PRIMARY EDUCATION
BY
CORRESPONDENCE

By K. S. CUNNINGHAM

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PRIMARY EDUCATION
BY
CORRESPONDENCE
PREFACE.

The present work would not have been possible without the willing co-operation of a number of persons. To these it is desired to express sincere thanks. The Directors and other officials of the Education Departments of the various Australian States offered every facility for obtaining the necessary information.

Most of the details were supplied in the form of answers to a lengthy list of questions. The persons who forwarded these answers were Mr. J. Bensted, head teacher of the Queensland Correspondence School; Mr. W. Finnigan, head teacher of the New South Wales Correspondence School; Mr. W. D. Scott, acting head teacher of the Victorian Correspondence Branch; Miss H. E. Wellard, head teacher of the Tasmanian Correspondence School; Miss S. N. Twiss, head teacher of the South Australian Correspondence School; and Mr. J. A. Miles, senior inspector in the Western Australian Education Department. After her return from abroad, Miss A. Whitford, who is in charge of the work in Victoria, gave much valuable assistance.

Visits were paid by the writer to the centres from which the work is carried out in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The information thus obtained has added considerably to the usefulness of the report. The willingness to help in every way possible shown by the head teachers and assistants during these visits added greatly to the indebtedness already incurred.

Reports on the work as carried out in Western Australia and South Australia have recently been written by Mr. Miles, a Senior Inspector of Schools in the first-named State, and Mr. C. Lewis, secretary to the South Australian Director of Education. With great generosity, these two gentlemen allowed free use of any of the matter contained in their accounts of the work.

Mr. Frank Tate, formerly Director of Education in Victoria, was good enough to read through the first draft of the report, and to offer a number of helpful suggestions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.—Conditions Giving Rise to Correspondence Instruction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.—The Growth and Scope of the Correspondence Schools</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical, number of children receiving instruction, factors influencing the growth of the schools, the ultimate size of the correspondence schools, general scope of State-provided correspondence facilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.—Administrative Aspects of Correspondence Work</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing, conditions of entry, qualifications of correspondence teachers, types of children enrolled, charges on parent, the cost to the State.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.—The Curricula and Methods of the Correspondence Schools</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The subjects which are taught, assignments, machinery for records and for despatch of work, etc., classification and promotion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.—The Attainments and Progress of Correspondence Pupils</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who have never attended school, rate of progress of pupils, results in examinations, after-careers of pupils.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.—Some Special Aspects of Correspondence Work</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The personal side, conditions under which pupils are working, special developments in Western Australia and other States.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.—Educational Problems and Principles Underlying Correspondence Work</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The handicap of isolation, some compensations, correspondence work as individual instruction, the usefulness of assignments, the value of personal knowledge of pupils, the development of initiative, general summary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samples of Pupils’ Work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Leaflets used in Instructing Pupils.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III.</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samples of Directions to Supervisors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I.

CONDITIONS GIVING RISE TO CORRESPONDENCE INSTRUCTION.

Australia during the last ten or twelve years has been the scene of a unique educational development. Education, perhaps less inevitably than we are apt to think, is normally regarded as a rather prosaic business; but the growth of facilities in the various Australian States for teaching young children by correspondence is nothing less than an educational romance.

Certain forms of correspondence tuition are well known and widely used. The world over, universities and private agencies have developed correspondence courses for students who have already attained a good standard of general education. It seems that Australia can claim to be the first country to have shown in a systematic way, and on a large scale, that it is possible to provide by correspondence a complete elementary education for children who have never been to school.

What a far cry from the picture of the schoolboy creeping unwillingly to school to that of the child whose nearest neighbour may be one hundred miles away, who has never seen a school or a teacher, and who yet waits impatiently for the day when he will ride twenty miles to pick up the weekly mail left by the lonely mailman at that part of his route nearest the boy’s home! The boy knows that the mail will contain corrected school work which he despatched two or three weeks before, that it will contain fresh assignments of work, that it will contain praise, encouragement and criticism from the distant teacher, whom he has come to regard as his best friend. It grips the imagination to think of this sort of thing taking place in the depths of the Otway Forest in Victoria, in the tropical forests of Queensland, two thousand miles nearer the Equator, in the great open spaces in the hinterland of South Australia beyond
Oodnadatta, in the Pacific Islands off the East Coast, or two thousand five hundred miles away in the pearl fishing settlements of Western Australia.

More than most parts of the world, Australia is faced with the task of providing educational facilities for rural and sparsely-populated areas. Owing to a variety of causes, it has been possible to meet this need with a considerable degree of success. At various dates between 1872 and 1893, State Departments of Education were set up in all of the States, and, through these, free and compulsory education has been provided for children between the ages of six and fourteen years. In no part of the world is there greater recognition of the desirability of providing educational facilities for all without respect of class or wealth. A remarkable proportion of Australia's leading men and women have come from homes where the parents would not have been able to afford an expensive private education. In spite of the fact that much of the country is still undeveloped, and the population very scattered, the figures for Australian illiteracy are low. According to the census of 1921, only 152 per 1000 of the total population (including infants) cannot read or write. A favourable circumstance is the homogeneity of the population, over 90 per cent. of her six million inhabitants being of British stock. The uniformity of language throughout the Australian continent is without parallel in the rest of the world. It is quite impossible to tell by his speech what part of the Commonwealth a man comes from.

In providing educational facilities for the backblocks, as the Australian hinterland is locally called, the most important factor has been the mode of organisation of the State Education Departments. The Commonwealth is divided into six great educational units, corresponding to the six sovereign States. These units are entirely independent of each other, since there are no educational obligations undertaken by the Commonwealth Government, education being definitely committed to the State Governments. Within each State, however, there is a marked degree of
centralisation. Under a permanent head, known as the Director of Education, the educational facilities provided by the State are organised and completely controlled from the capital city of the State concerned. Each Education Department selects, trains, appoints, pays and promotes its own teachers. It decides when and where schools are to be built and closed. It lays down the curriculum to be taught in all schools controlled by the Department. It maintains a corps of inspectors, who regularly visit and report upon all schools in the section of the State allotted to them. It even exercises, through its inspectors, a certain amount of oversight over private schools to see that they maintain a reasonable standard of efficiency and comply with the conditions relating to compulsory attendance. These and many other features are common to all the State Departments of Education. There are, of course, minor differences, but considering that the various systems grew up independently—though not without mutual influence—their general similarity is remarkable. On the whole, the administration of public education in Australia presents a striking picture of uniformity of general plan and almost complete centralisation.

In educational literature the pros and cons of centralisation have been frequently discussed. A careful study of Australian education from this angle would be well worth while, since it could provide many instances which would throw some doubt upon the assumption that centralised control necessarily involves an absence of local interest and effort in educational matters. For example, in Victoria alone it is estimated that the total annual monetary value of local contributions and private gifts is in the region of £100,000. The Government provides essential equipment on a liberal basis, but parents co-operate with teachers by forming working-bees and by money-raising efforts. In this way many schools have been provided with swimming pools, tennis courts, pianos, gramophones, libraries, school decoration and additional equipment.

Whilst holding the view that there are certain direc-
tions in which educational decentralisation in Australia is becoming increasingly desirable, the writer must concur with the frequently-expressed opinion that no system could have served so well in maintaining a reasonably good standard of general education during the pioneering work of opening up a new continent; and there is still much pioneering work going on in the far-flung interior. In countries where the provision of educational facilities is left to local control, the adequacy of the facilities made available naturally depends on the financial and social status of the community concerned. Undeveloped and rural areas cannot offer salaries as high as those paid in the cities, and hence they naturally get poorer teachers. The Australian system, where all State-provided educational facilities are paid for out of a vote by the State Parliament, makes it possible to spread educational opportunities more uniformly. In particular, the State Education Department has the right to appoint the teacher of a school in any part of the State. In the courses provided at the teachers' colleges special emphasis is placed on training for rural school work, and, apart from those training for secondary teaching or for work as specialists, such trainees expect their first appointment to be to a one-teacher school, perhaps hundreds of miles away from the capital city. Though there are, naturally, some differences in the content of the subjects of study in rural and city schools, the courses are quite as liberal in the country, and of as high a standard. For valuable State scholarships, country children work the same examination papers. It is often claimed that the same average educational standards are achieved, and though this claim has not yet received demonstration by careful measurement, it has often been made by those who have had experience of both types of school, such as inspectors of schools whose districts contain both town and country centres.

The rural schools, then, stand first and foremost in the provision made by Australia for educating her scattered population. A detailed study of them is out of the ques-
tion in this report. The situation may be illustrated by reference to South Australia, which, of all the States, has the greatest percentage of one-teacher schools. Out of 987 primary schools in the State, over 80 per cent. are controlled by one teacher. This State maintains 547 schools, with an average attendance of less than 20 scholars, and, of these, 172 schools have an average attendance of less than 10. The minimum number of pupils for whom a school is kept open varies slightly in the different States. It ranges from an average attendance of six for three consecutive months in South Australia to an average attendance of 10 for three consecutive months in Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria.

A number of other methods have been and still are adopted for carrying educational facilities into outlying districts. In some States, where there are two small schools, each below the attendance necessary for maintaining a teacher, but sufficiently close to be visited in turn by the one teacher, they are opened on a part-time basis. A common practice is to provide a travelling allowance to the parents of children who reside beyond a specified distance from a school. Boarding subsidies have been granted to permit children to live in towns and attend school. If two or more parents combine to obtain the services of a teacher approved by the Education Department, some States provide a subsidy for each child in attendance. The amount granted is approximately equal to the average cost per head of primary education in the State as a whole. One State has sent into the outlying districts a horse-drawn van equipped as a school.

A somewhat similar plan is that of employing an itinerant teacher, who visits in turn a number of homes in outlying districts, spends a few days at each, gives the children some instruction, and leaves them with school work to occupy them until his next visit. In Queensland it has been calculated that the itinerant teacher sees each child on the average 2.4 times per year, and in order to do this travels from 58,000 to 60,000 miles.
During recent years, however, the successful development of correspondence tuition has not only extended educational facilities to thousands of children previously beyond reach of them; it has tended to replace the methods mentioned above.

In spite of the fact that Australian educational methods and developments are comparatively unknown in other parts of the world, through the absence of published information about them, news of the correspondence work has got abroad, and all the States have received enquiries from many parts of the world. They have come from Soviet Russia, from United States, from South Africa, from British Columbia, from Belgian Congo, from Manitoba, from Labrador, from Patagonia, from Roumania, and other places. At the time of writing, Miss A. Whitford, of the Victorian Correspondence School, is on loan to the educational authorities in Rhodesia in order to inaugurate correspondence work in that country.

It is anticipated that the present study will prove of interest to educationalists generally, and particularly to countries faced with the same problem. It will, however, serve the further purpose of revealing to Australians for the first time a glimpse of the work being done in correspondence tuition in the country as a whole. Even those engaged in this work in each State have up to the present had little opportunity of gaining a detailed knowledge of the scope and the history of the work in other States. As a result, there have been claims or suggestions of priority, uniqueness, or of extent, which would not have been made if this fuller knowledge had been available. As we shall see, Victoria and New South Wales were first in the field. Both these States have supplied information for helping in the initiation of the work in other States, and this has brought about a general similarity in the methods adopted. Without departing from the general plan, each State has, however, made its own variations, and can justifiably claim to have developed its own scheme. This fact makes all the more striking the demonstration of the possibilities of edu-
eating children in this way. The six independent experi-
ments have all long since passed from the experimental
stage to that of a definitely-established educational facility.

The Australian correspondence schools are usually
housed in some city school, where decreased attendance has
made it possible to devote the building to this purpose. On
visiting the school, one finds perhaps 80 teachers, but no
scholars. Each teacher has, however, his or her invisible
“class” — the children who regularly send in their work for
correction and appraisement. In several of the States if
all the pupils of the Correspondence School were gathered
together their total number would be several times greater
than the attendance at the largest ordinary school in the
State.

The teachers attend the school each day for the ordi-
nary school hours. Here one finds them surrounded by the
books and papers of their distant pupils. There is not the
hum of children’s voices usually associated with the work
of an ordinary school, but there is a marked atmosphere of
quiet, busy efficiency.

Each correspondence school is organised along the same
general lines as an ordinary school. In the smaller schools
the head teacher devotes most of his or her time to the in-
struction of pupils; in the larger schools the administrative
work is heavier, and occupies more of the head teacher’s
attention. In some schools, specialisation of function has
gone a good way, and teachers experienced in the work are
appointed in charge of various sections, classes, or subjects.

There can be no doubt that the success of the corre-
spondence schools is largely due to the interest and devotion
of the teachers who carry out the work. To talk with them
of their pupils is to be convinced that their work is a labour
of love rather than a duty.
CHAPTER II.

THE GROWTH AND SCOPE OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS.

Historical.

