

CHAPTER 6

Health and Hygiene

Reform in the hygienic arrangements in the medical screening of children in Tasmanian state schools was a part of the overall progressive ideal of national efficiency. During the period newspaper editorials describing race suicide were numerous.¹ Two reasons for this supposed suicide were the declining birth rate and infant mortality, both of which were highlighted in the annual reports of the newly-formed Commonwealth Statistician's Office. With this as a social backdrop, the annual reports by Tasmania's Chief Health Officer raised much editorial comment, particularly on the subject of infant mortality.² Reports from the Commonwealth Statistician often would provoke similar editorial comment.³ Public health administration became a new profession.⁴

As with the kindergarten movement, various organisations were active in raising public discussion and pushing for reform legislation in Tasmania.⁵ For example, in Launceston the Children's Protection Society pushed the legislation to provide for an asylum or refuge for neglected infants.⁶ The National Council of Women was an influential group which was usually addressed at its annual meetings by somebody from health administration.⁷ Likewise, meetings of the Women's Health Association would often attract the world

1 See, for example, *Daily Post*, editorial, 7 Aug. 1907, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 23 Sept. 1911, 4, 3-4

2 See, for example, *Mercury*, editorial, 9 April 1907, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 20 July 1907, 6, 2

3 *Daily Post*, editorial, 6 Feb. 1912, 4, 5

4 For an interesting contemporary comment see, *Mercury*, 21 March 1905, 6, 5; for a general study of the process of professionalisation see Burton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism*, *op. cit.*

5 Stefan Petrow, *Sanitarium of the South? Public Health and Politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Tasmania, 1984

6 *Mercury*, 4 July 1907, 6, 4; *ibid.*, 11 July 1907, 3, 2

7 See, for example, *ibid.* 22 June 1906, 3, 2

and his wife.⁸ The Citizens' Reform League had as its basic platform the promotion of temperance, social purity, general social reform and the opposition to gambling. It included amongst its members Bishop and Mrs Mercer, Arthur Morrisby M.L.C. and P.D. Rattle M.H.A. The proceedings of the monthly meetings of this group always were well reported by the Hobart daily press.

This was a period in Tasmania which saw reform legislation or attempts at reform legislation in a multitude of areas. If the reform legislation did not succeed, then often the associated public discussion eventually resulted in some form of reform because of the developed public consciousness. Some important areas included smoking by juveniles, hotel closing hours, cleanliness of barber shops, meat inspection, pure foods and drugs, milk inspection, improved public water supply, and public refuse disposal.⁹

During the period there was considerable agitation for practical improvements in the methods of infant feeding.¹⁰ A natural extension of this movement was the agitation for the provision of state supplied meals for school children.¹¹ The concern for a correct diet for infants and children developed in the context of progressive 'parenting', with adequate family recreation. The belief was that if parents provided adequate recreation in a family context for their children, then children's school behaviour was less likely to be disruptive and attention-seeking.¹² The belief in the importance of the effect on children of the home

⁸ *Ibid.*, 6 June 1905, 5, 4

⁹ See, for example, *ibid.*, 19 July 1907, 4, 3; *ibid.*, 21 Feb. 1905, 7, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 3 Jan. 1905, 4, 7-8; *ibid.*, 18 June 1906, 5, 5-6; *ibid.*, editorial, 4 April 1906, 4, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 22 June 1905, 4, 3; *ibid.*, 25 Feb. 1905, 5, 3-4; *ibid.*, 2 Feb. 1905, 6, 8

¹⁰ For an interesting contemporary account of the extent of the movement in Tasmania, see, *ibid.*, 21 Aug. 1906, 3, 8

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7 Jan. 1907, 6, 6

¹² *Ibid.*, 7 Jan. 1907, 6, 6

environment, relative to hygienic practices, also was developed during the period.¹³

The second decade of the century witnessed an increase in the demand for more direct intervention by the state in matters of public health. In Tasmania sections of the Labor Party were at the vanguard of reform. The *Daily Post* fairly represented this point of view when it declared:

Complete reform can only be brought about by the State, which must follow its citizens from birth on through childhood and manhood, doing all that is possible to prevent disease and physical inefficiency, and when they occur providing the best treatment for the patients. The health of the State should be made the first care of the State.¹⁴

1 Dr J.S.C. Elkington's Pioneering Contribution

During 1910 Elkington, following six years of pioneering work in Tasmanian school health and hygiene, proclaimed:

Some of us may live to see the day when the serious acceptance of a doctrine of national physical morality will cause preventable disease to be regarded as somebody's crime, and when the preservation and protection of health will occupy a place in the daily round of unquestioned duty to the State and to one's neighbours.¹⁵

Elkington's strongly nationalistic-cum-eugenic assumptions were reflected in the fundamental drive of the early history of the Tasmanian school health and hygiene movement. All the principal participants in the history of the movement in Tasmania adhered to Elkington's assumption in varying degrees, and expressed them in their work. That there were sections of Tasmanian society-

¹³ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1907, 7, 7

¹⁴ *Daily Post*, editorial, 4 Jan. 1912, 4, 3-4. For similar editorial comments and articles see *ibid.*, editorial, 20 Dec. 1910, 4, 2-3; *ibid.*, editorial, 3 April 1912, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, 4 May 1912, 10, 2-3

¹⁵ *School Hygiene*, Brisbane, 1910, p.p. 11-12, quoted in Michael Roe, 'The Establishment of the Australian Department of Health: Its Background and Significance', *Historical Studies*, 17, 67, Oct. 1976

at-large who listened to the message expressed by Elkington *et al* is evidenced in the publishing^{of}a report of the 1908 Australasian Medical Congress held in New Zealand. The article stated that

... while the attitude of the medical profession has altered towards preventative medicine [and], while public health was receiving some of the best students and most distinguished scientists, the attitude of the people had undergone even greater change. They had come to consider questions of health in a broader and more scientific manner.

The article went on to contend:

Now and again a section of the community ... was shocked by some enthusiasts who hastened to help Nature in its elimination of the unfit.¹⁶

But the tide of history was on the side of the reformists.

In Tasmania the demand for school health and hygiene reform came for the most part outside of the teaching profession. Neale understood the reformist message and generated the ideals. The rank-and-file of the teaching profession first was generally blatantly hostile towards the demand for reform, but with the assistance of time came to accept its assumptions, and came more closely to reflect general social aspirations. There were, however, reactionary elements in Tasmanian society, with vested interests at stake, such as many of the teachers, who opposed the reform measures.

By early 1905 Elkington and Neale were working closely together for improved school health and hygiene. In February 1905 Elkington began delivering a series of lectures to teachers and the public in the old Technical School in Campbell Street, Hobart.¹⁷ A central theme of the lectures was the insistence that teachers closely observe children to discover physical defects. Also

¹⁶ *Mercury*, 3 Nov. 1908, 2, 6-7

¹⁷ *E R*, 1, 1, March, April, 1905, p.p. 9, 10, 13; *ibid.*, 1, 2, May 1905, p. 23; *ibid.*, 1, 3, June 1905, p. 35; *ibid.*, July 1905, p. 47

teachers were asked to look closely at the hygienic conditions of the school and see if there was any relation between faulty ventilation and lighting and children's physical defects. Elkington implored the teachers to apply simple tests in order to discover these defects which often would help to explain apparent learning difficulties, or in extreme cases, to discover a reason for apparently 'dull', 'stupid', or inattentive children. In relation to lighting and sight he stated that every child sitting in their usual reading position should be able to read diamond type at a distance of sixteen inches. The method for the testing of hearing was suggested as being to blindfold the child and to measure the distance at which the child could hear a watch ticking. These were simple tests directed towards teachers who were bereft of any sophisticated testing instruments.

Neale wrote in the *Record* on the reception that the lectures were having amongst teachers and the public. He stated that they 'still fully maintain their interest. As the months pass, the numbers increase rather than fall off.'¹⁸ With less vested interest, the *Mercury* was perhaps more honest. For example, reviewing a lecture in May the paper reported that there was a moderate attendance of teachers and the general public. The *Mercury* did, however, support the ideals being pursued by Elkington and Neale. The paper stated that teachers 'must exercise care and take precautions lest the school became an agent in spreading diseases, and must guard against dangerous results from the affect of school work on children ...' Society, the paper stated, would ultimately hold the schools responsible.¹⁹ The *Clipper*, too, applauded the work being done by Elkington.²⁰

¹⁸ E R, 2, 3, June 1905, p. 37

¹⁹ *Mercury*, 8 May 1905, 3, 6-7

²⁰ *Clipper*, 4 March 1905, 3, 1-2

Elkington's growing reputation no doubt assisted Neale in his attempt to convince teachers that the school hygiene movement was not a mere fad. But Neale drew on further support. He had printed in the *Record* a reprint from a report by Dr Kerr, the Medical Officer (Education) for the London County Council. The article argued that children who appeared to be mentally defective could, upon investigation, be found to be suffering from adenoid disorders. 'Open mouth[s], nasal discharge, and generally unintelligent appearance' could often be remedied by what was becoming a simple surgery. Neale added that teachers should regularly inspect children's teeth. 'A few decayed teeth may often explain alleged "school stress" or "stupidity"'.²¹

Elkington's enthusiasm and ability, and the way in which 'the congenial doctor' was able to link arms with Neale no doubt accounted for much in gaining public support. Clearly, there was a developing mood for reform amongst progressive sections of Tasmanian society. The doctor spoke to the Royal Society on the subject of 'School Hygiene and Medical Examination of State-school Children' during July 1906, and again the *Mercury* lent its support to the ideals expressed by Elkington. It alerted its Tasmanian readers that here was an issue of national importance. For

no more important a subject can engage the attention of a statesman or philosopher than that of education of the rising generation, and here at least an important part is played by the physical as by the spiritual development of the child. The latter, indeed, depends to a very large extent on the former, yet its importance has been too long overlooked.²²

The article went on to state that even with Elkington's comparatively short presence in Tasmania he had been able to convince many, including the authorities of the need for 'radical reform':

²¹ E R, 1, 6, Sept. 1905, p. 60

²² *Mercury*, editorial, 17 July 1906, 4, 6

With two such enthusiasts as Mr Neale and Dr Elkington looking after the intellectual and physical development of the children of Tasmania, we may be sure that no pain will be spared to obtain the best possible results. To carry out the necessary reforms, money will be required, but for so important an undertaking we have no hesitation in saying that money will be easily obtained.²³

Elkington and Neale in June 1906 proposed to the Minister of Education, Evans, that a medical inspection of about a thousand of Hobart school children should be made in order that a clear understanding of their health, eyesight and hearing might be formed. Parental permission was required before a child was examined. The parents were to be informed on the results, and the reports were to be kept confidential by the department. Neale predicted that the study would 'probably be the most valuable work of the kind yet undertaken in the Commonwealth'.²⁴

The *Mercury* endorsed the study as a 'wise innovation', and in a lengthy editorial the paper argued that the project should be beyond criticism. 'Questions affecting the health and physical welfare of the race [were] subject to no antagonism, whether of a secular or religious character; they arouse no professional jealousies, and stir up no sectarian strife.' The paper made it clear that the future fathers and mothers of the race should not be placed in jeopardy. The paper warned the parochial minded Tasmanians that Hobart was chosen because of 'the purposes of convenience and the economy of supervision ...' Besides if the scheme was successful, Launceston could only benefit from the findings. The scheme was 'capable of subsequent useful extension to other centres, and particularly to Launceston'.²⁵

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ E R, 2, 4, July 1906, p. 42

²⁵ *Mercury*, editorial, 12 June 1906, 4, 3-4

The Premier tabled Elkington's report on the study to the House of Assembly on 7 November 1906. It was a lengthy report, sixty type-written pages of foolscap, accompanied by tabular statements and diagrams.²⁶ Elkington was assisted in the study by Dr A.H. Clarke from Hobart, and a teacher Neale had made available from the Battery Point Model School. The examination was based on the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) 1902 with modifications to suit local conditions. The children from the Hobart schools, 1,220 in all, were examined, which made up seventy two percent of the average daily attendance of these schools. The children from the suburbs of Queenborough, Bellerive and New Town were excluded. Dr Tofft, from Campbell Town also examined fifty one children in the Campbell Town School, testing the comparative influences of rural and urban environments.

The report, taken as a whole, was a strong economic argument for medical inspection of state school children. It first dealt with the physical development of Tasmanian state school children. In comparison with the children of Sydney and Washington, D.C., they were found to be inferior in height and weight for both sexes at all ages. The children from the Battery Point Model School were closely studied in terms of comparable social background. The children from 'skilled labouring and mercantile parents' were found to have 'superiority in height and weight' compared with children from family backgrounds of unskilled parents. This result, the report declared, was in keeping with observations made in other countries. The report also highlighted the frequent occurrence of acquired defective eyesight and physical deformity such as curvature of the spine. These physical defects, the report attributed to poor school lighting and unsuitable school furniture.

26 JPPP, 1906, paper 23

Elkington pointed out the dreadful economic waste to the nation resulting from adenoid disorder amongst children. He stated that a child suffering from adenoid disorder 'was practically useless for educational purposes'. In the hands of a teacher unaware of the consequences of the growth these children were 'almost inevitably doomed to a reputation for stupidity', passing out from school being 'branded a dullard and a bad educational bargain'. Elkington pointed out that the condition could be removed completely by a simple operation, requiring the loss of only a few days' school. If only twenty percent of the parents of children suffering from adenoid disorder were to be persuaded to have their children treated it would economically justify a system of school medical examination. Interestingly, the report stated that the Campbell Town children were almost absolutely free from adenoid disorder - 'an immunity probably due to the dryness of the climate'.²⁷ This was a point which was bound to be capitalised upon by supporters of the country life movement.

Elkington also argued in the report that a system of school medical inspection was needed to alert teachers of the children suffering from heart complaints, because of the need to regulate their exercise. There was also the need to detect children with communicable diseases, such as consumption. In the report Elkington also argued that a system of school medical inspection which provided statistics, if also provided in other states, would enhance national education efficiency. The report noted that the British Education Bill was amended to provide for school medical inspection; and wherever adopted 'it had yielded the most satisfactory results'.²⁸

The report recommended that a scheme of school medical examination be commenced in Hobart and Launceston. The report did not recommend the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.22

appointment of full-time medical officers in these cities. It did, however, recommend that a local practitioner in each city be employed on a part-time basis, visiting the schools at least once every two weeks. The report went on to recommend the appointment of a female doctor to undertake the medical inspection of Tasmania's country children. Presumably this recommendation posed little threat to the vested interests of the medical profession. And after all, a female medical officer was less expensive than her male counterpart. Elkington stated that the whole scheme would cost less than £500 per year.²⁹

Elkington concluded his report by stating that it was clear that neither sentimentality or even altruism influenced the findings or recommendations contained in the report. Quite apart from the injustice of forcing physically defective children to attend schools by legislation, there were the hard-headed economic arguments of failing to remove the obstacles which mitigated against children receiving the best possible education from the £60 000 the state spent on education.³⁰

At the 1905 Australian Medical Congress held in Adelaide it was resolved that that each state education department should appoint a full-time medical officer, possessing special knowledge of school hygiene to work towards 'the protection of teachers and pupils from preventative diseases and the methods and scope of hygiene instruction and training'.³¹ Their brief was also to be the supervision of the hygienic construction and management of schools. At the 1906 meeting of the Australian Medical Congress held in Melbourne it was resolved that:

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ E R , 1, 6, Sept. 1905, p. 60

³¹ E R, 2, 5, Aug. 1906, p. 72

1. ... in view of the profound influence of school life and school training upon the physical future of the race, the hygienic construction of schools, the training of teachers in school hygiene, and the systematic practical instruction of school children in elementary, domestic and civic hygiene are subjects which demand the earnest attention of the Government of the various States of the Commonwealth;

2. ... for each State Education Department there should be available a whole-time medical officer, possessing special knowledge of applied hygiene in relation to schools to whom should be referred all questions relating to the hygienic construction and management of State schools, to the protection of teachers and pupils from preventable disease, and to the methods and scope of hygienic instruction and training.

3. That applied school hygiene should form a compulsory subject in the training of State teachers, and that a system of medical inspection of schools should be introduced at an early date, particularly in the larger centres of population.³²

2 The Establishment of a School Health Service

Elkington and Neale quickly were successful in having the government appoint a full-time school medical officer. The resolutions of the Australian Medical Congress would have added weight to the argument. Elkington, however, explained that it was the recommendations which he had made to the government following the 1906 medical inspection of the thousand Hobart school children which brought about the appointment in Tasmania.³³ He was proud to report, in fact, that all of his recommendations were implemented by the government. All this was backed by a general public concern for the health and hygiene of the children of Hobart. The *Mercury* during the summer of 1906-7 abounded in letters and reports on the subject. For example, the paper, in a lengthy editorial article reported the details of a meeting of the Queenborough Municipal Council where it was claimed, 'that a considerable

³² *Mercury*, 24 Sept. 1907, 2, 6-7

³³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 7 Feb. 1907, 7, 2

children attending State schools are so infested with vermin that it is a positive danger to decent people that they are allowed to use the [public] baths'.³⁴

On 25 February 1907 Dr Gertrude Halley was appointed medical inspector for the Education Department, an appointment which marked 'the practical foundation of the new medical branch of the Education Department'.³⁵ Halley had three main briefs. The first concerned the physical examination of Tasmanian state school children and the hygienic construction of schools.³⁶ Secondly, she was to lecture to trainee teachers in the training college on the principles and practices of school hygiene. Thirdly, she was to be concerned with 'the protection of infant life in Tasmania, a subject which is of acute interest, in view of the unnecessary high infant mortality prevailing in and about the cities'. She was to be assisted by two part-time medical officers: Dr Clark in Hobart, and Dr Hogg in Launceston.

Halley worked with a missionary zeal. Soon Tasmania's progress was a model for the rest of Australia. The Melbourne *Argus* enthused over developments in school health and hygiene in the island state. It claimed:

No State in the Commonwealth has made the advance in school hygiene that has characterised work in Tasmania. It may be that the limited sphere of operations to put into practice scientific methods for the better training of teachers and children which are generally approved by the foremost educationalists. All the same, the Government is to be commended for the cordial support it has given the recommendations made from time to time for the improvement of State-school life.³⁷

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Dr Halley arrived in Tasmania on 28 February 1907. She was the daughter of a well-known Congregational minister at Williamstown, Victoria. She had earned in Melbourne a reputation as a lecturer on medicine and hygienic matters. She left Tasmania in 1909 to take up a similar position with the New South Wales Education Department. In 1913 she took up a similar position with the South Australian Education Department where she immediately began to direct her attention to mentally retarded children.

³⁶ *Mercury*, 1 March 1907, 3, 1

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 24 Sept. 1907, 2, 3, reprint *Argus*, n.d.

recommendations made from time to time for the improvement of State-school life.³⁷

Not all in Tasmania, however, were as happy about Elkington's and Neale's aims and methods. Resistance came in several areas of Tasmanian society. For example, at a meeting of the Executive of the Tasmanian Teachers' Union held in Launceston in early April 1907 it was unanimously resolved:

The Minister for Education be approached, and it be made clear to him ... the undesirability of publishing reports, such as that of the Chief Health Officer, commenting on the want of personal cleanliness of the children attending some State schools, as such publication is calculated to have an injurious effect.³⁸

The Minister was approached to comment on the resolution, but sidestepped the issue by stating that he was not conversant with the facts.³⁹ It appears that Elkington and Neale informed him on the issue. This resulted in a letter being tabled in the House by the Minister from the executive of the teachers' union apologising for their action, but explaining that the conclusions of Elkington's survey 'was of considerable importance to teachers, and closely affected their interests'. The executive believed that Elkington's findings discouraged 'parents from sending their children to state schools'.⁴⁰

Opposition to Neale's and Elkington's initiatives also came from other sections of Tasmanian society. The publication in the *Mercury*, for example, of the Victorian Acting-Premier's doubts about a similar scheme in Victoria because if doctors were appointed, nurses and dentists would probably be asked for next, prompted some correspondence in a similar vein in the *Mercury*.⁴¹ The echo in Tasmania was, 'where is it all going to stop?'⁴²

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 24 Sept. 1907, 2, 3, reprint *Argus*, n.d.

³⁸ *Mercury*, 13 April 1907, 3, 8

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 19 April 1907, 7, 7

⁴⁰ JPPP, 1908, paper 39

⁴¹ *Mercury*, 15 April 1907, 3, 8

⁴² *Ibid.*, correspondence, 13 May 1907, 3, 8

Probably the most effective measure employed by Neale in the long term counter-thrust to resistance to the new school health and hygiene measures was to educate the teachers on the subject. This was done through courses for students at the Philip Smith Training College and through courses which teachers had to undergo in order to receive the salary increments and to be installed as permanent teachers with the department. An understanding of these courses is afforded by the questions of the Christmas examinations of 1906 for provisional teachers. During a one hour examination the candidates had to answer all of the following questions:

1. Why is a good supply of pure air so very important in schoolrooms? What are the principal ways in which the air of occupied rooms may be rendered impure?
2. What are the reasons for always keeping schoolrooms as clean as possible?
3. What is the best direction for the light to come from when children are learning to write? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What is the principal manner in which consumption is spread from the sick to the healthy?⁴³

The questions were in fact a summary question for chapters in Elkington's *Health Reader*. Similar examination questions were published in the *Record* for the 1907 and 1908 Christmas examinations. One can only suppose that the students at the training college underwent courses of at least a similar standard and that Elkington's *Health Reader* was used as a basic text.⁴⁴

⁴³ E R, 3, 2, May 1907, p. 23

⁴⁴ In the basement of the Southern Teachers Centre, Hobart, once the Philip Smith Training College, there is a collection of Elkington's *Health Readers*, many of which bare the accession date stamp of 1908. (19 Aug. 1983)

3 Drs Elkington's and Halley's Achievements

By 1908 the ideals of the school health and hygiene movement were being generated in Tasmanian society. The *Daily Post* gave much editorial space to a resolution passed at the Premiers' Conference held in Melbourne. The resolution urged that all Australian states adopt a uniform system of medical inspection and fully utilise the services of the Commonwealth Statistician. The paper urged other Australian states to develop the system used in Tasmania. For the *Daily Post*, the reasons for this development were unquestionably nationalistic:

Germany, with a mighty army to keep recruited, has looked to it that her school children are physically sound and medically tended and nurtured if they are not ... [Tasmanian state school medical inspection had shown that children] were often so unfitted for school work that the State was not getting the value of money spent on their education ...⁴⁵

The *Critic* some months later wrote in a similar vein, but, particularly applauded the work being done by Elkington and Halley.⁴⁶

At the 1908 Australian Medical Congress Halley was applauded at the completion of her paper. The congress congratulated Tasmania on the work it was doing, especially in that the state did not limit its health program in schools to 'mere inspection', but also concentrated on supervision. Speakers hoped that other states would follow Tasmania's example: 'what was good for Tasmania, was good for the rest of the Commonwealth.'⁴⁷ The congress argued for national statistics based on the type being gathered in Tasmania.

⁴⁵ *Daily Post*, editorial, 19 Sept. 1908, 2, 2-3

⁴⁶ *Critic*, editorial, 19 Sept. 1908, 2, 2-3

⁴⁷ *Daily Post*, 24 Oct. 1908, 5, 6-7

At the 1908 Congress of the National Council of Women. Halley gave a lengthy address which detailed the countries from which Tasmania was being influenced in its school health program and described the Tasmanian program in details. At a recent international congress held in London it was shown that even with the advances in England and Tasmania other countries were pioneering new ground. In Hungary, for example, the appointment of a school physician was well established; the scope and method work there in school hygiene was exemplary. Many of the states of the United States, too, were showing the way, particularly in the cities of New York, Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia. There were over 300 school doctors in the United States. Even in the Argentine Republic there was a medical inspection of schools. But, the *Mercury* reported, Japan led the way with over 9 000 medical inspectors of schools.⁴⁸

In Tasmania Halley pointed out the emphasis was not on compiling a number of anthropometrical statistics, which were useful, but required either a large number of staff inspectors or entailed much extra time by teachers. Here the emphasis concerned economic efficiency of schools: children could not learn efficiently with either defective eyesight, hearing, or working under poor hygienic conditions. Halley maintained that isolating and remedying these defects formed an essential part of the school medical officer's role. Epidemics of infectious diseases might break out in schools which could mean the loss of life, money and time to the community. The early recognition of the disease, and the prevention of its spread was another major concern for the school medical officers.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Mercury*, 27 Feb. 1908, 2, 4-5

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

In the city schools every child on enrolling was completely examined: height and weight measurements were made, and hearing and eyesight tested; any history of infectious diseases was recorded; personal peculiarities, including the existence of club feet, curvature of the spine, and the marked presence of adenoids were recorded. The classroom teachers, too, were asked to record any impressions of physical or mental abnormalities. The child's medical record was held in a central registry, kept by the head teacher. The city schools were visited by a medical officer at least once a week. If a child required any treatment the parents were contacted and urged to have the child treated by the family doctor.⁵⁰

The work in the country schools differed from the city schools, although the objectives remained the same. Teachers were not given any notice of Halley's visits, because she wanted to see the actual conditions of the schools without any 'dressing up' which may have occurred if notice were given of her visit. At the country schools the examinations and the records were the same as at the city schools, but the doctor also furnished a complete report on all aspects of the hygiene of the building, furniture, outhouses and playground.

Between March 1907 and June 1908, 11 287 children were examined in Tasmanian schools. Of these, 4 158 children or 36.83 percent, were found to be suffering from some form of physical defect to an extent which interfered with or was likely to interfere shortly with their educational progress.⁵¹

At the training college Halley followed Swiss and American examples. She cited Dr Combe, 'an eminent Swiss authority' who had stated that 'it is necessary that all teachers and all school authorities of whatever degree, should

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

understand school hygiene and be interested therein'. Halley gave weekly lectures at the college. The emphasis in the lectures fell on the practical, rather than the theoretical. 'Only as much elementary anatomy and physiology were given as was necessary to interest the teachers in methods and principles.' Because unhygienic buildings were going to be a fact of life for most trainee teachers on entering the service, 'it was useless to lecture to teachers on elaborate schemes of ventilation, heating, etc. of schoolrooms'. Halley explained to the students how to make the most hygienic use of the existing schools, 'how by a little management a close, stuffy room could be converted into one where the children could breathe properly, and would not become tired and inattentive to the efforts of a cross and unreasonable teacher'.⁵²

Halley drew on English and Swiss experience of having a program of 'chats' with mothers in country and city schools on child health and hygiene'. Lasting success in the schools could only be achieved if correct habits were formed at home. Halley reported the success of these sessions which were particularly important because often they reached 'a class that it was difficult to come into contact with in any other way'. Printed invitations were sent out to mothers. During the last three months of 1907 twenty two of these sessions were held with an average attendance of between sixty and seventy mothers. The meetings were held at the Launceston and Hobart schools about every month. And, of course, this was less frequent in country schools. During the meetings informal discussions centred on infectious diseases, minor accidents, infant feeding, and home nursing. These sessions helped convince mothers that the school hygiene movement 'was no mere fad, but a real practical assistance to the progress and prospects of their children'.⁵³ Halley later told the members

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

of the Australian Medical Congress that 'many of the mothers in the country walk 2 or 3 miles at attend'.⁵⁴

Richard Smith, a man respected for his commonsense and frankness, gave another official view of the progress of the school health and hygiene movement during its formative years. He remembered the dark days when 'things were in a bad state'. Now the visits of the school medical inspectors had many beneficial effects. Class teachers were able to notify them of cases which needed attention, or seek advice to handle a problem by themselves in the classroom. There had been 'a perceptible improvement' in personal hygiene. For the children, 'the brightness manifested in their faces on the approach of the doctor, and their evident desire to attract his attention if anything is wrong with them, show that they appreciate these visits'. Elkington's public lectures which were also published in the *Record*, 'aroused the attention throughout the country of all connected with education'. Halley's chats with parents 'helped considerably'. As acting inspector over a two year period, Smith was 'pleased to notice that a very great deal more attention is now paid to matters concerning the health and comfort of the children'.⁵⁵

Elkington took a leading role in the call for the compilation of national statistics on school health and hygiene. Even during the 1905 Australian Medical Congress there was a suggestion for the need for national statistics so that an overall view could be attained. By the end of 1907 there was a move initiated by Elkington and first supported by his counterpart in South Australia to have each state 'undergo physical, mental and pathological observations of school children on a uniform basis for comparison purposes and that the figures ... be

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Richard Smith, 'The Medical Inspection of Schools from a Teacher's Standpoint', *E R*, 4, 7, Dec. 1908, p. 100

collected by Mr Knibbs, the Federal Statistician'.⁵⁶ Although a move was made at the 1908 Premier's Conference to this end, and the Commonwealth Government had offered every assistance, the ideal was not realised until 1912.

Elkington left Tasmania for a new job as Commissioner of Health for the Queensland Government on 17 December 1909.⁵⁷ For the *Mercury* his departure had to 'be regarded with general regret'. He had set himself 'a very high standard of duty and ... courageously acted up to it'. He had found many things which needed 'the application of vigorous measures, and [was] never known to hesitate in his duty'. The *Mercury* believed that he left the state 'in a hygienic condition far in advance of that in which he found it'. The paper considered that if he had not achieved all he had set out to do, it was not his fault. The fault lay, in the *Mercury's* view, in those Tasmanians who had showed 'resistance or indifference'. Here the Hobart paper could well have been referring to the reactionary elements within the teaching profession, or to the members of the local boards of advice who guarded their interests in favour of reform in the health and hygiene of their schools. Perhaps with Neale in mind, the paper stated that like all strong men Elkington made mistakes - 'the inevitable mistakes where there is zeal!'

Elkington was eulogised for his work in Tasmania by some notable Australians before he left. For example Dr Carty Salmon, one time Minister for Public Instruction and Commissioner for Customs in Victoria, declared that Elkington's achievements in Tasmania, in imagination and effect, went beyond anything else in other Australian states.⁵⁸ The *Daily Post* in supporting Salmon's views on Elkington declared that because of ignorance of Elkington's

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 12 Dec. 1907, 6, 2-3

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, editorial, 17 Dec. 1909, 4, 6

⁵⁸ *Daily Post*, 18 Dec. 1908, 5, 4-5

ideals, and a misplaced sense of interference with individual liberties, Elkington had come under undue opposition and criticism.⁵⁹ The paper concluded that such opposition had to be expected because school hygiene was a science still in its infancy, and that when it was more thoroughly understood by the public and more widely practised so much improved would be national efficiency.⁶⁰

Halley left Tasmania four months later for a similar position in New South Wales as she held in Tasmania. The *Daily Post*, again, praised her achievements, and also placed in perspective the reason for both doctors transfers. The paper asserted that Halley's retirement was 'another instance of the false economy practised by the State'. The paper charged that Halley's salary of £300 was inadequate for the work that she performed. It was no secret, the paper declared, that she resigned because a better position and salary had been offered her in New South Wales. Thus, for the *Daily Post*, it would have been better economy for the state to pay her a fair salary and thus have continuity in the work. It declared:

Dr Halley is admitted to be the best medical woman in Australia for the work on which she has been engaged, and the salary which she has been paid here was altogether inadequate.⁶¹

4 Developments Under McCoy: Drs Hogg, Clark and Ormiston

During August 1910 Dr Isobel Ormiston took over the duties vacated by Halley.⁶² She proved to be just as forceful in her drive as did her predecessor. During 1911 school nurses were appointed in each of the Hobart and

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 21 Dec. 1908, 6, 5

⁶⁰ For a list of Tasmanians who attended Elkington's farewell ceremony and a brief statement of their views on his work see *ibid.*, 15 Dec. 1909, 5, 7

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 16 March 1909, 6, 4

⁶² JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 18

Launceston districts to back up the part-time services of Dr Clark and Dr Hogg. They were to work particularly with children from the poorer families through the outpatient's clinics at the two general hospitals. This sustained the growth of the school medical service in Tasmania's two major cities.⁶³ At the beginning of 1914 the new Labor Government's Minister for Education, Lyons announced the appointment of two additional full-time medical officers, and new arrangements for administration. One doctor was to be centred at Burnie, and the other at Launceston. Now there were three full-time doctors, two part-time doctors, and two full-time nurses. The part-time doctors continued to make weekly inspections in the Hobart and Launceston schools. The full-time doctors each had a district beyond the areas of Launceston, Burnie and Hobart. It was expected that all children in state schools would come under observation once every two years. The city children were better treated. They could expect a visit by a medical officer to their schools once every two weeks.⁶⁴

By 1911 Hogg from the Launceston district was becoming very outspoken in the progressive cause. There had been some advances made, Hogg stated in reviewing the progress since his appointment five years before, the most striking was the improved hygienic arrangements of the school buildings. The general cleanliness of the children, too, had improved. 'Then a large percentage of children had verminous heads, some had body-lice, some scabies; today in some schools, there is not a dirty head to be seen.' This, Hogg attributed to the effectiveness of the school nurse in her follow-up program. But the system, for Hogg, was far from perfect. What was needed were school clinics for on-the-spot treatment. Hogg maintained that, 'all authorities' agreed that 'medical inspection, pure and simple is, and should be a thing of the past'. To give

63 JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 20

64 *Daily Post*, 2 Fe. 1914, 5, 3

weight to his argument he quoted Sir George Newman, the Medical Adviser to the English Board of Education, who had stated:

The complete expression of the principle of associating all methods of treatment with methods of prevention ... [required that school clinics] should form an integral part of the organisation of medical inspection in every populous area.⁶⁵

Hogg while on his 1909 trip to Europe had found that all authorities were agreed about the necessity of school clinics, and about the unsuitability of the use of the hospitals. Hogg argued that 'the school clinic is a necessity if the State wishes to educate the child, and to fit him to receive the education the State provides'.⁶⁶ The Albuera Street School in Hobart, completed in 1913, was the first school to have a clinic included in its original design.

The aims and the methods of the medical inspections were much the same as before. The main duties of the medical officers were to examine the children for physical defects, in sight, hearing, and post nasal growths; and through the school head teacher they were to inform parents of these defects in order that a private medical practitioner could treat them. The medical officers also were to report on the hygienic state of school buildings, and to work as directed in relation to child epidemics. They were to lecture to students at the East Launceston Practising School, the Philip Smith Training College, to girls at the Hobart and Launceston high schools, and to examine teachers who applied for any form of leave of absence whenever directed to do so by the Director of Education.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 21. The quotation from Newman is unreferenced. Newman's work as the Chief Medical Officer of the British Board of Education undoubtedly was influential in Tasmania. His annual reports often formed the subject matter for public comment. See, for example, *Daily Post*, editorial, 12 Jan. 1911, 4, 3-4

⁶⁶ JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 22

⁶⁷ *Mercury*, 2 Feb. 1914, 4, 6

Some of the school doctors could report enthusiastically on the development in the schools' health and hygiene. Clarke in his 1915 report reviewed the progress of the first ten years of the scheme in Hobart. 'The most striking change', the doctor stated, 'is the appearance of the children, neatness and cleanliness being the rule, untidiness and neglect, the exception.'⁶⁸ Clarke saw another improvement over the ten years. The number of children suffering from 'nervous disease and overstrain' had greatly decreased. Of the first 1 200 children he examined in 1905, 20 were suffering from overstrain. For the 700 children he examined during 1915, Clarke detected, 'one case of chorea ... and one of overstrain sufficiently marked to require exclusion for rest'. Clarke attributed this to 'better teaching methods, especially in the junior classes', and to an increased awareness by teachers in children's health and hygiene.⁶⁹ The percentage of children suffering from adenoid disorders, Clarke noted, as much the same as ten years before, but now almost every case was treated. The number of eye defects had decreased over the ten years, too, but owing to different standards of measurement, an exact comparison could not be made. The most notable improvement had come in the teachers' attitudes to the medical inspections. Clarke claimed:

Hostility from fear of losing pupils and from indifference has given place to the most hearty co-operation, not only from head teachers, but from the majority of the class teachers, whose interests in the health and well-being of their children increases from year to year ...⁷⁰

Dr Ethel Hawkins who was in charge of the country districts in the south of the state was less enthusiastic than Clarke and Elkington.⁷¹ She was addressing herself to the question of community attitudes when she stated that the number of parents who attend meetings when the medical officer visited the school was

⁶⁸ JPPP, 1916, paper 4, p. 27

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Daily Post*, 3 Dec. 1915, 3, 9

'far from satisfactory'. The number of children she was able to treat as a result of her visits to schools was very small compared to the number of parents to whom she sent notices. Parents would often promise to visit her but would fail to do so. She argued for a follow-up system such as the city schools had.⁷²

Ormiston attended the 1914 Victoria League Health Conference in London. She was in the august company of two of Australia's foremost progressives: Dr James Barrett (health and town planning) and Peter Board (education). Here she could provide an even more objective assessment of Tasmania's progress in school health and hygiene. She stated:

We look forward to the time when the common drinking mug and the roller towel are abolished. I have frequently seen the latter used in the place of a pocket handkerchief by children with colds, and is thus rendered a ready source of infection. The parents, too, require instruction as to what is best for the welfare of their child: such important factors as food and clothing being entirely in their hands. Too often are children sent to school for the whole of the day with a small packet of bread and jam as their only nourishment to tide them over about eight hours of the day. This fact shows a complete ignorance of food values. It is difficult, too, to get mothers to realise how important is the care of the teeth. When notified of the presence of post-nasal growths, too often their reply is, 'the child will grow out of it at fourteen', not realising that by that age all the harm that can be done is done, and cannot be remedied. These two defects, are undoubtedly the most common source of physical unfitness amongst the school children in Tasmania.⁷³

Circumstances were no more encouraging in relation to medical treatment by the medical officers in country districts, according to Ormiston. She argued the obvious fact that unless affected children received adequate medical treatment the money spent on examinations was wasted. She urged state intervention, pointing out that if parents could not afford treatment, or were unwilling, then the state ought to have the power to intervene. 'No child should be forced to

⁷² See, for example, *ibid.*, 25 Nov. 1911, 4, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 27 Aug. 1910, 5, 3-4

⁷³ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 30

grow up perhaps maimed for life for lack of medical aid in early childhood.' She contended that it was incredible that the state had power to punish parents who failed to send their children to school, but willingly allowed parents to ignore the medical advice of the school medical officers 'on the more important subject of their health'. Ormiston went on to allude to the differences that the provision of a school nurse made in the city schools. Here the weekly follow-up to the examinations had led to 'remarkable results'. She gave the example of where she had assisted in an examination of two large city schools, and had found that eighty percent of the children had parasites in their hair. Two years later an examination of the same two schools revealed three 'dirty heads' in one school, and four in the other. She stated that the system of follow-up provided a ninety percent success rate in city schools, and an eighty eight percent success in country schools. Tasmania, with a population of 191 211 people, the doctor continued, spent £45 000 annually on hospitals and sanatoria, £23 000 on the care of the insane, but only £700 on the medical inspection of school children.⁷⁴

The comparatively slow development of community response to the measures being adopted by the school medical officers, and the increasing call for more thorough-going measures by the school medical officers found sympathy amongst some sections of Tasmanian society, particularly elements of the Labor movement. By April 1910 the *Daily Post* was declaring:

Parental indifference should not be allowed to affect the child, and there seems no other way of combating it than by making it compulsory for children to be placed under proper treatment when it is required ... It is the duty of the State to guard against this, and as it throws on a parent the duty of maintaining his children it has the same justification for requiring him to provide treatment for them when they are physically defective.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Daily Post*, 27 April 1910, 4, 3-4

Other editorials by the *Daily Post* throughout the second decade of the century pushed similar arguments. All were closely related to the issue of national efficiency.⁷⁶

McCoy took some action in 1917 to remedy the problem of the poor quality of the follow-up services in country districts by appointing two bush nurses as part-time nurses.⁷⁷ A more thorough-going solution to the problem in the country schools was not forthcoming prior to McCoy's departure from Tasmania at the war's end.

5 The Establishment of School Dental Clinics

The history of dental care in Tasmanian state schools begins with Elkington's report of the 1906 survey. Of the 1,207 teeth examined, 1,119 required either fillings or extractions; only six and a half percent of the children were without cavities in their teeth. Elkington contended:

The conditions required urgent action. As there is probably no more prolific source of ill-health and underdevelopment in later life than that arising from seriously decayed and defective teeth during childhood and adolescence.⁷⁸

The government failed to act.

Soon Elkington's report was tabled and the question of state funded dental examination and care for state school children again was made public. This time it was put to the board of management of the Hobart General Hospital by the superintendent of the Boys' Training School at New Town that a dental department should be established at the hospital to care for children under state

⁷⁶ See, for example, *ibid.*, editorial, 25 Nov. 1911, 4, 6, *ibid.*, editorial, 27 Aug. 1910, 4, 3-4

⁷⁷ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 6

⁷⁸ *Mercury*, 8 Nov. 1906, 1-2, op. cit.

supervision, and for the poor of the city, generally. The hospital board asked Elkington to take the question up with the Premier, and give the matter 'an early and favourable consideration'.⁷⁹ The dental department at the hospital was established soon after, but the boys' teeth at the New Town Training School went unattended.

Mr L. Rodway, the dental surgeon at the newly established dental department at the hospital took the case of the dental care for the boys in the Training School up again during 1911. He asked the government to support financially his department's care for the boys' teeth. Hitherto the only dental care the boys received were extractions when the teeth were badly decayed. Rodway, in his request to the Chief Secretary, suggested that the boys at the Training School were 'not alone in being left in a state of neglect, as far as their teeth are concerned'.⁸⁰ There is some evidence of growing public support for the cause. The *Daily Post* drew its readers' attention to the work being done in dental care by the Cambridge Education Authority in England.⁸¹ In a *Mercury* editorial, the case for state provided dental care for state school children was taken up and extended. The paper claimed that children were not generally taught dental care, and a provision should be made in the state schools' curriculum.⁸² The editorial really posed little threat to the Tasmanian dental profession because it did not suggest that the state should provide free dental care for state school children, but rather that state schools should teach the children how to care for their teeth, so that there would be no need to raise the question of the state providing free dental care. Certainly there is no evidence to suggest that the boys at the New Town Training School were provided by the state with any better dental care following Rodway's submission.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 13 April 1906, 5, 1

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 14 Jan. 1911, 7, 8

⁸¹ *Daily Post*, 12 Oct. 1910, 4, 2

⁸² *Mercury*, editorial, 10 Aug. 1912, 4, 5

The cause was then taken up by Hogg during 1912 who suggested that a school dental clinic should be established in Launceston.⁸³ At the Australian Dental Congress held during the same year, with Mr Robert Sharp representing Tasmanian dentists, 'motions urging that Government dental officers be appointed in all States' were submitted.⁸⁴ The Tasmanian government was unmoved. Hogg again argued in his annual report for the establishment of a school dental clinic.⁸⁵ The following year Hogg presented statistical evidence to the request. He wrote that he roughly classified children's teeth

... as 'bad' where there were numerous decayed teeth, often foul and suppurating; 'medium', where, although decayed, teeth were present, the mouth was not in a very healthy state; 'good', not more than two decayed teeth, and mouth comparatively healthy. Number examined, 642. Bad, 233; medium, 219, good, 190 ...⁸⁶

The government remained unmoved.

