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# The Government takes control

## 1901 1918

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### Influences on technical education

#### Economic and demographic

By 1906 Queensland had recovered from its financial difficulties caused by the depression of the 1890s and the severe drought of 1902 and, by 1911, the economy of the State was once more developing vigorously. The period 1906-1918 was characterised by an ambitious immigration policy and rural expansion. To extend and diversify the rural economy, the Government spent heavily on railways.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence of these priorities, by 1914, Queensland was the leading producer in Australia of beef and sugar, and second biggest in wool. Dairying and wheat growing were well established, and minerals continued to contribute to the State's development. While manufacturing in Queensland continued to expand, this was mainly in the primary produce and food-processing industries. Furthermore, Queensland lagged behind other Australian States in industrial growth. The population between 1901 and 1921 increased from 498 129 to 755 972, with the rural population increasing more than the urban.<sup>2</sup>

#### Apprenticeship training

The relationship between the nature of industrial development and the type of apprenticeship training needed in Queensland came under close scrutiny. There was a continuing debate on the educational implications of important economic issues. Should Queenslanders accept that Queensland was basically a primary producing State or should they make an effort to increase secondary industries? Given the imperatives of world competition, in what areas and to what degree of specialisation was Queensland able to compete? The answers given to these questions influenced the nature of the courses provided in technical colleges.

There was a general agreement that modern industrial shop-methods had led to the breakdown of the traditional apprenticeship system, and that the use of special machinery had deskilled many of the processes learnt under that system. There was also a general agreement that the technical college had an important role to play in a reformed apprenticeship training. There was much debate, however, on the following issues. Should limitations be placed on the number of

apprentices? How much practical work should be done at a technical college? Was pre-apprenticeship, fulltime, day training an economic possibility? During an apprenticeship, how much study should be done in the evening in the apprentice's time and how much in the day in the employer's time? Should students spend their time at the college acquiring general skills and knowledge, or restrict themselves to the specialist knowledge of their chosen trade?

One problem also which had to be faced was that the output of any system would be related to a previous economic situation. This problem remained one which was never fully solved.

#### Ideological and political

During the early part of the twentieth century, an important ideological influence was that of social efficiency. The doctrine of social efficiency required the educational curriculum to be relevant to the needs of society and to be the means of improving the State and public welfare. To achieve social efficiency, the utilitarians felt that it was important to identify and promote an intellectual elite. Working from different premises, those social Darwinists who stressed competition as a basic element in the struggle for life advocated a similar policy. For them, if the nation was to be efficient and to survive, it was necessary to encourage competition in education to find the natural leaders.<sup>3</sup> Another school of social Darwinism evolved along different lines. They believed that evolutionary success and control of the environment were to be achieved by altruism, cooperation and the capacity to be guided by supranational ethical principles. For them, social efficiency called for a program to raise the general levels of human potential by equalising social, cultural and educational opportunities throughout the country. This would result in a higher level of efficiency than wasteful rivalry could produce.<sup>4</sup>

Some threads of the ideology of this latter school of social Darwinism can be recognised in the socialist writings of Edward Bellamy, which had a stronger influence on the newly emerging labour movement in Queensland than the socialist works of Karl Marx.<sup>5</sup> Bellamy believed that fraternal cooperation should replace the suicidal folly of competition, that all alike should serve the nation working for the common fund,

which all equally should share, and that the principle of equality should prevail.<sup>6</sup>

The Labour Party, which quickly became a strong force in Parliament, opposed elitism in education. It believed in self-education, social mobility and equal educational opportunities. It saw secondary education as the prerogative of the rich and more readily accepted the practicality and usefulness of technical education.<sup>7</sup>

## **Closer government supervision of the subsidy, 1901-1902**

The Government became increasingly concerned at the increased amount of money paid in the form of subsidies to technical education, and, in 1901, the Minister for Education required the district inspectors to make a detailed inspection of the technical colleges to ensure that there were no abuses in the operation of the government subsidy.

The inspectors made favourable comments on some of the teaching they observed, especially in the bigger colleges. James Platt, for example, praised the work of the Ipswich Technical College. His analysis of the 273 students enrolled at that college revealed the following composition: seventy-two State schoolteachers and pupil teachers preparing for Departmental examinations in drawing, mathematics, mechanics, mensuration and English; eighty-four wage-earners, half from shops and offices, studying commercial subjects; fourteen from the railway workshops studying machine drawing; four miners undertaking mine surveying, and ninety-nine students, almost all women, doing studies related to household duties. Platt observed that the greatest benefit that the State was receiving was 'the withdrawing of its youth from the frivolity, vanity, and lust that infest the mind when vacant, and endanger the manhood of the nation'. He believed that 'the streets of Brisbane and Ipswich after working hours show the vital need for continuation classes from the primary school on to manhood'.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, their inspection exposed irregularities. One malpractice was the misappropriation of funds by some of the parent schools of arts. For example, the Government had subsidised the Dalby Technical College building and classes controlled by the Daby School of Arts. The inspection revealed that the only classes conducted there were by a private school for female pupils aged 9 to 15 years. The fees were retained by the teacher and the government subsidy was appropriated by the School of Arts.<sup>9</sup> The Department of Public Instruction also disapproved of subsidies being provided for what it believed were non-technical subjects, such as music, primary school level subjects, and the examination subjects required for organisations such as the public service, chamber of commerce, institutes of accountancy, and the Department of Public Instruction.<sup>10</sup> At this stage, then, Departmental policy rejected the concept of technical education providing an alternative liberal education.

The Auditor-General, who was involved in auditing

expenditure on technical education, expressed the opinion that legislation should control technical education, the subjects receiving subsidies and the total amount provided. He also thought the subsidy should vary according to the value of the subject from a technical education point of view.<sup>11</sup>

The Department of Public Instruction believed that a special Act and regulations were necessary to handle technical education, and that, as soon as the State finances allowed, the Department should control and manage technical education. It also recommended that, until the appropriate legislation was passed, more stringent safeguards should operate in the payment of subsidies.<sup>12</sup>

The Department drafted special regulations respecting the payment of endowment to technical colleges. In this draft, technical education was to be administered directly by the Department. Cabinet amended this by providing for administration by a board. The Department at the time alleged that this change had been made at the request of the Brisbane Technical College.<sup>13</sup> The regulations came into operation from 1 July 1902, and included the following provisions:

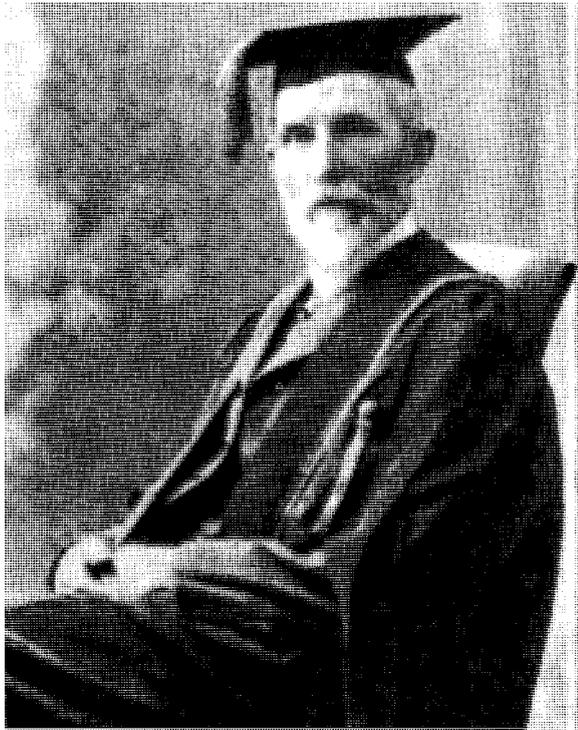
- Until the passage of an Act dealing with technical education, a Board of Technical Education, appointed by the Government, was to be responsible for advising and making recommendations to the Minister for Education on matters relating to technical education, including the conduct of examinations.
- Government approval was necessary for the establishment or continuation of a technical college.
- Colleges would not be established in centres with less than 3000 inhabitants.
- The rate of subsidy for preparatory, revision, or continuation classes in primary school subjects was not to exceed one half of the rate of subsidy given to technical subjects.
- Subsidies were not to be paid for public examination subjects, music, or any other subjects determined by the Minister for Education.
- Every technical college receiving an endowment was to be inspected by an audit inspector and by a State inspector of schools or officer of the Board of Technical Education.

During the debates on supply in Parliament, the parliamentarians who voiced opinions on the Government's restrictive action were generally quite in agreement. One of them, Alexander Lamont, even used the term 'looting' when referring to the operation of the subsidy system.<sup>14</sup>

## **Board of Technical Education, 1902-1905 - a government expediency**

### **The board - its struggle for power**

The majority of the nine board members, who were appointed on 25 September 1902, came from the controlling bodies of the Brisbane and South Brisbane



*Andrew Thynne, MLC, Chairman of the Board of Technical Education, 1902-1905.*



*David Dalrymple, Minister for Education, 1902-1903.*

technical colleges. Government nominees formed a minority group. The members, between them, had experience in business, industry, the public service and teaching in technical colleges. The chairman who came to exert a strong influence over the board was Andrew J. Thynne, MLC, an influential solicitor and former Cabinet Minister, who taught part time at the Brisbane Technical College.

Conflict soon arose over the interpretation of the role of the board. The board believed that their responsibility to provide advice and recommendations to the Minister was a mandate to administer technical education, subject to the control of the Minister. The Minister, David Dalrymple, quickly made it clear that, as far as he was concerned, advice and recommendations were to remain just that. McConnel, one of the advocates of the establishment of the board, claimed that he had been told by members of the Cabinet in 1902 that the role of the board was to act as a link between the Brisbane Technical College and the other colleges, to develop an examination system based on that of the Brisbane Technical College, and to adjust endowment scheme anomalies. One anomaly, for example, was that tradesmen's subjects of signwriting and staircasing and non-tradesmen's subjects of significant technical significance - telegraphy, wool classing and shorthand - had not been endowed.<sup>15</sup>

It took very little time for the board to enter stormy waters. In November 1902, two months after coming into existence, it forwarded to Dalrymple a set of recommendations. It did not receive any reply until 30 January of the following year. When it did, it was dismayed because the Minister had rejected most of the recommendations without providing any reasons. One of the most important rejected recommendations was a scheme of subsidies that attempted to remove perceived

inconsistencies and to increase the number of subjects receiving full subsidy.