In May, 1914, the Victorian Education Department received a letter from a settler in the Beech Forest, living eight miles from the nearest school. In this letter he enquired, "Can anything be done for the education of my two boys?" The Chief Inspector, Mr. Alfred Fussell, referred the request to Mr. J. McRae, Vice-Principal of the Teachers' College, in the hope that he might be able to arrange for some of the students in training to send lessons by post. As a result, five students volunteered to try the plan of teaching the boys by correspondence. Each one undertook responsibility for certain subjects. Sets of work for each fortnight were prepared and regularly posted. The children were instructed in the ordinary subjects of the curriculum, including the making of systematic observations of weather phenomena, and of plant and animal life. At the end of the year the boys attended the nearest school, and sat successfully for the annual school examination. In the following year their instruction was continued in the same way, and a younger brother of five was added to the class. As other cases came before the Department, the Chief Inspector referred them to the Teachers' College. Mr. McRae took a keen interest in the new method, and closely supervised the work of the students. It was mainly due to his enthusiasm that the experiment was continued successfully. By March, 1916, the number of children enrolled had increased and the work became too great a tax on the time of the student teachers. Arrangements were consequently made for most of the work to be carried out by certain members of the staff of the Faraday Street school, who were relieved from some of their other duties.
23rd July, 1917, a full-time teacher was appointed specifically to supervise the correspondence work.

Similar work had been begun independently in New South Wales. At the beginning of 1916, Mr. S. H. Smith, then Inspector of Continuation Schools, and later Director of Education for New South Wales, personally undertook to teach by post a little boy in the north-west of the State, whose mother sent in an urgent plea for the continuance of his education, which had been interrupted through the closing of a subsidised school. This work proving successful, Mr. Smith undertook the tuition of other isolated children in his spare time. The work grew so rapidly that by October of 1916 Mr. Smith found it necessary to arrange for the appointment of a teacher to carry out the work. By the beginning of 1917, 27 children from 11 families were enrolled, and from then on the school grew apace.

The following dates are those on which the various Education Departments or departmental officials commenced the correspondence work:

- Victoria . . . . . . . 1914 (May), by student teachers
- New South Wales . . 1916 (March), by teachers
- Western Australia . . 1916 (January), by Mr. S. H. Smith
- Tasmania . . . . . . 1916 (October), by teachers
- South Australia . . 1918 (September)
- Queensland . . . . . 1919 (January)

1920 (May)

1922 (February)

The date given for South Australia does not represent the first correspondence work in that State, since in the Annual Report of the Education Department for 1920, the following occurs:

"Before that (i.e., 1920), Miss Inspector Longmore, with the help of a number of friends, had endeavoured to teach these children through the post as a labour of love, but the large number of applicants rendered it advisable to appoint teachers."
The work of organising the scheme in Western Australia was carried out by Mr. J. A. Miles, a senior inspector of the Education Department. In an account of the work in that State, he mentions the fact that the subject of correspondence tuition was discussed at the Directors' Conference in the early part of 1918, and that a favourable report of its working was given by Mr. Frank Tate, the Victorian Director. He says: "The difficulties of introducing such a system into this State were great, for there was no information available for the organiser beyond the report of our Director that the system was working successfully in Victoria."

It would be unnecessary, even if it were possible, to trace all the details of the influence which one State has had upon another in the establishment of correspondence work. As illustrations of this influence, it may be mentioned that a teacher from Tasmania studied the methods used in New South Wales when correspondence facilities were to be initiated in the Island State. South Australia states that it adopted the Tasmanian method of recording the dispatch and receipt of lessons, but that otherwise it developed its own methods. In the early stages, observers from several States visited the Victorian centre.

As already indicated, however, there has not been any case in which a State has adopted in toto the methods and materials employed in another State. Since the correspondence work follows in the main the ordinary curriculum, and since this varies from State to State, those responsible for organising the correspondence tuition have in all cases been faced with the major problem of arranging suitable assignments and lesson sheets for sending to the pupils.

**Number of Children at Present Receiving Tuition.**

Starting from the modest beginnings in Victoria and New South Wales, indicated in the previous section, the movement has grown to large proportions. In Table I are given the numbers of children in the various States at
present receiving correspondence tuition. These figures indicate the number of children enrolled at the various correspondence schools in October or in November, 1930, according to the date when the information was supplied. In the same table are given, so far as ascertainable, the total numbers of children in the elementary school population of each State.

TABLE I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Correspondence Pupils</th>
<th>Total Number Elementary School Population</th>
<th>Percentage of Children Receiving Correspondence Tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>4733</td>
<td>295,378</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>4700</td>
<td>164,532</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>66,000</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>82,333</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>225,946</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>35,409</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,284</strong></td>
<td><strong>869,598</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this table it is obvious that elementary correspondence tuition has become in Australia an educational medium of considerable importance, especially in those States where areas are large and population scanty. About three children in every two hundred in the Commonwealth are receiving their only schooling through the post! Some thirteen thousand children are being reached in this way who would otherwise not be receiving any education at all. If the total enrolment for the year were given, the figure would be considerably larger.

Table II indicates the number of children returned by each State as having received such tuition since the inception of the scheme:
TABLE II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>17,646 (Since 1918)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>10,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>3,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5,817 (Since 1918)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>1,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,353</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Allowing for unrecorded cases in the early stages of the work, it can safely be said that some 55,000 children have been enrolled by the correspondence schools. This number is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that their enrolment is an entirely voluntary matter on the part of their parents or themselves. The fact that the children are eligible for enrolment means that they do not come under the compulsory attendance clauses, which apply to children within reach of schools.

Some figures which are available suggest that the pupil "turnover" each year is fairly high. For example, in one State the number of pupils enrolled at any time during the course of the year exceeds the number enrolled at the end of the year by 20 per cent. In another State, the corresponding figure is 19 per cent. To some extent this figure is attributable to the fact that, unlike ordinary schools, children are enrolled at any time of the year; it is contributed to by children who ceased to be enrolled, either because they have reached the standard aimed at or because they have moved to a district where there is a school, or because of sickness, or because of some change in home circumstances which makes it difficult or impossible to continue, or because of diminution of interest and effort.

Factors Influencing the Development of the Schools.

A cursory inspection of the foregoing particulars is enough to indicate that the present number of correspond-
DISTRIBUTION OF AUSTRALIAN POPULATION AT 1921 CENSUS.
Each small dot represents 500 people.
(By courtesy of Institute of Pacific Relations)
ence pupils is not by any means proportional to the length of time that correspondence facilities have been available in the State concerned. Queensland, with the youngest system, has almost as many pupils as New South Wales, and far more than any of the other States. Victoria, though first in the field, has the second smallest number of pupils.

The Australian States vary greatly in their size and in their population. They vary as well in their stage of economic development and in their possession of areas which can support no population or only a very scattered one.

Table III.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Area in Sq. Miles</th>
<th>Persons Per Sq. Mile</th>
<th>Correspondence Pupils as Per Cent. of School Population of the State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>975,920</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>670,500</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>380,070</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>309,432</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>26,215</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>87,884</td>
<td>20.04</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total for C’wealth . 2,974,581 2.13 —

Table III shows very distinctly that the proportion of children receiving correspondence tuition in any one State is in inverse ratio to the density of that State’s population. The only exception is South Australia, which, with a population considerably more scattered than that of New South Wales, has a slightly smaller proportion of pupils enrolled at the correspondence school. One cause of this exception is the fact that South Australia requires a child to be further away from an ordinary school before being eligible for enrolment at the correspondence school than does New South Wales or the other States. Another cause is the liberality
of South Australia in providing a school for an average attendance of six children. Still another probable cause is the fact that, as compared with New South Wales, South Australia contains large areas in which settlement is for the present almost impossible. These areas decrease the average density of population, but increase very slightly the number of children available for correspondence tuition.

It is obvious that, on the whole, the predominant factor determining the present extent of each State’s correspondence work is the size and distribution of the population or, more strictly, the size of the scattered population.

The Ultimate Size of the Correspondence Schools.

It is to be expected that with the further settlement of the country a point will be reached when the number of correspondence pupils will decrease, rather than increase. There is, however, likely to be need for correspondence facilities in Australia for many generations to come. Owing to the large areas with very poor natural resources or with an uncertain water supply, a considerable portion of the country is always likely to be very sparsely settled. The ultimate population which Australia is capable of carrying is estimated variously at from 20,000,000 to 100,000,000. Even the more generous estimate would mean a population of not more than some 34 persons to the square mile. As will later be shown, correspondence facilities need not be restricted to children living in remote districts. They are useful for certain types of children living in cities. The number of such children is likely to increase rather than decrease.

There is no evidence that the correspondence schools in the various States have yet reached their maximum size. Graph I shows the annual increase in size of the New South Wales Correspondence School from 1918 to 1930. The figures on which this graph is based are the numbers of children enrolled in the final quarter of each year. Conceivably this increase might be caused primarily by increase in the total school population of the State. To check this factor,
Graphs showing:
(a) Number of correspondence pupils in New South Wales.
(b) Total school population for same period.

GRAPH I.
the growth of the total elementary school population over the same period has been included in the same graph by appropriate modification of the scale. A comparison of the two curves shows plainly that the increase in the number of correspondence pupils has, on the whole, taken place independently of the size of the total school population. The Correspondence School has increased in size at a rapid rate, even when the total school population has remained stationary or decreased. There is no sign of a slower rate of increase during recent years.

New South Wales furnishes a good criterion in this matter since its correspondence facilities have been available for some time, and since it has for a number of years been in a reasonably stable condition of settlement. Complete figures are not available for any other State, but those which are to hand do not in any case suggest that the correspondence schools have reached a stage where the increase in annual enrolment is falling off.

On the whole, it appears that Australian educational administrators should be prepared for still further extensions of correspondence work.

General Scope of State-provided Correspondence Facilities in the Various States.

It is not easy to state the situation in this direction completely and concisely. In some of the States the Correspondence School which provides the elementary instruction also provides correspondence tuition in post-primary or even secondary instruction; in other States, secondary or technical instruction is carried out from a distinct centre. In some cases, the secondary instruction is of a general nature, in other cases it is intended for the academic or professional training of a specified group of students. Using the term "Correspondence School" for the organisation set up specifically to provide elementary instruction in outlying districts, we may briefly give the situation in each State so far as it is known.
The Queensland Correspondence School carries pupils up to the Qualifying Certificate standard, which is normally reached at 12½ years of age. Secondary and professional correspondence tuition for student teachers is provided from a centre connected with the Brisbane Teachers' College. The Education Department also provides a four-year correspondence course in the theoretical subjects required by apprentices to the electrical trades who are out of reach of a centre where such training is provided.

In New South Wales the Correspondence School carries pupils to the eighth grade standard, normally attained at 14 years. The school also supplies super-primary instruction leaflets to a number of one-teacher schools, but does not carry out the work of correction. Correspondence courses are provided by the Sydney Technical College, and a circular letter sent from the Correspondence School to pupils who have completed the ordinary course, draws their attention to these facilities.

The Victorian Correspondence School carries instruction to the Merit Certificate standard, which marks the completion of the eighth grade at 14 years of age. Victoria also possesses a distinct correspondence centre for advanced instruction. This centre, which is associated with the Melbourne High School, was in operation for some years before the elementary correspondence work was commenced. It was established primarily to enable teachers in the country to prepare themselves for public and for departmental examinations. With the development of State facilities for secondary education, it has enlarged its scope, so that any qualified pupil can enrol as a student and do the full course on payment of a fee of £3. At the present time the number of general students is several times larger than the number of teacher students. The total number of pupils dealt with each year is well over 1000. An interesting provision in the Victorian correspondence scheme for secondary pupils is that the pupils are required to continue in attendance at the local primary school, the teacher of the school taking certain responsibilities in regard to their work. Instruction
is given in practically all the subjects required for the Intermediate and the Leaving Certificate, the latter being the qualifying examination for entrance to the Melbourne University. Instruction is also given in drawing (four branches), design, nature study, and plasticine modelling for teachers' examinations. It is proposed to add agricultural science, French, economics and drawing for Leaving Certificate to the subjects already available. It is surprising to find that, at the present time, if we count the same subject for each course and each year that it occurs, a total number of 34 subjects is offered. From the Melbourne Teachers' College, correspondence tuition is also provided for country candidates for the Infant Teachers' Certificate. It will thus be seen that Victoria has a very extensive system of secondary correspondence instruction. This work is carried on quite independently of the work in the primary Correspondence School.

The Tasmanian Correspondence School carries pupils to the Grade VII standard, which is normally attained during the thirteenth year. If desired, more advanced tuition is given in subjects specified by the supervisor. Children unable to attend a State high school are given tuition in first-year high school subjects.