The onset of the war, and the obvious condition of the young recruits' teeth shook the government into action. Dental clinics were established in Launceston and Hobart during 1916. McCoy soon had a *Mercury* representative visit the Hobart clinic at the old Battery Point Model School. Also in attendance were the Premier and Minister for Education, the Attorney-General, and the Minister for Lands and Works. McCoy explained that all the children in the Hobart state schools were examined by the medical officer, and where dental treatment was required, a notice was sent to parents. About a month was allowed to pass in order that the parents had time to have the teeth treated by a private dentist. Following this period the children with untreated teeth were treated at the school dental clinic. Here emphasis was placed on

⁸³ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 22

⁸⁴ *Mercury*, 8 July 1912, 6, 5

⁸⁵ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 27

⁸⁶ JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 24

conservation of teeth and not extraction. McCoy explained to the *Mercury* that the Tasmanian Dental Association had resolved that it gave full support to the department's methods.⁸⁷

McCoy told the Tasmanian public through the medium of the *Mercury*, that in size and efficiency of its equipment, the Hobart Clinic was superior to its counterpart in Sydney. 'Mr McCoy has himself seen the Sydney clinic, so is able to speak with some authority on the score.' McCoy had also read of similar clinics in other parts of the world, 'and believed he could safely say it was equal, if not superior, to any other in existence'. The wait was indeed worthwhile. The clinic was divided into a surgery and a waiting room, both of which were 'exceedingly lofty and well-lighted'. The walls and the ceiling were painted in a white enamel, which presented 'a spotlessly clean appearance'. The equipment was thoroughly modern, which included a dental chair of 'the most improved type'. There was a dental drill, powered by an engine, a sterilising apparatus, and a swing table for all instruments as required. There was hot water laid on, as well as a dental spittoon connected to a sewerage system. A handsome case for the storage of the dental instruments was also on hand. Health and hygiene pervaded the whole surgery. The old building had had its windows enlarged to provide more natural light. The department 'had been fortunate in securing the services of Mr Hugh Fraser, a well-known and highly skilled practitioner ... and an ex-pupil of the Hobart State High School, as dental assistant'. Most appealing to the progressive mind was the elaborate system of charts used to record the services.⁸⁸

Hogg was equally enthusiastic about the Launceston dental clinic, 'commenced modestly and without any blaze of trumpets'. He knew of 'nothing more

⁸⁷ *Mercury*, 5 Aug. 1916, 10, 6-7

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

important in the educational life of Tasmania, or of no improvement which can exert a more potent power for good amongst the growing children in the State'. Mr A. Brown, the school dentist in Launceston, was 'a most capable officer'. More importantly for Hogg, the dentist was a kind, genial and sympathetic man, who had his clinic 'thronged by the children who with their parents, appreciated the good work which is being carried on ... Truly, many generations of Tasmanians will rise up to call it a blessed event.'⁸⁹ Two years later Hogg's enthusiasm was waning. He complained that although the clinic was proving a blessing to many of the Launceston children its effectiveness was impaired by it frequently being sent to the country districts.⁹⁰ But, one supposes that the use which the country children in Tasmania were able to make of the Hobart and Launceston dental clinics was relatively less than the use made of it by the Launceston and Hobart children.

A conference of school medical officers was held in Sydney at the end of 1916.⁹¹ It was attended by delegates from South Australia, Victoria, New Zealand and Tasmania. The main object of the conference was to establish common standards in examination, records and treatment in both the medical and dental care of state school children. It also was decided at the conference to form a society of school medical officers, and to have a biennial conference in each state in turn. The school health and hygiene movement had come of age.

6 The Importance of Reform in School Health and Hygiene

Reform in the principles and practices of health and hygiene in Tasmanian state primary schools was of a pioneering nature, Elkington, by the time of his

⁸⁹ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 32

⁹⁰ JPPP, 1919, paper 4, p. 13

⁹¹ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 30

departure from Tasmania was gaining national acclaim for his work. Success in the reform in school health and hygiene helped to engender a public confidence in progressive education in Tasmania during a time when progressive education was under attack in certain parts of Tasmania. Backed by a more politically acceptable administration progress in school health and hygiene was further developed during McCoy's directorship. If there were areas of resistance, they were very localised and were not evident at a political level in parliament. Moreover, the results of medical examinations of Tasmania's youth during the war further endorsed the need for improved school health and hygiene. The pursuit of reform in school health and hygiene was a part of the wider demand for social hygiene and national efficiency. Thus the values of elements of progressivism affected the development of Tasmanian state primary schools through the principles and practices of school health and hygiene. Moreover, school health and hygiene also brought with it the authority and values of science. In this respect it helped to endorse scientific progressive education and the 'science' of educational administration.

The overall effect was to add another facet to school life for Tasmanian children. Now, not only did the state provide free, compulsory and secular education, but it also administered care for the children's health and hygiene. The school medical officer and the school dentist were two additional professionals who worked with teachers in the care of children who attended state schools. Of course, the school health and hygiene movement brought to teachers the need to study the principles and practices of school health and hygiene. This added another dimension to teachers' professional preparation which assisted the general level of educational development in the state, moving teachers to Beeby's Stage of Formalism in educational development.

The presence of other professionals in schools, tending to matters with children other than teaching, in a sense, prepared Tasmanian state primary schools for a development which would follow in the 'twenties: the presence of the educational psychologist in schools. School psychologists and school medical officers pursued similar ideals.

CHAPTER 7

STATE SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE

In surveying the history of nineteenth century state school architecture in Victoria, Burchell concluded that contrary to public opinion the schools erected after 1865 were admirably functional and well suited to contemporary requirements.¹ Addressing himself to the issue of excessively ornate school buildings in the large towns and the cities of Victoria, Burchell concluded that both for the education authority and society at large the criteria for success was what was 'measurable and visible'. 'Thus the demand was for more buildings, rather than better buildings, for imposing exteriors, rather than efficient interiors.' Burchell contends that the plain but functional rural school building 'with thin unchanging exteriors, are more honest than their larger urban brothers'.² Burchell concluded his study by pointing out:

A true revolution in school architecture did not arrive until the twentieth century. Characteristically it was the outcome of a complete change in educational priorities and, more particularly, in teaching methods and school organization.³

It would be reasonable to draw the same conclusions, too, concerning Tasmanian state school during the nineteenth century. Here, during the period 1858-1888, Henry Hunter was most important. Freeland shows that 'this enthusiastic devotee of Gothic architecture designed commercial and civic buildings throughout the island'.⁴ His contribution to state school architecture was enormous. He designed many school buildings, two of which were the

1 Lawrence Burchell, *Victorian Schools: A Study in Colonial Government Architecture 1837-1900*, M.U.P., Melbourne, 1980, p. 172

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 J.M. Freeland, *Architecture in Australia: A History*, Pelican Books, Melbourne, 1972, p. 155

Goulburn Street School in Hobart (plate 1) and the Irish Town School on Tasmania's far north west coast. (plate 2) Both of these designs conform to the conclusions drawn by Burchell in his study of Victorian state school architecture.

Schools alone did not feel the effects of the new architectural spirit evident in western countries at the turn of the century.⁵ Internationally there was no more an important exponent of progressive architecture than Frank Lloyd Wright who pioneered and mastered the use of horizontal lines inspired by nature. Freeland shows that Australian architecture responded to the new ideals emerging during the first two decades of the century. The rural ideal and the desire for social hygiene influenced the development of the town planning movement. Moreover, architects now were able to use reinforced concrete to allow for more light and air in buildings.⁶ Godfrey and Cleary attest to the influence of the school health and hygiene movement on English school architecture.⁷

The influence of architecture on 'the evolution of the race' was a topic of public concern gaining currency by 1905. The *Mercury* in an editorial on the effect of architecture on the evolution of the race maintained:

Mean and sordid surroundings foster mean and sordid ideas. They tend to lower the moral sense.⁸

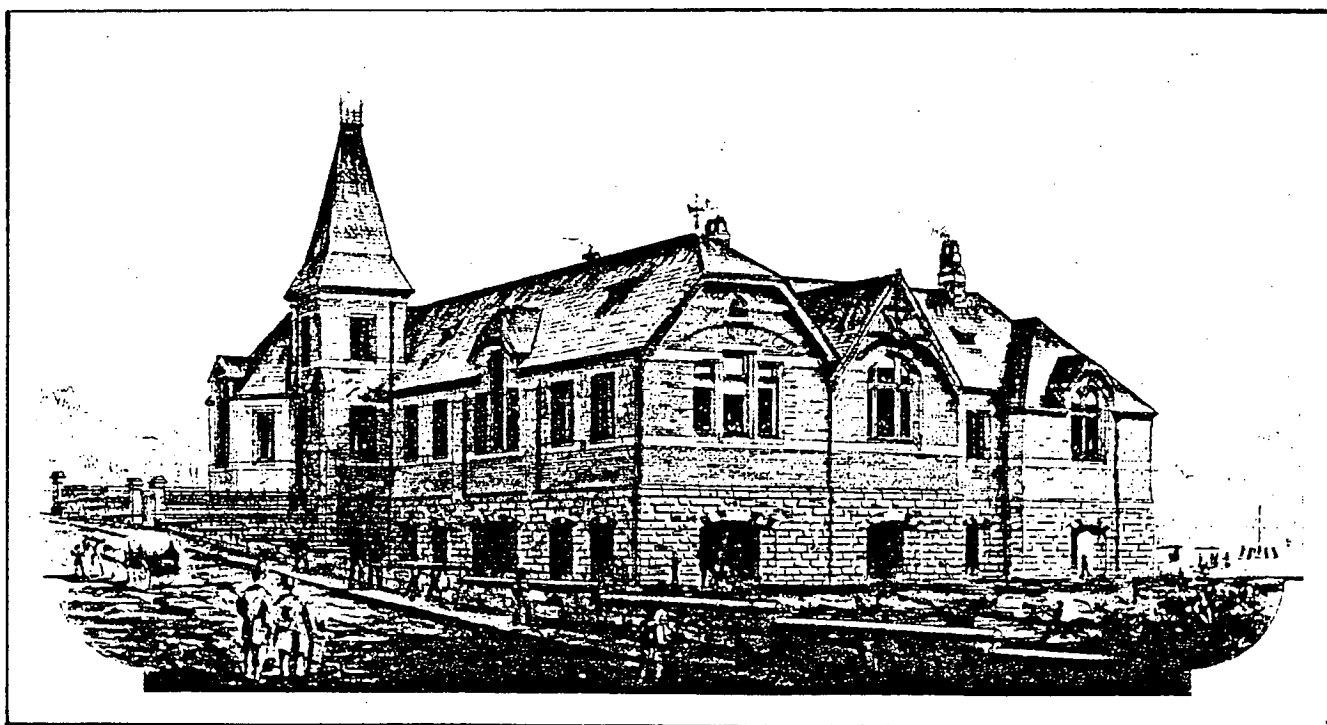
In the same editorial the *Mercury* stressed the detrimental effect that poor housing had on individuals, and particularly their efficiency as workers. The concern for improved hygienic architecture for public and private dwellings increased dramatically during the years 1904-9. Mention of it was seldom

5. J.M. Richards, *An Introduction to Modern Architecture*, Pelican Books, London 1940, Chap. 5

6. M. Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, *op. cit.*, Chap. 10

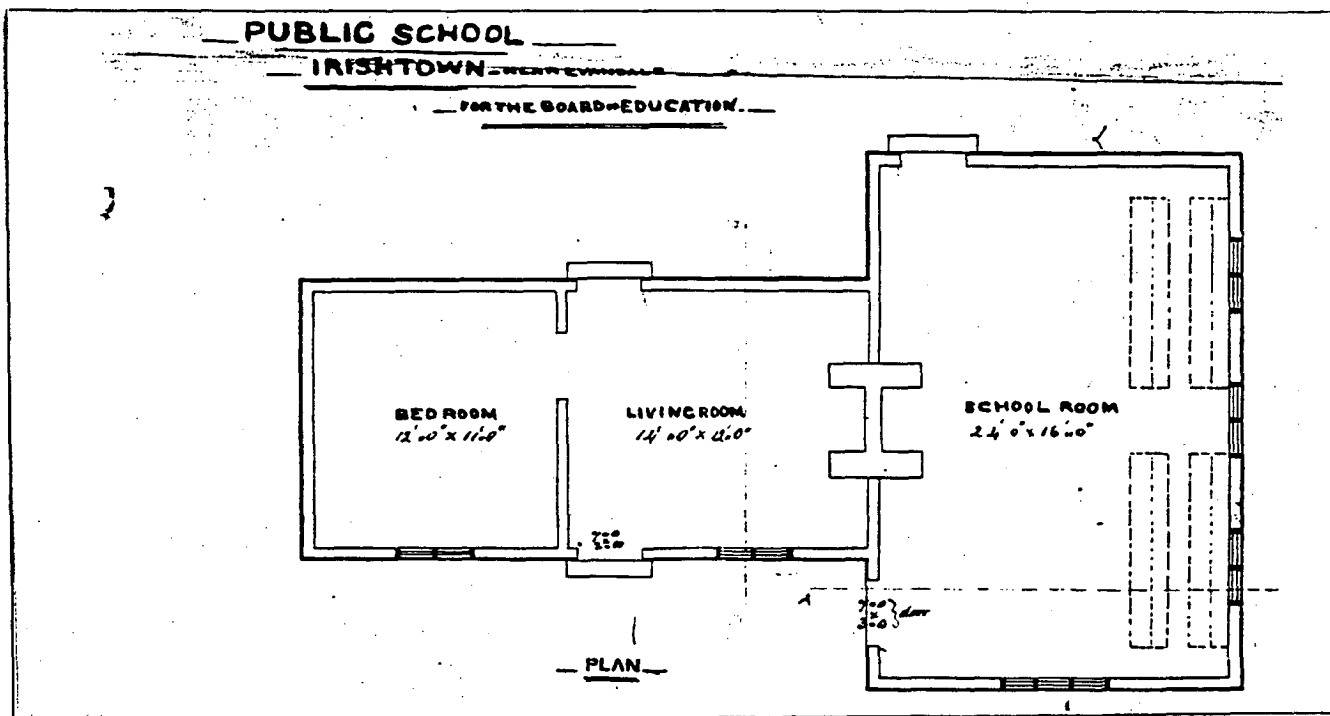
7. J.A. Godfrey and R. Castle Cleary, *School Design and Construction*, The Architectural Press, London, 1953, p. 27

8. *Mercury*, editorial, 7 Feb. 1905, 4, 5-6



Goulburn Street School (Henry Hunter)

Plate 1



Irish Town School

Plate 2

absent from the press. Journalism was often used to expose the problem in Hobart. At times these articles were in the style of the best of American muckraking journalism. For example, a series run by the *Mercury* during May 1905 was of this kind.⁹ Moreover, when some renowned mainland visitors were interviewed while in Hobart, they were often pressed to respond to questions regarding public health and architecture. For example, Dr Strong, head of the Australian Church in Melbourne and renowned progressive, was in Hobart holidaying with Lovel during 1906. When interviewed by the *Mercury* he spoke out on reform in public architecture.¹⁰ The *Daily Post*, too, gave the problem much space. In an editorial in July 1908 the paper declared that the Molle Street slum in Hobart was worse than that to be seen in Port Said, 'the filthiest sea port on the face of the earth'.¹¹ Elkington also was tireless in his pursuit of developing a public and government consciousness of the problem. He gave many lectures on the topic and worked vigorously in his capacity of Chief Health Officer to remedy the problem.¹² An influential group in the fight for architectural reform was the local examining board for the Royal Sanitary Institute (England).¹³

Associated with the problem of the need for architecture reform for private housing was the issue of infant mortality.¹⁴ As with the issue of the school health and hygiene movement the problem was often set in the context of 'race suicide' and portrayed in dramatic newspaper articles.¹⁵ One practical outcome of this problem was the children's hospitals established in Launceston and Hobart.¹⁶

9 For example, see, *ibid.*, 9 May 1905, 3, 2-3

10 *Ibid.*, 5 March 1906, 3, 2-3

11 *Daily Post*, editorial, 6 July 1908, 6, 2-3

12 See for example, *Mercury*, 1 July 1907, 4, 7; *ibid.*, 20 July 1906, 2, 7-8; *ibid.*, 17 Aug. 1907, 6, 4

13 For a list of examiners and the institute's role in Tasmania see *ibid.*, 4 March 1908, 4, 8

14 See for example, *ibid.*, 27 July 1907, 6, 2

15 *Ibid.*, 8 April 1908, 7, 2-3

16 See for example, *ibid.*, 27 July 1907, 8, 4

With these social issues as a backdrop, hygienic school architecture was a burning political issue in Tasmania during our period. For example, when the Minister of Education accompanied Neale on a tour of the midland schools, the *Daily Post* gave great emphasis to their observations of school buildings.¹⁷ Public concern for improved school architecture was increased by news from the United States of the death of 180 children by a school fire.¹⁸ The *Daily Post* pursued the matter of improved school architecture with a series on unhygienic Tasmanian state schools.¹⁹

1 W.L. Neale and Dr J.S.C. Elkington: Early Developments: Rhetoric and Reality

Throughout Elkington's public lectures held during the autumn and winter of 1905 at the technical school, reference was made to the effects of unsanitary school buildings on the health of the Tasmanian children.²⁰ In the autumn of 1905 Neale could remark that the 'genial doctor's enthusiastic work is highly appreciated and is already producing results'. Perhaps Neale's latter phrase may have been more of an exhortation to action than a description of actual events. Still, the body of Elkington's lectures dealt specifically with the problems of public hygiene and school architecture, problems which Neale had pointed to in his 1904 report: ventilation, lighting, interiors and furniture, and sanitary provisions.

17 *Daily Post*, 22 June 1908, 5, 7

18 *Mercury*, 8 April 1908, 5, 7

19 See for example, *Daily Post*, 5 June 1909, 5, 4-5. Frances Edwards wrote many articles during this period for the *Daily Post* on child health.

20 E R, 1, 1, March, April 1905, p.p. 8, 9

Public and professional awareness was being developed and the ever-present fear of child epidemics ensured that there was a sympathetic public audience amongst the literate middle and upper classes at least, particularly those in the larger cities. In order for Neale to carry public, and therefore political opinion with him he had to alert the Tasmanians what was happening elsewhere in the world in relation to the progressive development of school architecture. For example he had printed in the *Record* a reprint of a Melbourne *Argus* article of 24 March 1905 which explained that the Victorian Treasurer, Thomas Bent, allocated £10 000 for the purpose of improving the sanitary conditions of city and country schools. Neale made it clear through the *Argus* article that 'much of the sickness from which women teachers suffer is due to the bad arrangements in the schools'.²¹

In Neale's first report to his minister as director he proclaimed that Elkington was 'a rare specialist in school hygiene and school construction', and that for himself he

unhesitatingly endorsed everything [Elkington] had said on these matters, [but] if the parents of the children knew the mischief to body, mind, and morals being silently wrought through all the hours of school life by defective schoolrooms and furniture they would not wait to be aroused by enthusiasts in health and education reform. By far the most profitable investment we could make would be a few thousand pounds a year into modernizing school buildings.²²

To push his point in parliament and to the Tasmanian public, Neale proclaimed that education had now been embraced by economics. 'It pays in hard cash to have properly educated children.' Neale argued that if the state invested money in hygienic school buildings surrounded by wide playgrounds the return would

²¹ E R, 1, 1, March, April, 1905, p.p. 7, 8

²² JPPP, 1906, paper 12, p. 6

be 'in the shape of healthy, normal-sighted, and well-developed boys and girls, capable of much effective, continuous, and happy service'.²³

The Premier's education statement to the Tasmanian parliament in the spring of 1905 echoed Elkington's and Neale's ideals.²⁴ Evans told the House that the new schools in the process of erection were designed according to the progressive ideals articulated by the Chief Health Officer and the Director of Education.²⁵ Most importantly, Evans could show the House that the contract prices for the 'proper accommodation' was no more expensive than that of previous designs. Also, Evans went on to show that there was progress during the year in terms of the number of schools erected, although these were confined to country areas. But neither the improvements nor the new buildings were at a rate to satisfy local demands.²⁶ Some localities by 1906 were blaming Elkington for their unhygienic school buildings. In a letter tabled in the Council by the Attorney General, Propsting, Elkington explained that he had no authority over state school buildings, and that he received no remuneration or privilege from what was entirely a voluntary task:

The work has been, and still is, of a laborious and extensive character, involving the occupation of my own time to a very large extent. It is ..., and will continue to be, freely given for the service of the State, and for the enhancement, and economic assistance of education. As, however, this work is carried out purely voluntarily, and without statutory obligation, in a manner and to an extent which has been very favourably commented upon by distinguished authorities in other States and in England, it is respectfully submitted that I should be protected by Ministerial explanation from such implied charges as are at times made in connection with structural accommodation for pupils in State schools.²⁷

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ E R, 1, 7, Oct. 1905, p.p. 77, 78

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ See for example, *Mercury*, correspondence, 8 Feb. 1907, 9, 3

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 17 Aug. 1906, 3, 4

Neale was no less sparing in the progressive drive within his own department. From his first year as director, Neale instructed his inspectors to report specifically on school buildings and playgrounds during their annual visits to schools. Neale warned his teachers that they should bear in mind that the interest they showed in the upkeep of the school and the residence was an important factor in determining salary increments and promotion.²⁸

Progress during 1905 was limited to the application of new school architecture to one small country school. Brockett in his 1905 report to his director praised the architecture of the new Upper Barrington School as marking 'the beginning of a new era in school construction in this State'.²⁹ In lighting and general hygienic conditions it was 'greatly superior' to any other schoolroom that Brockett had seen. Now all teachers' residences in country schools were to be completely detached from the schoolrooms, with their own allotment of land fenced off from the playground. Moreover, in the event of increased enrolments a new residence would be built, and the old teacher livingrooms converted into classrooms.³⁰

The supply of school furniture designed along progressive lines became a problem during the early years of Neale's directorship. School furniture had been made in the Hobart Gaol, but now gaol authorities had trouble manufacturing furniture to meet the new required specifications.³¹ Elkington had spelt out the evils of the old type long, movable forms and desks. He had explained how ill-fitting seats caused an 'intensified spinal curvature, diseases of chest or abdominal organs, and eye defects'.³² Elkington explained how

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 May 1907, 3, 1

²⁹ JPPP, 1906, paper 12, p. 11

³⁰ *Mercury*, 12 May 1907, 3, 1, *op. cit.*

³¹ E R, 2, 7, Oct. 1906, p.p. 90-2

³² J.S.C. Elkington, 'School Hygiene, Lectures on School Hygiene for Teachers (1905 Course)', E R, 1, 1, March, April 1905, p.p. 9, 10

important was the position and size of the seat in relation to the desk. To ensure the compatibility of the two, the seat and the desk had to be secured to the floor. He strongly argued for single desks.

Evans, in his annual ministerial statement on education recognised the need for major new primary schools to cater for the growing population of young children in the suburbs of East Launceston and Sandy Bay in Hobart. He stated that soon 'the sketch plans of a new school for East Launceston will be laid before the Hon. Members'.³³ Neale, in his second report touched on the relative small level of development. There were two new schools erected in outlying areas during the year and, 'many of the old schoolrooms and residences [had] been renovated, and the sanitary arrangements remodelled or renewed on modern principles'.³⁴ The exact nature of these interior modifications were those outlined by Elkington in his lecture to teachers on school hygiene. The objective was to first prevent accumulation of dirt, and to make the detection and removal of dirt easy. Secondly, it was 'to prevent unnecessary absorption of light, to assist in its diffusion, and to prevent glare and dazzling'.³⁵ Finally, there was the need to develop children's aesthetic sense. To achieve this the buildings were modified with interior surfaces made of smooth, non-absorbent surfaces, coloured in light tints. Unnecessary mouldings were avoided; frames, carvings, and 'projecting horizontal or irregular surfaces of any kind' were removed.³⁶ Door and window frames were sloped off on the top by a prism-shaped bar. The tops of bookcases and presses were also sloped and made easily accessible for cleaning. Floors were made of hard wood, 'well cramped and smooth'. The angle between the floor and the walls was filled with a smooth prism-shaped bar of wood or metal. All

33 E R, 2, 7, Oct. 1906, p. 91, *op. cit.*

34 JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 6

35 J.S.C. Elkington, 'School Hygiene', p. 10, *op. cit.*

36 *Ibid.*

ceilings were to be impervious to dust. The best wall surfaces were cement, 'painted in three coats of good oil-colour when dry'. The aim of the interior colour scheme was to assist in the diffusion of light. Elkington argued for light blue, light grey, or grey as being the best colours for interior walls. Ceilings were to be white, and 'mantlepieces, wainscots, presses, etc. were to be green or blue. The paints used on all surfaces were to be flat, rather than gloss'.³⁷

Improved ventilation was a major innovation both in the new schools and the remodelled ones. Elkington pointed out that air is made impure by respiration, combustion and gas escapes from drains. This he called 'air sewage'. He distinguished between real and bogus ventilation. Real ventilation required an inlet, an outlet, a head or motive power to enable air to enter and pass out. There was also ventilation of pure air through open doors and windows. All air, be it naturally obtained or mechanically obtained through ventilators, had to be at a maximum level at children's 'breathing line'. There were severe limitations in relying on purely natural ventilation. He stated that 'with a floor space of 10 square feet per child, in a room 12 feet high, and no ventilation, the air of a schoolroom ceases to be fresh in two and a half minutes'. For special ventilation inlets he insisted on 'Window Boards (Hincles Bird method), Sherington Valves, Tobin Tubes, Ellison's Briock Ventilators'.³⁸ Elkington distinguished between ventilation and perfelation. Perfelation meant opening the doors and windows to allow the foul air to be replaced by fresh air. This required wide windows and doors, which preferably were placed opposite each other. Even the fireplace was a valuable means of ventilation.³⁹

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Elkington explained that mechanical, ducted ceiling ventilation was superior to natural ventilation. Draughts could be avoided, and teachers were able to supply as much warm or cold air as they needed. Moreover, they could achieve this independent of wind and weather. And inlets and outlets could be placed so as to ensure ventilation in all parts of the room.

Improved lighting was another modification to the design of new buildings and in the alterations of the old. Elkington explained that serious educational consequences resulted from defects in eye-sight. Other physical defects in children resulting from poor lighting included 'spinal curvature, mental symptoms, interference with [the] educational value of work, difficulty of cleansing [the] school and its contents, cultivation of disease-producing agencies, etc.'⁴⁰

There were three methods of lighting: natural, artificial, and a combination of the two. The provision of natural light meant more than just an increase in the size of the windows. The orientation of the building was an important factor. The main light wherever possible should come from a northerly and an easterly direction. Windows should have a glazed surface equal to about one fifth of the floor space. The building should be positioned so that adjacent hills, trees and other buildings did not detract from the natural light. The glass level should never be more than four feet from the floor. The window heads had to be square, and reach to within six inches of the ceiling. The direction of the light was important, Elkington explained. The main light should always come from left to right wherever possible. Here he was assuming that all children were righthanded. There was a need, too, for increasing or assisting unilateral lighting in deep rooms, and where desks were furthest from the windows.

40 *Ibid.*

There were advantages in having subsidiary windows on opposite sides of the room for perfolating purposes. But these windows on the right hand side of the room should not be the predominant source of natural light. Always front lighting should be completely avoided. There were virtues in the artificial assistance of natural light by reflection, prism panes, light colouration of interiors, and the leveling off of frames and window piers.

Elkington was adamant that the teachers could do much themselves to remedy the poor lighting in their schools. They could maximize the provision of natural light by cleaning off any frosting, paint, or dirt on windows. Also blinds could be better managed. Teachers could alter the position of desks so that the existing light could be utilized to the best advantage. They also could remove trees which obstructed the natural light.⁴¹

Elkington was much more specific in his 1906 report to parliament on his examination of the health of the Hobart state school children. Here he explained in length the detrimental affect of inadequate ventilation and lighting was having on the children. His report argued in economic terms about the absurdity of forcing parents by legislation to have their children attend such schools. In somewhat desperate terms he argued:

The results of the present investigation are such that it is impossible to refrain longer from urging upon the Government the pressing necessity for a scheme of building improvement for many of the larger city schools, in the interests of the Tasmanian teachers. It is possible, with a comparatively small outlay, to remedy certain of the worst defects in at least these shools considered in this report. One of them (Central) is, indeed, practically unfit for use in its present condition, and Trinity Hill school is little better. Recommendations are made with regard to ventilation, and the lighting of the city schools is then taken into consideration. The Macquarie Street building was the only one of the four examined wherein the

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

lighting was found to be at all adequate. With the exception of a few classrooms, Battery Point, Trinity Hill and Central schools are extremely badly lit ... Consideration of economy ... points to the advisability of effort towards the mitigation or removal of conditions which tend to straddle the State with a proportion of preventable pauperism and unfitness...⁴²

Other recommendations in the report moved the government to action in regard to the appointment of school medical officers. Only different priorities would have prevented immediate action being taken in renovation of school buildings, especially those illustrated in Elkington's report - the four state schools closest to the Tasmanian seat of government.

In fact there appears to have been more talk than action during the first two years of Neale's directorship. Neale explained in his second report to his minister that although the officers of the Public Works Department had done their best to help make up for the neglect of the past years they had not been able to keep up with the demand which Neale now placed on them. Particularly, Neale regretted that the Works Department had not been able to remodel any of the larger city schools. In Launceston and Hobart the demand for infant and lower primary accommodation was very pressing. But there was a real difficulty in obtaining sites next to the existing schools, and therefore, 'no room for extensions and no way of obtaining playgrounds, which are indispensable to any efficient education system'.⁴³ His good news in his report was that the new school at East Launceston was under construction during 1906. There is good evidence to suggest that Neale, himself, had a large say in its design, and that Elkington was closely consulted on aspects associated with hygiene.⁴⁴

⁴² *Mercury*, 8 Nov. 1906, 8, 1-2

⁴³ JPPP, 1907, paper 10, p. 6, op. cit

⁴⁴ *Mercury*, 18 Aug. 1909, 6, 6. The evidence is only inferred from the article which explains that Neale designed the Elizabeth Street Practising School, and that Elkington was responsible for the hygienic arrangements. One can only suppose that Neale and Elkington did the same with the East Launceston school.

To offset the only moderate material progress during the first two years as director, Neale presented his teachers with an excerpt 'From [a Victorian] Inspector's Note Book'.⁴⁵ The article highlighted the real missionary purpose of teachers, particularly in country schools. Material discomforts were simply hurdles to be jumped, objects which strengthened the human resolve, if the progressive spirit were true. Neale highlighted the contrast between two teachers in different country schools. At one school it was '100 deg. [°F] in the shade. The north wind, dust laden is scouring across the plain'.⁴⁶ The school stood bare, stark and exposed on a dry patch of earth, accompanied only by a tank of luke-warm water. All the trees had been ruthlessly removed. Inside this pitiful place 'the teacher is hot and visibly irritable. Irritability and vexation are in every tone and gesture'.⁴⁷ The slovenly class in front of the teachers reflects this sour mood. 'The building is all wrong. (This unfortunately is true). Everything gets dusty; and it is such a hot school'.⁴⁸ The flies are numerous and active and frequent the room at will. But the teacher had made no effort, asserted no will to overcome the problems. The progressive missionary spirit was sadly lacking. Without this there could be no progress. Contrasted to this school was another, only some miles away. Here, 'it is 105 [°F] deg. in the shade'. The natural conditions had been even worse. But the teacher was possessed of the missionary zeal. She had planted trees under which children could play, and vines around the porch, under which cool water bags hung. The torment of the flies were prevented by cheesecloth nailed around the windows:

This brave teacher has, like Kipling's hero, 'daundered' everybody through the afternoon. But the teacher has

⁴⁵ E R, 2, 4, Aug. 1906, p. 54, reprinted from the *Teachers' Aid*, n. d.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

another surprise in store ... the last lesson consists of the reading of a stirring deed of war.⁴⁹

Neale adulated such a progressive drive. Surely it was the human spirit which achieved progress in times of material hardship.

The same view was presented to the Tasmanians to which the *Mercury* spoke. A lead article stated that teachers should inspire the local population, through example, in planting shrubs and trees about the school. The article insisted that 'the teachers' home surroundings ... should as far as possible be a pattern'.⁵⁰ The *Mercury* stated that in many cases neglect of schools and school residences was very bad. But there was hope. The article described a visit by Neale and one of his inspectors to a school and the school residence which stood in its own ground. For Neale the residence and school was the envy of all the local inhabitants. Yet only a few years previously the school, before the department had constructed a new separate residence, suffered from 'culpable neglect'.

Improved educational funding during 1907 assisted Neale in his endeavour to improve school architecture. At the Launceston State School Exhibition held during August 1907 modern school furniture was proudly displayed to all. Seven new schools were constructed in country areas. Neale was able to report at the end of the year:

The new and the remodelled buildings in various parts of the State are object lessons to the parents of what the children should have, and the claims made upon the Department by neighbouring localities for similar improvements are embarrassing. It is difficult to induce local authorities to believe that all schools cannot be rebuilt at one time, or at least to admit that their claim is not deserving of being first to be dealt with.⁵¹

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Mercury*, 12 May 1907, 3, 1, *op. cit.*

51 JPPP, 1908, paper 4, p. 3

The pressure from various country and city areas which Neale referred to was evident in various articles and letters in the *Mercury*. There were complaints about country school children having to eat their lunch while sitting on wet logs in the playground, and consequent demands for outdoor shelter sheds.⁵² There were various allegations about unsanitary schools.⁵³ And there were complaints about over-crowding in the Trinity Hill School, North Hobart.⁵⁴ Neale retorted through a lead article in the *Mercury* that the Public Works Department was doing all it could to cope with the many demands. Neale's building program was interfered with by many local school boards which made political representations to members of parliament for improved buildings at their schools.⁵⁵

2 State School Architecture Under Neale

Perhaps Neale's greatest moment in his assertion of the progressive development of school architecture came in May 1908 with the opening of the East Launceston School.(plate 3) As Neale sauntered through the rooms of the new school on opening day, 'a day to be remembered in the history of primary education in Tasmania', the words of Wordsworth resounded in his mind:

In the 'Lines Written Above Tintern Abbey' Wordsworth speaks of the 'deep power of joy' in transforming human life. To him that 'deep power' was one of Nature's gifts; in the future it is going to be one of the gifts of the school.⁵⁶

For Neale, the completion of the new school at East Launceston marked 'the dawn of a new era in school architecture in the State'. He enthused:

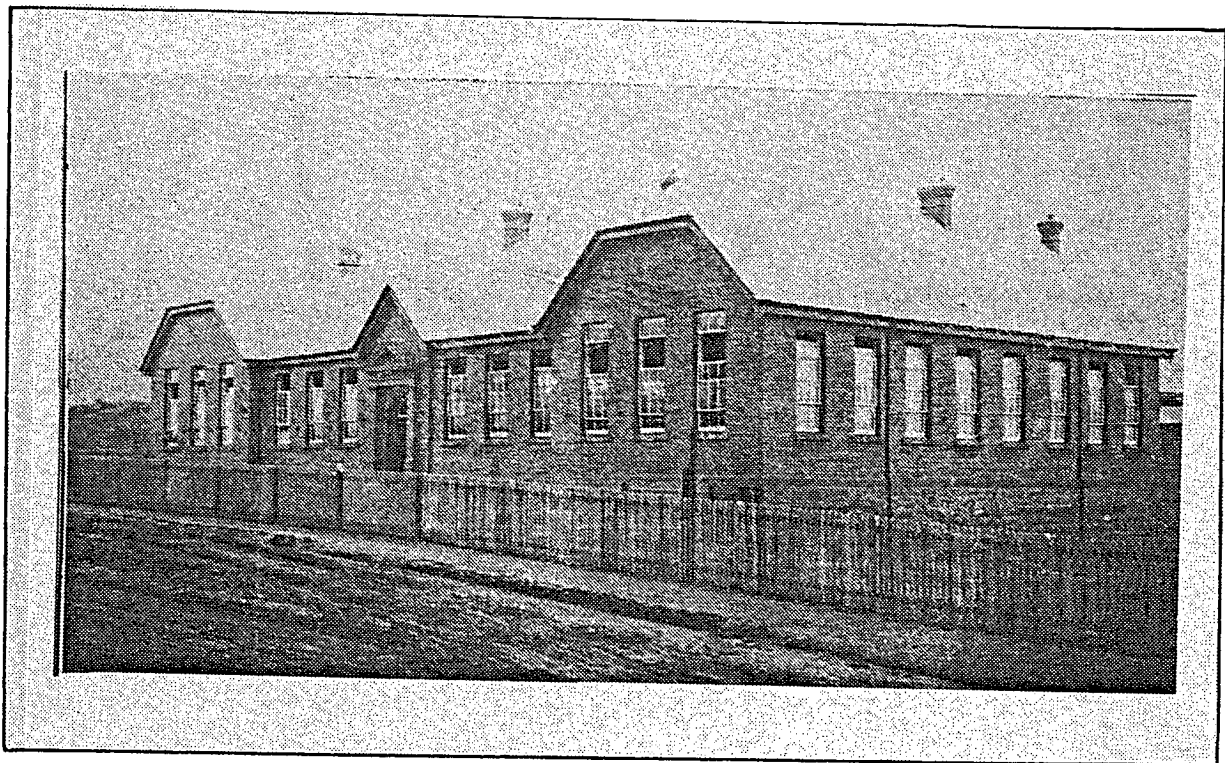
⁵² *Mercury*, correspondence, 19 June 1908, 6, 3

⁵³ See for example, *ibid.*, 11 Aug. 1908, 5, 5

⁵⁴ *Mercury*, 11 Aug. 1908, 5, 5; *Daily Post*, 13 June 1908, 5, 3-5

⁵⁵ *Mercury*, 27 Aug. 1908, 4, 3

⁵⁶ E R, 4, 3, June 1908, p. 25



East Launceston State School

Plate 3

... the old order is completely changed; childhood has at last come of its own, and the kindergarten maxim 'We live for our children' is going to be written, not above the doors of the school, but in the very structure of the building itself.⁵⁷

It was for this reason that Neale avoided having the words 'State School' imprinted over the front door of the school, as had been the practice. Neale explained that with buildings like the East Launceston school, such labels were redundant. The new architecture, and the effect that it had on the children's physical and spiritual development would make it clear for all that this was a state school. Now society was adjusting itself through the reform of its institutions to influence the development of its members at the appropriate stage in life. As Neale had it, 'the world is beginning to see that healthy, cheerful schools are better than up-to-date gaols and asylums'.⁵⁸

The East Launceston School design was, indeed, a remarkable break from traditional school architecture in Tasmania. Although possessing an element of traditional lines there was far less emphasis of this than had hitherto been seen in Tasmanian school architecture. Indeed, the design which was largely Neale's own work was a major step towards utility in school architecture. This is best represented by the incorporation of a domestic science room, along with a newly-trained domestic science teacher. The Premier and the Minister for Education were at the opening.⁵⁹

The new school was 'beautifully lighted, and thoroughly well ventilated'. It was built around a quadrangle, around which were 'sheltersheds and penthouse structures that will prove a boon in the hot and cold weather'.⁶⁰ Modern dual wooden desks were installed and all modern conveniences provided for storage

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

and display. Hanging around the interior walls were 'beautiful engravings of historical and artistic interest'. Gone were 'the usual tattered maps and hideous wall charts'.⁶¹

But, for Neale, these provisions alone did not breathe the progressive spirit into the building. The spirit demanded even more from the school architecture. Neale wrote that Wordsworth had written of the deep power of joy, but for Neale, 'there is also a deep joy in power'.⁶² And this was no better evident than in the strong teacher. 'He pervades the whole room like an atmosphere.'⁶³ Hygienic buildings with magnificent views, splendid playgrounds and a powerful teacher complemented each other. All of this saturated the spirit of every child in the school. Neale could show that nowhere was this better manifested than at the new East Launceston School. The two hundred children assembled there had come 'from all quarters'. Some had never attended school before. Yet, 'in a few weeks', the headmaster, Mr A. Crawford had

... secured the perfect unquestioning obedience characteristic of all good schools. In about two minutes, without an order being given, the whole school assembled in the quadrangle; in two minutes again the scholars were back in their classroom and all busily at work. Power! There can be no possibility of joy in a school without it; and the power springs from perfect mastery and perfect self-control.⁶⁴

The intrinsic effect of the school architecture had a far greater influence over the soul than did its extrinsic effect.

The *Daily Post*, also, was full of praise for the architecture of the new East Launceston School.⁶⁵ Particularly it commented on the 'lofty' nature of the

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Daily Post*, 29 May 1908, 5, 8

rooms. The Hobart daily particularly was impressed with the size of the playground, the sanitary arrangements and the quality of the ventilation.

Before Neale was to finally depart from Tasmania in the winter of 1909 he was to make two final decisions, both of which had a profound influence over the continued progressive development of Tasmanian school architecture. First, he was to choose Rudolph Koch's design for the Philip Smith Training College in Hobart.⁶⁶ (plate 4) Secondly, he played a major role in designing the Elizabeth Street Practising School in Hobart.⁶⁷

The Philip Smith Training College was opened on 7 February 1911 at a total cost of £5 224. The exterior of the building was strongly in the collegiate tradition, located only some fifty metres from the main university building, but still in the same grounds:

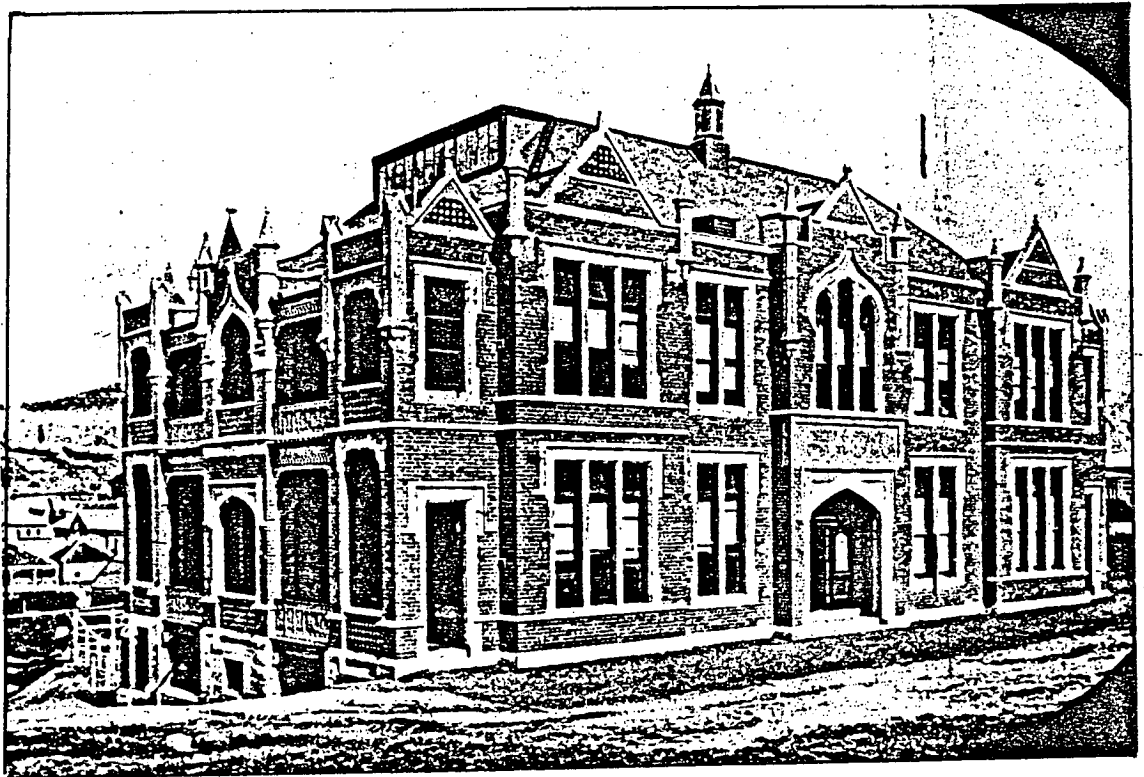
The task of the architect was that of designing a building in keeping generally with the characteristics of the main University building, and one which would at the same time provide the accommodation required for the purpose it was to serve. The difference in the materials of the two buildings, the older being of stone, and the newer of brick, precluded the obtaining of an exact harmony between them, but the aim was to avoid any incongruity that could be obviated between the neighbouring structures.⁶⁸

It was explained to the Tasmanians that full advantage had been taken of the elevated site, resulting in the building 'viewed from any angle, [presenting] a composite whole, and not an aggregate of unrelated parts'. The front of the building faces the Domain and the rear the city. The building was

⁶⁶ *Mercury*, 27 Aug. 1908, 4, 1; *ibid.*, 21 Dec. 1908, 7, 3

⁶⁷ Rudolph Koch, F.R.V.I.A. (after the Second World War, 'Kosh') himself, took a prominent part in education, and, in particular, architectural education, in the state. He often spoke at speech days and Wattle Day ceremonies at the Hobart schools. He taught a course in Architecture at the Hobart Technical College for many years. During the early 'twenties he taught S.W.T. Blythe, who was to become Tasmania's great progressive architect of the new generation. He designed many existing public buildings in Hobart, including the University Electrical Engineering Building, close to the Philip Smith building.

