1910.

NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION:
CONFERENCES ON EDUCATION.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

GENERAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE,
10TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

IN response to the following circular, issued by direction of the Minister of Education, the Hon. G. Fowlds, the Conference met in the Legislative Council Chamber at 10 a.m. on Thursday, the 10th February, 1910.

SIR,— Education Department, Wellington, 7th January, 1910.

I am directed by the Minister of Education to inform you that it has been resolved to convene a General Educational Conference, to meet in Wellington on the 10th, 11th, and 12th February, 1910.

The Conference will consist of representative teachers and other persons of standing professionally employed in typical educational activities of various forms within the Dominion, and will be expected to devote itself from different points of view to such broad questions as have a direct bearing on the co-ordination of the several parts of the education system of New Zealand.

In addition to representatives [eight] of technical (including agricultural) education nominated by the Minister, the following will be the constitution of the Conference:—

One representative each of the Professorial Boards of the four University colleges, and the Director of the Canterbury Agricultural College;
The principals of the four training colleges;
Six representatives of secondary schools;
Eight representatives of public schools (including district high schools) elected by the New Zealand Educational Institute;
A representative Inspector from each education district;
Five Inspectors of the Education Department, inclusive of the Inspector-General of Schools, who will act as Chairman of the Conference.

For the consideration of the Conference the following provisional programme has been drawn up:—

Thursday, 10th February.
Morning (10 a.m.): The work of the primary schools.
Afternoon: Relation of primary schools to secondary and technical schools.
Friday, 11th February.
Morning: The work of secondary schools and technical schools.
Afternoon: The relation of secondary and technical schools to one another, and to the University colleges.
Saturday, 12th February.
Morning: The work of the University and University colleges, and of the training colleges in relation thereto.

[Here follows the special invitation to attend.]

I have, &c.,
G. HOGBEN,
Inspector-General of Schools.

The following representatives were present:—

(*a.*) Professorial Boards' representatives,—
(1.) Professor A. P. W. Thomas, M.A., F.G.S., Auckland University College.
(2.) Professor H. B. Kirk, M.A., Victoria College.
(3.) Professor F. W. Haslam, M.A., Canterbury College.
(4.) Professor T. Gilray, M.A., F.R.S., University of Otago.

(*b.*) Representing agricultural education,—
(5.) R. E. Alexander, Director, Lincoln Agricultural College.

(*c.*) Principals of training colleges,—
(6.) H. A. E. Milnes, B.Sc., Auckland.
(7.) W. Gray, M.A., B.Sc., Wellington.
(8.) E. Watkins, B.A., Christchurch.
(9.) D. R. White, M.A., Dunedin.

(*d.*) Representatives of Secondary Schools,—
(10.) J. E. Vernon, M.A., B.Sc., Palmerston North High School.
(11.) J. P. Firth, B.A., Wellington College.
(12.) Miss M. A. McLean, M.A., Wellington Girls' College.
(13.) C. E. Bevan-Brown, M.A., Christchurch Boys' High School.
(14.) Miss M. E. A. Marchant, M.A., Otago Girls' High School.
(15.) J. Hunter, M.A., Gore High School.

(*e.*) Representatives of technical schools and of rural education,—
(16.) G. George, Director, Auckland Technical School.
(17.) A. Varney, Director, Wanganui Technical School.
(18.) W. S. La Trobe, M.A., Director, Wellington Technical School.
(19.) J. H. Howell, M.A., B.Sc., Director, Christchurch Technical School.
(20.) A. Marshall, B.A., Director, Dunedin Technical School.
(21.) R. Herdman-Smith, Director, Canterbury College School of Art.
(22.) J. Grant, Agricultural Instructor, Wanganui.
(23.) J. Bruce, Agricultural Instructor, Nelson.

(*f.*) Representatives of public schools,—
(24.) H. G. Cousins, M.A., Normal School, Auckland.
(25.) C. Watson, B.A., Te Aro School, Wellington.
(26.) J. H. Harkness, B.A., Westport District High School.
(27.) T. Hughes, B.A., Waltham School, Christchurch.
(28.) R. B. Holmes, Havelock North, Hawke's Bay.
(29.) L. F. de Berry, M.A., Cobden, Grey.
(30.) Miss M. H. Craig, Mount Cook Infants' School, Wellington.
(31.) Miss H. L. Birss, Middle School, Invercargill.

(*g.*) Inspectors representing the several districts,—
(32.) D. Petrie, M.A., Auckland.
(33.) W. A. Ballantyne, B.A., Taranaki.
(34.) G. D. Braik, M.A., Wanganui.
(35.) T. R. Fleming, M.A., LL.B., Wellington.
(36.) H. Hill, B.A., Hawke's Bay.
(37.) D. A. Strachan, M.A., Marlborough.
(38.) G. A. Harkness, M.A., Nelson.
(39.) E. A. Scott, Grey.
(40.) A. J. Morton, B.A., Westland.
(41.) T. Ritchie, B.A., North Canterbury.
(42.) J. G. Gow, M.A., South Canterbury.
(43.) P. Goyen, Otago.
(44.) J. Hendry, B.A., Southland.

(*h.*) Representing Education Department,—
(45.) G. Hogben, M.A., Inspector-General of Schools (Chairman of Conference).
(46.) W. J. Anderson, M.A., LL.D., Assistant Inspector-General of Schools.
(47.) M. H. Browne, Inspector of Technical Schools.
(48.) W. W. Bird, M.A., Inspector of Native Schools.
(49.) T. H. Gill, M.A., LL.B., Inspector of Secondary Schools.

The Hon. G. Fowlds, Minister of Education, welcomed the representatives, and explained the objects of the Conference. He asked Mr. Hogben, Inspector-General of Schools, to take the chair.

The Chairman then gave an address, and made certain suggestions for discussion by the Conference.

Mr. T. R. Fleming was appointed Secretary.

The following were elected a "Business Committee": Mr. Petrie, Mr. Morton, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Cousins, Professor Thomas, and Dr. Anderson.

The hours of meeting were fixed as follows: 10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

It was resolved that the time-limit for speakers be as follows: Ten minutes for the mover of a resolution, and five minutes for other speakers; but that these limits may be extended for any speaker by permission of the Conference.

The Chairman announced that the first subject for consideration was "The work of the Primary Schools." The Chairman called upon Mr. Petrie, as senior Inspector of the Dominion, to open the discussion.

Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Braik, Professor Gilray, Professor Haslam, Mr. Holmes, Professor Thomas, Mr. Hughes, Professor Kirk, and Mr. J. Harkness continued the discussion.

Mr. Strachan moved, That a committee of eight—one from each section of the Conference, with the Inspector-General as chairman *ex officio*—be appointed to go into the question of subjects suitable for a primary-school system, and the length of time to be devoted to each subject, and that the following gentlemen constitute the committee — Professor Thomas, Mr. Alexander, Professor White, Mr. Bevan-Brown, Mr. George, Mr. J. H. Harkness, Mr. Petrie, and the Inspector-General of Schools; that the committee be given twelve months to report, and that they be instructed to obtain information from all the countries in the world that are advanced in educational matters.

The motion was seconded by Mr. G. A. Harkness, but was withdrawn in the meantime, and the discussion on the general question was resumed by Mr. de Berry and Mr. George.

On the motion of Mr. Cousins the discussion was adjourned till 2.30 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Cousins moved, That in the opinion of this Conference the syllabus of work for primary school is based on sound principles, and is generally well adapted to the needs of our pupils.—Seconded by Mr. Hughes, and carried.

The discussion on the work of the primary schools was continued by Mr. Bevan-Brown, Mr. Firth, Mr. Howell, Mr. Hunter, Miss Marchant, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Goyen, Mr. Watkins, Mr. Milnes, Miss McLean, and Dr. Anderson.

Mr. Strachan's motion, which had been temporarily withdrawn in the morning, was then put, and negatived on the voices.

The Chairman then announced the next subject for discussion, "The relation of primary schools to secondary and technical education."

On this subject the following members of the Conference spoke: Mr. Bevan-Brown, Mr. Gray, Mr. Braik, Mr. Goyen, Mr. J. Harkness, Mr. Firth, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Howell, Mr. Vernon, Mr. George, Mr. Hill, Mr. Cousins, and Mr. Marshall.

On the motion of Mr. Marshall the discussion was adjourned till 10 a.m. on Friday.

FRIDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 10 a.m.

The minutes were read and confirmed.

The discussion on the question of "The relation of primary schools to secondary and technical education" was resumed.

Mr. Marshall moved, That this Conference, while strongly urging the retention of the proficiency examination as one of the means of enabling pupils to qualify for free places in secondary schools, considers that before the pupil is allowed to enter on a free place in a secondary school the parent or guardian should be compelled to give an undertaking that such pupil will remain a fixed stated minimum period at the secondary school.—Seconded by Mr. Morton.

Mr. Gray moved as an amendment, That the avenue to secondary education should be quite free and unrestricted, eligibility therefor to be dependent upon one primary-school leaving-certificate awarded on the joint representation of the headmaster and an Inspector of Schools.—Seconded by Mr. Vernon.

On the amendment the Conference divided.—Ayes, 30; noes, 14.

The amendment was then put as a substantive motion, and carried on the voices.

Mr. Gray moved, That the kind of secondary education to be attended by any one holding a primary-school leaving-certificate be determined by (1) the aptitude and capacity discovered during the last three years of the primary-school course; (2) by the indication of the parent regarding the time—one, two, three, or four years—during which the child may attend a secondary institution.—Seconded by Mr. Firth.

The Conference divided.—Ayes, 23; noes, 18.—Motion carried.

Mr. Gray moved, That the education of every child should be continued at least up to the age of seventeen years.—Seconded by Mr. Hill.

Mr. Gray temporarily withdrew his motion, and Professor Haslam was given leave to move, That the pupil be not admitted to the secondary school unless the parent guarantee that the child shall stay at the secondary school for three years, and deposit the sum of £——, which shall be forfeited in case the guarantee is broken.—Seconded by Mr. Bevan-Brown.

Mr. Marshall moved as an amendment, That all the words after the words "three years" be omitted.—The amendment was seconded by Mr. Howell, and carried on the voices.

The motion as amended was then put, and negatived on the voices.

Miss Craig and Miss Birss then spoke with reference to infant-school work.

Mr. Gray moved the adjournment of the debate, and the Conference adjourned till 2.30 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Gray moved, That the education of every child should be continued up to the age of seventeen.—Seconded by Mr. Hill.

Mr. George moved, That before the word "That" the following words be inserted: "That the age of exemption be raised to fifteen years."—Seconded by Mr. Braik.

On the amendment the Conference divided.—Ayes, 28; noes, 19.—Amendment agreed to.

Mr. George then moved as a further amendment, That all the words after "fifteen years" be omitted, and the following be inserted: "and that beyond that age it is desirable that all boys

and girls not receiving full-time instruction at secondary or other schools should attend continuation classes until they reach the age of seventeen years."—Seconded by Mr. Braik, and carried.

The motion as amended was then put, and carried on the voices.

The Chairman announced that the next subject for discussion was "The work of secondary and technical schools."

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Alexander addressed the Conference on the question of "Agricultural education."

The Chairman asked for the opinion of the Conference on the following questions: (1.) The overlapping, in case of commercial work and domestic work, between the technical day schools and the secondary schools. (2.) Whether the time has not come to consider the question of competition for scholarships, and the further question of restricting the scholarship grant to children living in country districts.

Mr. Holmes moved, That all Junior National and Education Board Scholarships be abolished; 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.—Seconded by Mr. Fleming.

It was resolved to divide the motion into two parts. The first part—namely, "That all Junior National and Education Board Scholarships be abolished"—was put to the Conference, and carried by 29 votes to 17. The second part was then put, and carried on the voices.

The Conference adjourned till 9.30 a.m. on Saturday.

SATURDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 9.30 a.m.

The minutes were read and confirmed.

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.—Seconded by Mr. George, and carried.

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.—Seconded by Mr. Marshall, and carried.

Mr. Hill moved, That, in the award of junior free places tenable at schools of other than purely secondary type, credit should be given for proficiency in subjects of manual instruction and domestic science.—Mr. Howell seconded.—Carried.

Mr. Firth moved, That this Conference suggest to the Minister of Defence that, in the case of boys under fourteen, systematic physical exercises may be substituted for military drill.—Seconded by Mr. Fleming, and carried.

The Chairman announced that the next subject for discussion was "The relation of secondary and technical schools to one another and to the University colleges."

Mr. Bevan-Brown moved, That this Conference recommends to the University Senate that the present aggregate maximum of marks for Junior University Scholarships be reduced so as to permit candidates taking only four subjects to attain the possible maximum.—Seconded by Miss Marchant.

Mr. Gray moved, by way of amendment, to omit all the words after "That," with a view to insert the following: "it be a recommendation to the Senate that the Junior University Scholarships be awarded on the results of the Matriculation Examination."—Seconded by Mr. Goyen.

The Conference divided on the amendment.—Ayes, 9; noes, 34.—Amendment lost.

Mr. Bevan-Brown's motion was then put.

The Conference divided.—Ayes, 22; noes, 21.—Motion carried.

Mr. Bevan-Brown moved, That this Conference suggests to the University Senate that moderators be appointed to supervise the question-papers set in the University Examinations.—Seconded by Professor Kirk, and carried.

Professor Kirk moved, That in the opinion of the Conference the time has come when the University should conduct at least its pass examinations within Australasia, and largely by help of the professors of its own colleges.—Seconded by Mr. Fleming.

The Conference adjourned till 7.45 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 7.45 p.m.

The discussion of Professor Kirk's motion was resumed.

Mr. Braik moved, by way of amendment, to omit the words after the word "That," with the view of inserting the following: "it be a recommendation to the Senate of the University of New Zealand to arrange that all pass degrees in arts and science be conferred on the basis of joint reports of the Home examiners and the professors of the colleges from which the students come."—Seconded by Mr. Gray.

Professor Kirk was given leave to withdraw his motion in favour of Mr. Braik's amendment, which was then put as a substantive motion, and carried on the voices.

Professor Kirk moved, That in the opinion of this Conference the constitution of the University should be modified so as to leave the framing of examination syllabuses largely to the Professorial Boards or faculties in conference.—Seconded by Mr. Bevan-Brown, and carried.

Professor Kirk moved, That this Conference views with approval the raising of the matriculation standard as a step towards preventing the overlapping that at present exists in the work of the University and the secondary schools; and it trusts that the Senate will, in accordance with present-day views, so deal with the requirements for a pass degree as to provide for the choice by

students of groups of cognate subjects and for the doing in those subjects of more advanced work than at present required for a pass, although fewer subjects may be chosen, the elementary general information that every graduate should have being vouched for by a modified matriculation examination.—Seconded by Mr. Braik.

By leave of the Conference Professor Kirk divided his motion into two parts.

The first part—namely, "That this Conference views with approval the raising of the matriculation standard as a step towards preventing the overlapping that at present exists in the work of the University and the secondary schools"—was put to the Conference, and carried on the voices.

On the second part the Conference divided.—Ayes, 8; noes, 29.—Motion lost.

The Chairman announced that the next subject for discussion was "The work of the University and University colleges, and of the training colleges in relation thereto."

On the motion of Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Hughes, this question was deferred in order to allow the Conference to consider the question of "The overlapping, in case of commercial work and domestic work, between the technical day schools and the secondary schools."

Mr. Howell, Mr. M. Browne, Mr. La Trobe, Mr. Bevan-Brown, Mr. Hill, the Chairman, and Mr. Marshall spoke. No motion was proposed.

The question, "The work of the University and the University colleges, and of the training colleges in relation thereto," was then further considered.

Professor Kirk moved, That, in order to prevent overlapping of work and to secure the highest efficiency, it is desirable that in each training college no teaching should be given in subjects in which lectures are given in the University college of the district.—Seconded by Mr. Gray.

Mr. Cousins moved as an amendment, That, in order to prevent overlapping in the work and to secure higher efficiency, in each training college no teaching should be given which is covered by the lectures in the University college of the district.—Seconded by Mr. Morton.

Mr. Hill moved, That the questions relating to training colleges be referred to the Training College Conference.—Seconded by Mr. Ballantyne.—Carried.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Chairman, the Secretary, and the Press.

Mr. Fleming moved, That the Conference conveys its thanks to the Minister of Education, the Hon. G. Fowlds, for calling this Conference together, and requests him to consider the desirability of calling such general conferences periodically.—Seconded by Mr. Watkins, and carried.

The Chairman was given power to confirm the minutes.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS.

Thursday, 10th February, 1910.

The Hon. G. Fowlds, Minister of Education.—Ladies and gentlemen, I desire to extend to you a very hearty welcome to this very important educational Conference, and I trust that the result of your deliberations will be to improve materially the conditions of our system of education throughout the Dominion. I am pleased to see such a large attendance. There are forty-nine members of the Conference, made up as follows: Four are representatives of the Professorial Boards of the several University colleges, one is the Director of the Lincoln Agricultural College, four are representatives of the training colleges for teachers, six are representatives of secondary schools, elected by members of the Secondary Schools Conference, eight are representatives of the primary schools, eight are representatives of technical schools, thirteen Inspectors of Schools representing the several districts, and five represent the Education Department — including the Inspector-General and the Assistant Inspector-General of Schools. This is not by any means the first Conference that has been held on education in this country. We have had for many years the annual meetings of the New Zealand Education Institute, a conference of a valuable kind, whose resolutions, year by year, have received careful attention. We have also had for a considerable time past regular conferences of Inspectors of Schools, the first of which was held in 1894. These conferences were made triennial in consequence of a resolution passed at the Conference in 1901, and are now so definitely recognised. With these have recently been associated also conferences dealing with training-college matters. Conferences of secondary schools have also been held, the last in May, 1908; and during the past year an association, with the consequent conference, has been formed of those directly interested in technical schools. In matters of local administration, conferences have also been held of Education Boards, which have contributed materially out of their wisdom and experience to the adoption of a practical working basis on many important points. This, however, is the first occasion on which it has been attempted to hold a conference representing all the forms of educational effort in the public service of the Dominion—primary, secondary, technical, and higher education. Education in the Dominion has now reached a point at which it becomes absolutely necessary to review the work of the various stages in relation to each other, and to the general wants of the community. Its primary object is the co-ordination of parts in such a way that each will serve its own special purpose, leaving nothing undone that ought to be done for that purpose, and doing nothing superfluous in the overlapping of facilities and the consequent duplication of cost without corresponding benefit to the paying public. From time to time criticisms of the efficiency of our

educational system, in one form or another, are heard, possibly in many instances with but slight foundation and little knowledge of the real conditions. Whether any such criticisms are justified or not, it will be your part to do your share to secure that no legitimate demand to bring the education provided into closer accordance with the requirements of the various classes in the community remains, so far as you are concerned, unsatisfied. It is my duty, also, to take steps to obtain the same result, but it is also mine to see that in meeting these wants all economic waste is avoided. Unfortunately, questions of education, like other matters, cannot be separated from the question of money, and while I trust I shall always be found doing my best to secure adequate monetary provision for all legitimate needs, and to cultivate among my colleagues and fellow members of Parliament an ungrudging and generous spirit in dealing with educational estimates, I must be prepared at the same time to show that none of the money provided is wasted; that the public get not only good value for that money in the quality of the education given, but that good results cannot be obtained with less. Doubtless this is not a point of view that appeals so directly to you, but it will be for you who are directly engaged in the work of teaching to point out how far, as the outcome of your experience, you are enabled to say that any waste may be avoided. It is perhaps not necessary to remind you that where economic working is present there is so much the more to be expended in other ways, and that there is no inducement to further expenditure so powerful as the conviction that what is already spent is well spent and spent to the best advantage. On the constitution of this Conference a good deal has been heard from various quarters, from those who have considered that in any general educational conference the work done by the local bodies entitles them to be adequately represented. Possibly it has not been made sufficiently clear from the outset that this Conference is, and has all along been, intended to be general only by way of distinction from other conferences with which the public are more familiar—training-colleges and inspectors' conferences, for instance, held at much the same time, and not entirely dissociated from it in *personnel*—and that it is, in especial, opinions expressed in the light of professional experience that on the present occasion it is desired to elicit. The education system from an administrative point of view is quite enough by itself to occupy the attention of a separate conference such as those that have been held before, and I hope to see held again, when representative members of Education Boards and their secretaries or chief inspectors have met to discuss matters of common interest. From the last Conference of this nature I cull the following topics of discussion: Building grants; attendance basis of teachers' salaries; free school-books; conveyance of children to country schools; election of Boards; method of appointing teachers; allowances to School Committees; grants for new schools in newly settled districts; and centralized schools. These are all topics of the first importance, on which Education Boards are entitled to speak with authority; but I think I may fairly say that they are practically all outside the scope of the present Conference. No doubt, from some of the questions you yourselves might properly be invited to discuss, questions of more or less administrative character cannot be separated, just as matters that specially concern the efficient working of the Education Boards have points of contact with matters of purely professional concern; but none the less it would clearly be a mistake to attempt to combine both purposes in a single Conference, if only on account of the large number of persons that would have a good title to be invited as members. You have a wide field before you—you may be apt, indeed, to be impressed with the richness of the number of topics that suggest themselves, and may be perhaps in doubt, through the very wealth of subjects, as to what directions your deliberations will take. You are a professional Conference, and to the professional head of the public education service, the Inspector-General, I leave the duty of putting before you in a more precise shape a few of the points in which some improvement can be effected. Whatever notices of motion are given, whatever discussion takes place, I am certain the Conference will deal with the questions in the most impartial manner, and with a view only to the general good. On many points, doubtless, you will have criticisms to make; but, so far as the Department is concerned, I can assure you that the criticisms will be welcomed. A contented and happy life is something worth securing; and that you should be contended and happy in your professional capacity—happy in the consciousness of doing good work in the service of the country, and contented with the conditions under which you work—is what we all desire; but at the same time we must recognize that discontent is the mother of progress, and if, in our expressions of discontent with things as they are, we secure any definite step of progress towards things as they should be, I need scarcely add that I shall be content. With these few remarks I will ask the Inspector-General to take the chair in order that you may proceed with your deliberations. I am sorry that I shall not be able to promise to be with you all the time, but I shall endeavour, if other public business permits, to drop in occasionally to listen to your discussions; and I hope that the results may be for the benefit of our educational system.