The South Australian Correspondence School provides tuition up to the Qualifying Certificate standard, which marks the completion of Grade VII. Children who attain this standard are invited to re-enrol in super-primary classes. For girls there are provided courses in needlework and in drawing and applied art. These courses prepare for examination by the Adelaide School of Arts in the two subjects named. A high school teacher has also been added to the staff of the Correspondence School, to give a two-year course of instruction in English, History, Geography, Latin, French, Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry for the University Intermediate Examination. This course is limited to boys and girls who have already completed correspondence work up to Qualifying Certificate standard.
The Western Australia Correspondence School, in addition to the regular primary work, has gone some distance in the provision of post-primary correspondence facilities. Since 1922 there has been available a two years' post-primary course in English, Arithmetic, Farm Bookkeeping, Farm Mensuration, Economic History and Commercial Geography. For this course, intended for those taking up work on the land, special text-books were written in farm bookkeeping and farm mensuration, and special curricula were prepared in history and geography. At the present time, 125 pupils are taking this two years' course. There is now also available a three years' course leading to the Junior University Certificate. This course includes the subjects of English, Mathematics I and II, History, Geography, Drawing and Agricultural Science. The Correspondence School has 36 pupils enrolled in this course. The printed leaflets prepared for these subjects have been made available to any pupils in one- and two-teacher schools whose parents guarantee to let them remain at school for the three years necessary to complete the post-primary course. The papers of such pupils are corrected by the teachers of the school attended, and not by the teachers of the Correspondence School. There are 370 pupils receiving instruction in this way.

It will thus be seen that there are considerable variations in the correspondence facilities provided by the various States for pupils who have passed the primary stage. Victoria appears to have the most extensive secondary correspondence system. It should be mentioned that very few of these secondary students are ex-pupils of the primary Correspondence School. In the other States which are developing correspondence work at the higher level, there is a tendency to do so by adding post-primary and secondary courses to the work of the primary Correspondence School, thus bringing all the State-provided correspondence courses under one organisation.

An interesting and significant development is the working out of post-primary courses intended specifically for
correspondence pupils, and not merely for preparation for the same examinations as those taken by pupils in ordinary high schools. Diverse opinions may be heard as to the desirability of making extensive provision for ordinary secondary instruction by correspondence. There can be no doubt as to the desirability of the provision of attractive and suitable post-primary courses in correspondence for those pupils living in outlying districts who wish to continue their education, but who would not in any case attend a secondary school.
CHAPTER III
ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF CORRESPONDENCE WORK.

Staffing.

A matter of some interest is the number of pupils dealt with by each teacher. Table IV indicates this in detail.

| TABLE IV. |
| Showing Staffing of Correspondence Schools (1930). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers—</th>
<th>Q'land.</th>
<th>N.S.W.</th>
<th>Vic.</th>
<th>Tas.</th>
<th>S.A.</th>
<th>W.A.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Full Time</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Part Time</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1(art)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typistes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorters</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messengers</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average No. of children for each full time teacher on actual enrolment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gr.</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39*</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regarded as maximum per Teacher.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39*</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See Text)

*Raised from 35 in October, 1930.

It would appear from this table that a teacher can teach by correspondence as many pupils as are found in a
large class in an ordinary school. For the whole of Australia, the average number of pupils per teacher is 55. This excludes clerical assistants, but includes the head teacher of the school whose time would be taken up to a considerable extent by administrative work. It will be seen that the States vary considerably in the matter of staffing. It will be noticed that, on the whole, the number of pupils per teacher increases with the size of the correspondence school. This is to be expected, because of the provision by the larger schools of helpers on the clerical side, and because of the facility with which larger numbers lend themselves to specialisation by the teachers. Victoria, however, is an exception to this rule. Although it is the second smallest of the correspondence schools, it has the largest number of pupils per teacher. The present staffing is, through the necessity for economy, less liberal than is officially recognised as desirable. It is interesting to note, however, that Victoria is the only State which sends the whole year’s work to the pupil at once. This method may result in a saving of time, which makes it possible for each teacher to deal with more pupils. It does not necessarily follow that this method is the most desirable.

The correspondence schools, which on account of their size have had to consider most carefully the question of staffing, have found it desirable to vary the number of pupils per teacher, according to the grade being dealt with. Their experience in this direction should be of service to the other States. Although the Queensland figures are higher than those holding good for New South Wales, the head teacher of the latter school, after a lengthy experience of correspondence work, regards the New South Wales maxima as being on the high rather than the low side.

An interesting variation is found in Western Australia. At an early stage it was realised that it was an advantage to keep a pupil with the same teacher for two or three years. With this end in view, the grades have been divided into four groups, as follows, and any given teacher specialises in one of the groups:
Group I . . . . . { Infants’ Classes
  Class I
    , II

Group II . . . . . { Class II
    , III
    , IV

Group III . . . . . { Class IV
    , V
    , VI

Group IV . . . . . { Post-Primary—2 years’ course
    , ”—3 years’ course

The figures for Western Australia in Table IV represent the number of sets of work per fortnight regarded as the maximum for each teacher. For the two sections in Group IV, the numbers of sets per fortnight are 25 and 20 respectively. Owing to illness, absence from home, and other causes, there are always some children whose work does not come in quite regularly. Thus a teacher who is responsible for 50 children will not, on the average, have 50 sets of work to correct. This means that the figures for Western Australia in Table IV would be higher if stated on the same basis as those for the other States.

The New South Wales School employs four of its teachers as testers, whose work it is to ascertain accurately the educational attainments of children seeking enrolment.

Qualifications of Correspondence Teachers.

As far as is known, the States have used only fully-trained and competent teachers for correspondence work. Any responsible expressions of opinion which have been obtained stress the need for teaching ability and for enthusiasm for this type of educational work. It is stated, for example, that the teacher needs a high degree of “teaching skill, initiative, imagination, insight, sympathy and thoroughness.” It is possible to find in correspondence tuition a useful avenue of work for teachers who, on account
of some physical or temperamental disability, are seriously handicapped in class-room instruction. It would, however, be a great mistake to make such considerations of first importance, or to assume that correspondence work requires anything less than first-rate teaching ability.

**Conditions of Entry. Types of Children Enrolled.**

In all the States except South Australia, children are eligible to be enrolled if they live three miles or more from the nearest school. South Australia requires a minimum distance of four miles. Victoria admits children under 11 years at distances of less than three miles, as follows:—Between six and seven years, one mile; between seven and nine years, two miles; between 9 and 11, two and a half miles.

As previously indicated, the correspondence facilities have been availed of by other types of children who cannot attend school. Thus among the children enrolled are a fair proportion of delicate, sick or crippled children, as well as a few whose parents belong to a travelling circus. In South Australia, children are included because of being educationally retarded, about one per cent. of the total enrolment coming under this heading. So far as known, none of the other States include children merely on this ground. One would suppose that only the less serious cases of retardation could be taught successfully by correspondence, and that, in general, the problem of retardation is more satisfactorily met by the establishment of special grades. The fact that South Australia has found it helpful to teach certain backward children by correspondence is a further testimony to the possibilities of this method of instruction.

Some idea of the proportion of children enrolled for causes other than distance from a school is given by the following figures:—Queensland has 98 such cases, this being about two per cent. of the total enrolment for the State; Western Australia has 95, which is five per cent.; Tasmania has 19, which is nearly six per cent.; South Australia has almost eight per cent.
The only conditions of entry for practically all the States are, first, that the child should be unable to attend an ordinary school for one of the reasons above indicated, and, secondly, that there should be someone in the child's home prepared to exercise a general supervision over the child's work. The person carrying out this function does not need more than an elementary education, but for the early stages of the instruction of a child who has never attended school, the issuing of simple and carefully worked out directions to the supervisor is probably the most important feature.

Children are enrolled at any age, from six or seven years onwards. In all the States children are allowed to enrol for the first time after the age of 14 years, which is the upper limit of the compulsory attendance period for children living within reach of schools. In almost all the States the correspondence tuition is continued indefinitely for those who wish it. New South Wales normally discontinues the correspondence facilities when the child concerned has reached 15 years, though exceptions are made. Western Australia makes an upper limit of 21 years. None of the other States have any specified limit. At the present time, Queensland has 303 pupils who are over 14 years of age. Some of the States include on their rolls children outside the State boundary. Queensland has 30 such pupils, New South Wales 35 (including 20 in the Federal Capital Territory), Victoria 13, and South Australia 13 (chiefly in Central Australia and the Northern Territory). The other children are living with their parents in Papua, Fiji and other Pacific Islands. Victoria has had enrolments as far away as Korea, India, and Papua.

Charges on Parent.

None of the States charge any fees for tuition. In Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia, the State pays postage both ways, and, in addition, provides text-books. In Western Australia, reading, history and geography books are supplied free, but other text-books are
purchased by the parent; there are no other costs to the parent. Tasmania introduced postal charges from October, 1930. In Victoria, parents pay postage one way and provide the child’s text-books.

The Cost to the State.

It might be expected that the facilities which are being described are an expensive item in the education bill of the various States. Enquiry indicates that this is not the case. The following table shows the replies furnished to the question as to the cost per pupil per annum:—

**Table V.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence School</th>
<th>Annual Cost Per Pupil</th>
<th>Total Primary School Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>£6 0 0 (approx.)</td>
<td>£11 0 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>6 8 3</td>
<td>16 15 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>6 10 0</td>
<td>9 6 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>6 4 8*</td>
<td>9 19 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>6 13 2½</td>
<td>11 12 2½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5 4 6½</td>
<td>9 19 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Exclusive of administrative cost.
†Includes both primary and secondary correspondence but excludes postage expenses.

It will be seen that the average cost is about £6/10/- per pupil per year, and that the cost in the various States clusters closely round this figure. To make a comparison between the cost of correspondence work and that of class instruction, we have included in Table V the most recent figure available for the per pupil expenditure on the total elementary school population. This comparison shows that it is considerably cheaper to teach a child by correspondence than to teach him in an ordinary school.

If comparison is made with the per pupil cost for the smallest schools which are kept open, the difference in favour of correspondence tuition is even greater; for example, in Western Australia and Tasmania respectively,
the cost of correspondence tuition is £6/13/2½ and £6/10/-, whereas the cost per pupil of Class VII schools in these two States is £16/19/2 and £11/0/5 respectively.

The head teacher of the New South Wales Correspondence School has kindly supplied figures which, though worked out several years ago, give an idea of the relative size of the chief items of expenditure. Out of a total per pupil expenditure of £6/6/10, salaries accounted for £5/8/3, postage for 12/3, and stores, printing, etc., for 6/4. An important consideration is that the provision of correspondence facilities does not involve the heavy expense of building schools.

Considering the importance of the pioneering element in our population, the amount of effort and the determination on the part of both pupils and parents which enrolment in the correspondence schools implies, and the educational success which is achieved, it will be generally agreed that the expenditure on correspondence work is more than justified.
CHAPTER IV.

THE CURRICULA AND METHODS OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS.

The Subjects Which Are Taught.

It will be interesting to ascertain the subjects of the ordinary elementary school curriculum which it is found impracticable to teach by correspondence. The various Australian Correspondence Schools were asked to indicate the subjects which were not included in the work sent out to their pupils:

TABLE VI.

Subjects Omitted from the Correspondence Curricula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q'land.</th>
<th>N.S.W.</th>
<th>Vic.</th>
<th>Tas.</th>
<th>S.A.</th>
<th>W.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing (part)</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Training</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that the fundamental subjects of arithmetic, reading, geography, and history are taught by correspondence in all the States. As would be expected, music and physical training are not included in any of the correspondence curricula. It must also be assumed that ordinary schools carry out various occupational activities not taught to correspondence pupils. Combining the experience of the various States, it appears, however, that it is practicable to teach nature study, drawing and sewing by correspondence.

Assignments.

An essential feature of correspondence work is the careful subdivision of each year's curriculum in each subject into a number of units, which can be sent to the pupils.
in the form of tasks or assignments. Such a procedure is necessary, not only for purposes of drawing up the instruction sheets which are sent out, and for ensuring that the whole year's work is covered, but also for keeping careful account of each child's progress.

Queensland and New South Wales make use of weekly assignments; the other States send a fortnight’s work at a time. This, of course, does not mean that the children in the first-named States cover the ground twice as quickly; it simply means that each assignment in the other States includes approximately twice as much work. It would be difficult to argue on a priori grounds that weekly assignments are educationally better or worse than fortnightly ones, and it is doubtful whether any of the correspondence schools have made trial of both methods. One would expect that the weekly dispatch of assignments would make the postage bill rather greater than would be the case with a fortnightly dispatch.

Victoria differs from all the other States in that it divides the year's work into fortnightly units, but sends the whole of the year's work to the child when the work of the grade is commenced. The child forwards each set to the school as soon as it is completed; it is corrected by the teachers, and returned with as little delay as possible. In the meantime, the child is going ahead with the next assignment. There may be certain advantages in the Victorian method, and there is much to be said in favour of allowing the child to critically evaluate his progress in relation to the whole year's work; but, for children whose work is being carried out under such difficulties, it would appear that some risk is run of discouragement at the presentation of such a large amount at one time. It would also appear that the sending of assignments at weekly or fortnightly intervals would lend itself to more flexibility, would tend to sustain interest, and would provide more incentive to the regular return of work by the pupils. These are points, however, on which no one could be dogmatic without extensive experience in correspondence work.
Machinery for Records, for Despatch of Work, Etc.

Each State has its own detailed methods of dealing with the work sent in by the pupils, of preparing lessons and of keeping records of pupils' progress. It would be impracticable to describe in detail the methods of each State, but since such details will be helpful to educational authorities who contemplate the provision of correspondence facilities, we will give an account of the methods employed in one of the schools. For this purpose we will select New South Wales, where the large size of the school has necessitated careful organisation. It is to be remembered that the other States employ methods which differ more or less from the following, and that they find them successful.

