

M.A., B.Sc., Inspector of Schools, Taranaki (Editor of *School Journal*); Mr. W. A. Ballantyne, B.A., Inspector of Schools, Taranaki; Mr. G. D. Braik, M.A., Chief Inspector of Schools, Wanganui; Mr. James Milne, M.A., Inspector of Schools, Wanganui; Mr. T. B. Strong, M.A., B.Sc., Inspector of Schools, Wanganui; Mr. T. R. Fleming, M.A., LL.B., Chief Inspector of Schools, Wellington; Mr. F. H. Bakewell, M.A., Inspector of Schools, Wellington; J. S. Tennant, M.A., B.Sc., Inspector of Schools, Wellington; Mr. H. Hill, B.A., F.G.S., Inspector of Schools, Hawke's Bay; Mr. D. A. Strachan, M.A., Inspector of Schools, Marlborough; Mr. G. A. Harkness, M.A., Chief Inspector of Schools, Nelson; Mr. A. Crawford, B.A., Assistant Inspector of Schools, Nelson; Mr. E. A. Scott, Inspector of Schools, Grey; Mr. A. J. Morton, B.A., Inspector of Schools, Westland; Mr. T. Ritchie, B.A., Inspector of Schools, North Canterbury; Mr. T. S. Foster, M.A., Inspector of Schools, North Canterbury; Mr. E. K. Mulgan, M.A., Inspector of Schools, North Canterbury; Mr. J. G. Gow, M.A., Inspector of Schools, South Canterbury; Mr. A. Bell, M.A., Inspector of Schools, South Canterbury; Mr. P. Goyen, F.L.S., Chief Inspector of Schools, Otago; Mr. W. S. Fitzgerald, Inspector of Schools, Otago; Mr. C. R. D. Richardson, B.A., Inspector of Schools, Otago; Mr. C. R. Bossence, Inspector of Schools, Otago; Mr. James Hendry, B.A., Inspector of Schools, Southland; Mr. A. L. Wyllie, M.A., Inspector of Schools, Southland; Mr. H. A. E. Milnes, B.Sc. Lond., Principal Training College, Auckland; Mr. William H. Gray, M.A., B.Sc., Principal Training College, Wellington; Mr. Edwin Watkins, B.A., Principal Training College, Christchurch; Mr. D. R. White, M.A., Principal Training College, Dunedin.

The Chairman addressed the Conference as follows:—

Gentlemen: Once more it is my great pleasure to welcome you in the name of the Minister of Education to this periodical Conference of the Inspectors of Schools. I am sure that though possibly it may be that we have not before us questions quite so burning—such as the discussion of radical changes in the syllabus—as we had before us at the last session, yet we have a good many subjects of great interest upon which we desire to secure the benefit of your advice in order that the colony may still go forward, not only in the matter of primary-school work, but also in the other departments of public education.

It is a sad duty for me to have to perform to call upon you to note that the uncertainty of life has been exemplified first by the loss of the late Minister of Education, a man who was one of the most prominent figures in our colony in every way—indeed, the most prominent—and whose loss we all deplore alike throughout the entire colony. We have also to note with sorrow the gap left in our own ranks by the death of our friend Mr. Smith, of Greymouth, the Inspector of the Grey Education District. I am sure we feel deep sympathy with all his friends, whether that sympathy is formally expressed or not; and I suppose it would not be out of place that we should also express sympathy with our present Minister of Education in the loss of his father, one who had an unusual tenure of long and healthy life—healthy in every way, not only physically, but healthy from other points of view.

We have lost from our midst in other ways several members who were present at the last Conference. Mr. J. H. Pope, for many years Inspector of Native Schools, has retired to enjoy a well-earned rest. I think many members of the Conference knew him for a great many years, and I think it is not too much to say that out of chaos in the Native-school system he by careful, unwearying work and interest in the welfare of the Natives has really contributed more than any one else towards the progress of the Maori race. Mr. J. Smith, of Marlborough, has retired from the inspectorate and taken the Secretaryship of the Education Board. Mr. Goodwin, of Auckland, is also retiring. Mr. Goodwin's career has been a very long one, and I am quite sure we know enough of Mr. Goodwin and his work to realise his faithful and long service in that very large and very important portion of New Zealand. Mr. L. B. Wood, of Christchurch, is also not with us now, having, after doing for many years most excellent work with a vigour always characteristic of him, decided on account of his health to go out of active service. But he cannot altogether separate himself from educational work and institutions, and he is now a member of one or more of the educational bodies in Canterbury.

I think, gentlemen, it is well we should not forget those absent friends. I think we ought to remember them as comrades in the past, and we are glad to say that in sympathy and thought some of them are the comrades still of those who are left to attend our Conference.—(Applause.)

These are losses that live in our memories; other changes there are, however, of a different kind, losses in one way, gains in another, about which I have less regret to express. I hope the members of this Conference will not think that there is in my mind any thought of centralisation when I say, as I am glad to do, that we have been able to absorb Dr. Anderson into the Department. We have also to welcome Mr. Spencer, who has been subjected to the same process more recently, and Mr. Gill, a new Inspector of the Department, whose work will be to assist Dr. Anderson and myself in the secondary schools, and in that part of the Department's work which includes the inspection of the district high schools in conjunction with the Inspectors of the Boards.

One other duty—a very pleasant duty—I have to discharge before I address any general remarks to you. In confident reliance on your courtesy I have taken a similar liberty this time to that which I took on the occasion of our last meeting, and invited in your name a visitor from the other side of the Tasman Sea to be present at our meetings.—(Applause.)—Many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Cooper, the principal Senior Inspector in New South Wales. We are glad to see him, and hope we shall hear something from him before the Conference has ended. They have recently taken a great step in New South Wales which I hope Mr. Cooper will not feel hurt if I characterize as a great step forward.—(Hear, hear.)—No one can say that with regard to system New South Wales is not now in the forefront. In its actual work it may have been there before, and I think in compliment to Mr. Cooper we may suppose it was there before. But now in its system it has taken its place in the forefront of educational progress, and I am sure the cause of education in New South Wales will receive great benefit from the great advance it has made in its scheme. Allow me, therefore, in your name to welcome Mr. Cooper.—(Loud applause.)