

I maintain that history properly taught in our schools will do more for the upbuilding of subsequent citizens than any subject you can teach. I have also a great belief that good poetry is going to help to make good citizens, and even though the child cannot assimilate the beautiful words at the time that he is learning them, yet the knowledge remains and the process of unconscious assimilation goes on in later life, and gives him the rich possession of a good store of good thought.

33. *Mr. Poland.*] Is there any other direction besides history in which you think the syllabus might be improved?—The English might be improved.

34. In what respect?—I think, though I suppose it is heresy, that we should go back to certain elements of formal grammar. I think, for instance, the child might go through a course in analysis without having to define subject and predicate, and words of that description. We can hedge round the word and give them a rigmarole instead of the word itself, though I think it is better that they should have the word. I would give them the elementary rules of syntax. Many of these children come from homes where English is not known. I say that without any disrespect for the homes, too.

35. *The Chairman.*] Is it not a fact that formal grammar is becoming less and less the vogue?—That is so.

36. *Mr. Poland.*] Is there anything further that you would alter with regard to the syllabus?—I was surprised to hear Mr. Mahon say the other day that he found the composition of the boys who came from the primary schools lacking in simplicity. The impression I had when last I inspected the Auckland schools was, when you remembered that it was the work of children of tender years, the composition was remarkably good. I think if I had been here I would have asked him if he would not modify his opinion on account of this fact—that for every twenty children who entered the Grammar School under the old condition of affairs there are now, under the free-place system, probably two hundred, and whereas when he originally formed his judgment he had to deal with absolutely the best children of the primary schools, now he has to take a very large number of average pupils. Any average boy or girl can pass the Sixth Standard under fourteen.

37. *Mr. Davidson.*] Do you think the present division of the Dominion into education districts is satisfactory?—I think it is distinctly unsatisfactory. When I was on the Auckland Board it had far too much to do. We did our work as well as we could, but far too perfunctorily. I occasionally thought that the Board's deliberations were every day supplying evidence of the reason for the abolition of Boards, but I am not sure that that was right. If we are to keep the Board system, I think we should have more Boards. In all State concerns where you have big interests at stake I am in favour of centralization as against the Board system. But if we are to keep the Board system we want more Boards. The Auckland District is too big and some other districts are too small.

38. If we continue the system of controlling our educational administration by means of Boards, would you place the inspectorate under the Central Department?—I would.

39. In looking through the departmental report I find that in one district an Inspector has a salary of £500, plus £175 travelling-allowance. In another district the Secretary and Inspector receives only £325. In another district the Inspector, who is also the Director of Technical Education, receives only £380. In another district the Secretary and Inspector gets £325, plus £75. Do you consider that that is a satisfactory arrangement?—If you put that position to any human being in New Zealand he would say that it was silly, and yet it exists. It does not want a Commission to decide that point. The mere statement is self-condemnatory.

40. But has not the mere statement been made very frequently without any practical result?—Yes; there are two politicians here.

41. Perhaps you admit that since Parliament has not taken action, and since the mere statement has not had its proper effect, a Commission may be necessary to bring about the result?—If educationists would ask members of Parliament that particular question at election meetings, the thing would be solved in one session of Parliament. May I say, with regard to the inspectorate, that when you are dealing with the monetary interests of the nation, such as State fire insurance, you give the man in charge of that Department £1,200 a year; when dealing with the head of a bank you give him £1,200 or £1,500; but when you come to the man who is directing the expenditure upon the course of education in this country, which is going to affect every unit and affect the nation hundreds of years hence, you give him £600 or £700. I maintain that you should have one Inspector-General at the head; that under him should be another grade of Inspector; and then you should come down and down until you get to the Inspectors actually in charge of small districts. You want to pay the man at the head at least as much as the Manager of the Bank of New Zealand.

42. May I understand that you strongly approve of a suggestion to place the Inspectors under the Central Department, and have for them a Dominion scale of salaries similar to that allotted to teachers?—I do.

43. *Mr. Hogben.*] Do you think it would be necessary that each Board should have its own expert adviser?—Yes; working in conjunction with the departmental officers.

44. *Mr. Thomson.*] You state that the Inspectors want organizing. If there were a Council of Education, what would be your opinion?—If you had a permanent Council of Education consisting of three men, who knew the work of teaching and knew education in its various aspects, I think that would be one of the best things that could possibly be established in the country.

45. *The Chairman.*] If it were possible to establish a Council of Education on which every branch of national education in New Zealand was properly represented, would that tend to efficiency of administration?—I would rather see primary schools represented in one council, the secondary schools in another, and the University in another, and then a main Council—consisting of a representative of all three. I think myself that three primary-school teachers sitting in conference could take our system and reorganize it from bottom to top. I think it is an enormous waste of time that