Each pupil has three work books, which are numbered for purposes of identification. Each book also shows particulars such as the child's age in years and months, the date on which the book was issued, the grade in which the child is working, the teacher's distinguishing number, the regular day each week on which the book is mailed, and the name and address of the child's supervisor in the home. The purpose of having three books is to make it possible at any given time for one to be at the pupil's home for working in, one to be at the school for correction, and one to be in transit. Arrangements are made so that the books for different members of one family will be posted together, even though they are dealt with by different teachers. The teachers are expected to correct and return books the same week that they arrive, and in this way there is no lack of continuity in the child's work, unless from causes arising in the home.

The teacher has to keep a daily record of all work despatched. This constitutes the teacher's "roll." If any given child's book has not arrived during the week, and there is no explanation forthcoming, that child is regarded as "absent," and a note of enquiry is sent. The next set of leaflets is also forwarded, with the exception of those in arithmetic and special English. Further enquiry is made if two consecutive weeks are missed. Towards the end of
each quarter a letter is sent to the supervisor of any child who is temporarily absent, or who has been irregular in sending in work, to enquire whether it is intended to continue with the correspondence lessons. If there is no indication of the child's intention, or if there is word that the child is not continuing, the name is omitted from the roll at the beginning of the new quarter.

A special method has been worked out in New South Wales for keeping particulars of each child and for keeping account of his progress. Each pupil has a history card, on which entries are made by each teacher dealing with the child. The cards are kept in groups according to school classification. A rotating colour scheme is used, so that it is possible to tell at a glance whether a child is retarded or advanced in classification. For example, in 1930 the colour for first grade was blue, for second grade it was violet, and for third grade it was white. In 1931, the colour for second grade will be blue, for third grade it will be violet, and white will be the colour for fourth grade. In this way the history card of the child who receives normal annual promotions will continue to be of the same colour as those of the majority of his "classmates" right through the school.

In some of the States the lesson sheets are typewritten or duplicated; in New South Wales, printed sheets are used except for the lower grades. Pupils are taught to keep all their leaflets together, and to refer back to them for revision or repetition when needed. The teachers are asked to keep a record of any suggestions for the improvement of the leaflets which arise from their experience with them, so that these suggestions will be available at times of revision of the leaflets.

Continuing to give the details for New South Wales, we find that each week every pupil receives a standard instruction leaflet, a general sheet, either a composition or a newspaper sheet, and an arithmetic sheet. Special sheets are issued from time to time. Forty-two issues of the standard instruction leaflets comprise a school year. The separate sheet for mathematics is not commenced until the third
grade; in the second grade all subjects are on the one sheet. These leaflets for instruction in the fundamental subjects are standardised, and can thus be prepared beforehand. They are normally printed in large enough quantities for a three years' supply, so that periodic revision can take place.

The general sheets referred to above are prepared each week. They supplement the standard instruction sheets, and by making reference to current events keep the subject-matter up to date. The standard instruction sheets and the general sheets are forwarded in their serial order to each child each week. The arithmetic sheets each contain one week's work, but their issue is controlled more immediately by the attainments of the pupil concerned. It is obvious that in mathematics each stage is more dependent upon mastery of the previous one than in the informational or "content" subjects.

A sheet containing instruction in composition alternates weekly with a news-sheet containing information of interest and selected newspaper cuttings. Special sheets mark such occasions as Anzac Day, Empire Day, Wattle Day, Bird Day, Mothers' Day and Christmas. The children are thus enabled to share intellectually in the various movements and seasons of national significance. The fact that their participation can be more than merely intellectual is instanced by the fact that the correspondence pupils of New South Wales have endowed two cots in the Sydney Children's Hospital.

Careful instructions are available to guide the teachers in correcting the work sent in by pupils. For example, the mark √ means nothing to children who have never been to school, or who have not been told its meaning; hence the symbols "R" and "W" are preferred. It is pointed out that comments should be clear and well expressed, that there must be firm insistence on the carrying out of any instructions given by the teacher, and so on. The spirit in which the corrections are to be made is indicated in the suggestion that, wherever possible, praise rather than blame is to be bestowed. Although the demands on the teacher are
not the same as in class-room work, there is obvious scope for teaching skill in full familiarity with the work and with the school's methods, in detailed knowledge of each pupil and the conditions under which he is working and living, in sympathetic appreciation of difficulties, both educational and otherwise, in the ability to detect and remedy weaknesses, in the knack of arousing interest and stimulating to greater effort, and, perhaps chiefly, in the capacity for making the child feel that he or she is a personal friend of the teacher.

When a child is first enrolled, typed sheets of directions are forwarded to the supervisor. These give instructions regarding the work of the supervisor, directions for postage, suggestions regarding the child's study, the time-table which he is asked to follow, and so on.

Classification and Promotion.

Since correspondence tuition is essentially a matter of individual instruction, it will be interesting to enquire into the way in which classification and promotion are dealt with. The modern study of education has shown that the customary method of class instruction in ordinary schools results in great educational wastage, because of the difficulty of catering for individual differences in rate of learning and for variations in the ability of the one child for different subjects. In particular, the system of repetition of grades following on annual examinations is tragically cumbersome and unscientific. To overcome these difficulties, many experiments in individual instruction are being carried out in various parts of the world.*

In the Queensland Correspondence School, a child is promoted as soon as he shows that he has mastered the work of the grade he is in. This promotion may take place at any time of the year, but is usually carried out at the beginning of a quarter. Only in special cases is a child graded differently for different subjects.

*See, for example, Individual Education (Educational Research Series, No. 1); or the account of the Winnetka Plan on pages 50-55 of Some Aspects of Education in U.S.A." (Educational Research Series, No. 2).
New South Wales also promotes at any time, if possible at the beginning of a quarter. Pupils whose progress in arithmetic differs considerably from that in English are graded differently in the two subjects. These are the only subjects in which differences in grading are allowed for. The child's actual classification depends on his attainments in English. If any one subject is to be selected as basic, one cannot doubt the correctness of making English the choice, since it provides the groundwork of a much wider and more important total area of knowledge than, say, mathematics. There is also scientific evidence that linguistic and mathematical ability tend to vary independently if intelligence is held constant.†

In Victoria the correspondence pupils are promoted as soon as the work of a grade is completed. Children may also be graded differently for different subjects. For example, a child may be doing the work of Grade VII in reading, history, geography and drawing, and the work of Grade VI in mathematics and formal grammar.

In Tasmania promotions from Grade I to Grade II take place every 16 months. Other promotions are normally made annually, but take place in shorter time when pupils are ready for it. Provision is made for a child to be in one grade for arithmetic and in another for the other subjects.

South Australia makes use of annual promotions, and does not provide for pupils to be graded differently in different subjects.

Western Australia has adopted a very flexible system of classification and promotion. Each subject in the curriculum is divided into assignments representing, on the average, two weeks' work. Twenty such assignments constitute a year's work in the subject in question. The child commences from the first assignment at any time of the year, and goes straight ahead. As soon as he completes the twenty assignments in any subject he is "promoted" in that subject, and commences the assignments of the next grade. Children are made to repeat that portion of any

†See Burt: The Distribution and Relationships of Educational Ability."
assignment which their written work shows them not to have mastered. A printed slip calling attention to any work which must be repeated is attached to the teacher's report, and this printed slip must be returned with the repeated portion. Carbon copies of all reports issued to pupils are kept by every teacher. This provision for progress in any subject at the pupil's natural rate, combined with insistence on thorough mastery of each stage, is found to work very satisfactorily, since many pupils complete three grades in two years. To quote from the report by Mr. Miles on the Western Australian system: "One of the outstanding advantages of the correspondence system is the opportunity it affords to the pupil of advancing at his own rate of speed. Many pupils complete their assignments in less than a year. Unfortunately, at the present time the staffing is not sufficiently liberal to enable more than a limited number of the brightest pupils to proceed at this rapid pace. If many pupils were to work through double assignments, the teachers would be unable to cope with their work. With an increased staff, it would be possible for many children to accelerate through the correspondence classes. . . . We have in view, however, an experiment in self-correction of assignment papers by the brighter pupils with the aid of key sheets. This, we hope, will lead to the acceleration of those pupils who have the ability to move forward rapidly."

"Another advantage of the correspondence system is the ease it affords for a variation in grading in different subjects. . . . Sometimes a pupil is as much as two classes ahead in his best subject."
CHAPTER V.

THE ATTAINMENTS AND PROGRESS OF CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL PUPILS.

Children Who Have Never Attended School.

It will be worth while to examine any evidence which is to hand regarding the rate and extent of the educational progress of correspondence school pupils. Owing to the difficult conditions under which many of the children carry out their work, and to the absence of many of the incentives and aids available to the child attending school, it is to be expected that the rate of progress will frequently be less than that of the child attending school.

It should be pointed out that, apart from the omission of a few subjects, the correspondence school children do the same work as children in the ordinary schools. They follow the course of study prescribed by the Education Department of the State concerned. This means, for example, that a child doing Grade IV arithmetic by correspondence is doing just the same work in that subject as a city child of the same grade. The correspondence schools are also inspected periodically.

It must be remembered that at any one time there will be on the roll of a correspondence school a considerable proportion of children who have previously attended school. Such children take advantage of the correspondence facilities because of the removal of their parents to a remote district where there is no school; because of the closing of the local school through the dropping of the number of pupils in attendance below the minimum number for which a school is kept open; because of sickness or injury, or because of other reasons which make it impossible for them to continue their attendance at an ordinary school. It is obvious that the proportion of such children will increase towards the upper classes, especially in the early years of
the correspondence centre in question; or, conversely, that
the proportion of pupils who have received their instruc-
tion entirely by correspondence will tend to decrease
towards the upper end of the school.

Not all the correspondence schools have available de-
tailed figures on this point, but the figures given in Table
VII illustrate the tendency referred to, and show that a con-
siderable number of pupils in the upper grades have never
attended an ordinary school.

**TABLE VII.**

_Proportion of Correspondence Pupils Who Have Never
Attended School._

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number Total</th>
<th>Queensland (1930) Not Previously at School</th>
<th>New South Wales (1928) Percent. Not Previously at School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1,795</td>
<td>1,512, i.e., 84%</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>644, 63%</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>264, 32%</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>178, 27%</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>90, 24%</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,695</td>
<td>2,688, 57%</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The totals, though not the detailed figures, are available
for Tasmania and South Australia, and they are, respecti-
vely, 60 per cent. and 50.4 per cent.

The figures in Table VII indicate that on the roll of
any of the correspondence schools we can expect to find
a number of pupils who have practically completed their
elementary education without having ever attended an ordi-
nary school. About one-quarter of the children in Grades
V and VI in Queensland have never been to school; a large
number of the others in these grades may have been to an
ordinary school for a short period only. It must also be
remembered that the Queensland school is the most recently established, and that the 90 children in Grades V and VI would commence their work in the first grade some years ago, when the school was much smaller than it is now. The figures for the older-established New South Wales School indicate a considerably larger number of pupils who have completed their elementary education without having attended an ordinary school.

Rate of Progress of Correspondence Pupils.

A precise measurement of the relative rate of progress of correspondence and of ordinary school pupils is practically out of the question. It would require the selection of a large group of correspondence pupils who had never attended school. It would then be necessary to apply to this group standardised tests of intelligence and of attainment, and then to compare the results with children of the same age and equal ability in attendance at ordinary schools.

It was, however, possible for some of the correspondence schools to give information as to the proportion of their pupils whose rate of progress is less than, equal to, or greater than the nominal rate of one grade per year. In Queensland it was found that 88 per cent. of the pupils progress at the normal rate, 7 per cent. take more than a year for a grade’s work, and 5 per cent. take less. In Victoria it is estimated that 30 per cent., chiefly in Grades VII and VIII, take over a year for a grade’s work, that 60 per cent. take the normal time, and that 10 per cent., chiefly in the early grades, do the grade’s work in less than a year. Tasmania finds that 50 per cent. of the pupils are promoted in twelve months or less, and that 50 per cent. take more than twelve months. The South Australian figures are: 87.6 per cent. for normal progress, 5.8 per cent. for more than a year in one grade, and 7.3 per cent. for less than a year. In Western Australia it is estimated that a very small percentage take more than a year for a grade’s work, that about 60 per cent. do the work in a year, and that about 33½ per cent. do it in less than a year. The high
figure for accelerated progress in Western Australia would appear to be connected with the flexibility of the system there adopted in grading and promotion.

It is to be realised that in the foregoing figures there are many possible factors of error, and that there may be variation from one year to another in any one school. There seems, however, to be ample justification for the conclusion that correspondence pupils can make progress which compares favourably, and under the best conditions even more than favourably, with that made by pupils attending ordinary schools.

**Results in Examinations: After Careers of Correspondence Pupils.**

Although it is not to be expected that many of the correspondence pupils will go on to do secondary work at high schools, an increasing number are doing so. In Queensland a total of 128 pupils have been successful in scholarship and entrance to high school examinations. The number in each year has increased steadily from 16 in 1925 to 41 in 1929.

