

to a certain class of schools. I doubt very much whether it would have any appreciable effect in diffusing a taste for higher studies generally throughout the Colony. Indeed, I am not sure that it would be desirable, even if it were possible, to bring the primary schools into competition with those in which higher subjects are taught. I cannot help fearing, moreover, that the establishment of these scholarships would have the effect in many cases of depriving the Colony of some of the most valuable members of the community. It would draft off all those young men who were most eminent for natural ability and powers of application and put them in the way of seeking advancement in the country to which they might be sent. Their own talents or the interest of friends, or both combined, would not improbably (or rather very probably) open for them a career on the spot which they would feel was not assured to them in a distant Colony. Besides this, however, the mere fact of their being in England or elsewhere at a distance would tend to loosen the ties which bound their parents to the Colony, and if the result was to induce the parents also to return home this would be a further loss. It may be assumed that those who had made the sacrifices necessary for the education of their sons so as to enable them to gain scholarships would themselves be persons of a higher order than common, capable at least of appreciating the value of learning, even if not personally engaged in literary pursuits. I think there would be this further objection to the scheme, that it would tend to break up family ties and withdraw the scholars just at a most critical age from the benefit of home influences—and what is true of the effect it would have upon their relation to their families, would be also true, to a certain extent, as regards the Colony. If they returned at all they would return as strangers. My objections therefore may be summed up shortly, as follows:—The establishment of scholarships to Universities out of the Colony would have a tendency to produce the following evils—Firstly: It would offer inducements to those whose abilities had been tested to settle elsewhere, and to give the advantage of their intellectual powers to some other community.

Secondly: It would offer an indirect inducement to the parents of the scholars to leave the Colony.

Thirdly: It would certainly, for a time at least, break up family ties.

2.] I think that under proper regulations and restrictions the foundation of exhibitions for the purpose named would act very beneficially. I think however, in the first place, that care should be taken that the encouragement thereby given to a higher class of studies should not have the effect of bringing the primary schools into competition with those of a superior character, at the same time it is of the utmost importance that the exhibitions should be open to boys of every class of life, whatever the class of school at which they may have received instruction. These two requirements may appear, at first sight, inconsistent with each other, because boys who have for any length of time been receiving instruction at a superior school will have a great advantage (amounting to a practical monopoly) over those attending schools of a lower kind, so that unless primary schools are encouraged to instruct in higher subjects they will be practically excluded from competition. I think, however, that the inconsistency would be reconciled by limiting the age of the candidates and only allowing very young boys to compete. Habits of industry and natural ability would no doubt show themselves at a very early age, and in the first few years of their school time boys attending both classes of schools would be very much on a par as to their attainments. During the first year or two of attendance at school the course of instruction at superior schools does not materially differ from that pursued at primary schools. In both the instruction at this stage is, or ought to be, purely elementary, so that boys belonging to either would compete on tolerably equal terms—and there would be this further advantage in admitting only very young boys to compete, that the authorities of both classes of schools would be under the necessity of thoroughly grounding the younger children in the elementary subjects of education—a point too little attended to now, particularly in the higher schools—at a later stage the equality which previously existed would disappear. The more regular attendance at a superior school, the greater length of school hours, the greater diversity of subjects taught, and the more perfect appliances of all kinds, would almost necessarily turn the scale of boys who (though possibly not the most promising naturally) had enjoyed those advantages. The following are my objections against any attempt being made to correct the disparity now existing between higher and primary schools by encouraging the latter to add higher subjects, such as Classics and Mathematics, to the present course. In the first place the Masters of these schools, though in most cases thoroughly competent to perform their present work satisfactorily would, in most cases, be quite incompetent to give instruction in higher subjects. The attempts they might make to do this would, therefore, do more harm than good. Then the teaching-power in primary schools is mostly insufficient to allow of instruction being given in a greater variety of subjects. The teachers have already enough to do with the instruction of the different classes, into which their schools are divided, in the subjects now taught. Any important additions, such as those above alluded to, would therefore, even supposing the masters competent, seriously impair the efficiency of the school by making it impossible to devote sufficient time to each different subject. The result would be that none would be taught well. The practical effect, however, of bringing primary schools into competition with those of a higher kind would probably be to tempt the masters of the former to devote the greater part of their time to those boys who, as they might think, would be likely to do them credit by gaining an exhibition. Everything would, as a general rule, be sacrificed to this object, and the bulk of the school would be neglected for the sake of a select few of the older and more intelligent boys.