

certificates, that examination was one of the means of qualifying for junior free places, but many pupils when they went forward to examinations did not anticipate going on to a secondary school, and it was only after being informed of their success in the examination that they decided to attend a secondary school. He begged to move the resolution.

Mr. MORTON seconded the resolution.

Mr. GRAY said he was in sympathy with everything Mr. Marshall had stated, and in view of the remarks he (Mr. Marshall) made on the previous day he would detain the Conference with a full statement of his position. He would put his views in the form of resolutions, which with the leave of the Conference he would move: That it is the mind of this Conference (1) that the avenue to secondary education should be quite free and unrestricted, eligibility therefor to be dependent on one primary-school leaving-certificate awarded on the joint representation of headmasters and Inspectors of Schools; (2) that the kind of secondary instruction to be attended by any one holding a primary-school leaving-certificate be determined by (a) the aptitudes and capacities discovered during the last three years of the primary-school course, (b) by the indication of the parent regarding the time (one, two, three, or four years) during which a child may attend a secondary institution. The other points were that the age up to which education should be made compulsory should be seventeen years, and that overlapping should as far as possible be avoided. He was not anxious that his amendment should be carried in its entirety, but it furnished a basis for discussion of the whole question. He was strongly of opinion that the present Free Place Examination and the scholarship scheme should be altogether amended, and the avenues to secondary education should be free and unrestricted—dependent wholly on one certificate given to the pupil on his leaving the primary school. The discussion that had taken place showed that the mind of the Conference was much against the system as it at present existed, and was in favour of doing something to preserve on one hand the identity of any particular institution giving secondary education, and at the same time to do ample justice to the large masses of the scholars.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, if Mr. Gray's amendment was to be taken as a series of resolutions, some of them dealt with the next subject for consideration by the Conference—viz., the work of the secondary schools. He knew that it was difficult to divide the question. Mr. Marshall's motion to some extent did that also in its second part. It might be more logical, having discussed the motion so far, if they were to leave it, and take up the work of secondary schools, and then come back to the connection between the two; because if they had not a clear idea of technical education and secondary education—as to the range it should cover and what they should do—perhaps they would be a little vague in saying what should be the transition between the primary and secondary education. He thought that some members of the Conference were speaking of different things when they were speaking about secondary education. He would suggest that they should leave Mr. Marshall's motion—which was really in two parts—and that they should postpone Mr. Gray's motion also, the first part of which was an amendment to the first part of Mr. Marshall's resolution. Mr. Marshall's motion urged the retention of the proficiency examination as one of the means of enabling pupils to qualify, and Mr. Gray in his amendment put the same thing practically in another way.

Mr. MARSHALL said he had limited his remarks to secondary schools pure and simple.

Mr. GRAY moved the first part of his motion as an amendment to the first part of Mr. Marshall's resolution. He used the term "secondary education" in the broadest sense. He did not think it was right to separate the institutions at the present stage.

Mr. VERNON seconded the amendment. He did not like the guarantee referred to in Mr. Marshall's motion. If the guarantee was asked for, it would limit the opportunities; and he did not believe that fifty per cent. of the parents would give the guarantee, because they did not know at that stage what they were going to do with their boys. He would vote against Mr. Marshall's motion, and he claimed that Mr. Marshall should also do so, because it would limit the opportunities. The whole point was what they meant by "secondary education"—whether in a narrow sense or in a broad sense. If they took it on broad lines, almost every member of the Conference would be bound to support Mr. Gray's amendment.

Mr. WATSON said he would support Mr. Gray's amendment. Mr. Marshall and Mr. Gray were both aiming at the same thing, and it was a pity that Mr. Gray's resolution had been moved as an amendment. They had come to the most important point—the great difficulty that every civilized and advanced community was dealing with. Every advanced community not only put no difficulty in the way of parents keeping their children at school, but, on the contrary, was seeking inducements to keep the children at school as long as possible. Mr. Marshall's motion would have the effect, if adopted, of shutting out of what were called secondary schools the greater number of those who had finished their primary course. He took it that was not the object of the Conference: they wanted to keep the young people under some sort of education as long as possible. The difficulty was that in the secondary schools there was no special organization for those children who were only going to stop for, say, one year or for two years. Some provision must be made for those children. What were they going to do? Were they going to establish a special school for those who could not go on to what was called secondary education? It might be possible to do that in the larger towns, but it would not be possible in the smaller towns. The number of children who completed the primary course was growing every year, and the number attending the secondary schools was also increasing. Was it not possible to provide in the present secondary schools for those children who were not going to stay at the secondary schools many years?

Mr. LA TROBE had great pleasure in supporting the motion brought forward by Mr. Gray. He thought that, as far as primary education was concerned, it should be a complete thing in itself. A final leaving-certificate should be granted, and that certificate should be accepted as a card of entrance to the secondary school—of whatever character. As to what the secondary-school system should be, that was a matter for consideration later on. He did not think the primary system