

78. What is the average number of teachers available at any one time?—It would work out at about ten.

79. What is the average number in a class if there are 300 scholars and ten teachers are available?—Of course, it would be thirty.

80. Do not most of the secondary teachers in New Zealand teach the whole of their time?—Yes. The point I want to make is that the German schools have much larger staffs, and the individual teachers teach fewer hours per week.

81. Were you in the *Musterschulen* at Frankfort, or the *Erste Realschule* in Berlin?—No; they were in vacation when I was there.

82. Did you see classes in secondary schools?—Yes, in several places.

83. Are all the secondary schools in Germany as well staffed as the Dresden one?—In some of the schools, where the classes got up towards forty, they were divided into two sections for certain subjects, and given to two teachers.

84. Is not the Wyggeston School a very highly endowed school?—I could not say.

85. Do you know how many *realschulen* there are in Germany compared with *gymnasien*?—They were tending to increase when I was in Germany—both the *realschulen* and the *oberrealschulen*.

86. Are they anything like as numerous as the *gymnasien*?—They were not when I was in Germany.

87. Take the leaving examination in Germany: is it not a fact that one of the officials of the Department is present?—Yes.

88. What would correspond to that official in New Zealand?—The Inspector of the Department.

89. Is it not a fact that in our intermediate examinations, at which senior free places are awarded, the teachers, the headmasters, and the officials of the Department co-operate in making the awards?—Yes.

90. Is there any practical difficulty in that?—Absolutely none.

91. Do you think there would be any more practical difficulty about giving a leaving certificate?—There should not be.

92. I want to ask you very definitely about one point, because I shall probably suggest to the Commission that there should be further evidence about it: You say that in recent years there has been a falling-off in the general qualifications of the boys who come from the primary schools. Your own experience refers more particularly to composition. Have you kept any models of the composition of twenty or thirty years ago?—I was teaching it for some years, and I have a pretty good idea what it was like.

93. You rather think the composition now is not as good as it used to be?—During the last three or four years I have noticed a falling-off. The chief fault is that the expression of thought is not simple enough. There is too much straining after effect.

94. But go back a little more than that. That is a fault of style. Take the question of matter, and the power of expressing thought, without reference to style?—I think the matter is very fair. It is chiefly the style I complain of.

95. Then, excepting for the style, is there a falling-off?—I think not. Of course, the style is the great essential in composition.

96. But is the style at the age of thirteen or fourteen a thing that cannot be corrected?—Of course, it can. I notice a great improvement after one term.

97. *The Chairman.*] You say that on account of this weakness in composition, when the children come to you from the primary school, you have to devote a considerable portion of your time to work that should have been done in the lower school?—I think that is a fault.

98. If they came to you properly prepared, would not a better opportunity be given them for specializing later? Is specialization retarded? Would it not be jeopardized under existing conditions? Assuming that shorthand-writing and typewriting are required in the secondary schools, you would not commence them till the third year. Can they take on that extra subject under present conditions?—I think if we devoted more time to the mother-tongue and mathematics, or to a modern language, during the first two years, we might reduce the hours on those subjects, and teach shorthand and typewriting in one year, giving at least an hour a day.

99. Would you go so far as to say that it is preferable to devote more time to secondary subjects than to shorthand and typewriting at all?—Yes.

100. *Mr. Davidson.*] Is it not a fact that you are getting a different class of pupil into the secondary schools now from those who were entering a few years ago—that formerly you got only the cream of the primary school, in the shape of scholarship-winners, whereas now you get the free-place pupils, and many who have simply qualified by means of the proficiency certificate? Would not that account for the lowering of the standard of composition?—It might to some extent.

101. Would it not account for it to a considerable extent?—It might do so.

HENRY WILLIAM CLEARY examined on oath. (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Will you state your position, and the matter you desire to bring before the Commission?—I am Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Auckland, and a Doctor of Divinity. I am here to-day because I know that your Commission is willing to receive any criticism or suggestion that is likely to be helpful in improving our school system. I fully recognize how generally meritorious that system is in its methods of instruction, and how fortunate in its *personnel*. My criticism of it gets back to what, in common with many others, I regard as its fundamental defect. I think I may fairly be taken as representing in this connection the views of a large section of the people of this Dominion, and, among them, of many who