⁶⁸ *Mercury*, 6 Feb. 1911, 4, 3-4



Philip Smith Training College

Plate 4

... treated with large mullioned windows and effective gables with the aim of giving the same general effect as the University buildings. The two side elevations face, one the harbour, and the other, the Glebe, and are provided with spacious balconies on each floor. The general effect, however, of the front elevation has been retained as far as possible, the aim being to make the balconies appear as an integral part of the buildings, and not as excrescences. This has been attained by the use of recessed open gables, alternating with bays of ornamental ironwork.⁶⁹

Neale also played a major role in designing the interior of the building.⁷⁰ The ground floor contained a large hall which could be converted into two classrooms by a folding door. The hall could hold three hundred people. On the ground floor there was a principal's office. Overall the building contained six large classrooms; two could accommodate sixty people; four could accommodate thirty people. Besides this there was a library and staff rooms. Immediately under the roof, there was a very large sunlit loft, which became known as the art room. The two major floors are joined by a wide staircase leading from the main entrance. There were four large balconies on each of the northern and southern sides of the building. Two were for the use of male, and two for the use of female students. 'They give opportunity for open air study, and also for lunching *al fresco* ...'⁷¹

The basement of the building, with an external entrance facing the city, contained the toilet blocks, and a boiler, which was used for the hot water, radiator heating of the building. In the basement were also bathrooms, showers, cloakrooms, 'and even a place for the storage of cycles'. The basement entrance opened onto two asphalt tennis courts. 'Provision [was] made ... for the body as well as the mind.' Thus, from the rear of the building,

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

facing the city, 'advantage [was] taken of the slope of the ground to make the building really of four stories ... ' and

in the whole building regard has been had to Swift's saying that the two noblest of things are sweetness and light. All the rooms have been given very ample window space, and careful provision has been made for due ventilation. The ceilings throughout are of steel, and provide little shelter for the ubiquitous microbe.⁷²

The whole building, then, affords an interesting example of integrating the progressive ideals of hygiene and open air education with traditional architecture. Today it is still one of the most appealing buildings in Hobart.

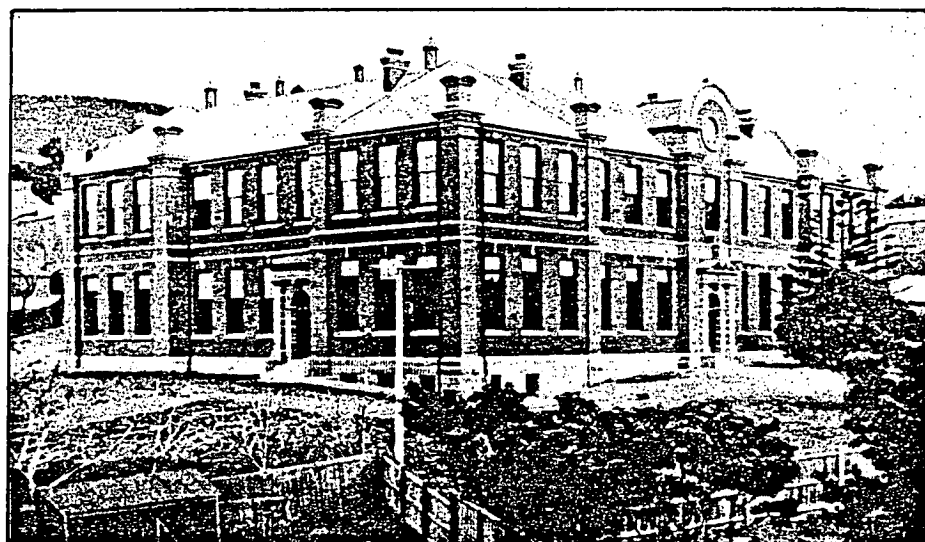
Neale designed the other significant school building of the period in Hobart, the Elizabeth Street Practising School. (plate 5) Elkington attended to the hygienic requirements. According to the *Mercury*, these two people were 'the best experts in the commonwealth'.⁷³ There is little doubt that Neale conceived of it and the training college as having a symbiotic relationship, complementing each other's purpose. The two buildings were fifteen minutes walking distance from each other. The growth of the North Hobart population heavily taxed the existing Trinity Hill School.⁷⁴ Originally the Trinity Hill School was built to accommodate 350 children, but at the beginning of 1909 there were over 600 children at the school. The advent of free education and consequent expected gross increase in state school enrolments 'actuated the Ministers in their decision to provide a building that would relieve the congestion'.⁷⁵ By August 1908 the government had purchased land for the school, and land on the opposite side of Elizabeth Street to the Trinity Hill School at the cost of £2,250.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 18 Aug. 1909, 6, 6

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 19 March 1909, 5, 7

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*



Elizabeth Street Practising School

Plate 5

Neale's departure from Tasmania and a new Minister for Education caused a delay in construction. Tasmanians were told that the new director would need to review the design.⁷⁶ With the confusion over the appointment of a new director the construction was further delayed. The *Daily Post* was relentless in its editorials in pushing for the government to proceed with the building.⁷⁷ Money for the building was finally voted in the 1910 budget following a great deal of public outcry during late 1909 and early 1910.⁷⁸ Whatever McCoy's comments on Neale's design were, his only change was to follow the New South Wales practice and have the words 'State School' embellished across the front of the building. The building was the same as described by the *Mercury* reporter who viewed Neale's original sketch plans.⁷⁹

The building was very similar in design to the East Launceston School. It was claimed that the building would be one of the best for its size and the most modern in the Commonwealth. Like the East Launceston School, the design is in the old tradition, with perhaps more pronounced vertical lines. The emphasis was on utility. It was designed in red brick, with free-stone facings.

The ground measurements are 120 feet by 84 feet. The building is a two-storied structure. The rooms had high ceilings with great attention paid to ventilation. About five feet high on the walls were inlet ventilators and near the ceilings were outlet ventilators. There was an 'air-pump' ventilator system provided for the top-storey rooms which embodied overhead shafts leading to the roof. There were as many windows as possible provided for each room; each room had two exterior walls. Consequently, it was 'splendidly lighted'.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 4 Aug. 1909, 5, 1

⁷⁷ See for example, *Daily Post*, editorial, 12 June 1909, 6, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 6 Aug. 1909, 6, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 18 Aug. 1909, 6, 6

⁷⁸ See for example, *Mercury* correspondence, 14 Sept. 1909, 6, 5-6

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 19 March 1909, 5, 7, *op. cit.*, *Daily Post*, 9 June 1909, 5, 4-5

⁸⁰ *Mercury*, 19 March 1909, 5, 7, *op. cit.*

The space between the ceilings and the floor was stuffed with a material which minimised noise. The building had no fireplaces, but was serviced by a system of hot water radiators, heated by a furnace.

There was accommodation for 800 children with a floor space of twelve square feet per child. There was a large double room which was to serve as the first state school kindergarten in the state; also on the ground floor there was another infant room. In all rooms the ceilings were made of pressed steel. Like the East Launceston School, the Elizabeth Street School was built around a quadrangle, with an open court in the middle. The quadrangle was overlooked by a verandah and balcony, each twelve feet wide. All rooms opened out onto the verandah or balcony. The stairways were built of cast-iron.

In the courtyard was a shelter shed, sixty two feet by thirty two feet. It was closed on the outer sides and open to the courtyard. Sliding doors opened onto the playground. The shelter shed was partitioned into two rooms: one for the boys, and the other for the girls. Lavatory arrangements were provided along the dividing wall. At the outer end of the shelter shed a bathroom was provided, 'having two modern "rain showers"'. These were provided for use, 'if necessary under the medical officer's instructions'. Up-to-date sanitary arrangements were provided in turn for the infants, the boys and the girls.⁸¹

The Minister explained that the building had 'everything that experience and modern research dictates should be provided...' The building was at the time the largest state school building in the state. In 1909 the estimated cost of the building was £6 000 which made it more expensive than the Philip Smith

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

building.⁸² At the time it would have towered over the North Hobart buildings. Perhaps McCoy's decision to have the words 'State School' embellished over the entrance signifies a basic philosophical difference between himself and Neale. It appears that Neale better understood the value of intrinsic goals and motivation.

The school had a large playground of a total area of two and three quarter acres. Many of the existing ornamental trees were left for both shelter and aesthetic appearance.

3 State School Architecture Under McCoy

In view of McCoy's reputation as a master educational administrator and in accordance with the principles of scientific management it was not surprising that during his first full year as director regulations for school buildings were first gazetted. The new regulations aimed at a standardisation of design. Now new schools were built with a provision of ten square feet per child. Buildings only were acceptable if their design allowed for light to fall on the left hand side of children. The area of window space had to be one-fifth of the floor space. McCoy maintained the principle first incorporated in the Elizabeth Street Practising School of having some of the larger buildings contain dual classrooms so that the assistants could be more closely supervised by the head teacher. Added to this was the cut in cost of having fewer interior walls.⁸³

Three years later McCoy had new and more comprehensive building regulations gazetted.⁸⁴ The new regulations required that where the school site was of two

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 3

⁸⁴ JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 36

acres or more the school building should be on a single floor, but if the school building was forced to be placed on a restricted area it had to have two floors with the infant accommodation on the ground floor. For maximum sunlight the building had to be oriented as near to the north east as possible. The building was not to be placed at an angle to roads. Accommodation remained at fifty children per room with ten square feet per child. But now the rooms had to be as square as possible. Wall heights were prescribed as being twelve feet from floor to ceiling; if the floor space exceeded 360 square feet wall heights had to be thirteen feet; and if the floor space exceeded 600 square feet walls had to be fourteen feet high. In all circumstances walls had to be smooth so as to gather as little dust as possible. Floors had to be level in all but upper primary grades. Gone in the lower grades were the teaching platforms of old. In the upper primary grades the teaching platforms had to be movable, only eight inches high, and measuring nine feet by five feet. The regulations required that the building's principal lighting should be arranged so that the sun could shine into every room at some time during the day. Again, it was regulated that the building should be arranged so that light came to the left hand side of the children. Back and front lighting had to be avoided. But now the regulations prescribed even more natural light; there was to be a glass area of one square foot to every four and a half square feet of floor space. A subsidiary window had to be provided if the room was more than twenty four feet long. Windows had to be no more than four feet from the floor level; a four inch or five inch ventilation board was required for each window. In all windows only clear glass was to be used. All windows had to be provided with strong green blinds on strong spring rollers. Windows had to be placed on opposite sides of rooms in large schools as was the case at the East Launceston and Elizabeth Street schools. In small schools one window was considered adequate for perfelation purposes. Ventilation had to be provided by means of wall vents, not more

than five feet from the floor, at a rate of two and a half square inches per child. Also there had to be outlet ventilation by means of exhaust cowls of two square inches per child.

Teachers who sat for their class II and class III certificates were examined on various aspects of the regulations and the general principles of school hygiene.⁸⁵ Moreover, a teacher's efficiency mark was gauged on criteria which included the efficiency of the management of school hygiene and the hygienic upkeep of school buildings.⁸⁶

McCoy in his first report to his minister in 1910 indicated that the supply of dual desks and seats 'comes along slowly'. The Department of Prisons was still the manufacturer. McCoy stated that the complete substitution for the backless forms commonly used would take many years to accomplish. He explained that the dual wooden desks and seats being supplied by the Department of Prisons could be much improved by 'adopting iron standards'. These would gather less dust, and to his mind sustain less germs than the wooden ones.⁸⁷ By 1914 McCoy was able to announce to the Tasmanian public that the supply of modern dual desks, with iron standards was being improved. The aim was 'not however, to make things more comfortable for the children, by putting them in pairs, but to provide desks and seating which are more suitable for the physical needs of the children, and more in keeping with modern ideas on the subject of school furnishings ...'⁸⁸

Technological advances were affecting the nature of school heating. The Philip Smith Building was heated by radiating steam pipes. After some indecision

⁸⁵ See for example, E R, 8, 3, p.p. 30-1

⁸⁶ See for example, JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 14

⁸⁷ JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 4

⁸⁸ *Mercury*, 17 July 1914, 5, 4

concerning relative costs the Elizabeth Street Practising School was equipped with the same system. The belief was that central steam heating was more cost efficient and more hygienic than dusty open fire places.⁸⁹ Most other new city schools such as Albuera Street and Moonah were heated by open fire places. Obviously the relative cost was the deciding factor. A significant step forward was taken in the electrical heating used at the new Hobart High School building.⁹⁰

The opening of the new Moonah State School on 3 July 1911 was significant because it reflected the population growth into Hobart's northern suburbs.(plate 6)⁹¹ The school was conveniently located between the New Town and Glenorchy schools. The first building encompassed all that was desirable in hygienic lighting and ventilation and was situated in spacious grounds.⁹² The following year an enthusiastic parent wrote to the *Mercury*, stating:

The school ... is built on modern lines, and has had every attention paid to ventilation, lavatory, and such like important matters, so that there is really nothing wanting, unless it might be another wing added in the near future to accommodate the increase in attendance, which will surely come as the suburb grows. People wishing a nice suburban part in which to live, with an up-to-date school, cannot do better than patronise Moonah.⁹³

The old Battery Point Model School (plate 7) was a building most condemned by Neale because of its antique architecture and the impossibility of extending it, due to its design and the small block on which it was built. During 1914 the Albuera Street School was completed to take the place of the old model school. (plate 8)

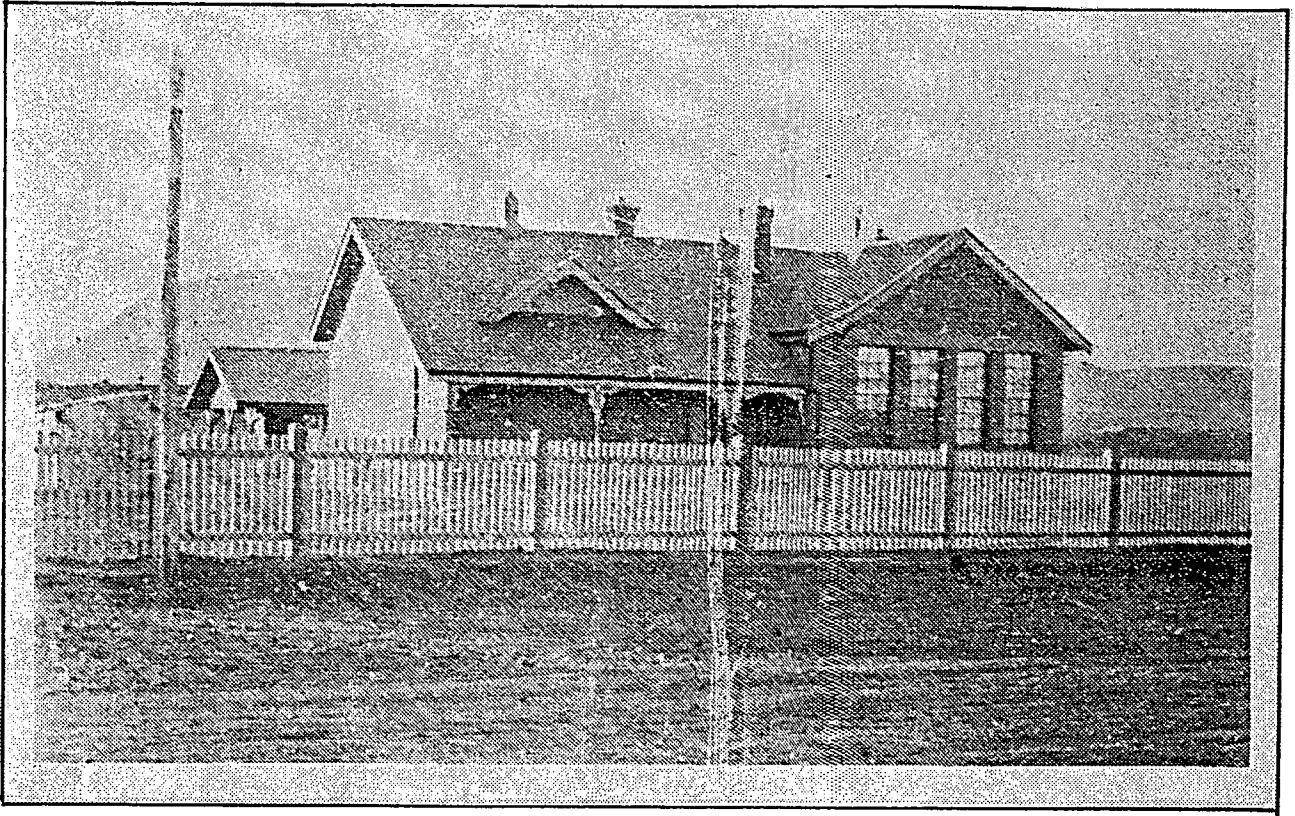
⁸⁹ *Daily Post*, 20 Aug. 1910, 11, 3; *Mercury*, 28 July 1910, 4, 8

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3 Dec. 1915, 4, 6

⁹¹ *Daily Post*, 20 Dec. 1910, 6, 6

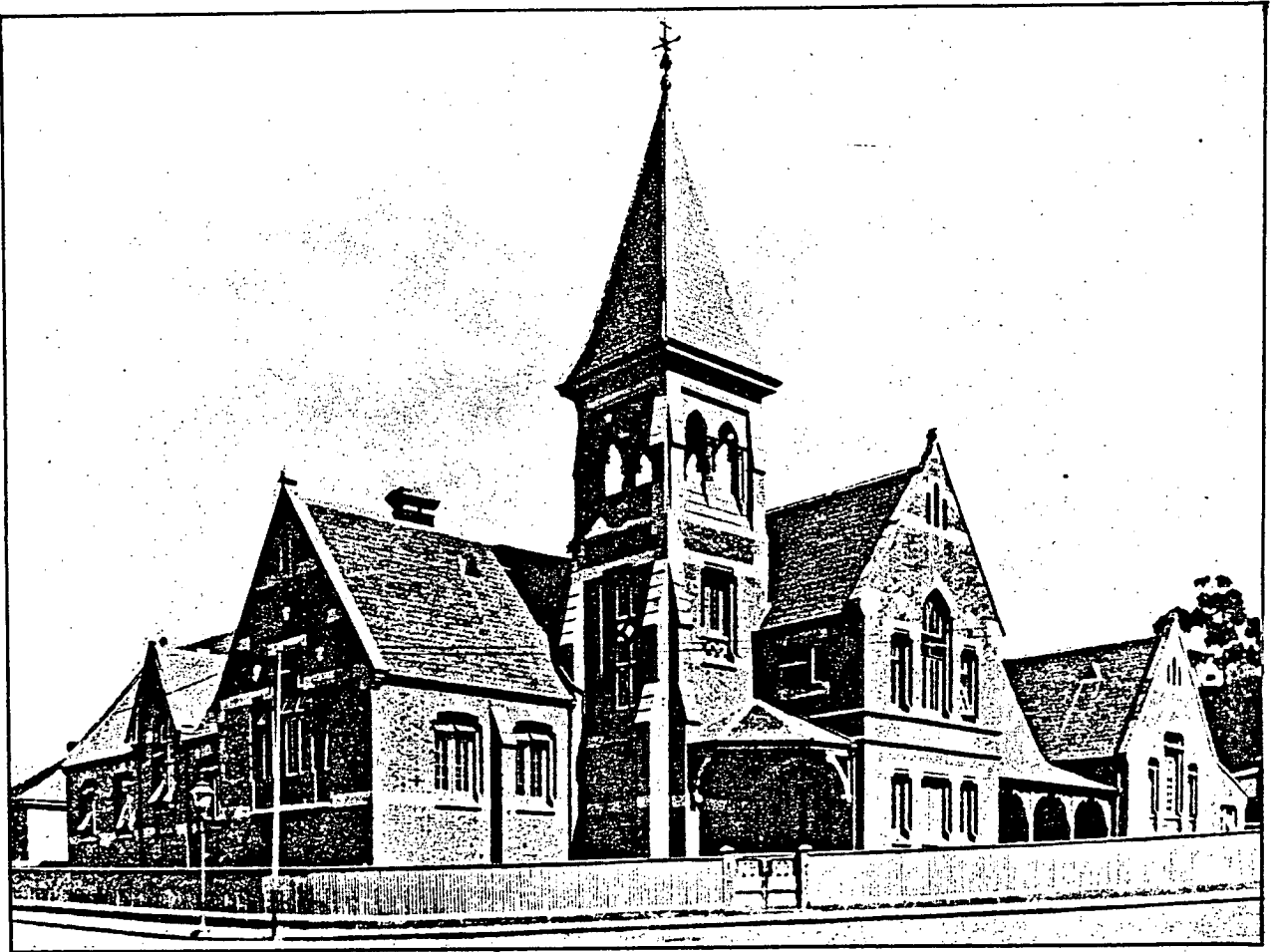
⁹² *Ibid.*, 4 July 1911, 8, 8; *Mercury*, 4 July 1911, 3, 4-5

⁹³ *Ibid.*, correspondence, 13 April 1912, 3, 6



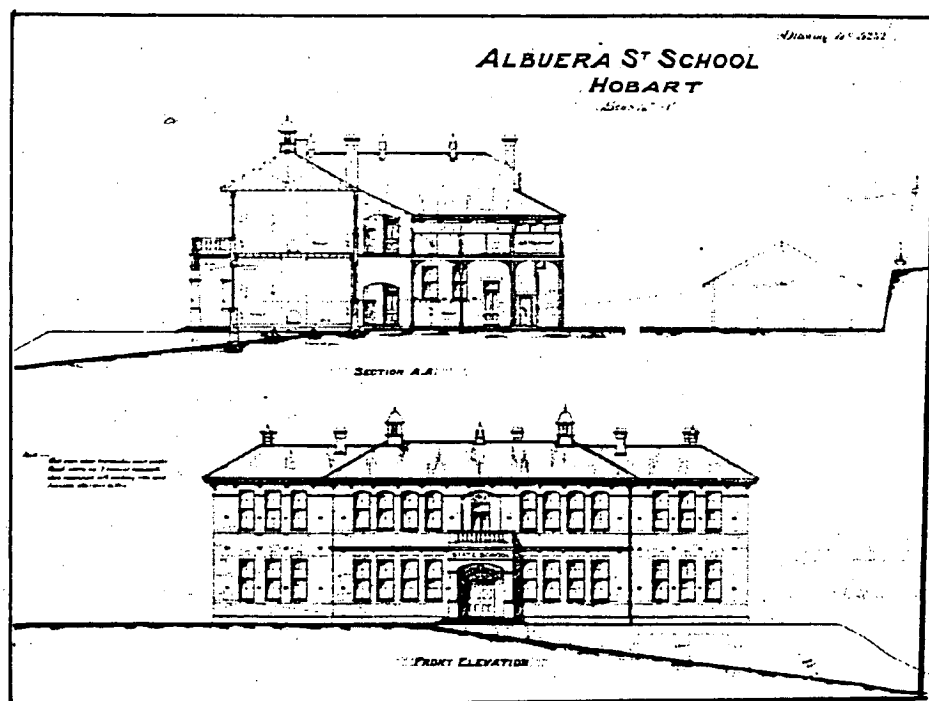
Moonah State School

Plate 6



Battery Point Model School

Plate 7



Albuera St State School

Plate 8

Dept. of Construction

10 Murray Street

Hobart.

The *Mercury* in reporting the opening of the new school, fittingly opened with a reminder to Tasmanians:

The last fifty years, and more especially the last decade, have seen a very general improvement in working conditions, housing, and all matters affecting public and private life, but in few things has the change been so marked than in education. Some sweeping changes have been made, especially in the state-school world in Tasmania, and following the improved methods of teaching, the housing accommodation for the children has been receiving attention.⁹⁴

The *Mercury* saw the new school as a 'very handsome two-storeyed building, commanding a view unsurpassed anywhere in Hobart for beauty'. The *Mercury* showed how the building fronted the range of hills stretching between Mt Wellington and Mt Nelson. The front of the building provided a fine panorama of the city, mountains, hills and river, stretching from Knocklofty, all along Sandy Bay, and across to the Eastern shores of the Derwent. The school was built on three acres of sloping land, where 8 000 cubic yards of earth and rock were excavated, forming a terrace, forty feet wide along the entire frontage of the school, along with a smaller terrace on the building's south-eastern side. This backed onto the barracks. The grounds were enclosed by a fence over six feet high. Close by was the Sandy Bay tramway.⁹⁵

The school was built on three sides of a square forming a quadrangle of 4 352 square feet. On the fourth side was located a shelter shed, eighty one feet long, by thirty six feet wide, partitioned into equal parts for boys and girls. Further back were lavatories and outbuildings. The buildings could accommodate 900 children.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8 April 1914, 6, 4-5

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

A continuous verandah and balcony ran around the three walls facing the quadrangle, both of which were twelve feet wide. All classrooms opened onto either the verandah or balcony. The balcony had two, five feet wide iron staircases leading to it, positioned at each end of the balcony.⁹⁷ For the *Mercury* the feature of the classrooms was the 'lightness and airiness'. The walls were 'one long succession of large windows, with ventilators between'. The two largest classrooms, one upstairs and one downstairs, were each forty four feet by twenty five feet, each provided with nine large windows.

The building was designed by the Government Architect, Flack Rickards. The stone used, with the exception of some Melbourne bluestone, was freestone from New Norfolk. It was built over a period of twelve months at a total cost of £11 000.⁹⁸

The remodelling of the old city schools in Tasmania was another step in reform of school architecture. The first school to be remodelled was Charles Street, Launceston. The old school was hopelessly antiquated, built solidly in the old tradition. Here sunlight and ventilation was scarce. Its major room had gallery seating. The remodelled building had a second storey, much larger windows, a cowl ventilation system, and generally built to the current specifications. A feature was the old gallery classroom which had been converted to a dual classroom where the female assistant could dutifully assist the master. Overall the building still maintained its collegiat styling, but its general appearance was far less traditional. During the same year the Invermay and Longford schools in the north also were remodelled.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 4

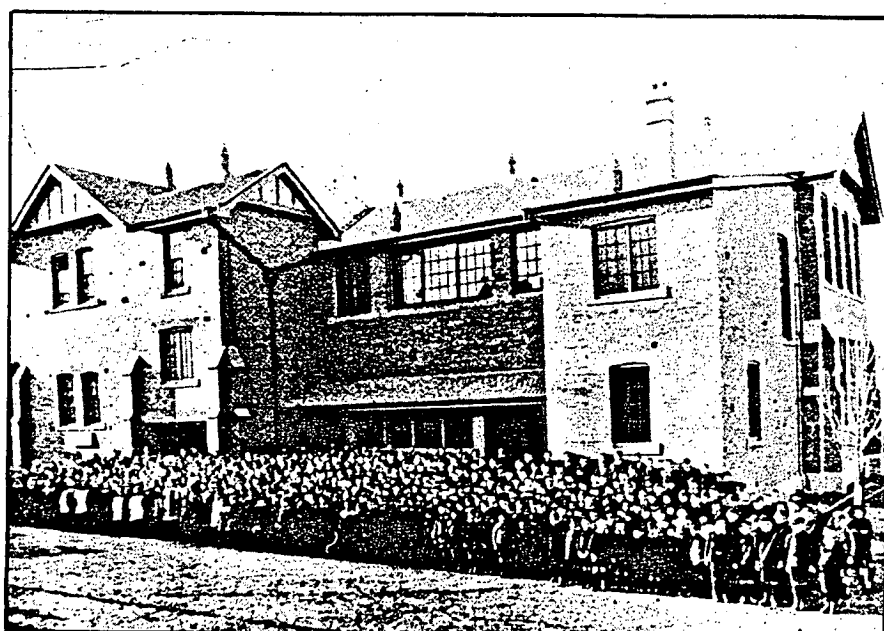
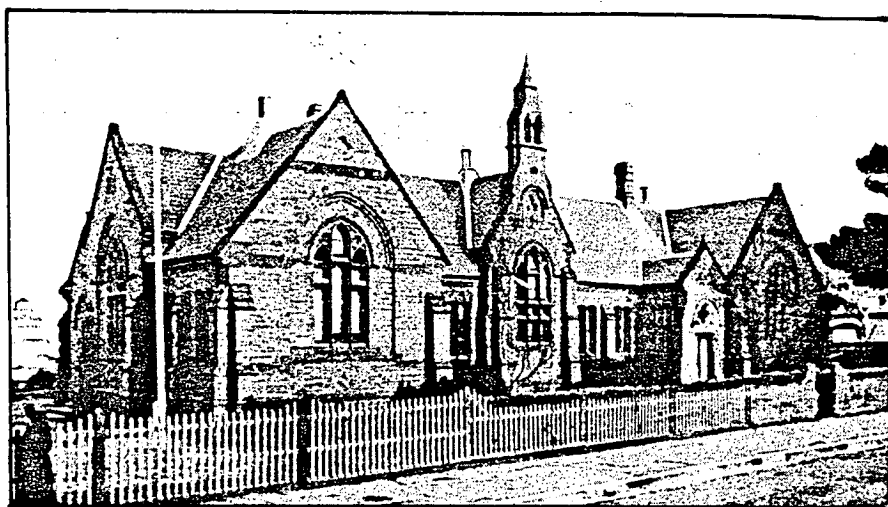
Each year there was some remodelling of the large city schools in Tasmania during McCoy's directorship. For example, schools remodelled during 1916 included Burnie, Seabrook, West Devonport, Queenstown and St Marys.¹⁰⁰ The remodelling of Wellington Square, Launceston, (plate 9) in 1917 marked the end of the remodelling of the larger city schools during McCoy's directorship. The original Wellington Square building, perhaps with the exception of the Battery Point Model School, was the most traditional of the Tasmanian schools in its architecture. Its floor plan was very similar to that of the nearby Charles Street School. The overall result of the remodelling was similar to that of the Burnie and Charles Street schools, but was far less in the old mode. In fact it came close to breaking with this styling.¹⁰¹

The completion of the East Launceston Model Country School in 1913, built in the grounds of the East Launceston School, and used for the 'practical training of candidates for the office of Provisional Teacher' marked the beginning of a new school architecture for the bush. (plate 10)¹⁰² Interestingly, the highly utilitarian building manifested little of the old styling. It was as if the replicas built in the bush would have few to impress. Built to the standard specifications of the day, the building was very well lighted and ventilated, and served as a landmark in the Tasmanian bush for the progressive influences of health and hygiene on architecture. Of course, none of the replicas in the bush were built in solid red brick as was the East Launceston School model. But, nonetheless, its weatherboard replicas, such as Elderslie, 1915, Ringarooma and Pioneer, 1914, were a far cry from the old manner. (plate 11)

¹⁰⁰ JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 14

¹⁰¹ JPPP, 1918, paper 4, p. 15

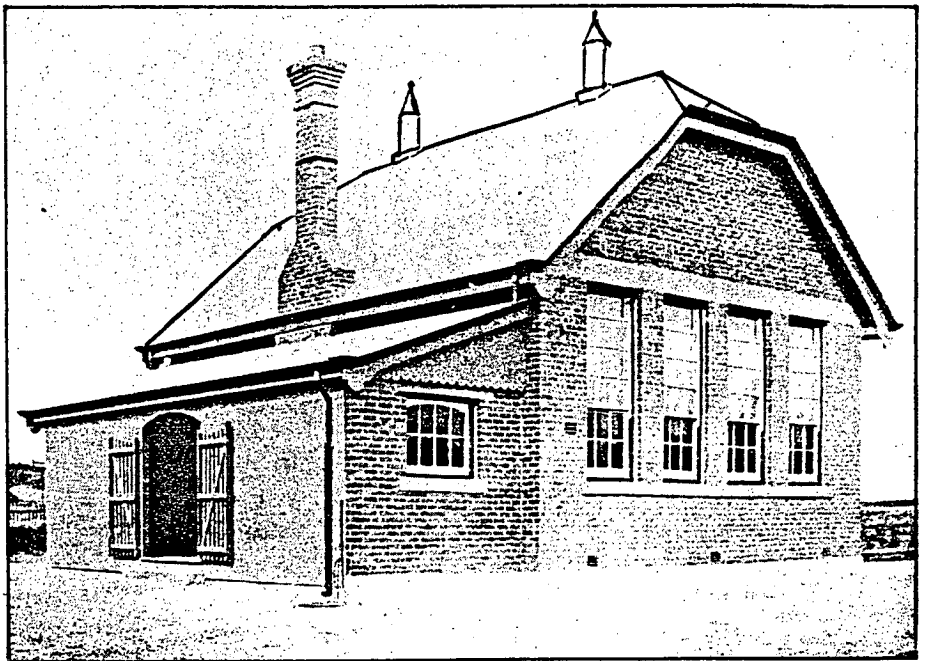
¹⁰² JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 16



The Old and the New

Wellington Square State School, Launceston

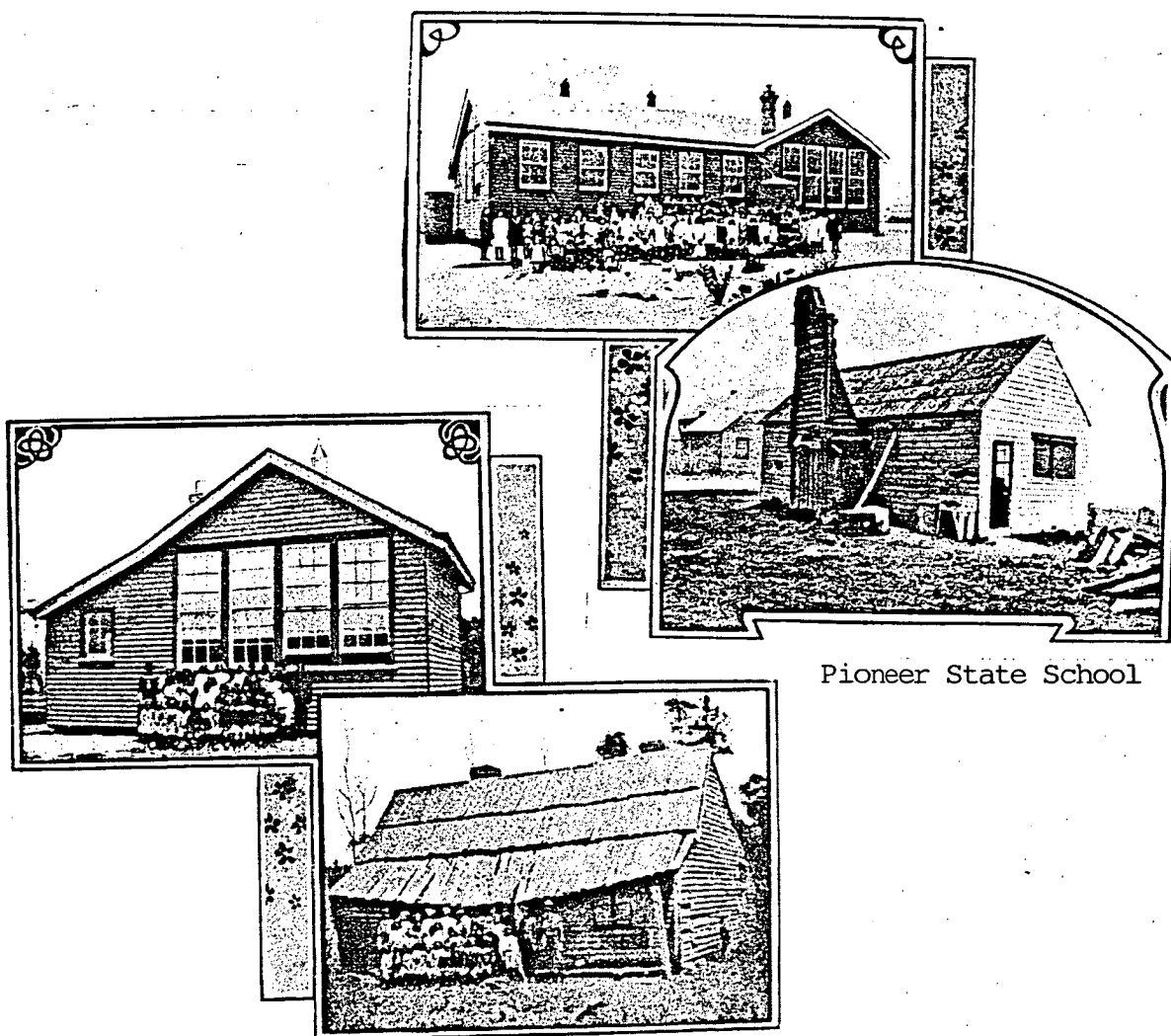
Plate 9



Model Country School - East Launceston

Plate 10

The Old and the New



Pioneer State School

Ringarooma State School

Plate 11

By 1915 the impact of improved school architecture throughout the state was becoming apparent. Heritage in that year summarised the progress:

In connection with school buildings there is unmistakably evidence of progress. The liberal provision made by Parliament for the erection of new schools and for the remodelling, enlarging and improving of existing schools and residences has enabled the Department to materially increase the accommodation and to secure the teachers and pupils extended advantages and conveniences which contribute towards more pleasant and successful school work and life. From all points the general type of buildings has vastly improved in marked contrast with the badly lighted, badly ventilated, and badly equipped schools of earlier days.¹⁰³

Heritage went on, perhaps self-consciously, to state that the improvements embraced not only larger towns, but 'the length and breadth of the State'. He observed that well-designed infant rooms were a special feature, mentioning the schools at Deloraine, West Devonport, Ulverstone, Burnie, Wynyard, Zeehan, Queenstown, Beaconsfield, and the schools of Hobart and Launceston as good examples. But it would be fallacious to suggest that the Education Department ever kept up with the demand. Throughout the period the *Mercury* is full of articles expressing discontent, particularly in the country districts.¹⁰⁴

The experimentation by the Education Department with an open air school was by far the most interesting development during the period in progressive school architecture.¹⁰⁵ Here was a definite attempt by members of the medical

¹⁰³ E R, 2, 1, p. 62

¹⁰⁴ See for example, *Mercury*, 6 Jan. 1910, 4, 7; *ibid.*, correspondence, 11 Feb. 1910, 2, 6; *ibid.*, correspondence, 6 Feb. 1911, 4, 5; *ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1912, 3, 4; *ibid.*, 1 July 1914, 5, 6; *ibid.*, 15 July 1914, 5, 6; *ibid.*, 22 May 1917, 8, 6-7; *ibid.*, 9 Aug. 1917, 7, 7; *ibid.*, 1 July 1918, 8, 5

¹⁰⁵ Dr Hogg gave a brief history of the origins of the open air school architecture in his 1916 annual report, cited above. According to Hogg, they were first begun at Charlottenburg, near Berlin, in 1904. The movement quickly spread all over Germany, to Great Britain and to America. At Charlottenburg the schools were open from April to Christmas, and were entirely open air except in very wet weather. The buildings were of two types: 1. simply a roof supported at the corners by beams; 2. a wooden building supported on wooden piles so that the dryness of the floor was secured by the air-spaces between it and the ground. Walls were of wooden framework covered by canvas. The latter type of building was only used in very severe climates.

profession to develop eugenic ideals in school design. The first reference to open air schools in any of the literature of the period in Tasmania is an article in the *Record*, dated about the time of Neale's departure from Tasmania. The article described the virtues of the open air school during 1908 in Bermeside, England.¹⁰⁶ Obviously, about this time there was a growing consciousness of the concept of open air schools. The following year in his annual report Hogg argued for the establishment of an open air school at Glen Dhu and East Launceston. He argued that these schools were 'showing the way towards a reform of the whole system of elementary education'. Tasmania, Hogg pointed out, was particularly suited to the establishment of these schools because its climate which was far more moderate than the European or American climates. Particularly, Hogg continued, because of their cheap construction Tasmania should quickly move towards their adoption.¹⁰⁷

In his 1913 annual report McCoy announced that a start had been made on the construction of an open air school at Charles Street, Launceston. The building was to contain two open air classrooms to accommodate 100 children. The cost was to be one-third of ordinary classrooms. It was to be a wooden building. McCoy pointed out that in other Australian states, teachers had expressed a preference for these buildings over the 'more solid structures'. McCoy did not go on to refer to the differences in climate between the other states and Tasmania. The building was supported on wooden piles so that the floor was kept dry because of the air space between it and the ground. The side walls were built up to a height of three feet six inches and were fitted with canvas slides working on ball bearings. McCoy did promise that if the building proved to be too cold in winter it would be used as a shelter shed. Public reaction to

106 E R, 4, 12, April 1909, p.p. 121-2, reprinted from *Education* n.d.

107 JPPP, 1911, paper 9, p. 18

the building was vitriolic.¹⁰⁸ It was commonly called 'the freezing works' by the public.¹⁰⁹

Hogg and McCoy held out. McCoy maintained:

Even in cold weather both the teachers and the children preferred these rooms to the ordinary classroom. The percentage of attendance in the classes was very high, and the children were practically immune from sickness and colds. But some well-meaning but ill-informed persons created a scare in regard to the building ... and the Department installed stoves, which brought colds and other ills in their train.¹¹⁰

Hogg in the midst of the public outcry during the winter of 1916 was asked by McCoy to report on the open air classrooms. Hogg stated:

I am not exaggerating when I say that the movement in their favour is regarded by the hygienists and educationalists of Europe and America as one of the most potent factors for good in the last decade ... the system [points] the way towards a reform in the whole system of elementary education. In the United States [open air] schools are in use even in winter, when the cold is extreme. It must be remembered too, that for all open-air schools it is the most delicate children who are selected. The cases, as a rule, are children suffering from -

1. Anaemia.
2. Malnutrition due to improper food, want of food, etc.
3. Convalescence after acute illnesses and operations.
4. Scrofulous diseases.
5. Heart diseases.
6. Pulmonary diseases, including early tuberculosis.

Statistics show that a large proportion of such children were cured or improved.¹¹¹

Hogg concluded his report with a quotation from an article by the Professor of Public Health in the University of Sheffield. The article started with the assertion that open air schools were a part of the rapidly developing movement of preventative medicine. Excellent results were being attained; it was clear that

¹⁰⁸ JPPP, 1914, paper 4, p. 24

¹⁰⁹ See for example, *Examiner*, correspondence, 3 May 1915, 6, 3

¹¹⁰ JPPP, 1918, paper 4, p. 6

¹¹¹ JPPP, 1918, paper 4, p. 8

open air schools were bound to have an enormous influence on school architecture specifically, and elementary education, generally. Gone was the need for expensive school buildings on costly sites in cities. Now children would be taken to the open air schools, cheaply built on sites close to the woods and fields of the suburbs, as teachers and parents began to realise the value of fresh air. A vast improvement in the physical efficiency of the nation was at hand.¹¹²

The demand for post war reconstruction and an increased national efficiency through a physically fit nation increased the demand for open air schools. Indeed, the idea now had greater potency. The direction which school architecture would take was unmistakable. The Tasmanian public was reminded that, after all, one of the lessons which the war brought home was that true national efficiency could not be achieved, a true democracy attained, and the Bolshevist peril restrained, unless the faults in the national education system were remedied. The *Mercury* gave prominence to a presidential address given by Col. Sir Donald Ross at the annual meeting of the Association of Public School Science Masters in England.¹¹³

Ross urged the further development of open air schools. He went on to add that in England a highly relevant curriculum had grown out of these schools. This was, according to Ross, naturally so. These schools developed a curriculum which imparted in the children the principles of 'personal honour, good temper, and duty - that was *noblesse oblige*' - which the open air school, more than anything else fostered and inculcated. Surely, those possessed of the progressive spirit in Tasmania must follow England's lead.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Mercury*, 4 April 1919, 8, 7

5 School Playgrounds

Neale took up the progressive cause of the provision of playgrounds for children. The push for extensive school playgrounds was closely related to the country life movement. Neale could look to the prophet of progressivism himself for an explanation. He exhorted his teachers to recognise that a message delivered by President Theodore Roosevelt would make a "good playground creed" to paste up where young contestants could read it often.¹¹⁴ Neale quoted the message by Roosevelt, addressed to the children of Washington D.C. The President made it clear that he did not believe in sacrificing work for play, but that he also emphatically believed in play. Neale went on to state that Roosevelt believed that children who had a healthy body would be better fitted for the work force during adulthood. Moreover, if this were achieved through a vigorous sport pursued in 'an honourable straightforward manner, not only the mind, but the character is developed'. Neale quoted Roosevelt's 'special word' addressed to the children of Washington. Roosevelt declared that he emphatically believed in 'manliness in courage, in physical address, but that he also emphatically believed in 'comradeship and in a spirit of fair play'. Roosevelt emphasised that for every contest in which a person entered, that person had 'a moral obligation to do all that was personally possible to win. But, it was far better to fail than to win by any 'underhand or unmanly' method. With this in mind, Roosevelt continued:

... it is only by persistent effort in the face of discouragement that any of us do anything that is really worthwhile doing. The fellow who gives up when he is once beaten is made of mighty poor stuff ... he does not stand much chance of success in the serious conflicts of after life. The true spirit is the spirit which fights hard to succeed, but which takes defeat with good nature, and with a resolute determination to try again. It is a good beginning for the serious work of after life if on the

114 E R, 4, 8, Nov. 1908, p. 93

playgrounds you learn how to co-operate with your fellows, and to do your best to win, while at the same time treating your opponents with fairness and courtesy.¹¹⁵

Neale wrote this at the end of 1908 when he was being pressed heavily by reactionary forces in the state and when elements in the Legislative Council were pressing him to face a Commission of Enquiry. So Neale's explanation regarding the role of playgrounds for the development of character and soul had an added meaning for him.