In South Australia 73 correspondence school pupils have gained the Qualifying Certificate, which entitles the student to attend a high school. A number of former pupils are at present attending State or private secondary schools. Former correspondence pupils have even become teachers, and are now in charge of schools. South Australia sets aside twenty scholarships for children educated in remote parts of the State, and fifty other scholarships are open to such children in competition with children from larger schools. In 1925 a correspondence pupil won one of these competitive scholarships.

Western Australia also offers scholarships which enable the winners to attend district high schools or agricultural colleges. So far, 13 pupils of the correspondence school have won such scholarships. The reports on the work of these pupils are most satisfactory. "They show very good progress by the pupils, and the head master invariably
speaks of the initiative exhibited by correspondence pupils in their school work.” One such pupil has won a Government Exhibition, which has taken him on to the University, where he is now working.

In a statement by Mr. S. H. Smith, late Director of Education in New South Wales, regarding the work of the correspondence school in that State, it is reported that those ex-pupils who have passed on to high schools after receiving all their primary education by correspondence have done remarkably well. Several such pupils have passed the Intermediate Examination (marking the completion of three years of secondary education) with distinction, though their first sight of a school was when they travelled many miles to sit for the Qualifying Examination which would enable them to attend the high school.

Victoria has had a number of pupils who have attended high schools after completing their elementary education through correspondence. One boy won an entrance scholarship to the University High School, and afterwards did a brilliant University course.
CHAPTER VI.

SOME SPECIAL ASPECTS OF CORRESPONDENCE WORK

The Personal Side.

All who have had anything to do with the work of the correspondence schools agree that the most pleasing and perhaps the most essential aspect of their activities is to be found in the friendly personal relationships set up between teachers, pupils and parents. It is quite safe to say that the correspondence teachers know the pupils whom they have never or rarely seen better than the average teacher of the city class knows his or her pupils. It is possible to conceive of correspondence work being carried on in a stiff, formal and impersonal manner, but it is impossible to suppose that such work would have achieved anything like the numerical and educational success which has come to the Australian Correspondence Schools.

The encouragement of personal friendliness between teacher and pupil is not at all incompatible with insistence on hard work and high standards. The average child will always do better work when his motive is to win the teacher's commendation rather than to avoid his wrath. Many class teachers have amply proved these points in their own work, but their further demonstration in a wholesale way by the correspondence schools is one of a number of lessons which they have to offer education in general.

Although their methods differ in detail, all the States have emphasised this personal side of their work. Pupils are encouraged not only to send in their work, but to send photographs and to forward letters giving details of themselves, of the conditions under which they are living and working, of their interests and leisure occupations, and so on. Some of the schools make a special feature of sending personal letters to the child's parents. In all the correspondence schools the comments on corrected work are of a personal character. Special credit stamps are used to
encourage good work in South Australia. In Western Australia a progress graph accompanies each set of corrected work. Purely personal letters are written by the teachers; in some States these accompany each set of corrected work, in other States they go to each pupil under the teacher’s care in rotation, and in other States they are sent in a less systematic way. The personal letters of children are usually preserved and passed on to the next teacher dealing with the child. In most of the States, children are specially encouraged to visit the Correspondence Centre if at any time they are in the city with their parents. In several of the States it is not at all uncommon for the teachers to be invited to spend their holidays at the homes of their pupils, and for these invitations to be accepted. South Australia sends birthday and Christmas cards to the children at the appropriate times.

Conditions Under Which Pupils Are Working.

The letters from pupils and their parents often give a vivid picture of the difficulties under which the work is carried out and of what the correspondence work means to the home. Before giving extracts from such letters, we may quote from the report written by Mr. Lewis regarding the work in South Australia. “In some families the school work is done under the direction of a supervisor paid by the parents. . . . In the majority of cases, however, the supervisor is the mother, who undertakes this task in addition to her multifarious household duties. Her anxiety to educate her children is generally in inverse ratio to the sum of her own attainments, and though she often pathetically explains that she has had very little ‘schooling,’ she contrives, by a combination of woman-wit and mother-love, to help her children to achieve results that would redound to the credit of pupils in charge of a trained teacher. And what of those wonderful mothers, the lonely, gallant women of the outback, women who have helped the men to develop ‘the big scrubs farther out’? They have been the inspiration of an experiment in education whose dramatic pro-
Primary Education by Correspondence

has been a wonder to many an educationalist. The home supervision is carried out in a very creditable manner, sometimes under extreme difficulty. One mother writes: 'Please excuse Jean's papers being rather soiled this time, as we are living in a tent and the temperature is 117 degrees in the shade.'

"In many instances the work is not only satisfactory, but surprisingly good. Whatever the conditions may be, whether sowing or reaping, shearing, fruit picking or fruit drying, drought or flood, through the period of great treks of cattle, through smiling harvests and the frowns of the lean years, the lessons are being constantly dispatched to the correspondence school, although, perhaps, they may be a little late or accompanied by a note to explain that the dirt on the paper is because of the dust storms. ... One heroic mother writes: 'It is 11 o'clock, and I have to be up at 4. We do not have many idle times. I have 17 to cook for.'"

In another part of his report, Mr. Lewis states: "The interest of the parents in the work of the children is very cheering, and the very marked improvement shown in what were at first regarded as hopeless cases is very encouraging. Some parents not only supervise the work of their own children, but perform the same office for the children of their less-educated neighbours. Of the children enrolled during the first year, 90 had never seen the inside of a schoolroom. One family lived 400 miles from the nearest school; others had not a school within from 100 to 175 miles from their homes; whilst the average distance from any school for the total enrolment was 28½ miles. . . ."

"One mother writes: 'The girls have to do their work in the barn, so as to get a little peace,' and another, 'Washing day is a good day for lessons, for I can get the children round me in the wash-house and give them spelling and tables.' In one northern family the children begin the day by milking eight cows and drawing water for thirty head of cattle. Yet the work done by all these families is beyond the average standard."
In another part of his report he states that in one case a brother and sister journeyed 120 miles on a camel and 50 miles by motor car to reach the nearest examination centre when they were ready to sit for the Qualifying Certificate. Another child travelled 140 miles to Maree. Some have arrived at the examination room camel-sick. One mother, writing to one of the correspondence schools, stated that her children had not seen any other white children for a period of five years.

Some years ago the Victorian Correspondence School successfully taught a boy, neither of whose parents could read or write. A neighbour undertook the task of supervising his work.

Another interesting incident was that of the little Victorian girl, who waited on the road near her home on the look-out for some passer-by who might, perchance, be able to supply her with the answer to a question in her lessons which was puzzling her and her parents.

The following extracts, taken almost at random, are selected chiefly from letters received in Victoria and New South Wales. They could be multiplied many times over from the records of any of the correspondence schools.

Here, for example, is a homely letter illustrating the minor difficulties which arise:—“This set should have been posted last Saturday, but was overlooked by Dad, and Pat’s blue eyes (Pat is the pupil) danced with mischief when giving a dig about it. Dad put the rubber away carefully, as there had been too much of it, and now cannot find it, so Brian’s handiwork will have to remain. He is only two, but can do a lot of mischief.”

Betty, aged nine years nine months, had just started Grade VII work. Her mother writes: “All the dolls were lined up after school to-day for their first lesson in roots. She learns everything by heart through teaching her dolls.” At the same time, Betty wrote: “That civics is terrible stuff, isn’t it? I suppose I shall like it better when I begin to study it.” One child told her teacher that her lessons looked
clean and neat when she sent them away, but when they returned they were painted all over with red ink.

One parent expresses her gratitude as follows:—"The coming of the lessons is the one great event in the lives of these bush children. We are grateful to you for the fresh hopes they bring us in connection with the education of our children. This matter is no longer a perplexity; we only regret that we did not know sooner of such a splendid institution as the Correspondence School."

Another parent says: "We have decided to send Jean to school. We felt that she needs the stimulus of having other children in the class with her. I can never lose my interest in the Correspondence School, for I think Jean did very well to work from first class to fourth class in two years."

The following extracts show that the correspondence schools have some influence in keeping people on the land:— . . . "We would have had to shift about two years ago only for getting the Correspondence School." . . . "I wish to make some slight effort to show my appreciation of the very great assistance yourself and your staff have been to me. Farming in a rough bush home, away from school, with four little ones, is in itself a very great hardship, and the responsibility of teaching them was often a heart-breaking load. With little ability, and heavy work from daylight until dark, it was impossible to pay the attention to the teaching of the children, and it looked many times that I would have to give up all my hard pioneering work and so go to some place where at least they might get a better opportunity. The tactful and kindly way your teachers have served my little ones is indeed remarkable; mail day is looked forward to with delight. . . . With a very scanty education myself, and my young days spent in Far-western Queensland as a stockman and horse-breaker . . . you can readily understand how much I appreciate the load you carry for me."

It is impossible to estimate the extent to which the correspondence facilities have revived and stimulated educa-
PRIMARY EDUCATION BY CORRESPONDENCE

GRAPH II.

(By courtesy of the Education Department, South Australia)
tional interests in the parents. "The Correspondence School is just wonderfully good for the children of the back country, and we appreciate its teaching very much; in fact, find them so interesting that I go over the sheets as carefully as the girls."

A striking case is cited of an illiterate employee on a farm where the children were receiving correspondence tuition. He could not tell one letter or figure from another. The children taught him the early rudiments of reading and number work. He became interested and ambitious, and soon began to master the harder work. The parent wrote: "He does all three boys' work each time, and corrects it when you return the books. He is so grateful. I'm afraid it's obtaining education by means of false pretenses, as he is 32; but I'm sure you will forgive us all." A Sydney gentleman happened to hear of the young fellow's grit, and gave him a job in the city, so that he could continue his education. When the Correspondence School last heard of him he was well on the road to success.

Special Developments in Western Australia.

The writer is indebted to the report of Mr. Miles for an account of some interesting developments in Western Australia. In 1926 the experiment was tried of organising an educational tour for correspondence pupils. Twenty-five of the senior boys were brought to Perth for ten days. Arrangements were made for them to be accommodated in the homes of city boys, where they were treated with much hospitality. The time of the Royal Agricultural Show was chosen, and this and the city itself provided many opportunities for educational sight-seeing. The financing of the trip was assisted greatly by much reduced railway fares from their homes, by free passes from city transport authorities, and by the services of private motor cars.

Two years later a tour for girls was arranged. Sixty girls spent two weeks in camp at the Agricultural Show Grounds. A fee of £2/10/- per pupil covered all expenses. Much assistance was given by the Parents and Citizens'
Federation, some of the ladies of that association going into camp with the girls. The pupils were taken each day by their teachers to business houses, factories, warehouses, and State institutions. The part played by these in our social life was suitably explained. During the rest periods in camp, lectures were given on literature, drawing, music and needlework. While in camp, the girls were medically examined, and parents were notified of minor troubles from which their children suffered. Dental attention was also given to children who required it. In 1930 another party of 50 correspondence pupils was brought to Perth.

Mr. Miles states: "One very valuable result of such visits is the personal contact of teacher and pupils. The visitors never fail to visit the room in which their lesson sheets are prepared and their papers corrected. On such occasions the visitors take possession of their teachers, and it is hard to tell who is more thrilled at the meeting, pupil or teacher. But it is quite certain that such visits have a mighty influence for good on the visitors, and that they make manifest the blessedness of the teachers' calling."

Western Australia has also made a feature of a monthly magazine prepared specifically for correspondence pupils. "Our Rural Magazine" has been in such demand from State and private schools, as well as correspondence pupils, that the circulation is now 10,000 a month. Each issue contains a letter from some prominent citizen of the State or the Empire, addressed to the children whose parents are doing pioneering work in the remote parts of the State. Prominent citizens of foreign countries have already been asked to contribute to future issues. Each year a feature is made of some special topic which is dealt with in each issue. The story of the discovery and development of the State and the story of the Empire have so far been dealt with. Great contributions to human welfare will be the central topic for the present year, and will form the introduction to a series on the League of Nations. Each issue of the magazine contains a section dealing with books and their writers, in order to encourage pupils to send for the books in the Correspon-
dence School library. A section on gardening encourages the children to beautify their homes, and this is backed up in a very practical way by the sending of seeds to pupils who wish to use them. In 1930, well over 5000 packets were forwarded in this way. It is proposed to develop other home projects in the same way. The co-operation has been obtained of the leading experts in the bird life, the plant life, and the insect life of the State. The gentlemen concerned contribute illustrated articles, and the children are encouraged to send specimens for identification and information. As a result of these activities, correspondence pupils forwarded exhibits in nature study to the recent Royal Agricultural Show, where their scope and quality surprised the judges and others who saw them.

