

It was a great day for education here

THE opening of the Eveline and Milton High Schools in Bulawayo on July 25, 1910, was described by the Administrator, Sir William Milton, as "perhaps the most important event in the history of the town and of Southern Rhodesia generally".

This was no polite exaggeration for the benefit of the 500 invited guests he was addressing. For it was indeed the first time in Rhodesia's history that an important centre had been fully equipped by the Government with educational facilities from the kindergarten department up to matriculation stage.

Until that day Rhodesia had no real educational system. It had struggled along on a hand-to-mouth basis.

Some of its children — the well-off ones — were educated in the Cape Colony or in England; some in isolated areas received no education at all.

The majority had to rely mainly on the efforts of various churches, whose struggle to provide schooling for as many as possible was such a bright feature of Rhodesia's pioneer days. However, they, too, suffered sadly from lack of proper equipment.

The Government (the Chartered Company) began to tackle

the problem some years before 1910. It took over a number of existing schools, and subsidised others.

An education committee was appointed and declared that there should be a Government public school in every centre.

This was easier said than done, and before 1910 the Government was unable to provide any fully equipped, up-to-date school out of its meagre education funds, which totalled only about £16,000 a year.

At last, however, the

country's growing prosperity cleared the way for the big decision; the new schools were planned, and the year's expenditure on education was pushed up to about £70,000.

The new schools in Bulawayo were the first to materialise, being built by the Public Works Department in the record time of four months. They were hailed as two of the finest schools in South Africa, with

TO PAGE 5



SIR WILLIAM MILTON