

of the regular work. It is no disgrace for an adult to have to look up a difficult word in the dictionary. Why should it be a disgrace to a child in Standard V or VI if he cannot spell a word that would puzzle an adult? I would lay less emphasis on spelling and more emphasis on language. For this reason I should make dictation the test of language and not a test of spelling. That is to say, I should pick for dictation passages familiar to the children, and test them by asking them to reproduce what I was reading. I find it is very hard to kill an old habit, and it is difficult indeed to get teachers to realize that when dictation shows errors in little words, that is simply due to the want of practice day by day in writing simple language. I think you will agree with me that if we cannot clear out of the written language of the Standard VI children all these little errors, then we may as well ignore some of the mistakes in spelling made in very long words. As to writing, I would institute time tests in various standards, and I would make the improvements (1) legibility and (2) facility. I think the artistic form is also very desirable and should not be discounted, but it should not take first place as it was inclined to take in the past. The development of facility without losing legibility should be the aim in our writing. On the physical side I would give more natural conditions where possible both in the schools and in the playgrounds. I would rely on play as the chief means with little children for their physical, mental, and moral development. I think the psychology of play is only being looked into now in the world. People are coming to the conclusion that it is through the natural activity of the child that you are going to train him to something better, and the scope offered in the playground is so very great that the schools of the future will have to rely very largely on this excellent opportunity of training our citizens. I would emphasize that physical education is desirable, not to develop physical results only, but to give a better mental training. I think some of the best training in moral character must be based on physical exercises. I do not wish to labour this subject, but I would be very pleased to amplify my opinions if I am asked questions. Then, on the physical side, too, I believe that the Department should issue certificates of proficiency in swimming, and I would even suggest in deportment. The carriage of children in no country, I suppose, is so good as we should like it to be. I am strongly convinced that when a boy or girl does not hold himself or herself well, something more than the body is at fault. You have to get at the mind as well as the body. Want of self-confidence very often is at the bottom of this bad deportment. I would encourage children in every way to think as often as they possibly can of the value of a good posture, especially in walking. In regard to deportment, then, I would recognize merit where I saw it, and award a certificate for this purpose. I think such advisers as Mr. Milnes recommended in the physical work might be asked to select each year those students who they thought deserved special mention in this way. At the Normal School already we issue certificates of competency and proficiency in swimming, with markedly good results. The certificates of proficiency are issued by the Chairman of the Education Board, and thereby carry a greater value. This year we have been able to issue these certificates to certain girls. In regard to the grading of schools, the ideas of the teachers will be found in the letter sent by the Headmasters' Association through the Teachers' Institute to the Education Department. These suggestions were indorsed by the Chief Inspector, which we consider gives them greater value. They will be found in Mr. McKenzie's evidence.

3. *Mr. Davidson.*] In regard to the examination and classification of teachers, when did you see the *Gazette* containing the new regulations?—It was sent to me early in February. I received a copy before the Principal of the Training College.

4. What effect do you think these new regulations will have upon the uncertificated teachers of the Dominion?—So far as the teachers are able to carry out what is required, I think they will have an admirable effect. I refer particularly to the requirements for practical work in science, but I believe that a great many of the teachers will be unable to put in that practical work, and therefore they will suffer hardship through their disability.

5. Do you think it would be wise to leave the subject of science and grant a certificate apart from that, leaving a special certificate to be obtained later on in science?—I would do anything to encourage these teachers in the backblocks to go on with their study. For that reason the best suggestion I can make is that there should be an optional course for teachers who are absolutely shut out from doing practical work in science. I would say they should be allowed to do extra work in language or history. The Inspector-General could draw up an extra course that would be one of culture. It would be an unfortunate thing to abandon science, and I think the obligation should be put on these teachers to carry out a practical course in science in a certain number of years when they come within reach of schools where instruction can be imparted.

6. That is to say, where it is impossible for teachers to attend the classes necessary to obtain practical work you would have an alternative course?—I should, but I think I would limit them by requiring science ultimately. I am thoroughly in agreement with the suggestion that science is necessary for a complete training, and that if taken at all it must be taken practically.

7. In regard to spelling and the use of the dictionary, you are aware that in some districts it is regarded as absolutely necessary that every child in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Standards should have a dictionary?—Dictionaries are now supplied by the Department under the free-book regulations. It is the *use* of them that I want to emphasize. The pupils may have them and not make use of them.

8. You are not aware they have been supplied by the children themselves in certain districts and are being used?—I know here and there it is being done, but I think the practice does not obtain as generally as it should do.

9. In connection with the teaching of English, have you noticed that in the new course of study both in South Australia and Victoria special emphasis is placed on phonics or voice-production?—I did not know until I had a conversation with you a few weeks ago.

10. Would you suggest that special emphasis should be placed on the subject of phonics and voice-production in the new syllabus?—Yes; and that reminds me that in some way I have left out any