

be stipulated that certain certificates are necessary for certain positions. Let a man prove his competency, and then let him have any position for which he is suitable. His certificate is only, at best, an imperfect gauge of such competency. A man may have a very high certificate and yet not be as competent as a man with a lower one. As cases in point, I have known university graduates in honours in New Zealand entitled to A certificates who have been quite unable to solve some easy little questions in arithmetic. Under the suggested scale we are told that none but a B1—*i.e.*, a graduate—is really eligible for a school of over 600, and that if a teacher does not possess this qualification he will be penalised. There are Inspectors of Schools who have no degrees; men whose efficiency is recognised, who are deemed competent to go into a school, pass an opinion upon the way it is organized, taught, and managed, advise the head-teacher how to work it, and yet, though they may even have no certificates at all, you demand a university degree from the teacher himself. There is a district in which four Inspectors are employed, only one of whom has a degree, and I venture to say that very few who know them would assert that the graduate was the best Inspector. I am not arguing against degrees, I simply say they are not the gauge of efficiency that this proposed scale implies, and I contend that you should not penalise a man for what, after all, may be only want of opportunity. There are very many well-read men who have not had the opportunity of going to college and obtaining a degree for the simple reason that they were unable to afford it. A bonus system would be better than the reduction proposed in the case of certificates—give an incentive to a man to steadily pursue professional study by offering £5 a year more if he will work up for a D, another £5 if he obtains a C, and so on. Our system of classification of certificates is altogether too cumbrous. A School Committee hereabout appointed a candidate with a D3 when there were others with a D1, on the grounds that a D3 must be better than a D1. Committees do not understand the relative values of certificates. In regard to classification, there are three divisions and three subdivisions of each in the English system, and these are sufficient. A teacher who holds an English certificate of “The First Division of the First Degree of Merit” can get no higher, and it often takes a man fifteen years after he leaves college to mount to that degree. If such a man is capable of taking charge of any English school, I have not yet seen the colonial school that he was not fit to take charge of. Yet he might have only a D or a C classification here. A C1 certificate would be quite high enough for any of our elementary-school purposes; there is the same routine in the teaching in larger as in smaller schools, and it is very much of the same character. Because a man has taken a degree that does not guarantee his efficiency. An Oxford B.A. who came to me to be taught school management and the art of teaching possessed as little natural aptitude for teaching as any one I ever met. Can a teacher do his work? That is the test. If a man does his work efficiently that should be sufficient; he is duly qualified, no matter what his certificate may be. Certainly I would ask of you to throw open to men with low classifications greater opportunities of getting those higher certificates. I know teachers who have prepared year after year to take their degree, but have been unable to do so on account of inability to leave their school just before examination; perhaps on account of the high fees and the other expenses attaching to it. With regard to the general scale of payment under the proposed scale, though I do not admit it is in any way perfect, it will be an improvement on the scale at present prevailing here. With regard to the difference of salaries in the sexes, I believe Mr. Hogben is in favour of making salaries uniform up to a living-wage, and he has put down £80 as the minimum. Would it not be possible to raise that living-wage a little higher? It might very well be brought up to £120. The living-wage as fixed is too low. Of course, it would mean a great deal more expense, but, still, I think it should be done, and the report you draw up might contain that suggestion.

278. *Mr. Hill.*] Does the possession of a high certificate necessarily mean an efficient teacher?—No. Were I asked to suggest a test I might adopt a remark in one of your own reports: “He is a good teacher who can teach and train one fair-sized class well, he is a very good teacher who can teach and train two such classes well, he is an excellent teacher who can teach and train three such classes well, and the man is not born who can teach and train four such classes to the best advantage.”

279. Do you not consider, other things being equal, that a man who has been teaching for, say, twenty years is worth more—as an educator and trainer of children, not as a crammer—than a young man of one or two years’ experience only?—Yes; and I think it would be a good thing to give such a man some recognition of the fact that he is a thoroughly experienced teacher.

280. Do you not think that, if teachers were arranged into, say, three classes, class 3 to typify a teacher of below ten years’ experience, and class 1 one to include those with an experience of twenty years, so as to show at once an experienced teacher—would you not approve of that?—Yes, so far as it goes; but it would not testify to a teacher’s literary abilities.

281. Would you place academic status before special training?—No; I know of teachers in this district, D1 men, who, I believe, could hold their own professionally against almost any two teachers you could find.

282. Are you aware what subjects are essential in the primary schools?—I think that the concern of the Education Department is simply to issue certificates of efficiency for the work of the elementary schools. Of course, a man may be a very admirable teacher of an elementary school and yet not be able to pass an advanced examination in Latin or higher mathematics.

283. Is there anything in the arts course that is essential to, or highly desirable in, an elementary teacher?—Not unless he takes science as one of the subjects for his degree. Some of our young people would have liked to take science, but could not, because they had not attended classes at an affiliated institution.

284. Do you not think it would be better, for example, that the Government should establish a teacher’s degree of equal difficulty with the arts degree at the present time? A university man can come down and become a teacher, whilst at the present time the teacher has to go through a