The magazine also encourages original contributions in poetry and prose by the pupils. Prizes are offered, and the best work is published. Mr. Miles states: “There is nothing really remarkable in the children’s work; but it is surely remarkable that in our large schools so much creative talent in self-expression is allowed to wilt through lack of encouragement. Our experience goes to prove the truth of Cizeck’s remarks about ‘taking off the lid’ with regard to creative self-expression. In this matter, correspondence pupils have one advantage not shared by pupils of the city schools; they live with their idea or inspiration until the process is psychologically completed through self-expression. The idea or inspiration of the city child, however, is too frequently crowded out by the excitements of town life.”

Special efforts have been made to ensure wide and wise reading by the correspondence pupils. First, second and third-year reading courses have been organised for the senior classes, and the satisfactory completion of each is marked by a certificate. The books were very carefully selected, and the library now has about 2000 volumes purchased by contributions from the parents, aided by a grant of less than £90 from the Education Department.
Encouragement of Reading in South Australia.

Most of the States make a special feature of wide reading by the pupils, and, incidentally, by many of their parents. The head mistress of the South Australian School conducts a reading circle. The pupils in the upper classes are encouraged to read Scott, Dickens, George Eliot, and other standard works. The members of the circle pay for their own books, and thus form the nucleus of a library in their own home. In addition, the Correspondence School has a circulating library of 2030 books. Parents often make donations to the library as a mark of their appreciation of the work of the school.

Horticulture in Victoria.

The Victorian correspondence pupils are encouraged to take advantage of the facilities available at the State School Horticultural Society. The Horticultural Society sends a letter twice each year to the pupils enrolled at the Correspondence Branch. These letters seek to interest the children in horticulture, in pasture improvement, and so on, and serve to draw attention to the provisions made at the Society's nursery for the supply of plants and seeds. The extent to which this has resulted in home gardening by the pupils is revealed by the fact that during the past year correspondence pupils obtained from the Society 11,784 packets of seed.

The foregoing do not by any means exhaust the special activities which the various correspondence schools have undertaken. They serve, however, to illustrate the fact that the schools are concerned with far more than the provision of the merely formal aspects of education.
CHAPTER VII.

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS AND PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING CORRESPONDENCE WORK.

The Handicap of Isolation.

It would be quite incorrect to regard the correspondence work which has been described in the foregoing chapters as nothing but an administrative device which has proved successful in carrying educational facilities to children in isolated districts. It should have been obvious that the principles and practices involved are not without significance for education in general. It will be useful to deal with these directly.

It would be possible to make out a good case for the view that educational science owes much to methods worked out with children suffering from disabilities of various kinds. The scientific study of individual differences between children, the modern realisation of the importance of adequate sensory stimuli, the careful analysis of the processes of learning involved in the fundamental school subjects, the importance and value of occupational work, the necessity for a clear distinction between the logically simple and the psychologically simple—these and similar concepts or movements owe more than is generally realised to pioneering work done with blind, deaf, or mentally handicapped children. In a similar way, it seems likely that contributions of general value to education can arise from the measures taken to meet the needs of children subjected to the social disability of isolation.

It will readily be admitted that the disability in question is a genuine one. Very important elements in a child’s education come from his personal contact with his teachers and with his fellows. The opportunities which the school affords, or should afford, for the boy or girl to learn to cooperate with others, to assume responsibility among equals, to subordinate self to loyalty for the team or the school, to
exercise the privilege of leadership, to enjoy the pleasures of companionship and the thrill of competition—these are some of the valuable social experiences normally denied to children who cannot attend school. Similarly, the city child has available to him advantages of an informational character through opportunities of first-hand observation of the commercial, political, scientific and artistic aspects of modern community life.

Some Compensations.

But the matter is not nearly so one-sided as it appears, even if we overlook the sad failure of many schools to realise effectively their opportunities for character building and for making use of the wealth of the child’s every-day experiences. Teaching children in classes has certain disadvantages, apart from the obvious difficulty of catering for the requirements and abilities of the children as individuals. It is not going too far to say that much of our class teaching places a discount on independent thinking and acting.* The member of a class must usually be a conformist if he is to avoid troubles and difficulties. It is often sufficient if some one member of the class provides the correct “answer” to a question. For perhaps one-half of the class the process of thinking through to the correct solution is short-circuited. In the great majority of cases the question itself is a teacher-made one. The child who does not know is not at all anxious to announce, or even to admit, the fact, since, even if he is fortunate enough to have a teacher who inspires confidences of this nature, he does not wish to appear to disadvantage before his fellows.

The child whose education takes place as does that of correspondence pupils is not subjected to the constant temptation to adopt the ideas and solutions of others. Intellectually, he must stand on his own feet. He learns to look to books and printed matter rather than to word of mouth for

*A rather extreme example observed by the writer was provided by a student teacher who wished to give what he thought was an effective demonstration of the incorrectness of the answer of a boy whom we shall call Tommy. “Hands up those who agree with Tommy,” he said; then, turning to Tommy, “You see no one agrees with you, so you must be wrong.”
guidance in forming his ideas. One must suppose, then, that these habits counteract to some extent the disadvantages of isolation from a class group. It is interesting to note that correspondence pupils who have passed on to high schools have been reported to show initiative and independence. On the informational side, too, the correspondence pupil is not without his advantages. He may be without the multitudinous sights and sounds of city life, but he is surrounded by stimuli less artificial in character and more readily appropriated by the immature mind. Facts in nature study, geography, agriculture, and rural economics play an important part in his life, and all that the correspondence teacher has to do is to develop and systematise such interests.

**Correspondence Work as Individual Instruction.**

The chief interest in correspondence work, when we consider it from the point of view of educational technique, lies in the fact that it is essentially a method of individual instruction. Looked at in this way, it must take its place with the Dalton Plan, the Winnetka Plan,† and with other similar schemes for breaking down the rigidity of traditional class instruction. It differs, of course, from these plans, in that they adopt individual methods from preference, whereas correspondence work is individual from necessity. It differs also in that none of the schemes for individualising instruction in schools go to the length of completely abolishing class lessons. Class lessons are usually retained for subjects such as literature, where one of the chief aims is the inculcation of appreciation.

The chief reason for devising methods of individual instruction is not so much the pursuit of an educational philosophy as the essentially modern realisation of the extent and importance of individual differences in learning. The well-attested success of such methods when properly devised and faithfully carried out arises from the fact that

they are scientifically sound. If the fundamental school subjects are treated, in the main, by individual methods of instruction, there still remains in the school ample scope for the cultivation of the pupils’ social qualities.

If it is allowed that the correspondence work described in the foregoing chapters is surprisingly effective, in view of the difficulties under which it labours, it may reasonably be claimed that this success is made possible because of the fact that the instruction is essentially individual in character. The time which the teacher would normally spend in teaching class lessons is devoted to carefully going over the work of one pupil after another. Each child’s difficulties and requirements can be discerned and catered for, no time is wasted in explaining for slower children points which are already obvious to the brighter child. There is no danger of the class moving ahead and leaving the slower individuals behind, with some vital point unmastered.

If the foregoing is correct, there is scope for the much more extensive trial of individual methods of instruction in Australian schools. Probably the greatest advantage of such methods is found in the possibility which they provide of avoiding the tragedy of repetition of grades. If each child becomes the unit of instruction in the fundamental subjects, his rate of progress affects no one but himself; there is no need for the promotion *en bloc* at a given time of all except a few unfortunates; it is just as easy to cater for the child who needs fourteen or sixteen months to complete a grade’s work as it is to cater for the child who can master it in ten, eight or even six months. The repetition of grades is less a failure on the part of the child than it is on the part of the school.

**The Usefulness of Assignments.**

For the repetition of grades, individual instruction substitutes repetition of assignments, or portions of assignments. It is interesting to note that the assignment came to play an essential part in correspondence work, as it does
in the Dalton Plan or the Winnetka Plan. A year's work in any subject must obviously be dealt with in sections or units. In ordinary class work these units are topic units rather than time units. The teacher, for example, deals with one type of sum after another until the year's curriculum in arithmetic is covered. In individual instruction the term assignment or goal is used, because the unit is definitely presented to the child as a stage or problem which he is asked to master. Though the units need to be as clearly defined with reference to their subject-matter as are the teacher's class lessons, they are generally presented to the pupil in individual instruction in the form of time units. This is done so as to indicate the length of time which, on the average, it ought to take to deal with them, and on account of the general convenience of the method.

There is a difference between the assignments of the Dalton Plan and the goals of the Winnetka Plan which is worth noting. The formulation of the Dalton Plan assignments is left to the inspiration—and consequently the mercy—of the individual teacher. The Winnetka Plan assignments are standardised, and are the result of a number of years' co-operative work and study by teachers in the Winnetka schools. It will be noted that the assignments used in any one of the Australian correspondence schools resemble those of the Winnetka Plan in that they do not vary from teacher to teacher or from year to year, except when revised. There is, however, this difference—the Winnetka curriculum in any subject for one year is modified if it is found that any pupil of normal intelligence doing steady work cannot complete the assignments within the year. In this sense the assignments determine the curriculum. The Australian correspondence school assignments have been arrived at by taking the course of study prescribed for the ordinary schools in the State concerned, and dividing it into units. Here the curriculum has determined the assignments.

There is much to be said in favour of the assignment idea in general. It lends itself not only to a careful examination of the curriculum, but to thorough mastery of each
stage by the pupil. The correspondence schools seem likely to make a contribution to the work of the ordinary schools in Australia in this direction, as well as others. In some of the States the lesson sheets of the correspondence school are widely used, even at present. For example, in Western Australia the demand for them has been so great that the Education Department has arranged to sell them to any teacher at half-a-crown per set of twenty papers. It is stated that the correspondence class papers in English and arithmetic for Grades V and VI are to be found in almost every school in the State. On the whole, this interest is likely to have arisen from the instructional value of the sheets rather than from their usefulness as assignments or units.

There is almost certainly scope for the careful examination of Australian curricula from the point of view of the amount of ground they cover in a given time, the order in which topics are treated, and the stage at which given topics are introduced. Although in Australia, as in other countries, there has been a steady growth away from the arm-chair type of curriculum fashioned in the administrative office, the possibilities of a curriculum based on careful research in schools are far from being fully realised. It is reasonable to suppose that such developments are capable of receiving much assistance from the experience of the correspondence schools. The use of assignments in ordinary schools, backed up by careful testing, would be of even more general value for this purpose, since caution would have to be used in arguing from work carried out under the special conditions which hold for correspondence work.

The suggestion that the division of the curriculum into units or assignments might make for efficiency in teaching and for researches which would lead to modifications in the curriculum does not mean the advocacy of a more formal approach to the work of the school. Perhaps even now the chief defect of Australian schools is the lingering on of the formalism which was so characteristic of school life twenty years ago. Teachers now have a considerable amount of
freedom to arrange that as much of the school work as possible will be related to the every-day lives of the children. However, a number of causes prevent the full exploitation of such possibilities.

The use of the assignment does not necessarily imply formalism; in fact, the project, which is really a special type of assignment, is the very means by which many modern schools are seeking to combat formalism.

Fundamentally, the matter resolves itself largely into a question of the motives which underlie the work of the pupils. In subjects where skill has to be developed by careful stages, each strictly dependent on prior stages, it may not always be possible to appeal to the inherent interest of the task. The feeling of progressive mastery, backed up by a desire for the approval of a well-liked teacher, will serve to motivate a vast amount of work by the average child. Perhaps it is unfortunate that this is so, since it tempts us to overlook possibilities for making school work attractive in itself. It is specially unfortunate for those who cannot keep up with the average scholar, and thus achieve little but a sense of failure, as it is for those who have a teacher whose words of praise and encouragement are few.

The assignment, especially if accompanied by some device for enabling the pupil to gauge his own progress, is specially useful in appealing to the motive of progressive mastery. By far the greater part of any curriculum has much interest in its own right if skilfully presented. Here the assignments can take on the attractiveness of projects. In subjects like history and geography there is no need to tabulate and standardise in detail the facts which children should gain from their studies. Twenty or thirty years ago the subjects in question consisted of little more than a tabulation of facts which children were expected to memorise. The dry bones must be clothed with flesh and blood, but we must see that there is sufficient stiffening of bones to avoid flabbiness and inefficiency. Well-drawn-up assignments can cater for both necessities.
The Value of Personal Knowledge of Pupils.

Undoubtedly some of the achievements of the correspondence schools are directly due to the fine personal relationships set up between teacher and pupil. The teacher is just as much interested in the new pony, of which Tom is immensely proud, or of the plans for the next holidays, as she is in the fact that nine-tenths of the last arithmetic assignment was correctly done. In ordinary classes it is more or less inevitable that teacher and pupil should occasionally rub each other up the wrong way. Such antipathies are of more than minor importance in a child's education. They would be less common if the teacher knew more of the out-of-school life of the child, of his personal difficulties with his playfellows, of his leisure interests and hobbies, of any unfavourable circumstances or poor training in the home. The time spent in gaining such knowledge would be time well spent.

The Development of Initiative.

Finally, the work of the correspondence schools suggests the possibility that the ordinary school might do more to encourage the growth of the qualities of self-reliance and initiative on the part of the pupils. For the pupil in an ordinary class, help is always at hand, either surreptitiously or officially. The wise teacher will devise many ways in which the individual child will be encouraged to act and think on his own initiative; he will seek to avoid exercising any tyranny, even of the pleasantest kind, over the thinking of the immature minds in his charge; he will see that as often as possible each child is thrown on his own resources; he will welcome and encourage any sign of originality. It will probably be agreed that we need to give much more attention to these matters than we have done in the past.