Mr. G. Hogben, Inspector-General of Schools, then took the chair. He said he desired first of all to echo the sentiments expressed by the Minister in the welcome he had extended to all. He regarded that as a specially good opportunity for them to realize that the several parts of the educational system of the Dominion must essentially be connected, because they related to the life of one people; and, if they had not recognised that formally before, surely it was not too late to amend the fault, and try to recognise it now. More and more throughout the progressive part of the world it was recognized that you could separate no part of an education system from the rest without injury to it and without injury to the rest; and he hoped they would be able—though of necessity there must be much tentative work in their deliberations—that they would be able to accomplish something substantial. It would be something substantial if they understood that the several parts of the system did belong to one another. The aim of the Conference was the consideration of the broad questions that had a direct bearing on the co-ordination of the several parts of the education system of New Zealand. There had been many theories as to the basis of co-ordination in education: those depended largely upon the ideal of education adopted. The ideal that appealed most to him was that of social efficiency—that was, "the development of the

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.

The Work of the Primary Schools.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the first subject for consideration was "The work of the primary schools."

Mr. PETRIE said he had had long experience as an Inspector—longer, he thought, than any one else in the Dominion—and he was very pleased, as the Chairman had invited him to do so, to state his views to the Conference on this subject. It was in 1874 that he came as an Inspector to the colony, and during the years that had passed since there had been continuous and in many respects very great progress in our elementary education system. At the present time he thought the majority of schools—and certainly the great majority of the larger schools—were conducted in a manner highly creditable to the teachers, and in every way satisfactory from the point of view of the average citizen. His belief was that the better schools of New Zealand were certainly as good as the better schools of Australia, and were better than the same class of schools in Great Britain. In Auckland there had been a great influx of population for many years past, and large numbers of pupils from outside the Dominion had entered the schools. These were very rarely as well trained as our own pupils. He believed that the general opinion of those who came in contact with our schools was that our primary-education system had no reason to fear comparison, as the Minister had pointed out, with similar school systems in other countries. We were reaching forward towards perfection, and our very zeal tended to make us judge ourselves rather harshly. He did not think our present syllabus was a perfect syllabus, but it was certainly a syllabus that allowed and encouraged the intelligent teacher to do highly efficient work. It left perhaps too much latitude to the average teacher. We were in this position: We had a very large number of small schools in New Zealand, and they were naturally accompanied by the payment of small salaries, and that naturally involved the employment of teachers of small capacity and low qualifications. He did not think it was necessary in connection with the larger schools, but in the case of the smaller schools, in some subjects, such as elementary science, nature-study, and in other directions also, he felt that more direct guidance by a wise Department might do much good. As there was to be an Inspectors' Conference later on, he would not touch on the subjects that would be discussed there. There were, however, one or two subjects connected with the syllabus of the public schools to which he might refer. One of those subjects had attracted a good deal of attention in Auckland and in other parts of the Dominion. He referred to the unsatisfactory condition into which the teaching of geography and history had drifted in the last few years. That was due almost entirely to the policy of allowing teachers to use text-books and other aids of that sort without the accompaniment of special teaching. He believed that neither in ordinary political or commercial geography nor in history would they be able to do their work satisfactorily without express and deliberate teaching of what they desired to make their pupils master. That seemed to him to be one of the weaknesses of the system at present. It was, however, a weakness that, in his opinion, could be readily remedied. Another important matter was the question of school hours. He was of opinion, after having given the matter a good deal of consideration, that it was very desirable that in the upper classes they should maintain the teaching of handwork; but the inclusion of that subject in the work of these classes took up something like two hours a week, and it had been found that the curtailment of the usual time available for the study of other subjects had been a great sacrifice. He thought it was highly desirable that five and a half hours' instruction should be given to each of the upper classes daily. That would be a change that would not be welcomed by teachers, but he thought the change must come. In Germany the daily school hours were six, and in some cases the school teaching extended to seven hours.

The CHAIRMAN said members of the Conference would find information with regard to school hours on the Continent in the "Special Reports on Educational Subjects: No. 7—Schools and other Educational Institutions in Europe and America (Report of the Inspector-General's Visit to)." The report was issued by the Education Department.

Mr. RITCHIE said his personal connection with our education system began in 1876, and since then, as a primary-school teacher for a good many years, and as an Inspector for a fair number of years—about half of the whole period—he had been in close touch with everything that had been going on, and he must say he looked with a great deal of pride on the progress that had been made during thirty-four years. Both as to the work done and as to its scope, they had much cause for satisfaction with the progress that had taken place. While the work was certainly less bookish than it was thirty or thirty-four years ago, its general scope and substantial usefulness had grown very decidedly. The introduction of handwork was a very necessary step. They had to remember that most of the pupils passing through our schools would largely depend on the labour of their hands for their future subsistence; and even for those whose preparation might be aimed towards other fields of occupation, still he thought that handwork came in as a very necessary part of their training. He could not say that he welcomed Mr. Petrie's suggestion for an extension of the school hours. They were dealing with young people whose physical development must not be overlooked. There was probably a tendency everywhere—in primary schools as well as in secondary schools and in higher institutions—to attach undue prominence to physical training, especially in connection with school games, &c., and in some cases they had gone perhaps a little too far. He thought the average youngster could be trusted to take a reasonable amount of exercise; but there were some districts where child-labour was a serious matter, and at present there was a difficulty in getting children away from their homes for the number of hours we had been keeping schools open. Hitherto it had been five hours a day, and if they lengthened those hours they would have a great clamour from the parents and from others who were interested in the industries which depended to some extent on child-labour. The progress that had been made in giving an opportunity for extending the education commenced at the primary stage was certainly a matter they must look at with satisfaction. The number of scholarships given and

free places granted had been increased, and, he thought, rightly so. He recommended the Conference to give its most careful consideration to the suggestion that had been made for lengthening the school hours.

Professor GILRAY said that his feeling was that not nearly enough attention was given to English in the primary schools. In American schools double the time was given that we gave here. He also regretted that so little attention comparatively was given to grammar. He thought there had been a decline in the attention given to grammar; and the bad effects of that would be seen later. In his opinion, the composition of the young people of the Dominion was not so good as it was ten or twelve years ago. That had been his experience in his own classes. That was a direction in which he thought some improvement could be made. He thought that the time given to some other subjects might be curtailed a little, and more time given to English.

The CHAIRMAN.—About ten hours a week is given to English. Professor Gilray had raised two very interesting questions. One was the question of time devoted to English, and the other was the question whether there should be greater attention given to formal grammar. He would like to ask Professor Gilray what he included in "English." Did he mean the mother-tongue—he did not mean history and geography?

Professor GILRAY said No; he was speaking of language and literature—implanting a real love of reading and literature in the children. His impression was that many of them left the primary school without having acquired a love of reading, and that they did not afterwards read very high-class literature.

Professor HASLAM said, as far as grammar went he thought he could support Professor Gilray. He had noticed latterly that a knowledge of grammar was much less accurate than it used to be, and it was much more difficult to get students to understand it. He understood that a similar complaint was made by teachers in the secondary schools. When you spoke to some children of gender, number, case, plural, singular, and so on, a look something like that of a gingerbread rabbit in a confectioner's window came over their faces, and by-and-by you found that those terms were strange to them—they were unfamiliar with the technical terms of grammar. They seemed to have lost information of grammar as grammar, and they came to him much less capable of tackling Latin grammar than they used to be. They did not seem to think it worth while to express themselves in technical terms.

Mr. HOLMES said they had had criticism of the primary schools from the University professors. He did not think they were the persons who should criticize the primary schools, inasmuch as they did not get their students in the University colleges from the primary schools, but from the secondary schools. Any defects in the University-college students could not be put down to the present primary-school syllabus, because that had not been in existence long enough.

The CHAIRMAN.—Four and a half years.

Mr. HOLMES said they could not blame the present primary-school syllabus for all the defects that had been pointed out. His private opinion was this—and he hoped the Inspectors would make recommendations on the subject at their Conference: that the work was too diffuse for the great bulk of the schools which were in charge of sole teachers. He admitted that there were good teachers in some of the smaller schools, but the great bulk of them were not capable of forming a very satisfactory syllabus of work; and if a suggestive syllabus were issued by the Department it would be of great assistance to teachers. This was particularly the case in regard to geography and English. He referred to the branch of English Professor Gilray had mentioned. He would also ask the Inspectors to rearrange the work of the syllabus. It was badly distributed. So long as we had our most cumbrous system of weights and measures, a great amount of time must be devoted to arithmetic. There was too much work for the Fifth Standard and hardly any for the Sixth in this subject. He trusted the Inspectors would give some attention to the rearranging of the work.

Professor THOMAS said it had been his lot for twenty-five years to have a number of pupils every year—and latterly a considerable number—who had practically been to no secondary school, and who had therefore received their education entirely in the primary schools—some of them had been, perhaps, pupil-teachers in the primary schools. He did not say that he was specially qualified to speak as to their knowledge of English literature, but was it not rather a difficult thing to inculcate a love of reading, especially of good literature? He did not think the difficulty of getting them to read good literature was to be got over by teaching them more grammar in the schools. As to grammar, it struck him that those who came from the primary schools wrote reasonably good English; they had good clear handwriting, and had reasonable power of expression; and he only wished that their natural intelligence were equal to their grammar, composition, and writing.

Mr. HOLMES asked if Professor Thomas would kindly say how the pupils who went through the primary schools compared—whether favourably or unfavourably—with those who came from the secondary schools.

Professor THOMAS said it was difficult to compare classes of students who were not equal. Some of his very best pupils, of course, came from the secondary schools, and especially those who had been through the junior scholarship class and perhaps had gained a junior scholarship. These unquestionably were the best. Then there were some who had simply passed their matriculation, and there was sometimes a great falling-off there. He had had some of his very best pupils—not many, very few—who had come direct from the primary schools as pupil-teachers. As to pupil-teachers, a great deal of their mental energy was taken away in the management of large classes, and that was no doubt a bar to their progress. Of course, secondary education did improve a pupil.

Mr. HUGHES wished to make a few remarks about the present syllabus, and he desired to say at the outset that the matter was considered by the Teachers' Institute, and he was simply voicing

their opinions when he said that they believed that the principle on which the syllabus was founded was calculated to give the average citizen a very sound education. He had watched the effect of the changes in the last four years. His own opinion was that the syllabus was excellent in the main, although he thought it be might well to reconsider some portions of it, and he also thought the time allotted to some of the subjects should be redistributed. It was said by some that the syllabus was too diffuse—its vagueness was urged against it. He thought that its width was its strength. The more intelligent their teachers became, the less difficulty there would be in mapping out their schemes of work, and teaching what they knew best themselves. He hoped the day would not come when the freedom of the teachers would be curtailed. It was the administration and working of the system—that was the difficulty. Any one who thought over the matter would see that during the last few years teachers had been intrusted with the promotion of their own pupils, and had been given freedom of classification. Prior to that time such work had been done under authority. Many teachers had been unable—some from diffidence—to catch the spirit of the syllabus and deal with it in the spirit in which it was conceived. He thought that was one of the causes of diffuseness, and it resulted in some measure of desultory teaching; but it was a standing testimony to the teaching in our schools that there had not been under this tentative scheme greater weakness shown than there had been. The wonder was that their young teachers had done so well as they had done. In school-organization and in formulating schemes of work they wanted to help teachers more than they did. He had two well-defined ideas as to how that could be done. The position in that respect was recognized in other countries. In Germany, for example, after a six-years course the teacher had two years' teaching under supervision. Despite the excellent work done by our Inspectors, the lack of such supervision was the weak point in our small schools and in the case of our young teachers. Many of those who went out at the present time gained their experience at the expense of their pupils. This was more noticeable under the present syllabus than under the old one. Despite the criticism that had been levelled against the new syllabus during the four years it had been in force, the children they had been turning out were more resourceful—and were likely to be more resourceful citizens—than those taught under the old system, because they had to deal more with things than with words and books as in former days. In some of the best schools in England they had an organizing teacher—who should be experienced and skilful in teaching—and it was his business to co-operate with the Inspectors and teachers in the mapping-out of the schemes of work and in making the young teachers suitable for their work. He thought such a system would be a good one to adopt, because the schools to which our young teachers were sent were constantly changing their teachers. An organizing teacher could prevent a great deal of loss and make the teaching more efficient. He thought that a want at the present time was a set of "Suggestions" for the consideration of teachers, such as those issued by the Education Department at Home. Any one who read those "Suggestions" would agree that they contained the concentrated common-sense of men well worth listening to on any educational topic. These "Suggestions" should be a corollary to our present education syllabus. It seemed to him that the teachers would then do better work. The "Suggestions" would be for the consideration of teachers in the working of the syllabus. They might deal with the drawing-out of schemes of work, and with the syllabus generally. They would form a fitting corollary, and would make our education system infinitely more efficient and economical than it was at present. But if he thought those "Suggestions" were going to put a new syllabus within a syllabus, he would say "Hands off." The "Suggestions" of the English Education Department were simply suggestions; they were not binding on teachers. He thought they should do more in the way of character-building in our schools than was done at the present time. He did not mean to say that our children did not in the main turn out good citizens, but he would like more definite attention given to character-building. They might turn out boys resourceful and mentally alert and splendid in physique, but they should also turn out boys imbued with the highest ideals of life and service. He thought the latter was most essential, and it required more consideration in our syllabus. Reference had been made to English. He thought the composition in our schools now was a more real thing than it was in times past. The composition taught now was the child's own thoughts expressed in his own way, more than a mere artificial exercise in the reproduction of other people's thoughts. Composition and the time given to English were two factors that commended themselves to him in the new syllabus.

Professor KIRK thought that Professor Thomas was perfectly right in saying that many of the students came to the University colleges not bearing the imprint of the secondary schools, or so slightly that it was not worth noting. It was an undesirable state of things, but it was one of the subjects they could better consider when they were dealing with the secondary schools. He would like to say something with regard to the teaching of English in the primary schools. He did not think the teaching of formal grammar improved the composition in the least. The English child did not speak the English he learned from any set book of grammar, but the English he heard spoken at home and to a less extent what he heard at the school—to a much less extent the English he heard at the school, because the teacher was so much engaged in the management of the class. The English that he heard generally, and the English that would remain with him, was the English of the home. There were many men who could give you a grammatical rule, yet whose English was execrably bad. He had no doubt that Professor Haslam and Professor Gilray could give instances of classical writers whose works had survived to this day who, if they could come before them for examination in formal grammar, would be "ploughed" hopelessly. We lived amongst a race of native people who were really a race of orators. These men knew no formal grammar, yet they spoke their language perfectly because they always heard it spoken correctly. That was a sufficient indication that a man could speak his own language well if he always heard it spoken well, and he could do so without the help of grammar. In our primary schools he feared that the time of the pupils that was devoted to formal grammar was very largely wasted. In secondary

schools the position was different. It might be considered by Professor Haslam and Professor Gilray that Professor Thomas and the speaker were not so much interested as to whether their pupils expressed themselves correctly, but he thought that at a later stage they would be able to show that they took a vital interest in that matter, although they did not consider that the pupils expressed themselves very much better even if during the primary course they had been well trained in grammar.

Mr. J. H. HARKNESS was very sorry to hear the opinion expressed by Mr. Petrie that the school hours should be lengthened, and he was pleased to hear an expression of feeling against such lengthening of the school hours. He thought he was voicing the unanimous opinion of the primary-school teachers of New Zealand when he said they would be opposed to it. He did not think the suggested lengthening of the school hours should be allowed to go forth without a protest being made against it. The teachers' school hours were not limited to five. Any teacher worthy of the name spent more time on his work than that. Experience had taught him that five hours was the limit of the time during which a teacher could profitably engage the attention of the children. He noticed, late in the day, a loss of energy, strength, and clearness of mental vision on the part of the children compared with what they possessed earlier in the day. It had been said that the number of subjects had been increased, and therefore the school hours must be lengthened. He thought they could well keep the hours the same, and if necessary cut out some of the subjects. The opinion was growing that some subjects, such as woodwork, ironwork, cookery, and dressmaking, should be deferred until the child had completed the primary course.

Mr. STRACHAN said there seemed to be only one subject on which all were unanimous—he had not heard any one that morning ask for more time for arithmetic, but some members of the Conference had urged that less time should be given to this subject. It had also been urged that more time should be given to English. If the Conference had been called for one matter more than another, it was due to the allegation that the syllabus was overcrowded. It was manifest that at the primary stage they could not do everything. It was important that teachers, especially of very small schools, should have a fairly definite programme before them. In his reading he had come across nothing that seemed to be so important in America of late years as the working of some committees on education. A committee of fifteen went into the subjects suitable for a primary-school course, and the question of how many hours should be devoted to each subject. Another dealt with the programme of the secondary schools. He proposed that a committee of eight—one from each section of the Conference—be appointed to go into the question of the subjects suitable for the primary-school system, and the length of time to be devoted to each; and that the following gentlemen constitute the committee: Professor Thomas, Professor White, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Bevan-Brown, Mr. George, Mr. J. H. Harkness, Mr. Petrie, and the Inspector-General; the committee to be given twelve months to report, and be instructed to obtain information from all countries in the world advanced in educational matters. It was a very important matter that the teachers should know definitely what subjects they should have to teach, and how much time should be given to each subject. He considered that the time would be well spent.

Mr. G. A. HARKNESS seconded the motion.

It was agreed to postpone the consideration of the motion in order to allow the discussion on the general question to proceed.

Mr. DE BERRY said that one or two matters had been raised during the discussion that called for a few words from the primary-school teachers. Mr. J. H. Harkness had entered an emphatic protest against lengthening the school day. There was another aspect, and that was that they as educationalists were seeking to benefit not the syllabus or any class of teachers, but they were seeking the benefit and ultimate good of the child. Their action that morning showed that the majority of the Conference was opposed to long hours of mental work, and it must necessarily follow that children, who were much weaker than they were, required shorter hours of mental training. There were one or two points that had been lost sight of, particularly by the two professors who had spoken. One point was that the child should not be expected to go from the primary school to the University, but should go to the University from the intermediate stage of a secondary school. That was one of the weaknesses of our system. Some of them were endeavouring to make the child too precocious—they were trying to force children on from the primary school to the University. If the course of instruction were taken in a logical manner, and if the secondary schools had imposed upon them a syllabus on the same lines as the syllabus imposed on the primary schools, the University professor would not then have any cause to complain about the lack of knowledge of formal grammar. The primary schools were doing all that was required of them in the matter of formal grammar—they were doing what was required of them by the syllabus. But there was a very bad break. The child left the primary school and went to the district high school or to some other secondary school, and there the system of teaching, particularly in English, did not follow logically and naturally upon the work that the pupil had done in the primary school. Were the district high schools and secondary schools of all classes to follow on with their work on the same principle and spirit as the primary-school teachers had to work on, then the formal-grammar stage would naturally come at that period of a child's development represented by the secondary school, and the child on reaching a sufficient standard in the secondary school would be quite fit to go on to the University. The child from the primary school had a mind that at that stage was not at all fitted to comprehend abstract matters of formal grammar such as was required of any student going on to the University. They had been told that there was not enough attention paid to English in the syllabus—to fostering the appreciation of English literature. That was a point that could not be dealt with entirely in the primary schools. The point must not be lost sight of that they had very young children in the primary schools, and it was impossible to train a child, say at the age of thirteen, to that standard of appreciation of English literature that was demanded by a university professor. In the discussion on grammar

and English that morning the connecting-link between the primary school and the University had been entirely lost sight of. Allusion had been made to teachers of small schools drawing up schemes of work. That was a real difficulty, and that difficulty would exist so long as they had so large a number of small schools in the Dominion. Mr. Petrie suggested that model syllabuses and schemes of work should be supplied to the teachers. Another suggestion was made that organizing teachers should be employed, whose duty it would be to advise teachers with regard to schemes of work. He thought that a compromise between the two suggestions might admirably meet the point. He held very strongly that the strength of the syllabus rested upon its width. A teacher worthy of the name must have all possible freedom given to him to so arrange his course of work as to meet the local requirements. With regard to the syllabus itself there was one point that must not be lost sight of, and that was that the very width of the syllabus carried along with it that which rendered the syllabus in some respects not all that it should be. What he meant was this: So much was allowed to the individual teacher, and consequently so much was allowed to the Inspector. There were thirteen education districts and thirteen sets of Inspectors, and consequently it followed that there were thirteen different interpretations of the syllabus. That should not be. He held that "Suggestions" similar to those issued to teachers in England should be issued to the teachers here, and also to the Inspectors. If that were done we should have, not a dull level of uniformity—that would be undesirable—but there would be a measure of similarity in the interpretation of the syllabus. Each Inspector at the present time interpreted the syllabus honestly, but very frequently what one Inspector considered an important factor in the syllabus another Inspector considered unimportant; and in that respect much of the freedom that was given to the teacher with one hand was taken away with the other. The whole trouble of the syllabus was merely one of interpretation. The teachers agreed with the principle underlying it. Teachers thought there was too much arithmetic, and that the work was badly arranged in the standards; but the difficulty could be very easily remedied. But beyond that, and one or two minor things in geography and English, they were quite in accord with the spirit of the syllabus. The New Zealand Educational Institute recognised this, and resolutions were passed urging that Inspectors should be placed under the control of the Department as far as the interpretation was concerned. If this were done, then the conditions under which the work of the primary schools was carried on would be such that practically no complaints would be heard about the syllabus.

