

and that is just the time when parents are finding it most difficult to keep their boys at school. I do not want to see all the scholarships going to country boys, because there is a good deal of honour and kudos to be got in the winning of a scholarship, and I do not think that should belong exclusively to the country children. As to the age for free places, in the original regulations the age was under fourteen on the 1st day of December, but that was afterwards raised to fifteen. I think that was a very great mistake. I think that if a free place is held on a Sixth Standard certificate of proficiency it should be given to boys under thirteen, and every one older than thirteen should be made to take the Department's examination. I do not think that it should be made too easy. I think boys particularly should be made to work a little bit for these things. Perhaps a country boy might be allowed his extra year. I think boys should be encouraged to come at under thirteen. In that way they would get through their school career very much earlier—many might finish their school career at sixteen, and so go either to the technical colleges or the University much earlier.

4. *Mr. Wells.*] I would like to know your opinion as to the need for a training college for the training of secondary-school teachers?—I like to get into the Grammar School somebody who has had some experience of teaching. We have one young man, who I hope will be a master with us presently, who has been a demonstrator for some time. We generally have two or three demonstrators in the school in our science department, and I get them to take a little teaching occasionally, and in that way they get some experience.

5. Have you had much experience with men who have had training in teaching in the primary schools?—Not a great deal.

6. Enough to express any opinion?—No. Most of my masters have come from other secondary schools.

7. You expressed the opinion that you are opposed to the one authority controlling primary, secondary, and technical education?—Yes, I am distinctly against that. I think it would be far too much to entrust to one body of men.

8. You do not think it would make it easier to obtain trained teachers in the secondary schools—that it would offer openings to men in the primary schools who obtain degrees to get into the secondary schools?—I do not think that would affect it at all. We have a young man just appointed who was through the Training College and had a short experience in the primary school. I think they will come to us now if they want to.

9. Would not such a system also afford more scope to the teachers in the secondary schools by enabling them to go to headmasterships in the primary schools?—Are they debarred at present?

10. They do not appear on the grading-list?—I am not aware that they would want to go to a primary school. I think they would probably apply for a headmastership of the other second schools in the Dominion. The number of secondary schools is growing, and I think they will grow very considerably indeed owing to the free-place system.

11. Would you approve of a Dominion scale of salaries for the secondary-school assistants?—No. I think that should be left to the Boards of Governors.

12. Are you in favour of the accrediting system for children from primary schools of good repute?—No, I am in favour of junior and senior free places being won by examination.

13. Do you find much waste of effort at the Grammar School in the way of boys entering the Grammar School who are not fit for a grammar-school course and who would do much better at a technical school?—I do not think so. I think if they had home-work it would be all right. The great trouble is that they are not used to home work, and it is very difficult in the first month or two to get them to do it.

14. Do you think the boys who enter the Grammar School should be under an obligation to spend a certain time there?—No.

15. Do you find that many leave in the first year, and that their cost is practically thrown away?—I do not think a year's education at the Grammar School is thrown away, and not a great number leave.

16. Are you conscious of any overlapping in any way between the secondary and technical schools?—No.

17. There has been some comparison made before us in regard to the standard now and the standard, say, ten or fifteen years ago in the pupils who enter the Grammar School: would you give us your opinion on that point?—Do the best of our primary-school boys now compare favourably with the scholarship boys you got, say, fifteen years ago?—They are equal, I think, certainly. Of course, they vary from year to year. The best boys of this year were noticeably inferior to the best boys of last year.

18. Striking an average?—I should think they are quite equal.

19. What is your idea about the maximum size of a grammar school?—I do not think there should be any limit, but I think it is possible the school may ultimately become very unwieldy. I think the present size of my school is not too great. There are great advantages in having a large school, because you can grade very much better.

20. *The Chairman.*] Given greater numbers, the only thing necessary, in your opinion, would be better staffing to deal with these numbers?—Yes, and a larger building.

21. *Mr. Kirk.*] Quite apart from the additional educational value of home-work, do you think it exercises a good corrective influence?—Certainly.

22. And for that reason as well as the other you advocate home-work?—Yes.

23. Do you see anything in the suggestion that is sometimes made that home-work may detrimentally interfere with the health of those undertaking it?—No, I think there is nothing in that.

24. And your experience bears that out?—Yes. It is very rarely I find a boy ill from home-work, and if I do I very soon let him off it.

25. Do you think that the introduction into the secondary schools and the allowing of boys to take at an early age such optional subjects as book-keeping, shorthand, and typewriting are in the