The foregoing considerations have arisen from the attempt to draw some conclusions of general value from the work of the correspondence schools. It would be out of place for one not actually engaged in the work to go far in
attempting to make suggestions for the correspondence schools themselves when they are doing their work so enthusiastically and so successfully. Those who are responsible for the work done in these schools would be the first to admit that finality had not yet been reached. It is hoped that the present report will be of service in suggesting features of the work done in some of the States which it might be desirable to initiate in others.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

It may, however, be helpful to state in the form of a summary the general principles and practices which the correspondence schools have found to work successfully, and to add to these any further suggestions which occur, particularly those which arise from special provisions which have been dealt with in the body of the report. The first five points are taken directly from conclusions stated by Mr. Miles at the close of his report, and others are closely related to his conclusions.

1. The key to success in correspondence work for elementary school children is co-operation between parents and teachers. If the parents can be made to feel that the teachers are personally interested in the welfare of their pupils, then, in the great majority of cases, they make friends of the teachers and co-operate heartily with them. The personal letters between teacher, pupils and parents are powerful stimuli in securing co-operation.

2. A parent or some member of the family must be able to read or write, in order to help pupils of the junior classes, but a high degree of education on the part of the home supervisor is not absolutely necessary.

3. It is advisable for the pupils to work to a timetable that meets the convenience of the parent or home supervisor. The advantage of working to a time-table is that children learn the habit to work regularly and systematically.
4. It pays to insist on quality rather than amount of work from the very beginning. If this is done, the ideal of neatness and orderliness can be satisfactorily attained by at least 90 per cent. of the pupils.

5. Achievement is a powerful stimulus. Care should be taken that each pupil achieves some success in each assignment.

6. The assignment method, in which the curriculum is presented to the pupil in the form of unitary but related tasks, each of which is carefully corrected, is the most effective and probably the only satisfactory method of carrying out correspondence work. Much care and attention is needed to see that the assignments are within the scope of the pupil, that they are made as attractive as possible, and that they represent suitable subdivisions of the curriculum.

7. Educational diagnosis is a very important feature of the work. In the first place, it is necessary to ascertain the general educational level of a pupil who is being enrolled for the first time. It is desirable that separate assessment should be made in each of the fundamental subjects. For this purpose, standardised educational tests would be of great assistance. If the size of the correspondence school permits, it is an advantage for one or more special teachers to be trained and to undertake the work of determining the classification of new pupils.

In the second place, careful diagnosis of the cause of children's errors is essential; merely to point out errors is not sufficient. By a little careful study of each child’s work, it is usually possible for the correspondence teachers to remedy mistakes by getting to their source.

8. Full advantage should be taken of the possibilities which correspondence instruction affords in the way of flexibility of grading and promotion. In a carefully worked out system of individual instruction it is possible to make a child’s rate of progress in any subject independent of any considerations except his ability for that subject and his
industry. This is specially advantageous both for the child whose ability is greater than average and for the child who cannot learn at the normal rate. It eliminates the worse features of the problem of retardation, it makes unnecessary the repetition of grades, and it solves the problem of the child who commences work during the school year instead of at the beginning of it.

9. Though under such a system as the foregoing it will be found that a certain number of children will be working at different standards in different subjects, it may be convenient, if not necessary, to select some one subject as the major subject in determining the child's classification. There is little doubt that for this purpose the subject of English should be chosen on account of its key position in regard to the child's learning in general. It may further be suggested that the subdivisions of the subject of English which should carry most weight are those of composition, considered chiefly from the standpoint of fertility and originality of idea, reading vocabulary, and reading comprehension; the subdivisions of spelling, oral reading and memorisation of prose or poetry should carry relatively little weight.

10. One of the most important functions of the correspondence school is the encouragement of reading on a wide and wise scale. For the majority of correspondence pupils this will be a much more valuable type of training than the achievement of advanced standards in more formal work. A good library of selected books is an almost indispensable adjunct to a correspondence school. The reading circle, the regular reviewing of books, the publication of notes about authors, and other devices have been successfully employed to encourage and guide the reading of pupils.

11. Much can be done to remedy the disadvantages arising from the isolation of correspondence pupils. By means of their own school newspaper or magazine, they can be brought into touch with the wide world in which they live, the significance of national days and events can be
brought home to them, current history can be made meaningful in an appropriate way, they can be led to grasp in an elementary form the economic structure of society and the part played in it by themselves and their parents. The more ambitious plan of educational tours has been tried with great advantage to those pupils who have been able to participate in them.

12. Not the least important part of the correspondence school's work is that of cultivating an intelligent interest by the child in his own environment. This cannot well be done by regular standardised assignments, since the surroundings and opportunities of pupils differ so materially. It has been found possible to introduce successfully the subjects of nature study, drawing, sewing, and other forms of occupational work. Gardening and other home projects are also promising developments.

13. The development of post-primary correspondence courses of a cultural and practical character seems to be a step in the right direction. If a student proposes to take up professional work, it would not seem desirable for him to go past the primary stage without attending a school. But it should eventually be possible to offer to the ordinary correspondence pupil who has completed a reasonable primary education an opportunity of continuing by selecting one or more courses from an attractive list of cultural and vocational subjects. Domestic science is already offered in one State. Apart from the question of expense, there seems no reason why elementary courses in economics, animal husbandry, forestry, agriculture and similar subjects should not be offered. If suitably linked up with the regular correspondence work as at present conducted, such courses would probably be in wide demand.

14. A question likely to arise in some States is that of the closer co-ordination between centres which are carrying out correspondence work at different stages. In some States the correspondence schools are undertaking post-primary work, in other States there are distinct centres.
Whichever method is better, there can be no doubt of the desirability of co-operation between the various stages and facilities.

15. Administrative authorities in Australia would appear to be justified in anticipating still further growth on the part of the correspondence schools.
APPENDIX I.

Samples of Pupil's Work and Letters.

(These samples show work which is typical of much which could be quoted.)

Child in Grade I. Composition on a Cat.

Once I had a cat.
His name was Dickie.
He ate our chickens.
He is dead.
I miss him.

Letter from Child of Eight Years Who Has Been a Few Months in Grade II.

dear teacher

I am very glad that I had so many credits for my lessons. Mother was so glad, and so was daddy. Daddy has a lot of crop up. It is so pretty. little baby Greta will soon be one year old. She can say a few words. She is a pet. With love from Olaf.

The following lines were written by a girl of 9 in Class III:

ALMOND BLOSSOM.

Last night when we were all in bed,
The little fairies came;
They danced around the almond tree,
And clapped their tiny hands in glee,
And played a splendid game.
Some flew up into the boughs,
While others stayed below;
They pulled the petals from the flowers,
And threw them down in scented showers,
Pretending they were snow.

To-day, beneath the almond tree,
I see the white flowers lie.
The boughs are looking sad and brown,
Their lovely blossoms all thrown down,
To perish and to die.

But soon the bare brown arms will be
A clustering mass of green,
And little velvet almonds show,
That quickly into brown nuts grow,
Where once the flowers had been.

SUNSET.

(By Eleanor Watts, of Kojonup, a Class VI pupil.)

The sun sank slowly below the western horizon, dyeing the clouds for a moment a glorious golden red, which, as the sun disappeared, gradually faded away, leaving them dull and grey. The sky grew dark, and stars began to peep and twinkle, as if laughing at the old world they saw every night. Then the moon rose up, first round and red, then orange, which faded to gold, then pale yellow, and finally silver-white. Trees, house, and all things around cast their grotesque shadows. Night had come.

While gazing on this scene, I thought how the sun rises every morning, sets every evening, the moon waxes and wanes, the seasons come and go, just as they would if we were not here, and yet how important we think ourselves!
“Sylverley”
P. B. 24
St Arnaud
8/8/30.

Dear Teacher

Last Thursday I went to a fair held in the town hall at St Arnaud. I got a whistle, a balloon, and a drawing book out of the fish pond. There was a lot of stalls where you could buy things. Mother bought me a nice vase for flowers. I have a new tricycle. This is the third one I have had, and I do like riding on it. It has been raining today. One of the big pet lambs will stand up on his hind legs and beg for oats. With love,

Your little pupil

Keith McDonald.

Letter written by a child aged seven years nine months. This child commenced work in Grade I in the middle of 1928, and at the time of writing the letter had just commenced the work of Grade IV. He has never attended school.
APPENDIX II.

Samples of Instruction Leaflets.

The following instruction leaflets issued by the New South Wales Correspondence School illustrate:—

(a) One of the earliest sheets sent to the pupil commencing at Class I.

(b) An instruction sheet in arithmetic for Class IV.

(c) An essay sheet for Class V, which follows up some work previously set in composition.

ENGLISH.

LOWER FIRST CLASS. LEAFLET 3. PAGE 1.

Keep all your leaflets together.

You have learnt all your letters now. What a clever little child you are!

This week we will learn how some of these letters "talk." Yes, the letters a, b, c, d, and so on, all talk in their own little way!

When we learn this we say we are learning the sound of the letters.

Tell mother what each letter is as she points to a, e, i, o, u.

To the Supervisor: The sound of each letter is heard in the words, a in at, cat and so on, e in egg, pet, net and so on.

\[ a \]

Now say each of these words clearly:—At, cat, fat, mat, an, can, ran, dad, bag, cap, Sam, ham.

Do you hear the sound of "a" in each of these words? Tell mother what it is. Then say aloud \[ a \] says "a" as in "cat."
Say each word clearly:—Egg, pet, net, hen, Ben, bed, keg.  Do you hear what e says? Tell mother.

Say each word clearly:—Ink, ill, in, it, kit. What does “i” say? Tell mother.

On, hot, dog, Bob, top. Can you hear the little “o” talking in each word. Tell mother what he says.

Listen while mother says:—Cup, hut, jug, bun, bud, rug. Then tell mother what “u” says.

Say each word clearly:—Cat, cake, cut, cane, cod, coat, cock. Do you hear what “c” says in c-at, c-ake, and so on? Tell mother what “c” says.

Makes a dear little sound—listen! Tom, toe, tea, tent, tap, tip. Do you hear him? Tell mother.

Say each word clearly:—Baby, Bob, book, bread, bun. Tell mother what “b” says.

Makes a big noise when he talks. Listen! Gun, girl, gate, goat, game. Can you say it?
\textbf{m} is the letter we love best because it says:—
Mum, man, mop, milk, mug.
It hardly makes a noise.
Can you say it softly?

\textbf{h} makes us think of a windy day for he makes us breathe hard:—
What does “h” say? hat, hand, home, hair, hit. Tell mother.

\textbf{l} is the tall man with a long voice. Listen! Long lolly, leg, lamp, lid, lace.
Can you tell mother what “l” says?

Try to put these sounds together. Say them \textbf{clearly}, and mother will put a line under those you missed so that I will know.

\begin{align*}
\text{at} & \quad \text{Now say the two together} \quad \ldots \quad \text{at.} \\
\text{et} & \quad \text{Now say the two together} \quad \ldots \quad \text{et.} \\
\text{it} & \quad \text{Now say the two together} \quad \ldots \quad \text{it.} \\
\text{ot} & \quad \text{Now say the two together} \quad \ldots \quad \text{ot.} \\
\text{ut} & \quad \text{Now say the two together} \quad \ldots \quad \text{ut.}
\end{align*}

Do these every day and you will soon be able to \textbf{read} quite clearly.
WRITING.—Copy carefully from the letters and words set in your book. Do you very best always.

\[\text{a e i o u at et it ot ut} \]

DICTATION.—To the Supervisor: On the last school day dictate these letters to the child and let him write them unaided in his book:

\[h, p, m, c, e, g, s, t.\]

(Please do not alter or rub out any mistakes he makes).

NURSERY RHYME.

Learn:—Handy Pandy Jack-a-dandy,
Loved plum cake and sugar candy,
Bought some at a grocer’s shop,
And out he came with a hop, hop, hop.

ARITHMETIC.—Copy two lines of good figures from the headlines set in your book:

\[0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9\]

Take counters and arrange them in this way:

Count 1 2 1 2
0 0 0 0
2 2
Say 00 and 00 are 4.
2 and 2 are 4.

Count 1 2 1 2 1 2
0 0 0 0 0 0
Say 00 and 00 are 4 and 00 are 6.
2 and 2 are 4 and 2 are 6.

Now count them in this way:—

\[\text{2 4 6}\]
0 0 0 0
Say 2, 4, 6.
Write these numbers in your book:
Seven, three, nought, five, nine, six, two, eight.

Write answers to these:
Take 2 away from OOOO. Write the answer here:
Put 3 more with OO. Write the answer here:
Take 4 from OOOOOOO. Write the answer here:
Put 5 with OO. Write the answer here:

SEND THIS SHEET BACK FOR CORRECTION.

FOURTH CLASS.

INSTRUCTION LEAFLETS.