Mr. George said the object of that morning's discussion was to deal with the primary-school work as it stood at present. Beginning at the bed-rock, he would like to say a few words in reference to infant-schools. As far as his observation had gone, that was at the present time the worst branch of the primary-school system, and required radical alteration. Like the Inspector-General, he had the advantage of visiting other countries a couple of years ago, and when he came back after seeing different parts of the world, and compared the infant-schools in some other places with those here—he spoke particularly of Auckland, but what was applicable to Auckland was perhaps generally applicable to New Zealand—he was struck with the inferiority of our infant-schools compared with, say, those of America. He thought that the training of teachers specially for infant-school work was a matter that required attention on the part of the educationists concerned. Our infant-schools in many cases were woefully understaffed at present. Another important matter was the question of girls' education as distinct from that of boys. No matter whether a girl took up any definite occupation after she left school, or whether she did not, the natural function of every girl was to become a wife and a mother; and the primary school should see to it that, as far as the foundations were concerned in connection with development in those directions, everything possible were done to educate the girl along the lines she ought naturally to go. He quite admitted that a great deal could not be done by the primary schools in that direction. A suggestion had been made as to lengthening the school hours. He would like to see improvements made in the ventilation, lighting, desk accommodation, and general equipment of the school buildings. If these improvements were made it would mean greater efficiency in the work of the children, and less fatigue. Again, the large number of pupils who left school and who drifted into occupations which did not offer them a bright future was astonishingly great. This was a problem that was agitating America and England, and one result had been the establishment of vocational schools. The Conference ought to consider whether the curriculum, especially above the Fourth Standard in the larger towns, should be modified so as to give a more vocational basis to the teaching of the older pupils. That system was being carried out at the present time with great success in London and New York. With reference to the work in the schools generally, the tendency of educationists all over the world was to make the schoolroom more of a laboratory and a workshop. He would like to say a word with reference to the pupils who came to the technical school after having passed through the primary school. It was seven years since he took up his present position in New Zealand. He must say that the English had decidedly improved in that time. He meant particularly in the form of composition and also as to the meaning of words. The work in that respect had decidedly improved: the children had better powers of expression, they wrote better, and they understood better. The object of teaching grammar was to enable a person to express himself better. There were people who wrote English quite well, but who spoke it badly: the reason was that in spoken language they depended on the sense of hearing. An effort should be made to teach children to speak more correctly, and it was most necessary that our school-teachers should speak good English. If the pupils did not hear good English spoken by the teacher, he did not know that any amount of teaching of grammar would cause them to speak accurately.

Mr. Cousins thought it would be unwise if the Conference did not attempt to arrive at some definite ideas or conclusions on some of the topics under discussion. He proposed to submit for the consideration of the Conference a motion that would cover the general subject debated, and

he hoped it would commend itself to the wisdom of the Conference. He moved, That in the opinion of this Conference the syllabus of work for primary schools is based on sound principles, and is generally well adapted to the needs of our pupils. The primary-school teachers, after four years' experience of the syllabus, were almost one in the opinion that the syllabus had brought the teaching into closer touch with the child's life, and that it aimed at the development of the child's mind. It had been said that the syllabus was too broad—that it aimed at too much. He thought the syllabus was made broad intentionally. All of the many separate subjects were parts of one integral whole, representing the expanding environment of the child's life. In training the child they must remember the whole development of the child's mind, and not specialize early in a few subjects. The wording of his resolution was such that it did not commit the Conference to the opinion that the syllabus was by any means perfect—that it was just what they would like. Certain things must be taught in arithmetic; and they felt the pinch there. That led him to suggest that it was not the syllabus alone that was guiding the education of our schools. Very largely it was the work of the Inspectors, and the examinations more or less set by those Inspectors. If they had the syllabus alone to go by, and if they had no special examinations to meet, as teachers they would have a much broader scope and a freer hand in regard to the selection of the work. So long as teachers were human the standard set by the examinations would have more to do with the governing of our schools than the syllabus. In some respects there should be a readjustment of the work of the different standards in arithmetic. What was wanted, they were told, was greater accuracy and speed. The ordinary man was not highly qualified in the manifold rules of arithmetic, but he had quickness in working simple operations; and it would be a good thing if they could emphasize that practical aspect of arithmetic, and if they relegated some of the other aspects to the secondary schools or left them out entirely. If that were done, they could give more time to English, as had been suggested by Professor Gilray. It was not only that the teaching of arithmetic was less useful than it might be—he thought some of the time spent on it would be more economically used if it were set free for other subjects. He could not at all agree with one view that had been expressed with regard to geography. The syllabus four years ago very naturally emphasized the importance of geography; but, largely owing to the unsuitability of the text-books, the humanistic side of geography had been largely neglected. The Teachers' Institute had adopted—he believed without dissent—and forwarded to the Department a remit to the effect that the two courses of geography—which were essentially two parts of one thing—should not be separated, and that some limit should be set to the amount of time given to that subject. It was suggested that if less time were given to arithmetic and geography more time would be available for other subjects. Such subjects as history were outlined very prominently in the syllabus, and yet they were relatively neglected in our schools, and were unsatisfactorily taken. If the Department brought out more suitable reading-books for geography and history the difficulty would be very much minimized. The teachers felt that certain aspects of geography were being emphasized, while others equally important were being neglected. He failed to see why humanistic geography should not be treated on such sound educational lines as suggested for the A course in the present syllabus. With regard to the vexed question of English, Professor Gilray in advocating the inculcation of a love of literature, had put forward a suggestion that they could all endorse. In regard to oral work, it had been shown that if the oral side were neglected, that neglect would follow the children through their lives. The syllabus deserved all honour for having faced the difficulty of language by introducing in the natural way the subject of oral composition in the earliest stages of school-work. With regard to the love of literature, he thought Mr. Holmes was right in pointing out that they must not attribute to the present syllabus any blame in that respect, or in regard to any weakness that might have been noticed in some students who went on to the University course. It was only four years since the present syllabus was introduced, and it would take much longer for the teaching to become effective. He thought Professor Gilray would be pleased to hear that it was the general opinion of the teachers of the primary schools that much more was now being done in our schools to make language a real and lovable thing. They were now trying to develop the habit of reading; but that habit would only be acquired gradually. The use of school libraries was extending very much, and supplementary reading-books were coming into our schools in greater numbers. He hoped the teaching of history would get a fillip from the introduction of a concentric series of suitable reading-books. With the exception of these three subjects, teachers generally found that the present syllabus was satisfactory. The troubles that had arisen in many parts of the Dominion were not chargeable to the syllabus alone. The Teachers' Institute had expressed the opinion that before there could be a proper interpretation of the syllabus the Inspectors must be, as far as the syllabus was concerned, officers of the Department.

Mr. Hughes seconded the motion.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Bevan-Brown said he was very pleased with the discussion that had taken place, and he was much struck with the speech of Mr. Hughes. With regard to his reference to moral instruction, it was, he thought, a terrible pity that the great book of literature, and, as Huxley said, the primer of morals, was for various reasons unfortunately excluded from the purview of the education of the youth of this country. It was an awful pity that the boys and girls should have the disability—and he was certain it was a disability—of growing up in country places, not perhaps in the towns, without those humanizing influences which came from the reading of the noble language of the Bible. It was of infinitely great importance—to his mind the most important point in education. He did not suppose he could carry with him many of those who were present, but he could not help expressing his conviction that it was of far more importance than formal grammar or the teaching of arithmetic. He was very glad to hear what Inspector Petrie said about the ambitious character of the history and geography in the syllabus, because it confirmed a sort of feeling that he had: he felt inclined to speak with all deference of the primary-school

teacher if he could master the syllabus, and to take off his hat to every Sixth Standard boy who could pass an examination in the syllabus. Notwithstanding this, important points of old-fashioned history and geography did seem by the pressure of work to be neglected. With regard to the syllabus generally, and the working of it, he did not profess to speak with authority. He thought the articulation of the children was better, and that the oral composition had had a good effect. But, speaking as a secondary-school master, he did think the point emphasized that morning —the question of grammar—was a very serious one, as it affected those children who came from the primary to the secondary schools. He did not for a moment say that formal grammar was necessary for a lad who went out into life. The position was different in the case of a student who intended to learn another language. He did not wish them to come to the secondary school knowing what was called formal grammar, but he did think it was essential that they should come to the secondary school knowing the parts of speech. It might seem astonishing to some members of the Conference that he should even suggest that very promising pupils came to the secondary schools unable to do simple parsing; but he could give examples of that—examples of boys who had qualified for scholarships who said they had never done analysis of a simple sentence, though they had done the general analysis of a complex sentence. He did not like to find fault in that way, because in many respects the syllabus had had a good effect on the children. But the members of the Conference were criticizing, and they ought to tell one another little points that could be remedied. It was possible the defect was due to the hard work of the standards, which were kept too much in watertight compartments. Possibly the pupils learned the methods in the earlier standards, and the work had not been continued and revised on reaching the Sixth Standard. Indeed, in arithmetic also there seemed need for more revision of earlier work. There was, he thought, too great a tendency to unduly and prematurely attempt to develop the reasoning-powers of children. If they looked at the minds of children they would see that there were two outstanding features—one was curiosity, and the other was the power of memory. It seemed to him that information rightly conveyed, which satisfied the curiosity, would itself have an educative effect, and they had gone too far in discarding memory-work. They could not get on without certain technical terms. Speaking generally, he might say that in the secondary schools they found they did not get the same promising children now for secondary-school purposes as they got sixteen years ago. They had formed that opinion in Canterbury; but it could hardly be due to the present syllabus, which was only four years old.

Mr. FIRTH said he could do little more than reiterate what Mr. Bevan-Brown had pointed out, and support what Professors Gilray and Haslam said with regard to grammar. With regard to what had been said to the effect that the want of knowledge of the elementary parts of parsing and analysis could not be set against the present syllabus he quite agreed, but the speaker seemed to imply that there had not been a similar want before. He thought there had been such a want for a long time past. He could give examples of that. Boys coming from some schools had a very fair knowledge of the elements of parsing and analysis, whilst boys from other schools had absolutely no knowledge of those subjects at all. In one respect he differed from Mr. Bevan-Brown: that gentleman said he thought that in the matter of articulation and pronunciation children were better now than they used to be. He should say that the tendency was rather the other way. He knew that New Zealand writers had said in English papers and magazines that the New Zealand boy had no accent. The only conclusion he could draw was either that such writers did not know what they were talking about or that they were not wise men. The person who said that the New Zealand boy spoke English as it should be spoken was talking nonsense. He thought the tendency here, at any rate, was not towards improvement, but the reverse.

Mr. HOWELL asked whether the fact that those who were concerned with secondary education found that in some respects, at any rate, the training of the primary schools did not provide them with pupils well adapted for the work of secondary schools did not seem to point to the desirability of an earlier differentiation than was at present carried out in our educational system. He had long felt that in New Zealand secondary education began too late, and that those boys who were going on to a secondary school to receive an education preparatory to the University would do well to enter the secondary school, say, at eleven years of age—a common age in England. They would then be able to receive such a training as would obviate the difficulties which masters of secondary schools at present found in preparing their pupils for the University. It would also enable the system to meet the needs of those pupils who when they left the primary schools did not go on to the secondary schools or even to the technical schools, but who went direct to work, for it would permit the establishment of the primary vocational schools which had already been mentioned by Mr. George. It must be borne in mind that the great majority of the pupils of the primary schools finished their education—if one might use the term—when they left those schools. They had to go out into life and take up their occupations with no further education than they had received there. It had been said—and he thought it was often justly said—that primary education was a one-sided education—that it was too bookish. In the towns of New Zealand, at any rate, very much had been done to correct that one-sidedness; but he was very sorry to hear a remark made that morning by one of the primary-school teachers to the effect that there was a feeling that too much had been done in this direction. He would be very surprised and sorry indeed to learn that that was an expression of the general feeling. It would seem to him to be altogether retrograde, and was contrary to the best educational opinion in England, America, and even in Germany, where in recent years enormous strides had been made in the introduction of manual work in the later years of school training. In two respects he thought that in recent years there had been a considerable improvement in the equipment of the child going from the primary schools. He referred first to the capacity to observe, and secondly to the power to express either in drawing or in writing what had been observed. He regarded these as extremely valuable acquisitions, for the power of correct observation and expression was of the highest import-

ance, especially in technical work. He was pleased to say that he found as a general rule that the pupils who came to the technical school possessed good powers of description.

Mr. HUNTER said he was in a position to speak as one who had been a primary-school teacher until recently, and latterly as a secondary-school teacher. During the last three years of his primary-school teaching he was in charge of the Fifth and Sixth Standards. He found the Fifth Standard arithmetic a big bill to fill. There seemed to be a want of proper distribution in regard to arithmetic between the Fifth and Sixth Standards. He differed from Mr. Howell in regard to boys starting their secondary-school education at eleven years of age. He was a great believer in the foundation that was laid at the primary school. He thought that a good foundation was laid there. He agreed as to the want of knowledge of formal grammar among boys and girls at the secondary schools.

Miss MARCHANT said, as the member of the Conference who first took charge of a free high school, she might speak with a certain amount of authority on the product of the primary school in the way of work. For the last six years they had practically none but free pupils at the Otago Girls' High School. She was sorry to say that her opinion agreed with that of Professors Gilray and Haslam, and Mr. Bevan-Brown, and the other secondary-school teachers who had spoken as to the lack of formal grammar and the general weakness in arithmetic. These told very heavily on the high-school work. She was inclined to think that the State had gained very much indeed by the alteration and broadening of the primary-school syllabus, but the high schools had not gained. The primary schools had very large numbers of pupils who never went to secondary schools, and, of course, the majority of the pupils must be considered. But she thought they must also consider those 40 per cent. who wished to go to higher work. They must do their best, and not sacrifice the interests of the latter class of students. In regard to the raw material the high schools had to deal with, her experience was exactly similar to that of Mr. Bevan-Brown. One hardly knew how to begin teaching Latin to many of the pupils who came to the secondary schools from the primary schools. If the Conference could throw any light on that subject, and bring any improvement in that respect, it would be strengthening secondary education, and eventually University education.

Mr. VERNON said he would like to know what percentage of Standard VI children went on to the secondary schools. If a large percentage went forward, that large percentage should be catered for. If the percentage was large, he would certainly say that it should be a function of the primary school to get the children as well trained as possible to continue their work at the secondary school. He had always been of opinion that they got the children too late for the secondary schools. His school was largely made up of free-place pupils. The average age of the pupils entering his school was thirteen or fourteen, and by the time they had been two years there they were beginning to think of leaving the school. He was perfectly certain that, if they took three or four years with their Latin that was now taken in two years, it would be better for the students. In the Old Country Latin was commenced much earlier than it was taken here. There was not the slightest doubt that many of the students knew very little about formal grammar when they came to the secondary schools. But, as Mr. Firth had said, that was also the case long ago. It had been a weak point for a long time, the want of formal grammar. If the primary schools could find out which pupils were going on to the secondary schools, and taught those pupils some formal grammar, it would be a good thing.

Mr. GOYEN said he had been greatly disappointed with the inadequacy of the treatment of the subject of grammar by the previous speakers. He really did not understand what they meant by "formal grammar." Did they mean grammar simply of form—of form and not of function? Was the English sentence so structureless, so absolutely wanting in form and structure, that they might call the grammar of their language a mere matter of form? The thing was absurd, he thought. What did grammar imply? It implied this, among other things: that a person should realize that words had certain functions, and that they could not discharge their functions unless they were placed in certain positions. That was a very important thing in grammar. It was not a formal thing at all. It was a part and parcel of the language and the structure of the sentence. The writer must know that the verb had a certain function, that the noun and adjective and other parts of speech had certain functions, and that in order to discharge their functions adequately they must occupy certain places in the sentence. It was not a matter of guesswork. There was just one place, and one place alone, in which a word could do its work most effectively. In his opinion, those who considered that grammar was to be taught only as part of composition took a very inadequate view of the subject. In what other way was grammar of use? They were for the most part occupied in interpreting the spoken and written speech of others, and he did not think anybody could, except in a vague sort of way, interpret the speech of others who did not know exactly how one word depended upon another, how phrase depended upon phrase, clause upon clause, and paragraph upon paragraph. That was the grammar he thought they ought to concern themselves with. It was not a formal thing at all. It lay at the root of all literary study. It was not everything. There was an imaginative and a purely literary element. He attached great value to that, and regretted that greater prominence was not given to it in the training of the teacher. In his view, they could not teach a child his own language, to say nothing about other languages, without thoroughly grounding him in its accidence and syntax—that is, in the forms words must take, and the places words, phrases, clauses, and sentences must occupy, to express adequately the thought they are intended to convey. Nothing merely formal could wed thought and language in this way. To him formal grammar had no existence. He knew from experience that grammar could be taught in a formal way, but he did not believe that there was any such thing as formal grammar.

Mr. WATKINS said he gathered from some of the speakers that morning that in some parts of the Dominion pupils passed from the primary schools to the University. He did not know of any part of the Dominion where that took place.

The CHAIRMAN said he thought that pupil-teachers were referred to.

Mr. WATKINS thought he was right in saying that within the last few years most of the pupil-teachers had gone through a period at the secondary schools. One of his bitterest recollections was being compelled to read Milton at an age when he was too young to care for it. He thought there might be a danger if they endeavoured to do too much in that respect. He wondered whether a child of ten years of age gained very much by being set to read such works. He thought such work should be given them at a later age. Many schools now had libraries, and those libraries were being used by the pupils. He was glad to hear Mr. Bevan-Brown's explanation as to formal grammar. It was a stumbling-block to many persons to know what was meant by "formal grammar." The syllabus said that grammar was a means to an end: they must not confuse the means with the end. Functional grammar was to be taught so far as it bore upon composition. The syllabus left the teacher power to use such terms as he found to be useful in dealing with a subject. The syllabus, if liberally interpreted by Inspectors, would do a very great deal to prepare pupils for the secondary school. The question was whether the children at the primary schools who were preparing for scholarships or who were going on to secondary schools should not have some special tuition in view of that; if not, the secondary schools must recognize the position, and provide for it when the children first enter the secondary schools. Primary schools did not exist in the first place to prepare children for the secondary schools. Primary education must stand by itself as a means towards securing such an education as was necessary for that portion of the community who would not take up professional work.

Mr. MILNES said he thought Mr. Watkins had hit the nail on the head. The secondary-school teacher evidently wanted formal grammar taught. The primary-school teacher did not want it taught. Was there any reason why the secondary-school teachers should not teach the children formal grammar? He could not see why the first fortnight at the secondary schools should not be devoted to teaching formal grammar, and thus get over the difficulty.

Miss MCLEAN did not think it should be allowed to go forth without a protest that primary education should be legislated for or dealt with as if it were a thing by itself. There was no getting away from the fact that a large percentage of the boys went on to secondary schools, and the foundation of their education could not be laid twice over. Therefore secondary-school work must be taken into account in the drawing-up of the primary-school syllabus. It had been said that 60 per cent. of the children at the primary schools did not pass on to the secondary schools—that the primary-school course was their whole education. Surely if 40 per cent. of the primary-school pupils went on to the secondary schools, a foundation ought to be laid so that they could go on to their secondary course satisfactorily. The syllabus of the primary schools was not at fault in this matter so much as the interpretation and the administration of it. Secondary-school teachers found it distinctly a hardship that perhaps half a term had to be spent in preparing pupils for beginning their Latin. It handicapped them very much that the pupils did not know the terms. It was not the fault of the syllabus so much as it was the fault of the interpretation, and teachers were often afraid of going too far. It was that reaction they had heard about. Besides the want of formal grammar, there was also the want of knowledge of Scripture that had been referred to. Our education should not ignore character-building. How could you get the highest form of character-building if you could not refer to the highest authority? There, again, the reaction had gone too far. Bible-reading was not permitted in schools, and therefore teachers had been too afraid to refer to what should be the ideals of all character. There was an ignorance of the principal Scriptural names and characters. It would be an improvement if the age of those pupils coming to secondary schools were lowered. In her opinion, twelve years was a satisfactory age at which to begin secondary-school work or to take up secondary-school subjects.

The CHAIRMAN said he did not want to discuss this question unless he vacated the chair; but he would like to point out with regard to the teaching of grammar that there had evidently been a misunderstanding of the syllabus if there was an idea present in the minds of teachers that no grammatical terms were to be introduced. The wording of the syllabus was that technical grammatical terms should be used very sparingly. What was not encouraged particularly in the syllabus was such a thing as consecutive parsing exercises. With all due deference to Mr. Goyen, the consecutive parsing exercise was formal grammar. Mr. Goyen apparently did not know what was meant by "formal grammar." It was true that to a certain extent there had been a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the syllabus in regard to this subject.

Mr. STRACHAN thought the time had come for him to move the motion of which he had given notice earlier in the day. Such a committee, in his opinion, was necessary. Members of the Conference would notice that it was composed of one representative from each branch of the education system; consequently every side of education ought to have its rights duly put forward. There was another point to be considered: There were 147,000 children in the primary schools, and only about 8,000 in the secondary schools. The 147,000 children must under the present circumstances be considered to a certain extent apart from the seven or eight thousand children who were going on to the secondary schools. Their problems were different problems from those of the seven or eight thousand children who were going on to the secondary schools, and still further apart from those of the thousand children or so who were going on to the University. It was important that a committee should be set up to determine what subjects it was desirable to take in our primary-education system, and teachers ought to know what time was considered a proper allotment for each subject. There ought to be something authoritative as to the time that should be given to arithmetic and other subjects. He might add that if the chairman wished to shorten the term of the primary school, it could be reduced by six months by the adoption of the metric system in arithmetic.

The CHAIRMAN asked where the committee was to meet, and to whom was it to report? If the motion was carried, he presumed the Department would see that effect was given to it. He thought,

if the committee had twelve months to consider the subject, they could produce something worthy of such a Conference as the present one. As he understood from Mr. Petrie that he would not be able to act, he would suggest that Mr. Goyen be appointed in his place.

Mr. GOYEN.—It is rather a big order.

Mr. STRACHAN.—I suggest that Mr. Braik be appointed a member of the committee.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN asked that his name be left off the committee. He would have to vote against the motion. The Conference had met to give each other hints, and it was for the Education Department and the Inspectors and primary-school masters afterwards to draw up their own syllabus. He would not like to have a hand in drawing up a syllabus for the primary schools, and he would resent the primary-school masters drawing up a syllabus for the secondary schools.