A deputation from the board expressed its discontent to the Minister. One member of the deputation, Albert Norton, MLC, who was also the President of the Brisbane Technical College, stated that the interests of technical education had not been advanced but retarded by the Minister's actions. He felt that such a subject as chemistry, rejected by the Minister as deserving a full subsidy, was essential to technical education. Another member of the deputation, Joseph Badger, Manager of the Tramways Company, claimed that the Minister had not given their recommendations adequate consideration. Dalrymple accepted that reforms were necessary, welcomed help from the board, but pointed out that it was an advisory board only. He defended his rejection of an increase in the number of subjects receiving full subsidy, by pointing out that the Government was hamstrung by the lack of money. The deputation assured the Minister that they had no intention of trying to usurp his powers; they only wanted the reasons for his rejection of their recommendations.<sup>16</sup>

This conflict was publicly aired in the press. The *Telegraph* supported the Minister and opposed any extension to the existing subsidy system at a critical financial time. *The Brisbane Courier* criticised Dalrymple for his deference to subordinates in the Department of Public Instruction, and claimed that the Minister was ignoring the supervisory role of the board which had been spelt out in the regulations. It pointed out the inconsistencies of the existing subsidy policy drawn up by a Department that *The Brisbane Courier* claimed was not competent to run its own business. It blamed Ministerial bungling and Departmental inefficiency for hampering the development of technical education.<sup>17</sup>

In 1903 the board failed over another issue. It

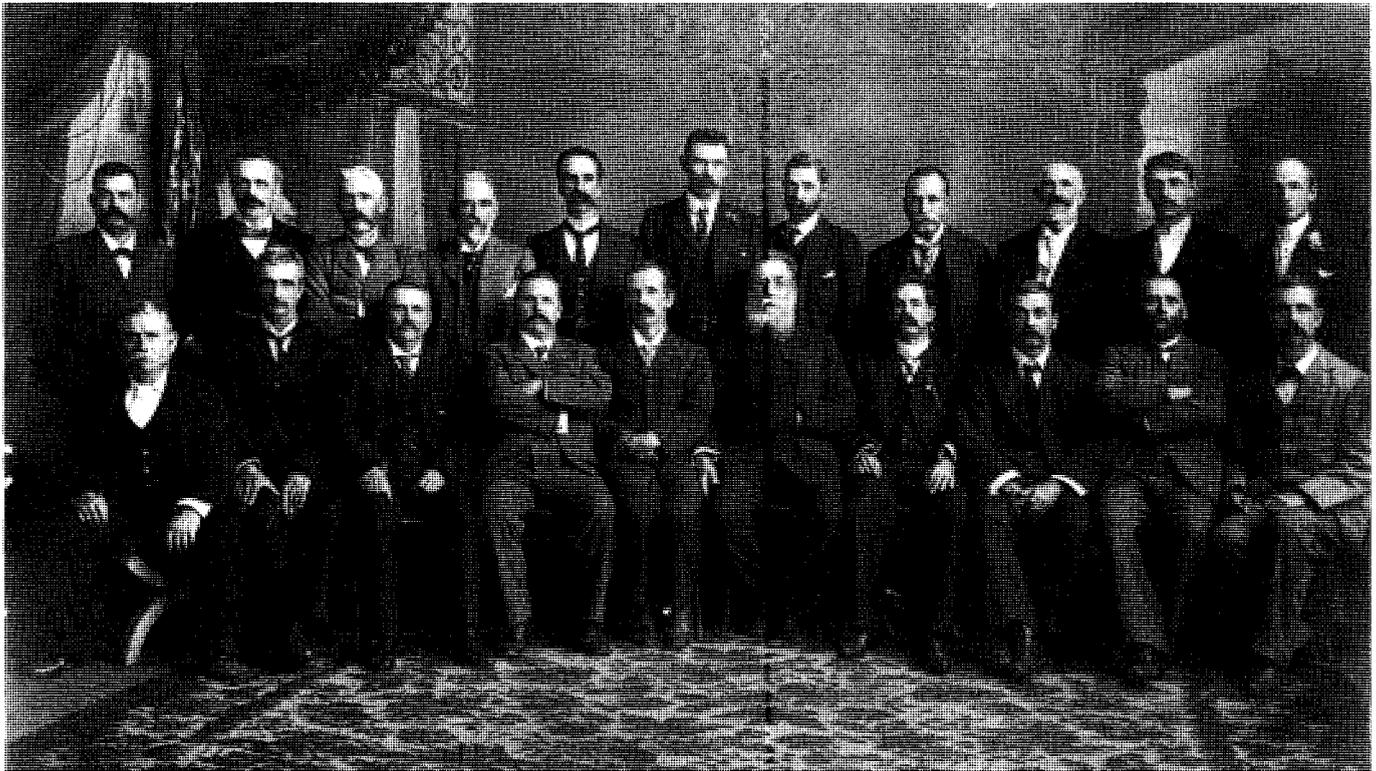
attempted to gain hold of the purse strings by recommending that the total funds of technical education be allocated to the board to dispense. The Brisbane Technical College protested strongly and successfully about this tactic.<sup>18</sup>

On 27 June in the same year, the annual conference of delegates from Queensland technical colleges approved of the appointment of the board. They also made an effort to grasp some power for themselves. They recommended to the Minister, Dalrymple, that a standard syllabus should be created and submitted to the colleges before adoption, that an endowment system should be based on the one used in New Zealand, that officers of the board, rather than Departmental inspectors, should inspect technical colleges, and that the conference should have representation on the board. The Minister was not very receptive to any suggestions which would cost more money and was quite blunt in rejecting the request for conference representation on the board. He said that it would be like allowing the cat to look after the cream.<sup>19</sup>

During the debate in Parliament on the vote for supply on 3 November 1903, James Blair, the Attorney-General, explained that the Department had reduced the number of subsidised subjects and this had led to a decrease in the vote for technical education. Peter Airey spoke against this reduction. He claimed that technical education was the secondary education of the working

classes and also the secret of commercial and industrial success of such countries as Germany, the USA and Great Britain. He pointed out that the vote for secondary education, the preserve of the rich, had not been cut down in any way.<sup>20</sup>

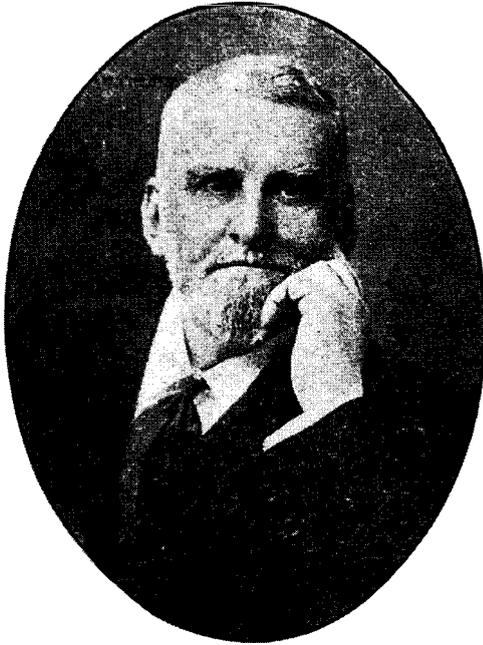
In the following month, Andrew Barlow, the Minister for Education in the new Morgan-Kidston coalition government, which had an agenda of reform, forwarded to Cabinet a memo on technical education, dated 14 December 1903. With a commitment to equality of opportunity, Barlow expressed in this memo the same opinion as Airey with regard to the difference in the vote for secondary and technical education, but ruled out adequate funding of technical education because of the existing State financial situation. He also pointed out that difficulties were created by the coexistence of the Board of Technical Education established by Departmental regulations, the Brisbane Technical College, incorporated by an Act of Parliament, and two other Brisbane technical colleges. To economise in government expenditure and to simplify a cumbersome administrative system, Barlow advanced the following policies. He proposed to abolish the board established by the previous government, and to amalgamate the three Brisbane colleges. He would manage and control the country colleges directly, availing himself of the advice of the Brisbane college when he required it, and the Brisbane college would conduct the examinations



*Annual Conference of Delegates from Queensland Technical Colleges, about 1901*

*Seated (from left): T Kavanagh, Beenleigh; WT. Paget, MLA, Mackay; D. Gardner, Maryborough; H. Pearce, B.A., South Brisbane; L. C. Woolryche, Townsville; Hon. A. Norton, MLC, President, Brisbane; TM. Lafferty, B.A., Charters Towers; F Kenna, MLA, Bowen; G. Jackson, MLA, Ravenswood; A. Exley, Allora.*

*Standing (from left): A. E. Driver, West End; G.J. Allpass, Toowoomba; W.G. Lewis, Bundaberg; T Ross, Gympie; R. A. Wearne, B. A., Ipswich; W.J. Affleck, Townsville; D. R. McConnel, M. A. Hon. Sec., Brisbane; Thornhill Weedon, South Brisbane; J. Thornton, Charters Towers; G. C. Neech, Sandgate; N.M.M. Davidson, Rockhampton and Mount Morgan.*



*Andrew Barlow, Minister for Education, 1903-1907*

and issue certificates for all the colleges under his direction.<sup>21</sup>

During 1903, the Brisbane Technical College Council made it quite clear that they had no intention of accepting supervision by the board. Sustained by the 1898 Act, the council insisted on the right to conduct its own affairs. This conflict reached a critical point in January 1904 over the council's appointment of Mr Green, a lecturer in chemistry whose qualifications the board regarded as inadequate. The board refused to recommend payment of endowment for Green's classes. Barlow tried to persuade the board to back down. When it refused, Barlow felt obliged to support the board. By May, the college council felt that they would no longer put up with what they regarded as harassment from the board over examinations and staffing, and the majority of the council resigned. Barlow thereupon appointed a new council. He complained that the problems created by the Board of Technical Education and the council of the Brisbane Technical College surpassed the responsibilities of all the other offices combined which he had previously administered.<sup>22</sup>

Another conflict encountered by the board was related to the endowment system. In an attempt to encourage the provision and study of technical subjects, the board attempted to introduce a differential system of endowment. This system reduced the subsidies on such subjects as bookkeeping and shorthand, and increased the subsidies on subjects more closely identified as technical subjects such as trade subjects. It also decreased subsidies in subjects where students did not achieve a set standard in examinations. This scheme initially received the support of Barlow and his Acting Under-Secretary, John Story. The representatives at the 1904 Conference of Technical Colleges opposed it, stating that the endowment should be provided on the basis of attendance and not on the basis of a pound for pound subsidy. This opposition led Barlow to reject the scheme.<sup>23</sup>

At a subsequent conference of technical college representatives and the board, the representatives stated that technical education should be controlled by legislation. Thynne, the Chairman of the board, went further by stating that any legislation should be extended to coordinate all levels of education. He took the opportunity to criticise, once more, aspects of State primary education. He expressed the opinion that the board would be more effective if it had complete control of technical education, and if it had Parliament behind it. *The Brisbane Courier* opposed the board's endowment policy, criticised the board for trying to change from an advisory to a controlling body, and supported the Minister for rejecting the board's endowment scheme.<sup>24</sup> Badger, another member of the board, publicly criticised the Government. At a banquet of the Institute of Engineers in November 1904, he accused the Government of not supporting the board's recommendations and not providing reasons for its rejection of these.<sup>25</sup>

The board was more successful in the construction of a syllabus. It entrusted Robert Riddell, a teacher at South Brisbane Technical College, to prepare a draft syllabus divided into the departments of art, commerce, trades, mathematics, physics, chemistry, electricity, mining science and practice, mechanical engineering, agricultural and pastoral, health and sanitary science, domestic science and art, and miscellaneous. A conference of technical colleges held in February 1904 accepted this draft after minor amendments. At this conference, Thynne embraced the polytechnic model; he expressed the opinion that technical institutions should teach whatever subjects were required by the public. Not wanting to compromise its independence, the Brisbane Technical College refused to attend the conference.<sup>26</sup>

In December 1904, during a parliamentary debate on the vote for technical education, those parliamentarians who spoke were in general agreement that the Board of Technical Education had antagonised all of the technical colleges and was responsible for the unsatisfactory condition of technical education. The general consensus was that the board should be abolished and that the coexistence of the three Brisbane colleges resulted in unnecessary expenditure and inefficiency. Peter Airey, the Home Secretary, suggested that the solution was for the Department of Education to control technical education.<sup>27</sup> Early in 1905, Barlow visited New South Wales where D.J. Cooper, the late Superintendent of Technical Education, pointed out to him the heavy costs involved in direct Departmental control of technical education, a policy which Barlow had hitherto favoured. To avoid a rapid escalation in expenditure on technical education, Barlow believed that it would be expedient to continue the existing system of subsidies to the local management bodies. Because Parliament had made it quite clear that they had no confidence in the board, he thought the best plan would be to appoint a Departmental official to supervise this system. Barlow also believed that it would be unwise politically to amalgamate the Brisbane colleges at that time. He had unsuccessfully attempted to achieve such an amalgamation through persuasion in January of the previous year. While

Brisbane Technical College was prepared to accept this, it was rejected by the South Brisbane College.<sup>28</sup>

In April 1905, Thynne, the Chairman of the board, presented an extensive report on technical education. This report repeated Thynne's earlier claims that revisal classes were necessary in technical colleges because of the shortcomings of the primary education system. These shortcomings had been indirectly acknowledged by the Department, which had introduced in 1905 a new primary syllabus that purported to have a more practical approach. The report supported the board's differential scheme of endowment as a necessary expedient because of the Minister's restrictive and inconsistent endowment policy. It opposed the independent stance adopted by Brisbane Technical College and argued that this college should not have any privileges denied to other technical colleges. The report outlined some of the board's successes in developing a standard syllabus and a general examination system, and in ensuring that technical teachers had the appropriate qualifications. It advocated a technical university to take the students who had completed appropriate courses of study at the technical colleges.