ARITHMETIC.

FIRST DAY.—Multiplication of Money. Sums 1 to 6.
SECOND DAY.—Tables. Sums 7 to 12.
THIRD DAY.—Mental Work. Sums 13 to 18.
FOURTH DAY.—Timepieces. Sums 19 to 24.

(I estimated the height of the crop of maize in the picture on page 83, leaflet 21, to be 11 feet 6 inches by the following method:—In the first place, I noticed a man in the picture. I considered him to be 5 ft. 9 in. high, which is the average height of Australians. Then I used this height as a measure by which to judge the height of the maize. Now, I estimated that the maize was twice as high as the man, and so I saw it must be twice 5 ft. 9 in., or 11 ft. 6 in. high.

Of course, if the man is above average height, the maize may be more than 11 ft. 6 in. high, while if the man is below the average height, it may be less than 11 ft. 6 in.
high. Those pupils who estimated the height as from 10 feet 6 inches to 12 feet were considered to be correct in their estimate.)

Tables.

Complete the following:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inches</th>
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<th>Feet</th>
<th>Inches</th>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>72</td>
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<td>96</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>60</td>
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Multiplication of Money (s. d.).

Problem.—Find the cost of 9 tins of salmon at 1/9½ a tin.

Since 1 tin of salmon costs 1/9½, 9 tins will cost 9 times 1/9½. The sum is shown below. Write the multiplying figure under the pence, not under the halfpence.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
1 \quad 9 \frac{1}{2} \\
\times \\
9
\end{array}
\]

We say "9 times a halfpenny, 9 halfpennies, which make 4½d." We write the ½d. down, and carry the 4 pence. Now 9 times 9 pence = 81 pence; 81d. and the 4d. we carried make 85d.; 85d. = 7/1. We write down the 1d. and carry the 7s. Again, 9 times 1s. = 9s.; 9s. and 7s. carried make 16s., which is written in the answer. The sum is as follows:—

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c}
\text{s.} & \text{d.} & 4 \frac{1}{2} \text{d.} \\
\hline
1 & 9 \frac{1}{2} & 81 \text{d.} \\
\hline
16 & 1 \frac{1}{2} & 7 \text{d.} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

\text{Answer:} 16 \text{s.} 1 \frac{1}{2} \text{d.}
Although this sum can be worked mentally, I have shown the working. In the following sums, show the working as in the example given above:

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<td>3</td>
<td>7½</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9½</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>8½</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6½</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/8½</td>
<td>x 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>2/2½</td>
<td>x 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>1/8½</td>
<td>x 10</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>11 times 1s. 5½d.</td>
<td>12 times 1s. 4½d.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Find the cost of 8 tins of salmon at 1s. 9½d. a tin.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Large tins of jam are 1s. 4½d. each. Find the price of 9 such tins.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>What must I pay for 5 yards of sheeting at 2s. 7½d. a yard?</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>What is the cost of 7 lb. of lollies at 1s. 9d. a lb.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>What would I pay for 5 lb. of butter at 2s. 3½d. a lb.?</td>
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Revision.

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<td>8,273</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>538</td>
<td>1,384</td>
<td>895</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>5,937</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>6,304</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>5,937</td>
<td>1,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22.  38,325 — 18,105. 
23. How much time is spent at Nyngan if the train arrives at 1.45 p.m. and departs at 2.8 p.m.? (The working must be set out as shown in leaflet 23.)
24. How long does it take to travel by train from Junee to Narrandera? The train leaves Junee at 8.55 a.m., and arrives at Narrandera at 11.6 a.m. the same day.
25. A train leaves Brewarrina at 8.10 a.m., and arrives at Byrock at 10.55 a.m. How long does the journey take?
26. I bought the following goods:—Hair broom, 6s. 9d.; carpet sweeper, £1 8s. 6d.; chamois leather, 5s. 9d.; feather duster, 1s. 11d. What was the total cost?
27. I paid for the goods mentioned in the last sum with three £1 notes. What change did I receive?
28. A boy had 5s. 10d. in his money box, and his father gave him 12s. 6d. on his birthday. How much had he then?

**Notation.**

29. Write down the value of the two underlined figures, twenty-one, in each of the following numbers:— 721; 3,217; 21,658; 2,175.
30. How many twenty-ones are there in the value of the figures underlined in the number 217?

**Timepieces.**

It is interesting to follow the various methods tried by men to measure time. I will name the methods, and give a brief description of some of them.
The man of the early days made a grass rope, which he knotted, damped, and set afire. As it slowly burnt from knot to knot, it recorded the passing of the day. The Chinese made the first water clock in 2656 B.C. The first sun-dial, referred to in the Bible, was that of Ahaz, in 742 B.C. Charlemagne's twelve-hour sand-glass was made in 807 A.D.

King Alfred the Great, who lived in the ninth century, wished to make the best use of his time. He divided the day into three equal parts. The first division was set apart for religious duties, the next for the affairs of his kingdom, and the last for rest. For this purpose, he had six candles made, each of the same size, and marked at equal intervals. The six candles were burnt one after the other in twenty-four hours—a night and a day. Finding that the wind often caused the candle to burn too quickly, the King had a lantern made of horn to enclose it. King Alfred's candle clock was effective for night time as well as for the daytime.

Clocks containing wheels moved by weights were invented about one thousand years ago. From time to time, improvements were made, one of these being the addition of a striking part, by which the hours, and even the quarters, were sounded by a bell inside the clock. Springs are now used instead of weights to produce the required motion of the wheels.

Watches are really clocks, made on a small scale for carrying in the pocket. The first watch was made in 1504 by a young locksmith of Nuremberg. The last century saw rapid strides in developing a valuable timepiece, the watch of to-day.
Turn back to your general sheet 10, and read again the work set in written expression. Look at the picture.

We received some very bright answers, some of which are given here for you to read.

Rod Wass says: “The clown was a ridiculous fellow, with a pillow inside his clothes to make him look fat. I think it was unkind of him to take another person’s hat when he should have had one of his own. Of course, he meant to be funny, but fun at the expense of other people is not very clever. A clown has to be clever to appear foolish enough to amuse the people.”

This is what Gwen Harvey writes: “The clown in the picture is round and fat, and looks very jolly. So realistic does he make the egg trick look that it isn’t any wonder Jim fears for his black bowler. Just imagine the clown’s amazement when Jim snatched his prized hat and ran away.”

Rod’s answer shows plainly that his sympathies are solely with Jim.

Still, I expect most of you realise that probably the clown did not mean to be unkind. Many boys would have been amused to be chosen as the victim of the entertainer’s teasing, but, unfortunately, Jim knew nothing about clowns or conjuring, and so, what was meant as a joke was taken seriously by the lad, and caused him much distress.

Rod’s summing up of the jester is good. It takes a clever person to be an entertaining clown.

Gwen makes excuses for Jim’s fears by mentioning how realistic the egg trick looked. Evidently she has put herself in Rattray’s place for the moment.

Many and varied were the suggested titles for the stanza about the magpie, and most pupils were successful in changing the verse into prose.
Gwen Harvey again comes under notice. She gives a good, brief, and to-the-point answer, which is as follows:

"Long ago a clever magpie, tired of being homeless, called her friends together, and said, 'Come and I will teach you to build a nest.'"

The title she selects is "The First Builder."

I want to draw your attention to the punctuation of Gwen's answer. Notice that *a quotation within a quotation* is placed between *single commas*.

Annie Hoskinson writes: "In the early days, when birds could talk, a magpie called her friends together and taught them to build nests.

"A good title would be 'The Magpie's Lecture.'"

Then we have Alice Watts' version: "The magpie was going to teach her feathered friends to build homes, so I think that a good name for the verse would be 'Magpie, the Builder.'"

This is what I think the stanza means:

"Long ago, birds were able to talk to each other as we do.

"The magpie, which even to-day is a garrulous (talkative) bird, called all the other birds together, and gave them a lecture on the building of nests."

It was very gratifying to find such interest and thought as were displayed by all of you in this particular lesson.
APPENDIX III.

Samples of Instructions and Suggestions Sent to Supervisors.

Correspondence School,
Kintore Avenue,
Adelaide, 1927.

Dear Sir,—

Your children/child are/is now enrolled in this School, and assignments of lessons will be sent to you in the course of a few days.

A fortnight is allowed for the working of the lessons, which will be returned in the envelope enclosed, and will not require a stamp. The envelopes must not be gummed down, but fastened with the paper fasteners as when they are received. Letters or books from the library must not be enclosed with the lessons. The library books will be returned in the envelopes in which they are sent, which can be returned with the printed address outside.

Letters will, of course, be enclosed in ordinary envelopes and stamped. Any books sent to you with the lessons are provided free by the Department.

If you are unable, on account of sickness or any other cause, to return the lesson assignments, it will be necessary to advise the Head Mistress at once; or should a school be opened in your district, near enough for your children/child to attend, you should at once advise the Head Mistress of the fact.

Regularity in mailing back the finished lessons is very necessary. If the teachers' instructions are faithfully carried out, the children/child will make good progress with the work.

Should you be in any difficulty at any time, or require any advice or assistance, the teachers will be pleased to give it.

Yours faithfully,

Head Mistress.
Information and Instructions for Parents and Supervisors.

Information and Explanation.

1. In the envelope with this paper, the following articles are sent for each pupil in the first half-year of First Class:—
   Exercise book and pencil; for the second and third half-year the same, and also a copy-book and ruler, and for higher classes, in addition, a School Paper and pen; for all classes, papers with a week's work set and explained for each pupil, and an addressed envelope for the return of the Exercise Book. When required a Reading Book for each pupil is sent under separate cover.

2. Only one page of the copy book should be written each week. The copy book is not to be returned until completed.

3. A week's work will be sent for every pupil weekly. Only the work set by the teacher is to be done in the Exercise Book.

4. Each pupil is put into the class for which he or she is considered to be most fitted. As, from information supplied, it is often very difficult to classify the pupil correctly, the Supervisor will be pleased, if the pupil finds the first work too easy or too advanced, to be advised to that effect, when the classification will be rectified. The work sent in by each pupil will be carefully examined, and pupils will be placed in other classes according to the merits of their work.

5. The papers with the week's work must be kept by the pupils for further reference.
6. The work set is carefully graded for each class to cover in a half-year the work required in corresponding classes in State Schools for the same period.

7. To secure satisfactory progress the week's work set should be done by the pupil every week. If, for any reason, the work cannot be done for the week, advice to that effect should be sent to the Supervisor.

8. Pupils should work at their lessons on the five school days in each week and for four or five hours in each day, but not necessarily under supervision all the time.

Procedure.

9. From the information and explanations given in the weekly papers the supervisor at the pupil's house should give the necessary help to the pupil, and, in Arithmetic, should give additional work, similar to the work sent. This additional work should not be written in the exercise book.

10. Some work, in each subject, should be mastered each day.

11. All spellings, tables, rules and definitions must be thoroughly learnt and frequently repeated. Sound progress cannot otherwise be secured.

12. Pupils should be encouraged to read slowly and distinctly, and should be questioned on the lessons read to ascertain if they understand what they read.

13. At the end of the week written tests in spelling should be given on the week's work.

14. All new words in the piece set for dictation should be learnt. On the fifth day the piece should be read by you, a few words at a time, giving the pupil time enough to write neatly.

15. Work should not be sent as dictation if it is copied by the pupil from the reading book.
16. All questions in English and Arithmetic, and all instructions given in the weekly papers, should be carefully read before any attempt is made to answer the questions.

Exercise Books.
17. The questions should not be written in the Exercise Books. The numbers of the questions only are required.
18. In Arithmetic all working must be shown.
19. The work set must first be mastered by the pupil with the help of the Supervisor, and the week's work set must be written in the Exercise Book. *This must be done by the pupil without assistance from anyone.*
20. Only the work set must be done in the Exercise Books.
21. At the beginning of each week's work the number of the paper and the date on which the work is begun must be written. Do not leave any pages blank or only partly filled.
22. The Exercise Books must be posted by the first available mail, as the week's work is done. An extra envelope is sent this time but in future you must return the one sent to you. Paste over your own address the enclosel label. Do not stick or seal the flap of the envelope but fasten the flap with the paper fastener which is in the flap of the envelope sent to you.
23. Do not stamp the envelopes.
24. As soon as you receive the Exercise Books returned to you, note carefully all alterations and remarks made by the teachers who examined the work.

Important:
25. Ask for additional explanations on any work which is not quite clear to you.
26. Remember—Regularity and Thoroughness are necessary to secure satisfactory progress.

27. No communication in the nature of a letter must be sent with the Exercise Books when returned, or the whole will be charged at letter rates by the Postal Authorities. If it is necessary to send a letter, the letter must be sent in a separate envelope addressed to the Supervisor, and the postage must be prepaid.

28. The Queensland Readers supplied by the Department must be kept in good condition and returned if in first-class condition when the pupil is promoted to a higher class unless required by another member of the family. When returning send in separate packet by book post, and in the case of books from Queensland Readers I. to VI. endorsed “Printed in Australia.”

Keep these instructions for future reference.