

23. Do you believe in teaching history and civics?—Certainly, but I would teach them on a very different plan to the old plan. I value very little the ordinary text-books in history, because I think they emphasize the battle side and ignore the life of the people. I would like to see the Department obtain the best historical pictures that are obtainable, and provide lantern-slides of these for use in the schools. The Department could do that more economically than it is now being done by teachers themselves, myself included, and if these pictures were sent to the backblocks and country schools it would give the children in these places an opportunity of learning something of the broader world than that in which they live.

24. Would you have these subjects made compulsory?—Certainly. In my own school I do more than is required by the regulations. To understand history the imagination must be developed, and modern authorities, I think, agree that to develop this imagination a good deal of work is necessary in the way of story-telling, so that a child, particularly one brought up in narrow surroundings, may have a chance of realizing conditions very different from his own. Unless they do that they cannot apprehend the teaching of history, and you must use pictures to make this real to them. I hope the Department will carry out this idea of importing and using lantern-slides extensively.

25. We have heard the opinion expressed that teaching by pictures is not of much use: will you state exactly what is your opinion in reference to the use of lantern-slides in the Normal College?—I have had many years' experience privately apart from the school as well as in the school, and I think there is no handier way of teaching a class of children than with a lantern-slide. When I throw a picture on the screen all the children can look at it at once, and one child in discussing the picture can lead the thought of the others. When you have children grouped together you want to keep them all thinking along the same lines as nearly as possible, and the lantern-slide is an admirable way of directing the observation. So far I have not had the collection of pictures for history such as I would like. I find the lantern-slide very valuable, too, in connection with nature-study.

26. Would you recommend the general adoption of the lantern?—Most certainly; and I hope that in all new schools there will be one room at least that can be readily darkened.

27. Do you think the D examination should be broken into sections?—We do it now to keep the teachers studying, and I think that tends to help to send the backblock teachers further on with their work. For that reason I would favour the suggestion of extending the principle.

28. Generally speaking, do you think the people are getting value for their money?—I concur in the opinion Mr. Milnes expressed yesterday morning. He gave that opinion as one coming from another country. Looking at it internally, as he looks at it externally, I am convinced that in the primary-school system the State is getting a very valuable return for its money, and I am glad to have the opportunity to bear testimony to the very useful work that is being done by many of the teachers in the service.

29. No country in the world endeavours to carry on its education in such remote parts as New Zealand does?—There are not many countries to be compared with New Zealand in this way, and I cannot make a comparison. I think New Zealand has done very well considering the very great difficulties we have in these backblock settlements, but I think the State ought to sacrifice a great deal more to help the children of the pioneers in these parts.

30. *Mr. Kirk.*] You spoke of the detriment to education in the backblocks by reason of the frequent changes that take place in the teachers. Would that be lessened or overcome by fixing a minimum term of appointment?—I think the effect of that would be to make it still more difficult to get any one to take up an appointment.

31. So you would not recommend it?—I would rather induce a teacher to go by offering some reward than force him to go unwillingly. I would make this a very honourable service, and reward it as much as possible. I had experience of this myself. I went back to two half-time schools. I was ten miles from the post-office. I lived with a gum-digger and had no one to converse with all through the winter except the gum-digger. I really pitied the condition of these children, but if I was going back I would like to take lantern-slides for their benefit. I dare say there are a few places still like that.

32. Then, assuming the conditions were made sufficiently attractive in the way of remuneration, do you think it would be a wise thing to assume that the teacher appointed would stay the minimum time?—I certainly think so. I think if you could afford to say to a teacher, "You will stay here three years, and at the end of that time, your work being satisfactory, you will get a comparatively good appointment," we should be helping these backblock schools very considerably.

33. You do not believe in early specialization?—I do not. I would hold it off as late as possible.

34. What teaching should precede the selection of any vocational course?—I should say a complete primary course before any vocational work at all.

35. What do you mean by that?—I should not consider that a bias towards the rural life or towards a commercial life was a vocational course. I would be willing to see this bias towards country life in our primary schools. I would have gardens in every city school.

36. We have heard a good deal about this, and allowing for the good effect that gardens have upon human nature, what other teaching would you give as the bias before the vocational course is taken for every child, and up to what age?—I would give each as much hand-work as possible in the primary school. I would make the course as broad as possible to develop the mind as much as the body. I think we are in the right direction now in introducing into our schools woodwork—not as a technical subject, but as a subject having an effect on the mind. I believe a boy who is trained to make a joint perfectly is going to be a more useful citizen than the boy who has never used a tool.

37. *The Chairman.*] Has that training given these boys a bent towards trades?—I think it has. I think it is doing something to break down what I regard as the old influence of commercial life.