

tion Department being sometimes present to see that everything is satisfactory. The high conception that German teachers have of their work is such that they are practically given a free hand, and they allow none to go forth to the University who are not in every way efficient and qualified to do good work there. If such a system could be introduced in New Zealand it would be the ideal system. Personally, I should fail a number of pupils who now pass matriculation. But the difficulty is that all our secondary schools have not the same standard. It has been suggested that in the smaller districts pressure might be brought to bear upon the teachers. Of course, the teachers would need a lot of backbone to resist the influence of parents in a country where the people are not so highly disciplined as in some of the European countries. This, for the time being, at all events, would prove an obstacle to the introduction of what seems to me the ideal method. Another point upon which I should like to speak relates to scholarships. I notice that in a recent interview Mr. Mulgan, Chief Inspector of Schools in Auckland, stated that in some cases scholarships are held at a district high school, and that if a pupil living within reasonable distance of the district high school wishes to go to a larger town to hold his scholarship no boarding-allowance will be granted. Personally, I think that that is a great mistake. The education a boy receives at a secondary school does not consist merely of the information acquired to enable him to pass examinations. A most valuable part of his education there is association with other boys. It comes from the school life—the taking part in sports and debates, and what may be called in general terms the life of the school. If that rule is insisted upon a very great injustice is done to a number of country boys. To take merely the case of my own school—I may point out that a boy from a remote country district, K. Sisam, who came from Whakatane, and another, Marshall, from Warkworth, passed through the school and gained Rhodes Scholarships. I think that is a good argument for allowing boys to come to a good school, where there is a sound and healthy school life. Another point that needs reform in connection with secondary-school work relates to the training of the teachers. A very large number of the teachers come to us fresh from the University, and they are put in authority over fairly large classes. I do not think that that is in the interests of either the teachers or the pupils. I have also been asked to emphasize the matter of superannuation. The secondary-school teachers agree with the primary-school teachers in asking that in estimating superannuation any three years of the teacher's service should be taken into consideration, and not merely the last three years. I admit that in most cases a teacher will be receiving his best salary in the last years of his career, but there are exceptional cases where a teacher, through ill health, is compelled to take a lesser position. In such cases it is unfair that his retiring-allowance should be estimated merely upon the unfortunate last years. I think, too, that in the case of secondary teachers they should be allowed to retire after thirty-five years' service. They begin their career later than the primary-school teachers. Very few start before they are twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, and if they have to wait for forty years for superannuation I am afraid that very few years would be left to them to enjoy it. Another matter that has occurred to me relates to district high schools. Looking through the list, I notice that, for example, there is a district high school at Paeroa, another at Te Aroha, another at Waihi, and a high school at the Thames. At the Paeroa School there are forty-one pupils, at Te Aroha nineteen, at Waihi thirty-six. The cost of educating at those schools ninety-six pupils is £906 10s. At the high school at the Thames there are seventy-five pupils, the cost being £1,822 18s. 10d. The total cost of the 171 pupils at the four schools is £2,729 8s. 10d. There would be a great gain in efficiency if a central school could be established for such a district. Paeroa is the centre of the district, within easy railway-communication of Waihi, Te Aroha, and Thames; and it seems to me there would be a much better classification, and consequently increased efficiency, if there were one central secondary school instead of those four institutions. With regard to private schools, it seems to me that it is the duty of the State to see that efficient education by skilled teachers is given in all schools, whether Government or private. With that end in view I think that all private schools, whether primary or secondary, should be under Government inspection. In order to bring that about, I think some scheme of registration of teachers should be instituted in New Zealand. There is such a scheme in Victoria, for instance; no teacher is allowed to teach in any private school there unless he is on the teachers list, and has such qualifications as the State thinks essential for successful work. These are the main points that I wish to bring before the Commission.

4. *Mr. Pirani.*] How would you narrow the examination so as to ensure that it would not be overdone?—In the first place, I would have only two examinations a year in a secondary school. Examination entails upon the master a considerable amount of work. He has first to think out his paper, and get it printed. Then there is the arduous work of examining and estimating the work of the pupils, and there are the various returns in connection with the schools. I think two examinations a year would be sufficient, instead of one at the end of each term. Some pupils undergo perhaps five or six examinations in their last year—the three term examinations, and perhaps the Civil Service Examination, and the Matriculation Examination. That is in the higher classes. In the middle forms there will be the term examinations and the Senior Free Place and Scholarship Examinations. I think some effort should be made by co-operation between the Education Department and the University Senate to have one representative examination for secondary schools to serve for Senior Free Place, Junior Civil Service, and Matriculation Examinations.

5. Is it not your custom, where pupils are going up for other examinations at the end of the year, to omit the school examinations?—No.

6. Do you not think it would be advisable to do so?—No. There are prizes offered, for which the pupils would not forego their chances.