Sections of the Tasmanian press took up the cause for the provision of more adequate school playgrounds.¹¹⁶ McCoy was sensitive to the groundswell of public concern. He had reprinted in the *Record* an article from the Victorian *Education Gazette* on the American playground movement. The article compared the movement in the United States with developments in the movement in England and highlighted the effect that the movement was having on education in these two countries.¹¹⁷ Particularly, the article stressed how the school playgrounds in America surpassed those in England in equipment and financial support. Their role in public health was important, particularly in the prevention of tuberculosis, the article stressed. But, also school discipline and efficiency was enhanced, along with 'a considerable decrease in truancy and juvenile delinquency'.¹¹⁸ McCoy again publicised the advantages of school playgrounds, drawing from the Playground Association of America. In a world threatened by 'German tyranny', the school playgrounds had an added importance. The article declared:

Among all the lines of upbuilding work which are democratic, preventative, constructive, and educational, none are more important, none more widely approved by

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Daily Post*, editorial, 27 May 1910, 6, 5; *Critic* editorial, 4 Feb. 1911, 2, 3

¹¹⁷ E R, 10, 3, June 1914 p.p. 183-4 reprinted from *Education Gazette*, n.d.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

successful experience in many cities than are the school playgrounds ... Our efforts should be directed not alone to the training of a few boys and girls who are already strong and able to be leaders, but to the training of every child.¹¹⁹

The article went on to emphasise the belief in the environment to influence the development of the soul and the body:

Whatever the neighbourhood is, the playground should establish wholesome surroundings and habits. The environment should be beautiful and orderly. There should be a place to wash, however primitive small, the children will care for them.¹²⁰

A playground was as necessary for the school as was a library. At this point, by way of footnote, McCoy explained self-consciously that 'most Tasmanian schools now have libraries'. The article then illustrated a typical schoolyard playground, sixty feet by one hundred and twenty five feet. Again, McCoy proudly explained that there were now many Tasmanian schoolgrounds of five acres, whereas the one described as being typical in the United States was only half an acre in area. A diagram illustrated many features of school playgrounds in the United States which were to become common features of school playgrounds in Tasmania, but mostly after the second world war - sandpits, swings and slides, nestled under trees.

McCoy, no doubt was moved to push ahead with the developments in school playgrounds by a resolution of the first biennial conference of Australian directors of education held in Adelaide during the winter of 1916.¹²¹ Here one senses that nationalism was gaining the added component of militarism as a determining factor in the development of school playgrounds. The resolution stressed the importance of school playgrounds for the development of organised

119 Elizabeth Rafter, 'Playground and Playground Equipment', *E R*, 10, 7, Sept. 1914, p.p. 224-5, reprinted from *The Playground*, The Playground Association of America, n.d.

120 *Ibid.*

121 JPPP, 1917, paper 3, p. 6

games and military drill. Despite these pressures most Tasmanian school playgrounds during the period remained as basically sparse acres of playing fields, devoid of any fixed play equipment, except for the odd swing under a gum tree, or a see-saw over a log. Admittedly, the occasional manufactured swing or slippery dip were located in the city schools.

In the popular demand for social reconstruction following the First World War the Tasmanian state school teachers took up the cause of school playgrounds. At the July 1919 conference of the Tasmanian Teachers Union held in Launceston it was resolved that Education Department should maintain and extend its commitment to the further establishment of school playgrounds.¹²² Now the progressive ideals were being generated by the professional body, whereas some twelve or thirteen years before only the solitary voices of a few individual progressives could be heard.

Associated with the development of the school playground movement was the school garden movement. The assumption again was that an ordered and beautiful environment positively affected the child's development. But there was a manual education factor, too. Children, while using their hands, could learn some basic agriculture and horticulture. The *Record* during the period 1905-10 contained many articles on the educational and social value of school gardens.¹²³ The October 1909 article illustrated how Colonel Legge, Chairman of the Council of Agriculture, was actively interested in school gardens. He handed the Minister of Education a number of reports from teachers which indicated what their school children were doing in the development of school gardens.

¹²² *Mercury*, 5 July 1919, 7, 7

¹²³ E R, 1, 7, Sept. 1905, p. 64-5; *ibid.*, 2, 3, July 1907, p. 53, reprinted from *Ontario Agricultural Bulletin*, n.d.; E R, 3, 6, Aug. 1907, p. 72; *ibid.*, 4, 8, Oct. 1909, p. 54; *ibid.*, 4, 8, Oct. 1909, p. 54-5; *ibid.*, 4, 12, April 1910, p. 126-7

In editorials the *Daily Post* maintained that the provision of school gardens would in fact add another dimension to school life. They would encourage teachers and children to use them as an integral part of the curriculum. They would become true open air schools.¹²⁴

By 1912 Brockett was reporting favourably on the signs of awakening interest in school gardens. In his district in north and east Tasmania, a considerable number of school reserves were planted 'with as many trees as the ground will reasonably accommodate'. He hoped that 'ere long teachers will arise who will be public spirited enough to begin the formation of avenues in the streets in our villages and on the country roads'. He saw St Helens as an example of what could be done.¹²⁵

Heritage, three years later, was no less optimistic, while still urging the development of school gardens. His report casts a better light on the values underpinning the school garden movement in the state. He stated:

An excellent example of the cultivation of the beautiful was at Claude Road, with Mt Roland as a background. Here there is a row of flourishing English trees, 10 or 12 years old, affording a marked contrast to the surrounding sombre bush.¹²⁶

The ideal was to plant as much of 'England' in Tasmania as possible. It is possible to detect a general growing public concern for school gardens. Certainly the astute Brooks sensed it, and acted accordingly. His school, the Elizabeth Street Practising School, the showpiece of Tasmanian state school education at the time, had splendid gardens facing onto Elizabeth Street. The *Mercury* reported in 1915 that school gardening was put down in the syllabus

¹²⁴ *Daily Post*, editorial, 13 July 1911, 4, 6; *ibid.*, editorial, 9 Aug. 1911, 4, 5

¹²⁵ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 24

¹²⁶ JPPP, 1916, paper 4, p. 23

as one form of manual work, and that 'the movement has extended far and wide'.¹²⁷ The Hobart paper maintained, perhaps optimistically, that three quarters of the state schools throughout the state had gardens, despite the ravages of such pests as rabbits. These gardens, the article maintained, were of considerable aesthetic and educational value. In Hobart, the *Mercury* went on, the Education Department had secured the co-operation of the City Council. The Superintendent of Reserves advised the department on matters relating to school gardens. The idea arose from a desire to improve the bank in front of the Albuera Street School, and had developed to the point where the City Council had supplied Hobart state schools with between 4 000 and 5 000 shrubs and plants. The *Mercury* had interviewed McCoy who had said that the most notable school gardens in the state were at Devonport, East Zeehan, and Wesley Vale. But in many country schools a good deal of practical work in school gardens was done. For example, at Forth and Evandale the various plots were 'a source of interest to the farmers of the district'. Here various kinds of manures were experimented with, and various kinds of grass and other plants tried, and some record of the results were kept. Such words as these and many others, echoed the strength throughout the period of the rural ideal.

6 School Architecture, Progressivism and Progressive Education

Progressivism influenced the development of Tasmanian state primary education through school architecture. The ideals and values of the town planning movement, eugenics, the rural ideal, and the health and hygiene

¹²⁷ *Mercury*, 19 Nov. 1915, 6, 5

movement, all of which were associated with social and national efficiency, were influential.

Reform in school architecture during the first two decades of the twentieth century was, as Burchill has shown, a response to the ideals and methods of progressive education. The child-centred progressive education of the early childhood grades required increased floor space and increased fresh air and natural light. And the scientific progressive education of the primary grades also required ample natural light and fresh air for the teachers to deliver the curriculum efficiently to healthy children.

The new buildings and the renovated older buildings served as a physical reminder for Tasmanians of the presence of progressive education and of the passing of older methods in Tasmanian state schools. The increased provision of school playgrounds also served to remind Tasmanians of the virtues of the country life movement.

CHAPTER 8

THE RURAL IDEAL

As Australian state Education Departments reached out to provide education to the sparsely populated rural regions of Australia, state education came to be dominated by small one or two teacher schools. All Australian Departments of Education, to varying degrees, encouraged the small rural schools to adapt their curriculum to the local environment.¹ For example, in New South Wales 'it was claimed that the teaching subjects ranging from nature study to geography to singing and arithmetic were coloured by local tradition'.² Of course to allow a curriculum to be 'coloured by local tradition' falls a long way short of purposefully developing a child-centred progressive curriculum where the local environment is used as a potent learning resource. Thus we need to distinguish between scientific progressive education which integrated some local subject matter, and child-centred progressive education which used the local environment extensively in a manner that was mutually determined between the learner and the teacher.

The small rural school was typically staffed by a young and inexperienced teacher, or occasionally was the refuge of an incompetent older teacher. Seldom were they staffed by teachers with vision and an understanding of child-centred education. During the first two decades of the century the trainee teachers for the rural schools received no special training in rural education during their short six months course.³ Few teachers in the small rural schools

1 Cliff Turney, Continuity and Change in the Public Primary Schools 1914-32, in J. Cleverley and J. Lawry, *Australian Education in the Twentieth Century*, Longman, Melbourne, 1972; B.K. Hyams and B. Bessant, *Schools for the People?* Longman Cheshire, 1972.

2 Cliff Turney, Continuity and Change..., *op. cit.*, p. 41

3 B.K. Hyams, *Teacher Preparation in Australia*, *op. cit.*, p. 77

would have advanced beyond Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development.

Tasmania's situation regarding rural education was similar to the mainland. In 1918, for example, there were two part-time schools, 57 subsidised schools with an average attendance of less than ten children, 171 schools with an average attendance of between eleven and twenty children, and 171 schools with an average attendance of between twenty one and fifty children. The full time small rural primary schools had a gross enrolment of 13 777 children; the gross enrolment for all of Tasmania's primary schools was 37 038. One or two teacher schools formed thirty seven percent of the total number of primary schools. At the Philip Smith Training College there were seventeen students studying for the six months course, and twenty five students studying for the twelve months course. It was these courses which supplied the teachers for small rural schools.⁴

The country life movement engendered an interest in rural education in Tasmania. There were sections of Tasmanian society which supported the country life movement. This is evident, for example, from a lengthy article published on Tasmanian country life in the *Daily Post* during 1909. The article argued:

.... taking country life in its entirety it is more healthy and enjoyable than that of the city. Country life unfolds the faculties and effectiveness of man more than the city life, where the majority of articles wanted are bought and not made ... Can anything be healthier than moving about amidst well-bred stock, seeing the crops grow, and taking a hand in the harvesting?⁵

4 JPPP, 1919, paper 4

5 *Daily Post*, 24 Aug. 1909, 5, 6-7 op. cit.

The article went on to paint an idyllic picture of Tasmanian country life, stressing the variety to be found from region to region, and how it was so different from that to be found on the mainland. The article concluded by asserting that the quality of Australia's national stock would not deteriorate while ever people were nurtured by the country environment.

1 Rhetoric and Early Responses

In his 1904 report on the efficiency of the Tasmanian Education Department Neale hinted at an ideal he held for country schools to develop curricula close to the needs of their communities.⁶ He looked to New Zealand for an example.⁷ Here there was a decentralised system of education which was administered locally. In some areas schools were encouraged to develop flexible curricula which were based on the needs of rural communities.

This was a theme which Neale took up in his early editions of the *Record*. In November of his first year as director Neale had published in the journal an article from an American journal on the education of farm children in the United States.⁸ The article summarised the issues of the progressive education of rural children. It stated that the progressive rural ideal was '... a well-equipped school-house, a first class teacher, and a course of study revised to meet the demands of the times'. Twentieth century rural life required that children received an education in book-keeping and a certain amount of industrial work. In all the grades children should be engaged in learning experiences such as cardboard modelling, clay modelling, the weaving of rugs and hammocks, the

6 Rep. Prim. Ed., p. 10

7 For a brief history of New Zealand education during the period see A.E. Campbell, *Educating New Zealand*, Wellington, 1941, p.p. 91-105. Campbell tells how the local education boards lost their powers to the central government during the years following the First World War.

8 O.H. Longwell, 'Education of Farm Children in America', ER, 1, 8, Nov. 1905, 93

making of baskets with raffia, and the making of reed and willow and doll-houses with raffia furniture. The article explained that the purpose of these learning experiences was not to lead all children to become carpenters or artisans, '... but with the thought in view of cultivating a desire and an appreciation for such work, and the further idea of giving the pupils the opportunity to acquire the ability to help themselves and thereby help others'.⁹

Neale addressed the progressive rural ideal again in an article by his own pen, headed, 'The Call of the Wild'. Here he teased out the more metaphysical aspects of the country life movement. He opened by contending:

A new spirit seems to be coming into modern life. The country calls us as never before. As we travel further and further from primeval simplicity, the call of the wild becomes more imperative. It is a call to a more natural mode of life.¹⁰

Tasmanians were told of the effects which technology and the applied sciences were having on American rural life by the *Mercury*. The Hobart daily, in a reprint of an article from an American progressive journal, *Collier's*, explained that the population drift from the country to the cities in the United States was due principally to the impact of electrical technology. There was a revolutionary change in the nature of farming skills and knowledge. Thus, 'the farm is no longer a place for dullards'. Now there were vast new bodies of knowledge associated with scientific agriculture. The article explained:

Very modern science is made contributory to farm life; ornithology, because the birds are the farmers' allies; entomology, because the insects are his rivals; geology and chemistry, because the soil and its enrichment are his primary interests.¹¹

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ E R, 3, 4, July 1907, p. 46

¹¹ *Mercury*, 30 Jan. 1905, 4, 6-7

The article went on to explain how American rural schools were responding to these changing circumstances by developing new curricula in both primary and secondary grades.

At the time Tasmanians were host to a distinguished Japanese professor who was responsible for agricultural education in Japanese elementary schools. He was, according to the *Mercury*, 'one of the cultured members of his race'.¹² In an interview with the Hobart newspaper the professor explained that in all Japanese rural elementary and secondary schools theoretical and practical agriculture and fishing were taught. The article reminded Tasmanians of the recent Japanese victories over Imperial Russia. From the responses by the Hobart daily it seems that the issue of rural education was increasingly being discussed in Tasmania.

2 Support From the Tasmanian Agriculture Department

During 1905 Tasmanians were told of the proposed new agricultural high schools in Victorian country districts.¹³ The following year the New South Wales provisions for assistance to rural schools through the Hawkesbury Agricultural College were described to the Tasmanians.¹⁴ During 1908 Tasmanians learnt of a new feature at the Melbourne Royal Agricultural Show: namely, 'a remarkably fine display of products from State-schools, to illustrate the recent advances in teaching experimental agriculture in these schools'.¹⁵ During 1907 Neale visited the Victorian agricultural continuation schools and described to a *Mercury* reporter what he had seen. He concluded his interview by stating that he was '... sure that everyone interested in the welfare of the

¹² *Ibid.*, 8 May 1906, 6, 4

¹³ *Ibid.*, 2 Feb. 1906, 7, 7-8, reprinted from the *Argus*, n.d.

¹⁴ *Mercury*, 3 Sept. 1908, 4, 8

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 18 Nov. 1907, 6, 2-4

people must hope for the time when we shall be able to give the same facilities to our Tasmanian children'.¹⁶ Moreover, only six months earlier Colonel Legge had visited the Hawkesbury Agricultural College. On his return he pressed the Tasmanian Government to provide the organisational support for the Department of Agriculture to assist the Education Department in in-service education for teachers and the practical support for schools to develop agricultural courses.¹⁷

In fact, as early as October 1905 the Agricultural Department and the Education Department were co-operating in bringing the science of agriculture to rural communities. Neale instructed his teachers to make their schools available to officers of the Agricultural Department after school hours for lectures.¹⁸ Again, during the same month the 'Government poultry expert' from the Agricultural Department was given permission by Neale to conduct an experiment in about thirty schools in rural areas in egg laying by various breeds of fowls. Teachers were asked to encourage children to assist.¹⁹ These moves were followed up with an offer by the Tasmanian Council of Agriculture to send, free of cost and on request, to every state school teacher a copy of the *Agricultural Gazette*. Teachers were invited by Neale to apply to attend the 1908 annual agricultural summer school conducted by the Council of Agriculture. The school was held over a two week period each January. At the 1908 school six experts gave instruction in agricultural work suited to assist teachers in starting school gardens. The twenty teachers who were chosen to attend were assured by Neale that the Agriculture Department would follow up the instruction by providing seed, tools and fertilizers to the teachers who were prepared to clear

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 23 March 1907, 5, 2

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 23 Feb. 1907, 5, 6

¹⁸ E R, 1, 7, Oct. 1905, p. 73

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74

and fence their school properties.²⁰ Neale offered the same provisions next year for another twenty teachers.²¹

By the spring following the first summer school many of the teachers who attended were able to implement what they had learnt.²² At Marrawah the head teacher had about an acre of land cleared. With the assistance of the local Progress League he had the land ploughed ready for cultivation. On the land in central plots ten grasses suitable for dairy herds were planted. Here the boys helped. In the front of the school in a grassed patch the girls at the school prepared and tended flower gardens. Additionally, the manager of the local cheese factory gave the school a Babcock milk tester for the children's practical work. The *Mercury* reported that the parents and children took great pride in their work. At the Hamilton-on-Forth school near Devonport a half acre plot was cleared. Here similar introduced grasses as at Marrawah were sown along with eighteen varieties of wheat and four varieties of oats. Bordering the plot a number of introduced trees were planted. Similar work was done on a plot cleared at the Nubeena School, but here clovers and various types of shrubs were sown, all under control conditions. At the Scottsdale School the children and the parents were greatly interested in the lessons given on pruning, budding, grafting, tree planting, shelter trees and manures. At the George Town, Saint Marys, Lefroy, Flowerdale, North Motton, Sheffield and Bismarck schools similar experimental work was carried out by teachers, all of whom reported on the enthusiasm shown by children and parents.²³ The Council of Agriculture followed up this work the following year by sending to

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ E R, 3, 9, Dec. 1907, p. 115

²² *Mercury*, 3 Sept. 1908, 6, 3

²³ *Ibid.*

participating schools, three varieties of wheat, two of oats and one each of Cape barley, peas, rye, maize and beans.²⁴

By 1910 the co-operation between the Education Department and the Agricultural Department ebbed. This may have been due to the relative disinterest which McCoy displayed towards the rural ideal in education compared with Neale's enthusiasm. Certainly, following McCoy's appointment nothing appeared in either the director's annual reports, or the *Record* concerning the progressive education of children in rural areas. This is not to say that the Tasmanian public displayed the same disinterest. The *Mercury* popularised the idea of how the Education Department could improve the rural society and economy by teaching the science of agriculture in schools. For example, in late 1909 it published an account of a meeting of the Otago (New Zealand) Education Board which stressed the importance of the schools in its district 'correlating the work of rural high schools with rural industrial and economic life.'²⁵ The paper then detailed the New Zealand scheme. In August 1910 in greater detail the *Mercury* published the views on rural education held by Alfred Williams, the South Australian Director of Education.²⁶ Williams described the changes occurring in English rural schools. He predicted that these reforms would create a new interest in rural pursuits and reverse the exodus of rural people to the cities. Williams then contended that South Australia, because the conditions there better approximated those prevailing in Canada and the United States, would follow these examples. The Hobart daily then described Williams's views. These included the need to consolidate small country schools into district or central schools and for these schools to develop curricula which mirrored the needs of the district, or in Williams's words,

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 5 May 1909, 3, 7

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 29 Dec. 1909, 3, 4

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8 Aug. 1910, 2, 6-8

highlighted 'the wonderland of the farm'. Williams claimed that the South Australian Education Department '... should aim at turning out ... boys and girls who can do things, who can and will desire to make the best of themselves and the most of the locality in which they live'.²⁷

The *Mercury* in a lengthy editorial during September 1910 placed itself in the vanguard of rural educational reform and displayed some additional concerns held by some urban Tasmanians.²⁸ The editorial pointed to the reforms in rural education in England, Europe and the United States where the errors of the past were being remedied. Children had been

... educated to a dislike of rural work and rural life, so that the cities swarm with crowds of non-producers, who think that they ought to be provided by the rest of the community with the means of living in the way which suits their inclinations.²⁹

There were European examples of the natural consequences of these dire social and political consequences:

In Germany special taxes are imposed on the artisans, in order to give special advantage to rural industries with the natural consequence that Socialism grows stronger in towns and now threatens even the peace of the world.³⁰

The *Mercury* contended that the system of rural education was at fault in these countries and that Tasmanians must learn from these examples. The Hobart daily argued:

There is a need for a thorough change ... the system is antagonistic to rural life ... it neglects the beauties of nature, and the infinite pleasure that is to be got from the observation of rural sights and sounds. The children are trained to thoughts and habits which alienate them from a country occupation, and come to think that the town resident leads an easier life. Rural traditions are dying out. Rural subjects are neglected. The young people have a pride in what they are not. There is a false ideal.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, editorial, 14 Sept. 1910, 4, 3-4

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

This ... is due to the system of education which fails to show the beauties and advantages of country life ... the people are out of touch with what is best both for their health and welfare ... the restoration of agriculture must proceed ... such a restoration will bring with it the restoration of the birth rate, which is now actually so low as to be a national danger.³¹

The Tasmanian Government about this time disbanded the old Council of Agriculture. It legislated for the creation of the Agriculture Department to be organised under a permanent head. The Minister of Agriculture during 1910 requested the Director of Agriculture to put forward plans for a state agricultural farm and school. The reason that the Agriculture Department was chosen to develop an agricultural school and not the Education Department may well have been due to the turmoil left in the Education Department following the Royal Commission of Enquiry into its administration the year before, or it may have been because McCoy was relatively uninterested compared to his interests in establishing urban secondary schools and generally overhauling the administration of the Education Department. The new Director of Agriculture, A.H. Benson, gave the Tasmanian public during 1910 an idea of what the new state agricultural farm and school might be like.³² Despite the publicity given in the *Mercury* about the success of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College in leading its students to an appreciation of the attractiveness of nature, and a vast improvement in farming techniques, the Tasmanian Government oscillated for five years before the farm and school finally were established.³³ Before the farm commenced operations in April 1915 there were many press releases by the Minister of Agriculture and his director on the proposed structure of the farm.³⁴ There was disagreement between what Benson expected and what the

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 12 Jan. 1915, 4, 8

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 3 May 1911, 4, 3; *ibid.*, 19 Feb. 1912, 5, 4; *ibid.*, 4 Sept. 1912, 6, 7; *ibid.*, 4 Oct. 1912, 3, 2-6

government was prepared to give towards its establishment. The *Mercury* in several editorials supported Benson's ideals.³⁵

Perhaps the Tasmanian Government was anticipating that its Agricultural College located south of Deloraine, as the state farm school came to be known, would remedy many of the concerns being expressed by individuals. The college had the misfortune to be opened following the outbreak of war. While the government had spent a considerable amount of money on capital expenditure towards the establishment of the college many Tasmanian youths preferred to rush to arms rather than enrol in the college. At its official opening in April 1915, while there was space for twenty students, only six were enrolled. Then the college had to compete for funds with the war effort. At its official opening there seems to have been more rhetoric and promise than actual progress. For example, Tasmanians were told that here was the best equipped dairy in the Commonwealth, and when the college procured some cows it would demonstrate the great possibility of dairying in Tasmania.³⁶ Twelve months later the future of the college was unclear.

The *Mercury* lamented the large amount of money which the Labor government had spent on the college, the poor enrolments and the difficulty the government was having in further funding its development. In 1916 the six students were costing the government £200 a year. The *Mercury* correctly predicted a major cause of the college's final demise when it suggested that the government could send the students to mainland agricultural colleges for less than that. Clearly, the college was proving to be an embarrassment to the government. It was even suggested that the expensive buildings be used to accommodate neglected

³⁵ *Ibid.*, editorial, 4 May 1911, 4, 5; *ibid.*, editorial, 12 Oct. 1912, 5, 7

³⁶ *Examiner*, 8 April 1915, 5, 5-6

accommodate neglected children who had become wards of the state.³⁷ This was its final end some years later. It is clear, though, that there were sections of Tasmanian society which still pursued the ideals of Tasmanian rural youth receiving systematic instruction in the new science of agriculture.³⁸ The college was maintained throughout the war. In fact, it seems that by the end of the war the dedicated staff brought about considerable advances in its development despite the shortage of students.³⁹ There is no suggestion to indicate the socio-economic background of the students attending the college. One supposes, though, that they were the sons of well-to-do established farmers, this being the only group who could afford to have a son absent from the farm for such long lengths of time.

3 The Labor Movement and the Rural Ideal

The education of children in newly settled and thinly populated areas of Tasmania was an issue taken up by the Labor Party by 1912.⁴⁰ The *Daily Post* argued:

Every child, whether resident in Hobart or in some remote part of the North-West Coast, should have equal opportunities for obtaining a sound elementary education ... There are not equal opportunities now, and unless the people in small communities are able to meet an expense that town residents are not called on to meet their children are left without educational advantages of any kind.⁴¹

The *Daily Post* went on to praise the efforts of the Labor Party's young shadow minister, Lyons, in Parliament in representing the educational needs of rural people.

³⁷ *Mercury*, editorial, 10 Aug. 1916, 4, 4-5

³⁸ See for example, *ibid.*, correspondence, 6 Nov. 1916, 6, 7; *ibid.*, 11 July 1917, 6, 6

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1 Aug. 1918, 7, 6-8

⁴⁰ *Daily Post*, editorial, 6 Aug. 1912, 4, 3-4

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Despite the election of Tasmania's first Labor government in 1913 Tasmanian country children continued to be deprived of an educational system which reflected rural needs. Even with the enthusiastic new Minister for Education, Lyons, the Education Department failed to realise the ideals of rural education being reached in other Australian states, and other parts of the world. Lyons was enthusiastic about McCoy's system of high school bursaries for academically gifted country children. But this was just another step towards the urbanisation of country children, and the very antithesis of the rural ideal. On a tour of country schools in 1915 Lyons praised the improvements made in the subsidised school system. He contended that now, generally speaking, the teaching in country schools was good, and the children were alert. For Lyons, in this respect, 'there is not nearly as much difference ... as there used to be between town and country children'.⁴² Clearly though these improvements came more in the area of administration and progressive education of a scientific type, rather than the provision of schools which were adaptive to the needs of local communities and developed child-centred progressive education. There were sections of Tasmanian society which realised the shortcomings of the provisions being made for rural education by the government. Bishop Mercer spoke out against the government's failure to meet these ideals. He asked:

What was the type of education imparted in our country schools? It was chiefly that which fitted the children, not for country life, but for city life, to become artisans and clerks, rather than agriculturalists. Why not vary the type, having imparted an education just as sound, but having special reference to country pursuits, encouraging the acquirement of knowledge and a taste of farming, dairying, orcharding, gardening, and the like, instilling into the young a greater love of the country for its own sake, an appreciation of its charm and its interests. To this end, nature studies were useful ends. Why not have a specialist form of country education, which would give the children special tastes, and enable them to be happy in the country.⁴³

⁴² *Mercury*, 9 April 1914, 4, 7

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 27 Jan. 1913, 5, 4

With the shortage of youthful male labour caused by the war many poor children from the poor Tasmanian farms continued to suffer extreme educational deprivation. For example, the head teacher at the Riana School on the North-West Coast complained to McCoy that his efforts to educate many of the children in the district were frustrated by parents who refused to send their children to school, knowing that the magistrates would be sympathetic to them if they were brought to court. These children were referred to as 'farm slaves'.⁴⁴ In the south of the state, the Port Cygnet Board of Advice openly encouraged children to be kept away from school to do farm work. The board's excuse was that the district had lost many of its young men to the front.⁴⁵ It is little wonder that these children sought futures in the Tasmanian cities.

4 The Rural Ideal and Social Reconstruction

McCoy showed little enthusiasm to develop curricula in the rural schools which were adaptive to community needs. The *Examiner* drew to the attention of the Tasmanian public the neglect of agriculture in rural state schools when commenting on McCoy's 1916 annual report.⁴⁶ At the first biennial conference of Australia's directors of education it was resolved that suitable rural schools be established in rural centres in order to provide for '... education specially useful for rural workers, e.g. for boys, woodwork, metalwork, blacksmithing, simple building construction, land measurement and agriculture; and for girls, cookery, laundry, dairying, and smaller farming industries'.⁴⁷ These same resolutions were passed at the directors' 1918 conference, but here another

44 *Advocate*, 1 Aug. 1918, 3, 6

45 *Mercury*, 13 Sept. 1918, 7, 3

46 *Examiner*, 1 May 1916, 3, 4-5

47 *Daily Post*, 24 July 1916, 3, 3-4

dimension of rural education was added. Anticipating the continued improvement in country transport, it was recommended that central schools be established in rural districts, and that the smaller surrounding schools be closed. Teachers should be specially trained to teach the subjects as outlined at the previous conference.⁴⁸ McCoy did not react to any of these resolutions. Pressure from individuals and groups within Tasmanian society in support of these ideals was strong. The Federal Institute of Accountants in 1918, in the spirit of the post-war reconstruction movement, argued for the establishment of agriculture high schools to enable children to follow agriculture pursuits.⁴⁹ The progressive measures taken by some rural school authorities in the United States were often seen as models for Tasmanian development. Individuals who had seen the results of American developments reported enthusiastically back to the Tasmanians.⁵⁰

The Tasmanian teachers at their 1918 annual union conference passed a motion from F.J. McCabe, the head teacher at the Longford State School, urging the establishment of area schools.⁵¹ McCoy replied unenthusiastically '... that such a central school would tend to break up and destroy rural community life'.⁵² The president of the Teachers Union and the chairman of the meeting was Brooks, soon to become director of education. Further pressure to establish agricultural high schools came from the boards of advice. For example, the Huon Board of Advice requested McCoy for the establishment of one at Huonville.⁵³ Despite criticism in the press, McCoy remained unmoved in regard to the establishment of rural central schools, or in encouraging rural

48 *Mercury*, 17 June 1918, 3, 4-5

49 *Daily Post*, 5 July 1918, 5, 6-7

50 *Mercury*, correspondence, 28 Sept. 1918, 11, 7; *ibid.*, 3 July 1918, 5, 4

51 A letter from McCabe is held in the records of the Tasmanian Teachers Federation, Patrick St., Hobart

52 McCoy's letter in reply is attached to McCabe's letter and filed in the records of the Tasmanian Teachers Federation

53 *Mercury*, 20 Jan. 1919, 7, 4

schools to develop adaptive curricula based on the needs of individual school communities. His response, perhaps, was predictable. He chose instead to establish a correspondence school, to be located in Hobart.⁵⁴ At least a semblance of reform was evident, albeit it was an urban-based reform which did little more than cheaply provide an education in the three R's to children who would have otherwise not received it. Perhaps the astute McCoy sensed that what most of rural Tasmanians really wanted for their children's education was a solid education in the three R's so that if need be they could compete on equal terms in the cities.⁵⁵ Certainly, the ultimate demise of the Tasmanian area school, established in the late 'thirties has been attributed to the fact that country parents wanted their children to receive exactly the same education as did their city cousins.

5 The Rural Ideal and Progressive Education

Progressivism affected the development of Tasmania's state primary schools through the rural ideal. Developments were slow. During McCoy's directorship the development of scientific management with its quest for uniformity and efficiency helped to suppress the developments put in train by Neale. McCoy's and Lyons's concern was to alleviate a perceived disadvantage being suffered by Tasmania's rural schools relative to schools in larger towns and cities. Better trained teachers in the tradition of scientific progressive education meant that Tasmania's rural schools were falling into line with those of the larger towns and cities. They, too, were developing from Beeby's Dame School Stage to the Stage of Formalism.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27 March 1919, 4, 6

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 31 March 1919, 4, 7; *ibid.*, 20 June 1919, 5, 8

Aspirants of the rural ideal in Tasmanian state schools brought a vitality to rural school life. During McCoy's directorships there remained Tasmanians who argued for the need to encourage Tasmanian rural schools to develop curricula which better reflected the nature of the school community. This would, it was argued, enrich and strengthen Tasmania's rural life and economy. An agricultural college had proven to be unviable. With the developing professionalism of Tasmania's state school teachers, and as more schools progressed through Beeby's Stage of Formalism to the Stage of Transition, it was more likely that stronger arguments for change in the rural school curriculum would come from the teaching profession. Tasmanian teachers would move from scientific progressive education to child-centred progressive education.

Chapter 9

The Development of the New Psychology and Special Education

For O'Neil scientific psychology, as distinct from a philosophical study of human behaviour, begins with the work of the German, Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920). Wundt established the first psychological laboratory in 1879 where he undertook an empirical study of human behaviour.¹ O'Neil also shows that the work of the Englishman Francis Galton (1822-1911), who initiated many observational studies of psychological problems, devised methods for their conduct and who was the founding father of statistics, was important in the history of scientific psychology. O'Neil shows that the Wundtian approach to psychology was 'akin to that of chemistry in identifying elementary content [of behaviour] and in showing how these elements were added and combined in the experience of everyday life'.² The first to abandon the old positivist doctrines and to develop a vitalistic approach to understanding human behaviour was the American, William James (1842-1910).

James believed that a more dynamic and more active concept of mind was required. The new psychology begins with James, who was a key exponent of act psychology. This was the precursor to functionalism which was best represented by the American, Edward Thorndike (1874-1949). Functionalism advanced the new psychology. O'Neil shows that the two important influences on James was the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin and the philosophical realist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

1 W.M. O'Neil, *The Beginning of Modern Psychology*, Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1968

2 *Ibid.*, p. 13

Turtle contends that Australia has produced neither individual psychologists of distinction nor a psychological tradition.³ But Turtle goes on to argue that a study of the history of Psychology in Australia is of interest, particularly to see the way in which the new discipline was transported to an adolescent colonial society and the way in which it has subsequently matured. This was a society which at the turn of the century was undergoing a major upheaval and soul-searching in primary, secondary and tertiary education, a time also when some Australians were beginning to apply the findings of overseas research in the new psychology.

On the other hand Taft argues that there were three Australian pioneer psychologists 'whose influential independent contribution between 1910-1920 went beyond contemporary developments in other countries'.⁴ For Taft Bernard Muscio, Elton Mayor, and Stanley Porteus were important because of their 'application of psychology to practical problems: industrial, clinical, political, and educational'.⁵ Roe certainly endorses Taft's claim.⁶

1 Anthropometrical Research

A study of the new psychology and the development of special state education for intellectually handicapped children in Tasmania begins with a study of anthropometrical research. Here the measurement of the body preceded the measurement of the mind. A major start had been made in Tasmania in anthropometrical research as early as 1901 by Bjelke-Petersen in a paper given

3 Alison M. Turtle, 'Psychology in the Australian Context', *International Journal of Psychology*, 20, 1985, 111-128.

4 Ronald Taft, 'Psychology and its History in Australia', *Australian Psychologist*, 17, 1, March 1982, p. 32

5 *Ibid.*, p. 33

6 M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives. op. cit.*, p.17

at the 1901 Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science Conference held in Hobart.⁷ Bjelke-Petersen surveyed 500 boys. From a perspective of over ten years, the *Daily Post* wrote that, 'it was recognised that the figures were based on limited numbers, but at least they challenged attention.'⁸

Elkington's 1906 medical survey of the 1 200 Hobart school children embodied a large amount of anthropometrical data. The data from a perspective of nearly seventy years may seem trivial, but its importance lies in the fact that it was data which could be used to compare the physical development of Tasmanian children from town and country, with children from other parts of Australia and the world.⁹

During 1912 the school medical officers began to collect anthropometrical data for the Commonwealth Statistician. A uniform system of measurements had been arranged for all states. Included in the purposes of the study was a comparative measurement of the effect of climate on Queensland and Tasmanian children.¹⁰ The *Daily Post* enthused over the work being done.¹¹ Anthropomological research, according to the Hobart Labor daily, had a contribution to make to national efficiency:

Much interest has been roused, particularly as affecting the physical growth of school children, and as regards fatigue effects in connection with the school programmes or drill requirements ... The question of physique and growth must receive more intelligent attention than it has done in the past if the progress of the British race here is to be properly studied. By the means of this survey we

7 Christian Bjelke-Petersen, 'Growth and Development of Hobart School Boys with Some Notes on Anthropometry', Australian Association for the Advancement of Science (Section J) 1902, JPPP, 1903, paper 66. National Physical Culture Scheme for Tasmanias. Proposal submitted by Mr Petersen

8 *Daily Post*, 11 May 1912, 7, 2

9 JPPP, 1907, paper 23

10 JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 21

11 *Daily Post*, 11 May 1912, 7, 2, *op. cit.*

can learn in good time the trend of changes that are taking place, and this will guide our action.¹²

2 The Child-Study Movement

Neale published in the *Record* a brief summary of some research being undertaken in England on the relationship between the quantity and quality of children's sleep and their performance in school. The Tasmanian teachers were told that statistics had been collected on the subject dealing with upwards of six thousand children in elementary schools to prove this point.¹³

Neale obviously sought to reinforce what Elkington and his ilk were saying about the importance of empirical studies of children. Neale asked his teachers if they had observed their children closely enough to answer a series of questions which he put to them: if all children could see every portion of the blackboard distinctly; if they could hold a book at a distance without any strain to their eyes; if each child could hear everything which the teacher had said; were there any partially deaf children in the class; if any child was inactive, was it due to lack of motor ability or some disease; did all children assume the best possible posture while sitting or standing; if any child showed some pallor, did the teacher know the reason why; did each child receive from home the essential instructions in hygiene and health; were teachers aware of the amount of manual and mental work that each child did after school hours; was the teacher aware of how much each individual in the class exercised both at school and outside of school hours; did each child enunciate words as well as possible? All these questions were closely related to the ideals of the school health and hygiene movement. They also presupposed that the teacher was the central figure in the learning process, and that there was some universal

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ E R, 4, 12, March 1909, p. 130

standard of excellence. Teachers were asked to study many aspects of each individual's behaviour in and out of school.¹⁴

Neale introduced another facet of the empirical study of children to Tasmanian teachers in requiring them to allow children to engage in spontaneous art work and to observe the results of this spontaneity to understand something more about the child. Neale had Dechaineux visit Invermay State School without notice to obtain specimens of spontaneous drawings by infant children.¹⁵ Mrs Sabine, the infant teacher at the school, told a story and conducted a conversation lesson for a few minutes. The forty infants were then asked to depict any part of the story in chalk on their blackboards.

Dechaineux then explained that he chose four drawings to illustrate the point which he wanted to make about spontaneous drawings in relation to child study. But one suspects he was really after adult standards of quality because he says that he 'could have easily selected ten or twelve equally as good drawings, and perhaps another six or eight very close in point of expression to the first lot. Quite a large number of drawings were exceedingly good, but were on too small a scale, and teachers [were] advised to warn against this fault ...'¹⁶ It appears then that much of what was being said overseas by people such as Stanley Hall and Sully evaded Neale and Dechaineux.¹⁷ Neither quite understood children's art as mirroring some aspect of a child's development. This did not stop Neale asking his teachers to read the overseas authors. For example, during his last months as director he suggested to his teachers that

¹⁴ E R, 3, 1, April 1907, p. 9

¹⁵ E R, 2, 4, July 1907, p.p. 48-9

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, 2 vols., New York, 1904; James Sully, *Studies in Childhood*, London, 1895. Hall and Sully were prominent amongst a group of progressive educators of the pre-war period who pioneered the application of scientific procedures to child study

they could catch 'glimpses' of the children's 'inner life' through their art work, where the unconsciousness was to be revealed. This was an editorial comment in reference to some of Barnes's work in the United States. Here again, Neale's pen does not suggest that he studied the work in depth.¹⁸

Neale during his last days in Tasmania further encouraged his teachers to pursue the empirical study of children's artwork.¹⁹ Sully's *Studies in Childhood*, Neale informed the Tasmanian teachers, illustrated how children's artwork provided a very satisfactory means of obtaining an insight into children's 'mental images, and their ability to group these into a given arrangement'. He stated that either a prepared written or oral introductory talk was first needed. The children were then required to reproduce the story in drawings, much the same as Dechaineux had done at the Invermay School. He further modified Dechaineux's approach by stating that the teacher should not impose any particular technique or aesthetic value on the children's work. Neale explained that an examination of just a small number of these drawings 'usually reveals some extraordinary mistaken interpretation of what has been read'. Remarkably, Neale tended to see the children's art work as a form of pictorial comprehension test. He still could not bring himself to the point that the art work could be appreciated in terms of the child's interpretation of the story, and that this could provide a mirror to the child's development. He did go on to state, however, that a study of the children's art work by the teacher would reveal, for example, 'the relative capacity of the eye which sees and the hand which draws, the appreciation of beauty and the knowledge of particular forms of experience - "powers of observation" as it is commonly termed'. Here, Neale, came closer to a better understanding of what Sully was arguing in

18 Earl Barnes, 'Child Study in Relation to Elementary Art Education', *E R*, 4, 12, March 1909, p.p. 114-19, reprinted Dr James P. Harvey, (ed.) *Art Education in the Public Schools of the United States*, Mass., 1906.

19 *E R*, 4, 12, April 1909, p. 130

his *Studies in Childhood*. Despite Neale's statement that Sully has '... made us familiar with the employment of drawings by the investigator', Neale's reference to such an influential work reveals no more than a superficial knowledge of a very short chapter in a major work by a leading international authority on the child study movement.²⁰ Sully's work deserved greater and more critical comment than Neale's petty contribution.²¹ There is no evidence that there was any follow-up by Neale or his inspectors to encourage teachers to read and apply the methods outlined in Sully's work. No reference to the topic appears in any annual report, agenda for summer schools, or articles in the *Record*.

Schoolroom 'howlers' provided another subject for the empirical study of children. The *Mercury* in early 1905 reprinted an article from the English educational journal, *Schoolmaster* on the subject. Although most of the article dealt with the alleged comical side of 'howlers', the *Mercury* article gave some indication to the Tasmanian readers that there was more at issue than the merely humorous aspect of 'howlers'. The paper explained that '... the youthful mind is fresh, alert, and not overlaid with impressions. It, therefore, takes a view that is refreshing.' And later, inclining towards more analysis, the article went on:

The working of the child mind, the quaint homely wisdom and shrewdness that it not frequently displays, and the paths that - so far as the working class are [sic] concerned - it discovers, are often engrossingly interesting.²²

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ James Sully, *Studies in Childhood*, chap. 9, 'The Child as an Artist'. Sully was Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University College, London during the last decades of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. His autobiography is *My Life and Friends*, London, 1918. His publications were many. Those which had special influence on education were *Studies in Childhood*; *Children's Ways*, London, 1916; and *The Teachers' Handbook of Psychology*, London, 1920. These and other titles bearing early accession dates are contained in the Bliss Collection, Uni. of Tas. Library

²² *Mercury*, 2 June 1905, 6, 3-4

Just how much Tasmanians were interested in the child study movement is not at all clear.

It is an index to an understanding of the growth of the child study movement that when next 'howlers' are mentioned in the Tasmanian educational literature, there is a definite attempt to make them a source of empirical study so that teachers could gain a more advanced insight into child development: Neale, during his last days in Tasmania declared that 'howlers' was one field of study which lay open to all teachers, but which, as far as he knew, had not received any serious consideration. 'Howlers' Neale contended, could afford 'glimpses ... of the individual pupil's mental processes ...'²³ He argued that what was needed was for the teacher to carefully record the 'howler' itself so that the sense of humour should not be allowed to trick the memory into making smart 'copy' for the newspapers. The circumstances of the 'howler', too, should be recorded, 'and what ever explanation could be assigned to it'; more particularly any explanation extracted from the perpetrator. There is no evidence that any of Neale's inspectors or teachers took Neale up on his suggestion.

The study of handwriting as a means to understanding an individual's psychological makeup had some general interest in Tasmanian society early in the twentieth century. The *Mercury* gave an account of Binet's work in Paris.²⁴ The Tasmanians were told that Binet had constructed a series of tests which sought to make 'the pseudo-sciences of graphology, palmistry and phrenology' more of an empirical study. Binet sought to establish whether or not handwriting could reveal the age, sex, intelligence and character of the writer. Elkington added another facet to the empirical study of children when he illustrated to the Tasmanian teachers the need to study carefully and record

²³ E R, 4, 12, April 1909, p. 134

²⁴ *Mercury* 10 Jan. 1907, 7, 3

children's handwriting in order to detect changes in children's physical condition.²⁵ To illustrate his point he had copies published of a child's handwriting as the child/^{became} increasingly afflicted by St Vitus Dance, 'a nervous affliction which if undetected, may be productive of much misery and distress to its victim, and may even result in irreparable damage'. There is no evidence in either the director's annual reports, inspectors' annual reports, or the *Record* that teachers were ever required to act upon these suggestions. One supposes that the schools left the responsibility to the school nurses and the school medical officers.