In this 1905 report, the board defended itself by stating that it had attracted much public criticism because the Treasury did not provide adequate funds for technical education, and that it had attracted the disapproval of Departmental staff because it had criticised primary education. The report stated explicitly that the Department had missed an opportunity to further technical education by failing to accept the board's recommendations.<sup>29</sup>

In the annual report of the Secretary for Public Instruction, Barlow countered many of the board's claims. His main defence was that lack of funds prevented him from acceding to many of the board's recommendations, that Brisbane Technical College had the protection of separate legislation, and that the board was an advisory one without a legislative basis.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from the South Brisbane Technical College, which made a last-minute appeal to the Minister to retain the board<sup>31</sup>, the board found itself without adequate support. On 25 May 1905 the axe fell and the board was abolished.

To supervise technical education, Riddell was appointed as the Department's Inspector of Technical Colleges on 1 July 1905. Riddell had passed the London University B.Sc. Intermediate examination held at the end of the first two years of the B.Sc. three-year course. He also held certificates, including a Teachers' Certificate, from several educational institutions in England. After considerable teaching experience in England, Riddell began teaching a wide range of subjects at the South Brisbane Technical College in 1903.<sup>32</sup> Story had recommended Riddell for the position of inspector because he did not think that there was an officer in the Public Service who possessed the necessary qualifications. Story believed that Riddell was responsible for the success which South Brisbane Technical College experienced after Riddell's arrival. Riddell had been responsible for compiling the board's syllabus in 1904 and had been praised by the board and by Cooper, the

late Superintendent of Technical Education in New South Wales.<sup>33</sup> Riddell was allocated the following responsibilities:

- to advise the Minister in matters relating to technical instruction;
- to foster and encourage technical education;
- to correlate as far as possible primary and technical education;
- to develop the system as far as State financial exigencies allow;
- to oversee the expenditure of grants;
- to confer with, guide and advise directors, principals and committees of technical colleges;
- to submit reports to the Department and make recommendations for better working of the technical colleges;
- to perform such duties as required by the Minister.<sup>34</sup>

For this he was to be paid an annual salary of £275, which was slightly lower than that paid to district inspectors.<sup>35</sup>

It appears that the board, during its short existence, attracted much public criticism away from the Department<sup>36</sup>, which kept control of technical education through the endowment system. Had the board been able to implement more of its policies, it is doubtful whether much of this criticism would have been made, and it is possible that the drop in total college enrolments - from 5465 in 1901 to 3600 in 1904<sup>37</sup> - would have been less severe. Certainly the board's vision of technical education was a much wider one than that espoused by the Ministers and the Department.

## The technical colleges

**Brisbane Technical College - struggle for survival.** By the end of 1903, Brisbane Technical College was experiencing a slump in enrolments and was facing severe financial difficulties. Changes in the endowment scheme resulted in lower government subsidies. The withdrawal of a free railway pass system to schoolteachers attending the college reduced the attendance of teachers. Furthermore, the economic difficulties at the time contributed to lower enrolments.<sup>38</sup> The college borrowed £600 from the Government but was unable to pay it back when it was due in 1904. Finding their financial difficulties almost insurmountable, the council considered closing the college, and a motion at a council meeting in September 1904 to this effect was narrowly defeated by five votes to four. Barlow believed that the council wanted to close the college to discredit the Government, but Miss Fewings, Headmistress of the private Brisbane High School for Girls and one of the council members, pointed out to Barlow that three of the four who wanted the college shut were government nominees.<sup>39</sup>

In November the Treasurer of the college, T. Welsby, met the State Treasurer, William Kidston, and the Minister for Education, Andrew Barlow. Kidston was most unsympathetic. He regretted having advanced the money to the college and was quite prepared to let the college close but passed the problem to Barlow. The

Minister disowned responsibility for the management of the college and blamed the depression for the dismal state of affairs.<sup>40</sup> The council then turned for assistance to the Brisbane City Council, and, in support of their request, pointed to the financial assistance received by the South Brisbane College from the South Brisbane Council. The plea fell on deaf ears.<sup>41</sup>

Acting upon a request from Barlow, the Public Service Inspector, H.D. Brennan, and District Inspector A.S. Kennedy inspected Brisbane Technical College in December 1904. Brennan expressed the opinion that the amalgamation of the three Brisbane technical colleges and the College of Pharmacy would solve the financial problems of the Brisbane Technical College and would result in greater efficiency. He opposed the teaching of home science and commercial subjects, which he regarded as non-technical. This was an opinion shared by Barlow.<sup>42</sup> Kennedy, on the other hand, said in his report that there were precedents in Great Britain and elsewhere for the provision of these subjects in technical colleges. He also saw some merits in the board's differential subsidies scheme.<sup>43</sup>

When these reports were presented to the council, it rejected Brennan's views of what constituted technical education:

The Council strongly protest against ... the tacit assumption that the sole aim of State-aided technical education is to provide a means of livelihood, and also the suggested curtailment of the syllabus to only purely scientific and technical subjects.

The council went on to reassert the aims of the college included in the College Incorporation Act:

... to teach theoretically and practically the principles of science and art, and their application to industries, trades, commerce and domestic economy; and to aid in the enlightenment and elevation of its students.<sup>44</sup>

To avert the financial collapse of Brisbane Technical College, Cabinet agreed in January 1905 to increase the subsidies on a number of subjects.<sup>45</sup> In June 1905, another council deputation to the Premier, Arthur Morgan, requested that the Government provide an annual lump sum to replace the subsidy system. This policy was rejected by Barlow, who stated in a memorandum to the Premier that the implementation

of such a financial system would lead to the Department losing control of technical education. Barlow also asserted to the Premier that the South Brisbane college managed their affairs much more successfully than the Brisbane college. At this meeting, members of the deputation advanced other ideas to improve technical education in Brisbane. A. Hinchcliffe, MLC, supported the policy of amalgamation of the Brisbane colleges, and Mrs J.S. Kerr suggested that continuation classes should be made compulsory for those who were over 15 and unemployed.<sup>46</sup> One measure that assisted the Brisbane Technical College was the restoration of railway passes in 1905 to teachers attending the college. Of the 1033 students enrolled in 1905, 181 were teachers.<sup>47</sup>

**Other colleges - survival of the fittest.** By 1902, thirty-three technical colleges had come into existence apart from Brisbane Technical College. Some of these - Zillmere, Southport, Normanton, Howard, Beenleigh, Clermont and Gin Gin - lasted only a few years and were closed by 1902. Many others - Allora (Victoria Institute), Ravenswood, Stanwell, Hughenden, Charleville, Dalby, Childers, Roma, and Stanthorpe - came to a halt during the period 1902 to 1905. Few of these had a life span beyond three or four years. Generally, these short-lived colleges were located in the smaller country towns (see Appendix 2).

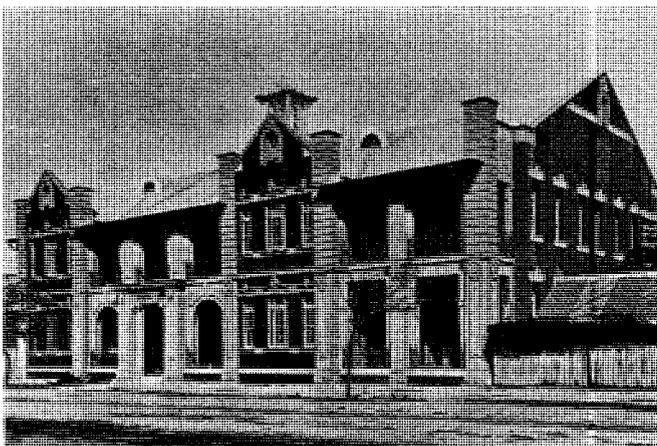
While the tightening up of the endowment system was a major reason for failure during the 1902-1905 period, other factors were involved. In addition to the prevailing general economic situation of the State, fluctuating fortunes in local businesses and industries played a part. As well, in centres that provided only a few subjects for a small number of students, the shift of a teacher or some of the students to another district, or waning local enthusiasm could close down a centre.<sup>48</sup>

Growth in many bigger centres either came to a standstill or was reversed. Rockhampton, for example, with 309 students in 1900-01, had exactly the same number of students in 1906-07.<sup>49</sup> One college that managed to grow was Charters Towers, which rose from 250 in 1903 to 424 in 1905.<sup>50</sup>

Barlow expressed the opinion in 1905 that the best technical college outside Brisbane was at Charters Towers.<sup>51</sup> In the same year, District Inspector A. Mutch visited Charters Towers and reported, 'Technical education appears to be carried on here for the purpose of giving the worker the opportunity of increasing his efficiency so that he may thereby secure a higher wage'.<sup>52</sup> Enrolment at the college in 1905 stood at 424.

In 1902 Charters Towers Technical College introduced a Day and Night School, which functioned as a secondary school. In 1903, forty-one students, of the total 250 college students, were attending this school.<sup>53</sup> A similar school, the South Brisbane Technical College High School, was established in 1905. This school provided a science course and a commercial course, each of two years' duration. Students were able to prepare for the Sydney University Public Examinations.<sup>54</sup>

Though Barlow did not favour commercial subjects in technical colleges, these subjects continued to be the most popular ones throughout the State.<sup>55</sup>



Rockhampton Technical College, 1915.

About 1902, representatives from all of the technical colleges of the State held a conference, and in succeeding years this became an annual practice. This annual conference gave the colleges a chance to consider common problems and determine common policies. By presenting requests to the Minister, it also constituted a strong lobby group.<sup>56</sup> Throughout the existence of these conferences, their requests received serious consideration from the Minister and his Departmental officers.

## The Department grasps the nettle, 1905-1918

### Administration

Influenced by the concept of national efficiency, the Department wished to coordinate all levels of education from the kindergarten to the university, and in 1906 presented a planned reorganisation of education designed to achieve this. A corollary of this was a firmer Departmental commitment to taking over both the grammar schools and the technical colleges, and controlling the direction of a university when one came into existence in Queensland.

