

point of order of the honorable member for Ormond is merely a play on words in an attempt to conceal the fact that parents are being called upon to provide half the cost of basic capital works. This is a most serious matter. I made that reference in passing, and I might say that I found the Minister's reply unconvincing and unsatisfactory. The position is that only the richer areas—that was the expression used by the Minister—will be able to take advantage of this offer of providing 50 per cent. of the cost of assembly halls. A relative of mine who was present last night at the speech night of the MacRobertson Girls' High School, probably the leading girls' high school in the metropolitan area, told me that a statement that an assembly hall was to be provided was received with great delight, but that there were loud groans when there was a further announcement that it would be provided only on the condition that the school committee furnished a very large sum of money towards the cost.

Mr. BLOOMFIELD.—The MacRobertson Girls' High School is already equipped with a good assembly hall which has been built for some years. Substantial alterations are now desired.

Mr. STONEHAM.—The basic principle is the same. Parents and other supporters of the school will be called upon to provide half the cost of what work is to be done. We have drifted into a most critical situation, and I should like the Minister of Education to take the Committee into his confidence and describe what he considers conditions will be like in two, three, four or five years' time if things continue to drift as they are drifting now.

With the opening of the new school year, for the first time in this State to my knowledge, there will be a situation of two schools being incorporated in the one building. At Bayswater, a new high school is to be created in 1961, but a new building is not available for it. Its students will be instructed in the existing primary school which will be staffed with two head teachers and two sets of administration. Of course, all the students will

meet together in the overcrowded playground during recess periods. Generally, there will be confusion and a most undesirable atmosphere, and the students of the high school will be unable to take pride in attending the foundation meeting of a new secondary school. There is clear evidence, both on aspects of staffing and of accommodation, that no apparent improvement has been made. Actually, there has been further deterioration. I ask the Minister of Education to tell the Committee where he thinks we are getting to.

Mr. EVANS (Ballarat North).—I fully appreciate the honour of being elected to represent Ballarat North, and I am also very pleased to be a supporter of this Government which I have noticed has over the years made a very fine contribution to the development of the State. It is with extreme pleasure that I speak on the matter of education. It gives me great satisfaction to realize the contributions this Government has made in this field. It is also gratifying to note that the Government intends to extend its excellent record in the next financial year by allocating £54,000,000 for educational purposes. That is £7,000,000 more than was spent last year. The announcement by the Premier that the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry will be raised to the status of a university college was very welcome news, not only in Ballarat but also to all far-seeing people throughout the State. It is also very pleasing to hear the later statement that institutions at Geelong and Bendigo will be raised to university college status. I remind honorable members that the historic Ballarat School of Mines and Industry was an affiliated university college from 1887 to 1893. The question now arises how soon can we achieve the progressive move of again making it a university college.

I was pleased to hear the Premier say last evening that a committee was to be appointed to investigate the possibility of expediting the raising of this school to the tertiary education level. It is to be hoped that the committee, when it is selected and commences its work, will be able to arrive at a prompt and sound

decision. We feel that the increasing number of students becoming available, especially in the country, for university education makes it necessary for the job to go ahead as quickly as possible.

I should like to refer in some detail to the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry. I have studied its over-all situation and have first-hand knowledge of its efficiency and the planning that is taking place in regard to its establishment as a university college. It is predicted that by 1966, 20,750 persons will be seeking university education as compared with a total of 11,072 in 1960. Those figures reveal that there must be no unnecessary delay in implementing the sound policy that has been announced. The opponents of tertiary education in the country point to the failure in the past of a branch of the University of Melbourne at Mildura. However, I feel that this branch was hastily conceived and ill-planned. It is unfortunate that it set back for a number of years provision of higher education facilities throughout the country. Any further developments in country areas must be well planned in order that high standards be maintained. The latest report of the Australian Universities Commission states, *inter alia*—

When the point is reached that a new university institution is required the extension of this system might lead to the development of tertiary institutions possessing some of the general features of American senior colleges but associated in Australia with parent universities.

