

mechanical sums may be sufficient to secure a pass; third, that history be removed entirely from the Third-Standard work, and that science be made an additional subject; fourth, that more freedom be allowed to teachers in grouping classes, and that no more than two additional subjects be required (at least, in the case of country schools); and that amongst these additional subjects mathematics and Latin be included.

Selection 4.—Reading, writing, arithmetic, and English composition will thus form the important subjects in a rational Syllabus. The highest importance ought to be attached to intelligent reading, and this might very well be done by lessening the requirements in arithmetic, which appear to be too high in the New Zealand Code. So much stress is laid on the ability to solve problems in arithmetic that in a number of schools one and a half hours per day are devoted to this subject, often, doubtless, with the result that the brain is overworked. Geography ought to be made a class subject and should not be taught under the Fourth Standard. The requirements in history for the Third Standard are ridiculously extensive. Formal grammar ought to be made a class subject, and greater importance ought to be attached to English composition. Grammar ought to follow composition and not precede it. Elementary science, as at present taught, is perfectly useless. In the most of cases it is taught like a literary subject, and not experimentally, and therefore degenerates into mere cram.

Selection 5.—I consider that the powers of memory should not be over-taxed by the necessity of keeping up the dates, names, and special facts of history; as also minute details of places, relative positions, and other particulars required by a constant repetition of geography, in order to pass at the examination. I consider this a serious mistake, and, from my experience of about thirty years, I venture to say such crucial taxation of memory is bordering on a system of torture.

Selection 6.—The present system may tend to the development of a phase of skill in cramming that may be destructive to the exercise of that intelligence necessary to be exercised in determining how and in what quantity and form instruction can be best imparted to the young plants, with a view to their success in after life. What I think should be more aimed at than is at present is to provide our schools with well-trained, intelligent teachers, who are able to discriminate and weigh the capabilities of their scholars, and who should be allowed far more exercise of their own individuality in the management of the schools under their charge, and who, from their daily careful study of the mental and physical constitutions of their scholars, ought to be the best judges of the amount and kind of work most suitable and expedient in each case, and that is likely to prove most successful and useful in after life. This leads me to express my conviction that the system of classification of teachers adopted by the Inspector-General is not calculated to encourage the production of the best workmen.

Mr. JNO. NEILL to the CHAIRMAN, Education Committee.

Office of the Southland Board of Education,
Invercargill, 5th December, 1887.

SIR,—

I have the honour, by direction of this Board, to inform you that your circular of date 10th November last, was carefully considered at its last meeting held on the 2nd instant, when the following resolutions were adopted:—

1. "That, in the opinion of this Board, it is not desirable to raise the school-age until all other methods of reducing the expenditure on education have been fully considered and tried; as, among other reasons, it will have the effect of closing a large number of small schools throughout the colony."

2. "That this Board is of opinion that it is undesirable to impose any fees for the higher standards."

3. "That, in the opinion of this Board, it is desirable to amend the Education Act in the following directions: (a.) To abolish the present statutory capitation grant. (b.) To empower the Governor in Council to make regulations for fixing the salaries, bonuses, and rent-allowances payable to teachers throughout the colony, based upon the average attendance at each school, and for fixing the allowances payable to School Committees upon a like basis, such last-mentioned allowances to be upon a graduated scale, the amount per pupil in average attendance being largest in the case of the smallest schools, and becoming less as the average increases. (c.) That a sum for the expenses of Education Boards, for scholarships and contingencies, based upon actual requirements, be annually voted by Parliament. (d.) That a sum equal to the amount of the teachers' salaries, bonuses, rent-allowances, School Committees' allowances, Boards' expenses, scholarships, and contingencies, for each month be paid to the respective Boards for application to the proper purposes."

4. "That this Board does not see its way to suggest any alteration of the Syllabus with a view to its improvement."

I am further directed to inform you that, in the opinion of this Board, it is undesirable that any amalgamation of the present Education Boards should take place.

For the information of your Committee, I enclose a report of the discussion which took place in reference to the foregoing resolutions.

I have, &c.,

JNO. NEILL, Secretary.

J. G. Wilson, Esq., M.H.R., Chairman, Education Committee, Wellington.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE NORTH CANTERBURY EDUCATION BOARD IN REPLY TO INQUIRIES FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE WORKING OF THE EDUCATION ACT.

1. THE interests of education would not suffer by raising the school-age for entrance from five to six years. But the real saving would be little or nothing in the country schools, and in the town