

38. *Mr. Kirk.*] You spoke about the influence of reading: what, in your opinion, should be the purpose in view in selecting books for reading in school?—The first thing should be to develop interest in literature. I should say that if at the end of the school course a boy had not a love of reading, that the main object had failed, even though he could read aloud with fair intelligence.

39. What books would you recommend?—I should take the Teachers' Encyclopedia, which has a list of books which I think is a very good list, and I would map out a course of continuous reading, and I think I would have all the children do a very definite amount of this reading silently, and I would have discussion lessons on the matter of it afterwards. With silent reading there must be a test to see that there is comprehension of what is read.

40. Would you let them develop a taste for the lighter literature?—I should be very cautious about that. I do not say that every tendency a child has should be developed. I think there should be some restraint; but I should say that every legitimate taste the child has in his life should find expression in the school. Unless the school comes into touch with it and develops it then we lose efficiency in the school. If a boy is interested in making boats, why not let him read at school a book dealing with boats, and so on.

41. Would you eliminate such books as Henty's and Ballantyne's?—Not fully, but I would not give them the very prominent place they hold now. In this connection I think the cinematograph-film is doing much harm to our children. I would not suggest that children should not be allowed to go to picture theatres, but I think a certain theatre should be set apart to show certain work in connection with children, and I would suggest that the films at this theatre should be under censorship. I think it is very desirable for the good of the children of the State that the school influence should permeate beyond the immediate precincts of the school, and should get to the home life of the child.

42. *Mr. Wells.*] You spoke of encouraging backblock teachers by giving them, say, higher marks for service: have you thought at all of the proportion you would give?—No. If I did not give them marks I would give them a definite promise of a definite appointment afterwards. It struck me one effective way would be to double the service marks. If a teacher served three years in a really remote part I would make that equivalent to six years in the city.

43. Has it been discussed by the Institute?—No; I am not in any way expressing the detailed opinions of the Institute.

44. Do you think the tendency of these revised regulations would be to make backblock schools more unpopular?—Unless they are amended as I hope they will be.

45. I mean as they stand?—I do not think the backblock teachers are being sufficiently considered.

46. It will make it exceedingly difficult to fill backblock schools?—Yes, I am convinced of that. When I went round as an Inspector I was utterly surprised to find how many uncertificated teachers there are in these schools.

47. You spoke of the education districts: have you any suggestion to offer as to the size?—I would like to see four. The system in Auckland of grading is working admirably. The teachers here would feel very much grieved if their district is to be reduced. The broader the scope of promotion the greater will be the hope of the teacher.

48. You think you can say, as an Auckland teacher, there is no feeling that the Auckland District is too large?—It is the other way round. More than that I can say. After attending about eleven annual meetings of the New Zealand Educational Institute, I say that the feeling is most pronounced against these small districts. There are so few schools of any large size in them that good teachers want to get out of these small districts as soon as they can. I have not professionally examined in all of these districts, but I would not mind staking my reputation that the efficiency in them cannot be so great as the efficiency of the country schools of the larger districts.

49. You think that the want of hope will have a deadening effect?—A wonderful effect. I think the greatest qualification of a teacher—and I came to the conviction after four months' work as an Inspector—is enthusiasm, and anything this Commission can do to develop that will be grand work.

50. You made mention of the Normal School giving teaching practice to all the students in the classes there: a e you of opinion that the effect on the children has been bad?—I would not say it has been bad. I think the children gain wonderfully from many points of view, but perhaps when it comes to getting a definite standard of work, then the burden is a little felt. One of the Inspectors told me my infant department was 50 per cent. lower in efficiency than another infant department. He based that estimate on certain practical tests he had given which did not turn out very well, and I attribute that entirely to their work being cut up so much by the training students; but on the whole I am quite satisfied there is a counterbalancing effect in giving the children breadth of training. I am convinced that if I had fifty students to train instead of one hundred, the efficiency would be much more effective—I know that from experience.

51. You spoke of making arithmetic more practical: would you go so far as they go in the Horace Mann School, where they rule out at once any sum that is not applicable to daily life?—I think that is the aim, and I would subscribe to that in a general way; but, of course, all these reforms must be made gradually.

52. You think that is the goal to be reached?—Yes.

53. In geography you would strike out much of the present mathematical geography?—Where I was sure that the children were going on to secondary work I would put all except observation-work into the secondary school. I find children do it much more readily in the District High School. I am sorry to say that the examination again governs the position here.

54. I suppose you mean organized play when speaking of play?—If you mean organized play in the broad sense, such as training one child to protect a weaker one, and training the eye and hand in handball and organization in football, certainly.

55. *Mr. Pirani.*] In regard to the grading of teachers, do you think it would be a fair thing in the grading-list, say from and inclusive of the second assistant downwards, that the men and women should