The educational arguments associated with the ambidextrous drawing question which were current during the early part of the century were closely linked to the child study movement. At the centre of the debate was whether or not children's minds could be developed by training them to draw ambidextrously. The Tasmanian public was provided with an interesting account of the issues involved in the debate through the *Mercury* as early as May 1905.²⁶ The paper described a report of a scientific paper by Dr George M. Gould, printed in the English journal, *Science*. Gould had contended that it was 'the eye, and not the hand or the foot, [which was] the governing power of the facile movement'. He maintained that if a person was 'left eyed', then it was 'natural' for them to write with their left hand, in fact, to force them to write with their right hand could cause them mental imbalance, and would lead to gross non-creativity. Indeed, the end result would be total neurosis. According to the *Mercury*, Gould had written:

It is my opinion that ambidexterity should be discouraged. If a child prefers to use his left hand to the right he will probably be afforded greater celerity and unity by reason of the three organs' dominating action

²⁵ E R, Supplement, 3, 3, Aug. 1908

²⁶ *Mercury*, 20 May 1905, 6, 3

being in one side of the brain... I have never seen any but bad results from attempts to train children to use the right hand instead of the left when they exhibit a tendency for the former. Moreover, the attempt is never successful. The best results attained are poor, and are only awkward mixtures of the two forms which yield confusion and indecision throughout the subsequent life of the victim.²⁷

Gould gave examples of what in his view were disastrous results in training in ambidexterity. For example, one person grew to hate writing. 'The mere act of executing penmanship distresses him. Neither is he able to display originality of thought while engaged in writing.'²⁸

Neale brought the Tasmanian teachers in touch with the debate which was developing on the mainland. The South Australians had the first say. J.T. Smyth, an inspector, offered an amazingly simplistic argument for the teaching of ambidextrous writing.²⁹ He observed that society 'was poorer' in 'manipulative dexterity judging by [contemporary] sculpture, architecture, illuminations, and intricacy of design', while 'two-handed training [led] to greater executive ability and increased power'. Neither Smyth, nor Neale through editorial comment, chose to offer any empirical evidence for this claim.

Of the Tasmanian educators of the early twentieth century, Neale showed the greatest enthusiasm for the child study movement. Again, his pen was not original but he at least seemed to be in touch with what was happening elsewhere in the world. He was sympathetic to the broad principles of the movement which asked educators to first look at the child then look to a suitable curriculum. Through the Sydney Society of Child Study he brought the Tasmanian teachers into contact with these broad principles. For example, during his first months as director he summarised for the Tasmanians an

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ J.T. Smyth, 'Rational Education - Two-Handedness', *E R*, 3, 6, Sept. 1907, p.p. 71-3, reprinted *Education Gazette*, n. d.

address delivered by G.H. Knibbs to the Sydney Society. *Inter alia*, Knibbs said that there should be fewer examinations and that Australian children would gain more from better school buildings, better equipment, and better trained teachers. The examination system negated all the ideals of the child study movement because it encouraged teachers to perceive of education as an absolute body of knowledge which all children had to gain. 'What [children] wanted was faculty, not erudition, power, not memory.'³⁰

There was never any child study society in Tasmania, but there were interested and well-informed educators. That there was some public interest in the subject is evidenced by a *Mercury* article as early as 1905.³¹ The paper in a lengthy lead article published the proceedings of a meeting of the Sydney society. Frances Anderson, wife of the Professor of Education, University of Sydney, addressed the meeting on the subject of the virtues of co-education. She argued that a child's healthy self-esteem and well-balanced mind could only come from a school environment where boys and girls, and where teachers themselves, fostered a frank belief in the virtues of co-education. She contended that parents and teachers alike often persistingly ignored some of the strongest impulses of complicated human nature, and by doing so lay a foundation of estrangement between parents and children, or teacher and children. Anderson argued from an empirical standpoint. To prove her point, she asked those at the meeting to observe the behaviour of the children in their charge. For example, she asked, 'do [children] regard the difference of sex seriously and with reverence, or do they make of sex a subject for secret alluring amusement?' In the same article, the *Mercury* reported the answer of Knibbs, president of the association, which included the assertions that he did not have any firm beliefs

³⁰ E R, 1, 6, Sept. 1905, p. 60

³¹ *Mercury*, 2 June 1905, 6, 3-4

on the subject, and that any definite answer must wait upon greater knowledge of child psychology.³²

Johnson had reservations about the child study movement. In his paper read to the Royal Society during the winter of 1906 Johnson evaluated and summarised the achievements of the child study movement. For Johnson

a great deal has been written in these days about child study - much that is very ridiculous and very useless. But the movement has done some good in leading the teacher to see that his methods ought to seek and use the natural impulses of the restless little atoms in front of him. How observant children are! How imaginative! What wonderful powers of reasoning they possess at times. And their very mistakes - what are they but windows through which we may peep into the workings of their minds?³³

Johnson's was a commonsense attitude to the child study movement. But given the small groundswell of support for progressive education in the state, coupled with Tasmania's small population, it was unlikely that there would be any original research done as there was in Sydney. The Tasmanians would look to the mother colony for a lead in discussion.

Little of note was written on the subject of child study until a group of progressive Tasmanian educators invited G.H. Archibald from England to include the island state in his Australian tour. In May 1912 McCoy gave notice to the Tasmanian teachers that 'Mr G.H. Archibald, who has a high reputation in Great Britain as an exponent in Child-Study, is about to pay a visit to the various Australian States [his daughter] Miss Archibald is also to give lectures'.³⁴ McCoy gave no notice of Archibald's published works.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ J.A. Johnson, 'The New Education', *E R*, 2, 6, Sept. 1906, p.p. 76-8, *op cit.*

³⁴ *E R*, 7, 12, May 1912, p. 173

During June 1912 Dickinson, who may well have been on the organising committee, contributed a lengthy article in the *Mercury* on the significance of Archibald's visit.³⁵ Dickinson brought the purpose of Archibald's visit into focus by explaining that Archibald had paid special attention to Sunday school work, but from a glance at the syllabus of the lectures, teachers too could learn much from his message. The primary significance of Archibald's visit, explained Dickinson, lay in the basic need for child study in Tasmania schools.³⁶ Just how much Dickinson's views on the potential of the child study were reflected in the Tasmanian education system is difficult to say, but it is clear that many people held much store in the potential power of the results of the empirical study of children.

Archibald had nothing new to offer any Tasmanian who had read the literature which Neale was advocating some years before. Coming from the mother country, however, the Hobartians gathered unto him. Nine lectures in all were given, followed by two demonstration teaching lessons of an infant and a primary class.³⁷ The content of the lectures was a fair summary of Parker's educational philosophy and methodology, with a little of the same from Sully. For example, he told the Tasmanians that the school should resemble a warm and caring home environment; that children should not have their natural urge to play suppressed; that children should never be frightened; that due care should be taken by teachers and parents of children's physique; and he criticised the growing emphasis on militarism in Australian schools generally. Archibald, at no stage credited Parker with any of these ideas. He chose instead the authority of the Old Testament. For example, in reference to children's natural

³⁵ *Mercury*, 14 June 1912, 3, 2

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Mercury*, 20 June 1912, 6, 2; *ibid.*, 21 June 1912, 6, 3; *ibid.*, 22 June 1912, 6, 2; *ibid.*, 24 June 1912, 6, 5

impulses he said, 'The Old Testament said, "Train up a boy in the way he wanted to go"'.

Archibald did pay some attention to the empirical study of children. He had nothing to add, however, to what Sully had written nearly twenty years earlier. First, he encouraged teachers and parents to observe carefully children's drawings. His guidelines for observation of the various aspects of children's drawings were the same as those given by Neale some three years before. Later he referred to the results of some research undertaken at the Normal Training College, Worcester, where some 35 000 children were examined on their imitative abilities. According to Archibald the results showed that eighty nine percent of children imitated adults, and eleven percent imitated other children.

These, no doubt, were research findings which would have endorsed many of the practices of the teacher-dominated classrooms of the day.

Archibald's lectures generated a small amount of interest in child study in the Tasmanian community. The *Critic*, for example, hoped that Archibald's ideas would be adopted and would bring 'a bright system of teaching which will let some sunshine into the minds of the men and women of the future'.³⁸ Perhaps, because of the shallow treatment given to empirical research by Archibald, or perhaps because of a general absence of commitment by teachers, following his visit there was no follow-up reference in official Education Department literature to his message. The significance of his visit lies in the fact that he was the first overseas educator to publicly address the Tasmanians on the virtues of progressive education. The only reference to the influence of his message in the Hobart press came late in 1912 when the *Mercury* announced that the New

³⁸ *Critic*, editorial, 28 June 1912, 2, 3

Town Congregational Sunday School had formed a kindergarten group along the lines suggested by Archibald.³⁹

The formation of the New Town Sunday School group and an article in the *Mercury* suggests that there was a body of informed opinion in Hobart society about the child-study movement.⁴⁰ Mary Hughes, whose article suggests that she was a well-informed progressive parent, rather than a teacher, argued that the main thrust of the child-study movement was to improve the relationship between teachers and children.

The empirical study of children's behaviour and development in the classroom by teachers became firmly implanted in Tasmanian infant schools with the introduction of Montessorian methods. During 1912 the Tasmanian public was given an account of how Montessori used the empirical studies of children as a necessary component of her total method. Montessori, the *Mercury* wrote,

... was led to observe closely the mental condition of large numbers of feeble-minded children. She was at the same time a keen student of anthropology and psychology, and of the works of Seguin.⁴¹

When Rowntree was in full swing at the Elizabeth Street Practising School, a *Mercury* reporter visited the classroom under her control.⁴² From the *Mercury* report there is only inferential evidence that the Montessori method of the teacher making daily notes on each child's behaviour and development was being used by Rowntree. But, being a follower of the Montessorian methods during her early years as the demonstration teacher at the school she must have used these observational notes of children. And all the infant trainee teachers

³⁹ *Mercury*, 17 Oct. 1912, 2, 2

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 12 June 1909, 3,

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 26 July 1912, 3, 6-7

⁴² *Ibid.*, 17 May 1917, 2, 5-6, *op. cit.*

from the Philip Smith Training College would have had to follow these methods.

There is no doubt, however, that Australian educators were beginning to realise the importance of making observational notes of children's behaviour and development, and basing learning experiences on these. This of course only applied to infant and primary schools. Tasmanian teachers in June 1918 learnt that the Australian directors of education were concerned about the lack of individual methods in schools. The Tasmanians were told:

As to the training of the individual it was felt that in schools as constituted at present, there was too much treatment of children in the mass, and too little study of the individual. The conference felt that the question was one of such grave national importance that the attention of all those interested in education should be specially directed towards it.⁴³

McCoy elaborated on this press summary for the Tasmanian teachers in the *Record*.⁴⁴ In much detail McCoy instructed his teachers how child observation could lead to greater individuality in teaching. In his first annual report as the new Director of Education, Brooks followed up McCoy's message. He considered that 'it is still necessary to emphasise the point'.⁴⁵ There was nothing, however, in the annual reports of his inspectors to indicate that they were pursuing these ideals.

3 The Development of the New Psychology in Tasmania

The development of the Tasmanian teachers' understanding of the importance of the new psychology in understanding individual development dates from

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 16 June 1918, 6, 6, *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ E R, 14, 7, July 1918, p.p. 102-3, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ JPPP, 1920, paper 4, p. 3

Neale's arrival in Tasmania. This is not to say that Neale was the first person to introduce the new psychology to the Tasmanians. There was in Hobart at the time of Neale's arrival an active Psychic Research and Psychological Society which met monthly. Prominent members were Dr Gerard Smith, a Hobart medical practitioner, A.J. Taylor and Mrs Henry Dobson. The society, as the title suggests were not wholly involved with the new empirical psychology. For example, at their January meeting in 1906 Taylor addressed the group on 'Dual Personality and Psychic Phenomena'. From the *Mercury* report of the meeting much of what was said was speculative psychology.⁴⁶ Other topics discussed moved closer to the new psychology. For example, at the March 1906 meeting of the society Smith addressed the group on the subject of the 'Brain and Mind'. In his address Smith spoke of current research on the brain and the nervous system.⁴⁷

Johnson in his 1906 Royal Society paper indicated his commitment to the new psychology as the keystone of progressive education. He contended that, 'the teacher is primarily dealing with mental processes and mental growth; hence it is essential that all his training should be based on accurate knowledge of the nature of such mental processes - in other words his training must be grounded in psychology'.⁴⁸ Psychology, Johnson went on, had grown beyond the 'battleground of the warring theories of useless philosophies', and had emerged as 'the most intensely interesting of all practical sciences in its application to the theory and practice of education'. He mentioned Morgan's *Psychology for Teachers* and James's *Talk to Teachers* as essential texts to be studied. Both of these texts were accessioned into the college library during 1906.⁴⁹ All student

⁴⁶ *Mercury*, 16 Jan. 1906, 5, 3

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1906, 3, 7

⁴⁸ J.A. Johnson, 'The New Education', *op. cit.*, p. 80

⁴⁹ In the basement of the Southern Teachers Centre, the old Philip Smith Training College, are stored multiple copies of these texts, bearing the accession date of 1906 (Nov. 1983)

teachers for many years were initiated into the functionalist psychology of these two pioneers of the new psychology.

Johnson brought the development of the new psychology another step closer when, at the May 1911 meeting of The Royal Society, he was successful in having a Psychology and Education section formed as a part of the Royal Society, a society whose original charter was scientific research.⁵⁰ Speaking to his motion Johnson explained to the members of the august body that it was his opinion that 'the greatest revolution which had taken place in the last 20 years in any department of scientific work was that which has taken place in regard to education'. Johnson told the society that he knew several educators who would be pleased to participate in the new section.

The first paper on the new psychology to be presented to the Psychology and Education Section was given by Johnson, entitled 'Recent Developments in Experimental Pedagogy'.⁵¹ The paper gave a brief summary of overseas research, but also argued for the university to undertake research in the new psychology. Significantly during 1913, the year Johnson gave his paper, Morris Miller was elected to the society. The following year seven papers were given in the section, and the membership stood at nineteen.⁵² There are no

50 *Mercury*, 9 May 1911, 2, 5

51 The Royal Society of Tasmania, *Abstract of Proceedings*, 1913, p.p. 288-90

52 The Royal Society of Tasmania, *Abstract of Proceedings*, 1914, p. 309:

'Psychology and Education Section

Seven Meetings of the Psychology and Education Section were held during the year with an average attendance of ten members. Mr L.H. Lindon was elected Chairman of the Section, and Mr J.A. Johnson, Secretary. The members of the Section were Messrs. W.C. Annells, T.C. Brammall, G.V. Brooks, S. Clemes, W. Clemes, L. Dechaineux, S.R. Dickenson, E.I. Gower, J.A. Johnson, L.H. Lindon, S.O. Lovell, P.H. Mitchell, J.A. McElroy, A.A. Stephens, R.C. Stephens, W. Wright, Gordon Wood.

The subjects of study centred on the recent developments in Experimental Pedagogy. The following papers were read and discussed -

1. "The Psychological Aspect of Education." G.V. Brooks and J.A. McElroy.
2. "The Philosophical Aspect of Education." S.O. Lovell.
3. "Experimental Pedagogy" (read before the Society on 11th August). J.A. Johnson.
4. "Experimental Work in Sensation." A.A. Stephens.

records of the research, but four of the titles suggest that they were original: A.A. Stephens, 'Experimental Work in Sensation'; W. Wright, 'Experimental Results in Attention'; P.H. Mitchell, 'Experimental Aspects of Perception'; L.H. Lindon, 'Experiments in Memory'. This was Miller's second year as head of the philosophy department at the university, where he included elements of the new psychology in his philosophy course. It is a reasonable assumption that the people giving the papers were Miller's students. The four were graduates of the training college, and more than likely, completing their degrees part-time. Three of them, Wright, Stephens, and Mitchell went on to become senior officers in the Education Department. This fact alone suggests that the Psychology and Education Section was becoming a necessary step for any ambitious teacher in the Education Department. The other papers given to the section until 1920 concentrated on the role of education in post-war reconstruction, especially technical education, although during 1918 Brooks gave a paper on 'The Training of the Individual'. It is reasonable to assume that the paper was similar to that which McCoy had published in the *Record* the same year.

During the second decade of the century, the Tasmanian public had little published locally to indicate what impact the new psychology was having on educational practice. Dickinson contributed a lengthy article on the topic during December 1913.⁵³ His message contained nothing original, its significance lies in its strength of argument for the turn which education was about to take, and the fact that he was the only Tasmanian educator who was prepared to give this message to the Tasmanian people.

5. "Experimental Results in Attention." W. Wright.

6. "Experimental Aspects of Perception and Apperception." P.H. Mitchell.

7. "Experiments in Memory." L.H. Lindon.

53 *Mercury*, 14 Dec. 1913, 6, 3-4

Dickinson argued that the most remarkable development was the recognition by some educators that 'learning how to learn' was far more important than the recital of facts at examination time. Dickinson saw this fundamental change in conception of education, as a result of the 'science of education', specifically, 'the consequent adoption of the methods of science, including particular practical experimentation under the same rigid conditions as are employed in the other sciences'. This had brought educators to first consider the learning program for each individual in the class, rather than the teaching of a single body of knowledge for the whole class. A concomitant of this was the breaking down of centralised control over education, which was 'fatal to individualism both in teacher and the taught'. This in turn had witnessed a breakdown of the examination system. Now certificates were 'largely based on a pupil's entire school record, recognition of the fact that a pupil's probable future has some claim to decide the nature of his school course ...'⁵⁴

The emerging science of education, Dickinson proclaimed, drew on '... the sciences of physiology, biology, psychology, ethics, economics, philosophy, eugenics, and some other sciences'. This new science, Dickinson predicted would emerge as being the '... supreme science of the development of human nature'. More specifically, Dickinson predicted that just as the science of physiology had brought about the great changes in school architecture, the science of psychology was revolutionising the understanding of individual children.⁵⁵

By the end of the war some Tasmanians were beginning to accept the new psychology as an essential tool for social development. Professor R.J.A.Berry, the eminent psychologist from the University of Melbourne, had

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

advised the government on the type of infrastructure required for the care of intellectually handicapped children. Psychology had a special role to play in vocational guidance, and vocational guidance had a special role to play in post-war reconstruction. Under the auspices of the Workers' Education Association, Miller spearheaded developments in this area in Tasmania.⁵⁶ Even the businessmen of Hobart had invited Miller to address them on the psychology of advertising.⁵⁷

By the time of the advent of the First World War psychology was still very much in the functionalist mould. There were, however, signs of change. Functionalism was taking new directions with work being done by Thorndike in the United States.⁵⁸ These changes were being studied at the Philip Smith Training College. The College library during 1918 acquired Thorndike's *Elements of Psychology* and Loveday and Green's *Introduction to Psychology*.

4 The Eugenic Movement and Special Education

The science of eugenics was gaining support in Tasmanian society. In a lengthy article in early 1906 the *Mercury* expressed its support for Galton's scheme for social hygiene.⁵⁹ It explained that the need for the applied science of eugenics grew out of the recent urbanisation of society. This science was as necessary to civilised and urbanised society as was the science of agriculture to the modern farmer.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 13 Sept. 1918, 3, 6-7

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 27 March 1919, 6, 4, *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ See esp. W.M. O'Neil, *The Beginning of Modern Psychology*, *op. cit.*, p.p. 97-8

⁵⁹ *Mercury*, 5 Feb. 1906, 8, 6-7

In Nietzschean terms the *Mercury* went on to argue that evolution had advanced and urbanised the white races through resistance to diseases. Eugenics had a special role to play in society's further development. As the *Mercury* put it:

Only those races ... which have undergone evolution against the crowd disease are capable of becoming civilised. All other races are disappearing before the march of civilisation.⁶⁰

The *Mercury* went on to support the concept of improving the human, or at least the white races, by 'breeding from mentally superior people'. They would be achieved by

... eliminating the worst by obstructing as far as possible the output of children by the obviously defective in body and mind - feeble-minded people and consumptives for example.⁶¹

By 1910 the *Mercury* was warning Tasmanian society that the advancement of civilization had made the implementation of the science of eugenics imperative: the advancement of medical science had ensured a greater survival rate of the feeble minded.⁶² The *Mercury* argued that if society was going to facilitate the survival of the unfit through the advancement of medical sciences, the implementation of science of eugenics was absolutely necessary. The Hobart daily went on to explain the importance of the state providing a special education for intellectually handicapped children. It declared that

... the fact is beyond dispute that if the feeble-minded are to be preserved they must be placed under special system - one devised to improve their minds and bodies as much as possible, while they are prevented from propagating their defects from generation to generation in an ever-increasing ratio.⁶³

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, editorial, 30 Aug. 1910, 4, 5

⁶³ *Ibid.*

The *Mercury* publicised the emerging number of books on the subject of eugenics.⁶⁴ A review of Dr W.P. Norriss' *Public Health Ideals* was given a

large amount of space in the paper.⁶⁵ The *Mercury* argued that western society must maintain its own forward momentum. It must go on to make its position more secure or it would perish as 'a miserable half-hearted muddler'. The *Mercury* drew on Nietzschean phraseology in arguing that society must 're-evaluate its values'. Science must show legislators how to save society from the rising tide of overwhelming numbers, the product of 'random procreation'. The marriage of people with superior physical and mental ability must be encouraged. The marriage of the unfit had to be discouraged. Special schools had to be provided to segregate and supervise the education of the intellectually unfit. In another article the *Mercury* reviewed in similar terms Ellis' *The Task of Social Hygiene*.⁶⁶

At the Cathedral in Hobart Dr Mercer in a series of sermons addressed himself to the question of social hygiene. He threw himself behind the Nietzschean notion of society's forward struggle.⁶⁷ Eugenics would secure this forward momentum:

There must be selection. But whereas natural selection is, so far as we can see, blind and fortuitous, human selection must be rational and humanitarian. It will not be safe, nor right, to allow epileptics, consumptive and dangerously diseased to contract unrestricted marriages. But our eugenics must be truly human and so with all matters that concern the health of the social body, physical and moral.⁶⁸

Mercer contended that the state must take a lead by establishing special schools for the intellectually unfit to provide adequate supervision from an early age.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 21 Feb. 1911, 3, 4-5

⁶⁵ W.P. Norriss, *Public Health Ideals*, London, 1899

⁶⁶ *Mercury*, 20 Sept. 1912, 7, 3, a review of Havelock Ellis, *The Task of Social Hygiene*, London, 1912

⁶⁷ *Daily Post*, 8 Jan. 1912, 3, 3-6; *ibid.*, 8 May 1912, 7, 1-10

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Sections of the Labor party, too, supported the eugenicists' cause. The *Daily Post* in an editorial during 1910 maintained that while the breeding of certain types of animals, for example, homing pigeons, thoroughbred horses and merino sheep was considered to be important, at the same time nothing was done to ensure a similar high standard among mankind.⁶⁹

Later the *Daily Post* fully endorsed Mercer's sermons on the subject.⁷⁰ The paper saw eugenics as the means to ameliorate society, ridding it of its class distinctions. It maintained that Mercer's sermons were a hallmark in Hobart's social evolution. Now people in high positions had shown that it was not a true Christianity which maintained a gulf between rich and poor. Eugenic legislation would change the social and economic conditions which rendered a hopeless misery for so many thousand. Eugenic legislation would ensure the forward momentum of the English race. This would have to be so otherwise it would perish. In other words,

its hope is to go forward and clear itself of the conditions
that now threaten to bring about its decay and death ...⁷¹

A part of the legislation had to provide for special state schools for intellectually unfit children.

In a series of editorials and lead articles during the years just prior to the war the *Daily Post* continued to advocate the writing of eugenic planks in the Labor Party platform.⁷² At the 1912 Federal Labor Conference the Tasmanian delegation put forward a motion proposing the prohibition of the marriage of 'the unfit and Asiatics', but it was not adopted.⁷³ The *Daily Post* was not greatly disturbed by this. It regarded the eventual legislation as inevitable;

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, editorial, 1 Oct. 1910, 6, 2-3

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, editorial, 8 May 1912, 4, 5

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*, editorial, 6 Jan. 1912, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 14 May 1912, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 2 July 1912, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, editorial, 10 Dec. 1912, 4, 3-4; *ibid.*, 18 April 1913, 8, 5

⁷³ *Ibid.*, editorial, 19 Jan. 1912, 4, 7

circumstances and time would ensure that the other state branches of the Labor Party caught up to Tasmania's position.

5 The War and the Establishment of State Special Education

During 1905 the Tasmanian public was presented through a *Mercury* editorial with the idea of a special education for intellectually handicapped children.⁷⁴ The editorial noted that the Victorian government statistician had collected data on the number of 'mentally defective' children in the state. No comparison with other Australian states could be made because of the absence of figures for each state. It appears, however, that the number of mentally deprived children in Victorian state schools formed about one percent of the school population, a proportion which was roughly equivalent to that found in some of 'the older countries'. The paper explained that this one percent did not include 'the absolute idiots, both those in asylums and out, neither are those children, while practical idiots, yet manage[d] to escape inclusion on the list'. Obviously the *Mercury* editorial reflected a concern which some individuals in Tasmanian society felt for state care of mentally deprived children.

The editorial pointedly explained why state education systems had failed to deal adequately with the problem of care for mentally deprived children. First, there was no systematic records kept, and collated nationally. Secondly, it was in the interests of schools and individual teachers to conceal their existence, because 'no encouragement [was] given to school teachers to classify their scholars according to mental capacity'. The editorial argued that all the state asked of its schools and teachers was that knowledge should be crammed into the children minds, to an extent which satisfied inspectors. According to the *Mercury*, the

⁷⁴ *Mercury*, editorial, 26 April 1905, 4, 4

successful state school teacher was one who acknowledged the idiosyncracies of the inspector, prepared children to meet them, and gave the impression of having 'attained a high average standard of knowledge in the school'. Thus, for the *Mercury*, the fate of mentally deprived children was that of a suppressed being. 'What the State school system demands is an average - it cares nothing and knows nothing about individuality.'⁷⁵ By inference, the editorial suggested the practical problem facing educational reformers in this area was a system of adequate measurement and classification. At this stage in far off France, Binet was just beginning to address himself to the problem.

The *Mercury* informed the Tasmanians that the Victorians had looked to Germany for the best example of contemporary attempts to deal with the problem of state care for mentally deprived children. In the Fatherland, special schools had been established for the sole purpose of educating the mentally deprived. 'The result [was] that a majority, each year, of those who receive training at these schools, go forth able to take their place in the world, and to earn their own living.' But the editorial admitted, of course, this was easier in a country the size of Germany with its large population centres. Here, the paper went on was where the social problem of the socially deprived was worse. Urban populations were the results of the struggle for existence, the offspring of the strenuousness which made present day life. In the country districts, however, their ultimate fate was similar. Here the dullness of the environment reacted on these children. 'It is a striking abhorrence which Nature has for extremes, and of the way in which our great Mother punishes those who err in either direction.' The fate of mentally deprived children, the *Mercury* argued, was bound to be linked to 'criminality or nervous diseases'; while in the country, 'it partakes more of the nature of sheer idiocy'. The article went on in

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Darwinian terms to argue that 'the mental deficiency noted is a result directly or indirectly of civilisation'; and 'it behoves our civilisation to look for the remedy'.⁷⁶

Either to prompt more discussion on the problems of state care for mentally deprived children, or as a reflection of the concern already manifest in certain sections of Tasmanian society, or as a combination of both reasons, the *Mercury* let the Tasmanians know of the progressive reforms taking place in Victorian Education Department. In June 1906 it was announced to the Tasmanian public that the Victorian Premier had declared that he was going to provide special schools for the '1 800 children of school age who cannot keep up with their brighter fellows'.⁷⁷ The next month Tasmanians learnt where exactly the pressure for reform in Victoria was coming from, and where the real concern of the Victorian government lay. The Tasmanians were told that 'a highly influential deputation of medical men, and representatives of philanthropic, educational, and religious institutions' had requested the government to provide special state schools for mentally retarded children. Apparently the Victorian government was not as committed as the Tasmanians were first informed. The Victorian Minister for Education had replied that his greatest concern was providing 'education for the ordinary children'. He did concede, however, that special education for mentally deprived children 'might prove a good investment'.⁷⁸ The strong commitment for the provision of an efficient education for 'ordinary children', in favour of a somewhat ambivalent attitude to the special education for mentally deprived children no doubt reflected the circumstances in the island state.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 6 July, 1906, 3, 1

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Rodgers has traced out the development of special schools for intellectually handicapped children in Victoria.⁷⁹ She notes that a new wave of public interest was apparent in Victoria by 1910 with the publication of a report by Arthur Hauser, a teacher, who had visited state institutions for intellectually disadvantaged children in Britain and Germany. Rodgers contends that additional causes for the renewed public interest in Victoria were brought about 'by the sensationalism of the Eugenics Movement which flared through United States of America, Europe and Britain as a popular movement, and found interested supporters in Australia.'⁸⁰

Similarly, a new wave of public concern can be noted in Hobart. By 1910 the Hobart Board of Advice was devoting some of its monthly meetings to the question of a special education for intellectually handicapped children. For example, at its January meeting in 1910 J.T. Mather, just returned from England, addressed the meeting on the topic of 'Educational Progress in English State Schools'.⁸¹ Much of his address was given to the methods being deployed in English state schools in educating intellectually disadvantaged children. He stated that his observations led him to believe that the segregation of these children provided them with a better education and lessened the burden on the remainder of the class. Mather went on to state:

The opinion is gaining ground in the old country that both the community at large and the unfortunates themselves will greatly benefit when legislature inacts (sic.) that the worst mental defectives shall be segregated permanently. It is believed that, by so doing, every kind of immorality will have its operation much more restricted than at present.⁸²

⁷⁹ Gwen Rodgers, 'A Question of Policy: is provisions of special schools for defectives to be undertaken by this, department?' *ANZHEJ Journal*, 9, 2, Spring 1980, 42-54

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48

⁸¹ *Daily Post*, 19 Jan. 1910, 5, 2

⁸² *Ibid.*

In Tasmania, following the Victorian circumstances described by the *Mercury*, the cause of a special education for intellectually handicapped children was taken up by a member of the medical profession. Elkington in his report of his 1906 examination of 1 200 state school children in Hobart and Campbell Town addressed the problem. In a news release on the report the Tasmanians simply were told that Elkington drew attention to 'the [educational] requirements of defective children, and [offered] certain suggestions with regard to their education'.⁸³

In his report to the government Elkington dealt at length with the problem. He first exposed the problems associated with teachers, untrained in physiological or psychological examinations, classifying children into categories of mental deprivation. He explained that of the fifteen children who had been classified by teachers 'as defective in mental capacity', six children on examination, 'were found to depend for their apparent defectiveness on some remedial condition of eyes, ears, or throats'.⁸⁴ Elkington used a definition for classification from the Scottish Education Code:

Children who, not being imbecile, and not being merely dull or backward, are defective; that is to say, children who, by means of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in the ordinary elementary schools, but are not incapable by reason of such defect of receiving benefit from instruction in special classes.⁸⁵

It is clear that because the definition was so open to interpretation only a person with a training in physiology could distinguish these children. Thus, the teaching profession in order to adequately classify mentally deprived children had to wait upon developments in the applied science of the new psychology.

⁸³ *Mercury*, 23 Nov. 1906, 8, 1-2, *op. cit.*

⁸⁴ JPPP, 1906, paper 23, p. 16

⁸⁵ Art. 20, Scottish Education Code, quoted by Elkington in JPPP, 1906, paper 23, *op. cit.*

Elkington's suggestions to the Tasmanian Government on a course of remedial education for mentally deprived children, as he had defined them, 'and certain others who hover above the borderland of mental deficiency', were thoroughly modern. He argued that special classes were needed in large schools to cater for these children. But, he argued that the children in these classes should not be 'labelled "defective", nor should they be specially separated from school association with normal children'. Elkington went on to insist that they be taught by a specially trained teacher 'in order that such reactive powers as they possess may be developed to the best advantage'.⁸⁶

Elkington sustained the pressure on the government to act in the interest of intellectually handicapped children. For example, in his report for 1908 he explained that 'seventy one mentally deficient children' were examined by the state's three medical officers. He was supported by Halley and Clarke. Halley had pointed out that these children were 'doing no practical good at school, they [were] hindering the teachers, and distracting the attention of the other children'.⁸⁷ Elkington added that these children were 'also taking up much needed air space, and in a few cases [were] liable to become actively dangerous to their fellow scholars'.⁸⁸ In the same report Clarke argued for special classes for mentally deprived children because

these children could then be protected from themselves and from other scholars, and at the same time could receive that individual attention, with the constant repetition of the same subject, which is necessary for their mental development, but which is impossible when the normal children so soon outstrip them when working in the same class.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ JPPP, 1907, paper 23, p. 16

⁸⁷ JPPP, 1909, paper 47, p. 11

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14

Pressure for the establishment of special classes for mentally deprived children was continued by the school health officers. For example, Ormiston in 1911 pressed Parliament through her report to the Director of Education for some special education provisions for these children. Her arguments were the same as those used by her colleagues and predecessors.⁹⁰ The Tasmanian school medical officers, however, were now backed by the national body of the medical profession. During 1912 the national medical congress backed its psychiatric section in calling for national statistics on mentally deprived children. Within the psychiatric section the champions for the cause were Drs Fishbourne, Sutton and Stevens. Fishbourne had long 'been the pioneer of this work in Australia'.⁹¹ At the meeting of the psychiatric section Sutton especially addressed himself to the problems of diagnosis. It was a result of the discussion following this paper that the congress resolved to establish a national committee to develop public awareness of the problem in order to bring about a change of political attitude. A representative was appointed from each state in order to facilitate the compilation of national statistics on school-aged mentally deprived children. Sutton headed the national committee; Tasmania's representative was Dr G.H. Butler. Throughout Australia all schools, government and private, were to be sent questionnaires to establish the number of 'idiots, imbeciles, backward and defective children...' The press release of the 1912 medical congress highlighted, among other things, the problem in relation to Australia's growing urbanisation. It used strong eugenic arguments:

It is becoming more and more generally recognised that the criminal element in the population is extensively recruited from among the feeble-minded: that the educationalists readily appreciate how detrimental to a class is the presence in it of a boy or girl three years or so older than the average age of the class; that not only for the sake of his class mates, but for his own proper education he should be taught in a special class; and that

⁹⁰ JPPP, 1912, paper 3, p. 18

⁹¹ *Mercury*, 21 May 1912, 2, 4

the statistics of the institutions show that the number of feeble-minded and defective are being received in greater and greater numbers. It is also well known that the number of illegitimate births are numerous amongst feeble-minded women, that inebriate habits are common among such people, and that generally the sub-normal individual is a serious menace to society. Notwithstanding all this, but little appears to be done to segregate such individuals, to train and educate them, and to protect them from their own evil passions, or those of other unscrupulous persons.⁹²

Ormiston advised the Tasmanian Parliament that she was hopeful that much good would come from the national body.⁹³ At the end of 1913 she reported on the Tasmanian results of the survey. She stated that 'the returns from the private schools and medical practitioners were distinctly disappointing, as the majority ignored altogether the circulars. Only fifteen private schools, four of which were catholic schools, supplied the required information. Only four medical practitioners filled in and returned the circulars.'⁹⁴ Clearly the private schools and medical practitioners who failed to respond to the survey reflected the general negative social attitude attached to mentally deprived children. Ormiston added that 'all State schools gave very full and necessary information'. No doubt, they were guided by the presence of the school health officers.

Ormiston stated that the information 'was collected under definite headings' each of which was clearly and simply defined for the teachers. One can only assume that Ormiston was using the definitions of the Scottish Code. Ormiston found 683 boys and 519 girls who were 'backward from accidental causes'; there were 312 boys and 227 girls who were 'mentally dull'; there were 66 boys and 41 girls who could be labelled 'feeble-minded'; no 'idiots' were found. It is assumed the latter group were all in the New Norfolk asylum.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ JPPP, 1913, paper 4, p. 27

⁹⁴ JPPP, 1914, paper 3, p. 28

There were six 'imbecile' boys and three girls. Ormiston also required that the 'epileptic, deaf, blind and paralytic' be classified for her records. Of this group she found twenty three boys, and twenty four girls. Of a total private school enrolment in Tasmania of 6 248 the returns showed that the group of mentally deprived children from accidental causes comprised one boy and five girls; there were five 'mentally dull' girls, six 'feeble-minded' boys and two girls, no idiots, and one epileptic girl. The returns of the surveys from the medical practitioners showed that there were two boys and one girl who could be classified as 'mentally dull', and there was one 'feeble-minded' girl.

Ormiston in sounding a warning about the results again pointed to the problem still facing those people attempting to classify children into various groups of mentally deprived. First, an allowance had to be made 'for the personal equation' of the 425 individuals who supplied the information. She contended that 'some teachers would naturally be glad to give "mentally deficient" as the cause of backwardness' in many of the children in their schools, but the cause of the backwardness may have been 'due to deficient instruction'. Ormiston anticipated that with the appointment of two additional medical inspectors for the country state schools 'the work of the Department [in this regard] will be more systematically and thoroughly carried out'. From now on all state school children would be examined three times during their school life. Ormiston predicted that 'this should nip a great deal of incipient disease in the bud, and do much to protect the health of the community'.⁹⁵ The reports of the school health officers until 1919 carried similar statistical information used by the national committee on mentally deprived children.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

That Neale was sympathetic to the idea of the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children is evidence from two articles he had published in the *Record*. Obviously he was trying to arouse the consciousness of the Tasmanian teachers when he explained that 'Miss A.M. Simpson, of New York, has for years conducted a school of nearly a thousand backward or defective children'.⁹⁶

Neale gave the first hint to the Tasmanian teachers on how these children might be educated. He explained that at Simpson's school the curriculum consisted largely of 'manual training, gymnastics, rhythmic movements, and organised playgames'. Moreover, Neale explained that Miss Simpson had 'succeeded in making them almost self-governing on what [was] known as the school-city plan'.

In the last edition of the *Record* under Neale's regime it was explained that the Education Committee of the London County Council had just opened another school for mentally deprived children, the twenty eighth under the authority of the Education Committee. In the same article, however, the author sounded a note which was to influence the development of the provision for special education facilities for mentally deprived children in Tasmania. The note had strong eugenic undertones. The author asked:

Why do we tinker with these questions? Why don't we get to the root of the matter? Why do we leave the business until it is too late, and then whine about the increasing physical degeneration of our people?⁹⁷

The author explained that he was not advocating 'the establishment of a lethal chamber in every town', but he was advocating that civilisation be protected from the possibility of mentally deprived females producing offspring 'to mock

⁹⁶ E R, 3, 10, Feb. 1908, p. 130

⁹⁷ E R, 5, 3, June 1909, p.p. 1-3

our boasted civilisation'.⁹⁸ Neale added nothing by way of editorial comment to indicate that he agreed or disagreed with the proposal. One can only suppose that the absence of any comment indicated at least his tacit approval.

It is clear that Neale enjoyed some success in persuading the Minister for Education to take some action to care for the mentally deprived children in Tasmania. From 1908 when the building of the Elizabeth Street Practising School had been agreed upon by the government there was some public discussion on how the old Trinity Hill School building might be used. The Minister proposed that the building be used for special classes for mentally deprived children.⁹⁹ That the old building eventually was used to house the first Hobart secondary school classes, displayed McCoy's and the government's real priorities.

By 1914 there were signs of more concrete developments. At the old Battery Point Model School, now emptied of children following the building of the Albuera Street School, a special class for mentally deprived children was established. It seems, however, to have only run for several years. The availability of teachers with a special aptitude for the work would have been a deciding factor in the success of the class. The class was taught during the first two years by an enthusiastic female teacher. Clarke visited the class occasionally and found 'the mental progress which the children [had] made [was] really remarkable, and [showed] what can be done by a teacher who [had] her heart in her work'. He contended that the results were so satisfactory that the system should be extended 'so that the backward children from all the schools may have special instruction'.¹⁰⁰ At the beginning of 1916 the class

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Mercury*, 18 Aug. 1909, 6, 6

¹⁰⁰ JPPP, 1916, paper 4, p. 31

was taken over by a young teacher recently arrived from New South Wales, Henry Thomas Parker, who was to have, arguably, the greatest impact of any single teacher on the progressive development of Tasmanian state education. Neither Parker nor official records provide any evidence of the age group of the special class, the number of children in it, or the methods used. It seems, however, when Parker took up an appointment at the beginning of 1917 as head teacher at Gormanston the class ceased to exist.

A visit by McCoy to Melbourne and Sydney during 1915 provides some insight to the Tasmanian Education Department's attitude towards special education for mentally deprived children. McCoy on returning to Tasmania devoted a large section of his press release to what he saw in the special schools in Melbourne and Sydney.¹⁰¹ It seems that McCoy was becoming conscious of the growing public concern for the matter. Particularly, he described what he saw at the Bell Street School for mentally deprived children in Melbourne. Here the Tasmanian public was told of the practical methods which could be employed by teachers with these children. One can assume that the astute Parker used similar methods at Battery Point. At the Bell Street School the younger children were 'taught on the Montessori system, and later [were] given manual education, in which subjects such as woodwork, bootmaking, laundry work, cookery, bulk very largely in the curriculum'.¹⁰²

McCoy explained that the school medical officers were responsible for admissions to the special school. Interestingly, the *Daily Post* reporter revealed what was perhaps a general belief held by many at the time: namely, the 'thin line' between intellectually deprived and intellectually gifted children. The reporter asked McCoy if 'those future great men of whom we read [and] who

¹⁰¹ *Daily Post*, 3 June 1915, 6, 5

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

were either abnormally dull or, abnormally mischievous in their school days' were admitted to the school. The latter group belonged to the group of intellectually gifted children who were behaviour problems because of unstimulating learning environments and curricula. McCoy indicated that these children would not be admitted. He was confident that the medical officers could distinguish between these children, and those who were truly mentally deprived. McCoy went on to explain to the Tasmanian public that special schools for intellectually deprived children did not admit children who were either 'idiots or imbeciles'; also that parents were not forced to send their intellectually deprived children to special schools. The system of transportation of the children to the special schools in Melbourne and Sydney seemed to work well, McCoy explained. McCoy told the Tasmanian public that he was aware that certain sections of Tasmanian society were pressing for the establishment of these schools in the state. 'But', he went on, 'I have grave doubts as to the result of such an experiment in a place with the population of this city [Hobart].'¹⁰³ It is interesting that McCoy still conceived of special schools as an experiment. There could be no doubt that McCoy's enthusiasm for educational development in Tasmania lay in the area of urban secondary education for selected children.

The war years witnessed increased pressure mounting against McCoy and the government. The Australian directors of education at their first biennial conference in Adelaide during 1916 recommended that in larger centres of population 'special school of the Montessori type should be established'.¹⁰⁴ Of course, McCoy could argue as he had done before, that Tasmania did not have a city large enough to warrant such a school. The conference also recommended that mentally deprived children in larger schools should be grouped within the

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Mercury*, 24 July 1916, 3, 4

schools in 'ungraded classes'. There was no reason why McCoy could not have sought the implementation of the recommendation in Tasmania. After all, an example had been established at the old Battery Point Model School in 1915. The third recommendation made by the Australian directors of education in relation to mentally deprived children warranted McCoy's or the government's reaction: namely, 'that the question of establishing institutions for the after-care of children who are mentally feeble receive consideration, and that provision be made for the special training of teachers for this particular type of school'.¹⁰⁵

The Women's Health Association at its 1915 annual meeting made its position clear in relation to the establishment of special schools for intellectually deprived children. It believed that in the interests of social hygiene 'the care and education of the feeble-minded should be as important as other branches of education, if not more so'.¹⁰⁶ It was this sentiment, the sharpened eugenicists' view resulting from the social turbulence caused by the war, which sustained the drive for the establishment of special schools. The unique individual rights of intellectually deprived children faded under the eugenic shadow, cast in the main by upper-middle class women's groups.

