

a series of resolutions, and the grading system now in vogue is in a great measure due to those resolutions. There is going to be a fairly strenuous attempt to interfere with what I consider is the Board's right to send only one name to a School Committee. In all human affairs you have to come down to trusting to one man or body of men, and I take it that it is axiomatic that a body of men to be trusted are the men who know, and they are the Inspectors. If they say that Thomas Smith is a better teacher than William Jones, it is ridiculous for a Board or Committee to say that the second should have the position and not the first. The only men who know are the Inspectors. I do think that in the Auckland Board's scheme—I am quite out of the service now, and can say this without any want of good form—far too much stress is laid, in my opinion, upon academic attainments. I quite agree that it is a very good thing to encourage academic attainments. Yet what is the measure you apply in all the affairs of life? If you want a doctor you do not inquire as to his academic attainments. What you want to know is whether he can set a limb or diagnose disease. If you want a lawyer you ask whether he can draw a deed or interpret an Act. When you come to teaching you apply a different measure—you ask what does he know. I think far too much weight is given to academic attainments.

22. *The Chairman.*] You think the efficiency of the individual should be the prime test?—I think it should be the sole test.

23. *Mr. Wells.*] If in the grading scheme 50 or 70 marks are given for efficiency, and only 7 or 8 between the highest and lowest, is that not a very moderate allowance for education?—Very moderate. But if you are to consider academic attainments and length of service, let them be extra qualifications. If you are going to allot 100 marks to a teacher *per se*, I say allot them wholly on his power to teach.

24. Not reckoning personality?—That is one of the very essentials of the power to teach.

25. *Mr. Kirk.*] At the same time, granting that you have a good man with a non-academic career as a teacher, do you not think that that good man might have been a still better man if he had had academic training?—I do. But if I had that better man I would give him a better school.

26. You do not wish us to infer that the academic teacher should be avoided?—I believe that every one of our teachers would be a much better teacher if he went through an academic course, even to getting a degree. I believe that would improve the man, but I would not measure him ultimately by whether he had or had not gone through that course. Speaking for myself, I am quite satisfied that I would be a much more capable man had I gone through the academic course than by having failed to do so.

27. You would not suggest the utilitarian idea should altogether outweigh the academic one?—No. I think what we are aiming at is increasing culture. An academic attainment is the avenue to that. I do not want to give the impression that I underrate the value of the degree. I simply say that in the measurement of the man as a teacher I should welcome every means to improve him through that source. You are placing little children in the hands of a man who has to teach them. I say that they should be placed in the hands of the man who can teach them best, quite irrespective of any attainments he may have. I would go still further, and say that I should like to see all our teachers taking the academic course, because I believe that even the man who can teach them best would be still better for it.

28. Speaking from your experience as a teacher and Inspector, can you say that the relations that exist between the Education Boards and the Inspectors are satisfactory and in the best interests of education in the district?—I can speak as an Inspector under the Auckland Education Board and also as a member of the Board over the Inspector. I think their relation has been most amicable. At the same time, I think that as a general principle the State should control the inspectorate, and direct it in the interests chiefly of uniformity. I sincerely commend the present practice of the Auckland Board in considering the Inspectors as occupying special positions, and removing them altogether from the sphere of the grading scheme. When you come to choose your high officers they cannot be subject to a grading system. A man might be an excellent teacher, but it does not follow that he would make a good Inspector.

29. Can you speak as to the relations which exist between the Inspectors and the teachers?—I can only speak with any confidence of the Auckland Province, and I should say they are absolutely of the most happy description.

30. Do you agree with the suggestion that attendance at secondary schools should be compulsory, just as attendance at the primary schools is?—I should like to answer that question tentatively. I am inclined to say Yes—that is, within a certain radius of the school. I think a great loss has been suffered in education in country schools from the abolition of what was called the Seventh Standard. The reason the children do not stay at school beyond the Sixth Standard in country districts to-day is that there is a sort of general understanding that the Board intends to employ as teachers and probationers only those who have gone through a secondary-school course.

31. Have you any knowledge of the present-day syllabus in the primary schools?—I have some knowledge of it. I was teaching until last November.

32. Will you give us your opinion of it?—Generally I should say it is a good syllabus, but at the same time I think it has too many adornments. If you ask me to specify the subjects I should cut out you put me in a difficulty. I think we should give our children very much more history than we do. We should reinstate history and make it an important matter—not necessarily for examination, because an examination in history is an examination in facts. The value to a child in the learning of history is the impression left on his mind. If I speak to a child about Pym or Hampden, and give that child an impression in favour of justice or mercy or sacrifice or any of those qualities, that impression is left on his mind for all time, and it does not seem to me to matter whether he remembers the name of Pym or Hampden. The fact knowledge of history seems to me wholly unimportant, yet