

117. Ten thousand pounds a year would be put on to the cost of our education system?—What does technical education in the towns cost the State at the present moment?

118. Sixteen thousand pounds. That is for the whole of New Zealand, and covers I do not know how many thousand people. This certainly would not cover as many?—What is the greatest industry in New Zealand—is it not agriculture?

119. That is quite right; but what I want to find out is whether you make any suggestion at all by which any portion of this cost should be paid otherwise than by the State?—I have not considered that.

120. You referred to Mr. Gilruth's article. You know Mr. Gilruth's idea on this subject about the teachers teaching the children during the summer vacation?—I have heard him make a few remarks upon the subject.

121. Did you read what I said during the debate in the House?—Yes.

122. Do you agree with those suggestions—that there should be a course of summer instruction undertaken by the officers of the Agricultural Department?—To be given to the teachers or the children?

123. To the teachers?—That would be a very valuable thing.

124. Would that not be an economical way of beginning this work, at any rate? Would it not be useful, supposing the teachers met at one or two stations in the colony during the summer vacation and there received a course of instruction from the Government officers—from such experts as the Government have—in agricultural subjects?—Yes, but I do not think that would be sufficient, nor would it be long enough. For instance, in Canada a certain number of people are sent to the Macdonald Institute, and even the girls there take two years to be taught. Here it is, "Normal course in domestic science, two years." It would be distinctly valuable to have lectures given by Mr. Gilruth or any other officer to the teachers, but you could not say they would take the place of a training college, because in a training college a young person would have all the necessary surroundings and would mix with others.

125. You have missed my point altogether. I do not want to do without the training college. To give the children in the country what you want to give them—that is, an interest in their life, a belief in the pleasures of country life and in its possibilities—you want to have teachers who have a little enthusiasm and a little knowledge of that which underlies rural life. Would you not get this result as easily and as economically, and would you not distribute the advantages of such a system of training all over the colony if Mr. Gilruth's idea was carried out?

*Mr. J. Allen:* Perhaps it would help Mr. Wilson if you state what Mr. Gilruth proposed to teach the teachers.

126. *The Chairman:* This is what he suggests: (a) Practice and theory of agriculture, such as the use of cultivation, drainage, manure, &c.; (b) rudimentary botany, and the common plants and weeds, trees, fruits, &c.; (c) rudimentary anatomy and physiology of animals, stock feeding and rearing, dairying, &c.; (d) rudimentary chemistry relating to soil, &c.?—Yes, but I do not think that listening to the lecturers and going through a short course like that would disseminate the knowledge that I want to disseminate among the children. It would be left entirely to the individual unless you made it a subject in the syllabus. The individual might have a sort of love for it himself and might go on with it. But the mere giving of lectures will not do what is wanted. It would be a very valuable adjunct, but it would not carry it out.

127. What you suggest is a lecture in the morning and another in the afternoon given by the peripatetic teacher?—A demonstration.

128. A demonstration. You say two lectures would be sufficient, and then he could go away. Would not the work done during the summer vacation in teaching the teachers to teach the children at an experimental station have a much more lasting effect than an afternoon's lecture upon the children?—I say it would be a very valuable adjunct, but I do not think it would achieve the end in view unless you had more instruction.

129. But would it not be more valuable than this instruction of the children? Would not three weeks' instruction of the teacher be necessarily much more valuable than a short instruction of the child itself?—There are two different objects. I want to train the teacher, and I want to begin to turn a child's mind into the direction in which I want it to go. If the teacher has not the gift and the interest, then instruction would stop at Mr. Gilruth's lecture. I want to get at the child, to be sure that he gets there. Supposing the lecturer takes a flower, say, a sweet-pea, and he demonstrates the different parts of the flower by pulling it to pieces, showing the petal, stamen, ovule, and so on. Every child would be interested in that. He does not give a set lecture, but he makes demonstrations and interests the children. I repeat that your suggestion would be a very valuable adjunct, but it would only be a means towards the eventual end.

H. HILL, Inspector of Schools for Hawke's Bay District, examined. (No. 2.)

130. *The Chairman:* I do not know whether you have come down to give evidence on the subject of agricultural instruction, Mr. Hill?—Any questions you may ask me I shall be prepared to answer; but I have simply prepared certain facts with regard to the expenditure of moneys by the different Boards.

131. You have heard Mr. Wilson's evidence as to agricultural instruction?—Yes.

132. And you have grasped the main proposals—the principles underlying his speech?—Yes.

133. Will you tell us how far, in your opinion, the work that he says should be undertaken by the peripatetic teachers—how far it is advisable it should be undertaken in the manner he suggests, and will you generally make such comments upon the evidence as you feel yourself justified in making?—There are so many points that I should prefer to be asked questions, because I might possibly miss some of the more important matters that Mr. Wilson has dealt with. As to these peripatetic teachers, however, I think it would be very inadvisable to employ them.