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and control his primary course. One of the arguments advanced in favor of the examination test for free places is that otherwise there would be a certain number of children receiving the benefit of free secondary education who would make no return to the State for the money they cost. We do not think that this idea is in consonance with the higher ideals of education, and in any case, considering the extreme complexity of the child mind and the various lines along which it may develop, it is a bold thing to say that because a child may not reach a certain arbitrary standard in such a subject as, say, arithmetic, therefore, he is to be debarred from the advantages that secondary education may confer.

Medical Inspection.

A remarkable incident, showing the necessity for medical inspection, recently came to light in Tasmania. This was the case of a schoolgirl, aged 11 years, in the fourth class of a large Hobart school. Up to August, 1907, she was a bright, intelligent child, writing a fairly good and clear hand. In that month, however, she began to experience a good deal of homesickness, which worried her. About this time she was noticed to be tired and "fidgety" in class at times; her writing fell off in quality, and some jerkiness became evident in September, especially in the long strokes. From this time her copybook writing showed great deterioration, and in October she was earning a reputation for slovenliness. Towards the end of the month her writing became blotchy and the jerkiness increased. Throughout November she became worse, and at times her transcription was almost illegible. The teacher remonstrated with her severely, and in her next transcription task she improved in the beginning, but towards the end there was evidently complete loss of control, and her writing became very bad. At this stage the teacher decided to recommend her for examination by the school doctor, in order to ascertain whether or not this remarkable "carelessness" was the fault of the pupil. An examination showed that the girl was suffering from severe St. Vitus' dance; so she was promptly sent home. Her parents followed the advice given as to her treatment, and she is now stated to be improving rapidly.

Education in Sierra Leone.

Two years ago a school was established in Sierra Leone for the purpose of educating the sons of chiefs, not merely in the ordinary branches of a school curriculum, but mainly with a view to their future position as rulers of the chiefdoms in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone. Hence the school course includes, in addition to the three R's, carefully training in physics, hygiene, and physiology, agriculture, and chemistry. Nor are these extensions of the scope of training made mainly in order to increase the pupils' knowledge. The system is designed to develop the powers of observation and reasoning, in the belief that habits acquired at school will not be shaken off when manhood is attained. Thus, the school exists for the purpose of supplying the various chiefdoms with rulers whose minds will be stored with useful knowledge such as can be put into practice in the ordinary details of agricultural life, and who will be accustomed to argue from facts, and to avoid guessing or arriving at conclusions in a haphazard fashion. By teaching hygiene and physiology it is hoped that towns will be better built and kept in a more sanitary condition. Chemistry and agriculture being taught together, so as to make the former bear upon the latter, in the days to come the land of the protectorate should be made more productive, because of the more scientific methods of cultivation. As the pupils are to be rulers, they are taught civics—that all government must be based upon sound ethical principles. Thus, should the school realise its ideals, it promises to have a great and beneficial effect upon the protectorate, and, indirectly, upon the colony itself. The system of making "black Englishmen" is avoided as far as possible by encouraging the pupils to keep up their tribal customs. They live in a specially built town, which is presided over by their native teachers, all of whom are drawn from the protectorate, and both teachers and pupils wear only native dress. Loyalty to Africa, to their tribes, and to their color, is taught. They are urged to believe in their race, and not to depart from their tribal customs. Imitation of the Englishman is held up as a thing to be avoided—at least, so far as dress is concerned. It is hoped by all these methods to produce a set of rulers who will be true guides to their people, and who will make that part of the Empire a contented, prosperous, and well-governed community, a source of strength instead of weakness.

STUDYING THE SUN.

AN IMPORTANT SUGGESTION. AUSTRALIAN SOLAR OBSERVATORY.

Melbourne, April 17.

As a result of communications between the Prime Minister, the International Union for Solar Research, and Mr. Dufour, a South Australian scientist now working at Manchester University, favorable consideration is being given by the Minister of Home Affairs to a proposal to establish an Australian solar observatory. It has been recognised for some time by those engaged in investigating solar phenomena that a link is wanting, and that link would be supplied by systematic solar study in the Southern Hemisphere. At the last conference of the International Union, already referred to, held at the Maudon University, near Paris, in May last, a motion was unanimously carried, at the suggestion of Sir J. Norman Lockyer, welcoming the prospect of the establishment of a solar institution within the Commonwealth.