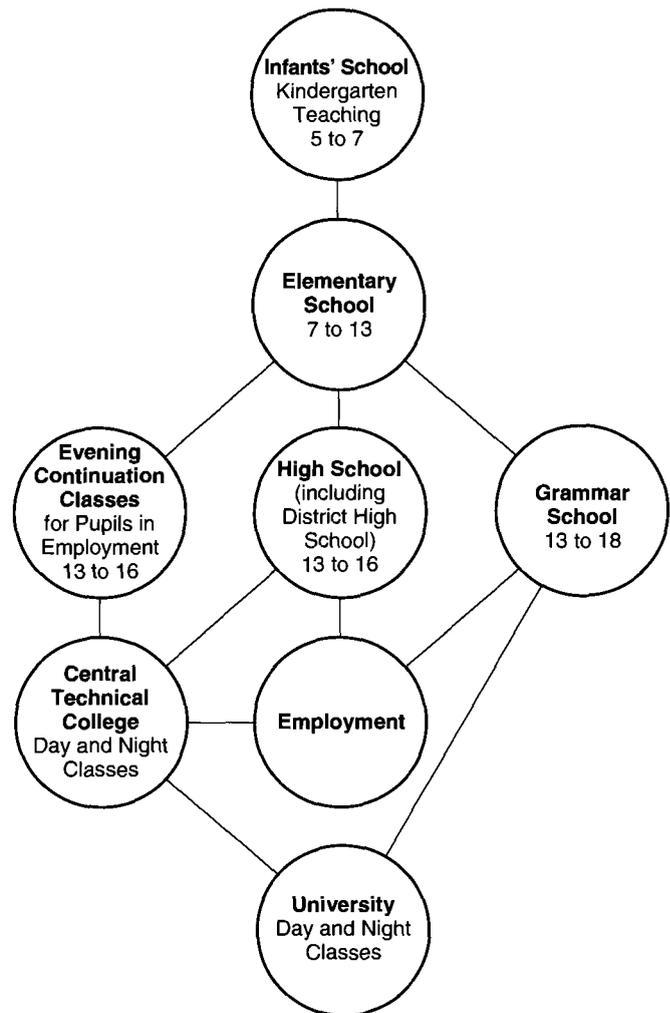
**Integration and control of technical colleges.** As a step towards closer control of the administration of technical colleges, the newly formed Technical Education Branch made use of its control of the subsidy scheme to influence college management committees to adopt the following administrative procedures: new sites for technical colleges to be vested in the Minister for Education, technical colleges to be administered separately from schools of arts, and departmental representatives to be included in management committees. Furthermore, colleges were regularly inspected by Riddell.<sup>57</sup>

In 1908 the Department presented a new plan for the integration of education, which would provide a wider access to higher education through technical education (see Figure 1). This plan, subsequently modified, would enable intelligent children from less affluent families to bypass the expensive grammar school education.

David McConnel, however, was highly critical of the Department's administration of technical education. He believed that it lacked knowledge of the nature of technical education and had no sympathy for the needs of the students.<sup>58</sup>

Meanwhile, the Attorney-General, James Blair, introduced a Bill in Parliament in 1907, which was designed to extend the control of the Department of Public Instruction in the field of technical education. Introducing the Bill, Blair gave a brief history of the problems and changes in the administration of technical education since 1900 and outlined the reforms effected by the Department since 1905. He explained that the only way that the Department could exercise any control over technical education was through conditions attached to the granting of subsidies, and that the Bill was necessary to put matters of reform and organisation on a firm footing.<sup>59</sup>

**Figure 1: Plan of reorganisation of education as suggested in 1908**



Source: *Annual Report of the Secretary/Minister for Public Instruction/Education (Queensland), 1908, p. 16*



*James Blair, Attorney-General in 1907, Minister for Education, 1912-1915.*

Blair stated that the main purpose of the Bill was to amalgamate the College of Pharmacy and the technical colleges of Brisbane, South Brisbane and West End into one central technical college, and so end unnecessary competition and duplication in equipment and teachers. He also intended the Bill to establish this central college as an advanced technical institute for the whole State and as a model for other technical colleges. The central college would come under the direct administration of the Technical Education Branch, which would be controlled by a superintendent.

He believed that one central college would facilitate the linking of primary and technical education, and that the provision of continuation classes would prepare for 'the contest in life' those who had to work for a living. He stated that the only changes contemplated for country colleges were to commit them to common standards and a centralised examination system. He expressed the hope that the Bill would institute a national system of technical education in Queensland, which would provide a firmer foundation for national prosperity and greatness.<sup>60</sup>

During the debate, technical education received general support from parliamentarians who believed that it would help develop our industries to enable our country to compete in the battle for life, and to educate our own technical experts instead of importing them. While there was much support for the provisions of the Bill, there was also much criticism, especially from members or ex-members of college management committees, such as Thynne, Hinchcliffe and Norton.

Several parliamentarians supported the existing control by local management committees, and questioned the wisdom of extending the 'hide-bound' control of the Department of Public Instruction, which was seen as lacking the necessary expertise and flexibility to provide technical instruction. Some expressed the opinion that Riddell would prove inadequate as a future superintendent because he did not have a very wide experience of technical colleges. Several country members opposed the provision of government money for buildings and equipment for a Brisbane Central Technical College without requiring the local community to contribute one-fifth of the total cost, as was the usual practice. They complained that a similar concession should be made to country technical colleges. Most of the opponents of the Bill unsuccessfully requested that changes should be postponed until a select committee could further investigate the matter.<sup>61</sup>

The Bill was passed and became the *Technical Instruction Act 1908*, which did not come into operation until 1 August 1909. The Act repealed the *Brisbane Technical College Incorporation Act 1897*, provided for the abolition of the committees of management of the three Brisbane technical colleges, and for the establishment of a Central Technical College in Brisbane. During the passage of the Bill, the College of Pharmacy was excluded from the amalgamation because it was considered to be more appropriate as part of a future university. The Central Technical College was to come under the direct control of the Minister and was to be supervised by a superintendent appointed by the Minister.

The Act also provided tighter Departmental control of other technical colleges. Before such a college could receive an endowment, it had to receive approval from the Minister for its rules and regulations, its method of appointment or election of the managing committee, its appointment and salaries of staff, its syllabus of instruction, its methods of examination and its granting of certificates and diplomas. Any new college was to be established on a site vested in the Minister for Education, with a one-fifth local subscription towards the total cost of the site, buildings and equipment. No endowment would be paid to a college proposed to be established within a five-mile radius (about 8 kilometres) of an existing college, but provision was made for the establishment of branch classes.

Regulations issued under the Act also tightened Departmental control over the non metropolitan technical colleges. At least three members of a management committee were to be nominated by the Minister. The duties of the management committee were to include:

- making recommendations to the Minister on subjects, staff and other matters;
- supervising classes;
- arousing local interest in attendance and the goals of the college;
- making college rules (subject to Ministerial approval);
- fostering relationships between college work and State industries.

Other regulations dealt with the manner of expenditure, conduct of branch classes, and student qualifications necessary for entry to classes.

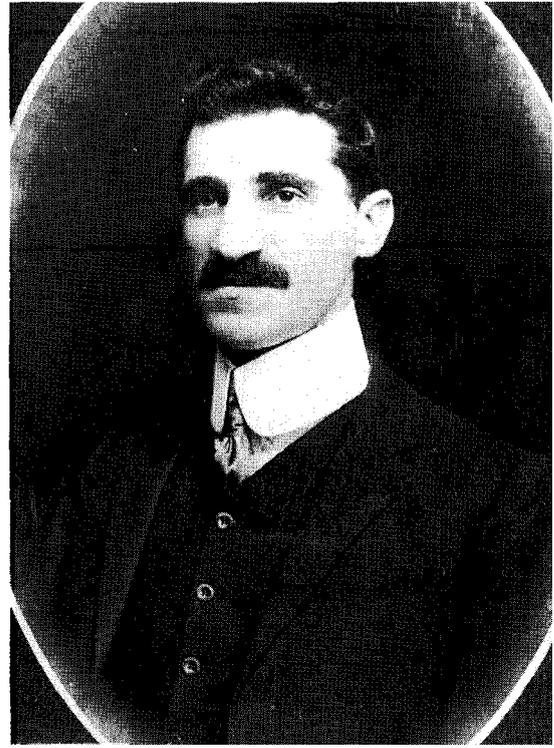
As a result of these restrictions, college management committees feared that they would be placed in the same position as State school committees, whom they regarded as having no responsible position whatsoever.<sup>62</sup>

The Minister, Barlow, created a new position of Superintendent of Technical Education. For this position, Barlow wanted a superintendent who was in touch with modern developments in technical education, and he publicly made known his belief that it would be necessary to go outside the State to obtain such a person.<sup>63</sup> Among the applicants were McConnel and Riddell, but the superintendent appointed in 1909 was Leonard Morris, at that time, 31-year-old lecturer at Sydney Technical College. Morris had become an Associate Member of the English Institute of Electrical Engineering, following an apprenticeship in the engineering trade and four years' study in mechanical and electrical engineering at Sydney University, being placed first in each of the four years.<sup>64</sup> Morris became responsible to the Minister for the overall administration of technical education. Riddell was appointed Deputy Superintendent, with the specific responsibilities of administering the Central Technical College (CTC) and inspecting the country technical colleges. In 1917 Morris received a salary of £600 and Riddell £440. At that time the salary of the Chief Inspector was £575 and the salaries of district inspectors were in the range £400 to £440.<sup>65</sup>

Recommendations from Morris to the Minister passed through the hands of Story an extremely capable



*Leonard Morris, Superintendent of Technical Education, 1909-1938.*



*John Story, Under-Secretary of Education, 1904-1920, had a strong influence on technical education.*



*Central Technical College Staff, 1910.*

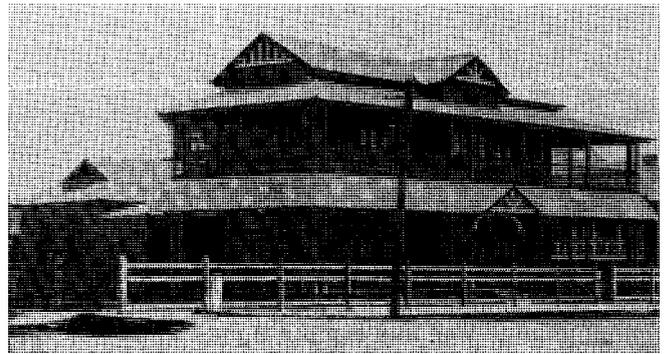
*Back row (from left): J.A. Rigby; B. F. Canniffe, ACPA, AFIA; WC. Oxlade; G. V. Boyer; L. Hayles; J. F. Martyn Roberts; W Schoch, FIPS; A. H. Foster, ARIBA; D. Fison; P. f. Ure; H. L. Watkins, B. A.*  
*Third row (from left): C.J. Johnstone; G. Wood; L. Barrett; K. Morris; D. Wendt; J Noonan; M. Schauer; L.J. Harvey; R. Godfrey Rivers; E. H. George, AFIA.*  
*Second row (from left): J E. Jones; M. Comyn; M. McCloy; Mrs Brydon; L.C. Morris, AMIEE; L. Blaxland; A. Allison; J E. Smith.*  
*Front row (from left): J. L. Sands; W.H. Leonard; C. Rich; H. C. Richards, B.Sc.; H. W. May, B. E.; W Arundell; G. W Wilson.*

administrator, who had been appointed Acting Under-Secretary in 1904. Prior to this appointment, he had been Chief Clerk. Story became chief adviser to the Minister on professional as well as general administrative matters. While the new superintendent's expertise was an important influence in the shaping of technical education policy and practice, Story directly intervened in the formulation of major policies in technical education, so that, by 1915, he was the main architect of planning in technical education.<sup>66</sup> In a speech at the 1917 Annual Conference of Technical Colleges, Morris advised delegates to discuss important issues with Story while he, Morris, would attend to the details.<sup>67</sup> Story made much use of the expertise and advice of committees he set up, and reports and advice from other States, Great Britain and the USA.<sup>68</sup>