Dr. ANDERSON said he was unable to support Mr. Strachan's motion. The Department had a large amount of information from various quarters of the globe. It was not lack of information they suffered from, but from various other things. It was not particularly difficult to determine what should be included in the primary course of instruction. Briefly, there should be the mother-tongue—including on the one hand reading and the art of interpretation, and on the other hand the art of expression—and that would also include drawing. Arithmetic, from its practical utility, must, of course, have its place, and there must also be cultivation of the observation by means of practice in scientific methods. But the difficulty was a very real one when they came to the relation between the primary and the secondary school. Mr. Howell had touched upon a point that had been long more or less in his own mind—namely, that they ought to study a little more closely how far they might adjust the work of the primary schools to meet the needs of the secondary schools. The primary-school system was for the bulk of the pupils. The smaller number of children who went from the primary to the secondary school might require a very different treatment. It might not be possible to give that different treatment in the primary school, and the only course then would be to take the pupils at an earlier stage, leaving those who wanted to finish with the primary school to remain there. That, to his mind, was the point of real importance to which special attention was needed. But, so far as the primary-school course in itself was concerned, they knew enough about that. With reference to grammar, he was strongly of opinion that the art of expression was the main feature of the work to be done in the primary school. Grammar was the science of language. Composition was its correlative art; and grammar had no place, to his mind, in the primary-school course, except as a handmaid to composition. But what was done in that way should be done effectively. There should be no grammar except what had a direct bearing upon the mother-tongue, and the amount of that was not great. The secondary-school masters need not be shocked at young people who came to them with a certain amount of power of expression and cultivated intelligence if there was a certain amount of ignorance of certain grammatical terms, such as had been referred to. When the secondary school met with these initial difficulties in the study of another language it was its duty to provide for them. What was essential for the elementary study of Latin, but not essential for the elementary study of English, was not within the province of the primary school.

The motion was negatived on the voices.

The relation of Primary Schools to Secondary and Technical Education.

The CHAIRMAN said the next question for consideration was "The relation of primary schools to secondary and technical education." This was an extremely important subject, and he hoped it would be fully discussed from every point of view. He would indicate what some of the questions involved were. A very large proportion of the pupils of the secondary schools consisted of free pupils. The conditions of entrance to a free place in a secondary or technical school were threefold, or, rather, the doors were three in number: (1) All holders of scholarships—Board or other scholarships—were entitled to free places; (2) all who qualified for scholarships, and all who qualified in a special examination held by the Department for free places, were entitled to free places; and (3) all who got certificates of proficiency, and who were not over fifteen years of age at time of entrance, were entitled to free places. The Inspectors of the Department from time to time inspected the secondary schools at which these pupils were admitted. In some places the authorities had expressed the opinion that a good many of those who had entered were not fitted for the secondary education of the kind obtained at the secondary school. He was not referring particularly to secondary schools. The same thing was true to a certain extent of district high schools, but there was a qualification there which he would refer to presently. In the case of secondary schools that opinion had been expressed, and he was bound to admit that to a certain extent—in view of certain facts that came before the Inspectors of the Department—there was a number of individuals—a certain proportion only—in regard to whom that statement as to unfitness for secondary education seemed to have some foundation in fact. The question resolved itself into this: as to whether the third door of admission—he did not think there was any question as to the other two doors—whether that third door of admission by means of a proficiency certificate might not be so wide as to admit some who really were not fitted for the form of secondary education that was given, and should be given, in our secondary schools. That was one of the questions that might be discussed by the Conference. There were two ways of altering the conditions. One way had been suggested by a leading headmaster of a secondary school—a man who had a good deal of experience. He (the Chairman) would not say whether he approved of the suggestion or not—he did not wish to express an opinion upon it; but the solution that had been suggested was certainly worthy of consideration: the suggestion was that that door should be absolutely closed, and only those admitted to free places who should qualify in a special examination. To that the objection has been made that if they did not take care they would have a very considerable portion of the year of the boy or girl in the Sixth Standard taken up by preparation for that examination. Another proposal made in one quarter was that the certificate of proficiency examination should

be much more clearly distinguished from the competency examination, and that it should be reserved for the best pupils to get a proficiency certificate. The question was a very important one as to what should be the condition of entrance to the free place in the secondary school. Another question arose with regard to district high schools. At the present time the conditions of a free place in a district high school were exactly the same as those for the secondary schools. The district high school had to serve a double purpose in a very great many places. It had to give the pupils all that it could give them of a secondary education as interpreted in the secondary schools, but it also had to be prepared to give a good many of them all the technical education that some of them were likely to receive, or the beginnings of a technical education. In country districts, if the district high schools did not do this work, the pupils would in many cases not get the instruction at all. Then there were the technical schools. At the age of thirteen or fourteen about 35 to 40 per cent. of those leaving the primary schools went to secondary schools, district high schools, or technical schools. He was speaking of technical day schools, which were really secondary day schools of a special kind. Thus there were left about 60 per cent. who left school presumably to earn their own living. That 60 per cent. the technical schools, if any institution, ought to provide for. One of the questions they would have to consider when they came to technical schools was in what way they ought to provide for them. In dealing with the subject now before the Conference they could not leave out of sight agricultural education. More than half of our industrial workers were concerned with agriculture. They could not afford to neglect that branch of study in the way it had been neglected by the farmers themselves in the past. The machinery existed now, but it was still neglected by the farmers.

Mr. Bevan-Brown said he had always been of opinion that the Department made a mistake in having the proficiency certificate as a qualification for a free place, in addition to the qualifications 3 (*a*) and 3 (*b*). He could see no reason for it. It might be urged possibly that qualifying for a scholarship was a little too hard—he did not think it was; but the junior free place examination was, in all conscience, an easy test to judge whether a pupil was fitted for a secondary school, so that it would be a profit to the State for that boy or girl to have secondary instruction. He admitted that a great many proficiency pupils were quite equal to those who passed a junior scholarship examination, but a great many of them were not. In regard to free places, he would like to see this adopted: that all children living within easy distance of a centre should be compelled to sit for the free-place examination—if not for a scholarship examination—in order to qualify for entrance to a secondary school. He did not think that would be a hardship at all. Country children might be allowed the privilege of a certificate of proficiency. In his opinion, the Department had retrograded in the last two years. Formerly the age for the (*c*) qualification was under fourteen. It had now been raised to under fifteen. He thought the test was insufficient and the age was too high. With regard to senior free places, he would lay down a rule that a boy in order to qualify must be under sixteen if he passed the Junior Civil Service Examination, and if over sixteen he must pass that examination with credit. At present, even if a boy was eighteen, and passed the Junior Civil Service Examination, he could get a free place. He thought that was making it too cheap. He brought this matter before the Secondary Schools Conference two years ago, but did not carry the majority of the Conference with him. At present the finances of the secondary schools were based on the large number of free pupils who earned capitation, and he could quite understand that it would make a tremendous difference, especially to some schools with small endowments, if the (*c*) qualification were suddenly cut off; but the difficulty might be got over by raising the capitation. He did not think it was to the advantage of the State to educate so many children free, possibly a third of whom hardly could be said to profit by secondary instruction as such. They often drifted off into book-keeping, which it was not really the province of a secondary school, as such, to teach.

Mr. Gray said he dissented almost entirely from the views expressed by Mr. Bevan-Brown on the general question that scholarships for only a certain selected number were to be provided by our secondary education—using the word in its widest sense, and including technical institutions. The problem appeared to him in this way: that we should move entirely in the direction of retaining as many free scholars for as long a period as possible in our secondary schools. He was opposed to anything in the way of increasing the strain by way of competitive examination for our secondary schools, or for any schools at all. They had had enough of them, in all conscience. He was rather in favour of the idea of allowing scholars to qualify by way of credits, the masters of the schools acting in conjunction with the Inspectors in the matter. Competitive examination was one of the rampant evils at the present time throughout our whole education system. He thought that in the case of children going on under the free-place system to secondary schools—that is, the ordinary type of secondary school—the parents should give an undertaking that the scholars would remain at the school for a period of four years—for a long-enough time to profit by the course of education given there. One of the most serious evils that secondary schools had to contend with was this: that they had to deal with separate classes of pupils—some one-year, some two-year, and some three-year pupils. He was strongly in favour of vocational classes.

Mr. Braik said he thought the standard for admission to secondary schools should be higher than it was. If parents wished their children to go to purely secondary schools, by all means let them pay an adequate fee. He was perfectly certain that many of our proficiency-certificate pupils were a burden to the secondary schools, and were not likely to bring any credit to the State from their attendance at secondary schools. In regard to district high schools and technical schools, he would have no educational qualification beyond this: If a child had gone through a primary-school course, was of good character, and had done honest work, he would say, "You may go to a technical school or a district high school, and continue your education." It appeared to him that there was no use in continuing the proficiency examination. Under the conditions he had indicated he thought that any child ought to go free to any practical form of education that the

State provided, whether industrial, agricultural, or mechanical. He thought there ought to be a certificate which would guarantee that a boy or girl holding it was fit for the public service, and was also fit for ordinary commercial employment, apart altogether from the proficiency certificate.

Mr. GOYEN thought they had made the winning of the proficiency certificate altogether too easy. He was quite sure that the percentage required for a pass was in some subjects too low. It was too low in arithmetic and composition. The cards used in the examination in these subjects were drawn by the Department, and most of the arithmetic cards were well drawn; but there was, he thought, room for improvement in the composition cards, which, in his opinion, did not suggest right lines of study. It was easy for a boy or a girl to make 40 per cent. in these subjects and still be utterly unfit for the work of the secondary school. He thought they might raise the percentage a good deal, and thus make the certificate a warrant of thoroughness of preparation in the work prescribed for the primary school. Many of those who got proficiency certificates simply "scraped" through. Moreover, some of them were rather young, and would be all the better for another year in the primary school.

Mr. J. H. HARKNESS said the multiplication of examinations led teachers to do special "coaching" out of school hours for these scholarships. In regard to what had been said by one speaker as to the work of the headmasters of district high schools, in his opinion there was a greater amount of worry in the work of the headmaster of a district high school than there was in the management of a primary school.

Mr. FIRTH said that, whilst supporting Mr. Bevan-Brown's contention that many boys who qualified for a proficiency certificate were not capable of returning adequate value to the State, nor, on the other hand, of gaining much good for themselves in secondary-school work, he would like also to say to Mr. Harkness that he was not right in stating that Mr. Bevan-Brown was mistaken in his judgment because a number of boys had been specially "coached" for the Junior National Scholarship Examination, because, although that special "coaching" would affect their position in the scholarship list, it had no effect at all on the ability of the boy to take up entirely new work—it had no effect at all on the ability of the boy to go on with the secondary-school work. He supported Mr. Bevan-Brown's contention in that respect.

Mr. FLEMING said the criticism of the syllabus that had been made that morning would be very interesting to most Inspectors. Whilst certain faults had been found, still the syllabus as a whole seemed to have found favour generally. There were certain things which, apart from the point of view of the secondary teachers, required remedying. The question was, how they were to remedy these defects and fit in the work of the primary schools with that of the secondary institutions. His opinion all along on this question had been that the body which could help them in this matter was the University Senate, and he thought they had now taken a step in that direction. A number of scholarship pupils had gone into secondary schools, and there was, no doubt, a feeling amongst the parents and teachers that the pupils must reach a certain stage within a certain time, which was in most cases too short for a satisfactory training. That was one of the great defects, to his mind, of our system. He did not know whether the Senate had laid it down expressly, but he thought that underlying the change recently made was the idea to make the secondary course a four-years course. That was a step which he thought was going to be of some service. It was not the quickness in getting through the work, but it was the length of time that was given to the children to do the work thoroughly, which would enable them to derive the greatest benefit from their studies. He thought the Senate would have made another step forward if they had raised the age for matriculation to seventeen years. That would mean that scholarship boys going from the primary schools to secondary schools would be under the age of fourteen. The Chairman had stated that from 35 to 40 per cent. of the children attending primary schools went on to the secondary course. The numbers had roughly been estimated at 40 per cent. There was another thing in regard to which he thought secondary-school teachers might have given the Conference some little information—viz., how many pupils of that 40 per cent. stayed at the secondary schools long enough to derive any benefit from the instruction. Not many. He thought, roughly, from 5 to 10 per cent. only derived any benefit from Latin or mathematics. In his opinion, the best plan would be to take up one of the suggestions which the Chairman had made—viz., that the admission of these children to secondary schools—namely, those who would eventually proceed to the University—by means of a free place should be on "examination" (Department's examination), and not on "proficiency." He would not stop any district scholars going into district high schools or technical schools. Entrance to these schools should be by promotion only. It would be a very difficult thing to carry out. The best guarantee was that the scholars were going to take up a course of study which they would derive benefit from. If they did not take a four-years course they should go into a district high school or a technical school. He had as much abhorrence of examinations as some other speakers had, but he could not see how they could avoid them at present. Certificates of proficiency might be left alone at present, and certificates might then be taken for admission to district high schools and technical schools, or entrance made by promotion only. That would get rid of some of the difficulties, but it seemed to him that it would not make the system anything like perfect.

Mr. HOWELL thought that at least one-third of those who entered secondary schools of which he had had experience were not profiting to any considerable extent by the instruction which they were receiving. It seemed to be a very common feeling amongst them that they were there to put in time, and, perhaps, to obtain the kudos of having belonged to a secondary school. A good many of this class of pupils left in the first year, and the great bulk in the second year. Teaching such pupils was very unsatisfactory, especially as the classes were usually very large. He did not think it was necessary to increase greatly the total amount that was at present expended on secondary education, but if the same total grants were made for a smaller number of pupils it would enable the secondary schools to decrease the size of their classes without diminishing their staffs or reducing their salaries. So far as his experience had gone, the crying evil in secondary-school work

had been the very large classes. He thought the capitation that was given for secondary schools was altogether inadequate. In the case of technical education no distinction was made between day-classes and evening-classes as regards the age of admission, and he thought a distinction ought to be drawn. The regulation was that those who qualified for free places and who were over the age of thirteen years were entitled to free education. He thought as regards evening-classes that age was too low, and that as regards day-classes it was too high. The education that was provided in technical day-schools was not of a purely technical character. It had vocational aims, certainly; but he was sure that those concerned in its administration were only too anxious that it should be broadly educational. If that was so, in his opinion it was an undoubted hardship to prevent pupils from entering a day technical school under the age of thirteen years. They could enter a secondary school, but they could not enter a day technical school. On the other hand, pupils might claim to be enrolled as day pupils even if they were seventeen or eighteen years of age, and they did so; and, further, they were entitled to claim certain railway concessions up to nineteen. In his opinion, a boy who had done eight or nine hours' work was quite unable to profit by evening instruction. The governing body of the institution with which he was connected had discouraged such young people from taking up full courses at evening classes by refusing to admit them to these as free pupils under the age of fifteen. He would be very glad indeed if the Department could see its way to adopt the suggestion which had been made that there should be no lower age-limit for admission to day technical schools. In the case of the older students he thought it was desirable that they should give some pledge of their earnestness in the way of a deposit. In his own institution those who wished to take advantage of the privilege of free places, and who were over the age of seventeen years, were required to pay a deposit of £1, which was returned to them in full at the end of the year if their attendance had been satisfactory.

Mr. VERNON wished to enter his protest against some of the statements that had been made. He was rather surprised that many speakers should have advocated closing our secondary schools to a large number of the children of New Zealand. He thought that free places in technical schools might be granted to holders of competency certificates. He thought they ought to encourage them as much as possible to enter these schools. If they were not able to get proficiency certificates, and yet could get competency certificates, they might be encouraged to attend technical classes. He did not like to see boys and girls of thirteen or fourteen years of age attending these classes. He thought it would be far better if they attended a school where there was the ordinary school discipline. They all knew that it was not merely the instruction that was imparted, but it was also the discipline they received that benefited them.

Mr. GEORGE thought that the discussion that afternoon must have led the members of the Conference to one or two definite conclusions with reference to the relation between primary and secondary and technical education; and it seemed to him that one of the most definite conclusions they must have come to was the necessity of having one authority for all those branches of education in order to prevent overlapping.

The CHAIRMAN.—Do you mean one local authority?

Mr. GEORGE.—Yes. At the present time it often happened that those three branches of education were under three separate authorities. With reference to the admission of pupils to the technical schools without any special certificate, he presumed that the speaker who made that suggestion referred to those who had gone through the full primary course. He thought the time had come when they should consider the question of raising the age below which children should not be allowed to give up education entirely. At present the age was fourteen years. They ought to keep boys and girls at school as long as possible. He knew that there was a great objection in a British community to make anything compulsory. They might retain the primary education as at present, and a provision might be made by which young people on leaving the primary schools would be required for a certain period longer to devote a certain number of hours per week in continuation of their education. He thought that means could be devised to prevent overlapping, and to overcome the difficulties which under the present system must arise in the smaller centres.

Mr. HILL confessed that, listening to the interesting speeches which had been delivered that afternoon, he was somewhat surprised to hear the suggestion made that the proficiency certificate should not count for admission to the ordinary high school or to the district high school. He had watched with very great interest the working of our education system since the proficiency certificate came into operation, and he had noticed the growing interest which the people themselves had taken in the granting of those certificates. They had to consider that the proficiency certificate represented the final reward to the boy and the girl who completed the standard course in the public schools of the Dominion, and it did seem to him a strange thing that that certificate after years of toil should be deemed to represent an insufficient qualification to enter a high school —not because the preparation was bad, but simply because it did not represent the type of work that was regarded as necessary in a high school. The question was this: whether the work or the kind of work that boys and girls had to do in the primary school should be such as to prepare them to fulfil their life's duties. They had to recollect that three out of every five boys and girls who completed the primary standard course did not attend high schools. About ten thousand children were in Standard Six, according to the Minister's annual return, and six thousand of those children never went on to a secondary school or a district high school, and yet the majority of them might have obtained proficiency certificates. To say that that proficiency certificate ought not to qualify them for admission to a high school seemed to him very strange. Personally, he believed they would get far better results if on the completion of the Sixth Standard course pupils were allowed to continue to work in their own schools along the same lines as the district high schools, and that at the end of a year special examinations were held for their admission to a technical or a secondary school. He was of opinion that the technical schools and the secondary schools were the two kinds of schools they required to make their system of education complete. He was one who believed in the system that had been adopted. He liked the primary-school course

that had been laid down, and with a few slight modifications he believed it could be adapted to furnish the very best material for secondary and technical schools. He thought that all that was required was more elasticity in the requirements of the Sixth Standard course. If the Inspectors were centralized he assumed that they would examine the pupils and would certify, as they did now, as to the qualifications of candidates for the certificates of admission, whether to a free place in a high school or to a technical school. That opened up a very important question, and he hoped it would be discussed at the Inspectors' Conference. He hoped that the proficiency certificate would be duly recognized as a certificate which would admit children to the high schools, otherwise hundreds of those who now have the right to attend high schools would receive no benefit whatever from our secondary system of education.

Mr. COUSINS desired to point out another aspect of the question. In the Auckland Provincial District, at any rate, many pupils who were qualified to take the course provided at our secondary schools were debarred owing to the necessary expense which would be involved in having to reside away from home near a high school. He thought it might be well to withdraw the money that was at present granted to holders of scholarships living in the large centres, and devote the funds to bringing country children who won scholarships to the towns.

Mr. MARSHALL said that he was somewhat surprised to hear some speakers practically recommending the abolition of the proficiency certificate, and also to hear them ask for some higher qualification. More especially was he astounded when he heard some of the reasons given for such a change. Some of the speakers emphasized the point that the classes were too large in the secondary schools—that these schools could not do efficient work, and therefore the children were handicapped. That was practically what it amounted to. He maintained that if New Zealand had a name for education amongst education authorities in other lands, and if they asked those authorities, it would be found in nine cases out of ten the admiration was not for our primary or university system, but for the splendid opportunities offered for secondary education. In dealing with the claim for secondary rather than technical education, he said he had been frequently consulted by parents as to whether they should send their children to a secondary school or allow them to continue at the district high school. His reply had always been, "How long are you going to allow your boy or girl to continue at school?" If the answer was that it was intended to keep the pupil two or three years longer at school, then he recommended the high school or district high school. But he thought that some provision should be made whereby children should not be admitted to a secondary school unless the parents gave a guarantee that such pupils would be continued at that school for at least two years, or, if he had his way, for three years. He was surprised to hear it said by some speakers that the standard for admission to secondary schools should be raised. He thought that if we gave these young people qualifying under present conditions free education at secondary schools, a large percentage of them were thoroughly competent to take advantage of it.

The Conference adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

FRIDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 10 a.m.

Mr. MARSHALL said that at the adjournment on the previous day he was dealing with the question of whether or not a proficiency certificate was a sufficient guarantee for a pupil to go forward to a secondary school. He now moved, That this Conference, while strongly urging the retention of a proficiency examination as one of the means of enabling pupils to qualify for free places in secondary schools, considers that before the pupil is allowed to enter on a free place in a secondary school the parent or guardian should be compelled to give an undertaking that such pupil will remain a fixed stated minimum period at the secondary school. His object was to express approval of the proficiency examination as one of the means of qualifying for secondary education. Although the remark had been made that some pupils did not appear to benefit by secondary education, the members of the Conference ought not to accept such appearances so far as the examinations were concerned. It was quite possible for pupils who had been several years at a secondary school to have reaped benefits which did not appear on the surface. He knew of instances where pupils who while at the secondary school had caused a considerable amount of vexation, yet were afterwards found taking prominent positions in the Dominion—that was to say, boys who had not given any indication of scholastic ability had as men attained to high and important positions. On the other hand, pupils who continue three or four years at a secondary school invariably give some indication that they have received benefit from that course. The young people upon whom the secondary school makes no permanent impression are those that remain only a short time at such school. There was another aspect of the question: It was a serious thing to begin limiting the opportunities for higher education to the great bulk of the people. During the last few months it had been decided to raise the standard of the Matriculation Examination, and the effect of thus raising the standard would prolong the time at school by at least one year. That meant that a certain number of pupils would be cut off. If now the proficiency examination were interfered with, the opportunities of those who were desirous of taking advantage of a secondary course would be still further restricted. It seemed to him, looking over the figures of the various schools, that half of the district high schools in outlying districts would not be able to carry on. They depended on the capitation per pupil, and he had come to the opinion just expressed after studying the information given in the last annual education report. If the resolution which had been moved had not been so long he would have liked to add a tag to it somewhat in this form: "That in the case of those forms or classes no capitation shall be paid on any class which exceeds twenty-five pupils taught by one teacher at the same time." To refer again to the subject of proficiency

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

ought to occupy itself with anything but primary-school education. The vast majority of primary-school children left school to enter the industrial world, and their leaving-certificate ought to be only incidentally a card of entrance to a secondary school. He thought Mr. Gray's motion ought to receive the support of the Conference.

