in applied-science course and the general course, which might be considered to be widely different? In the first two years in both courses pupils would take the same English, the same mathematics, the same history and civics; they would take one science, at all events, in common; they would take the same language—a modern language—that is, if they took any foreign language at all. They would take the same drawing, the same physical exercises. In fact, they would have three-fifths of their work in common; so that those who changed their course would have to change probably only two-fifths of their work, instead of having to change the whole work as they might have to do if they went from one school to another. You cannot tell at the age of fourteen what a boy or a girl is going to be, and still less can you decide at an earlier age. The great mistake (now being recognized even in Germany itself) is that with separate schools for separate courses the parent has to make up his mind when the child is nine years old (or, on the Frankfurt plan, at the age of twelve) as to what course the child is to go through right to the end—that is, until he is nineteen; if he does not complete the chosen course he spoils it by a serious break in the middle. In order to avoid that we ought to have these various courses at the same school. It is more economical educationally as well as financially. That is my general view in regard to the safeguard against overlapping. The alleged overlapping may be illustrated by one or two cases—namely, those of Auckland and Napier. The technical school in Auckland proposed to start commercial classes. These commercial classes would be of all stages—junior commercial classes that relate to the intermediate stage from thirteen to fourteen to fifteen or sixteen years (the junior-free-place period) and senior commercial classes that relate to the senior-free-place period, from fifteen or sixteen to eighteen or nineteen years of age. We draw a distinction between these two stages because we think with certain authorities in the world—the Chamber of Commerce amongst others—that it is no use trying to make a clerk at the age of fourteen years: that at that age the boy wants his general education extended in a way he was not ready for before. At fourteen years he has come to an age at which his bodily and mental powers are both beginning to mature; he is in a state of adolescence. You therefore ought to give him that education, though it may be vocational in tendency, at the secondary school, so as to extend at the same time his general education. We therefore asked the Auckland Grammar School Board of Governors whether they were prepared to give such a course—the junior commercial course—in the Auckland Grammar School. They said they were not prepared to give it to all who applied for admission to the school. (I am not condemning them for saying so: they were already giving it to a certain extent.) Partly for that reason, and partly because in Auckland there is room for two schools of secondary rank, we agreed to the establishing of commercial classes of both grades, junior and senior, at the Technical School. We agreed to these classes because the Grammar School was not prepared to make any fresh provision for these pupils. At the same time, bearing in mind what has happened in New York, where a special high school of commerce was established, I still think it is a mistake to attempt to set up classes or schools that deal with commerce alone; for I may mention, for the information of the Commission, that at the New York High School of Commerce all courses are now taken, the school authorities having found that if they did not establish other special courses they would lose pupils who wanted to give up the commercial course and take another one. It is no longer therefore, solely a special school of commerce. In the case of Napier, the High School was not prepared to take up a commercial course, and, even if we had wished to interfere, we could not have compelled them to do so. It therefore seemed necessary that we should recognize the course at the Technical School. Napier is really not big enough, in my opinion, to run two schools of a secondary character for boys or two such schools for girls. In regard to applied science, the case is not quite so clear as it is in regard to commerce. Only very large schools can afford the apparatus and equipment necessary for running even the preliminary stages of a vocational engineering course, so in my opinion in New Zealand those who are going to be engineer apprentices at an early age should take their work in connection with an institution already provided with the apparatus and equipment. Wanganui is rather a case in point: the Technical School is already well equipped; it would be a mistake to try and set up another such school in the district.

WELLINGTON, SATURDAY, 1ST JUNE, 1912.

GEORGE HOGBEN further examined.

44. *The Chairman.*] Will you please continue your evidence in regard to the orders of reference not yet dealt with?—I will now deal with "Agricultural instruction and rural courses." I would ask permission to refer to page 83 of my report on a visit to schools in other parts of the world, and particularly in America. The table there, I think, almost explains itself. This is the scheme of agricultural education as I think it should exist in New Zealand. Nature-study should be taken by all primary schools. It is now compulsory in the syllabus, and probably is taken by nearly all schools with varying degrees of efficiency (as is very natural, I suppose, with teachers of all kinds of qualifications). I think it is still necessary to emphasize nature-study more than it has been emphasized yet. I am speaking generally; I do not say in every school; some schools have taken it up in an adequate manner already. I should like to intercept a remark here to prevent a possible misconception; when I emphasize nature-study and when I emphasize subjects of manual instruction and science I do not intend thereby to lay less emphasis on the teaching of the mother-tongue. The teaching of the mother-tongue is the most important work of the schools, and must occupy, whatever else happens, the principal place, not as a mere formal language study, but simply because it is the vehicle of expression of all thought whatever. Then, in the