

natural powers of the individual and the acquisition of knowledge, so that he may become adjusted to the ideals towards which society is moving. . . . Social efficiency is the best brief expression of our goal, emphasizing the capacity to do as well as to know" (Dutton). Human society has grown out of the past; it lived in the present, it moved on towards the future; it was essentially organic—no part of it, in time or in space, could be absolutely separated from the other parts. Education was a part of life—not merely a preparation for it. The true co-ordination of an education system was to be found not in abstract theories, but in the actual facts of life. He held that if they properly connected education with the life of the community they would thereby co-ordinate the several parts of their education system with one another, for the life of the community was an organic whole. They must, of course, take as wide a view as possible of the life of the community—not limiting themselves to the consideration of merely external conditions (as eating, and drinking, and clothing), but going beyond to the highest functions and powers of man. They must have regard to the various functions performed by the different members of the State—domestic, industrial, commercial, professional—as they were commonly classed. They must bear in mind the physical, mental, and moral capacities of those who were being educated; especially, if they agreed that education was an actual part of their life, they must avoid the introduction of sham and unreality, not attempting to give them instruction which was not suitable at their stage of development. As the State had grown through the ages to its present achievement, and would grow in the future, they trusted, into something approaching what they regarded as the ideal State, so should each individual grow into the perfect citizen—that was, into a citizen perfectly equipped for the social duties that his natural powers and capacities fitted him to perform. In other words, they should train all the individuals of the State each for his proper work, and at each stage should suit the training to his physical, mental, and moral development. They might regard this either as a truism or as an impossible ideal, according to their point of view. Applied roughly, in their own case, it simply amounted to this: In their little country of New Zealand the activities of the people were directed along certain lines: they must train their citizens to do efficient work along these lines. They had to deal in their homes, schools, and colleges with boys and girls, youths and maidens—at various ages and stages—(a) from birth to 5 years of age; (b) from 5 to 13 or 14; (c) from 13 to 15 or 16 (some go to work and some still go to school); (d) from 15 or 16 to 18 or 19 (more go to work, but some still go to school); (e) from 18 or 19 to 22 or 23 or even 24 or 25 (some go to the University). These children and young men and women were of varied powers, physically, mentally, morally. They could not overlook any section of them; they would injure the State—that was, both them and ourselves—if they did. How great was their responsibility! How hard the task! How easy to talk glibly about its solution! They had to consider that morning the work of the primary schools (leaving without discussion the important question connected with the training of the earliest years of childhood). He took it that this work was that part of the education system in which every citizen (whether he went to a public school or not) received to a large extent the same kind of training—it was shared in common by all normal children. The following questions suggested themselves: What should be its subject-matter—its syllabus? how long should it take for the average child? how long for the clever child? were there any methods by which the work could be made easier or better? what was its relation to the next stage—the secondary stage? He need hardly remind them that—he was going to say the "cant," but he would say—the "pat phrases" used about the three R's had no foundation in fact. The three R's did not constitute education, although there might be a good deal of education connected with two of them—with reading and with the operations of arithmetic there might be; but writing was purely mechanical, and was not necessarily educative, except so far as it was an instrument in the acquiring of education. The real subjects of primary education were two—language and science—knowledge, observation, and expression. They might subdivide those subjects for convenience; but he did not think they were likely to be led astray by anything they heard said, that "the three R's" described the education of the primary stage. He took it that the mother-tongue was probably at that stage *the* most important subject. The question was as to what the teaching of the mother-tongue should include, say, for the normal child between the ages of five and thirteen or fourteen. One of his ambitions, before he quitted the post he had now occupied for some years, was that they might see the average age decreased one year at the end. He thought that what they reached at thirteen or fourteen years ought to be reached—and was reached in some of the best countries in the world—at twelve or thirteen without any difficulty. He was suggesting these subjects as questions they might discuss. As he had said, the mother-tongue was one of the most important things. The question was, what they should include? They had, for instance, the vexed question of formal grammar. They had a certain amount of grammar in their syllabus. That was a question that might very well be discussed when they came to the relations between the primary and secondary schools. It was a question on which those with practical experience were justified in assuming they had a right to express their convictions. They would probably not settle that question finally, but they might get some expression of opinion that might help them considerably in arriving at a reasonable compromise. Then, as to the question of mathematics. In the mathematical syllabus was comprised arithmetic and geometrical drawing. It became a very great question sometimes whether they should break up this subject—whether without including any more they should not co-ordinate the parts so as to make the teaching very much better than it was when they treated them as almost separate subjects. Then they came to the questions of civics, physics, and nature-study; and then they must have in their minds what was the relation of all these subjects or parts of subjects to the surroundings and life of the child, because, if their work was not intimately related at every stage to the actual facts of the child's every-day experience and the surroundings of the life of the child, he held that to that extent it was unreal. It was not the wish of the Department to put down questions for discussion, because that might tie the hands of the Conference unduly.