Mr. Bevan-Brown said it seemed to him that the somewhat narrow issue raised at first was beginning to open up very much larger issues. It was a matter of importance to the Conference that they should weigh well what they were doing. If the resolutions of the Conference were those of an executive body, if Mr. Gray's amendment were carried it would alter the constitution of the education system throughout New Zealand most materially. He was of opinion that it was arguable that all education should be free from the primary school to the university; but if it was to be free, the State would have to pay the piper. If Mr. Gray's resolution were carried out, it would very soon end in there being no paying pupils, and all secondary schools would be free. If that were so, the capitation allowed would not enable the secondary schools to be kept at their present level. He was not arguing against free education at secondary schools; but was the State prepared to pay for it? His opinion was that at least 50 per cent.—nearly 75 per cent.—of those who now got secondary education could easily pay the fees. The question was whether the tendency to do everything for parents and leave them nothing to do, or to make no sacrifice, was a good thing. Then they had also to consider the poor man. They wanted some kind of sorting-machine which would sort the capacity of the children, so that they would be able to say, "It would be to the advantage of the State to educate this child from the primary school to the university." They must have some method of sorting. At present it was by the rough method of examination. He had very great sympathy with Mr. Gray's scheme. Mr. Gray said that the sorting-apparatus should be a joint consultation between the parent, the Inspector, and the headmaster or headmistress. Now, if the head teacher were always like Mr. Gray, he (Mr. Bevan-Brown) would trust his judgment. But many head teachers had not Mr. Gray's experience or discernment, and would be open to pressure from parents or committees, so that grave evils might result.

Mr. Marshall desired to explain that his resolution applied to secondary schools only. He intended afterwards to submit resolutions dealing with technical education, and with the education of those children who could not remain at secondary schools at least two or three years. He wished to widen the door to the lower grades of secondary education.

The Chairman said one impression ought to be removed entirely—namely, that £4 5s. was what was being paid. The income from endowments and capitation together could not amount to less than £12 10s. on any free pupil. That must be borne in mind; and if they took the £12 10s. and multiplied it by twenty-five they would find the number that had been mentioned—they would find that it would pay both salaries and incidental expenses; because when arriving at the income from endowments there had already been taken away from the calculation all the expenditure on buildings, repairs, mortgages, interest, &c. The amount of contribution was more like £17 or £18 per head. As the number of pupils increased, the capitation would rise, and the two together—endowment and capitation—could not be less than £12 10s.

The Conference divided on the first part of Mr. Gray's amendment—viz., "That the avenue to secondary education should be quite free and unrestricted, eligibility therefor to be dependent upon one primary-school leaving-certificate, awarded on the joint representation of the headmaster and an Inspector of Schools."—Ayes, 30; Noes, 14: majority for, 16.—Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Gray moved, That the kind of secondary education to be attended by any one holding a primary-school leaving-certificate be determined by (1) the aptitude and capacity discovered during the last three years of the primary-school course, (2) by the indication of the parent regarding the time—one, two, three, or four years—during which the child may attend a secondary institution. He believed that every boy or girl who wished to attend a secondary institution of a classical or of a scientific order should have the option of doing so if he was going to stay there for such a time as would be profitable to himself and to the institution concerned. The idea underlying the motion was that parents or schoolmasters should indicate the duration of the period for which the scholar would attend school. He was of opinion that some kind of bond or guarantee of good faith should be given. If they got into closer touch with the parents of the children in the primary schools as to their aims in respect to their children, and if they were perfectly straightforward with regard to the aptitudes and capacities of the scholars, much good might be done. The period for which the child attended school should be a determining factor.

Mr. Firth had much pleasure in seconding the motion. The point as to the length of time a pupil was to stay at a secondary school was a most important one. He could not, however, see how the mover was going to get his guarantee. Still, that was merely a matter of detail. He thoroughly agreed with the principle enunciated.

The Chairman said he did not want to discuss the question from the chair; at the same time he thought they were rather unfortunate in discussing it before they knew what secondary education was. They had not yet determined what secondary education was. The course they were taking was not very logical. There were several kinds of secondary education. We had recognized them partly in this Dominion, and they were recognized more or less in several other parts of the world. The only distinction that he could find that was common to them all was that of age. The ages were not alike. But that was the only point that was common to all the divisions or classifications of secondary education—the classification with regard to age. He thought that was tolerably sound. He believed that the mental capacities of children corresponded very closely to the physical growth of the children. He thought the age—rough index as it was in some cases—was probably the soundest of all if not too strictly adhered to. They found children going to secondary schools—real secondary schools—between twelve and fourteen. There were a few outside fourteen, but not many under twelve. The great tendency in the English schools was not to

take them under thirteen. The headmaster of Clifton said he did not want any boy under thirteen, even if he was a genius, and he informed him (Mr. Hogben) that that was the opinion of many headmasters. That represented one stage—from twelve to fourteen: thirteen to fourteen he put it down at. At about sixteen years of age there was a distinct natural sifting of boys and girls. There were some for whom it was not beneficial that they should give their whole time to school-work. They ought to be out earning their living, but going on with their education as well. In the case of some, it was not worth their while devoting the whole of their time to education: they might carry on their education side by side with their professional work. So that in the secondary-school period they had three kinds of people. He believed they ought all to go on with their education for a certain period. He believed it would not be a bad thing—whether by local option or by a general law, as in Germany—that they should make it compulsory. That was his personal opinion—not his official opinion—that they might make it compulsory for all to go on for three years longer than they did now. If we wanted our system to grow up logically, we ought to logically provide for the division of the children according to their natural capacity. They would come to this question again when considering the work of the technical schools. The question now was, where the children should go for the first part of the period, and perhaps for the second. They should bear in mind—certainly in the larger towns—that there should be provision for all these different kinds of pupils. That was what they were aiming at under the present system, so that this motion did not mean any amendment to what was being done now. They had decided on the door: now they would have to decide what they would do when they were entering the door.

Mr. George would like to know whether Mr. Gray would make it compulsory that the children should go to any particular type of school, or would he give the parent an option in the selection of the school.

Mr. Gray said they ought to keep in touch as far as possible with every parent, and, working in conjunction with them, get the children placed in the best institution.

Mr. Howell said he felt that, while the system proposed was an ideal one, there would be serious difficulties in carrying it out at present. In the case of large primary schools it would be impossible for the master to have such an intimate knowledge of the capacity of every boy and girl as would enable him to say definitely for what class of secondary work each was best adapted.

Mr. Goyen agreed with the last speaker that it would be beyond the powers of most of our teachers to determine the aptitude of the pupil on leaving school at thirteen or fourteen. That seemed to be the weakness of Mr. Gray's proposal. He thought the parent's opinion should prevail on that point, and not the teacher's opinion. The teacher was not in anything like as good a position as the parent to determine what the child should be allowed to proceed with. He would vote against the motion on those grounds.

Mr. Hughes quite agreed that the door should be as wide as practicable; but there should also, if possible, be some guarantee that the child going on to take purely secondary education, in the narrowest sense, should take that course for a definite time. A pronouncement of the Conference would have some weight if they said that, in the case of a child taking high-school work pure and simple, the parent of the child should be prepared to state that the child would give at least two years to that work. He thought there should be a selection. Mr. Gray's motion was ideal, but the machinery was inadequate, and he thought it would fail. The ambitions of parents had to be considered. He (Mr. Hughes) was sometimes consulted by parents, and he had the greatest difficulty in advising them in regard to the aptitudes of their children. He proposed to move an amendment to the effect that the time specified should be not less than two years.

The Chairman said that members of the Conference would find on page 39, E.–1, a statement as to the length of time spent by pupils at secondary schools. The average time spent at a secondary school in New Zealand was over two years and a half. Three or four years ago it was 2·1, now it was 2·9 years. If they made some form of education compulsory after the children left the primary school the tendency would be to increase the time spent at the secondary school still further. It would in that case be some sound and sufficient reason that would induce parents to take their children away from the secondary schools. If that was so, were they in such cases going to exact the carrying-out of a bond with a penalty?

Mr. Hill thought that if the resolution were carried out, it would eventually be detrimental to secondary schools. They had to recollect that a large number of parents made great sacrifices in order that their children might receive as much secondary education as possible. That aspect of the question should be considered by the members of the Conference. He agreed that there should be a leaving-qualification, and that they should abolish the wretched competency certificate, which represented the standard of mediocrity. He thought the right to send a boy or girl with a proficiency certificate to a secondary school should be left in the hands of the parent, and that he or she should continue at the secondary school as long as the parents were willing to make the necessary sacrifice. Depend upon it, if the parents were fairly well off their children would attend the secondary school sufficiently long to obtain something beneficial for their future life's work.

Mr. Ritchie said he was very strongly in sympathy with Mr. Gray in his desire to open as widely as possible the doors of the secondary and technical schools. The sifting process which Mr. Gray referred to with regard to determining the fitness of the primary-school pupils to go to these institutions he thought might be extended over even a longer period than the three years proposed. Children developed very rapidly in the last years of their school life, and often a long probationary period was scarcely necessary. He felt some doubts as to the proposal to ask parents for some guarantee. A good many parents were casual sort of people in regard to determining what the final occupations of their children would be. That matter was determined largely after the pupil had been a year or two in the higher institution. The pupil then began to show more decidedly what was in him. There were opportunities already for keeping the parents in touch with what the child was doing at school. There were the reports which were sent out at the end of every

term, and those reports might be useful in guiding the parents as to the duration of the pupils' stay at the secondary school. He would like to see also more encouragement, if possible, given to the parent who was not anxious to shirk the responsibility of defraying some of the cost of the child's education. It was often those who were not well-off who were willing to make sacrifices and encourage their children to look upon their opportunities with some sense of responsibility.

Mr. La Trobe said he would support the first part of the resolution. He thought the saving of our present examination system was that it did not do the work in was intended to do; because, if it did, our education system would be so utterly at variance with the industrial demands of the country that it could not stand.

Mr. Gray pointed out that the resolution he had moved did not require a guarantee—only that the parents should indicate the time.

The Conference divided.—Ayes, 23; Noes, 18: majority for, 5.

Mr. Gray moved, That the education of every child should be continued at least up to the age of seventeen years.

Mr. Hill seconded the motion.

Motion, by leave, temporarily withdrawn.

Professor Haslam moved, That the pupil be not admitted to the secondary school unless the parent guarantee that the child shall stay at the secondary school for three years, and deposit the sum of £——, which shall be forfeited in case the guarantee is broken. He thought they were all agreed that if parents sent their children to a secondary school they should keep them there for a fair time; otherwise it was a bad investment for the State for the children to have free education for a few years, and then go away. He thought they were all agreed that the children should stay for a certain time—either two years and a half or three years. He thought three years himself. However, the headmasters of the secondary schools were likely to know better than he did about that. He was not so particular about there being a deposit so long as there was a guarantee or bond, which could be executed very simply without legal action.

Mr. Bevan-Brown seconded the motion.

Mr. Hill said he objected entirely to the proposal to require any parent to give a guarantee. If that were done it would mean excluding a very large proportion of the children who pass through the primary-school course.

Professor Thomas agreed with Professor Haslam that those desiring secondary education should stay a sufficient length of time to benefit by it; but what that time was varied.

Mr. Vernon opposed the motion. If they wanted a guarantee in respect of free pupils they should also require one in regard to paying pupils, because the Government was contributing towards the cost of the system.

Mr. Marshall moved the omission of all the words after the words "three years."

Professor Kirk said one might just as well ask for a guarantee from a tradesman that a pair of boots shall last for three years.

Professor Haslam thought that if parents gave a guarantee they would try to keep it, even without a deposit of a sum of money.

Mr. Howell said the existence of a guarantee in connection with one educational institution, at any rate, had worked very well.

Mr. Hughes thought that three years would deter many parents from giving a guarantee, and would thus prevent many deserving children from getting a secondary education. He thought two years would be better.

The amendment was agreed to, and the motion, as amended, was put, and negatived on the voices.

Infant-schools.

Miss Craig said that in the course of his remarks on the previous day Mr. George said that the infant-schools of New Zealand were the worst feature of our education system. On speaking to Mr. George privately she understood that he really meant that the school buildings and the staffing of the infant-schools were not satisfactory. It was admitted that the infant-schools—and, in fact, all the schools—were not perhaps all they should be. In order to get the most satisfactory results each class in an infant-school should have a room to itself. In her opinion the classes in the infant-schools should be smaller. The staffing should be more generous. They should have specially qualified teachers—perhaps the best teachers on the staff—to do this work. The foundation work was undoubtedly the most important, and if that foundation suffered it stood to reason that the whole of the primary-school course would suffer. Much had been said on the previous day about the teaching of English. Even that subject could be taught in the infant-schools, and it would very much help the primary-school teachers, and even the secondary-school teachers. Even in her babies' class the little ones were taught simple oral composition by being asked to describe things. Even in that way something was being done to help on the teaching of English. In the First Standard and in the Preparatory class she had told the children such stories as "Enoch Arden" and even "Ivanhoe," and had been surprised at the amount of interest that had been manifested by the children and the grasp they got of the subject. They did not claim that the infant-schools were perfect, but they compared favourably with other standards.

Miss Birss rose to support the remarks which Miss Craig had made. The Conference, or a large number of its members, had no idea of what the work of the infant-teacher was, or of the size of the classes. In many of the infant-rooms the teacher had a class of over a hundred, with an average of from eighty to ninety. And to help her in that work she had the services of an untrained pupil-teacher, and also a probationer in some cases for two hours a day. In the course of her work she had often felt that pupil-teachers should have been abolished long ago. The staffing of the infant-rooms was very inadequate, and in addition to that there were the disadvantages of inadequate school buildings. New infant-schools should be built on a proper plan. Some

of the new schools that were now being built consisted of three rooms; there was not one single class-room; and in each of the three rooms the attendance varied from 119 to 130. The teacher had no class-room to which she could take any class, and so the 120 or 130 children must remain in one room the whole time. It would be a good idea if the Education Department issued instructions to the architects in various parts of the Dominion to have the infant-schools built on the latest plans. In some schools the children sat on forms without backs to them for the period of four, five, and five and a half hours; and when a request was made that that should be remedied they were always told that it could not be done—that it would be too expensive. These were some of the disadvantages the infant-school teacher laboured under. The other members of the Conference would sympathize with her when she said that the infant-schoolrooms and the staffing were not what they ought to be. The present methods were the only ones the infant-school teachers could employ with the present buildings, rooms, and staff at their command.

Mr. GEORGE said he had been misunderstood in the remarks he made on the previous day. He recognised that many of the infant-school mistresses were doing heroic work. As far as he had seen their work, he wished to give them every credit. He hoped that one of the outcomes of the Conference would be that infant-schoolrooms would be built on better models, and that the defects that at present existed would be remedied.

The CHAIRMAN thought it would be just as well if he corrected a wrong impression that might get abroad. The views he held were based on the experience he gained two or three years ago when he visited Europe and the United States. People who compared the schools of other countries with those of New Zealand were very apt to take one or two show schools of those countries, look at the arrangements there, and assume that all the schools in those countries were similar; and then they compared them, not with our best schools, perhaps not always with our average schools, and they condemned our schools. There were a great many things we might learn from America. He would like to see our infant-schools like the best of the American schools. But our average infant-school was better than the average infant-school in America; and he had no hesitation in saying that our infant-schools were better than the average infant-schools in Great Britain. But our best schools were not equal to their best schools. It was a matter of money to some extent, and a matter of arrangement. What he would like to see was that our schools should be something like the schools in Rome. He referred specially to the Scuola Regina Elena, a description of which was given by him in the Education Department paper entitled, "Special Reports on Educational Subjects: No. 7—Schools and other Educational Institutions in Europe and America (Report of the Inspector-General's Visit to)."

Education up to Seventeen Years.

Mr. GRAY moved, That the education of every child should be continued up to the age of seventeen. His idea was that every child should remain under instruction till at least the age of seventeen years. If through force of circumstances a child had to leave the day-school and go to work, then that child should still have the opportunity of carrying on its instruction. The resolution was most general in its form. It simply meant that every child between the ages of three or five and seventeen should be given some kind of instruction.

Mr. HILL seconded the motion. His view of the matter was this: that pupils having obtained leaving-certificates should be required to attend continuation classes, in order that they might begin to specialize. In the ordinary school course the pupils were not able to obtain much in the way of specialization. The country required that some attention should be given to that aspect of school training. It seemed to him that they had not done sufficient yet in the case of these pupils, because they had not provided continuation classes for their benefit. He thought this subject opened out a very important economic question. Many of our boys and girls at the present time went out into the world without the slightest preparation, and simply became errand-boys and nurse-girls. He wanted to know whether that was the purpose of our primary-school training. The children he had referred to should attend continuation classes.

Mr. GOYEN said he could not go as far as Mr. Gray on this question, but he was prepared to go a long way. It seemed to him that they had now entered upon the consideration of one of the most important subjects to be brought before the Conference: he referred to the position of the pupils who left school at fourteen and who did not attend any school afterwards. "Three categories of children," said Mr. Goyen, "are to be provided for—(1) those who leave school at thirteen or fourteen; (2) those who leave school at fifteen or sixteen; (3) those who remain at school to eighteen or nineteen. The third are those who recruit the professional life of the country; the second, a much larger number, recruit the *élite* of the commercial and industrial workers; and the first recruit the workers on a lower plane. The primary school provides for the first category, and the secondary or the technical school for the second and third. Is this provision sufficient for purposes of civic and economic equipment? For the second and third, yes, if the schools are adequately staffed and equipped; for the first, no. It is certain that an education that terminates at thirteen or fourteen does not provide this equipment, and it is also certain that much of the money spent on education that terminates at fourteen yields a very inadequate return in the shape of increased national efficiency. At the most critical period of life, and just when their education is beginning to operate most efficiently, boys and girls pass from the discipline of the school to the streets, where they are left to themselves, and soon forget everything learnt at school except the mechanical parts of reading, writing, and arithmetic. How is this to be remedied? How is the nation to get an adequate return for the huge sum of money spent in elementary education? There is, I think, but one efficient remedy—namely, the establishment of continuation classes at which attendance shall be compulsory to the age of seventeen or eighteen. This is what the most efficiently educated nations of Europe have done, and what the School Boards of Scotland are now empowered to do by the new Education Act, which says, 'It shall be the duty of a School

Board to make suitable provision of continuation classes for the further instruction of young persons above the age of fourteen years with reference to the crafts and industries practised in the district, or to such crafts and industries as the School Boards may select, and also for their instruction in the English language and literature.' And again, 'It shall be lawful for a School Board from time to time to make by-laws requiring the attendance at continuation classes up to seventeen years (or such other age not exceeding seventeen years as may be specified by the by-laws) of young persons above the age of fourteen not otherwise receiving suitable instruction.' The Act not only makes the establishment of continuation classes compulsory, but also prescribes what shall be the course of instruction, and empowers School Boards to compel attendance. It is obvious that it would be cruel to force children to attend evening-classes after working seven or eight hours at their employment. How can we reconcile compulsory attendance at school with daily employment? By limiting the hours of work for all under seventeen, and compelling employers to grant facilities for attendance at the classes. To the nation this is a question of vital importance, and what is good for the nation is in the end good for the employers. With their sympathy and that of the trade-unions it would be easy to add enormously to the civic and industrial efficiency of the Dominion. It is obvious that the question of extended school life, like the question of protection, is bound up with our industrial system; and, just as we have made sacrifices to foster variety of employment and to make the nation self-contained, so we ought to make sacrifices to lift every class of worker to a higher plane of civic and industrial efficiency. The problem of making provision for an extended education of boys and girls between the end of the compulsory period and the age of seventeen or eighteen is, it must be admitted, a very difficult one, but one that ought to be faced and solved. The following words quoted from a Home paper are of interest in this connection: 'Our modern industrial arrangements too often present alluring prospects for the young for a year or two, but offer absolutely no future. Certain forms of industry are largely parasitic in character, and get more of the physical and mental capital of the young than they are entitled to. They absorb young employees for a year or two, and then cast them aside, and bring in another set in the same way to do the work. It is these parasitic industries that are in large measure responsible for recruiting the ranks of casual labour, and it is in the ranks of casual labour that the great mass of our unemployed are found. If something could be done to divert the young from these occupations it would strike at one, at least, of the many causes of unemployment. Probably no better way of doing so could be found than that provided for in the new measure (Scotland), whereby School Boards are empowered to set up employment bureaux for the purpose of collecting and distributing information as to employment open to children on leaving school, and the conditions of service and the ultimate prospects in each.'"

The CHAIRMAN would like to point out that in Switzerland there was one way of solving the question that was now before the Conference. First of all, in Switzerland there was a general law—federal law—which was binding on every canton. The canton must provide institutions to carry out the federal law. The federal law on this question was a local-option law. It provided that, where a majority of the population entitled to vote—meaning three-fifths—so decided, continuation or vocational education should be compulsory for three years after the conclusion of the primary-school course. More than nineteen-twentieths of the people had adopted that law. Fines might be imposed on the employers of the pupils and on the pupils themselves. In one part of Germany there was a similar law, but it was not a local-option law. It depended on the number of persons employed in a trade. In Germany it had been compulsory since 1907. It was permissive before that. There were three distinct methods—local option, compulsory, and voluntary, as in Halifax. The cases in which the voluntary method had succeeded were few and far-between. In Chicago there was a law compelling the education authority to establish classes if the masters' unions and the workers' unions combined for the purpose.