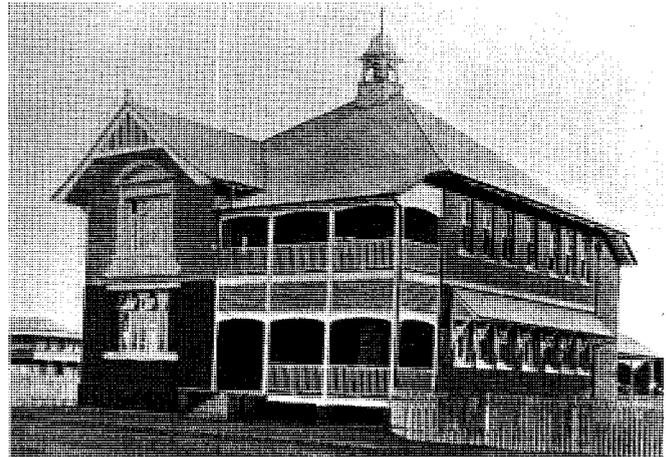
It was not until the beginning of 1910 that the amalgamation of the Brisbane colleges was carried out. The new Central Technical College (CTC) was based on the previous Brisbane Technical College, since this college was the biggest and had the most facilities. The West End Technical College, which had always been a small college, was closed. The South Brisbane Technical College, which had proved a strong rival to the Brisbane college, functioned temporarily as a branch of CTC, providing classes only in English, arithmetic, domestic science and commercial subjects. The reasons put forward by the Department for the retention of these classes were that if they ceased more space and teachers would have been needed at the central college, that the equipment required for them was not expensive, and that these classes served the special needs of the district. The Department claimed that the centralisation resulted in a reduction in the fees and the employment of more full-time staff and fewer part-time staff. In 1913, supervisors were appointed to CTC. Each supervisor was in charge of a department and was responsible to the head of the college. At the end of 1914, CTC shifted into new buildings located in the grounds of the Old Government House in George Street, and opened for instruction in these new buildings on 15 February 1915.<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile, the University of Queensland opened in the Old Government House in George Street in 1911, and the Government planned as an economy measure that the university would use some of the buildings and equipment of the college when it was opened. Because of the high status the university developed, in 1913 Story expressed his concern to the Minister, James Blair, that, when the college was completed, the needs of the technical college, which catered for almost 2000 students, would be subordinated to those of the university, which catered for only 219 students.<sup>70</sup>

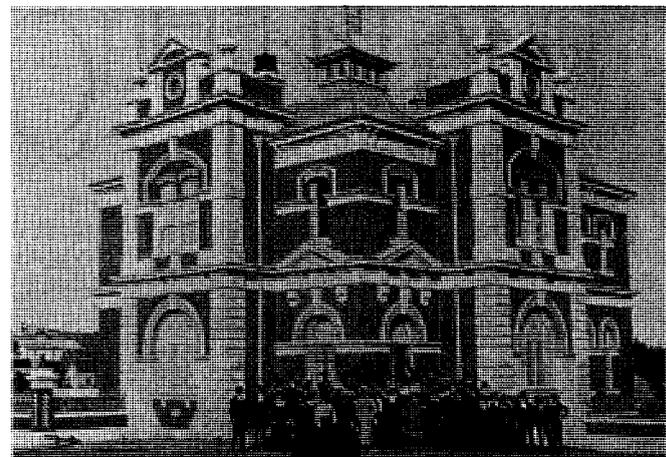
In addition to the takeover of the Brisbane colleges, the Department took over Warwick Technical College in 1910 and Mackay Technical College in 1912, at the request of the management committees of those colleges. This left the colleges at Townsville, Rockhampton, Charters Towers, Bowen, Mount Morgan, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Cairns, Bundaberg, Maryborough and Gympie outside direct Departmental control. According to a Departmental report, the success or otherwise of



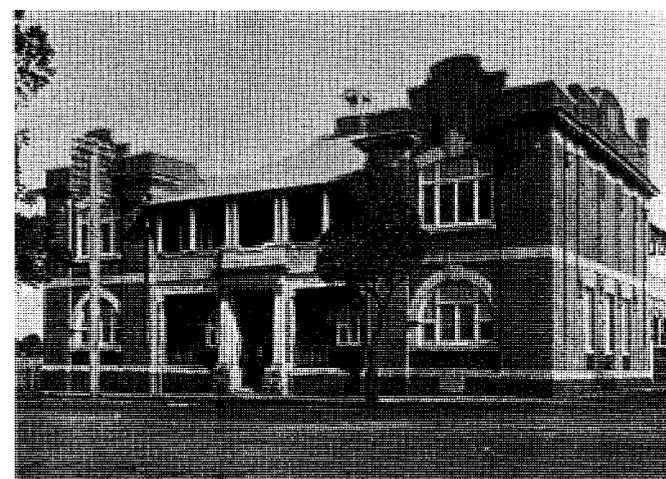
*Warwick Technical College.*



*Mackay Technical College.*



*Ipswich Technical College.*



*Toowoomba Technical College.*

these non-government technical colleges depended in most cases entirely on the secretary or the principal of the individual college.<sup>71</sup> In 1915 the Department prepared a system of technical education that provided a considerable degree of flexibility. Provided that they made the right choices, students at all levels of study were given better access to higher levels of study up to and including university level (see Figure 2).

As early as 1911, the Minister, Kenneth Grant, considered preparing a Bill that would allow the Department to take over all the technical colleges and he made inquiries about the cost to the Government.<sup>72</sup> It was not until 1918 that the Minister, Herbert Hardacre, presented a Bill in Parliament to effect such a takeover. Hardacre was well briefed by his main advisers, Morris and Story.

Incorporating points made by Morris, Story listed the following advantages to Departmental control of all technical colleges:

- better coordination of primary, secondary and technical education;
- closer uniformity in fees;
- greater equality in teacher remuneration;
- greater ease in establishing new courses, including those of higher technical content;
- lightening of the administrative load of local administration;
- employment of more efficient teachers;
- opportunity to establish a system of training teachers; - implementation of a system of transfer of teachers;
- better provision of continuation, branch, apprenticeship, and returned soldiers' classes;
- implementation of an effective system of technical college scholarships;
- closer contact with trade, manufacturing and commercial interests.

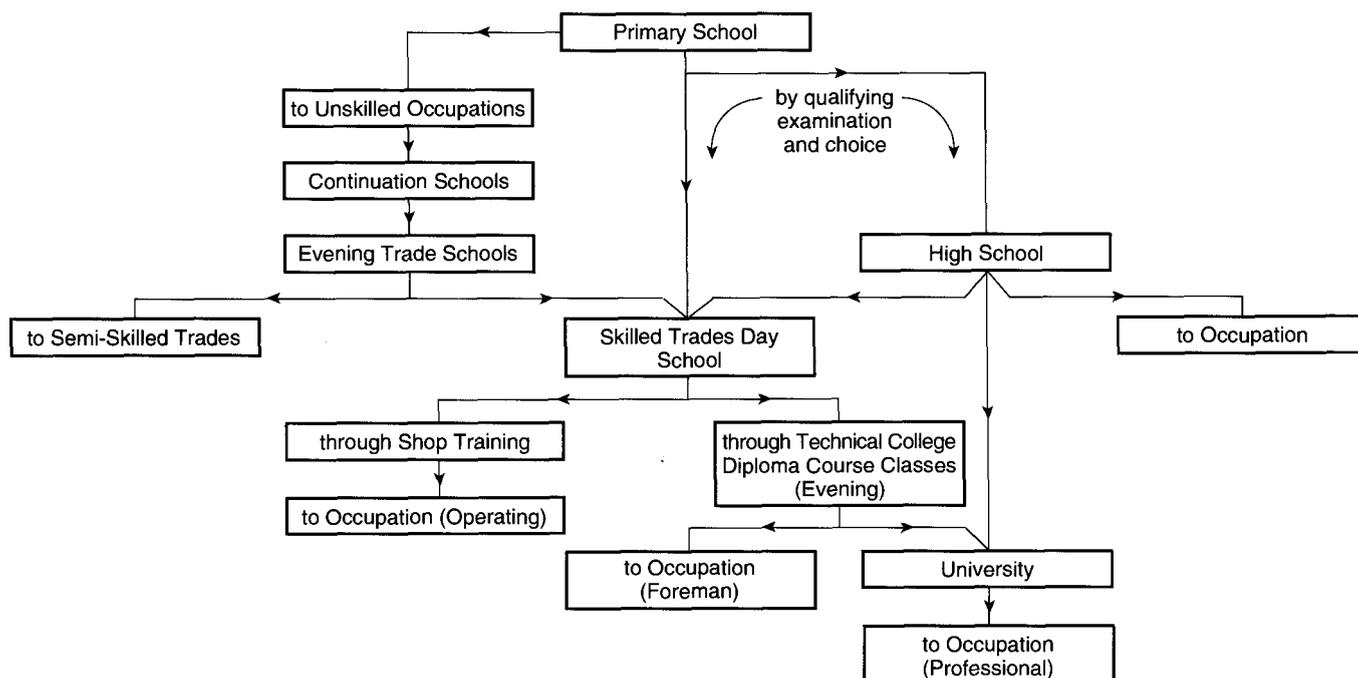


Herbert Hardacre. Minister for Education, 1915-1919.

Story advocated a gradual takeover of the colleges, implementing a policy of mutual agreement of the management committees and the Department. The committees were to be retained to guide and assist activities to meet local requirements and provide for local development. He also advocated a policy of caution in taking over the colleges to avoid unforeseen expenditure. To this end, he had a detailed survey made of the costs of taking over each technical college.<sup>73</sup>

The Department recommended to the Minister that Ipswich, Rockhampton and Charters Towers colleges should be the first colleges taken over, because in those instances there would be few staff changes needed; the colleges were strategically placed in the southern, central

Figure 2: Planned system of technical education, 1915



Source: Annual Report of the Secretary/Minister for Public Instruction/Education (Queensland), 1915, p. 22

and northern regions (which would be advantageous for compulsory apprenticeship training envisaged in the near future); the buildings and equipment of these colleges were already vested in the Department (except for one of the Ipswich buildings); and the colleges had made takeover requests in previous years.<sup>74</sup>

In introducing the Bill, Hardacre spoke of the need of skilled workers to increase productivity in primary products. He also said that new industries were needed and that technical education would help to establish these. A consequence, he believed, would be increased efficiency, increased wealth, increased demand for labour and an increase in wages and conditions. Hardacre later expressed the opinion that technical education was more important than secondary and university education because the subjects taught in secondary schools and universities were beneficial only to a small number of people.

Hardacre complained that, while the Department was meeting almost all of the expense of equipment, buildings, and maintenance, its only power was that of veto over courses and staffing. He then put forward the advantages for technical education that Morris and Story had provided for him. He followed up by explaining that it was not the intention of the Government to take over all of the colleges at once, and that the Government would try to avoid taking over any college where the management committee was opposed to such a move.<sup>75</sup>

There was relatively little opposition to this Bill, which was introduced by a Labour Government and which provided for changes advocated earlier by non-Labour governments. Walter Barnes, a non-Labour ex-Minister for Education, when speaking to the Bill, implied that the main goal of the Bill was to implement Story's goal of integrated education and Departmental control of all avenues of education.<sup>76</sup> When the Bill was passed, it became the *Technical Instruction Act Amendment Act 1918*. This Act gave the Minister for Education the power to take charge, at any time, of any established technical college to which endowment had been paid. Furthermore, any new technical college established was to be under the control of the Minister. It also gave the Governor-in-Council the power to make any regulations with regard to those colleges taken over. With regard to colleges that remained outside direct government control, the Act, in addition to the requirements of the 1908 Act, required management committees to obtain Ministerial approval for fees set for students and salaries paid to staff.

