

EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

Equal Chances for All

Further progress was made this year in implementation of the policy of providing every facility available within the State for aboriginal children in the matter of education. It becomes more apparent, year by year, that the future of our aboriginal people and their acceptance as social equals to the white community is wrapped up in educating the younger generation so that they may have the opportunity of taking their place in the social and economic life of the community generally. It is admitted that many of the dark people are not availing themselves to the full of this opportunity, but the same can be said also of a section of the white people. Some parents, unfortunately, are not prepared to allow their children—some of whom are intelligent and well qualified—to proceed to secondary schools for higher education, preferring that they should leave school and go to work as soon as they reach fifteen years of age.



The Education Department fully recognises the right of the aboriginal children to be taught in up-to-date schools and by well trained teachers, and it is recorded with satisfaction that the new schools that have been built over the past few years for aboriginal children are modern buildings, well provided with proper facilities and teaching aids.

Another very important and most desirable departure from the old order, in which the Department of Education is co-operating most whole-heartedly, is the gradual closing of special primary schools for aboriginal children. This old-established manifestation of the "segregation" system is now giving place to the absorption, where possible, of aboriginal children into "white" schools. The arrangement has already been put into practice at Collarenebri, Mungindi, Forster and Dubbo, where special schools previously existed, and other centres have been noted for similar action at the beginning of 1953.

At the end of last year, fifty-seven children from aboriginal stations and homes were enrolled at High Schools, no less than seventeen being from Quirindi Aboriginal Station. These numbers have no reference to aboriginal children whose families live independently of the Board's direct supervision. It is known that there is a considerable number belonging to that category. The Board has followed the practice for some years past of granting a number of bursaries, year by year, in the sum of £50 each per annum for three years, to selected children who possess the requisite educational standard, to continue a secondary education, but whose parents are not able to afford the cost of maintaining them at school for that further period. During the year, four such bursaries were awarded, bringing the total of current bursaries to seven. Two children completed their secondary school studies during the year and the availability of their bursaries ceased. This year one bursar will sit for the Leaving Certificate Examination.

STATION CHANGES

During the past few months there have been many changes in the management of aboriginal stations throughout the State.

Boggabilla.—Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Forster have left Cabbage Tree Island and taken over at Boggabilla in place of Mr. and Mrs. Forster who resigned to take up a farming property.

Brewarrina.—Mr. and Mrs. Somers, of Brewarrina, have retired from the service and their places have been taken by Mr. and Mrs. J. Spencer, formerly of Burra Bee Dee. Mr. and Mrs. E. Cole have taken over at Burra Bee Dee.

Cabbage Tree Island.—Mr. and Mrs. N. R. Luschwitz, of La Perouse, have taken over at Cabbage Tree Island and have already settled in.

Caroona.—Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Tower, of Burnt Bridge, have moved on to Caroona to take over from Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Wehams.

Murrin Bridge.—Murrin Bridge welcomes Mr. and Mrs. N. W. Ribbons, who have recently been appointed Assistant Manager and Assistant Matron.

Pilliga.—Pilliga has bid farewell to Mr. and Mrs. R. Constable, on the completion of their service.

Woodenbong.—Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Stratton, of Cabbage Tree Island, have taken over from Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Foster at Woodenbong.

Tabulam.—Mr. and Mrs. J. Marsh, of Tabulam, have resigned from the service and their places have been taken by Mr. and Mrs. G. Carlin, of Burnt Bridge.

Area Welfare Officer.—Mr. S. C. Lambeth has been appointed Area Welfare Officer for the South and South-West, with headquarters at Leeton. His postal address is Box 119, Post Office, Leeton.



A happy group at the recent Convention at La Perouse. From left to right—Mrs. D. Forster, Mr. Lindsay Grant (Speaker), Mr. C. Edwards, Mr. Tom Brady and Mr. Tom Pittman.