Mr. GEORGE moved, as an amendment, That before the word "That" the following words be inserted: "That the age of exemption be raised to fifteen years." It seemed to him that one of the first steps forward in educational matters was to raise the age-limit. At the present time a boy might leave the primary school at fourteen years of age unless he obtained an exemption certificate before that age. He thought it was undesirable, from a physique point of view, that a boy should commence work under fifteen years of age. After that age one began to deal with a very difficult problem. It was very nice in theory to say that every boy and girl must stay at school until they were seventeen; but one had to consider the economic conditions, and those who were not so well situated. He thought that if the Conference moved in the direction of his resolution that would be one step forward. There was a great deal to be said in favour of local option. He believed that the Scotch Act had worked exceedingly well. In his opinion, every one would agree that beyond fifteen, and at least up to seventeen—he would like to see it even higher—boys and girls should receive some instruction, although they might be earning their own living. The question then arose as to the nature of the education-work that should be taken up. He was strongly against evening-classes, and would like to see them abolished in the case of those who had been working all day. Boys and girls who had been working all day were physically unfit to attend evening-classes. If his amendment was not carried he would vote for Mr. Gray's motion.

Mr. BRAIK seconded the amendment. The difficulty would be to apply the change to rural districts, owing to the scattered population and the want of roads. The difficulties would be very great. He would support the amendment on this ground: that if they raised the age to fifteen they might reasonably expect boys and girls in country places to attend school till they were fifteen. He thought the Conference should affirm the principle that the compulsory age should be raised to fifteen. He would be very glad if some plan could be hit on under which military work, together with educational work, could be carried out, so that our young people would reach manhood as worthy soldiers and citizens.

Mr. WATKINS hoped that nothing would be done by the Conference to encourage evening-classes in place of day-classes.

The Conference divided on Mr. George's amendment.—Ayes, 28; Noes, 19: majority for, 9.—Amendment agreed to.

Mr. George moved, as a further amendment, That all the words after "fifteen years" be omitted, and the following be inserted: "and that beyond that age it is desirable that all boys and girls not receiving full-time instruction at secondary or other schools should attend continuation classes until they reach the age of seventeeen years."

Seconded by Mr. Braik, and carried.

The motion, as amended, was then put, and carried on the voices.

The Work of Secondary and Technical Schools.

The Chairman announced that the next subject for discussion was "The work of secondary and technical schools." He had already tried to define what was the work of technical and secondary schools. A very important part of secondary and technical work was now carried out in country districts. Some district high schools and one or two high schools were making a beginning, which he was very glad to see. He did not think there was any harm in naming at least one school that was doing very good work. The Stratford District High School had been very successful in that respect—in making the work of the secondary department vocational, and yet they were also giving a good deal of educational training in the mother-tongue and training in scientific method applied to the every-day life of the children of the district. The particular work of science they took there—the particular practical work they took up—was dairy-work, and associated with it was the growth of fodder. Milk-testing was carried on there. The cows were milked by the children, the milk being taken into the laboratory, and was there tested in every way, and the results were recorded. Samples of milk were also brought by the children from their fathers' farms, and those samples were tested also. He felt very keenly that science should be properly and really taught, as far as it could be taught, in every school. He was told of several instances where, from the evidence obtained from the school tests, farmers had dispensed with unprofitable cows and had replaced them with profitable cows. The work done at that school was extremely good. The work done in botany was distinctly good. It was part of the school course. They were not made farmers. It was not trade instruction. That would come at a later time. It ought to come at a later time. He believed that if strictly technical classes for farmers followed on that, those pupils would make a good set of farmers. A good part of the instruction in that school consisted of English and arithmetic and other subjects. He was not one of those who believed that because a thing was useful you could not make it educational. He believed that if a thing was useful it was easier to make it educational than otherwise. The strongest argument for teaching English was that it was making us good citizens, and he thought they could make that a strong argument for a preliminary agricultural instruction in our rural schools: not a substitute for it, but what would lead up to it. He wished to see our district country high schools doing something of the same sort in the future. He would ask Mr. Alexander, Director of Lincoln College, to address the Conference on the question of agricultural education.

Mr. Alexander said the question of agricultural education had occupied many minds in many countries, and apparently with very little success, because such education in many countries was very far from ideal—in fact, was very poor indeed. He had fairly definite views as to what agricultural education should be. Lincoln College was supposed to occupy the status of an agricultural college. They had many difficulties in their way. Arguing backwards, he would deal with what might be the form of agricultural education given in the primary schools. At the present time at Lincoln College they were handicapped in several ways. The first was that the students they got were not properly grounded in English. What he meant was this: that the great majority of the students were not able to put their views clearly on paper. If they were set a simple examination they were not able to convey their thoughts on paper in an intelligent manner. He did not know who was responsible for it. The second difficulty was that they had very little idea of mathematics, arithmetic, or simple calculations. He did not know whose fault it was. He could give instances of students with secondary-school certificates who were so deficient. There must be something wrong with our primary and secondary education when that was so. The next thing they had to complain of was that there seemed to be a want of thoroughness about the method of the new students in doing their work. Who was to blame for that he did not know—probably the boys' parents, not the teachers. If boys were taught method in their youth they were generally methodical all their days. He thought that the aim of agricultural education in primary schools should be to develop habits of observation. You could not specialize too early. He was very glad to hear the Chairman express his views so clearly in regard to the science of applied agriculture—that it could be useful and educative at the same time. He wished to outline the system of agricultural education that was being worked at the present time successfully. He did not wish to say anything further about ordinary education: he would leave that for the Education Department to settle. The present Conference did not seem to be able to settle it—they did not seem to be agreed as to who was to blame. He would outline a system of education that was supposed to lend itself to agriculture. In the primary and secondary schools they could not teach agriculture. In the first place they were not fitted to do it, and in the second place it could not be done. In some districts in England they had tried a system of teaching elementary horticulture—not simply theoretical teaching, but by means of a number of small plots of ground attached to the school. On those small plots they grew a few vegetables, flowers, &c., and they tried to encourage the children to make collections of weeds. Beyond that they did not try to go. They simply tried to interest the children by growing a few vegetables which they could eat afterwards. The plots were differently treated in order to show the children the results of different plant-food. He thought that was a thing we ought to do a little more of in this country. There was one thing that he noticed probably more than anything else when driving through some parts of this country for the first

time, and that was that very little attention was given to making the surroundings of the home attractive. He very rarely, if ever, saw any flowers growing round the home. If a child was taught to love flowers in the primary school he would carry that love within him through his life. If the children were encouraged—and they were encouraged in some schools—to make collections of weeds, they then got to know a good plant from a bad plant. Beyond that you could not go. He did not see why in a primary school such elementary teaching should not be given, and a part of a day taken once or twice a week to do the cultivation that was necessary. Labels might be put on each row of plants, and plots could be treated with different chemical manures, and the treatment could be indicated at the end of each row. In that way the children would gain a great deal of knowledge which would be useful to them afterwards, and they would also be interested in their surroundings. There was no mental trouble attached to such study. The child thus easily gained knowledge that would stick to him afterwards. He would not confine such teaching to rural districts. The children in the towns could be taught to have a love of plants. It was a good thing for the children to have healthy employment in the open air. With regard to the secondary schools, they went a little further, but they still continued the cultivation of the school plots, and made collections of weeds, &c., and studied the results of giving different manures to the plants. They were asked, in addition, to do some elementary science in the schoolroom in connection with agriculture. Some biology, chemistry, and physics they might also be asked to do. That was the programme that had been carried out. A special instructor who had taken a horticultural course was employed in connection with this instruction. It was his duty to go round and help the schoolmasters with the management of the plots in the hope that the schoolmasters would be fitted to impart the instruction in the course of a year or two. You had to go further if you wanted to give agricultural teaching. Then there were continuation and extension classes. They were not night-classes, but day-classes, taken also by special teachers after the boys had left school and before they came to manhood. The special instructor gave lectures in agriculture, and in science relating to agriculture. This instructor must be a qualified agricultural instructor—*i.e.*, one who has had a complete course of training in agricultural science. It was more applied work than purely scientific work. There was also seed-testing. Simple chemistry was taught, which must be purely theoretical. Seed-testing should be done in every extension school, and it was done in most cases. Then there was the surveying taught, which would be useful to the farmer. These classes went on from six to twelve weeks, for three days a week, and as a rule for four hours a day. The students could go back for a second or third year and take more advanced courses. The system had worked very satisfactorily indeed. The system he had outlined had been adopted, at any rate, in one part of Ireland. After such a course of instruction the practical work of the young men on farms became much more interesting to them than it would otherwise be. After the courses of instruction he had outlined there would, in our case, be the higher agricultural training and teaching given in the Lincoln Agricultural College. There was every facility at that College for pupils obtaining the higher branches of agricultural teaching and training. The system he had outlined would coincide with the views he held. Probably it would not coincide with the views of many persons in this country. He did not think they could teach agriculture in the secondary schools. You could not teach agriculture unless you had the practical work going on side by side with it, and until the students were fully matured—say, from seventeen to eighteen. For those two reasons he contended that neither in primary nor in secondary schools could you teach agriculture, nor could you prescribe text-books for agriculture in those schools.

The CHAIRMAN said he would like to ask Mr. Alexander one question. This matter had been a subject of conversation between them before. In our primary schools and in our secondary schools they had courses which Mr. Alexander did not call "agriculture." They were really nature-study, with some practical work leading up to agriculture—a preparation for it. Probably those present would agree entirely with the views Mr. Alexander had expressed as to the teaching of technical agriculture in any of these schools. What was called "agriculture" in our primary schools was really only a preparation for it. It was just what he had said should be taught; but still, for all that, they would want teachers trained for it—teachers who would teach it in such a way that it would be profitable educationally, and profitable from the point of view of those who were going to teach pupils in our rural schools. In other words, they wanted teachers in our ordinary rural schools—both primary and secondary—capable of handling nature-study; but they also wanted specialists of the kind that Mr. Alexander had indicated. His idea was this: Let those people have two or three years' as complete instruction as possible in an agricultural college, but let them have one year at least, in a training college, in actual training in the methods of teaching. He thought a good deal was gained by giving those who were going to teach nature-study some insight into the actual working of agriculture—as was done at the Agricultural College at Hawkesbury, N.S.W. Classes of teachers attended that College every year. It was also done in Canada. He would like to ask Mr. Alexander how he would propose to teach the ordinary teacher so as to make the instruction he gave such as would lead the pupil up to something more definite; and then, how would he train the specialist?

Mr. ALEXANDER said his idea was to give them a course in horticulture by having a horticultural school attached to the College. If they spent two years under those conditions they should be able to teach the horticulture required to be taught in the schools afterwards.

Overlapping of Commercial and Domestic Work.—Grants for Scholarships.

The CHAIRMAN asked for the opinion of the Conference on the following questions: "(1) The overlapping in case of commercial work and domestic work between the technical day-schools and the secondary schools; and (2) whether the time has not come to consider the question of competition for scholarships, and the further question of restricting the scholarship grant to children living in country districts."

Mr. HOLMES moved, That all junior national and Education Board scholarships be abolished; 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. This motion naturally followed on the resolution the Conference had already come to. In abolishing the proficiency certificate, and having a leaving-certificate, the Conference had practically decided that we should do away with examinations altogether, except in so far as the conferences between the Inspector and the headmaster were concerned. He thought the Department would also be happy in being released from this examination, because it must be an awful task for the Department to conduct the Junior Scholarship Examinations, considering the number of candidates they had to deal with and the number of papers that had to be got through. His idea in connection with this matter was this: that our policy should be to distribute whatever money was available in such a way as that the greatest good would be given to the greatest number. That was not the case now. The teachers at their institute meeting had also talked this matter over, and they had come to the conclusion that the time had come when scholarships should be abolished. The teachers were certainly of opinion that scholarships should not be continued, because it was simply, as it were, giving monetary value to brains, and they did not think that at that stage of a person's school life they should be putting £10 or £40 a year as the value of certain educational equipment. Scholarships were useful in the olden days when children had not the advantage of free places, and secondary schools were much fewer. £10,413 was expended in scholarships last year. He did not suggest giving full boarding-allowances, because he thought parents should be prepared to supplement the grant made by the Department in keeping the children when they were boarding away from home.

Mr. FLEMING seconded the motion. He might say, as far as the Wellington Education District was concerned, that when the free places were established he said to the Board that he thought the scholarship money should be given for the benefit of the country children. Seeing that the children had free places given to them, he thought that was quite sufficient in the way of scholarships for those who were living near any secondary school. He thoroughly agreed with the principle of the resolution. The details could be worked out afterwards. He thought Mr. Holmes wanted to lay down the general principle that the money should be restricted generally to country children. He heartily supported the teachers on this question.

Mr. STRACHAN thought that before this question was disposed of the Conference should consider the claims of town pupils in regard to the cost of books. A good many people in the towns had children with a fair amount of brains, but the parents had not an overplus of money, and the cost of the books was a considerable item. He thought that, at any rate to the extent of the cost of the books, the claims of the town pupils ought to be considered. He knew of some cases where the cost of the books was a turning-point in deciding whether the children should be allowed to go to the high school or not.

Professor THOMAS said there were two minor points that he thought were worth mentioning. A difficulty sometimes arose in the selection of a boardinghouse for a child who came in from the country with a scholarship. The parents were not always able to choose wisely, and sometimes the children were boarded in most undesirable localities. It might be better if the boarding-allowance were coupled with the condition of an approved household. Then there was the question of some allowance being made to town children to cover the cost of books. In the case of parents who were not well-off, some allowance might be made to assist in the purchase of books, or an allowance in the nature of partial maintenance.

The CHAIRMAN said, in regard to books, the amount required was very small, and an arrangement could be made to give assistance in certain really deserving cases. In the case of the bulk of parents, he did not see why they should not make some sacrifices. He thought the boarding-allowance should be a full allowance, because there were a good many expenses—such as clothes—connected with sending children to secondary schools. He thought they ought to authorize the authorities of secondary schools to make a rule compelling children from the country to board at certain licensed houses—preferably where there were teachers in charge.

Dr. ANDERSON wished to express his entire sympathy with Mr. Holmes's attitude on this question, and also his own personal concurrence with Mr. Hogben's view that as far as possible these things should not be competitive. However, the abolition of the competitive element was necessarily a financial matter. If Parliament was prepared to provide moneys sufficient for all who attained to a certain qualification, the competitive element could be abolished. If not, a certain amount of competition must prevail if there were more applicants than there was money to provide for them. There was another aspect of the question to which he would like to call the attention of the Conference. In regard to free places, what were they to do in the case of pupils from private schools? Mr. Holmes had shown that the carrying of his motion would relieve the Department of the work of examination for Junior National Scholarships, and concurrently with that for junior free places. He could not see how they could apply any principle of selection such as had been suggested to the pupils of private schools, who were as much entitled to higher secondary education as pupils attending the public primary schools.

Mr. PETRIE thought the Conference ought to very seriously consider what some of the motions they were adopting would involve. The present motion involved this: that every child who qualified for admission to a secondary school was going to have a boarding-allowance. That might mean the expenditure of a great deal of money. It might mean expending four or five times the present grant for National and Board Scholarships. He thought that before they were invited to pass a resolution of that kind they ought to have some information as to the financial burden the change would involve.

The CHAIRMAN said it was all worked out in his report three years ago.

Mr. PETRIE said he did not like to vote in the dark on a motion like that now before the Conference. While examinations had many objectionable features, still he thought they did a great

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 TROBE 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

the question of the training of the teachers. The system seemed to have grown up that the training of teachers was required for the primary schools, whereas the teachers of secondary schools were generally taken from the ranks of University students, without training. Thus there must be a lack of continuation of effort in the one direction, and he thought there must be consequently a loss of ultimate efficiency. If the primary-school teacher could realise what was required in the secondary school and lead up to it, and if the secondary-school teacher kept thoroughly in touch with the primary school, he thought they would come nearer success. He thought the question of inspection bore very vitally on this point. They had heard much of the overlapping of teaching, nothing of the overlapping of inspection. He knew of no more practical way of bringing about a bond between the two classes of schools than by having the same inspectors for the two grades of schools.

Mr. MARSHALL seconded the motion. It had always been his opinion that the same inspectors should supervise the work of both. The teachers in the secondary schools should be trained teachers, and they should be graduates in addition.

The CHAIRMAN said the question of training would come up in connection with the training colleges. He thought that our system was better co-ordinated than that in operation in other parts of the world. Still, he thought the different parts were not so well correlated as they might be. He thought the present Conference would do a good deal to bring about correlation by an exchange of views.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. HILL moved, That in the award of junior free places tenable at schools of other than purely secondary type credit should be given for proficiency in subjects of manual instruction and domestic science. The members of the Conference were all aware of the fact that the manual and technical regulations were now well understood in the various schools, and they were adopted in a large measure in the instruction of the children. Those subjects took up a fair portion of the school time—on the average two hours a week. It seemed to him only right and just that they should be considered as part of the school course, and in the examinations be treated as subjects for marks when estimating the attainments of the children for a proficiency certificate or for a free place.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that if Mr. Hill moved this motion in a general way, the carrying-out of it could be discussed at the Inspectors' Conference.

Mr. HILL.—That is what I wish to do.

Mr. HOWELL seconded the motion.

The CHAIRMAN said he would undertake to see that the subject was brought up at the Inspectors' Conference.

Motion agreed to.

Military Drill.

Mr. HOWELL moved, That, in reference to the Defence Act, the Minister of Defence be asked to make such arrangements for the military drills of students attending evening-classes recognized by the Minister of Education as will not interfere with their regular instruction.

Mr. BRAIK seconded the motion.

Mr. MARSHALL said he was strongly in favour of such a motion.

Motion agreed to.

Physical Exercises and Military Drill.

Mr. FIRTH moved, That this Conference suggest to the Minister of Defence that in the case of boys under fourteen gymnastics may be substituted for military drill. There were many boys of twelve who were quite unfitted for military drill with the rifle. He was convinced that from a military point of view it would be a great advantage if boys received two years of gymnastic training—not fancy tricks, &c., but such work as Swedish drill and running exercises. The senior military training would be greatly improved by such preliminary training. He used the word "may" because in some cases there might not be the facilities for gymnastic training.

Mr. FLEMING seconded the motion. The only point about it might be that the term "gymnastics" might be misunderstood.

The CHAIRMAN.—You mean co-ordinated physical exercises?

Mr. FIRTH.—Yes.

On the suggestion of the Chairman the word "gymnastics" in the original motion was struck out, and the words "systematic physical exercises" were inserted in lieu thereof.

Motion agreed to.

Secondary Schools and University Colleges.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the next subject for consideration was, "The relation of secondary and technical schools to one another and to the University colleges." He did not know whether all the members of the Conference knew what the decision of the University Senate was with regard to matriculation—as it would be after the year 1910. There was a definition now of a matriculation standard. There was no definition before. The definition of a matriculation standard now was that it was to be such as should be reasonably represented by four years' work at a secondary school. It did not imply that the student had been for four years at a secondary school, but that the degree of attainment shown should be such as might reasonably be expected from pupils who had gone through a course for four years at a secondary school. The Senate set its face against any idea that two years at a secondary school, or work that could be done in two years at a secondary school, was sufficient to prepare a student for a university.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN moved, That this Conference recommends to the University Senate that the present aggregate maximum of marks for Junior University Scholarships be reduced so as to permit

candidates taking only four subjects to attain the possible maximum. He might say shortly that the object of this motion was to lessen the overpressure which he thought existed on boys and girls who were competing for Junior University Scholarships. A resolution to that effect was passed at the last Secondary Schools Conference.

Miss MARCHANT said this was a matter she had always had very much at heart, and she had great pleasure therefore in seconding the resolution.

Mr. STRACHAN was afraid that if four subjects only were accepted it would mean that Latin would be chosen practically in every case, and that science would be altogether neglected. In preference to that he would rather see a lower grade of examination all round, and retain the wider programme.

Professor GILRAY said the B.A. Examination in English was much stiffer than the Scholarship Examination.

Professor THOMAS hoped the Conference would not pass the motion. It appeared to him that it would be altogether a retrograte step. He feared that the object of the motion was that science should be left out. A wish had been expressed that special assistance should be given to those who were strong in languages. But where was the assistance or encouragement given to those who were specially strong in science? There was no assistance. It was discredited. The majority of the members of the Senate had no sympathy with science and its aims. They belonged to the old literary school. In saying that he hoped nobody thought he was in any way antagonistic to literary culture. He would be very sorry indeed to see literary culture excluded even from the science degrees of the University. A branch of study so important as science in our modern life should not be cold-shouldered, neglected, or discredited in our secondary schools, and thereby also in the University. Since the so-called reform of the Senate there had been a distinct retrogression in the study of science in New Zealand. He trusted that the motion would not be carried. There was another point: Could you remove the strain of overcompetition in examinations by diminishing the number of subjects? No; the strain would be as great with four subjects, because the competition would be greater.

Mr. HUGHES, as a primary-school teacher, would like to say this: that, while he agreed that undue pressure was to be deprecated, still a wide training was the foundation of all university culture. He thought in this case they would possibly be taking a retrograde step if they narrowed the curriculum for our secondary schools.

Mr. FLEMING sympathized with the desire to remove the strain of the examination for the Junior University Scholarships, but he thought the majority of the Conference would agree with Professor Thomas in regard to the teaching of science.

Mr. FIRTH thought that if the number of subjects was lessened it would give the students more time to "browse" on their subjects. Junior University Scholarship students now had no time to read anything outside what they wanted for their examination. If the number of subjects was lessened the result of the work would be better, and certainly the harmful results would not be so great as under the present system.

Mr. GRAY moved, as an amendment, to omit all the words after "That," with a view to insert the following: "it be a recommendation to the Senate that the Junior University Scholarships be awarded on the results of the Matriculation Examination."

Mr. GOYEN seconded the amendment.

Miss MCLEAN did not think that reducing the number of subjects would reduce the overpressure as long as the system of competitive examinations existed.

Mr. HOWELL thought that if they reduced the number of subjects from five to four they would not diminish the strain to any appreciable extent.