The National Council of Women met in Hobart in 1918. At the meeting Mrs Waterworth, a Tasmanian delegate, spoke on the problem of 'the teaching of the mentally deficient ... and the delinquent child'.¹⁰⁷ Some months later a public meeting on the problem of government provisions for mentally deprived children was held in the mayor's courtroom at the Town Hall in Hobart.¹⁰⁸ The meeting was held under the auspices of the Women's Health Association. It was addressed by Dr P. Lalor, acting medical superintendent at the Mental

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 12 June 1915, 5, 6

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 27 Feb. 1918, 5, 4-6

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 13 July 1918, 6, 6-7

Disease Hospital, New Norfolk. Those present included representatives of the various branches of the Mothers' Union, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Girls' Friendly Society, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Women's Health Association, the National Council of Women, and the Child Welfare Association. Lalor's speech represented the hard line solution to the problem.

Lalor stressed that any action which the government took must follow the British experience. Here, opinion leant to 'the compulsory detention, under suitable pleasant and advantageous conditions, of all those who form the borderline of mental deficiency'.¹⁰⁹ He thus was talking about the group of mentally deprived children whose degree of deprivation was not severe enough to allow for their detention at his institution. Lalor explained to those present that in Great Britain a Royal Commission probed the problem for years, beginning in 1908. He stressed that 'the opinion of the Commission is really the last word on the subject, and it is idle for anybody to dispute the method without tacitly admitting that they do not wish to deal effectively with the question at all'.¹¹⁰

Lalor argued for strong state measures because after all the children's compulsory detention in such a centre was in the interests of the state in order to prevent the procreation of their kind. The state medically screened state school children, and for Lalor, the state had a social obligation to institute a system of 'mental medical examination'. He maintained that 'fully 3 percent of our children attending our State or secondary schools are feeble-minded'. Lalor then contended that when this three percent of the school population had been uncovered they should be certified, and steps taken to prevent 'the marriage or

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

parenthood of any case known to be feeble-minded'. These children, along with the mentally deprived adults, Lalor argued, should be kept in 'farms' or 'industrial colonies' similar to those recommended by the British Royal Commission. At the end of the meeting Waterworth moved 'that a deputation consisting of representatives of the various women's societies, wait upon the Chief Secretary, asking that the matter of dealing with the mentally deficient be dealt with in this session.'¹¹¹

The Child Welfare Week held in Hobart in August 1917, although focusing more on normal children, did much to sensitise the government to the social ramifications of unhealthy children. The subsequent Children's Charter passed by the Government during 1918 provided for delinquent and neglected children. It was within this socio-political setting that the deputation waited upon the Chief Secretary and the Premier. The *Mercury* reported at length on what was said.¹¹² In reply to the deputation the Premier assured the members of the deputation 'that he appreciated the interest which was manifested ... it was an indication that they recognised the danger of mental deficients being allowed to remain among the general community'. The matter had exercised his mind for some time. The Government now proposed to take action in the current session. The deputation would only strengthen the Government's hand in Parliament the Premier assured the women. He had already requested the medical superintendent at the New Norfolk institution to confer with the superintendent of the New Town Infirmary concerning the accommodation for fifty mentally deprived children. A property in New Town had been purchased with this end in mind. The Premier 'agreed that if a satisfactory home was

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² See for example, *ibid.*, 12 June 1917, 2, 4; *ibid.*, 18 June 1917, 7, 8; *ibid.*, 8 Aug. 1917, 3, 4; 21 Aug. 1917, 2, 3-7; *ibid.*, 25 Aug. 1917, 8, 5

established, parents in all parts of the State would be glad to hand their feeble-minded over, and thus save themselves a great anxiety'.¹¹³

During September 1918 the matter of state care for mentally deprived children was put to the House of Assembly. A prominent speaker was Mr Shoobridge, who argued:

Steps should be taken to check the feeble-minded in certain directions ... Such persons were proved to indulge in alcoholism, which increased, and became more and more a menace to the community. Mental disease experts said that if for 50 years segregation of the feeble-minded took place in a community, its asylums could be shut. Immorality, crime, etc. would be reduced. Alcoholism in its serious state, was due to feeble-mindedness and alcoholism intensified feeble-mindedness.¹¹⁴

It was clear then that a section of the community linked mental deprivation with alcohol abuse. The strength of the temperance movement increased in Tasmania during the later stages of the war. Many saw the Education Department playing an important role in the temperance cause and caring for mentally deprived children.

The Premier, in reply, assured the House, 'that he was fully seized with the importance of the question'.¹¹⁵ He had asked Miller and others to draft suitable legislation. Perhaps it was Miller's initiative which was responsible for having his old colleague, Professor R.J.A. Berry from the University of Melbourne visit the state during early 1919 to advise the Government on the legislation. Berry argued for less extreme legislation than that being pushed by Lalor. At a meeting attended by Premier Lee, Dr Lalor, McCoy and the parliamentary draftsman, Berry urged that the Government 'should deal only with the obvious

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 3 Aug. 1918, 11, 8

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13 Sept. 1918, 9, 6

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

cases, and make provision on a sound basis, upon which the scheme could be built up ultimately and developed as necessity arose'.¹¹⁶

It was inevitable that the debate would touch the teaching profession. Some months after Berry's visit, the Tasmanian state school teachers at their annual conference made a stand on the issue. Victor Von Bertouch moved 'that mentally deficient children should no longer be taught side by side with the normal child'. The motion was carried.¹¹⁷

Parker spearheaded the establishment of state special education in Tasmania. While at the Battery Point School, Parker commenced part-time study for his B.A. degree at the University of Tasmania. He majored in Philosophy under Miller who was imbued with the new psychology, and included this in various parts of his undergraduate course.¹¹⁸ Parker's study under Miller was during the war years, a period in which Miller's commitment to the new psychology was greatly increased, particularly in the area of child psychology. Parker's studies were marked by considerable distinction. By 1921 he had gained an M.A. degree under Miller's supervision.¹¹⁹

As part of his post-graduate study Parker carried out an extensive empirical study of the mental makeup of 320 children, using the Binet-Simon tests in the four Tasmanian schools at which he was head teacher. His research aimed at a revision of the Stanford version of the Binet-Simon tests. During 1919 Parker published an introduction to the new psychology in the *Record*, the first article on the new psychology to appear in that journal.¹²⁰ In the article Parker

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 20 Feb. 1919, 7, 3

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4 July 1919, 5, 3-6

¹¹⁸ M. Roe, 'Edmund Morris Miller', *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁹ Discussions with Liz Small, nee Parker, Sept. 1981

¹²⁰ H.T. Parker, 'The Testing of Mental Deficiency', *E R*, 15, 6, Sept. 1919, p. 128

emphasised the point that 'the determination of mental deficiency is primarily a matter for the psychologist, and not for the medical practitioner' as had been the previous practice in Tasmanian schools. Parker, however, went on to posit the progressive ideal that the ultimate solution to the problem would require that 'the teacher, the doctor, and the social worker all contribute evidence which must be taken into consideration before a true decision is made'.

Parker's paper, a part of his post-graduate study, drew on the early research in Paris by Binet and Simon, and the Stanford revision of the work done in the United States. He was also aware of Cyril Burt's work in the London schools since the famous 1913 legislation providing for a psychologist to screen the mental makeup of the school children. Parker was able to conclude from these studies, and inform the Tasmanian teachers:

If the progress of the normal child be graphically represented by a straight line starting from zero attainment point and rising to the successive age levels as shown by the Binet scale in uniform time periods of one year, the progress of the deficient child would be represented by a curve, beginning at the same point, but failing gradually further and further away from the former line, and assuming at the age of maximum mental development (some-where between the eight and twelve year level) a more or less horizontal direction.¹²¹

Parker's research resulted in a revision of the Stanford version of the Binet-Simon tests. He regraduated the scale, eliminated some items, rewrote others, and arranged them in a simple series of progressive difficulty without age levels. Consequently he was able to standardise his scale for the test to suit Tasmanian children.¹²² In these articles Parker opened by declaring the child-study which had been for a long time an interest of progressive educators, was now 'being placed on a scientific basis, and promises to be of much practical

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² H.T. Parker, 'A Tentative Revision of the Binet-Simon Scale'. *E R*, 16, 1, April 1920; *ibid.*, 16, 3, June 1920; *ibid.*, 16, 4, July 1920., 16, 5, Aug. 1920; *ibid.*, 16, 8, Nov. 1920

benefit to the teacher'.¹²³ This meant the measuring of the actual differences that exist in the mental capacity of individuals. Educational methods would no longer tolerate the teaching of a class 'as a plastic whole' with a uniformity of methods and examinations, but what now was demanded was the understanding of the quantifiable mental capacity of each individual in the class.

This led Parker to 'lay down positively the following principle':

*School classification should be based on the ideal of groups, not of equal chronological age, but of equal mental age. (emphasis in original)*¹²⁴

Parker qualified this principle by declaring that there would be obvious difficulties within a school if this were fully implemented, but he reminded his readers that the establishment of a special class for subnormal children in a school had been recommended by the conference of directors of education in Adelaide in July 1916. Such classes, moreover, had long been recognised and established in several of the states of the United States. Parker proposed that the principle characteristics of the class should be that:

1. It is ungraded. Each child is a class in himself. The members are include because of the fact that they do not fall into any of the groups of the ordinary part of the school.
2. The children are included in it only temporarily. As soon as they have covered the ground that is required of them to permit their classification in one of the regular school grades, they are recovered from it.
3. It is limited in size to about 15 pupils. This is a measure of economy. The number of children that a teacher is able to relate to individually is not great. If too many children are placed in the class, the teacher's efforts are diffused, and little good is done. The average time spent in the class by each pupil to fit him for promotion should be not above three months.
4. It is not an occasional arrangement, but a permanent part of the school organisation in all of such schools where a sufficient number of recruits is forthcoming.¹²⁵

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 16, 1 April 1920, p. 71

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 16, 4, July 1920, p. 102

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105

Parker proposed that the candidates for the special class would be what we call today underachievers (children whose school achievement is below their potential) and slow learners (children whose I.Q. is somewhere between 75 and 100) children who were then broadly classified as retarded. Parker estimated that about forty percent of any school population would fall into this group, spending about a year in the special class throughout their school lives. He argued that it was the responsibility of normal schools to educate these children, using the screening tools of new psychology.

There was, however, another group of children which Parker drew special attention to: the mentally deprived. This group was comprised, according to Terman's classification, of idiots (with a mental age up to two years), imbeciles (with a mental age of from three to seven years), and morons (with a mental age from eight to eleven years). Terman had established that one percent of the American population fell into these three categories. Parker, using his modified Stanford version of the Binet-Simon test, had found that 3.8 percent of Tasmanian children fell into these categories. He, thus, strongly argued for the establishment of special classes in large population centres to cater for this group:

1. The ordinary class should be freed from the influence of unusually dull children.
2. The curriculum should be modified for children who will not develop up to the ordinary adult level.
3. The rate of progress should be lessened, and made proportionate to the natural rate of development in each individual case. (The class should therefore be ungraded.)
4. Teaching methods should be modified to meet the needs of exceptional children.
5. The class should be an observation class. In many cases long observation alone will enable the distinction to be drawn between: a. backwardness for accidental circumstances, such as negligence and its consequences b. dullness; and c. moronity.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 16, 5, Aug. 1920, p. 116

Parker insisted that the purpose of placing dull children in special classes was not that they may receive special coaching to keep the level with normal children. Rather it was to provide for the admitted incurable dullness or defect that demanded permanent special treatment. The idea was not to turn these children into normal citizens, but to provide them with an education which would allow them to realise their full potential.

Parker did not go on to suggest an actual curriculum suitable for special schools, but he did state some guiding principles. First, the curriculum should be highly individual. If there were to be fifteen children in the class, then there should be fifteen different teaching programs. The curriculum, moreover, should make full use of concrete activities. Secondly, because mental inferiority is marked by a less degree of deliberation and a greater mechanical action, training should replace education as properly understood. Parker explained:

Education prepares the mind to grasp the significance of a situation and provide a suitable response; training prepares the mind to react mechanically to a definite given or anticipated situation. The capacities of the merely training mind are strictly limited to the few more or less simple situations for which it is coached: the capacities of the educated mind are practically unlimited. We speak, then, rather of training than of educating defectives, and the lower we go down the scale of intelligence, the more truly is education inapplicable and training the only substitute.¹²⁷

From this point, Parker insisted that special education required lifetime supervision in an environment devoid of competition.

The Mental Deficiency Act was passed in 1920. In the end, Miller had the greatest say in its form. It took the form of the softer alternative advocated by Berry. There also was required an amendment to the Education Act by

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.p. 116-117

requiring that certified mentally deprived children be kept at school until sixteen years of age. The Act provided for the establishment of the Psychological Clinic which was administered by the Mental Deficiency Board. In respect to the amendment of the Education Act mentioned above, and the clinic and board, the legislation was of a pioneering nature for Australia. Much of the credit the progressive measures had to go to Miller. He spent the early part of 1921 on a tour of North American schools, clinics, courts and asylums. He returned to become director of the clinic and member of the board; later in 1924 as chairman of the board. In the long run, however, it was Parker who guided the development of state care for mentally deprived children in Tasmania.

6 The Influence of Progressivism: The New Psychology and Special Schools

The development of the new psychology in the Tasmanian state primary schools brought with it very profound and long term influences of progressivism. First, it added the authority of science to state primary education. Here science was now able to provide solutions to the problems of retardation which Neale had shown were so important in 1904. Science had assisted dramatically in solutions to problems associated with the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children. The arguments advanced for the provision of these schools by Tasmanians were similar to those advanced in mainland states and in other parts of the world: these were associated with national efficiency and eugenics. There was a close affinity between the ideals underpinning the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children and those ideals underpinning the school health and hygiene movement.

There was also a strong connection between the closure of the state's ragged schools in 1910 and the assumptions underlying the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children. In Chapter 2 we argued that the closure of the ragged schools strengthened state control over education in Tasmania. Ramsland has argued that those people who advanced the cause of the ragged schools did so with a motive of social control:

... the [Ragged Schools] Association's promoters saw their schools' functioning as reclamation or result agencies for the 'perishing' classes. Their intention was the complete transformation of lower class culture through elementary moral and religious education. They sought to create an industrious, well-behaved and God-fearing working class, well suited to respectable Colonial capitalism through a persistent injection of evangelical and Protestant Christian doctrine. The fact that many of the working class were Roman Catholics was not a serious consideration.¹²⁸

Pearce in her study of the Tasmanian ragged schools argues that the motives did not disappear with the closure of the ragged schools, but reemerged eight years later with the 1918 Children's Charter.¹²⁹

We have seen that the legislation providing for special state schools for intellectually handicapped children was closely connected with the 1918 Children's Charter. It can be argued that Ramsland's and Pearce's conclusions about the underlying motives of those who supported the ragged schools can be applied with equal conviction to the motives underpinning the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children. We will need to trace out evidence for the argument during the 1920's and the 1930's in the next chapter.

128 John Ramsland, 'The Development of the Ragged School Movement in 19th Century Hobart', paper presented to the ANZHES Conference, Waikato, 1983

129 Pearce, *The Lowest Common Denominator* ..., pp. 98, 99

The developing professionalism of the Tasmanian state primary school teachers was evident after the war when one of their members, Parker, commenced his pioneering work in the new psychology. Clearly there was at least one Tasmanian state primary school teacher who had advanced beyond Beeby's Stage of Formalism in educational development, and was perhaps even approaching Beeby's Stage of Meaning. Now change was developing from within the Tasmanian education system.

Chapter 10

Aftermath: Changing Patterns of Progressive Influences

By the end of the First World War fundamental changes in progressive education were becoming evident in Tasmania. In this section of our study our task is to examine the continuing effect of progressivism on the Tasmanian state primary schools. Our examination will help to explain the nature of the influence of progressivism on the schools during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

1 Educational Administration

During 1920 in an address to the annual conference of the Southern Tasmanian Secondary Teachers' Association, Dickinson proclaimed, 'what we are pleased to call "modern civilisation" has been resting on a false basis'.¹ It was

... necessary that the whole world should be rocked to its foundations by a war unexampled in history to make men question the rationality of many features of their social and economic life.²

Dickinson declared to the Tasmanian secondary teachers that education was to be the great panacea in social and economic reconstruction. Philosophers had long argued that a sound social and political fabric must be based on a proper education for the young. Now, more than ever, society demanded better education as a cure for the general unrest and disorder. For Dickinson the world was on the eve of a great educational renaissance. He alerted his audience to the view that the war had shown how this could be achieved:

1 S.R. Dickinson, 'The Teaching Profession and Social Reconstruction', *E R*, 15, 10, Oct. 1920, p. 138

2 *Ibid.*

accurate scientific knowledge had been applied to industry and warfare with startling results; but the same could not be said for education. Though educational science, like physical science, had many problems to overcome there was a very considerable body of reliable scientific knowledge that was waiting for application. It was to the new psychology that teachers must turn.

Dickinson echoed the common theme of progressives when he warned that teachers had a professional obligation to make use more fully of research. Professionalism demanded this. Public opinion moreover would never accord professional status to any aspiring profession that did not produce systematically new discoveries that would lead to further progress. Dickinson insisted that research was needed to vitalise methods to banish mere routine in classroom practice, and to show how accepted ways of teaching were in accord with the 'laws of psychological development'.³

The end of the war brought with it a strengthening of the belief in science to bring about increased social efficiency.⁴ In support of the 1920 Mental Deficiency Act and the general social concern generated particularly by Miller at the University, Brooks, from 1919 the new Director of Education, sent the promising young Parker on a study tour to Sydney and Melbourne during late 1921 to further his understanding of the new psychology. He returned and took up an appointment at the beginning of 1922 as Lecturer in Psychology at the training college and as Supervisor of Special Classes. While Parker was absent there is evidence of a growing community of thought in the new psychology within the Education Department. In June 1921 C.E. Fletcher, Inspector of High Schools, showed his commitment to the new psychology by

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Tas. Uni. Archives, Morris Miller Papers, esp. 'Compilation of Mental Deficiency Act, 1920'

publishing a sympathetic review of Terman's *The Measurement of Intelligence*.

He began by stating:

Ever since the publication of articles in the *Educational Record* last year, some teachers have exhibited a gratifying curiosity by asking for further information and details re Binet-Simon tests.⁵

Like their counterparts on the mainland and overseas the professionals of the new psychology had at the base of their consuming interest a search for the certainty which they felt the new learning could dispense. Behind their seeking after general psychological 'laws' and the 'objective facts' of a particular psychological situation lay an assumption that these laws and facts were 'there', only requiring to be unearthed. The Tasmanians were not positivists and thorough-going behaviourists in the extreme sense, as for example, were Terman and Thorndike. They held to a belief in will as fundamental to human nature, decisively rejecting the notion that the mind was that which could be totally quantified. After all Miller's rise to fame rested on his sympathetic study of Kant's Idealism.⁶ But the vigour with which the Tasmanians set about measuring the mind of the Tasmanian child in practice testified to at least a certain operative positivism. The professionals took for granted the 'purposive' in their basic definition of man. They now felt free to concentrate on describing the static cross-section of mind which they felt confident that they could dissect by quantitative methods. Parker, himself, leaves no doubt about what he believed about the distribution of intelligence. He wrote that the distribution of natural ability appears to follow the general law of averages applicable to natural phenomena in general. If a sufficiently large number of individuals are taken and their differences in ability arranged in a graded scale, that scale conforms to the 'normal curve'. The greatest number of examples are found

⁵ C.E. Fletcher, 'The Testing of Intelligence', *E R*, 17, 6, June 1921. This article is in the main a review of Lewis M. Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence*, London, 1919

⁶ M. Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, *op. cit.*, p. 290

in the mean positions. At the bottom of the curve will be a relatively small number of sub-normal children, and at the top of the curve will be a relatively small number of super-normal children.⁷ The search which Parker and his colleagues set off on then was a search for a 'science of education', a search for a psychology which broadly could be proven scientifically. On the surface their pre-occupation with such a psychology involved them in two rather different approaches. The first was the delineation of general laws which could explain the total formation of personality. The second was the investigation of that which could be measured and verified about intelligence. In research during the 'twenties the professionals of the new psychology happily married the both approaches. Clearly the Tasmanians could find both consistent with their teleological view of man which they also sought, and a view which they inherited from the pre-war generation, best represented by Neale. Nevertheless it was into measurement of intelligence, and special education, that the Tasmanians really threw themselves, which formed the fountain head of the Education Department's policies during the 'twenties, and which shaped more than anything else the development of the department during the next twenty five years.

Throughout the 'twenties the Tasmanian state school teachers continued to be classified according to McCoy's scheme. Every January edition of the *Record* began with the 'classified list' of Tasmanian schools, their head teachers and teachers. Immediately following the list in each January edition came a list of individual results in the qualifying certificate examination, from 1924 onwards, called the scholarship examination. This list was categorised according to the children's destined high or district school. Following this list came the 'supplementary list'. This was a list of grade 6 children who academically

⁷ H.T. Parker, 'Psychology in the London Schools', *E R*, 18, 5, May 1922, a review of C. Burt, *Mental and Scholastic Tests*, London, 1921

qualified for entry into secondary schools, but failed to gain a scholarship because of the ceilings placed on entry to secondary schools' intakes. A further development in the examination system during the 'twenties was the merit certificate. This was awarded following examination at the end of grade 7 to those children who failed to gain entry to secondary schools. Here in grade 7 many children would linger for several years waiting for certification. Following in each January edition of the *Record* came a list of individual secondary schools results in the university-awarded intermediate certificate; then followed a list of individual secondary schools' results in the university-awarded leaving certificate.

There is no doubt that the Education Department's cult of efficiency in Examinations was a reflection of the aspirations of Tasmanian society. Referring to the quality of the qualifying certificate examination in his first report to his minister in 1919, Brooks enthused:

Much interest is shown both by parents and children in this examination, and it is quite certain that children are remaining at school for a longer period in order to gain the qualifying examination.⁸

This is not to suggest, however, that examinations went without criticism. But the criticism was directed at the standards of examinations, rather than the system itself. This prompted the self-conscious educators of the island state to try even harder. In his 1920 report to his minister Brooks retorted:

In view of the fact that criticism of the standard [in the qualifying] examination has been heard in some quarters, it may be well to remind the public that marks demanded for a pass are probably much higher than those required in other states.⁹

⁸ JPPP, 1920, paper 4, p. 4

⁹ JPPP, 1921, paper 15, p. 3

During 1919 the Education Act was amended, taking responsibility for attendance away from the boards of advice, and vesting it in the Education Department. School vacations, too, were altered so that schools especially affected by the hop and small fruit industries had their school vacations matched with the harvesting seasons. Improved transport assisted in the efficiency of the Education Department in tightening its powers over public education generally, but school attendance specifically. School attendance improved not only because children could more easily reach school, but also because an energetic and efficient truant officer on a motorbike operating within a thirty mile radius of Hobart rounded up truants. In Launceston a similarly energetic and efficient truant officer had a free ticket to travel on trams at any time in discharging his duties.

The improved percentage of attendance at schools was most marked during these years. The return of the troops during 1919 was soon followed by a prevalence of epidemics. But despite this the 1920 average monthly attendance was eighty-two percent, 'the highest on record in the history of the State'.¹⁰ By 1930 this figure had reached ninety-nine percent.¹¹

School management during the 'twenties witnessed a similar level of development in efficiency. In his last report to his director in 1929 Brockett noted that 'there were few occasions when it became necessary to report adversely on the general order in the classroom'.¹² But, for Brockett, this was no reason for teachers and head teachers to be complacent. He maintained that 'it is not sufficiently recognised that without mental effort, mere order stands for little'.¹³

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ JPPP, 1931, paper 9, p. 4

¹² E R, 26, 7, July 1930, p. 98

¹³ *Ibid.*

Brockett was able to describe a school which provided an admirable example of efficiency fully realised. Significantly, he began by describing the school's yearly tally of certificates, bursaries and entries to high schools. Moreover, at the school

... assembly and dismissal are carried out with great alacrity and military precision. There exists throughout the school a zest for work which is generated by all the teachers.¹⁴

With the onset of the depression some Tasmanian educators began to question the role of schools in society. Walter Wright, Acting Secretary for Education, when addressing the Annual Conference of the Teachers' Union in Launceston during the spring of 1930, considered that Australian democracy was out of control, 'and that we have built a machine we do not know how to run'. Wright asked the Tasmanian teachers to consider what schools could do 'towards showing how to run it'. He went on to ask, 'how many of the present discontents and difficulties [were] due to some want in the training we teachers have given?' More pertinently, Wright asked, 'is it due to some weakness in our education system?'¹⁵

The theme of questioning the role of education in society was continued by Inspector J.F. Jones at the Inspectors' Conference during November 1930. Particularly, Jones alerted his fellow inspectors to the failure of the examination system which fostered

... the individual outlook, and strengthen[ed] the notion that schools [are] a place for competition between scholars where each strives to secure the best for himself, where the smartest secures the prize, and where the slow-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

witted are left to be undeveloped in both mind and spirit.¹⁶

It was with these assumptions that the Tasmanian educators looked to the new psychology to assist in the reframing of the role of education in society. During the 'twenties the new psychology was mainly drawn upon to assist in special education in Tasmania. Where it was concerned in ordinary schools it was in association with ability grouping in the larger city schools. Nonetheless, the 'twenties were years of consolidation for the new psychology in the Tasmanian Education Department, and by 1930, assisted by Parker's enormous enthusiasm in his work at the training college, it had assumed a respectable role in the department.

The growth in the application of the new psychology as an instrument of educational management in the Education Department came with the foundation of the Australian Council of Educational Research during early 1930. At first Tasmania's member on the council was Johnston. With Johnston's retirement through ill-health during 1930 his place was taken by Parker. Perhaps, it was fitting that this should have been so. Johnston was too much a creature of the pre-war school of educational psychology in the Tasmanian education Department. Parker, however, had spent the 'twenties nurturing the establishment and development of special education for intellectually handicapped children. At the peak of his career, he was brimming full of energy and enthusiasm for the task in front of him. Certainly Parker figured most strongly in the Tasmanian research funded and published by the ACER.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Tasmania's contribution to the ACER list of publications before the war was:

*G. Limb and H.T.Parker, *An Experiment in the Teaching of Reading*, 1932

*H.T. Parker, *Crippled Children in Tasmania*, 1932.

*H.T. Parker, *Intelligence and Scholastic Attainment*, 1932.

*H.T.Parker, *Defects in Speech in School Children: Results of an Investigation Made in Tasmanian State Schools*, 1932.

*H.T. Parker, *The Development of Intelligence in Subnormal Children*, 1934.

*H.T. Parker, *The Background of American Education as an Australian Sees It*, 1935.

*C. Reeves, *A History of Tasmanian Education: State Primary Education*, 1935.

The Tasmanian Institute for Educational Research was formed late in 1930.¹⁸ Its foundation chairman was Brooks, and its secretary, Parker. The pattern was established for a quarter of a century whereby the chairman of the TIER would be the director of the Education Department, or his deputy. Since 1936 Gollan Lewis had been a member of the TIER, and he affirms the view that the TIER by the mid 'thirties had become the 'central executives', or the 'inner committee' of the Education Department.¹⁹ Much of the research, and many of the decisions made at the monthly meetings guided the development of the department during these years. Certainly, the membership list for 1945 at least reads like a 'whose who' of the Education Department.²⁰ A glance through the institute's minute book reveals that by 1940 membership was by invitation only.²¹ Once having achieved membership, ambitious teachers had their career prospects greatly enhanced; and to participate in the research and to give a paper at the institute further enhanced the career prospects for the ambitious teacher.²²

An interesting example of the way in which educational research was used for the 'scientific management' of the Education Department were the changes made in the entrance examination for secondary schools. There were doubts expressed about the role of examinations in Tasmanian education during the depression years. Thus it is not surprising that the research by the members of the institute was concerned largely with the problem of examinations. In this

18 For a contemporary account of the development of the ACER during early 1930 see K.S. Cunningham, 'Educational Research in Australia', *E R*, 25, 6, June 1930, p.p. 83-5. Also see W.F. Connell, *The Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, 1980*.

19 Recorded interview with Gollan Lewis, ex Deputy Director General of Education, Tasmania, April 1982

20 Appendix 1

21 In 1983 the minute book for the TIER from its establishment until 1950 was held in the office of R. Cooper, Research Branch, Education Dept., Bathurst St., Hobart

22 Recorded interview with Gollan Lewis, *op. cit.*

research Parker figured most prominently, but by 1932 he had the full time assistance of C.C. McShane.

Brooks, in his annual report of 1934 argued that the fact that the scholarship examination, as an instrument for selecting high school pupils, is not as efficient as could be desired, has led to an intensive study of the examination itself, and of the records of pupils who are admitted to high schools as a result of examination success.²³ Brooks for some time had been aware of the use of the new psychology in selecting students for secondary education. The New Zealand example of granting entry to high schools on the results in general ability testing was made clear to all directors of education at their 1928 biennial conference.²⁴ The TIER took the initiative to modify the high school entrance examination during 1932. Proposals were put to attempt some experimentation with tests in general knowledge (English, geography and history) and to introduce a test of general ability in order to remove much of the subjectivity of essay type questions in the scholarship examination.

A favourable start was made during 1932 and a further general ability test was prepared for 1933. Now the test was given to high school candidates all over the state. Following this test a supplementary list of children who scored well in the general ability test, but who failed the scholarship examinations, was prepared. These children were allowed to enter the various high schools throughout the state during 1934. Their progress was closely monitored. At the end of the year Parker reported enthusiastically about the success of the tests.²⁵ The general ability test was totally objective in its scoring, and supposedly did not distinguish between the sexes. Besides it could be administered in about a half hour, whereas the scholarship examination took

²³ JPPP, 1935, paper 9, p. 3

²⁴ AOT, ed. 73, 1928

²⁵ *Ibid.*

hours. Change came slowly. From 1934 until 1937 the selection of candidates for secondary schools was based on the general ability test and the scholarship examination. In the midst of the anti-examination debate which was associated with the New Education Fellowship conference in Tasmania and other states, the teachers union took the initiative of urging the abolition of the high school entry examination.²⁶ No doubt the executive of the union was motivated by the fact that an enormous amount of their members' time was spent in administering and marking the examination. But there were also the genuine educational reasons surrounding the effects which the examinations had on school administration and the curriculum.

As a result of discussions between the executive of the union, the minister and Brooks, Brooks was proud to announce during 1937, the year of the New Education Conference in Tasmania, that Tasmania was the first Australian state to abandon the practice of entry to secondary schools through scholarship examinations. Now entry would be by the head teachers' nomination. The fact that nominations were subject to approval by inspectors became more of a formality than a fact. In order that the head teachers might have adequate evidence to guide them in their nominations a system of cumulative recording was introduced in the primary schools.

Certainly, the NEF conference did much to raise doubts in the minds of the Tasmanian educators regarding ability grouping generally and group testing and examination of children to measure school efficiency. From a perspective of forty years Lewis remembers the overriding informal discussions during the conference as an 'examination of examinations', or even anti-examination.²⁷

26 I.L. Kandel, *The Problem of Examinations*, in K.S. Cunningham (ed.), *Education for Complete Living*, Melbourne, 1938

27 Recorded discussion with Gollan Lewis, *op. cit.*

The committee convened by Brooks in 1945 to guide the development of primary education during the period of post-war reconstruction addressed the issue of examinations: Although much criticism has in the past been rightly directed against tests and examinations it does not follow that the remedy is to abandon them, or even to reduce their extent. Much of the evil has come from their wrong, but not their excessive use.²⁸ The committee then detailed the place of tests in the school program, and the nature of the testing program. It is clear, though, by 1945 the belief in behaviourist psychology as a basis for the science of organisation had lost none of its strength. Standardised achievement tests and general ability I.Q. tests were to be the mainstay of the school's organisation. For the committee, the criteria by which a school's efficiency could be assessed included the administration and recording of all tests, and the faithful keeping of other official school records. So school efficiency during the period of post-war reconstruction embodied the ideals of science and order. Few of the committee members would have doubted that efficiency had an absolute standard, and a standard which could be measured.

The science of educational administration strengthened and developed formalism in Tasmanian schools. The science of educational administration in the end enslaved, rather than liberated. When Tasmania's leading educators did question, for example, the role of examinations in state education, the result was to make the key examinations more scientific by changing to standardised intelligence tests.

The growing professionalism of the Tasmanian teachers was apparent from Parker's work in the new psychology at the training college, and the work being undertaken by the TIER. Developing professionalisation did not liberate the Tasmanian state primary teachers either. It further strengthened the process

28 R C 1945, p. 18

of formalism and secured the dominance of a system of centralised control over state education. The very assumptions upon which the Tasmanian educators administered their department and schools reinforced rather than led them to question their practices.

Bowles and Gintis in their revisionist study of the scientific testing movement in the public schools of the United States claim that standardised tests reinforced the role of these schools in social control.²⁹ The tests were culture bound, reinforcing the values of business over public education. This was a continuation of the process described by Callahan. There is no evidence to suggest that the tests used by the Tasmanians were any less culture bound than those described by Bowles and Gintis. Certainly, the activities of the Tasmanians do not lead us to believe that they realised the implications of the tests that they were using.

When referring to the influence of progressivism of the public schools of the United States, Bowles and Gintis argue that the increased centralised control, developed in the name of efficiency, locked the public schools into a form of progressive education, which we have followed Katz in labelling as scientific. The small, decentralised school, independent in thought became an anachronism. Bowles and Gintis argue:

The legacy of the urban school reform movement in this period reflects both its strongly upper-class basis and its commitment to social control as the overriding objective of schooling. Social amelioration, open education, equalization of opportunity, and all the democratic forms could have been pursued only insofar as they contributed to - or at least did not contradict - the role of the school in reproducing the class system and extending the capitalist mode of production. The essence of Progressivism in education was the rationalization of the process of reproducing the social classes of modern industrial life. The Progressives viewed the growing corporatization of

29 Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, *op. cit.*

economic activity as desirable and forward-looking indeed, the best antidote to the provincialism and elitism of U.S. culture. For some Taylorism in the schools was, in turn, seen as an ideal.³⁰

We have argued that these very same events were set into train with Neale's first attempts to bring efficiency into the Tasmanian state primary schools. McCoy's work ensured the future development of these trends, long after he had departed the island state.

We have already noted the strong conservative tendency of Tasmanian governments. Robson has described the new wave of industrialisation in Tasmania following the depression.³¹ A.G. Ogilvie took office in 1934 and commenced over thirty years of uninterrupted Labor party rule. It was a period of government subsidised development with the newly-formed Hydro-Electric Commission working closely with private industry in developing the state's resources. Brooks administered the Tasmanian Education Department along lines which assisted this industrial development. The conclusions drawn by Bowles and Gintis apply with equal weight to the influence of progressivism on Tasmanian state primary schools.

The use which Brooks made of the ACER and the TIER further endorses the link between educational administration of state schools and interests of business and commerce. The prime reason for the establishment of the ACER was the national co-ordination of educational research. The funding of research was guaranteed by Carnegie funds, as were tours of the United States by prominent and influential Australian educators. Karier argues that corporate wealth was used consciously to facilitate the development of a liberal state based on the political and economic hegemony of the native white American middle

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 199

³¹ Lloyd Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania, op. cit.*, p.p. 132,133

class. Karier shows that Herbert Croly, the great American progressive and contemporary expressed the ideal well when he suggested that progressive democracy was 'designed to serve as a counter poise to the threat of working class revolution'.³² Karier explains that Carnegie wealth was second only to Rockefeller wealth in financing educational research which guaranteed the economic and political advance of middle class America. At every step during the period which we are studying in Tasmania the mode of educational administration assured the establishment of a scientific progressive curriculum which maintained the *status quo* of Tasmanian society.

2 Curriculum

Tasmanian educators during the inter-war years continued to conceive of the state primary school curriculum as an instrument of social control. In the wake of post-war reconstruction Brooks had McCoy's 1910 curriculum revised during 1921.³³ The only major alteration was the inclusion of a course in civics. Instruction in civics for some time had been favoured by many educators as being a subject which could correct any trend towards social unrest and political discontent. The 1920 biennial conference of the Australian directors of education had called for the installation of civics into the curriculum.³⁴ Civics, it was believed, could instruct children in morals and their general duties to the state.

During 1924 and 1929 the curriculum was revised and modified slightly. In an introductory note Brooks pressed home the importance of developing in

32 Clarence J. Karier, Testing for Order and Control in the Corporate Liberal State, in C.J. Karier, P. Violas and J. Spring, *Roots of Crisis ...*, Rand McNally, New York, 1973, p. 115

33 JPPP, 1922, paper 6, p.p. 1,2

34 AOT, ed 73, 3

children a positive attitude to the established social order.³⁵ He maintained that teachers should aim at establishing definite rules of conduct and of the acquiring of habits that would lead children to 'play the game and become worthy citizens'. This, for Brooks, was a fundamental duty which teachers had to the state. Brooks went on to show how a teacher's system of classroom management should aim at developing in children attitudes which would preserve the established social order. For example, attitudes and practices of punctuality, cleanliness and thrift could be reinforced through day-to-day school routines. As Brooks put it:

And so we might continue to show that practically every subject in the curriculum can be so treated that each lesson may be the means of establishing some desirable habit of polishing some facet of human nature.³⁶

With the onset of the depression leading Tasmanian educators again saw the state school curriculum as being a vital element in alleviating social and economic ills. Wright, in addressing the Teachers' Union Conference of 1930 contended:

The more I think of it the more it seems to me that the present financial conditions are largely due to inaccurate and imperfect training in arithmetic and a want of knowledge of the fundamental principles, particularly tables ...³⁷

That inane comments such as these had a considerable currency is evidenced by similar statements by another leading educator. Jones in an article in the *Record* of November 1930 headed 'The Development of National Feeling in Schools' argued how state schools could be used as a focal point to re-establish the British work ethic.³⁸ Children, teachers and parents could come together and through voluntary effort work at repairing and developing school grounds and buildings Jones contended:

³⁵ E R, 24, 11, Nov. 1928, p. 142

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ E R, 26, 12, Dec. 1930, p.p. 156-7

³⁸ E R, 26, 11, Nov. 1930, p.p. 146-6

It is doubtful if there is any country in the world where the need is greater than in ours for intelligent and carefully planned exercises in schools for developing feelings of patriotism.³⁹

The experiences of the depression did not dim some Tasmanian educators' belief in the prime role of the curriculum in the maintenance of the social order. During 1934 Brooks convened a committee to manage curriculum revision. Of the eleven 'fundamental principles' of any curriculum one was the maintenance of 'certain essential attitudes and habits which would characterise school activities'. The curriculum should aim at a desire for self-improvement, a power of self-control and a reverence for an ideal; in short, an apt appreciation of the true, the good and the beautiful.⁴⁰ The committee further believed that the state school curriculum should enable children on the completion of their schooling to follow 'a vocation worthily and live in right social and political relationships with [their] fellows'.⁴¹

Herbartianism dominated teaching methodology during the inter-war years. Another of the 'fundamental principles' of the curriculum the 1934 committee maintained was that 'there should be a strong element of correlation between subjects'. The extent which the Tasmanian educators placed their faith in the psychological powers of association can be assessed from an inspector's comments on the value of the geography lesson in developing patriotism:

With the habit of association the boy will think of Manchester as he pulls on his shirt in the morning; the girl will think of Belfast as she lays the tablecloth (and even of Damascus); as they both snuggle under the blankets on a cold night they will cry, 'Hurrah for Invermay or Waverley'; even the little ones, when conversation becomes slack at the tea-table will suddenly volunteer the fact that the little boys of India sent the cups of tea.⁴²

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 146

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Supplement, E R, 30, 10, Oct. 1934, p.p. 1-2

⁴² E R, 20, 10, Oct. 1924, p. 118

Still there were instances of experimentation in the Tasmanian state school curriculum during the inter-war years. And these were found where the rigours of the centralised examination system did not control what was taught, and where experimentation in the form of the Montessori method had been officially encouraged in the past. These developments in the curriculum occurred in some of the larger city infant schools under Rowntree's guidance during the 'twenties.

In July 1924 A. Fussell, formerly Chief Inspector of Schools in Victoria, addressed the annual state school teachers' conference in Launceston. His address was entitled, 'Present-Day Efficiency'.⁴³ He argued that in schools efficiency was being gained with the result of educational sterility. Extrinsic modes of motivation, the general examination system, had brought with it minds which lacked curiosity and an excitement for learning. The social ramifications were massive: community service, fruitful leisure-time activities, altruism generally, and the maximum utilization of an individual's ability were being discouraged because schools were having a narrowing effect on children.

For Fussell the answer lay in freeing the curriculum and this sense of freedom would be passed on to the children. Passive learning for examinations must give way to self-enquiry and self-motivation. Children must be given the freedom to organise their own time and their own study. Children's attitudes towards study must be changed. They must be intrinsically motivated to learn so that they leave school with a desire for cultural self-enhancement. The individual must be allowed to realise his full potential. The great beneficiary would be society-at-large.

⁴³ A. Fussell, 'Present-Day Efficiency', E R, 20, 8, Aug. 1924, p.p. 94-7

Fussell observed that children entered school in infant grades with a spontaneity and an excitement for learning. The use of Froebel and Montessori methods recognised this by basing their methods on activity-based learning. These methods had revolutionised the infant schools. But spontaneity was lost in the rush for examinations and certificates in the primary and secondary schools. The Dalton Plan, Fussell argued, could do much to remedy the problem, with its central features of a socialised working environment and the self-initiative it promoted.⁴⁴ A further feature for Fussell was that class teaching was not abolished, in fact, it was indispensable to the Plan, but the right feeling and desire created by the intrinsic appeal of the curriculum intensified motivation.

It is not surprising that Rowntree an exponent of Froebelian and Montessorian methods would be the first Tasmanian educator to promote curriculum innovation in the form of the Dalton Plan.⁴⁵ In her annual report for 1921 Rowntree complained that the growing tendency towards formalism was stifling the spontaneity of the young mind. Such a tendency of course was fatal to infant school ideals.

Rowntree responded to the encroaching formalism by implementing the plan in modified form in the infant department of Elizabeth Street Practising School, under the supervision of her sister Miss Frances Rowntree in 1922. This was the same year that the plan was reported as being first undertaken in Australia.

44 Helen Parkhurst, *Education on the Dalton Plan*, London, 1923, The Dalton Laboratory Plan for curriculum innovation was a creature of both the earlier pre-war philosophical ideals of the New Education and the post-war drive towards a science of education and of classroom management. Helen Parkhurst, an American educator, long imbued with the ideals of the New Education, worked with Montessori in Rome during 1914. Her subsequent conversion to Montessori's principles of freedom, self-education and the recognition of the importance of the learning environment, gave strength to the idea of developing a laboratory plan of learning. Following a successful trial of her scheme in a school for crippled children in 1920, she introduced it in the high school of Dalton, Massachusetts. Here the plan excited attention from both sides of the Atlantic.

45 E R, 18, 4, April 1922, p. 71

This was at the Faraday Street School in Melbourne.⁴⁶ The plan was started with the top infant classes at Elizabeth Street, and is the first recorded instance of it being used in infant classes in Australia.⁴⁷ Rowntree reported that while the experiment was still young the teachers were enthusiastic about it. It lifted a load off the shoulders of the teachers, and placed the burden of learning onto the child, albeit, 'this was not a burden, but a joyous task'.⁴⁸ The following year Rowntree was responsible in having the plan introduced in the Launceston Practising School under Miss Annie Fraser. The promise, however, which Rowntree saw for the Dalton Plan at the Elizabeth Street Practising School did not fully eventuate, although under her sister's supervision there was some expansion. In November 1924 Rowntree reported that at Elizabeth Street Practising School for that year four classes with a total of about 200 children were involved in the plan.⁴⁹

Enthusiasm for the plan ran high during 1923 and 1924. In his 1923 Annual Report to the Minister Brooks reported that many teachers in primary grades were experimenting with the plan, adding:

The attention of teachers is specially called to these signs of the times, and they are urged to devote themselves to reading and experimenting on these lines.⁵⁰

Johnson was no less enthusiastic. He applauded the plan because of 'the community spirit that is being fostered' in 'school work and school life'.⁵¹ For Johnson, now the school was being looked upon as 'a real society, every member doing his part with freedom and consciousness of responsibility'. Johnson confidently predicted that the plan would revolutionise classroom practices and

46 R. Petersen, *Experimental Schools and Educational Experiments in Australia*, 1906 - 1948, *op. cit.*, chap. 7

47 E R, 19, 2, Feb. 1923, p.p. 36-7

48 *Ibid.*, p. 37

49 E R, 20, 11, Nov. 1924, p.p. 126-7

50 JPPP, 1924, paper 19, p. 1

51 *Ibid.*, p. 10

the curriculum. Young teachers, thus, must be prepared for these new circumstances. No longer would their efficiency be gauged by the old methods of inspection and examination. Now 'the teacher must be a man of culture, able to act as interpreter between the great community outside and the smaller one in which he presides'. Johnson proclaimed that 'the "Dalton Plan", with modifications, has come to stay'. Johnson in 1924 had two classes at the college organised along Dalton lines. These he called, 'Community Classes'. Ominously, however, the modifications which Johnson saw as being necessary required that 'tests, with and without notice, will have to be given at more frequent intervals'.