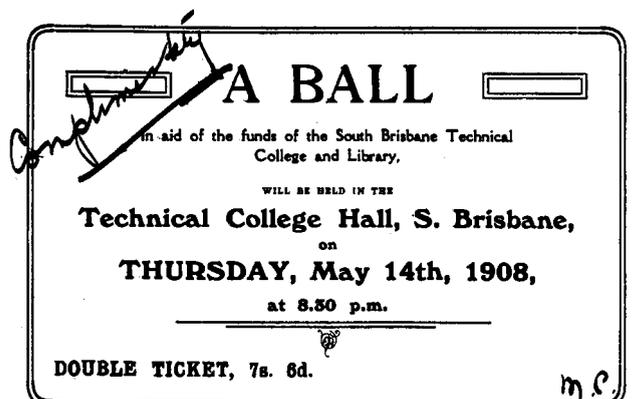
At the 1918 Annual Conference of Technical Colleges, delegates generally accepted the principle of the government takeover. Some opposition emerged, however, with the result that a motion of open support for the changes was successfully amended to a non-committal one of support for technical education in general. Conference delegates supported the Victorian system, which gave considerable executive power to local committees, with some delegates supporting the opinion that, if Queensland committees were not given such powers, the colleges would lose their services. Hardacre attended this conference and received a sympathetic

hearing. He tried to reassure the delegates that the Government had no intention of taking over colleges in the face of hostility, and there was no intention of dispensing with the committees.<sup>77</sup>

The Brisbane daily newspapers generally covered the changes favourably, but two of them, the *Telegraph* and *The Brisbane Courier*, were opposed to one aspect of the changes - the ending of local control - which they regarded as a threat to local interest, initiative and pride in local institutions. *The Daily Standard*, a newspaper that supported the Labour Government, greeted the changes enthusiastically in terms of 'More Socialism' and 'Nationalisation'.<sup>78</sup> The Minister reiterated in the press that the Government had no intention of disbanding technical college management committees. He claimed that they would be given a wider base of representation to make them more useful, that they would retain most of their executive powers, and they would be given a certain amount of money each year. He also claimed that in some cases the Government would determine that some things would have to be done, but in most cases the committees would be given recommendations on these points and money to carry out the work.<sup>79</sup>

**Finance.** After 1905 closer Departmental involvement in technical education was accompanied by a steady increase in the amount expended by the Government in this field.<sup>80</sup> The return of better economic conditions also assisted in providing greater stability for many of the colleges, including the Brisbane Technical College. A differential scheme of endowment introduced on 1 January 1906 continued to operate, with increased subsidies in some subjects, throughout the period. One important concession introduced in 1907 was an increased subsidy of £4 for £1 on equipment and apparatus.<sup>81</sup> In 1917 Thomas Dunstan raised the issue of funding for technical colleges, advocating Commonwealth involvement in Queensland technical education so that Australia could compete more effectively against other countries.<sup>82</sup>

Whereas in the USA some of the best technical institutions were privately endowed, in Queensland people continued to look to the State Government to finance technical education. By 1918 only three individuals and the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company had made some limited financial contributions to technical education.<sup>83</sup>



Fund-raising for South Brisbane Technical College, 1908.

## Staffing

The total number of staff, part time and full time, in technical colleges rose from 195 in 1907 to 310 in 1917, and then dropped slightly to 295 in 1918. Females constituted approximately one-third of the total during this period.<sup>84</sup>

After 1905 the Department exercised control over the appointment of staff to non-government colleges by requiring the names and qualifications of proposed teachers before approving them. This approval was required before the subsidy was paid. In one instance, the Department prevented the appointment of one principal at Rockhampton Technical College by not guaranteeing his salary. This action resulted in the appointment of a new principal by a reconstituted committee.<sup>85</sup>

The quality of college staff varied. In 1906 McConnel referred to some teachers at the Brisbane Technical College as 'university honours graduates'. One example of a highly qualified teacher was Dr Hawkin, ex-lecturer at Sydney University and Prince Alfred Hospital, who went to Warwick in 1910 for health reasons, and there became a general practitioner and a teacher of physiology at the Technical High School. On the other hand, Professor Gibson referred to the lack of calibre of many of the technical college instructors.<sup>86</sup>

For technical teachers, the colleges relied on both fulltime and part-time teachers. According to Morris, the part-time teacher gave his best effort to his employer, who was the major source of his income, while the fulltime teacher lost touch with the practical side of the trade. The majority of technical teachers, full time as well as part time, had no experience of teaching before undertaking technical teaching. There was no pre-teacher education and no in-service teacher training for technical teachers.<sup>87</sup>

## Defining the function of technical education

**Importance to industrial development.** Before any systematic scheme of industrial training could be devised, the planners needed to have a good grasp of the development of the State's industries. Contemporary commentators readily recognised that Queensland was predominantly involved in primary industries. Morris also realised this. However, he also engaged in futuristic planning. He stated that one needed to determine the direction that industries of the State would take in the future to ensure the State's efficiency. He believed that, while primary industries would continue to predominate in future years, an effort should also be made to develop those secondary industries which did not need a lot of artificial assistance.<sup>88</sup> The reduction of imports caused by World War I and the consciousness of postwar industrial and commercial opportunities heightened the interest of planners in developing new industries.<sup>89</sup>

Against this background, the Minister and leading officers of the Department of Public Instruction, including Morris, expected technical education to play a role in improving productivity, competitiveness and industrial efficiency of the State by providing skilled

craftsmen and reducing the number of unskilled workers.<sup>90</sup> This expectation was shared by others outside the Department who commented on technical education at the time.<sup>91</sup> Morris also believed that technical education would be needed to solve problems to be confronted when the time came to repay huge national debts.<sup>92</sup>

**Efforts to limit technical education.** Many of the members of the management committees of the various technical colleges, as well as some other members of the general community, continued to support the polytechnic concept. To them, popular classes that brought money into the coffers of a college were, ipso facto, desirable. While such people believed that a technical college should foster subjects of a direct technical nature, they also believed that a technical college should provide equality of opportunity and social mobility, and should be in each town the centre of culture, the 'Working Man's University'.<sup>93</sup>

After the Technical Education Branch was established in 1905, the Department of Public Instruction made clear what it regarded should be the goals of technical education and attempted to impose these on the technical colleges. Riddell, as inspector of Technical Colleges, played an important part in forming and implementing these goals. He quickly opposed the polytechnic concept.

Expressing official Departmental policy, Riddell publicly stated that technical education should foster industrial efficiency and progress, and raise the earning power of its students. He also stated that a consequence of this was that the purpose of a technical college was vocational. A college was to be judged by the extent that it prepared students for trades and professions and not by the number or variety of subjects, teachers and students it attracted. Riddell did not see that secondary education was a legitimate function of a technical college.<sup>94</sup> In a confidential report to the Minister, Riddell accused the technical colleges north of Brisbane of not having much knowledge of what their objectives should be.<sup>95</sup>

Riddell put forward once more a differential subsidy scheme which was accepted as Departmental policy and implemented. In his notes on this proposal, Riddell circumscribed the role of the technical college. He stated that technical education should lead to the improvement of production and the means of production, and that the implementation of the differential scheme would provide pressure upon colleges to give more attention to those technical subjects which contributed to that goal. He did not believe that such subjects as shorthand, typing, dressmaking and cooking made such a contribution. At the same time, Riddell admitted that a compromise was necessary because the removal of a subsidy from those subjects might result in oblivion for many technical colleges.

A sampling of some of the changes that he advocated, together with his reasons, illustrate his interpretation of technical education. No subsidy was to be given to art needlework, which was not a subject to be encouraged in technical colleges. Revisal classes were necessary but

were not technical education, and therefore would receive a government subsidy of 10 shillings for each pound raised by the college. Typewriting, a subject of a mechanical nature, should be discouraged, and would receive a subsidy of 15 shillings for each pound raised. Shorthand required no encouragement from the Government and there were many private tutors available. Shorthand would receive a subsidy of 17s 6d. Painting was non-technical but a non-subsidy would cripple many colleges and Queensland possessed no art schools beyond technical colleges, so a subsidy of 17s 6d was to be paid.

For some subjects, the pound for pound subsidy was maintained. Others, such as assaying, mechanics and advanced chemistry, regarded as more desirable technical subjects, were subsidised as high as £3 for £1.<sup>96</sup>

The Department was not very successful in this effort to impose its interpretation of technical education on the technical colleges, because students from local communities continued to attend technical colleges for 'non-technical' subjects, in spite of increased fees.<sup>97</sup> By 1910 the Department realised it would be difficult to change the status quo. The Brisbane Central Technical College, which came under its control in that year, continued as a polytechnic institution, with the Department continuing to provide a wide range of vocational courses, including commercial courses, hobby classes such as cooking, and all levels of education, from primary revision through secondary to a tertiary level. Story, the Under-Secretary of Education, took a strong interest in the development of technical education, and by 1918 was Chairman of the Departmental Advisory Committee on Technical Education.<sup>98</sup> He came to accept that a technical college should not be restricted to providing technical subjects. In an address to the 1917 Annual Conference of Technical Colleges, he stated that the role of technical education should not be circumscribed. He said that primary education dealt essentially with the three 'Rs', secondary education was restricted by university requirements and the university had definite courses. Story represented technical education as 'the navy of education'. He described it as a kind of self-contained branch, which was called upon to do work that other branches of the education system often failed to do or were unable to do.<sup>99</sup> In a speech at the Annual Conference of Technical Colleges in the following year, Story said that, in Queensland, many people had a too narrow view of technical education because they equated it with industrial education.<sup>100</sup>

Apart from public pressure for the provision of subjects originally regarded as irrelevant to a technical education, the Department itself was moving towards a commitment to providing a systematic scheme of vocational education. This commitment induced the Department to look to technical colleges to educate students in a range of skills beyond strictly technical ones.

Vocational training was a subject that the Minister for Education, Hardacre, chose to highlight in his 1917 Annual Report. Hardacre defined vocational education as 'that form of education which fits directly an individual for the successful pursuit of some useful

occupation'. He believed that the material and financial demands created by the Great War and the anticipated after-effects upon social and economic conditions emphasised the need for the utilitarian aspects of education, and, in particular, schemes of vocational education.

An analysis of possible future as well as present trends in Queensland's industrial development convinced Hardacre that Queensland should implement a more extensive system of vocational education, so that it should no longer be dependent upon an imported skilled labour supply, which was uncertain. Hardacre believed that action by the Arbitration Court was necessary to provide better inducements for young people to enter the skilled labour force. He referred to the manufacturers' response to a survey which showed that they generally supported apprenticeship training at technical colleges, and that they blamed the limitation of the number of apprentices imposed in many industries for the need to import skilled workmen.<sup>101</sup>

In 1917, in an address to the Annual Conference of Technical Colleges, Story described the role of technical colleges in the provision of vocational education. He believed that, for generations to come, Queensland would be essentially a primary producing State and that rural schools would assist the primary industries through the practical education of the boys and girls of those engaged in those industries. He looked to the technical colleges to assist in this form of education. At the same time, he believed that technical education should train efficient workers to help the war effort and to take part in planned, future industrial development in such industries as iron and steel. He also pointed out that technical education should be concerned with the training of apprentices, the training of returned soldiers, the provision of continuation classes for those who had just left school, and the extension of the system of technical branch classes in country areas.<sup>102</sup>

At the 1918 Annual Conference of Technical Colleges, Morris also elected to give a wide role to the technical college. He said, 'In each town, the college should become the centre of Culture, the working man's University'.<sup>103</sup>

While technical education, then, continued to provide a wide range of subjects at many levels, criticism of this policy still smouldered within the Department. Unsigned drafts of two Departmental memorandums, dated 13 March 1918, stated that technical colleges should be restricted to vocational work, and that some of the work conducted in technical colleges should be transferred to primary schools and high schools.<sup>104</sup>

### **Developments in curriculum and examinations**

The annual conference of technical colleges on several occasions referred to the need to revise the technical college syllabus annually<sup>105</sup>, and in actual practice revisions were made nearly every year.