Mr. HILL said he never could understand why more marks should be given for Latin than for English, or why less marks should be given for science than for mathematics. The present system of allotting marks was grossly unjust to those students who had a bias for science.

Professor KIRK agreed with those speakers who thought that the main object of the motion, to lessen the strain, would not be reached by passing the motion. He agreed with what Professor Thomas had said in regard to science. It seemed to him, however, that the amendment did not go quite far enough. It ought to be made clear what subjects, how many subjects, and what differential weight, if any, should be attached to particular subjects.

Mr. VERNON intended to vote against the motion, because he did not think it would remove the strain.

Professor HASLAM thought it would be better to preserve the Junior Scholarship Examination at all events for some time, until they got a superior Matriculation Examination. He was in sympathy with the motion. He failed entirely to see the force of the arguments of those who said that overpressure would not be diminished.

Miss MARCHANT thought that Professor Thomas was labouring under a mistake in saying that science would be cut out. Perhaps there might be an equality of marks arranged for, but that was for the Senate to say.

Professor WHITE thought that to reduce the number of subjects of instruction in any given examination would be, to some extent at least, to reduce the amount of strain. It was not the number of subjects, but it was the sphere of work covered by a particular subject that had to be considered. He quite admitted that it was possible to have only three subjects, and at the same time so enlarge the sphere of work in each that the strain would be the same; but he did not suppose that Mr. Bevan-Brown anticipated that there was to be a material increase of work in the four subjects.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN.—Certainly not.

Professor WHITE said he assumed that from the beginning; and the assumption was, he thought, in favour of reducing the mental strain if they carried the motion. He did not think the mover of the motion intended that the present system of marking should be continued. Ob-

viously if there was to be a reduction of subjects there would be a reallocation of marks for each subject. The significant thing was, what relative marks were you going to give to the subjects? He trusted the Conference would carry the motion. He felt sure the mover of the resolution was as anxious as Professor Thomas that science should have a fair share in the educational system of the country.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN could not help thinking that Professor Thomas had, to use a homely phrase, drawn a red herring across the scent in talking about the claims of natural science. What had that to do with the question of whether candidates should take four or five subjects? It could only be on the assumption that a student would omit science; and they knew perfectly well that would not be the result. Under the present marking, unless a boy took science he was heavily handicapped. The majority of members of the Senate rather encouraged than disparaged science. He knew that a majority of masters of the secondary schools agreed with him that overstrain undoubtedly did exist in the higher classes of the secondary schools. He hoped the Conference would give sympathetic consideration to the motion, which he conceived to be of very great importance.

The Conference divided on the amendment.—Ayes, 9; Noes, 34: majority against, 25.—Amendment negatived.

The Conference divided on Mr. Bevan-Brown's motion.—Ayes, 22; Noes, 21: majority for, 1.—Motion agreed to.

University Examinations.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN moved, That this Conference suggests to the University Senate that moderators be appointed to supervise the question-papers set in the University examinations. There should be more care taken in keeping the standard of examination at a reasonably uniform level, and that could be done by the appointment of experienced men to supervise the question-papers.

Professor KIRK seconded the motion. He said there were not only serious blemishes in the standard, but there were other blemishes that a moderator would look to.

Professor HASLAM desired to see the principle extended to University degree examinations.

Professor THOMAS said what was complained of was the change in examiners and the total change in the style of the paper. The best method of dealing with the difficulty would be to have two examiners, who would confer. It was very difficult to interfere with the examiner's right to settle the examination himself. He must be left to fix the standard, but continuity of standard ought to be maintained.

Motion agreed to.

University Pass Examinations.

Professor KIRK moved, That in the opinion of the Conference the time has come when the University should conduct at least its pass examinations within Australasia, and largely by help of the professors of its own colleges. People outside New Zealand knew nothing and cared nothing as to who our examiners were. The present system was archaic and inconvenient. In the early days it had much to commend it. A long interval elapsed between the examination and the announcement of the results. During that time—from November till the end of March—little solid work was done by the average student owing to the uncertainty. In the case of written examinations conducted at a distance, the examiners could take no account of the students' originality of mind. The time had arrived when these drawbacks could be avoided. The present system tended to lower the professoriate to the position of coaches. Proper recognition could not be given to the better class of work that was done by the students. The existing system of examination led to discounting originality, and tended to demoralize the university system.

Mr. FLEMING seconded the motion.

Professor GILRAY said that this subject was discussed at the last meeting of the University Senate, and that a motion in favour of the retention of the Home examiners was carried by a large majority. Theoretically a good deal could be said for examining pass students in New Zealand, but it was very important to get first-class Home examiners; and in order to get them they required to be well paid. If only scholarship and honours work was given to the Home examiners the remuneration would be so small that it would not be possible, he thought, to get first-class men to act. As things are at present, the New Zealand University was able to command the services of the best examiners in the various departments of study to be found in Great Britain. It was sufficient to mention, among the dead, the names of such great men as Routh and Edward Caird, the late Master of Balliol. He was afraid we could not get the same class of examiners if the Senate adopted the suggestion in this motion. It should not be forgotten that at present the New Zealand professors can, in the annual examinations for terms, fail any candidates they consider unfit to sit for B.A. or B.Sc. He thought the Edinburgh system, where it was practicable, was really the best. In Edinburgh University the professor sets half the questions, and the external examiner sets the other half. The external examiner then reads the papers, but before announcing the results he confers with the professor. The object of this arrangement is to give the professor an opportunity of protecting such candidates as, while not doing themselves full justice in the final examination, had yet done consistently good work during the session. This Professor Gilray believed to be the ideal system. Under the conditions at present existing in New Zealand, and in view of the competition of the affiliated colleges, he was personally in favour of the retention of the Home examiners, and would therefore vote against the motion.

In reply to a question, the CHAIRMAN said the practice differed very widely in different parts of the world. It differed even amongst the Home universities.

Professor THOMAS said it appeared to him that the chief injury done by the present system of examiners was that it degraded the University colleges here into mere institutions for cramming. We did not know whether the examiners selected in Great Britain would turn out to be good examiners or not, and very often it led to serious disappointments. The Edinburgh system was a better one, but he did not think there was much chance of getting that ideal system quickly.

Professor HASLAM said that under the present system considerable value was attached to New Zealand degrees in educational centres in England. He thought that was a thing worth preserving. There was a great deal of difference between the value attached to our degrees and those of other colonial universities which conducted their own examinations. Educational authorities at Home said they knew where they were in the case of our degrees. His experience did not agree with that of Professor Kirk in regard to students not going on with their work whilst awaiting the results of the examinations. He was opposed to the notion that the University professors here were very much like "coaches." He had never acted as such, and never would.

Mr. WATKINS thought that if the change suggested in the motion were carried out there would be danger of our degrees falling in value.

Professor WHITE must say that he had not yet been quite able to see the reasons for the change. The objections that had been raised to the present system applied to almost any system of examination, and applied to almost any body of examiners to a greater or less degree. They were of a trivial nature, it seemed to him, and were not quite significant enough to weigh very much with the Conference. He had often heard it said that the change should be made in order that the examiner might know something of the personality of the examinee. He did not know what that meant. To know something of the personality of an examinee in the case of a written examination did not seem to him to count for very much. The examiner judged by results or by the papers set. Were the New Zealand professors who advocated the change advocating it on behalf of the students who passed or ought to pass, or on behalf of those who failed and who ought not to fail? It was not at all clear to him where this vital question of originality entered in a matter of a written examination. He could not see very well how it was to be estimated. Then, again, it had been urged that the teacher was always the best examiner. That was one of those statements, it seemed to him, of too general a character to attach very much importance to. It might be true in an abstract kind of way, but an examination was a very different kind of thing from teaching. He was to some extent disposed to think that there ought to be two sets of persons concerned in every examination. He thought the teacher alone was not to be trusted in this matter—he meant so far as results were concerned. It would not be a wise thing to give all teachers or professors the power of passing students through. It had been suggested that an examiner should be appointed with the teacher as a kind of compromise. It seemed to him that under the present system they practically got that. He would rather rely on the judgment of two independent examiners than on the teacher and an examiner. If a teacher said, "Unquestionably I think this student ought to pass," it could easily be seen that the examiner might to some extent be influenced contrary to his own judgment. He would like to know the object of the proposed change. Was it to raise the standard of the degree examinations in New Zealand? He presumed it was not meant to lower the standard. It would be just as well for us to take a less optimistic view of our work, and be prepared to pass on what we did to men of world-wide authority and reputation, and let them appraise our University degrees, and not ourselves. He was inclined to think that it would be sounder policy to let well alone for some time to come.

Dr. ANDERSON thought that New Zealand had reached a time when it might stand on its own dignity and say, "We do the best we can within the limits of our University," and trust to the public outside the Dominion to recognize that we were doing good work. He did not see why a general practice should not be followed of allowing the professors of the University colleges to set the papers in association, each of the professors so engaged having, say, two others from different centres associated with him in the award. That would meet the difficulty that might be suggested of one professor unduly favouring a candidate, and it would bring about a closer association with the teaching than existed at the present time. He was surprised to hear Professor White give utterance to the opinion that teaching and examination should be entirely dissociated. He thought it must be recognized that the closer they brought the two together the better it would be for the University. He had much pleasure therefore in supporting Professor Kirk's motion.

Mr. BRAIK moved, as an amendment, to omit all the words after the word "That," with the view of inserting the following: "it be a recommendation to the Senate of the University of New Zealand to arrange that all pass degrees in arts and science be conferred on the basis of joint reports of the Home examiners and the professors of the colleges from which the students come." It seemed to him almost outrageous that the men who knew the work of the students through and through should have no voice in saying whether their students were to be awarded a degree. As a compromise, he would like to see his resolution adopted.

Mr. GRAY seconded the amendment.

Professor HASLAM pointed out that the annual college examination weeded out from the candidates coming up for the degree such students as the professors thought were not worthy to pass. Those who went forward had practically the *imprimatur* of their colleges that they were fit to pass for a degree.

Professor GILRAY said the Professors here already had the power of stopping students going forward who they thought ought not to do so.

Mr. STRACHAN traversed at some length the arguments put forward by Professor Kirk. If the idea embodied in the original motion were affirmed it would tend to permit a single professor to fix his own programme irrespective of what the University thought right. The value of the degree must depend on the standing of the men who granted it. The examiners at Home were men who were known in all corners of the earth where their subjects were taught. It had been said that there were other degrees granted in New Zealand—namely, the LL.B. and the medical degrees. Now, it happened that in connection with the former each country claimed the right to see that before men practised in law they must prove that they came up to that country's standards. And every one knew that our local medical graduates were not satisfied until they had journeyed Home and had some Home experience, and possibly gained some Home degree. Our present examiners were men who had not only passed their examinations with high honour, but, what was even more

important, they had been conspicuously successful in the larger work of their after-life. It was true that our University staffs contained some men of special merit, and that our University had produced some graduates whose worth was recognized throughout the world; but its degrees would not have their present standing until such men were not only produced by our University, but were able to be retained by it, so that the eyes of the world should be turned on our University, and its standards should be known.

Mr. FLEMING recognized the great difficulty in carrying out the resolution; but if the Conference could pass a general recommendation to the Senate to consider the question fully, he thought the Conference would have done some good.

Mr. WATKINS felt convinced that our colonial degree would lose some of its value in the eyes of the educational world if the suggested step were taken. It would come to be looked upon as a little village decoration. It would be far better to leave the matter in the hands of the men of eminence at Home who acted as examiners. He did not think that any good would be done by passing the amendment.

Professor KIRK would like to see his motion carried, but on the present occasion it would probably be well to accept the compromise offered by the amendment. He therefore asked leave to withdraw the motion in favour of the amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Dr. ANDERSON said he would vote for the motion as amended, because it was a step in the right direction, but he must express his regret that Professor Kirk had withdrawn his original resolution.

Mr. BRAIK'S amendment was then put as a substantive motion, and was carried on the voices.

University Examination Syllabuses.

Professor KIRK moved, That in the opinion of this Conference the constitution of the University should be so modified as to leave the framing of examination syllabuses largely to the Professorial Boards or faculties in conference.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN seconded the motion.

Motion agreed to.

Matriculation Standard.

Professor KIRK moved, That this Conference views with approval the raising of the matriculation standard as a step towards preventing the overlapping that at present exists in the work of the University and the secondary schools; and it trusts that the Senate will, in accordance with present-day views, so deal with the requirements for a pass degree as to provide for the choice by students of groups of cognate subjects, and for the doing in those subjects of more advanced work than is at present required for a pass, although fewer subjects may be chosen, the elementary general information that every graduate should have being vouched for by the modified matriculation standard examination.

Mr. BRAIK seconded the motion.

It was agreed to divide the resolution; and the first part, down to the words "secondary schools," was agreed to on the voices.

Professor KIRK then moved the second part of the resolution.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN seconded the motion.

Mr. STRACHAN said he was very much inclined to support the motion. He thought it was a step in the right direction.

Professor GILRAY was afraid, if the motion were adopted, students would not take such subjects as Latin and mathematics. He would be very sorry to see Latin made an optional subject for a B.A. degree.

Professor WHITE was not quite clear what the practical effect of carrying the resolution would be. The resolution did not seem to bear on the face of it what it really meant.

Dr. ANDERSON would congratulate Professor Kirk on his wisdom and sense of expediency if he withdrew this resolution. He took it for granted that the motion meant that a University student, if the system were adopted, would devote himself wholly to specializing a subject or groups of subjects. He was not prepared to go as far as that.

Professor THOMAS thought the Conference ought not to be asked to pass such a resolution until they knew what the groups of subjects were to be like.

Professor HASLAM thought more details were required before the Conference should be asked to pass such a resolution. He would vote against the motion.

Mr. HILL rather liked the idea put forward in the motion. He thought it was a step in the right direction.

Mr. GRAY hoped that Professor Kirk would not withdraw the motion. He was satisfied that the time would come when they would have a unanimous Conference on the subject.

The Conference divided. Ayes, 8; Noes, 29: majority against, 21.—Motion negatived.

Technical Day-schools and Secondary Schools.

The CHAIRMAN said the next question for consideration was, "The overlapping in case of commercial work and domestic work between the technical day-schools and the secondary schools."

Mr. HOWELL thought it desirable in discussing this question that they should understand clearly what was meant by "secondary education" and by "that kind of education which was taken in the day technical schools." He proposed to call the latter "vocational education." It was perhaps not altogether a satisfactory term, but it would serve his purpose. He did not think the education given in a secondary school should have a direct bearing upon any particular vocation, but that its aim in the case of boys should be to turn out a gentleman in the broadest sense of the term—a man fitted by wide and sound training to meet any of the ordinary demands of life; and to do this it must embrace those various branches of study which were generally recog-

nized by educationists as desirable. Great attention should be paid to the study of the mother-tongue and its literature; but the boy should also have some acquaintance with at least one language other than his own. There should be also such a development of the hand as would make him "handy"—a qualification of great value in most pursuits. He should also have a thorough grounding in the elements of mathematics, and a sound training in scientific methods, such as was given by a school study of science. There had been established in our chief centres, in connection with the University colleges, a department of commerce, and he held very strongly that those who went through a secondary school with a view to taking up work in the commercial world should be encouraged in every way to go on to the University, and this not merely in order to take a University degree, but to come under the influence of University life. He was aware that University life in New Zealand was at present by no means what it should be be, but still there was an *esprit de corps* in our University colleges, and there were influences at work that were of great value to young men and women. In the case of girls, he regretted very much that in secondary schools, where the highest education available for girls was given, such subjects as shorthand and typewriting should be taken, and that such subjects as music, and art, and gymnastics in its widest sense should be to a large extent, if not altogether, neglected. With regard to the vocational schools and the work they were doing, the first thing that had to be borne in mind was that they were primarily short-course schools—that the boys and girls who went to those schools did not remain on an average more than two years. Too many left after the first year, and few remained till the third year. It must also be borne in mind that when the pupils left school, for the most part they did so in order to become wage-earners. In arranging a curriculum for these it was therefore necessary to take into account the occupation they would follow. Those who took up the commercial course in these vocational schools went there to train for work in offices. He did not say that it was desirable that a boy or girl should go into an office at the age of fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen, but there was a demand for boys and girls in offices, and it was a legitimate demand. Therefore he held that it was our business to do what we could to provide the best employees it was possible to do in the short time at the disposal of the school. He admitted that the course of instruction mapped out by the Chairman was an admirable one, and if girls and boys who were preparing to enter commercial life would take up that course and remain in the school for three or four years, and then be willing to spend another year in special training, they would be well equipped as shorthand-typists or clerks. He himself would prefer a clerk who had matriculated or obtained a leaving-certificate from a secondary school, and who had afterwards gone in for such special training in shorthand and typewriting as was necessary to make an expert shorthand-typist. He felt, however, that under the circumstances the day technical schools were providing a commercial course which was demanded not only by the pupils themselves, but also by the community; and that course was as sound as the circumstances would permit. With regard to the domestic-science course in the day technical schools and in the secondary schools, he thought there should be a distinct difference made. In the secondary schools the course should extend over not less than three years—in his opinion it was desirable the course should be for not less than four years—and should be far wider in its scope than was possible in the short courses provided by day technical schools.

Mr. M. H. Browne agreed with a good deal Mr. Howell had said. For a pupil who had qualified for a junior free place and who did not immediately propose to take up employment two doors were open—the door of the secondary school and the door of the technical day-school. He thought it would be better, instead of having these two doors, to have one wider door—a door which would give entrance to what might be described as a combined secondary school and technical day-school. A good deal had been said as to the age at which it was possible to decide what career a boy or a girl was best fitted for. Personally, he had his doubts whether that could be satisfactorily determined in all cases during the primary-school course. He thought that no definite decision as to whether a pupil's course should be largely non-vocational or largely vocational should be attempted until after the pupil had entered on a course of secondary instruction. What was wanted, he thought, was for the secondary school to provide more opportunities for training of a vocational character than was at present the case. If the high schools and the technical day-schools were under the same control, something in this direction could no doubt be achieved. He recognized that there were practical difficulties in the way; but, given the combined school he had referred to, he thought it would be time enough when he entered on a senior free place for a pupil to make up his mind whether his training should be non-vocational or vocational. It hardly seemed at present that our secondary-school system could be regarded as universal in the sense that the primary system was universal—universal in that it taught all sorts of persons for all sorts of callings and in all sorts of subjects. He did not think it would be so until we had schools of the type he had outlined. He did not think that any one who knew anything of the technical day-schools would deny that they had done excellent work. If the secondary schools were prepared to take up work on similar lines, well and good. If they were not, then he thought the technical day-schools had a place in the scheme of education in New Zealand.

Mr. La Trobe said that Mr. M. H. Browne had indicated the establishment of a sort of combined institution, taking both the ordinary secondary and also technical school work. They would have to consider the establishment of an institution which would be capable of giving courses as elastic as possible, including all sorts of combinations of subjects for all sorts of professions or callings of the future worker, and, in addition, to that, they would have to arrange the courses so that they would be capable of compression into various definite terms of years—one, two, three, or four years; and they had also to bear in mind those who might wish to take a longer course. That institution would be a very considerable one, he imagined, in any particular town. It must also be an institution easily got at by the students. Although, on the face of it, it appeared that the scheme if carried out completely would meet all the needs of educational life in this country, still, if they examined it a little more closely, he thought they would find the necessity for some-

thing more than that in the educational system of the country. Carried out on right lines, the institution would educate every youth for whom education was mainly a means of entering a profession or trade, and it would give him that side of his training which he could not get in the practice of his trade or profession. He would also have to some extent contact with a portion of scholastic work, and a love of learning could be instilled into him to a certain degree; he would have contact with the latest science and art in the particular profession he intended to take up.

Mr. BEVAN-BROWN thought that in the smaller centres such a composite institution as had been referred to might find a place, but he was of opinion that in the larger towns, where the expense could be met, differentiation of schools was needed. He was not in favour of huge educational factories, so to speak, with various departments of the most diverse character; in such institutions there could be no corporate life.

Mr. HILL regretted exceedingly that this subject had been deferred to so late a period of the Conference. It seemed to him perhaps the most important subject they had to discuss—the relationship that ought to exist between the primary and secondary schools and the technical schools. They all understood—at least, those connected with primary-school work did—that we had what was called a scheme of primary education. Every teacher knew what that meant. A teacher was aware of the work that had to be done, and the course that had to be pursued in passing from standard to standard. During the last twenty years he had taken some interest in the subject of the relationship that should exist between the primary schools and the secondary schools, and he had inquired now and again into the work that the secondary schools attempted to do. It was said that we had a secondary-education system. If any one were to ask him at the present time what the system was he could not tell him. They had not a system under the same kind of organizing influences and direction as existed in the case of the primary schools. Twenty-five of the high schools had each a system of its own, and it was time these were brought into line. If they had had a secondary-school system, he maintained they would not have had the difficulties they had had in relation to the children who passed the primary schools obtaining secondary education. It seemed to him that they ought to try to determine what was the work that should be done in the secondary schools by pupils who passed through the primary schools, and also the work that should be done in the technical schools.

Mr. HOGBEN (speaking from the floor of the chamber) said he had left the chair in order that, without taking undue advantage of his position as Chairman, he might reply to some of the points raised by Mr. Howell. It had been recognized by many people for some time past that this question of departmental schools—he thought that was a happier term than vocational schools, because the vocational schools, he took it, were still further specialized—it had been felt that this question of departmental schools was an extremely difficult one. We could not solve it for many years to come as it might be solved in countries with a large and close population. Unless they were to have a very much more extensive system of education than they had now, they must have institutions with several functions. If they were to separate them, it could only be done at present in the four large centres. During his recent visit to Europe and America he had spent a great deal of time in making inquiries as to the relations between the departmental schools, special kinds of secondary schools, and the ordinary or older type of secondary school. The results of his investigations were given in an Education Department paper entitled "Schools and other Educational Institutions in Europe and America (Report of the Inspector-General's Visit to)." Mr. Hogben then outlined the systems adopted in some other countries, as fully set forth in his report.

University and Training Colleges.

The question, "The work of the University and the University colleges, and of the training colleges in relation thereto," was then further considered.