When Johnson next reported to his director in 1925 there was no mention of the Dalton Plan as being so central to the student teachers' professional development. Nor did Brooks ever again see the need to mention it in his annual report to his minister. Of course, this is not to say that the Dalton Plan completely disappeared from the Tasmanian Education Department, but one looks in vain for any widespread commitment to the plan outside of Rowntree's group. Many of the teachers leaving the training college must have experimented with it. Real success and implementation, however, could only come if the plan had the wide support from the head teachers and the inspectors.

Brockett saw the plan as something of an educational plague.⁵² For Brockett, the plan was, he maintained, a course of 'instruction', and not as Rowntree and Parkhurst had claimed as an individualised learning program. Brockett, like most other Tasmanian teachers and educators, could not approve of the teacher's role in the classroom as anything other than the central and dominant force. Generally, the teachers were unable to assume a consultative and advisory role. Brockett explained that the plan was being tried in various

52 JPPP, 1925, paper 19, p. 1

schools in Tasmania and that his and others' experience of it was by 1925 too limited to 'warrant a definite expression of opinion'. He warned that

... unless a teacher is on his guard he will find the power of speech distinctly modified and there is a further danger that while the children may absorb *information* at a faster rate, their *intelligence* may not develop with equal steps.(emphasis in original)⁵³

Development of intelligence, then for Brockett, was dependent upon didactic teaching methods. Never had Tasmanian teachers been encouraged by their inspectors to veer from the prescribed curriculum, and inspectors were loathe to encourage the practice lest examination standards would fall. A scientific curriculum required that the outcomes could be measured. Many of the naturalistic and child-centred objectives of the Dalton Plan could not be measured.

Tasmania's experience in curriculum innovation during the inter-war years differed little from mainland examples. Turney asserts:

State education in Australia has never been a fertile bed for educational experiment. Such features of centralization as uniformity, efficiency, inspection, and examination, have largely precluded experimental work in schools. Besides head office administrators have found it easier to introduce change into schools by means of edict.⁵⁴

Certainly attempts at the implementation of the Dalton Plan in state schools on the mainland had similar results as Tasmania's attempt. Turney explains that where these attempts at curriculum innovation were attempted teachers '... were rarely encouraged to pursue promising educational examples'. Tasmanian state primary teachers were firmly entrenched in Beeby's State of Formalism in education development. They were never encouraged to experiment with, or to depart from, the prescriptive and predictable scientific progressive curriculum. We will

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Cliff Turney, *Continuity and Change in the Public Primary Schools 1914-32*, in J. Cleverly and J. Lawry, *Australian Education in the Twentieth Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 55

argue later, however, that the Rowntree's attempts at curriculum reform were not totally thwarted. That same enthusiasm for reform would re-emerge ten years after her experiments with the Dalton Plan. Again, the child-centred progressivism of the early childhood education years would provide an example in curriculum innovation for the other primary teachers to follow.

3 Early Childhood Education

Before McCoy left for South Australia in mid 1919 Rowntree, was appointed as Inspector of Infant Schools. Brooks explained in his first annual report, this 'was the natural corollary to the establishment of the system of infant school work begun seven years ago'.⁵⁵ Now Rowntree was responsible for the training and inspection of infant teachers throughout Tasmania. Brooks added that Rowntree's appointment would facilitate the 'harmonious and satisfactory' working of the infant schools and classes. The teachers who had worked with her at the Elizabeth Street Practising School, and who understood her educational philosophy and transformed this into classroom practice, Brooks predicted would 'probably do well under her supervision and inspection'.

The child-centred progressive education which had its formative years stunted by the war quickly flourished in the post-war 'baby boom'. There was also the need for much immediate development to compensate for the years of forced neglect during the war. In 1919 two new infant departments were established: one at the Goulburn Street State School, Hobart and one at Queenstown State School. During 1920 separate kindergarten rooms were built in Launceston at the Wellington Square and Charles Street state schools. Added to this there was the appointment in 1919 of Miss E. Sagarser as Assistant Art Teacher to

⁵⁵ JPPP, 1921, paper 15, p. 3

Dechaineux at the training college. Her task was to assist in the art education of infant school student teachers.⁵⁶

There was, however, no similar development in the Montessori method in Tasmanian state schools. Petersen observes that by 1922 there were about eighty infant teachers in Tasmanian state schools, all of whom had been trained by Rowntree.⁵⁷ Petersen wonders why Brooks would want to explain in 1922 that experiments with the Montessori method were still continuing. This was six years after the experiments had been commenced. We can agree with Petersen who suggests that Rowntree's experimentation in the Dalton Plan really signalled an end to the pure use of the Montessori method in Tasmanian state primary schools. Certainly her departure to England in 1923 to study the Play Way and Daltonism, Petersen argues, served to mark the end of the Montessori method in Tasmania.

Petersen describes a similar fate for the Montessori method in the New South Wales state primary schools.⁵⁸ He contends that in this state the Montessori method failed to develop here because it was perceived of as being a threat to the established Froebel kindergarten method. Cohen describes a similar opposition to the Montessori method in some parts of the United States.⁵⁹ There is no evidence that this was the case in Tasmania where Rowntree exercised complete control over what educational method was to be pursued in the early childhood education grades. There is no evidence to show that she had any more vested interest in the Froebel method than the Montessori method. Perhaps Petersen's explanation of the fate of Montessori method in the South Australian state schools better reflects the Tasmanian circumstances: here the

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians* - M.M. Simpson and L. de Lissa, *op. cit.*, p.251

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 244

⁵⁹ Sol Cohen, 'Montessori Comes to America, 1911-1917', *Notre Dame Journal of Education*, 2, 4, Winter 1972, p.p. 358-72

Montessori method simply became a part of the growing eclecticism of the kindergarten.⁶⁰

Willcott adds another dimension to the explanation to the fate of the Montessori movement in the United States:

For all its intensity, American enthusiasm for the method was brief. By 1920 interest in Montessori was virtually non-existent in [the United States]. The explosive initial reaction was an example of what Hofstadter calls the 'periodic psychic sprees that purport to be moral crusades.' The disproportionate intensity of the emotion which characterised the Montessori spree is accounted for by the fact that it was a composite of other sprees and strong currents which existed independently - feminism, the belief in the saving power of science, the burgeoning reaction to Victorian authoritarianism. Underlying these, of course, was the widespread interest in educational reform of all types. The magazine articles and books made it impossible to overlook the connections between the Montessori movement and its components, and they did so in absolute and extremely emotional terms. Under these conditions, the seemingly inappropriate public response was inevitable.^{61 62}

At every point Willcott's explanation applies to the fate of the Montessori method in Tasmania. Willcott suggests that progressivism by 1920 had lost its innocent, missionary zeal. This was certainly the case in Tasmania.

Cohen's explanation of the fate of the Montessori method in England following the First World War further suggests an explanation for its fate in Tasmania. Cohen draws on Miles' authoritative *Innovations in Education* to explain why the Montessori methods' success in England was initially very limited.⁶³ Cohen shows that

60 R.C. Petersen, *The Montessorians* - M.M. Simpson and L. de Lissa, *op. cit.*, p. 262

61 Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1955, p. 17

62 Paul Willcott, 'The Initial American Response to the Montessori Method', *Journal of Education*, June 1968, 147-65

63 Mathew B. Miles (ed.), *Innovations in Education*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia Unit., New York, 1964, p.p. 657-8

[Miles] distinguishes between substantive failure - inability to achieve desired results - and adoptive failure, when an innovation is rejected by the 'target system' due to deficiencies in the management of the reform, or incongruence with existing target norms and procedure. The history of the case study in England provides an illuminating case study in adoptive failure.⁶⁴

So it was in the Tasmanian state primary schools. Outside of Rowntree and her small band of select teachers at the Elizabeth Street Practising School few Tasmanian teachers understood the real meaning of the Montessori methods' principles and practices. The Tasmanian teachers generally were still locked in the stage of educational development which Beeby has labelled The Stage of Formalism. They lacked the professional development to make autonomous, critical curriculum decisions. They required detail curriculum information and close supervision. When Rowntree moved away from the Montessori method, the teachers followed.⁶⁵

Rowntree always believed that an educator must maintain always a strong and active commitment to culture and learning generally. In March 1940 following a meeting with the Brooks, she wrote a strongly worded letter, with emotional undertones to Brooks about the status of a female Inspector. She wrote:

A professional woman must necessarily be cut off from many of the joys of womanhood and there is always a serious danger that she will become hard and narrow. If she is to continue to be a leader in thought and policy in her chosen work she must be in a position to travel and to surround herself with the means of intellectual culture and physical care. Generally such women lead arduous lives...⁶⁶

64 Sol Cohen, 'The Montessori Movement in England, 1911-1952', *History of Education*, 3, 1, January 1974, 51-67

65 R.C. Petersen, The Montessorians - M.M. Simpson and L. de Lissa, *op. cit.*, describes a similar professional relationship between early childhood educators in other Australian states.

66 AOT, ed 83 General Correspondence, C. 1912 - C. 1968, A Personal File on Miss Amy Rowntree, File No. 0269.40, The letter is concerned with the salary for a female Education officer in the Department. Rowntree received £535 per annum, while a male Education Officer received £730 per annum.

As was the case in other Australian states, few women occupied important positions in the Tasmanian Education Department, mainly because senior posts were denied them by inequality of opportunity, social pressures, and until recently, by regulation. In the Tasmanian government service, Rowntree established a benchmark for professional women. Professionally, she followed in the footsteps set internationally by the great Montessori, and nationally by Simpson.

Echoing Neale's fundamental drive, Rowntree continually sought to develop in her teachers the full realisation of the true missionary work for which they were the source and inspiration. She wished that they could remember the infant schools of her childhood before McCoy established infant schools. Then they would realise the immense socialising nature of their work. She maintained that it was not always the most perfect disciplinarian, not always the most effective teacher, who had the greatest influence in her district: ... some more than others are given the power to lighten the way for the blind, to inspire the love and confidence of the weak, to carry high the torch of life.⁶⁷

During 1923-24 and 1938-39 Rowntree travelled overseas to Britain, Europe and North America to widen her experience in early childhood education. In the same refrain as her first director, Neale, Rowntree echoed the cry for the decentralisation of authority to counter the formalism in schools. Her tour of English schools during 1923 confirmed her belief. Here she saw some of the finest infant schools in the world. Decentralisation brought with it added responsibility for schools and teachers. And this further encouraged them to think for themselves. She recognised, however, that this could not be imposed on schools in Tasmania. They must be professionally ready for it. Rowntree argued:

⁶⁷ E R, 26, 5 May 1930, p. 14

On the teachers be it to prove when the ripening [time] comes. Wise experimentation, originality, initiative, are not as yet characteristic of our work.⁶⁸

We have seen that this is what Rowntree wanted her teachers to do with the Dalton Plan. For Rowntree the first educational principle was that the child should be the centre of the learning program. For this reason she demanded that the teachers be no slave to any specific methods. It was in this spirit that Rowntree drew on the best of the Froebellian and Montessorian methods. For example in 1921 she wrote:

There can be no doubt that much development accrues to the child from the kindergarten Montessori 'free period'. During the half-hour, however, the material used is that of Dr Montessori, the Froebel gifts and occupations being reserved for the more formal table periods.⁶⁹

Always the child's development should be the reason behind the choice of any particular method. Again both theorists should be considered critically. For example both educational theorists considered that correlation of subject matter was important. When Rowntree saw that this was being neglected by some teachers she responded with the view that correlation 'should not be regarded as a religious fetish'. But appreciation of its advantages will lead the teacher 'to an economy of thought, more lasting impressions, a more warmly coloured atmosphere' for a child's overall development. Correlation of subjects was of value in the classroom only if it aided in the development of a child's understanding. Rowntree would have one day the opportunity to extend these ideals to the primary grades.

Alexander in his study of Australian twentieth century history contends that while it is very tempting to describe and analyse the inter-war years as one

⁶⁸ E R, 21, 10 Oct. 1925, p. 126

⁶⁹ JPPP, 1922, paper 6, p. 34

formative period, such an analysis and description can misrepresent some important changes resulting from the depression.⁷⁰ Alexander states:

Reviewing all the consequences, good and bad, of the depression years, an Australian may derive more satisfaction from these than from the more prosperous postwar decade of the 'twenties. The recovery of the mid-'thirties was surely encouraging - intellectually and emotionally. For the Australian people did more than merely recover material assets; in so doing, they showed something of the adaptability and resource which had been characteristic of their pioneering forefathers ...⁷¹

With the depression drawing to a close, and with the renewed confidence which came with the increased financial resources resulting from the establishment of the Grants Commission, the influence of child-centred progressivism began to assert itself against scientific progressivism. The gap between infant and primary methods had always been a concern to progressive educators. In early 1934, with Brooks's support, Rowntree set about to encourage '... those progressive primary teachers who would like to break away from the plodding humdrum of mass tuition...' ⁷² She recognised that these initiatives could not succeed through directives, but rather she had to stimulate schools to move in the new directions.

Brooks and Rowntree established two 'light-house schools' to illustrate the possibilities of breaking the hiatus between the two sections in the large primary schools. At Glenorchy and Bowen Road (Hobart) state schools infant department methods would be carried through to grade 4 to show what results were possible. Rowntree explained that by results she meant

... results in the growth of initiatives, the power to attack new work, the steadiness and industry of the pupils, their reliability and sense of honour when left to their own purposes.⁷³

⁷⁰ Fred Alexander, *Australia Since Federation*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1967, p.93

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 133

⁷² E R, 30 4, April 1934, p. 51

⁷³ *Ibid.*

In reviewing the experiment at the end of its first year Rowntree explained that the whole tone and atmosphere of the work escaped the art of the pen, and must be seen to be understood. She was therefore asked by Brooks to invite other primary teachers to see the experiment in its process. A student in the Bowen Road State School grade 3 class remembers the many visitors and remembers the year as her most memorable in primary school.⁷⁴ By encouraging primary teachers to experiment with a child-centred progressive education Rowntree was advancing their professional development and allowing them to move beyond Beeby's Stage of Formalism.

Long ago Simpson, when observing the influence of kindergarten principles and methods on the other infant grades had predicted that this influence would extend upwards into the primary grades. With the onset of the second war, however, much of the progressive educational momentum was halted. With the prospect of peace, and the popular demand for post-war reconstruction there was an opportunity for child-centred progressive educators to reassert the influences of a naturalistic curriculum through the committee convened by Brooks in 1945 to write the *Educational Aims of the Primary School*.⁷⁵

Lewis, a member of the committee, at the time Master of Method at the Albuera Street Practising School, and one time Rhodes Scholar, remembers well Rowntree's influence on the committee's report.⁷⁶ Her experience in the Tasmanian Education Department had no peer, and she had an unparalleled respect amongst her fellows. She, more than any other committee member, ensured that the report started from the point of view of the child, and not of

⁷⁴ Recorded discussion with Margaret Lonergan, Infant Mistress, Howrah, Tas. Aug. 1985, ex student of Bowen Rd State School, 1930-36

⁷⁵ R C 1946, Introduction

⁷⁶ Recorded interview with Margaret Lonergan, *op. cit.*

subject matter. New subjects and new content for old subjects may come and go, but

... far more important is a new approach to child education. Placing the child in the midst of them, teachers will discard those adultish, dominating features far too much in vogue in the past.⁷⁷

The report began with the view that the stage of education, from six to twelve years, was but a phase in the child's overall development. The school must start for the child where the previous educational agency, the home or the pre-school left off. 'The activities must therefore be planned to emerge naturally from the earlier period.' Teachers must base all methods and curriculum content on a careful study of 'the child's development, mental, physical and emotional'.⁷⁸ As the child's needs change, as a result of his development, so also should teaching methods and subject matter change to meet these needs.

The report contains a brief summary of the main characteristics of the child's development between the ages of six to twelve years. Rowntree's influence is obvious. Teachers first needed to recognise that childhood is the period of play:

For the child play has a meaning in itself, and is part of his life, but the educator must realise its biological significance as preparation for the life of later years.⁷⁹

For the committee, development of discipline is a natural corollary to the impulse for play. The determining influence is the environment which must be strong and sympathetic, and should not hurry the child 'into precocious exercise of adult responsibility'.⁸⁰ The development of thought, too, begins with the child's impulse towards play. 'A child's introduction to the world of ideas is through his perceptual experiences.' The report also recognised that the young child although gregarious, was 'an individual and quite unconsciously self-

⁷⁷ R C 1946, Introduction

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.p. 9, 10

centred'.⁸¹ This, too, determined the child's development of moral responsibility. While a child had the capacity for aesthetic discrimination, it was impossible to distinguish this from growth and directed experiences. The committee also saw the child as having spiritual tendencies which needed opportunity for expression and development. It stated that children

... therefore need an environment in which order, beauty, truth, and justice prevail; companionship in which love, sympathy, understanding, and joy have play; peace and solitude for meditation and freedom for self-expression.⁸²

With this understanding of the child, the committee maintained that there could be no 'uniform pattern of development nor fixed goals of achievement' for primary school pupils. Thus, any learning program had to encompass much individual learning.

In its report the committee gave considerable thought to the place of discipline, freedom and self-expression in primary schools. Lewis remembers Rowntree as having inspired this section of the report. The committee believed that:

Discipline, freedom and self-expression are not separate contributing factors of experience, but are aspects of the one process by which character is shaped and unified. For the adult, no less than for the child, life is to be regarded in terms of all three; true self-expression comes only with freedom, and the path to freedom is through discipline.⁸³

Related to the place of discipline, freedom and self-expression in primary schools, was the development in children of appreciation, taste and values. Lewis recalls Rowntree as being the driving force behind these ideals. The committee stated that primary schools should introduce children to nature and her ways, and awaken in them a sensitivity to beauty in all its forms.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Rowntree, in 1905 Neale's first choice as a Philip Smith probationer, the ever critical exponent of first the Froebel-Quincy method and then the Montessori method, brought the ideal of child-centred progressive education to fruition in the Tasmanian Education Department infant schools. Here the progressive methods would assert their influence on the higher grades whenever social circumstances permitted. Rowntree, the third generation Tasmanian, had succeeded where Neale, the fiery messiah, had failed.

4 Architecture

During the years prior to and during the First World War the most momentous development in state school architecture in Tasmania had been the incorporation of open-air design into school buildings. Here Tasmanian state schools reflected developments in England.⁸⁵ Three primary schools completed in Hobart during the 'twenties illustrate how these ideals were manifested.

School populations increased rapidly following the war. By 1921 Brooks was complaining that the

overcrowding at New Town, Landsdowne Crescent, Albuera Street, Elizabeth Street and Moonah in Hobart, and the overcrowding at Charles Street and Invermay ... are concrete cases the like of which can be found nowhere in the country.⁸⁶

To alleviate the overcrowding at the Elizabeth Street Practising School land was purchased at Campbell Street between the Elizabeth Street Practising School and the Hobart Domain. The Campbell Street Practising School was completed during 1925.⁸⁷ The building had spacious playgrounds where team sports

⁸⁵ J.A. Godfrey and R. Castle Cleary, *School Design and Construction op. cit.*, p. 27

⁸⁶ JPPP, 1922, paper 6, p. 1

⁸⁷ JPPP, 1926, paper 3, p. 1

could be played, thus responding to the popular demand we have noted for increased team sports. The building retained some traditional lines which had marked the state school buildings of the pre-war era. The arched entrance is an example of this. (plate 12) However, the building had large doors which opened on to a verandah and to the spacious playgrounds. The classrooms were located around a central quadrangle where assemblies and military drill were conducted. These were considered to be essential elements in an efficient school administration. By 1926 a new school was erected at Glenorchy, to the north of Hobart, to accommodate children in the developing suburb next to Moonah.⁸⁸ As with the Campbell Street Practising School the new Glenorchy State School building incorporated vertical collegiate lines, and was located in similar spacious grounds. (plate 13) A contemporary plate illustrates a typical open-air classroom. (plate 14) The Bowen Road State School was built between Moonah and New Town to alleviate the overcrowding at these schools.⁸⁹ The Bowen Road School completed in 1928 incorporated the open-air design as did the Glenorchy and Campbell Street Schools. (plate 15)

An important break in Tasmanian State school architecture came when S.W.T. Blythe became Senior Architect to the Tasmanian Public Works Department in 1934.⁹⁰ McNeill has commented that the architecture of Blythe in the period 1930-45 'is the most significant early modern architecture completed in Tasmania'.⁹¹ McNeill contends that the extent of the break can be gauged by comparing Blythe's design for the Campbell Town School completed in 1937 with the Campbell Street Practising School. McNeill observed:

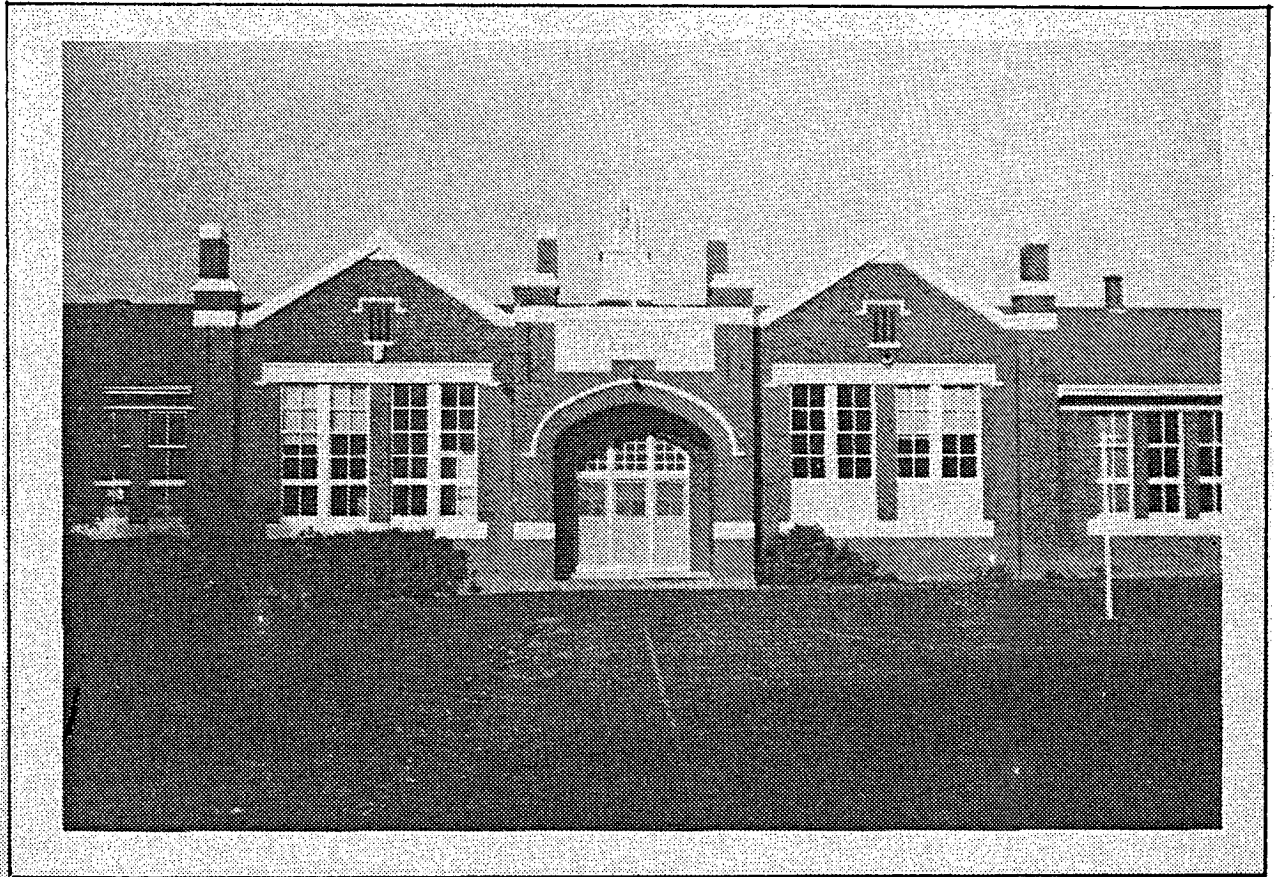
The Campbell Town example ... has a single loaded corridor plan with Northern orientation, considerable glass areas and continuous lintels and sills. (The tower

⁸⁸ JPPP, 1927, paper 13, p. 1

⁸⁹ JPPP, 1929, paper 13, p. 2

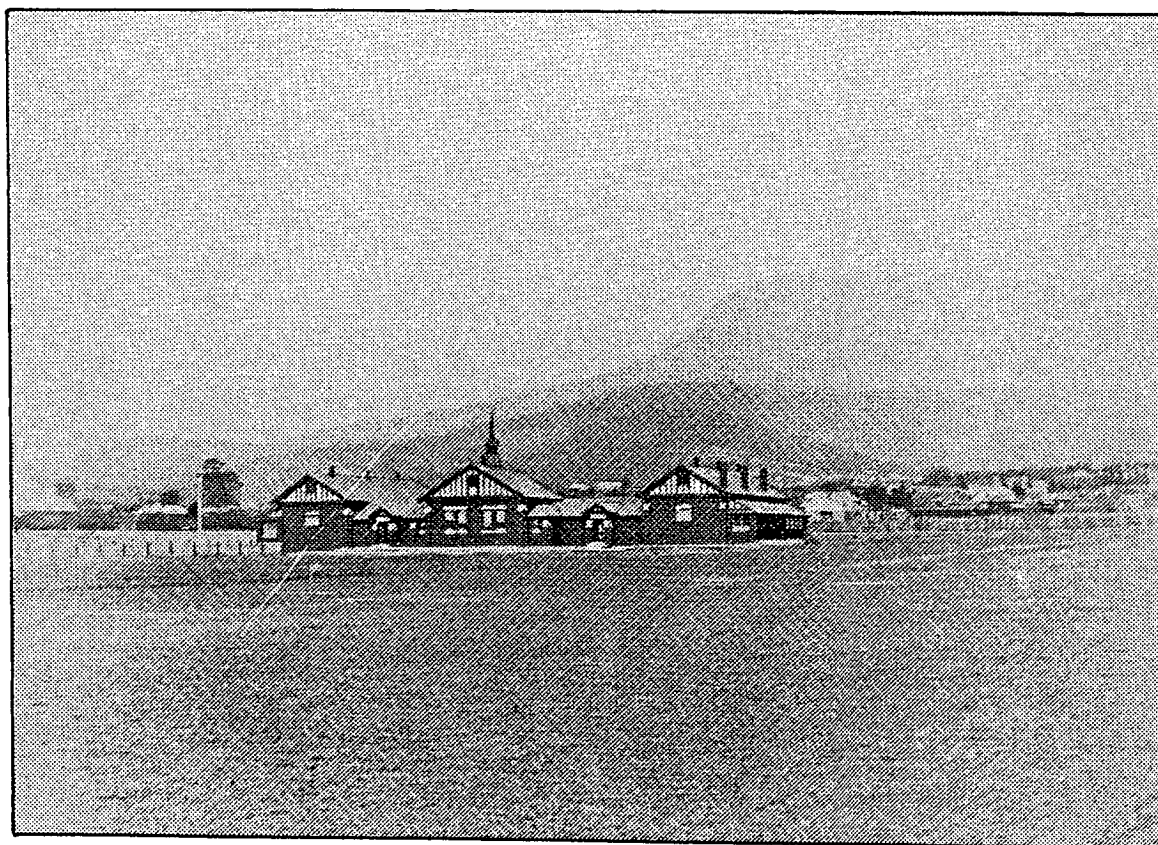
⁹⁰ Blythe was articulated with R.W. Koch and trained in Europe during the mid 1930's.

⁹¹ B.H. McNeill, 'S.W.T. Blythe: The Early Works', *Tasmanian Architect*, May, 1966



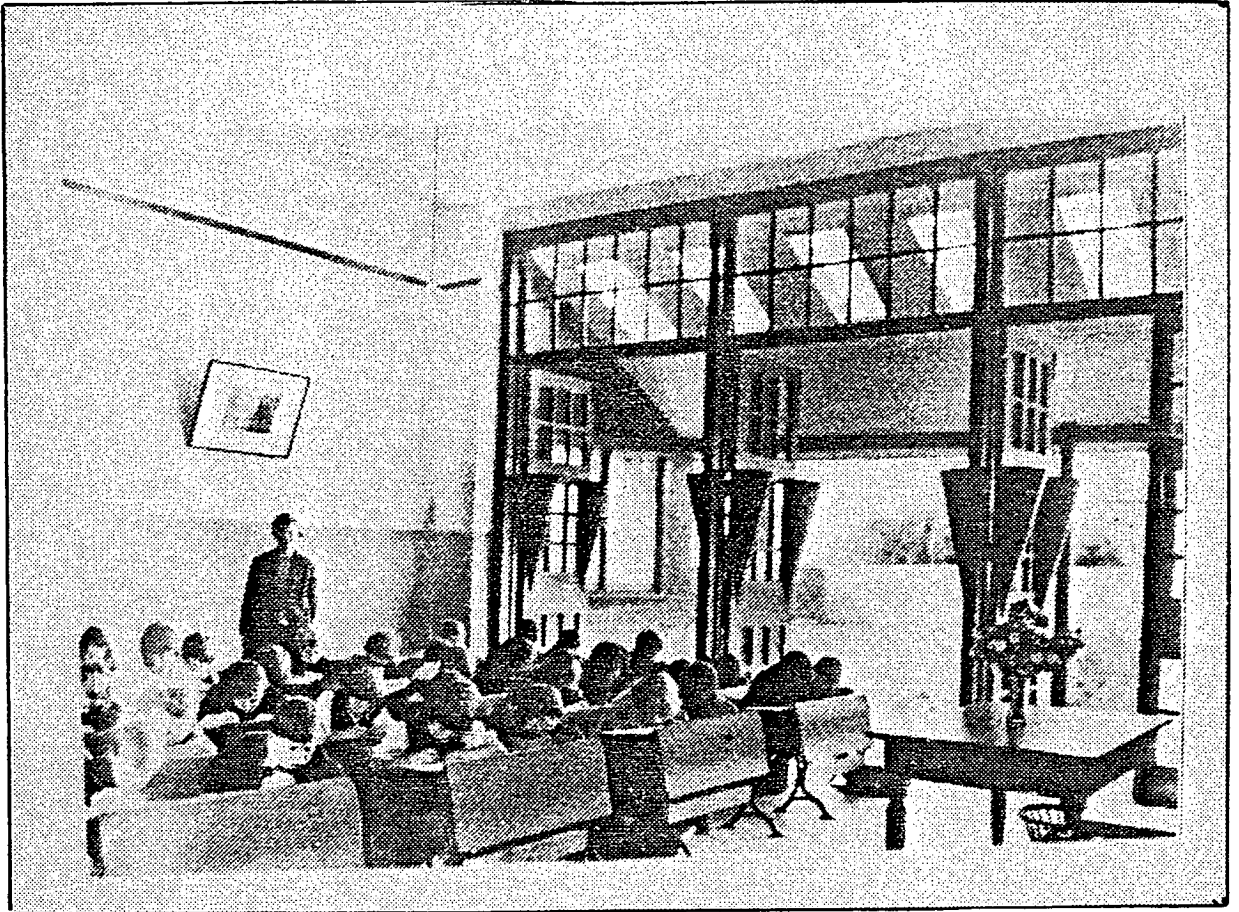
Campbell Street Practising School - Entrance

Plate 12



Glenorchy State School

Plate 13



Open Air Classroom, Glenorchy State School

Plate 14



brian curtis

Bowen Rd State School

Plate 15

was also a feature of Campbell Town and other similar schools and was a result of ministerial request for schools to be identified and given a suitable dignity ...)⁹²

Blythe remembered his state school designs of the 'thirties and 'forties as being dominated by a horizontality of line and of access to light and air.⁹³ (plate 16) The Queenstown, Strahan and Glendhu (Launceston) schools completed during the period illustrate these ideals.

McNeill considers that the best example of Blythe's state school designs during the period is the Goulburn Street School completed in 1944. (plate 17) McNeill notes:

This was a project to replace an old school destroyed by fire, and the existing foundations were re-used. However the whole plan was altered to provide a single loaded classroom wing of two storeys. Each classroom has northeast orientation and an extensive view over the city. This wing is linked by an administration and office section to the library and assembly hall-gymnasium. Evidence for a definite break in 1934 is thus extensive ...⁹⁴

Freeland states that the period of early modern architecture (1930-1944) of which Blythe belongs was influenced by Lloyd Wright, particularly in the use of horizontal lines. Freeland states:

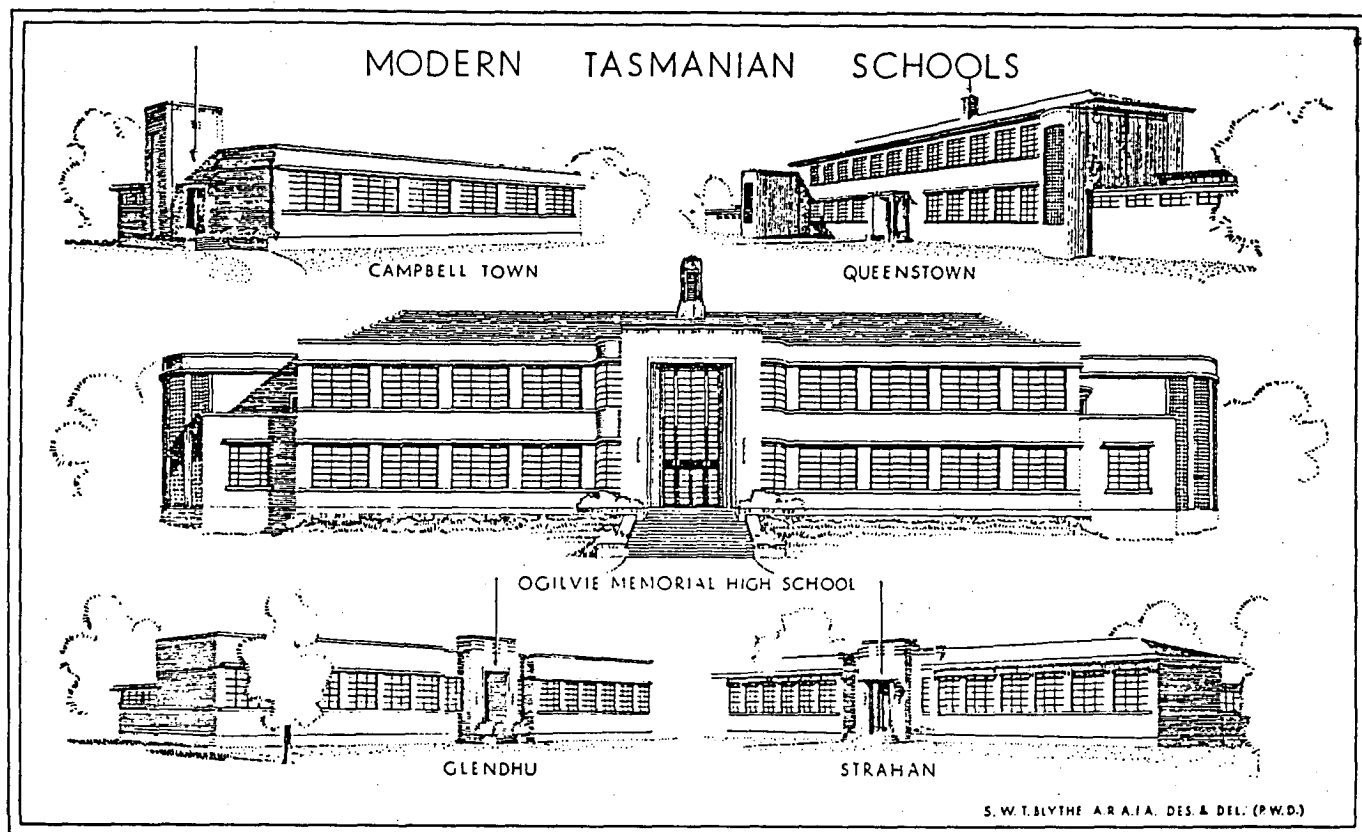
The new type of architecture which crept onto the scene from 1934 when building slowly revived was a world away from that which had been built in 1929. It was by no means a simple architecture of the type that had been advocated in the 'twenties. To be sure it was plain and made up of simple individual elements. The plainness and the simple elements were put together in an austere cerebral way ... It was mechanical, hard and austere but extraordinarily confident.⁹⁵

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 128

⁹³ Recorded interview with S.W.T. Blythe, Bellerive, Tas., June 1983

⁹⁴ B.N. McNeill, "S.W.T. Blythe: The Early Works", *op. cit.*, p.39

⁹⁵ J.M. Freeland, *Architecture in Australia*, *op. cit.*, p. 253



S.W.T. Blythe - State School Architect

Plate 16



Goulburn Street State School

Plate 17

Blythe explained that he was engrossed with the possibilities of the uses which steel, glass and reinforced concrete could be put. Always his object was to allow for full access to light and fresh air, while engendering a sense of space.⁹⁶

Our concern is to illustrate the continuing concerns expressed in Tasmanian state school architecture, ideals which endured through three decades. Particularly we need to recognise the role which state school architecture played in providing a powerful influence of progressivism on state primary schools.

5 The Rural Ideal

The history of the establishment of area schools in Tasmania was the realisation of the ideals of the country life movement. The establishment of the schools was also a continuation of the tradition of experimentation in Tasmanian agriculture, the development of progressive measures - for example the travelling dairy and the school-based experiments conducted with the co-operation between Neale and the Council of Agriculture. The objective of these measures was the economic advancement of rural Tasmania.

In his first report to the Minister at the end of 1920 Brooks expressed his concern for educational innovation in rural Tasmania.⁹⁷ These considerations were given further thrust in 1924 when a board of enquiry was established to consider various aspects of secondary education in Tasmania. The chairman of the board was Peter Board, recently retired as Director of Education in New South Wales. The board examined closely the possibility of providing courses in agricultural education, and reported in favour of the development of

⁹⁶ Recorded interview with S.W.T. Blythe, *op. cit.*

⁹⁷ JPPP, 1921, paper 15, p. 1

agricultural courses for country schools, in particular the provision of land and plant to ensure the practical success of the courses. The scheme did not eventuate.

The biennial conferences of directors of education held during the 'twenties also provided a forum for Australia's leading educational administrators to push the cause of progressive rural education at both primary and secondary level. Brooks's commitment to the concept was favourable, but no doubt the austere economic climate mitigated against any positive steps.⁹⁸

The centralisation and consolidation of education facilities which began in Tasmania in 1924 should be seen as rendering as much economic efficiency as educational efficiency. Brooks reported enthusiastically on the steps first taken at Mt Nelson and Scotchtown. To him:

a. Better education [was] being received by the pupils. b. Transport [was] conducted to the satisfaction of all concerned. c. The cost to the Department [was] less than if a separate building had been erected.⁹⁹

There was no attempt to provide any form of agricultural education in these centralised schools, but it was an essential aspect of the scheme that children were transported to and from the central schools by bus each day. Such a transport scheme had been operating in New South Wales since 1904, and it appears likely that Brooks learnt of it from one of his biennial conferences of directors which he attended.

During 1926, the year in which the Hadow Report was released in England which recommended the establishment of centralised rural schools, the Tasmanian Government again considered the introduction of rural schools. The

⁹⁸ AOT, ed 73, 2

⁹⁹ JPPP, 1925, paper 3, p. 3

Minister for Education, A.G. Ogilvie, suggested that the first of these schools would probably be established at Deloraine. The following year, in an address to the Teachers' Union, C.L. Gillies, the Chief Agricultural Instructor in the Department of Agriculture, advocated that schools should be used as community centres in rural districts.¹⁰⁰

The years from 1924 to 1934 saw a continuation of the school-based experiments in agriculture commenced during Neale's directorship. The *Record* abounds in reports of successful innovations, a means, of course, to 'seed' further innovation and development. Significantly, H.W. Gepp, now a progressive of national stature, in 1932 donated a prize to be competed for annually. The prize was in the form of a trophy, and was known as the 'H.W. Gepp Schools Trophy'. The object of the competition was to 'widen and extend the knowledge of grasslands and their management'.¹⁰¹

It took a depression of unparalleled social consequences, however, before any decided steps were taken towards the establishment of area schools in Tasmania. Again the problems of rural reconstruction faced Tasmania, albeit with a gravity hitherto unfelt. In 1934 the *Examiner* had advocated editorially that 'suitable super-primary courses be provided for the pupils who wished to follow small farming operations'.¹⁰² Well it might: in the early post-depression years many adolescent children were competing for a limited number of employment opportunities. Consequently employers were able to demand the Intermediate Certificate as a basic qualification for appointment. This meant that most country children were unable to gain employment, simply because few of them were able to attend the secondary schools in the island's four largest cities. At this time, forty eight per cent of Tasmania's population lived in rural areas,

¹⁰⁰ *Tasmanian Teacher*, Aug. 1926, p. 10

¹⁰¹ *E R*, 28, 5, May 1932, p. 19

¹⁰² *Examiner*, 15 Jan. 1935, 4, 1

and twenty-seven per cent of the permanently employed males were engaged in agriculture.¹⁰³ In both cases these proportions were greater than any other state.

Brooks and his minister were well aware of the political and social consequences of failure to tackle the problem. He reminded the Premier:

Our difficulty in Tasmania results very largely from the remoteness of our [rural] schools from High or Technical school centres - this fact making it impossible for many children in these areas to gain more than a primary school education.¹⁰⁴

Brooks was granted £400 from Carnegie and state government funds by the ACER in late 1934 for a tour of progressive schools in the United States and Britain.¹⁰⁵

Agricultural education was in fact the aspect of progressive education to which Brooks devoted most attention. He investigated rural schools in the U.S.A., Northern Ireland and England. The area schools of Tasmania were directly influenced by what Brooks saw of activity methods in East Suffolk, particularly Reydon Area School. Brooks never greatly published this fact; indeed, the only person he told seems to be Dr K.S. Cunningham of the ACER.¹⁰⁶ Selth argues this was because Brooks stumbled across the innovation at Reydon and that much of Brooks's report and recommendations to his minister was copied directly from a report on the Reydon Area School.¹⁰⁷

103 P.H.Hughes and H.T.Parker, *The Tasmanian Area Schools*, Hobart, p. 40

104 AOT, Premier's Dept. File 1935

105 AOT, ed 72, 2. A letter from the Tasmanian Guild of Inspectors to the Minister for Education, 7 Sept. 1934 explains how the additional £200 from the state government was obtained.

106 Archives of the ACER, a folder marked 1943, and in it 'Rural Reconstruction Commission', notes on evidence given by Dr K.S. Cunningham, Director, ACER, p. 3 with notes to the Board of Education Pamphlet 93

107 D.V. Selth, 'Innovation by Accident', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 1973

Brooks was no doubt encouraged by Tasmania's improved economic position following the establishment of the Commonwealth Grants Commission in 1933 which increased the state's financial resources and so enabled the government to improve its educational facilities. Selth points to the fact that the government sought to reverse the population drift from the country to the towns resulting from the depression. This was a major reason for the establishment of the area schools.¹⁰⁸ But there was also the fact that Brooks was now the most senior of Australia's directors of education. This gave him a level of confidence and a desire to initiate innovations which he hoped would place him with Frank Tate and Peter Board as one of Australia's leading educational administrators.¹⁰⁹ The knowledge that he was surrounded by an able and experienced team of senior colleagues, who embraced some aspects of the progressive ideals, would have further encouraged Brooks to undertake a major initiative in progressive education during his last ten years as director. This was the year before the New Education Fellowship Conference was to be held in Australia, with a week of it to be spent in Tasmania. Brooks submitted a report to the government during 1935 arguing for the establishment of area schools.

At first Sheffield was chosen during 1935.¹¹⁰ Then J.S. Maslin of the Hagley State School, wrote to the department. Inspired either by Brooks' talks to teachers in mid-October, or by Inspector P. Hughes, he offered Hagley as a district school in contrast to an area school.

It was the Sheffield Area School which Brooks described in detail to his colleagues in Brisbane in 1936. Here he proudly described the progressive

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Of course this point is difficult to substantiate, but it was made most emphatically to me by two senior Tasmanian educators who had been principals of areaschools: G.H. Holden, Howrah, Tas., 1981 (Mole Creek Area School) and H.L. Swifte, Abbotsfield, Tas., 1981 (Ringarooma Area School).