CTC introduced changes as their needs were perceived. A full commercial course was established in 1913. In 1915, a full-time, six-months course was implemented in sugar chemistry, to cater for an increased

need for sugar chemists, and a telephone mechanics course recognised by the Post Master General's Department. In 1916, wool classing was efficiently and thoroughly carried out by students under the supervision of their teacher. As a result of this efficient wool classing, farmers who participated in the wool-classing scheme found that they received twice as much for their wool at the sales. During the war years, the college prepared thousands of patterns for use in making garments for distribution by the Red Cross Society and field cookery courses were initiated for the armed forces in 1915.<sup>106</sup>

Some colleges specialised along the following lines: Gympie and Mount Morgan - courses for the mining industry; Maryborough - engineering theory; Bundaberg - agricultural chemistry classes; Rockhampton - chemistry leading up to assaying; Ipswich - coal mining and railways; Central Technical College - electrical engineering.<sup>107</sup>

With regard to the curriculum for industrial training, Morris stated that, because of the nature of industrial development in Queensland, instruction in general skills and knowledge was more important than in specialised skills. E.C. Barton, MLA, another leading educationist in the field of technical education, expressed the same opinion at a prestigious conference in Brisbane in 1909.<sup>108</sup> Riddell, in his Inspector's Report of 1906, elaborated on another perennial curriculum problem - the need for combining theory and Practice.<sup>109</sup>

The Department continued to stress the need for students to undertake prerequisite studies at an elementary level before proceeding to a more advanced level. To encourage students to take full courses of study, a reduction of fees was offered to a student who began such a course. In 1914 Morris claimed that statistics showed that more students were undertaking structured Courses.<sup>110</sup>

By 1918 technical education was offering about 100 subjects in the following departments: agriculture; art; building; chemistry, mining and metallurgy; commerce; domestic science and art; engineering; languages and literature; mathematics; science; sheep and wool; and six subjects in the special syllabuses of subjects for pupils of State schools attending technical colleges (see Appendix 3).

As part of a coordination policy elaborated in 1908, the Department supported a plan whereby a person completing a full course at CTC, or other institutions of equal standing, should be issued with a Fourth Grade Certificate, which would allow that person to enter the University of Queensland when it was established. This plan failed when the University of Queensland, after it was established, set up its own matriculation examination system. In 1914 Riddell advocated a policy of student assessment that would combine the existing practice of an annual examination with an assessment of students' work done at home and in class.<sup>111</sup> It is not clear whether this proposed policy was implemented. In 1915 and in 1917, similar recommendations were made at the annual conferences of technical colleges.<sup>112</sup> Riddell also suggested that certificates should be issued certifying a student's ability to perform certain work in terms understood by the trade rather than, say, Fitting and Machining, Stage I.

The technical college management committees were concerned that only bona fide college students should be allowed to sit for technical college examinations. To allow otherwise would result in what the committees saw as unhealthy competition from outside institutions for their students.<sup>113</sup>

### Technical colleges as multilevel institutions

**Primary level.** In 1905 the Department was opposed to any form of technical education in the primary school curriculum.<sup>114</sup> As a result of a change in policy, Riddell reported in 1909 that technical colleges were providing some technical subjects for primary school pupils who were close to technical colleges. By 1911 there were 1397 such pupils attending technical colleges. While the majority did manual training and domestic science subjects, a few took other subjects, such as bookkeeping, shorthand, chemistry, physics and geometrical drawing.<sup>115</sup> It appears that the subjects in the latter group were offered for only a few weeks before being withdrawn as subjects for primary level study.

In 1917 the Nambour State Rural School was established. This Departmental innovation in primary education provided, as part of the school curriculum,



*Primary school pupils at a dressmaking class, Toowoomba Technical College, 1913.*



*Primary school pupils at a cooking class, Domestic Science Department, Central Technical College, about 1911.*

manual skills useful for boys who would be taking up rural occupations and domestic science subjects for the girls. The Technical Education Branch was responsible for developing a suitable curriculum and for providing instructors for those subjects.<sup>116</sup> The success of this school was followed by the establishment of similar schools elsewhere.

As an experiment, the Department introduced in 1918 instruction in manual training and domestic science for the older pupils at Woolloowin State School. The Technical Education Branch was responsible for conducting these classes.<sup>117</sup>

**Apprenticeship training.** A general consensus had developed that the traditional methods of apprenticeship training were no longer relevant to the needs of the time, and that the State, through the technical colleges, should assist in this training.<sup>118</sup> As a consequence, one of the provisions of the *Industrial Arbitration Act 1916* was compulsory attendance at technical colleges for apprentices in prescribed trades.<sup>119</sup> A progressive step was taken by the Railways Department in 1916, when it sent its apprentices to classes at Ipswich Technical College during work time.<sup>120</sup> In the following year, the printing trade was added to the prescribed trades, and compulsory attendance included one hour attendance each week in work time.<sup>121</sup>

One major conflict that developed after 1912 was caused by trade union pressure, which resulted in limitations being placed on the number of apprenticeship places in the various trades. The trade unions wanted the number restricted to what they thought the

trades were able to absorb.<sup>122</sup> Their opponents believed that this condemned many Queensland children to a life of unskilled labour, and deprived the State of tradesmen who would be needed in the future.<sup>123</sup> The importation of skilled tradesmen was seen by some as an effect of the small numbers of apprentices accepted, while others saw it as a cause. This limitation on the number of apprentices reduced in turn the number of apprentices in technical college courses. Furthermore, a limitation was imposed on access to some trade courses. For example, when classes for the printing trade were being organised by the Department in 1916, the Labour Minister, Hardacre, agreed that it would be Departmental policy that the classes would be available only to those in the printing trade or to those who made a serious undertaking to enter the trade.<sup>124</sup>

Another problem was caused by the Arbitration Act which required an apprenticeship, usually of five years' duration, to be completed by the age of twenty-one. This created an age barrier for those who finished a high school course at the age of 16, for those forced to wait for more than a few years for an opening as an apprentice, and for those who found they disliked their chosen trade when they were 16 or more years old and wished to change trades.

A further problem was that those young people who entered unskilled jobs were initially paid more than those entering apprenticeships. This led to the claim that there was a tendency for children of poorer parents to enter the unskilled jobs, resulting in a lack of equal opportunity for all.<sup>125</sup>



*Woodworking class, Central Technical College, about*

To assist in the training of each of the trades taught at CTC, the Department established trade training committees in 1915. The functions of these committees included:

- making recommendations on and supervising classes, and ensuring that the training was relevant to current workshop practices;
- advising on the appointment of trade teachers;
- cooperating in the examination and appraisal of practical work for certificate purposes;
- encouraging class attendance of apprentices.

In the following year, advisory committees were also established for the art, building, commercial, domestic science and wool departments of the college.<sup>126</sup>

In 1918 a commentator in *The Daily Standard* made a scathing attack on these committees. This commentator claimed that the Day Trade School Advisory Committee had met once in 1918, that other trade advisory committees had even worse reputations, that advisory committees had no authority, and that they had not secured the cooperation of the Education Department and industry.<sup>127</sup>

**Pre-vocational trade education.** Shortly after Morris became Superintendent of Technical Education, he advocated the establishment of full-time day trade preparatory classes to improve the much criticised apprenticeship system. By 1913 the concept of a day trade school became official Departmental policy.<sup>128</sup> In 1915 a Departmental committee reported on trade training. The committee comprised Morris, Riddell, R.A. Wearne, Principal of Ipswich Technical College, and Professor A. J. Gibson, Professor of Engineering at the University of Queensland and Honorary Inspector of Engineering and Trade Work of the Technical Education Branch. This committee stated that the period of apprenticeship was too long and recommended that, in addition to the continuation of the apprenticeship system, day trade schools should be established, that scholarship allowances should be paid to the students as compensation for loss of earnings, and that the trades be encouraged to recognise the day courses, organised under the guidance of trade advisory committees, as training towards journeyman status.<sup>129</sup>

At the beginning of 1917, a Day Trade School, a type of technical high school modelled on a Victorian scheme<sup>130</sup>, was established at CTC, and provided a three-year course. In the first year, fifty students, selected by a qualifying examination, received free tuition in English, mathematics, history, geography, trade drawing, trade geometry, engineering sketching, electrician's work, carpentry and joinery, and plumbing. Financial assistance was given to a student whose parents' income was below a set level. At the end of the year, forty-six re-enrolled and each student was streamed into a trade guided by his ability and the future work prospects of each trade. The second year was spent partly on general schoolwork but mainly on the trade work chosen. The third year was to be devoted almost wholly to trade work. Provision was also made for various sports. The Department hoped to turn out

better men, better citizens and better tradesmen. A similar school was established at Ipswich Technical College in the same year.<sup>131</sup>

The scheme quickly became controversial. As well as some public support, it continued to have the support of Morris, Riddell, Wearne and the majority of representatives at the annual conferences of technical colleges. Wearne, for example, saw it as useful in filling an educational gap between the end of primary education at the age of 13 to 14 and the taking up of an apprenticeship at the age of 15 to 16. He thought that it would also provide a suitable education for a tradesman destined for higher positions in a trade.<sup>132</sup>

By 1918 Story had become a critic of the system and opposed any expansion of the scheme beyond Ipswich and CTC where it had been established. At the annual conference of technical colleges in that year, he stated that employers welcomed the system as a promising source of carefully trained boys, but trade union representatives saw it as overcrowding the labour market, resulting in unemployment and lower wages. Story believed that, if concessions were not made in the form of a shortened apprenticeship period and adequate pay for the students, and if students were not absorbed by the trades, then there was little inducement to lads to enter the school because of the waste of time and wages lost.<sup>133</sup> The Minister for Education in 1918, Hardacre, claimed that similar schools in Victoria had been a success but had proved a failure in New South Wales, and said that they might later have to reconsider the whole question in Queensland.<sup>134</sup>

**Commercial and domestic science studies.** The implementation of the subsidy system failed to lessen the emphasis on commercial and domestic science studies in technical colleges. In 1905 the most popular subjects were commercial and home science subjects, with the number who sat for examinations in these subjects being 44 per cent and 15 per cent respectively of the total examination candidates. In 1917 the Minister, Hardacre, acknowledged that commercial and domestic science subjects were the most popular branches of vocational education. At the end of 1918, they remained the most popular subjects, with commercial and domestic science examination candidates comprising 32 per cent and 29 per cent respectively of the total examination candidates.<sup>135</sup>

One example of the general popularity of domestic science was provided in 1917, when domestic science staff at the CTC gave well-attended public demonstrations in cookery, dressmaking and millinery, first at the college and then in four nearby suburbs.<sup>136</sup>

**Secondary education.** The Technical High School of the South Brisbane College established in 1905 proved quite successful, according to Riddell. In a brief report dated 3 April 1906, he stated that it had earned a reputation of a secondary school established on modern lines.<sup>137</sup>

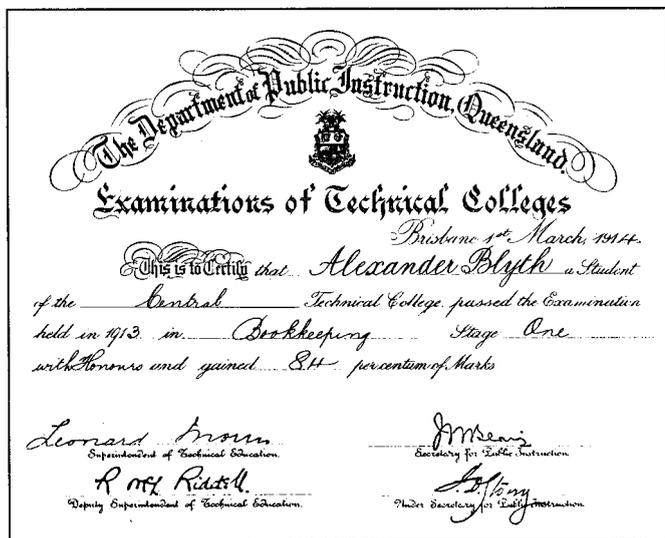
By 1905 day classes at the Brisbane Technical College were providing full-time secondary courses. In 1910 the Department arranged the secondary courses into a Day School. This opened with an enrolment of 154 students,



Shorthand class, Rockhampton Technical College, 1901.