As illustrating the practical value of solar study, in one of his letters to Mr. Deakin Mr. Dufour points out that a considerable amount of importance has been attached to the coincidence of the fluctuations of the annual rainfall with the recent eleven-year period of the sun spots. Many scientists trace a relation between solar phenomena and the electrical conditions of the earth's atmosphere, especially in connection with magnetic storms.

The Minister of Home Affairs expects to receive a report on the proposed observatory from the Commonwealth Meteorologist within the next few days.

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THE INFLUENCE OF COMMERCE ON CIVILIZATION.

This evening Mr. J. Currie Elles, of Sydney will deliver the third of his lectures on commerce in the Victoria Hall. Admission is free, and tickets may be had on application to the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce or to the registrar of the University.

Mr. J. Currie-Elles, of Sydney, who will deliver the Joseph Fisher lecture on commerce in connection with the University of Adelaide this evening, arrived in Adelaide by the express on Wednesday morning. Mr. Currie-Elles is an interesting personality, of large experience, and he resided in China for a number of years.

COMMERCE AND CIVILISATION.

LECTURE BY MR. J. CURRIE ELLES.

A PESSIMISTIC VIEW.

At the Victoria Hall on Thursday evening Mr. J. Currie-Elles, of Sydney, a member of the University of Glasgow, delivered a "Joseph Fisher" lecture at the invitation of the Adelaide University upon "The influence of commerce on civilisation." There was a large attendance, and the chair was taken by Mr. J. R. Fowler, M.A. The Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Barlow) was present.

The lecturer began by laying down as the basis of his argument the varying influence, one over the other, between the conflicting good and bad in commerce and civilisation since history began. There had ever been a conflict between practice and theory; between commonsense and visionary ideas in all their mundane existence. Since ever the world began, from the earliest records now extant of ancient peoples and buried civilisation, the two words, commerce and civilisation, were stamped on the records of time. Commerce presupposed and marched hand in hand with civilisation, and commerce through all times had developed civilisation, while civilisation had often failed and retrograded to the detriment and set-back of commerce. During all the turbulent mundane history of the earth, through all the effacements of empires and the downfall of civilisation, commerce had ever emerged supreme from the ashes of her predecessors to initiate and establish a new era even more extensive and far-reaching; and civilisation, real or supposed, had always followed; brought into birth by the energy of commerce, again to die away through the effateness of its own luxury and ineptitude. He traced the history of commercial transactions from the earliest times to the present day among the Eastern and Western nations. The Napoleonic wars, when the British fleet under Admiral Nelson shattered the combined fleets of Spain and France at Trafalgar, and Wellington conquered at Waterloo, left the commerce of the world, won by war, at the feet of Great Britain. Coming to the position Australia holds in the commercial world, Mr. Elles said that Australia now held a very leading position in the science of the foreign Exchanges throughout the world. Coupled with the Cape colonies, she was also an immense producer of gold; and as the Cape had no mint at present, while Australia had three, and as India was an immense consumer of silver and Australia largely produced this metal, it would readily be understood by an expert what a powerful position Australia held, properly directed by capable men, and not by irresponsible politicians, in the immense trade of the 300,000,000 who constituted the population of the East, and who hoarded gold in return for their inexhaustible products. The science of the foreign Exchanges was one of the most important factors in commercial economy. The proper understanding of this science, or ignorance of it, meant the success or the failure of any commercial people. The science of the foreign Exchanges was as firmly fixed and governed by laws as were the rise and fall of the tides or the laws of storms. Anyhow, Australia was so far a portion of the British Empire that she could not afford to remain apart, if not from her very dependence in every way on the old land, at least from her being part of the machinery upon which the old world's commerce and finance revolved and had their raison d'etre. Australia had acquired her territory under the aegis of the Union Jack cheaply and without contest. The great motherland flag fluttering over this great continent ensured peace and prosperity to her inhabitants. No other country in the world enjoyed such freedom, without preliminary expense in blood and treasure, as did Australia. The mother country was lenient with her fair daughter in her woman-like perverse moods. She lent her money, she shielded her with her sheltering arm, and she allowed her such freedom and protection as no other community in history on record had ever enjoyed. Her far-seeing, broad-minded statesmanship had ever been