The Ballarat School of Mines and Industry lends itself admirably for this purpose; in fact, it is now in a position to take up its place as a university college if the necessary moneys are made available. That will now be subject to the investigations of the committee to be appointed, but I know that people in Ballarat have put a lot of planning and work into the proposal and are keen that the school should progress in the manner indicated. I speak so convincingly of the Ballarat proposal because I know how carefully considered are the plans, and I am aware that the people know what they want.

The other centres of Bendigo and Geelong may, possibly, have not yet finalized their plans, but in these days of quotas and insufficient accommodation for students, it is important that we should proceed immediately with the Ballarat proposal. I feel that I should make some references to the wonderful record of the diploma courses. The figures which I shall quote shortly reveal that the high standards attained by the number of students who have gained diplomas from these colleges enabled Victoria to avoid the expense of establishing a second university many years ago. Diploma students from the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry are sought after throughout Australia, and one might say even throughout the world. Students from Ballarat have obtained positions in mining in South America and in Canada. I emphasize their superiority by pointing out the number of Commonwealth scholarship holders in Victorian technical colleges as compared with the number in other States. In New South Wales there are 35 Commonwealth scholarship holders, in Victoria 234, in South Australia 2, in Queensland 4, in Western Australia 10, and in Tasmania nil. Of a total of 285 scholarship holders throughout Australia, 234 came from Victorian diploma schools. It will be noticed that the number awarded to Victoria is about eight times that awarded to New South Wales.

I have recently studied the 1959 report of the Commonwealth Scholarship Board, and I can substantiate my remarks concerning the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry. Of all the major technical colleges in Victoria with an enrolment of over 100 pupils, it has the highest proportion of Commonwealth scholarship holders. An interesting feature that has received publicity recently is that diploma students of the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry are being selected in increasing numbers for overseas scholarships allotted by English engineering and electrical firms for advanced studies in the United Kingdom. Fortunately, there is a growing awareness of the contributions that the Ballarat School of Mines

and Industry and other such institutions have made in the past and a realization that they will make even greater contributions to this rapidly growing and changing nation of ours in the future.

The current report of the Australian Universities Commission reveals that the Townsville University College was given a capital grant of £100,000 for the period 1961 to 1963. I make that reference to emphasize the fact that the value of the diploma colleges is being appreciated in an increasing manner. If we in this State are going to accept our rapidly growing responsibilities in the field of education, we must quickly develop educational facilities.

No discussion of education in this State would be complete without some reference to forestry instruction, especially the School of Forestry at Creswick, which has made contributions to forestry not only in Victoria but also throughout Australia. As most honorable members are aware, this school was established in 1900, and until about 1912 it was the only school of forestry in Australia. There is only one other such school now; it is at Canberra. The Government is fully appreciative of the excellent work of the students at the school, and recently made available a grant of £50,000 for extensions to be carried out at Creswick.

The standard of the students graduating from Creswick has been equal to the high standard of other graduates from country diploma schools, but there is a feeling amongst foresters that the course should be raised to a degree standard so that graduates will receive world-wide recognition. The Forests Commission has agreed to this request for a four-year degree course to be instituted. I suggest that more rapid implementation of this policy could be carried out at Creswick if this were effected in conjunction with the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry, which is only about nine miles away. Some of the lecturers work between the two institutions at present. It is interesting to note that in its initial stages the Creswick School

of Forestry was conducted in conjunction with the Ballarat School of Mines and Industry.