Invalid cooking, Domestic Science Department, Central Technical College, 1910.



Certificate for bookkeeping, Central Technical College, 1914.

98 of whom were scholarship holders.<sup>138</sup> Within a few years, these classes were often referred to unofficially as the Technical College High School. The aim was to provide not only manual skills but a sound general education to prepare students for courses in the various Departments of CTC, university matriculation, civil service, and for professional examinations. By 1918 the aims of the school included also the development of the student's whole being - physical, mental and moral.<sup>139</sup>

The subjects initially provided were English, mathematics, chemistry, physics, physiology, drawing, geography, woodwork and home science subjects. The fee per term was £2 2s Od but seventy-four scholarships were made available, fifty for boys and twenty-four for girls. A Commercial Day School, established also in 1910, provided general and commercial subjects. To these were added the Trade Day School and the Domestic Science Day School. In 1918, 651 students were attending these four schools.<sup>140</sup>

The CTC High School was conducted like other secondary schools, participating in sports and holding annual speech nights.<sup>141</sup> The lack of playing space, of course, created difficulties.

CTC continued to provide secondary evening classes. Among those taking advantage of these were teachers seeking Class III and Class II status, which, shortly after the opening of the University of Queensland in 1911, became equivalent to the levels of the junior and Senior Public Examinations respectively. Most of the teachers aspiring to the Class I level after 1911 attended evening classes at the University of Queensland.

In 1909 the Management Committee of the Warwick Technical College planned a Day (Technical High) School to open in 1910 as part of the college. At the same time, the committee made arrangements for the Department to take over the Warwick Technical College. The Warwick Day School was opened on 1 June 1910 and thenceforth was directly administered by the Department as part of the Warwick Technical College. The subjects provided were English, arithmetic, mensuration, geometry, algebra, physics, chemistry, physiology, geography, freehand and geometrical drawing, bookkeeping, French, Latin, woodwork, dressmaking and cookery.<sup>142</sup> By 1911 similar day schools had been established at Bundaberg and Toowoomba Technical Colleges. The Bundaberg Day School remained under the control of the college management committee until 1912, when the day school was replaced by a Departmental high school.<sup>143</sup>

The Department established a system of high schools in 1912. These were located at Warwick, Gympie, Bundaberg, Mount Morgan, Mackay and Charters Towers. The CTC day (high) school was not listed as a high school and continued as part of CTC, while the Warwick Technical College was renamed the Warwick High School and Technical College. The Mackay High School was established in the Mackay Technical College, which was taken over by the Department and renamed the Mackay High School and Technical College. The Mount Morgan High School made use of facilities provided within the Mount Morgan Technical College by the management committee. Thus the facilities were used day and night. A single principal was in charge of each of the combined high school and technical colleges at Brisbane, Warwick and Mackay, and some of the teachers taught in both the technical college and high school sections. At the other high schools, the students attended the separate technical colleges for manual and domestic science subjects. The Department saw such measures as an effective economy<sup>144</sup>, and the Annual Conference of Technical

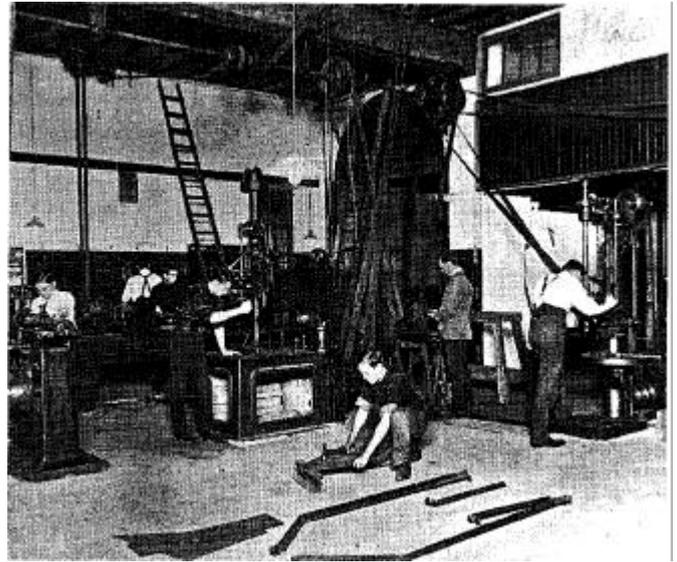
Colleges in 1912 saw the establishment of these high schools as helpful to the work of technical colleges<sup>145</sup>

When the University of Queensland set its matriculation requirements to take effect from 1912, all the secondary schools established in the technical colleges provided modern languages and spent more time on general subjects and less time on practical subjects to enable its students to sit for the junior and Senior public examinations of the University.<sup>146</sup> Thus the university came to dominate the curriculum of the secondary schools and this thwarted to a large extent the Departmental plans of integrating technical and State secondary education. In 1918 a newspaper article expressed concern that there was a trend to deflect the more intelligent students into preparation for university public examinations and away from industries.<sup>147</sup>

By 1916, in addition to night classes held in commercial subjects in most technical colleges, full-time commercial day schools were held at Brisbane, Warwick, Ipswich and Townsville, and part-time day classes at Cairns, Charters Towers, Rockhampton, Mount Morgan and Bundaberg. In 1918 commercial subjects were accepted for the junior Public Examination conducted by the University of Queensland.<sup>148</sup> Story believed that the emphasis on primary industries ensured that commercial vocations absorbed more students than industrial vocations.<sup>149</sup>

In 1915 a Domestic Science Day School, the first in Queensland, was established at Ipswich and in the following year at Brisbane. By 1918 another had been established at Townsville. The students studied general as well as domestic science subjects. The major aim of the course was to train the girls for the home rather than prepare them for the Junior and Senior examinations. A feature of their work was that they cooked meals for the staff, with the money collected paying for the materials used. This form of domestic science studies did not prove to be very popular. The domestic science day schools soon became regarded as academically second-rate. Furthermore, the girls of the high school section adopted a snobbish attitude towards the girls who chose domestic science. Commercial classes, which had more lucrative openings available, proved more attractive to the girls. In fact, some girls transferred from the CTC Domestic Science Day School to the Commercial Day School. One parent explained, 'I wish her to learn something which results in her being able to bring in some money'.<sup>150</sup>

**Diploma studies.** After the University of Queensland began operating in 1911, the University Faculty of Engineering and the Department of Public Instruction came to an agreement whereby the Faculty of Engineering examined technical college engineering subjects of a four-year course and issued a Diploma of Engineering to those students who successfully completed the course. This diploma was given the equivalent standing of the first two years of the university Bachelor of Engineering course. The standards set for the qualifications of the college lecturers and the equipment, however, proved to be beyond the reach of most technical colleges. Furthermore, the standards of the diploma course were very



*Engineering shop practice, Central Technical College, about 1911.*

high. Only a small proportion of students reached the third- and fourth-year levels.<sup>151</sup>

At the same time that these standards were established, the Department upgraded the diploma requirements for engineering, art, craftsmanship, accountancy metallurgy, mining, wool and domestic science by requiring a pass in an entrance examination, or evidence of an equivalent standard. The diploma courses in stenotyping, dressmaking and millinery were downgraded to certificate level.<sup>152</sup>

**Courses for returned soldiers.** At the beginning of 1916, a sub-committee of the Queensland War Council was appointed to deal with the training of returned soldiers who had a pressing need to learn new occupational skills. The technical colleges played an important role by providing a wide range of suitable subjects.

In 1918 the Commonwealth Repatriation Department became responsible for administering a scheme of training for returned soldiers. The State provided existing technical college facilities and staff free, while the Commonwealth Repatriation Department paid for any new buildings, equipment and staff needed for any new classes to implement the scheme of training, and found employment for the returned soldiers after their training. The scheme provided free training and a sustenance allowance to those returned soldiers who had enlisted prior to 20 years of age, or who needed a new vocation because of war injuries. The most popular subjects proved to be commercial subjects, wool classing, engine-driving subjects for the Commonwealth Public Examination, and boot repairing, which was reserved for men who had lost limbs. The courses for returned soldiers terminated at the end of 1922.<sup>153</sup>

**Extramural technical education.** The Department encouraged technical colleges to establish branch classes in surrounding centres. These branch classes were usually taught by teachers who visited from the college. For example, Ipswich Technical College conducted branch classes in 1914 at Boonah, Engelsburg, Forest Hill Laidley, Kirchheim and Redbank Plains. Nearly all of the subjects in these classes were art, domestic

Central Technical College

# BOOT REPAIRING BY RETURNED SOLDIERS

All Work Guaranteed by Instructor

## PRICE LIST

|                  |                   |             |                 |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Men's Boots      | Soled and Heeled  | (Hand sewn) | 5 4             |
|                  | Soled             | (Hand sewn) | 6 0             |
|                  | Soled and Heeled  | (Riveted)   | 4 6             |
|                  | Soled             | (Riveted)   | 5 0             |
|                  | Heeled<br>Rubbers |             | from 1 6<br>2 0 |
| Ladies' Boots    | Soled and Heeled  | (Hand sewn) | 5 0             |
|                  | Soled             | (Hand sewn) | 4 0             |
|                  | Soled and Heeled  | (Riveted)   | 4 0             |
|                  | Soled             | (Riveted)   | 3 3             |
|                  | Heeled<br>Rubbers |             | from 1 0<br>1 0 |
| Youths' Boots    | Soled and Heeled  | (Hand sewn) | 5 0             |
|                  | Soled             | (Hand sewn) | 4 0             |
|                  | Soled and Heeled  | (Riveted)   | 4 6             |
|                  | Soled             | (Riveted)   | 3 9             |
| Children's Boots | Soled and Heeled  |             | from 2 6        |

All Boots for Repair will be received at the CENTRAL RECEIVING DEPOT OF THE SOLDIERS' ENQUIRY OFFICE, situated at the corner of George and Queen Streets, or at the Boot Repairing Shop at the Central Technical College.

PRESENT REQUIREMENTS: 24 PAIRS OF BOOTS PER DAY.

R. A. WEARNE, B.A., Principal.

*Price list for boot repairing at Central Technical College by returned soldiers from World War I.*

science, commercial subjects and woodwork. In 1918 branch classes were operating in thirty-one centers.<sup>154</sup>

Where a centre was too remote from a technical college to conduct branch classes, the Technical Education Branch undertook to provide continuation classes under

local committees. These were usually held in State school or school of arts rooms. Speaking in 1917, Hardacre stated that these continuation classes had not proved very successful. He revealed that in that year there were only three in existence.<sup>155</sup>

Another innovation of the Department was the provision of correspondence classes through CTC. The first classes were provided in February 1912 in bookkeeping and accountancy.<sup>156</sup> In 1913 additional correspondence classes were provided for unclassified teachers studying for the Class III examinations, and in the following year a university matriculation course was added.<sup>157</sup> Such correspondence courses were described at the time in an article in *The Daily Standard* as a response 'to the present day call of equality of opportunity to share in the intellectual pleasures and material advantages born of the accumulated wisdom of the race'.<sup>158</sup>

## Students

In 1905 total enrolments in Queensland technical colleges numbered 3892. By 1909, this figure had risen to the peak enrolment total recorded in 1901, increasing steadily to 9900 by 1918, fifty-three per cent of which were females. From 1912, and right up to 1938, enrolment numbers included high school students enrolled at combined high schools and technical colleges.<sup>159</sup> In 1909, statistics show that the great majority of college students were aged between 15 and 25.<sup>160</sup>

Morris recorded in 1911 that government departments and the larger private employers were paying the fees of some of their employees attending technical colleges, and that advancement in the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company was dependent to some extent on technical college attendance.<sup>161</sup>