

deal of good. He believed that if National Scholarship and Free Place Examinations were abolished there would be a perceptible shrinkage in the efficiency-level of many of our schools. He thought it would not be very great, but he was quite sure there would be some shrinkage. If they could not provide scholarships for all country pupils, how could they select those to whom assistance was to be given? If the number was such that they could not provide for the claims of all who qualified, they would have to conduct an examination. There was no other way of settling the matter.

The CHAIRMAN said that some three or four years ago the amount was worked out in the secondary schools report. On the same qualification the cost would be £4,000 a year. There would have to be a qualification. His point was that it should not be competitive. It would be a qualifying examination.

Mr. PETRIE said it seemed to him that it would involve a much larger expenditure than £4,000 a year.

The CHAIRMAN said he worked out the figures very carefully, and he was sure they were pretty nearly right. If they had not the money they could easily screw up the qualification.

Mr. COUSINS wished to support Mr. Holmes in what he thought to be a thoroughly sound position. They claimed that it was unwise of the State to make monetary gifts to some clever children whilst the children in the backblocks were debarred from taking full advantage of the opportunity that was offered to their more lucky brothers. Children living in country districts had as great a claim on the State as the children living in the cities. No doubt, before any change was made the question would be thoroughly considered by the Department. There was, however, no danger in advocating a principle which was truly democratic, and which truly suited the requirements of the times.

Mr. GOYEN thought personally that parents were not asked to make sufficient sacrifices for their children in the matter of education. At the present time the State was doing far too much for people both in primary and secondary schools.

It was resolved to divide the motion into two parts.

The Conference divided on the first part—viz., "That all Junior National and Education Board Scholarships be abolished."—Ayes, 29; Noes, 17: majority for, 12.—Motion agreed to.

The second part of the motion—viz., "That sufficient travelling-expenses and boarding-allowances be made to those pupils attending secondary schools from a distance or obliged to reside away from home"—was carried on the voices.

The Conference adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

SATURDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

#### *Technical Classes.*

Mr. HOWELL moved, That it is desirable that the age-limit of thirteen years below which pupils may not be admitted to technical instruction should be abolished as regards technical classes in the case of those entitled to junior free places. In order to save the time of the Conference, he did not propose to say anything in regard to it, because the subject had already been touched on in previous discussions.

Mr. GEORGE seconded the motion.

Mr. PETRIE said he presumed that no payment would be made for pupils under thirteen, but they would be eligible for admission on the capitation payment being made.

Mr. LA THOBE said that students under the age of thirteen were at the present time being admitted to most technical day-schools throughout the country.

Mr. MARSHALL saw no reason for breaking away from the general principle that had been already mentioned—namely, that the general education of the child should continue as long as possible before specialization began, more especially if the child was to take advantage of that specialization. He would vote against the motion unless some reasons were given in its favour.

The CHAIRMAN said that in special cases, with the consent of the Minister, permission had been and could be given.

Mr. GOYEN said he saw no objection to boys or girls entering these schools under the age of thirteen provided they had obtained their proficiency certificate.

Mr. HILL said he thought it was hardly advisable to encourage the attendance of pupils at technical schools under the age of thirteen.

Motion agreed to.

#### *Correlation between Primary and Secondary Schools.*

Mr. COUSINS moved, That efficiency in our education system calls for much closer correlation between our primary and secondary (including technical) schools than exists under the present arrangement. The Conference had affirmed the principle that education should be compulsory till the age of fifteen. They had also affirmed the principle of a wide-open door, and in a way they had shown that the work done in the primary schools should give an indication as to what form that secondary education should take; but they had not yet done anything to show that the interrelation between the primary and the secondary school was of very great importance if they wanted one system of education in the country. His motion was proposed with the idea of showing that unless there was one continuous road from beginning to end for each child who was to be perfectly educated there must be a great loss in the work done. There was a great want of continuity of effort along the same lines between our primary and secondary schools. That had shown itself in