¹¹⁰ Amy Rowntree, 'The First Tasmanian Area School -Sheffield', *Tasmanian Education*, 4, April 1949

methods and the close relationship which existed between the school and the community, with a representative school council largely determining the nature of the curriculum.¹¹¹ The progressive methods used here generated much excitement both on the mainland and in Tasmanian education circles.¹¹²

The progressive methods used at Hagley and Sheffield and their results also were well publicised at Brooks's request in their communities and in the regional newspapers. Brooks reported to his minister that consequently '... there were numerous applications for area schools in other localities'.¹¹³ The selection of the next area schools was motivated obviously by political needs. Brooks wrote that '... provision has now been made at Wesley Vale, in Wilmot [electorate]; Ringarooma, in Bass [electorate]; and Cygnet, in Franklin [electorate]'.¹¹⁴ By 1945 there were fifteen area schools in existence, with a combined enrolment of 4 012 children.¹¹⁵

Despite all the publicity given to the Tasmanian area schools, they only grew in number but did not develop along progressive lines. Discussion with principals of these schools invariably lead to similar conclusions.¹¹⁶ Many of these, now retired principals, conclude that the basic flaw in the conception of the area school before the war was that they were not nearly enough closely tied to vocational needs. This is despite the establishment of parent councils to ensure that school's curriculum mirrored parental aspirations. Certainly, many of the open-air activities - harvesting, fruit-picking, shearing, etc. - would appeal to

111 Appendix 2

112 R. C. Petersen., *Experimental Schools and Educational Experiments in Australia, 1906-1948*, *op. cit.*, chap 6

113 AOT, ed 72, 3. A report on Sheffield and Hagley areaschools and a detailed description of Sheffield Area School's courses and management prepared for the 1936 biennial conference of directors of education.

114 *Ibid.*

115 JPPP, 1946, paper 7, p. 15

116 Recorded discussion, G.H. Holden, Howrah, Tas., 1981 (Mole Creek Area School) and H.L. Swifte, Abbotsfield, Tas., 1981 (Ringaroom Area School), *op. cit.*

many progressive educators as experiences that every child should have. But the Tasmanian area schools did not sufficiently broaden children's experiences, because many of these school activities were things which the children did at home, anyway. The school simply was helping them do these things better. And the fact was that for the majority of these children after the war would be seeking urban-based employment. The Tasmanian scene was, even in 1936, predominantly an urban scene, and the activities of the Tasmanian area schools, as well as their vocationalism, were not really the answer to Tasmania's educational problems, which were problems of purpose rather than of method. Increasingly after the war the area school children took up occupations in the cities. Consequently a secondary education in a city comprehensive high school became the main aspiration for the rural children. Area schools became the poor cousins of the Tasmanian Education Department. This was an important reason for the failure of the area schools. But it is asserted that experimentation in curricula could only occur in schools which had progressed from Beeby's Stage of Formalism. Such schools could only develop under the leadership of professionally advanced teachers, supported by a sympathetic education authority which encouraged school-based decision making in curriculum matters. Moreover, schools of this type required the confidence and support of their communities.

There is no doubt that curriculum developed in the area schools at Sheffield and Hagley (described in Appendix 2) was in the tradition of child centred progressive education, and was a deliberate break from the stifling scientific progressive curriculum which dominated other Tasmanian primary schools. By 1935 at least two Tasmanian state primary school principals had developed professionally enough to break from the tradition of faithfully implementing a curriculum as prescribed by the central authority, and to experiment with a curriculum which reflected perceived local needs. This was an ideal of child-

centred progressive rural education described by Neale thirty years before. At least two Tasmanian schools, were moving beyond Beeby's Stage of Formalism of educational development. This occurred with government support following the economic and social disruptions caused by the depression. This supports Alexander's belief that the depression brought about a positive response by many Australians to reevaluate and change institutions in order to ameliorate social and economic conditions. Now child-centred progressive education could be found in classrooms other than Rowntree's early childhood education classrooms.

6 Special Education for Intellectually Atypical Children

By the 'twenties the ideals and practices of the school health and hygiene movement had become an accepted part of state primary school education in Tasmania. We have argued that there was a close connection between the ideals of the state school health and hygiene movement and those relating to the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children. The state provisions for intellectually handicapped children were developed and consolidated during the inter-war years. The eugenic demand for state legislation to control the births of intellectually handicapped children lost none of its potency during the 'twenties. The depression, however, marked a watershed in commonly-held beliefs and practices for these children. The late 'thirties witnessed a softening in eugenic demands for segregation of intellectually handicapped children. Special state provision for intellectually advanced children was a development during the early 'thirties. Here, too, while the early practice was the segregation of the intellectually elite, these children were later integrated back into ordinary schools.

In his first annual report of the Psychological Clinic, Miller spent some space explaining the functions of the clinic, which was, in short, to facilitate the mental hygiene of children. Children could be referred to the clinic by 'any person, school, court, department of state, child welfare, or other social or philanthropic agency dealing with the problems of child life'.¹¹⁷ The clinic, through two members of the medical profession and two qualified psychologists, including the director, examined any child who deviated from the normal, including mentally gifted children; behaviour problems, too, were to be examined. The clinic, thus, was not only concerned with the mentally defective; it was the task of the new psychology to ripen the mentally advanced to a level which would enhance the efficiency of society-at-large. It was not, however, until 1934 that the Hobart Activity School for Intellectually gifted children was established, and this was not from a direct initiative from Miller or his board.

Miller in his first annual report, posited the view that an important function of the clinic would be the compilation and classification of data gained from psychological diagnosis and prognosis. The Education Department and the university would be encouraged to avail themselves of the data and the facilities at the clinic, at the same time adding to the research. Miller saw the clinic as a liberalising institution, adding to human dignity, rather than distracting from it in any totalitarian way. The new psychology would guide society's evolution along the most desirable lines.

The Education Department co-operated with the board and clinic, especially in the provision of a psychology service and the establishment of special schools for the mentally deficient. Brooks recognised in Parker a man of massive energy and sense of service. During 1922 he published a series of lengthy

¹¹⁷ E R, 19, 10, Oct. 1923, p.p. 166, 7

articles in the *Record*.¹¹⁸ He tested the intelligence of many of the children in the Hobart and Launceston schools, which provided information on defectives for the establishment of the first special class in Tasmania at Elizabeth Street Practising School in 1922. During 1923 a second special class was established at the Charles Street State School in Launceston. Both the classes at Charles Street and Elizabeth Street catered for children from those and neighbouring schools. At the beginning of 1924 the Girls' Welfare School was established at New Town in a building formerly used as the Boys' Training School.¹¹⁹ By 1928 a second special school was established at Invermay, Launceston and a Boys' School was established in Hobart. In 1929 the Girls' Welfare School was transferred to premises in Murray Street, Hobart, adjoining the Elizabeth Street Practising School, which was more accessible to the college students. During the same year an exhibition was held at the old Model School, Battery Point, of the work done in special schools and classes. It attracted considerable public attention and served to popularise the cause of special education.¹²⁰

By 1929 there were 147 children enrolled in special schools and classes in Launceston and Hobart. They were drawn from a total school population of 16,000 children; seven teachers were employed along with two junior assistants.¹²¹ Parker emphasised that these classes and schools were not established solely for mentally defective children, but for subnormals, generally. Parker explained that the term 'subnormal' was used to include defective and doubtful cases, and also some borderline. Occasionally a child who was merely dull was enrolled in a special class for special reasons, but this was not a usual practice. Parker explained that it had been found undesirable

118 H.T. Parker, 'Mental Defectives in Our Schools', E R, 18, 10, Oct. 1922, 18, 12, Dec. 1922, 19, 5, May 1923

119 JPPP, 1924, paper 19, p. 3

120 *Mercury*, 19 May 1929, 6, 2-3

121 Special Ed. file, 'Historical', Ed. Dept., 'Westella', Elizabeth Street, Hobart, a letter to Director of Education, Perth, W.A., 18 Oct. 1929 written by H.T. Parker

and frequently impracticable to have the Psychological Clinic certify school children under the age of twelve to thirteen years as defectives. Children did not have to be certified to be placed temporarily in a special class as long as the child was not kept there after turning fourteen years of age. Most children were selected by Parker partly as a result of routine school surveys, and partly from children who have been nominated for examination because of special circumstances: for example, hopeless ineducability or incorrigibility. The basis for selection for special schools, Parker explained was according to achievement in educational tests in reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling, interpreted according to actual standards of Hobart children. Parker had tried to make these tests as objective and as standardised as possible. In using them, special attention was given to qualitative differences, and the children's school history and record were also closely considered. Then there was individual intelligence test. Parker used the Stanford scale. Added to this were the teachers' judgements. The final decision was always made by Parker.¹²²

Only children who had been certified under the Mental Deficiency Act as feeble-minded could be kept at school until sixteen years of age. Parker had soon become very critical of this clause because he maintained that it was cumbersome in that certification was frequently impossible at an early age. Thus, action under this provision was not often taken unless there were other circumstances which rendered it advisable to compel attendance during the ages from fourteen to sixteen years.

By 1930 Parker was advocating that the Mental Deficiency Act be amended, to increase state powers.¹²³ He now advocated that the whole process of

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

certification be the responsibility of the Education Department. The final step towards complete technocracy was near.

The 1930 biennial conference of directors of education gave Parker the opportunity to take stock of the overall problem of the mentally deficient in the community. Brooks asked him to prepare a position paper to be given at the conference. He began with the premise that 'the position of the defective in the community is that of a dependent'.¹²⁴ For Parker, they could never become independent or self-supporting. Thus, any improvement in their position had to be confined to the amelioration of their inescapable position of a dependent. For Parker, this ultimately meant stronger state legislation, particularly *vis-a-vis* supervision after the age of sixteen years. After all, Parker insisted:

The economic value of each defective can ... be greatly increased by vocational training, and at the same time his character can be strengthened with a developed sense of personal efficiency.¹²⁵

This led Parker to consider the 'ultimate possibility of the elimination of a section of defectives'. He stated that '... it is everywhere admitted that hereditary is the principal cause of deficiency'.¹²⁶ While environment had some importance, the control of the genetic stock was of paramount importance. With stronger state control, the hereditary factor could be easily reduced

... by preventing reproduction where it is reasonably to be expected that defectives will be born. If known hereditary defectives could be prevented from reproducing children, it could be expected that in one generation the number of defectives of all types could be reduced by about one-half. The continuance of such measures would bring about a further steady but slow reduction in the figures. The greatest rate of improvement would be immediate.¹²⁷

124 H.T. Parker, *The Problem of the Mental Defective: Improving his Position in the Community*, unpublished paper prepared for the 1930 biennial conference of directors of education, AOT, Ed. 73

125 *Ibid.*, p. 2

126 *Ibid.*, p. 4

127 *Ibid.*, p. 5

Parker asserted that the birth of deficient who were in schools in 1930, could have been prevented back in 1922 when special classes were first begun had the knowledge that the Education Department possessed then been put into practice by segregation or sterilization.

Three possibilities were considered by Parker in solving the 'ultimate problem of the mentally defective in the community'. The first, he argued would have few advocates: namely, prohibition of marriage. Parker pointed to the Swedish experience which showed that where such necessary legislation was in force, it proved to be ineffective after several years, and was superseded by legislation empowering sterilization. Segregation, for Parker, was practicable only to a limited extent. The numbers were too great to be handled in this way. He estimated that there were about 100 mentally defective children enrolled each year in Tasmanian state schools. Added to this each year there were another twenty children in non-state schools. Parker further pointed out that as institutional care would have to be practically life-long in the case of males, and about thirty years in the case of females, it could not be considered practical to deal with the problem of reproduction in this way. Sterilization, Parker insisted

... was advocated by most authorities. It is applicable only in cases where the defect is demonstrably hereditary, as shown by recurrence in families. The method is by surgical operation of vasectomy and salpingectomy for male and female respectively.¹²⁸

Parker further argued that these operations had no effect upon health or physique, nor did they interfere with the individual's sexual function beyond rendering them infertile.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6

Parker then stated that ultimately the desirable legislation should wait upon public opinion. Favourable public opinion would naturally follow when all the facts of mental deficiency and sterilization were known. He concluded:

Probably the most effective plan of control of the production of defectives is one that involves both segregation and sterilization. Under such a plan defectives could be segregated, but where thought advisable, could be offered release on parole provided they submitted to sterilization. Experience in California shows such a provision to be quite practicable and also to have beneficial results both individual and social.¹²⁹

Here, then, is probably the high-water mark of the new psychology in the Tasmanian Education Department. Social efficiency would be enhanced by marrying the ideals of the new applied science with the eugenicists' creed. National resources could be maximised by having the mentally defective rendered sterile. The professional bureaucrat, armed with the tools of the new psychology, could measure the mental capacity of society's members, and judge who would be best fitted to reproduce. Perhaps, at no other stage in Tasmanian history were the liberal ideals of the potential equality of man pushed so far aside, and the totalitarian ideals of efficiency, homogeneity and order given such full play.

Still, we know that these ideals did not materialise into legislation, despite the considerable support which Parker mentioned. Various groups urged sterilization, particularly of deficient girls, 'most undesirable from the standpoint of motherhood'.¹³⁰ Despite some suggestion for legalising the operation under strict control, the Mental Deficiency Board under Miller did not lend any more than luke-warm support. Reviewing the history of special education in Tasmania from the perspective of 1955, Parker lamented that

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ AOT, file CSD 22/357/59, 1930 for a letter from Mrs E.A. Waterworth to Miller urging sterilization of deficient girls; also files for 1931 and 1932

following the intense interest and development during the 'twenties , public interest slowly declined during the 'thirties .¹³¹ Yet, the changes which did occur were manifestly qualitative rather than quantitative. The depression of the early 'thirties tragically scarred the fabric of Tasmanian society, as in other Australian states. The pathetic bread lines and the intolerable misery could not but cause educators to think again about the role of education in society, albeit for many this may have been a deep attitudinal change, not readily verbalised. The deeply held conviction of the position of applied science as the necessary keystone of progressive education could not readily be abandoned. Still, even if many of the Tasmanian progressive educators were not readily prepared to admit it early in the 'thirties the nature and use of the new psychology did not escape the effects of the depression. Now there was an irrevocable softening of attitude and change in the nature of the determining ideology within the Tasmanian Education Department.

The progressive ideal of special education for intellectually gifted children in Hobart had its origins in the call for social reconstruction following the First World War. During 1922 in his first annual report of the Mental Deficiency Board, Miller, who had recently returned from a tour of North American clinics and schools stressed that an important function of the clinic was

... the examination of superior children with a view to training them, in accordance with the principles of mental hygiene.¹³²

During the 'twenties the idea of special education for gifted children never completely faded from the minds of the Tasmanian educators. Under the banner of efficiency, science and homogeneity, Brooks was continually

¹³¹ H.T. Parker, 'Education of Mentally Retarded Children in Tasmania', *The Slow Learning Child*, 1, 3, March 1955

¹³² E R, 19, 10, Oct. 1923, *op. cit.*, p. 166

persuaded towards the idea of a special school for the intellectually elite by his fellow directors of education at their biennial conferences. Certainly, by 1924 the new psychology was profoundly determining the way in which schools, particularly the larger schools in the cities, were being organised. The 1924 biennial conference of directors of education had stated that

... it would be sound educational policy to gather together children of mental ability much above the average in special classes where their talent might have a better chance of full development. The supernormal child often finds the class work so simple that there is not sufficient call upon him for mental effort, powers tend to become atrophied and habits of laziness result.¹³³

By far the most interesting attempt which the Tasmanian educators made in adding the dimension of science to their quest for efficiency in the Tasmanian Education Department was that associated with the Hobart Activity School.

When Parker returned in 1933 from an eight months study tour, funded by a Carnegie grant, of American progressive schools, he wrote a report for the ACER on what he saw.¹³⁴ The report is a qualified argument for an activity based curriculum. This was certainly a very important aspect of the Hobart Activity School. But the report does not mention a special school to educate the intellectual elite. This was the other, and probably the first purpose for the school. On his return to Hobart, Parker made a submission to the executive of the ACER for a grant to establish an activity school for the intellectually gifted child in order that a study may be made of the benefits of such a school. The ACER responded with a grant of £25.¹³⁵

133 AOT, ed. 73, 3, a collection of papers on the proceedings of the 1924 biennial conference of directors of education

134 H.T. Parker, *The Background of American Education As An Australian Sees It*, Melbourne, 1935

135 ACER Archives, Records of Grants

Thus, in the development of Tasmanian progressive education a decided step was taken towards the ideal of special education for the intellectually elite. The basic drive behind Parker's and his colleague's decisions was to inject efficiency and science into Tasmanian education and Tasmanian society generally. Parker used the educational arguments for the special education of the intellectually gifted child which had been advanced during the 'twenties . But he further stressed that the

... qualities of self-reliance and initiative ... should especially characterise bright children, and ... are in their case of particular social value.¹³⁶

During 1933 there were approximately 8 000 children in the fourteen primary schools in Hobart and its suburbs. Each head teacher was asked by Parker to nominate a prescribed number of children from each age-group in his school.¹³⁷ He was required to nominate the most accelerated intellectually in each age group; Parker added an equal number of children who, in his opinion, were suitable for selection. The final choice from these children was made on the basis of a brief group intelligence test, checked by reference to the school records, and confirmed after conference with the head teacher concerned.¹³⁸ Parker remarked that the selection seemed to be highly satisfactory. That there were twenty four boys and only ten girls simply prompted Parker to remark that this was 'curious'. It did not cause him to question the nature of the group intelligence test in that it could have been culturally biased towards boys; nor did Parker question that the subjective judgements made by the head teachers could have been biased towards the importance of a boy's education over a girl's.

136 AOT, ed. 73, 3, a collection of papers on the proceedings of the 1934 biennial conference of directors of education

137 AOT, Ed 73 (3), a collection of papers, *op. cit.*

138 F. Watts, *The Education of Gifted Children - A Report to the ACER*, 1936, Hobart, 1936, appendix 4

During 1933 Parker decided to enrol in the school children between the ages of seven and ten years, inclusive.¹³⁹ He argued that such a plan permitted a selection of a greater number of intellectually gifted children than would have been the case if only one age-group were selected. The grouping of children was ungraded and was an essential part of the experiment. With the children ranging from grade 3 to grade 6 it was possible to establish the school as a school, and not merely as a class. It provided the opportunity for co-operation between children of different achievement levels. Further, it broke down the usual class group with its tendencies towards uniformity and regimentation. There was, however, no danger of any child being 'a drag on progress' because all were relatively homogeneous intellectually.¹⁴⁰

The school was established in the grounds of the Elizabeth Street Practising School at the beginning of 1934 and was classified as The Activity School in the records of the department. The head teacher was directly responsible to Parker, and not to the regional inspector. Parker approached a young and talented teacher, Frank Watts, to run the school.¹⁴¹

At the beginning of 1937 Brooks communicated to Cunningham:

It has been regretfully decided to close the Activity School at the end of the present year. This action is not to be interpreted as in any way critical of the ideals of the school, which the Department recognises as being in conformity with the best modern educational practices and principles. The reason for closing the school is that its continuance would prove an undue strain on the professional resources of the Department, a strain which, at the present time, is particularly serious because of the

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, appendix 1

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, appendix 2, for the occupations of parents of children enrolled in the Hobart Activity School, 1934. The figures substantiates Karier's point that it was the middle class which most benefited from the Carnegie grants.

¹⁴¹ Watts retired as Director of Educational Programs, Australian Broadcasting Commission

exceptional shortage of teachers even to fill ordinary positions in the service.¹⁴²

No doubt the availability of suitable staff in order to continue the school was a problem. Certainly, this was the official reason why the school was closed. Perhaps, Petersen is correct in suggesting that Parker had seen what he expected to see: that gifted children could positively respond to an activity-based curriculum, and that the whole thing was simply a kind of experiment in ability grouping, but where the results were known before the experiment was started.¹⁴³

Given the added advantage of a two year perspective, Brooks gave another, if not a confidential account, to his fellow directors of education. These reasons suggest the underlying reasons why the school was closed, and perhaps the long-term significance of the experiment. In 1939 Brooks reported that the experiment was abandoned because:

1. It was found that selection of this class immediately set up in the child a superiority complex which militated against the progress of the child not only in school work but in his relations to others.
2. The task of securing a suitable teacher proved extremely difficult. In one case the teacher developed the same superiority complex and in subsequent cases the teachers found that the strain of the conduct of such a class was far heavier than in ordinary class teaching.
3. Though the pupils owing to the very wide type of curriculum covered gained a particularly good general knowledge, they deteriorated rapidly in the formal subjects such as writing, spelling and arithmetic and rather came to look upon these as matters of drudgery.¹⁴⁴

Lewis, who was by 1938 a senior officer in the Education Department, and who had an office close to Brooks declares that the stiffest opposition to the

142 K.S. Cunningham *et al*, *Review of Education in Australia*, 1938 Melbourne, 1939, p. 179

143 R.C. Petersen, *Experimental Schools and Educational Experiments in Australia*, 1906-1948, *op. cit.*, p. 442

144 AOT, ed 73, 3, a collection of papers on the proceedings of the 1938 biennial conference of directors of education

Hobart Activity School came from Inspectors who were denied control over the school and who denigrated its work whenever they had an opportunity. Lewis believes that the reason expressed by Brooks to his fellow directors of education was much closer to the truth.¹⁴⁵

We have seen the effect that the depression had on other areas of progressive state education in Tasmania. Special state education for intellectually gifted children similarly underwent changes following the depression. The theme of the 1937 Australian New Education Fellowship conference was 'education for complete living'. Many of the speakers reflected ideals opposed to special education for the intellectually elite. After all, by 1937 these beliefs were increasingly associated with the excesses of certain European fascist groups. Many of the visiting speakers had been living close to these excesses. The initial appeal of elevating a superior group was by 1937 losing some of its gloss for the Tasmanian educators. Brooks's statement to his fellow directors of education in 1938 explains this change in mood. Brooks now saw the integration of the intellectually elite into the ordinary classroom as being the most beneficial, educationally and socially. Indeed, this was a decided step towards the liberal ideal. He explained that it was the responsibility of the ordinary teacher to provide these children with a range and depth of learning activities which could cater fully for their special talents. The Hobart Activity School, then, deserves its place in a history of progressive education in Tasmania. What appeared to be at the outset a decided step towards the potentially fascist ideal of special education for the intellectually elite, later manifested a definite step towards the liberal ideal of integration and heterogeneity.

145 Gollan Lewis, recorded interview, *op. cit.*

Progressivism continued to influence the development of Tasmanian state primary education through special schools for intellectually handicapped children during the inter-war years. Special state provisions for intellectually gifted children provided an additional means for the influence of progressivism.

We have seen that social control was a factor associated with the provision of special state schools for intellectually handicapped children during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Ford, Morgan and Whelan in their study of special schools as agents for state control in Britain during the period 1920-1944 conclude that means for state control were further developed during the period.¹⁴⁶ We have seen that the period in Tasmania witnessed similar developments. Of course, it can be similarly argued that the special state provisions made in Tasmania for intellectually gifted children was another form of state control. The Hobart Activity School insured that a select group of children, chosen because of their intelligence received a special education. Bowles and Gintis have established that the intelligence tests used between the inter-war years were structured and normed to reinforce urban middle class Anglo-Saxon values.¹⁴⁷ When one studies the home backgrounds of the children who were chosen to attend the Hobart Activity School we find that Karier's findings similarly would apply to the Tasmanian tests.¹⁴⁸ All children come from middle class homes. Moreover, Henderson has argued that the concept of intelligence favours middle class values.¹⁴⁹

146 Julianne Ford, Denis Morgan and Maurice Whelan, *Special Education and State Control*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1982, Chap. 3

147 Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-198

148 F. Watts, *The Education of Gifted Children - A Report to the ACER*, *op. cit.*, appendix 4

149 Paul Henderson, *Class Structure and the Concept of Intelligence* in R. Dale, G. Esland and Madeleine MacDonald (eds), *Schooling and Capitalism*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1976

However the developments in special education and the work done by Watts at the Hobart Activity School together show a developing professionalism by Tasmanian state primary school teachers. Again we have evidence of a qualitative growth in teachers' professionalism, a growth which indicated Tasmanian state primary schools were developing out of Beeby's Stage of Formalism.

CONCLUSION

Progressivism was a powerful influence on the development of Tasmanian state primary education during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Progressivism brought progressive education to Tasmania at a time in the history of the island state when economic buoyancy and optimism prevailed. Developments in agriculture, mining and hydro-electrical-based industries were altering Tasmanian society and economy. Progressives brought reform and development to Tasmania in a variety of areas: public health and hygiene, agriculture and dairying, hydro-electricity generation, mining and engineering.

Tasmanian governments were moderate. The developing Labor movement also established a tradition of moderation. Governments always had to be mindful of an electoral system which encouraged the election of independent members which could upset the balance of political power. Moreover governments also had to appease a politically independent Legislative Council which nurtured parochial interests. Directors of Education also needed to be mindful of these facts.

Neale's 1904 report highlights the state of development of Tasmanian state schools. There were very few trained teachers throughout the state, and only several schools, located in Hobart and Launceston, which were at all efficient and progressive. The vast majority of Tasmanian state schools were in Beeby's Dame School Stage of educational development.

Tasmanian society, economy, policies and government, and the stage of development of its schools determined the nature of the influence of progressivism on state primary education. Its influence can be traced through educational administration, the curriculum, early childhood education, school health and hygiene, school architecture, the rural ideal, and the new psychology.

The rejection of Neale's administration was a signal for McCoy to alter the system of administration and seek out firm political support. McCoy was no less concerned with efficiency than Neale. Indeed, Neale was messianic in his appeal to Tasmanian teachers for efficiency in school administration: it was a level of efficiency which required a missionary zeal. McCoy developed the administration of the Education Department along scientific lines: efficiency was developed methodically and with a close attention to teachers' perceived needs. Now there was no appeal to missionary zeal, rather a financial reward for the attainment of a determined level of efficiency. At the time of McCoy's departure from Tasmania most Tasmanian primary schools had reached Beeby's Stage of Formalism in educational development. The ideal of scientific administration was further developed during the inter-war years, now with the powerful assistance of the new psychology. Tasmanian state schools were an important instrument of social control during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The process was consolidated during the inter-war years.

McCoy's curriculum complimented his principles and practices of scientific administration. McCoy's curriculum was of the scientific progressive kind. Whereas, Neale's curriculum embodied both the ideal of the child-centred progressive curriculum and the scientific progressive curriculum, McCoy's curriculum exclusively embodied the ideals of the latter kind of progressive

education, and contained few of the tension which existed in Neale's curriculum.

The moderate nature of Tasmanian politics ensured that social reformist progressive education would not develop in Tasmania : Tasmanian governments sought to consolidate the social *status quo*, not criticise and reform it. Scientific progressive education, with its neo-Herbartian methodology, enabled McCoy to methodically develop Tasmanian teachers to Beeby's Stage of Formalism, but did little to professionally prepare them to progress beyond this stage. Tasmanian primary school teachers were trained to follow, not to initiate and lead.

Progressivism influenced the development of the curriculum in Tasmanian state primary schools through the values which the teachers imparted: central to these values were the ideals of social efficiency generally and eugenics specifically. It was these ideals coupled with the content and method of scientific progressive education which reinforced Tasmanian state schools as agents for social control. During the 'twenties this trend continued. The depression, however, caused many Tasmanians to reassess the role of school in society.

Tasmanian early childhood education nurtured the ideals of child-centred progressive education. Closely associated with early childhood education during the first two decades of the century were the ideals of social hygiene. Under Rowntree child-centred progressive education was consolidated in the Tasmanian state primary schools. Generally, Tasmanian early childhood teachers were no further professionally advanced than were other teachers : their inability to develop the principles and practices of the Montessori education is testimony to this point. Through Rowntree's initiatives, however, child-

centred progressive education, following the depression began to influence the development of primary schools.

The school health and hygiene movement provided another means of influence for progressivism on Tasmanian state primary schools. National efficiency and social hygiene were influential ideals associated with the school health and hygiene movement. The movement was also important because it was a precursor to the role the new psychology played in schools. The ideal of social hygiene was sustained through the development of special schools. The ideal brought with it a strong tendency towards social control. These developments were sustained during the inter-war years.

Progressivism influenced the development of Tasmanian state primary schools through school architecture. School architecture responded to the methods of progressive education, but also to the demands of social hygiene and the rural ideal. Developments in school architecture, of course, were also important because they were a physical reminder of the influence of progressivism on schools.

The rural ideal was a powerful influence on Tasmanian state primary schools from the time of Neale's directorship when the Education Department supported the progressive initiatives of the Council of Agriculture. The establishment of the Tasmanian area schools was a continuation of these developments. Here in the area schools, child-centred progressive education was developed as Neale had advocated thirty years before.

By far the most powerful influence on Tasmanian state primary education was the new psychology, interpreted and implemented by H. T. Parker. Born in the demand for social reconstruction following the First World War, its

development and application consolidated developments in progressive education which had begun with McCoy's appointment in 1910. Its application to the Tasmanian state primary schools ensured the dominance of scientific progressive education in the schools.

Progressivism irrevocably influenced the development of Tasmanian state primary education.

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- b. Archives of the University of Tasmania contains considerable material relevant to the development of the new psychology in Tasmania, and the establishment of special classes in state schools for intellectually handicapped children.

9. Other Historical Material Located in Government Files

- a. The files of the Special Education Branch, Education Department, had in 1984 considerable material of historical value. One file, labelled 'historical' contained much material associated with H.T. Parker.
- b. The files of the Research Branch, Education Department, had in 1984 considerable material of historical value. In Mr R. Cooper's file there

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F. NEWSPAPERS

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The Daily Post, 1908-1919, published daily in Hobart, represented a socialist and state-wide, but more southern viewpoint.

The Clipper, 1900-1909, published weekly in Hobart, represented a socialist state-wide viewpoint.

The Critic, 1907-1916, published weekly in Hobart, the organ of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, represent a more 'middle of the road' state-wide point view.

The Monitor, 1900-1920, published weekly in Hobart, represented the official Roman Catholic state-wide point of view.

The Tasmanian Mail, 1900-1920, a pictorial weekly, published in Hobart in association with the Mercury, distributed state-wide.

The Examiner, 1901-1920, *The North Western Advocate*, 1900-1911 and *The Advocate* 1917-1920, and *The Zeehan and Dundas Herald* 1900-1920, represented, respectively the north, north west and western regions of Tasmania.

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I. INTERVIEWS

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J. MANUSCRIPTS HELD BY SOCIETIES AND INDIVIDUALS

'Minute Book, 1931-1950', Tasmanian Institute of Educational Research,
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APPENDIX 1

Membership: 1940

TASMANIAN INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Mr. L.E. Amos, Technical College, LAUNCESTON
Mr. H.V. Biggins, State High School, Letitia Street, HOBART.
Mr. R.G. Brett, State High School, Letitia Street, HOBART.
Mr. W.W.V. Briggs, State High School, DEVONPORT.
G.V. Brooks Esq., Director of Education, Education Department,
HOBART.
Mrs. M.F. Dwyer, State High School, HOBART.
Mr. S.E. Deegan, Superintendent of Mails, G.P.O., HOBART.
Miss J. Eyre, Teachers' College, HOBART.
Mr. M.H. Eyre, Boys' Welfare School, Elizabeth Street, HOBART.
Mr. C.E. Fletcher, Education Department, HOBART.
Mr. W. Gibson, Superintendent of Technical Education,
Education Department, HOBART.
Mr. W.L. Grace, 14 Auvergne Ave., NEW TOWN.
Mr. T.A. Lay, State School, EAST LAUNCESTON.
Mr. G. Lewis, Charles Street Practising School, LAUNCESTON.
Mr. G. Limb, Campbell Street Practising School, HOBART.
Pilot Officer V.R. Long, Somers, VICTORIA.
Mr. C.W. Macfarlane, State High School, BURNIE.
Mr. C.C. McShane, Hampden Road, HOBART.
Mr. J.B. Mather, Practising School, BURNIE.
Mr. A.L. Meston, "Murnoch", Windsor Street, GLENORCHY.
Mr. P.H. Mitchell, 53 Swanston Street, NEW TOWN.
Mr. H.E. Miller, Area School, HUONVILLE.
Mr. R.O.M. Miller, 458 Elizabeth Street, HOBART.
Miss M.C. Morgan, State School, EAST LAUNCESTON.
Mr. Carl Morris, State High School, LAUNCESTON.
Mr. H.T. Parker, Hampden Road, HOBART.
Mr. C. Reeves, State High School, LAUNCESTON.
Mr. B. Ross, State High School, HOBART.
Miss A. Rowntree, Secheron Estate, BATTERY POINT.
Miss J. Somerville, Teachers College, HOBART.
Fl. Lieut. D.H. TRIBOLET, R.A.A.F. Headquarters, MIDDLE EAST.
Dr. L.A. Triebel, The University of Tasmania, HOBART.
Mr. E.E. Unwin, The Friends' School, HOBART.
Mr. A.A. Vollprecht, Goulburn Street School, HOBART.
Mr. V. von Bertouch, 26 Bourke Street, LAUNCESTON.
Mr. R.H. Warner, BURNIE.
Mr. F. Watts, C/- Australian Broadcasting Commission, HOBART.
Miss G. Whyte, Teachers' College, HOBART.
Mr. J.E. Wright, Correspondence School, HOBART.

From TIER Minute Book, 1940-1962, held in the files of the
Research Branch, Tasmanian Education Department, September 1982.

APPENDIX 2

Conference of Directors of Education Brisbane, 1936

Notes from Tasmania

(vii) Two Rural Area Schools were established in Tasmania at the beginning of this year (a) at Sheffield and (b) at Hagley.

a. *Sheffield*: The method adopted here follows closely on the lines of work being carried out in Suffolk.

Sheffield central school had an enrolment of approximately 210. It is surrounded by a number of small schools averaging from 20 to 50 or 60. It was arranged that children of 12 plus attending these schools should come into Sheffield for special work.

Transport: The Department agreed to pay 25/- per annum to children who rode in on their bicycles or, if they possessed no such means of transport, to provide a bicycle free of cost on loan to pupils. Fifty (5) such bicycles were purchased and made available at Sheffield. In a general way, it was found that the children took readily to such means of transport and with that the attendance at the school right through the winter has been particularly good. There have been no marked objection to travelling in this way from the pupils in any of the schools.

Curriculum: For girls' work a building is set apart and the Domestic Arts teacher is responsible for tuition in Needlework, laundry work, Housewifery, Cookery and Art work generally. These subjects are taken in addition to the ordinary subjects.

For boys, teaching is provided in Harness-making (a part-time officer), blacksmithing, tinsmithing, carpentry work and agriculture.

One teacher on the staff is responsible for handwork with the exception of the saddlery and agriculture.

The provision of this type of work for boys and girls has aroused on their part the greatest interest and the results achieved have given the greatest satisfaction to parents.

Effect on Children From Outlying Areas: In addition to the special subjects provided here, the country children enjoy the advantage to be obtained in a centre of this type in such subjects as Music, Physical Culture, Speech Training etc. It is found that many of these children excel in one or other of the subjects in the school course. The effect of this on the town children as well as on the country children is very marked. It has led to more effort on the part of both groups and already the Advisory Committee (of which details will be given later) is very enthusiastic about the possibilities of the school. With a view to arranging for an expression of opinion from all interested and with a view to obtaining the wholehearted co-operation of all interested an Advisory Committee practically settles the policy of the school.

This Committee consists of two representatives from the Central School and one each from the outlying schools, with the Head Master of the School as Secretary *ex officio*.

The experiment has been conducted in rooms of somewhat tentative nature but in view of the success of the experiment, the Department is calling for tenders for a considerably enlarged school consisting of 4 main teaching rooms, a library, teachers' room, Head Master's office, etc.

Indeed, Cabinet has decided to establish three other schools of this type in the coming year.

b. *Hagley District School*: This differs somewhat from the Area School at Sheffield, the main features of difference being as under:

Four small schools within driving distance of Hagley were closed in December last and a commodious conveyance now calls at the four centres and brings into Hagley all the children from these districts.

Those subjects taught here are similar to those provided at Sheffield.

In both cases minor variations are made to suit local conditions. An important feature in both schools is the provision of soup or food at mid-day for the children who travel. This is provided at a very small cost and the convenience is much appreciated by country children.

Details as to the actual experiments carried out in Agriculture and Sheep-raising will be given to anyone interested.

Sheffield Area School

1. *Organisation*: Following on the world tour of the Director of Education, Sheffield was chosen as a suitable school to carry out an experiment in rural training because of (a) the district is a thriving agricultural area, (b) the close proximity of seven small schools (all within a radius of 6 miles), (c) the advanced educational outlook of the community, (d) the enthusiasm of an excellent Parents' Association, and (e) valuable experimental work in agriculture has been carried out at the school previously.

2. *Accommodation*: 4 acres of eminently suitable soil belonging to the school served as a basis for agricultural training. For the purpose of instruction in craft subjects (see below) a two roomed school was transferred to Sheffield where one room was equipped for domestic science, etc., and the other for allied manual crafts for the boys. Attached is a small dining hall. The Department has been put to considerable expense in the purchase of all necessary equipment.

3. *Additions to Staff*: (a) Domestic Science teacher, (b) Trade Teacher, (c) One local tradesman 3 half days weekly, and (d) extra assistance in the class rooms due to additional pupils from district schools.

4. *Transport*: All pupils from the district or feeding schools have been provided with a cycle (mud guards painted white and each is numbered and stamped). Three pupils find their own means of transport and are paid 25/- a year expenses. Major repairs are met by the Department. A rain-proof cape for each child is also provided.

5. *Attendance*: 250 are attending the school. Of these 35 are district pupils and 48 are from the central school. 83 are therefore receiving special training. At first the idea of cycling was rather harshly criticised but few comments are now heard. The weather has to be particularly boisterous to cause absence. *The children suffer no ill-effects* from their daily journey and practically all pupils are *developing physically* because of the exercise. Punctuality is good, most of the cyclists being among the early arrivals.

6. *The Courses*: All scholars from the age of 12 years and over are required to take the rural subjects. This age qualification is extremely valuable as dull children as a result can benefit. In fact that type is catered for particularly. If scholastic attainments are required these pupils would be deprived of learning subjects which they, more than the bright children, especially need. Children from Grade III upwards attend.

The ordinary classroom subjects are maintained on the same level of efficiency.

7. *Subjects and Time Allocated*:

Boys: Technical Drawing and Woodwork: 3 hours weekly. Articles made are drawn to scale prior to the construction of same. Care is taken to see that all pupils complete certain stock models, e.g., grain scoops, axe-handles, bucket handles, mallets, while with larger models, e.g., gates, step-ladders, pig troughs, stools, grindstone stands, and fencing, a group effort is naturally required. In this and other sections *new material is not always* used. Children are encouraged to make articles from box timber and waste timber similar to what could be contained on the farm.

Tin Smithing: 3 hours monthly. The tinning of a soldering iron and repair work on buckets, saucepans, and spouting plays an important part. Stock models based on farm life are made to include 'elbows' in spouting, repairs to water taps, soap containers and tin dishes, etc.

Leather Work: 2 hours fortnightly.

This subject has a definite appeal. The Course includes making of wax-ends, stitching, travelling straps, case handles, girths, surcingles, and plough back bands, while repair work on harnesses brought from home plays an important part in this subject. Boys now scorn the farmer's friend (wire) in this connection and frequently one observes the lads mending their school bags, etc. in their own time.

Blacksmithing: 2 hours fortnightly. A commencement has just been made with this subject but the course will include welding, repairs to farm equipment and shoeing.

Agriculture, Vegetable Culture, Horticulture, and Pastoral Work correlated with Natural Study

It is this subject around which the four previous ones are moulded. They are auxiliary to Agriculture which is the hub of the scheme. In this, the boys receive (1) *Instruction in identification of grasses and clovers*, experiments in types of clovers, and recording and graphing of the growth rapidity, etc. (2) *Vegetable Culture* - a considerable section is devoted to this phase. Vegetables are grown for use in Domestic Science room while raspberries, gooseberries, etc. are being cultivated for jams and preserves. The aim is to make the scheme practically self-supporting as should be the farm which the boys will own in the future. (3) *Pasture Work* - 10 plots 1/8 of an acre have been well fenced and sown with different mixture of grass and clovers, later they have been treated with fertilizing manures. Five Southdown ewes are grazed. The value of the different plots are compared and records are kept of the number of feeding days, etc. A 5 year rotational system is adopted in the vegetable garden.

The boys manage their own Agricultural Fund. The sheep have been purchased by them and the lambs, excess vegetables and potato crops are sold. The proceeds are kept by them for purchases of sorting materials, etc. This gives them valuable Civic training and book-keeping knowledge. Last year they collected £5 for onions, £6 for potatoes and £3 from sheep (some lambs died). Next year home projects are being attempted while poultry and bee-keeping at the school will make the scheme more self-supporting.

Bicycle Instruction: Boys learn to attend to minor repairs as part of their manual training.

The Domestic Science Course

This course follows on similar lines to the Domestic Training Schools in the cities. Subjects taught include:

- i Domestic Science and Housewifery 3 hours weekly
- ii Laundry - 1 day a month
- iii Sewing - 2 hours weekly
- iv Craftwork - Done during breaks in work or as hobby work.

This course appeals greatly. The girls are keenly interested and there is a definite practical value leading to a carry over to the homes. Cleanliness, economy, book-keeping, buying of goods are stressed. preserving, jam-making, recipes for stain removal and the like make the course very general and very attractive.

7. *The School Canteen:* This is an integral part of the school's activity. The girls under their Mistresses' supervision prepare and serve each day hot cocoa, soup or pies to the district pupils who lunch in the school dining room under a Prefect. The cost is nominal and it ensures that the pupils do not spend all day without some warm nourishment.

8. *The Advisory Council:* This consists of 1 member from each of the district schools Parents' Associations and 3 from Sheffield. It meets monthly and greatly assists the Head Teacher by (a) Information of what is really required to be learnt by the young farmer, and (b) links up the district schools and the Area School and so tends to unification of education in the Municipality.

9. *The Parents' Association:* This is the backbone of the school's activities and it organises functions and raises funds for the school, being assisted by the Advisory Council the members of which are invited to join and assist at all functions. The Advisory Council thinks of the district pupils in particular and the school in general, while the Parents' Association thinks of the school in particular and the district centres in general - both uniting for the common good.

The scheme needs two years to complete. Following this year it is hoped that the Merit Certificate will be abolished and an 8th Grade established when the following subjects will be taught

(suggested):

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| (a) First Aid | (d) Practical Arithmetic e.g. |
| (b) Cement Work | Income Tax Forms |
| (c) Elementary Mechanics | (e) Business Principles and Book-keeping |

10. *General Features:* While it is too early to make definite judgement on the effects of the scheme the value of it can be born out by the following observations:

(a) *The Psychological Effect*: With the addition of the district pupils, a great levelling effect has taken place. The 12 plus children show a readiness to develop and by their attendance at the central school their mental outlook changes. The exchange of ideas and greater facilities for companionship has a beneficial effect and the rather morose, indifferent attitude of some pupils is being overcome by a more active and energetic spirit. A definite scheme of Physical Training is helping in this connection.

(b) *Pupils who are backward in the classroom* have frequently shown that they excel in the Trade or Domestic subjects. If so, every encouragement is given and more time is allowed for these subjects. Thus a poor scholar is able to establish himself in his own eyes and in those of his fellow pupils. He loses that inferiority complex and is able to say, 'Well I cannot work out Practice sums but I can make good dog's collars'. *His attitude to life is changed*.

(c) *The Carry-over to the Homes*: Abundant examples of how these subjects are applied at home can be given. One girl, aged 12 years was able to keep house while her mother was absent (holiday time) for a week and gave a different menu daily. On the last day her recipes were exhausted however. Parents tell of the ability of their girls to make cakes, spring clean, and to wash. The boys frequently return with articles made at home while comments are frequently heard of how 'Tom mended the hurricane lamp' or what 'an excellent job Bill made repairing the broken pole strap'. This is indeed a very strong argument in favour of the scheme - it links most intimately the home and the school - simply because the tasks are allied and because the father and mother can benefit from the child's ability to help in the activities of the home. (d) *The children show no ill-effects* as a result of their day's absence from the classroom. In fact, on their return they appear brighter and more keenly interested in their studies. (e) *Finally*, the pupils deeply enjoy the practical training. They look forward to this instruction and I feel that if a school can get a child interested and happy in his work, the labours of the teachers are well worth while.