

I found that there were only some sixty refusals on the part of parents to allow them to attend Scripture classes after school, and of these very few objected to Scripture teaching; the majority asked that their daughters might be excused from attending, as they had long distances to travel, and it made them very late in arriving home if they stayed after school. I would have it very clearly understood that the teaching should be strictly undenominational. The teacher cannot alter the facts of the Bible stories, and the lessons to be obtained from these stories are countless and sublime, and furnish a stimulus for the best in human nature. I would not have attendance at Scripture lessons compulsory. Liberty of conscience is every one's right; but I think that the number of those who did not attend would be small in proportion to those who did attend, and I feel sure that a very material help in the tone of the school will have been given, and also a closer union obtained between teacher and scholar. I would suggest that parallel lessons be arranged for those girls whose parents objected to their receiving Scripture teaching. In closing this paper I should like to put in a plea for those who carry on the all-important work of teaching. I feel that they are worthy of a better hire. Teaching, properly done, is an exceedingly exacting profession, and heavy toll is paid by the conscientious teacher for the knowledge imparted to his or her pupils, and also for the training given. I think, therefore, that the material life of a teacher should be made as easy as possible. The salaries given do not admit of much relaxation—they are excellent factors in economy. The cost of living in New Zealand is high, and in proportion everything else is high, and hence I think that professional salaries should be high too. I am not pleading now for such people as myself—I consider that as I was engaged at a definite salary to do a definite work it is immaterial whether my school contained ten or a thousand pupils, I should feel that I was just as much bound to do the work in one case as the other at the same salary. I am speaking on behalf of my assistant mistresses. Individual increments are granted by the local governing bodies as far as possible, I know, but these do not meet the requirements of the case. I think the scale of salaries throughout the Dominion requires to be raised. Teaching will not suffer because teachers are better paid—rather, I think, it should improve.

3. *Mr. Davidson.*] I notice that you suggest a closer correlation between the primary schools and the secondary schools in reference to the course of study. Would you favour the primary, technical, and secondary education of the Dominion being placed under one controlling body in each district?—I would, because it would be continuous in that case.

4. When you speak of conferences of primary and secondary teachers, are you aware that there is an organization known as the New Zealand Educational Institute?—I do not think sufficient advantage is taken of it.

5. Would you recommend that the basis of the membership of the Institute should be widened so that it should embrace both primary and secondary teachers?—Certainly.

6. *The Chairman.*] Would you go further and say that if the control of all the branches of education in New Zealand were placed in the hands of one controlling body the same opportunity should be given to all teachers to meet?—Certainly. I think it would be very advantageous, and would lead to more uniformity of method and a great general improvement in education.

7. *Mr. Davidson.*] Do you not think that if boys and girls were taught together it would tend to refine the nature of the boy and get rid of the silliness and namby-pambyism that is frequently found in girls where they are kept apart from boys?—I do. The question of co-education lies in the hands of the teacher. If the dominant influence of the teacher is sufficient to have boys and girls under his complete control co-education is possible. But there is only one teacher in a thousand who can meet the needs of the boy and the girl sufficiently to bring out the best in both, and to dovetail them together so that they shall reap mutual advantage. My own experience is that the girl under the present system loses much in refinement through mixing so much with her brothers. She is roughened and coarsened in her early years in that way. The fault does not lie in the teacher. He has so many to deal with that it is impossible to look after them. I am afraid that co-education instead of decreasing the silliness rather increases it, because complete supervision is impossible.

8. If the classes in a mixed school were not too large and care were taken in the choice of the teachers, would not co-education be a good thing?—Yes, certainly, if you can get that ideal teacher, the one in a thousand; but I do not think you will get him frequently enough.

9. Do you think that in primary schools where women are in charge of the classes co-education is a good thing?—Only in the case of infants. Just as I maintain that a man cannot meet the needs of the girl, I do not think a woman can altogether meet the needs of the boy.

10. Seeing that young boys and girls while in the infant-room becomes chums and friends, does it not seem hard to separate them when they go into the higher standards? Would you not carry their association a little further than the infant-room?—When I speak of infants I mean children up to the age of even ten. I think that from ten onwards the boys and girls should be separated.

11. In our primary schools the average age in Standard I is about eight, in Standard II about nine, and in Standard III about ten. So you would favour the boys and girls being in charge of a woman until they reach the Third Standard?—Yes.

12. You mention that probationers are generally too young and insufficiently educated before they enter our primary schools?—What I meant to imply was that they have not had time to take full advantage of the course in the secondary schools. They have not stayed long enough in the secondary schools.

13. Would you make it one of the requirements that they should matriculate before becoming probationers?—Yes, particularly in the case of the girl, for under the present system while she is teaching she is also studying. It is a double strain.

14. *Mr. Pirani.*] I think you have been mixing up probationers and pupil-teachers?—I refer to the pupil-teacher.