The University of Melbourne is now overcrowded, and the figures I quoted earlier show that even when Monash University commences to operate, it will not be possible to handle comfortably the large influx of students. It has been argued by opponents of country universities that it is impracticable to carry out some degree courses in the country because of lack of facilities. The same critics must agree that in these days of growing educational demands, with a shortage of suitable facilities, the right and proper place for a forestry course is in the pleasant country atmosphere that exists at Creswick. Up till now it has been necessary to complete the fourth year necessary for the degree, in Melbourne. I suggest that the new committee, when constituted, should investigate the possibility of establishing a full chair of forestry at the Creswick School of Forestry. Some people may ask what the standards are there. I point out that there would be no lowering of standards under my suggestion, and that the proposal would ease the pressure on the University of Melbourne. Already a board of examiners from the University of Melbourne not only examines students at Creswick, but also overlooks their work. We are living in changing times and educational facilities must be provided to meet those circumstances. In Creswick there is a very sound, ready-made base on which to develop a strong degree course which will not only be of benefit from the educational point of view but will also encourage much-needed forestry development throughout Australia.

I commend the Government for its broad and liberal approach to the provision of other educational facilities, both primary and secondary, in the country. Possibly one of the most outstanding new projects is the Daylesford Technical School, costing £160,000, of which the residents of Daylesford and the large district it serves are justly proud and grateful to the Minister of Education. This is a continuation of the Government's

policy to provide amenities in the country which will not only hold the population there but also cause secondary industry to follow.

The demand for trained men in the engineering and scientific field to-day is being emphasized to a greater degree almost daily. If the Government could see its way clear to complete the engineering block at the magnificent Daylesford Technical School, that school would quickly make more outstanding contributions to this very important field. We must strive to meet the increasing demand in the scientific and engineering field, and we must also give greater consideration to a more scientific approach to the many and varied problems of the primary producer. No other individual has to handle a greater number of and more complex problems than the farmer. Agricultural science courses must be given increasing consideration in both our secondary and tertiary schools in country areas. The establishment of an agricultural science course at the Daylesford High-Technical School would lead to greater production in this already very productive area of the Central Highlands.

In conclusion, I pay a tribute to the work of the Government, and the Minister of Education in particular, for the manner in which they are providing a new era of greater opportunity to the 100,000 young people who are living in the country and who are demanding higher education.

**Mr. GIBBS (Portland).**—The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the provision of assembly halls, mainly at secondary schools. I do not suppose anyone would deny that there are far too many secondary schools without assembly halls, but, as the Chief Secretary said some time ago, after all this is another matter in which we cannot have it both ways. Only a certain amount of money is available for education—it has been doubled over the last few years—and one either has assembly halls and fewer class-rooms or more class-rooms and fewer assembly halls. I would rather see the Government con-

centrate on providing more class-rooms and not worry about assembly halls for the time being.

The Leader of the Opposition also discussed the shortage of secondary school staff. That worries everybody, but we have not yet heard from anyone, not even a Government supporter, the solution to the problem. One of the greatest shortages is that of subject teachers, in particular of science, and perhaps mathematics. How can one encourage children to specialize in these subjects and become teachers in them if fundamentally they have not a natural bent towards the subjects? After all, do we not teach best the subjects that we like best? I have often wondered whether it would not be a good idea—perhaps the Department has thought of this—to consider transferring, even temporarily, some primary teachers who are qualified in certain subjects, to secondary schools to overcome the shortage there? Some primary school teachers do first and second-class honours as part of their qualifications. There are various ways in which they obtain those honours. One method is to do three university subjects and education. That provides second-class honours. First-class honours can be obtained by achieving first honours in three subjects and a first in education. Such transfers could be arranged, while the teacher's name was maintained on the primary list. Of course, there would be a consequent shortage of staff in primary schools, but I do not think that would be as noticeable. I commend the Government on the good job it is doing in gradually overtaking the shortage in accommodation and staffing.

**Mr. STONEHAM.**—There is no evidence of that.

**Mr. GIBBS.**—I think there is. If the Leader of the Opposition examines the growing school population from natural increase and immigration, and the number of class-rooms being added each year, he will find that the lag is gradually being overtaken.

**Mr. HOLLAND.**—It is very gradual.

**Mr. GIBBS.**—When there is vigorous development and prosperity it is impossible to keep up with the demand. It is easy to do so in a time of stagnation.