

47. Would you have the whole system under the control of the Central Department?—I take it the co-ordination would refer to the teaching and not to the finance. I do not believe in a Dominion scale of salaries for secondary-school teachers.

48. Why not?—It is so difficult to judge them. I will take a big boarding-school, for instance. There may be a teacher who is a particularly good man for that school, because he is a good footballer or gymnast, and can organize the boys well. There may be another man who is particularly desirable for the sixth form because he has specialized in some subject, but possibly his discipline is not the best thing in the world. I do not, however, know how you are going to bring these different people in the high schools on to anything like a uniform scale of salaries.

49. Do not the same difficulties exist in connection with the primary schools?—I do not think so.

50. *Mr. Hogben.*] Have you ever been in any school where there was an agricultural course?—No.

51. You have not seen an agricultural course being taken in a school?—No.

52. Have you ever been in America, and seen an agricultural course taken in high schools there?—No.

53. Then, you are speaking from your general impression?—Yes, and from reading.

54. Do you think there is any difference in scientific principle in finding the specific gravity of milk or the specific gravity of sulphuric acid?—None whatever.

55. So that so far as finding the one in an agricultural course and the one in a physical-science course is concerned, they are in that respect equally good?—Yes.

56. Have you looked through the agricultural-science course?—Yes.

57. Does that not all the way keep close in touch with scientific method?—Yes.

58. That would train in scientific method if properly taught in a practical way?—Yes, with a big leaning to the agricultural side, whereas the physical-measurements course, which treats with the same subject is not only applied to agricultural but to other branches as well.

59. Is not the main thing to get into the best habit of mind in accordance with scientific method?—Yes.

60. What difference does it make if the tests used are of the same kind whether they are going to influence his future life or not?—The only difference I think that the agricultural course gives.

61. Would it not be just as good for a boy's training in scientific method if the subject is elementary agriculture as if the subject is elementary physical measurements?—No, I look upon agriculture as more particular than elementary physical measurements.

62. *The Chairman.*] You are quite satisfied the commercial course as taught in the Technical School in the Thames could be overtaken by your school?—Yes. When I applied to have some of my children sent along to make use of the typewriters at the Technical School they said they could not take them for typewriting alone—that they must take the full course.

63. And ostensibly that full course is used to entitle them to the grant from the Department?—Yes.

EDMUND CAMPBELL PURDIE, examined on oath. (No. 13.)

1. [*The Chairman.*] What are your educational qualifications?—I hold a D certificate. I have been a teacher in all varieties of primary schools; I taught for five years in the secondary schools; I was an Inspector for eight years; and I was a member of the Auckland Education Board for two years. I am not occupying any scholastic position at present.

2. I understand that you wish to address us in regard to certain points; and with regard to other points, you will put them in writing on returning home, have them attested by a Justice of the Peace, and return them to the Commission?—That is so. I wish first to speak with regard to a scheme for the improvement of the education system which I brought before the Inspectors' Conference nine years ago. I was then urged by the Inspectors present to hold the matter over for three years, in order that they might have an opportunity of discussing the matter, and I agreed to do so. Three years subsequently the Inspectors' Conference, by a very large vote, approved my scheme. I also brought the matter before a variety of education authorities—the Auckland Branch of the Educational Institute, the Whangarei Branch of the Institute, and the Assistant Masters in Auckland. Without any exception they indorsed the principle of my scheme as being thoroughly sound. All that I asked them to do was to affirm the principle. I do not suggest that every detail is correct. To me it seems a matter of very great importance. At the time I brought the matter before the Inspectors' Conference in Wellington nearly every leading newspaper in New Zealand took it up, and in no instance that I am aware of did any newspaper oppose the principle underlying the memorandum I propose to read. I may say that I submitted the memorandum to the Auckland Education Board, who referred it to the Education Department, but the Department did not, as far as I know, take any action in regard to it. The matter was brought up by Mr. Stallworthy in the House of Representatives, and the Minister of Education (the Hon. George Fowlds) said that while he was not prepared to accept the recommendation contained in my memorandum, he was to some extent favourable. I mention these matters to show that the principle received the almost universal approval of laymen, as witnessed by their newspapers, and of education authorities throughout the country. I addressed the memorandum to Mr. Petrie, who was then Chief Inspector of Schools for Auckland District, I being at the time in charge of the northern district, and Mr. Petrie forwarded it to the Board. I consider that the country which first adopts the scheme of organization such as I propose will make an immediate advance in primary education. That is why I wish to give evidence in regard to it. It seems to me that it will make for both economy and efficiency in the carrying-on of our education system. The memorandum in connection with it is as follows:—