Professor KIRK moved, That, in order to prevent overlapping of work and to secure the highest efficiency, it is desirable that in each training college no teaching should be given in subjects in which lectures are given in the University college of the district. He admitted that at present it was necessary to take into the training colleges students who could not always benefit from all the lectures of the University college; but, from what he had seen, the training-college students were every year improving, and they might look forward to the time very soon when all these students would reach the matriculation standard—even the improved matriculation standard. If the time and money spent at training colleges on the work referred to in his resolution could be expended in the University colleges, it would certainly, it seemed to him, be to the advantage of the students.

Mr. GRAY seconded the motion. If the staff of the University colleges were sufficiently strong, much better work could be done in certain subjects than could possibly be done in the training colleges with the somewhat limited equipment of the training colleges.

Mr. MILNES said he quite agreed with the principle underlying Professor Kirk's motion.

Mr. COUSINS moved as an amendment, That, in order to prevent overlapping in the work and to secure higher efficiency, in each training college no teaching should be given which is covered by the lectures in the University college of the district.

Mr. MORTON seconded the amendment.

Mr. HILL moved, That the question relating to training colleges be referred to the Training College Conference.

Mr. BALLANTYNE seconded this amendment.

Mr. Hill's amendment agreed to.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Chairman, the Secretary, and the Press.

Mr. FLEMING moved, That the Conference conveys its thanks to the Minister of Education (the Hon. G. Fowlds) for calling this Conference together, and requests him to consider the desirability of calling such general conferences periodically.

Mr. WATKINS seconded the motion.

Motion agreed to.

CONFERENCE OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS (INCLUDING PRINCIPALS OF TRAINING COLLEGES),

15TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

LETTER OF INVITATION.

SIR,— Education Department, Wellington, 5th January, 1910.

I have the honour, by direction of the Minister of Education, to invite you to attend the ensuing Conference of Inspectors of Schools, which is convened to meet in Wellington on Tuesday, the 15th February proximo, at 10 a.m.

One of the chief matters, it is understood, for the deliberations of the Conference will be the question of the rearrangement and adjustment of the syllabus of instruction in public schools, held over for further consideration from the Conference of 1907. Any proposals for amendment in this matter of which you desire to give timely notice, and any suggestions you have to make for additional subjects of discussion and notices of motion thereon, I shall be glad to receive at your earliest convenience for embodiment in the agenda paper.

Of the precise place of meeting in Wellington you will be informed later. For the Conference three days have been provisionally allotted.

I have, &c.,
G. HOGBEN,
Inspector-General of Schools.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

THE Conference met in the Legislative Council Chamber at 10 a.m.

Present: Mr. G. Hogben, M.A., Inspector-General of Schools (Chairman); Dr. W. J. Anderson, M.A., Assistant Inspector-General of Schools; Messrs. T. H. Gill, M.A., LL.B., Inspector of Secondary Schools; W. E. Spencer, M.A., M.Sc., Inspector of Secondary Schools; M. H. Browne, Inspector of Technical Schools; E. C. Isaac, Inspector of Technical Schools; W. W. Bird, M.A., Inspector of Native Schools; J. Porteous, M.A., Inspector of Native Schools: Inspectors—Auckland—Messrs. D. Petrie, M.A., J. Grierson, C. W. Garrard, B.A., W. A. Burnside, B.A., J. T. G. Cox, G. H. Plummer, LL.B., R. D. Stewart; Taranaki—Messrs. W. A. Ballantyne, B.A., and R. G. Whetter, M.A.; Wanganui—Messrs. T. B. Strong, M.A., B.Sc., G. D. Braik, M.A., and J. Milne, M.A.; Wellington—Messrs. T. R. Fleming, M.A., LL.B., F. H. Bakewell, M.A., and J. S. Tennant, M.A., B.Sc.; Hawke's Bay—Messrs. H. Hill, B.A., and J. A. Smith, B.A.; Marlborough—Mr. D. A. Strachan, M.A.; Nelson—Messrs. G. A. Harkness, M.A., and A. Crawford, B.A.; Grey—Mr. E. A. Scott; Westland—Mr. A. J. Morton, B.A.; North Canterbury—Messrs. T. Ritchie, B.A., E. K. Mulgan, M.A., T. S. Foster, M.A., and W. Brock, M.A.; South Canterbury—Messrs. J. G. Gow, M.A., and A. Bell, M.A.; Otago—Messrs. P. Goyen, C. R. D. Richardson, B.A., C. R. Bossence, and Dr. J. R. Don, M.A.; Southland—Messrs. A. L. Wyllie, M.A., and J. Hendry, B.A. Training Colleges—Principals—Auckland—Mr. H. A. E. Milnes, B.Sc.; Wellington—Mr. W. Gray, M.A., B.Sc.; Christchurch—Mr. E. Watkins, B.A.; Dunedin—Professor D. R. White, M.A.

Messrs. J. S. Tennant and T. H. Gill were appointed Secretaries of the Conference.

The Chairman suggested that a business committee be appointed to deal with (1) the appointment of committees set up to consider matters referred to them; (2) to draw up each day's order paper.

Mr. Stewart proposed, Mr. Mulgan seconded, That Messrs. Fleming, Mulgan, Morton, Stewart, Harkness, and the Secretaries be a business committee.—Agreed to.

Mr. Fleming moved, Mr. Petrie seconded, That the meetings of the Conference be open to the Press.—Agreed to.

The Conference decided to sit from 10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m., and from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

It was agreed that the resolutions be in writing, and the time-limits be ten minutes for the mover, with an additional ten minutes if the meeting so decided, and five minutes for each subsequent speaker.

Mr. Stewart moved, and Mr. Hill seconded, That the standing orders of the New Zealand Educational Institute be adopted.—Lost on division by 35 to 6.

Mr. Hill moved, and Mr. Morton seconded, That every member present must exercise his vote.—Carried.

Mr. Mulgan moved, Professor White seconded, That the following committees be set up: (*a*) Syllabus, (*b*) Teachers' Certificates, (*c*) Scholarships.—Agreed to.

Mr. Petrie moved, Mr. Bossence seconded, That the meeting proceed to the order paper.—Carried.

Mr. Bakewell moved, Mr. Wylie seconded, That the present five classes of certificates be reduced to three.

On the motion of Mr. Gray, it was carried by 35 to 7 to refer this proposal to the Teachers' Certificates Committee.

On Mr. Bakewell's motion, the remit, " That in order to facilitate the system of transfer, the Department establish a uniform system of grading, to be applied to all primary teachers in the Dominion," was referred to the Teachers' Certificates Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Bakewell, the remit, " That all certificates of proficiency be granted on the results of the Department's Junior National Scholarship and Junior Free Place Examinations," was referred to the Scholarships Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Grierson, the remits, (1) " That geography, course A, in Standard VI, be removed from the list of compulsory subjects, and made a compulsory additional subject " ; (2) " That paragraphs 1 and 2 of clause 42 be expunged " ; (3) " That geography, course B, be more clearly defined " ; (4) " That in schools of Grades V and upwards the use of a suitable reader to supplement the instruction given in geography, course B, be made compulsory " ; (5) " That a definite course of instruction in civics be made compulsory in schools of Grades 5 and upwards," were referred to the Scholarships Committee.

On the motion of Professor White, the remits, (1) " That in line 17 of clause 6 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools the following words be omitted, ' the absence of a pupil,' and the following words be inserted, ' where a pupil is absent for some considerable time prior to and during the course of the annual examination, such absence ' " ; (2) " That clause 20 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools be amended by the addition of the following words, ' Provided that in the case of pupils whose names are on the roll of any public school, no such notice be required ' " ; (3) " That the ' standard of exemption ' under section 142 of ' The Education Act, 1904,' shall be the Sixth Standard, and the certificate referred to in subsection (*e*) of section 142 of the said Act shall be a certificate of competency in the work of Standard VI or a higher standard " ; (4) " That in the case of the additional subjects referred to in clauses 30 and 33 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools, the requirements of schools in Grade IV be the same as for those of schools in Grades V to X " ; (5) " That it be clearly set forth in the Regulations for the Inspection and Examinatior of Schools that the details of the work outlined in clauses 37, 38, 40 to 57, inclusive, are intended to be suggestive, and not mandatory—*i.e.*, to act as a general guide to teachers as to the lines on which suitable programmes may be drawn up," were referred to the Regulations Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Foster, the remit, (6) " That there be substituted for the present courses in geography two or more alternative schemes giving special prominence to topographical and economic conditions, and to a study of the British Empire," was referred to the Syllabus Committee.

On the motion of Professor White, the remits, (7) " That, though the use of suitable reading-books for the purpose of teaching geography and history should be encouraged, especially in the upper classes, no course of instruction in these subjects be considered complete which does not provide for a full share of vivid personal teaching " ; (8) " That the teaching of course B, geography and history, be continuous in the classes S. 3 to 6, and that the regulations making it optional to omit these subjects during certain years or portions of years be modified accordingly," were referred to the Regulations Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Harkness, the remit, (9) " That the following words be added to clause 22, section 18, Manual and Technical Instruction, ' Provided that on the recommendation of an Inspector of Schools pupils from any class may be included,' " was referred to the Scholarships Committee.

Mr. Mulgan moved, Mr. Gow seconded, That, subject to the restrictions referred to in section 72, subsection (*b*), of " The Education Act, 1908," Junior National Scholarships be open to pupils from all schools which have been subject to inspection under the Education Act for three years immediately preceding the date of the Scholarship Examination.—Carried.

Mr. Mulgan moved, Mr. Petrie seconded, That, in view of the many excellent text-books and class-books now being brought out by leading publishing firms, the Department's " List of Class-books for Public Schools " be extended, and that a choice of books wider than now obtains be allowed to teachers in making selections in terms of the Department's memorandum dealing with the grant for free school-books.—Carried.

The Conference adjourned at 12.30 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Fleming read the report of the Business Committee.

The following committees were set up :—

Syllabus.—Messrs. Grierson, Ballantyne, Braik, Fleming, Smith, Strachan, Morton, Bird, Foster, Gow, Goyen, Hendry, Dr. Anderson, Professor White, Mr. Harkness (convener).

Training.—Messrs. Milnes, Gray, Watkins, Professor White, Messrs. Bakewell, Garrard, Milne, Hill, Ritchie, Isaac, Dr. Don, Mr. Gray (convener).

Scholarships.—Messrs. Whetter, Richardson, Brock, Wyllie, Porteous, Browne, Plummer, Stewart (convener).

Regulations.—Messrs. Petrie, Burnside, Spencer, Strong, Crawford, Scott, Bossence, Cox, Bell, Mulgan (convener).

On the motion of Mr. Mulgan, the remit, " That for each of the four training colleges two annual extension scholarships be established, open to all students at the end of their second year of training, and tenable for one year at some University college or its equivalent to be approved by the Minister of Education ; that holders of scholarships be required to specialize in agriculture or in some science

subject, and that the scholarships be awarded partly on the result of an examination and partly on the recommendation of the principal of the training college," was referred to the Training Committee.

Mr. Wylie moved, and Mr. Petrie seconded, That the Department issue maps of the Dominion and of education districts for school use.

Mr. Petrie moved, and Mr. Goyen seconded, That the following words be added: viz., "such maps to show surface relief."

The amendment was carried.

The motion as amended was carried.

Mr. Wylie moved, and Mr. Strachan seconded, That an official Teachers' Journal be established, and issued monthly.—Carried.

It was agreed to adjourn at 12.30 p.m. to-morrow to afford Miss Sheath an opportunity of explaining her invention for teaching the elements of the theory of music.

In the absence of Professor White, Mr. Gray moved, and Mr. Stewart seconded, That the motions standing in Professor White's name be referred to the Syllabus Committee.

Motions: (*a.*) The subjects included in the course to be arranged in three groups in the order of their significance and importance as primary-school subjects; (*b.*) As far as practicable, subjects of co-ordinate value be placed in the same group; and (*c.*) At the various stages in the course the subjects to be introduced in proper sequence as determined by the average pupil's physical and mental development. That the following outline syllabus serve as a working-basis for discussion:—

	S1.	S2.	S3.
Group A	English (as in present syllabus)	English	English.
	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic.
Group B	Physical training, games, and musical exercises	Physical exercises	Physical drill.
	Singing	Singing	Singing.
Group C	Drawing	Drawing	Drawing and handwork (including sewing for girls).
	Handwork	Handwork.	
		Nature-study	Nature-study. Geography.

	S4.	S5.	S6.
Group A	English	English	English.
	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic.
	History	History	History.
Group B	Composition and grammar	Composition and grammar	Composition and grammar.
	Geography	Geography	Geography.
	Drawing and handwork	Drawing and handwork	Drawing and handwork
Group C	Physical drill	Physical drill	Physical drill.
	Singing	Singing	Singing.
	Elementary science	Elementary science	Elementary science.

In classes S1 to S3, as showing in a practical way the due and relative importance of Group A compared with Groups B and C, the Conference considers that not fewer than hours a week should be given to the subjects of Group A. In Standards IV, V, and VI the subjects of Group A are of most significance, and as a means of expressing the difference in the relative value of Groups B and C the Conference suggests that not fewer than hours a week be given to the former, and hours a week to the latter.

WEDNESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 10 a.m.

The minutes were read and confirmed.

On the motion of Mr. Fleming, seconded by Mr. Gow, Dr. Don's name was added to the Regulations Committee.

Mr. Mulgan moved, Mr. Petrie seconded, That remits 7 and 8, from North Canterbury Inspectors, be transferred from the Regulations Committee to the Syllabus Committee.—Agreed to.

Mr. Gray moved, Dr. Don seconded, That the Conference do now adjourn till 12.25 p.m.—Agreed to.

The Conference adjourned at 10.25 a.m.

The Conference resumed at 12.25 p.m.

Mr. Gray presented the interim report of the Training Committee.

It was resolved to consider it at the afternoon session.

Miss Sheath gave an exhibition of the working of her scheme for teaching the elements of the theory of music.

The Conference adjourned at 12.45 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Notices of motion were received, and referred to the Business Committee.

The interim reports from the Scholarships Committee and Regulations Committee were received.

Mr. Gray moved, Mr. Mulgan seconded, That no notice of motion be received after 11 a.m. on Thursday.—Carried.

Mr. Gray moved, Mr. Mulgan seconded, That the Conference go into a Committee of the Whole to consider the report of the Training Committee.—Carried.

The Conference went into Committee.

The Conference resumed.

Report of Training Committee.

Your committee has to submit the following report :—

A. *Re* Mr. Bakewell's motion No. 1, it was decided to recommend,—

(1.) That the present system of classification be modified with a view to substitute three for five grades.

(2.) That the scheme circulated be taken as a basis to indicate the direction in which simplification takes place, and that the scheme be referred to a special committee elected by the Conference.

B. *Re* Mr. Bakewell's motion No. 2, it was decided to recommend,—

(1.) That, in order to facilitate the system of transfer, the Department establish a uniform system of grading to be applied to all certificated teachers in the Dominion.

(2.) That the suggested scheme (as appended) furnish a basis for the working of the system.

C. *Re* Mr. Mulgan's motions, it was decided to recommend,—

(1.) That for each of the four training colleges two annual Extension Scholarships be established, open to all students at the end of their second year of training, and tenable for one year at some University college or its equivalent to be approved by the Minister of Education.

(2.) That holders of scholarships be required to specialize in agriculture or some other science subject, and that the scholarships be awarded partly on the result of examinations and partly on the recommendation of the principal of a training college.

The following motion of Mr. Bossence was also considered : " That in the case of non-singers a reasonable proficiency in violin-playing be accepted in lieu of practical singing."

It was decided to recommend the following : " That in the case of candidates for teachers' certificates who are unable to qualify for the practical musical test, a reasonable proficiency in playing some suitable musical instrument be accepted."

W. GRAY,
Chairman of Committee.

Suggested Scheme for the Classification of Teachers, based upon a Consideration of the Various Types of Teaching-institutions.

—	Academic Qualification.	Pedagogical Training.		Alternative Pedagogical Training for Second Year.	Schools for which qualified.	Special Certificate.	—
Elementary.	Four years' secondary school or its equivalent. Standard matriculation.	Theory of education, including psychological foundations; history of education, methods; special training in drawing and science, if necessary.	Practical work in teaching. Probationary period of two years; T.C. course of two years.	Special method, &c., of the infant and kindergarten schools.	All classes in primary school; headships of schools below Grade .	If the alternative pedagogical course be followed, it will lead to special certificate for infant-school teachers.	Elementary.
Intermediate.	Two-years University course or its equivalent. Standard first section B.A. or B.Sc.			Special application of methods and practice to suit particular schools, secondary, D.H.S., manual training, &c.	All positions in primary service except headmasters of D.H.S.	If the alternative pedagogical course be followed, it will lead to certificates for special positions.	Intermediate.
Higher Grade.	Three-years or more University course. Standard B.A., B.Sc., M.A., &c.		Optional probationary period; compulsory T.C. course of at least one year.	Special work of secondary schools.	Positions as headmasters of D.H.S., as Inspectors, as teachers in secondary schools.	If a full University course in pedagogy, coupled with T.C. course, be followed, it should lead to a diploma in education.	Higher Grade.

Scheme for Grading of Teachers.

(Total, 100 marks.)

1. Service	10	(2 years = 1 mark.)
2. Academic attainment	15	
3. Teaching-proficiency	40	
4. Personality and discipline	20	
5. Organization	10	
6. Environment	5	

On the motion of Mr. Gray, the report of the Training Committee as amended in Committee of the Whole Conference was adopted.

Mr. Gray moved, That Professor White, Messrs. Milnes, Gray, Fleming, and Bakewell be appointed a committee to consider further the matter of the classification of teachers.

The Conference adjourned at 5.35 p.m.

THURSDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 10 a.m.

The minutes of the previous day's proceedings were read and confirmed.

A memorandum from the Minister of Education *re* temperance-teaching was referred to the Training Committee.

A memorandum was received from the Minister of Education *re* freedom of classification.

On the motion of Mr. Fleming, it was decided to consider this memorandum presently.

Notices of motion were received.

On the motion of Mr. Milnes, Mr. Watkins's name was added to the committee set up to consider the training of teachers.

Mr. Goyen moved, Mr. Mulgan seconded, That Messrs. Braik and Hill be added to the committee to consider the training of teachers.—Carried.

Mr. Gray asked leave to move a resolution dealing with the committee set up *in re* training of teachers as follows: "That the committee appointed at the close of yesterday afternoon's session be instructed to confer with the Department."

Leave granted, and, on the motion of Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Petrie, it was agreed to.

Dr. Anderson read the report of the special committee set up by the Conference to deal with the question of the certificate to be given in recognition for a complete period of training, and moved that it be referred to the Training Committee.—Carried.

Mr. Stewart moved, That the Conference go into Committee of the Whole to consider the interim report of the Scholarships Committee.—Carried.

The Conference went into committee to consider the report.

The Conference resumed.

Interim Report of Scholarships Committee.

A. "That the attention of the Department be drawn to the effect the recent action of the University Senate in raising the standard of the Matriculation Examination will have on pupil-teachers, probationers, and candidates for the D certificate, and on pupils who cannot arrange to take the four-years course at a secondary school or district high school."

B. "That all certificates of proficiency be granted on the results of the Department's Junior National Scholarship and Junior Free Place Examinations."

This committee has no recommendation to make.

That the following words be added to clause 22 of the Regulations for Manual and Technical Instruction, to follow the word "included": "Provided always that on the recommendation of an Inspector of Schools pupils from any class in any grade of school may in exceptional cases be included."

That in clause 72, section (*e*), of "The Education Act, 1908," dealing with Junior National Scholarships, the word "thirty-five" be substituted for "forty," and the words "one hundred and sixty" for "two hundred."

Mr. J. A. Smith's notice of motion: "That the privilege of freedom of classification be restricted to teachers who possess sufficient experience to enable them to employ it judiciously."

Mr. G. Harkness's notice of motion: "That only with the approval of the Inspector should the right to conduct an annual examination and to classify the pupils of a school be granted to a sole teacher."

The committee is of opinion that the powers at present in the hands of Inspectors, if carefully exercised, are sufficient to insure a proper classification.

RALPH D. STEWART, Convener.

The report of the Scholarships Committee, as amended in Committee of the Whole, was adopted on the motion of Mr. Stewart.

Mr. Mulgan presented a second interim report of the Regulations Committee.—The report was received.

Mr. Fleming moved, That the memorandum from the Minister *in re* freedom of classification be considered. Seconded by Professor White.—Carried.

Mr. Fleming moved, Professor White seconded, That the report of this discussion be forwarded to the Minister.—Agreed to.

At 12.15 p.m. the Conference went into Committee of the Whole to consider the interim report of the Regulations Committee.

At 12.45 p.m. the Conference adjourned while in Committee of the Whole.

The Conference resumed at 2.30 p.m. in Committee.

The Conference resumed at 2.45 p.m.

Interim Report of the Regulations Committee.

In addition to notices of motion appearing on the order paper of the 15th instant, the following motions were dealt with :—

That in line 2, Regulation 6, the words " forward to the Inspector in duplicate " be deleted, and the words " prepare and present to the Inspector at his next visit to the school " be inserted therefor.—Mover, C. R. Richardson ; seconder, C. R. Bossence.

That in clause 72, section (*e*), of " The Education Act, 1908," dealing with Junior National Scholarships, the word " thirty-five " be substituted for " forty," and the words " one hundred and sixty " for " two hundred."—Mover, W. A. Ballantyne ; seconder, R. G. Whetter.

The Committee beg to report as follows :—

North Canterbury Inspectors' Notices.

That the following be substituted for Notice No. 1 :—

" 1. That in line 17 of clause 6 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools the following words be omitted : From ' The absence of a pupil ' down to ' marks gained by him ' ; and after the paragraph the following be inserted : ' In the case of pupils absent from any of the periodical examinations, the teacher shall, if possible, enter in red ink an estimate of the quality of the pupil's work in each subject.' "

That notices No. 2, No. 3 (with the substitution of the number " 150 " for " 142," and " 1908 " for " 1904," and the omission of the words " or its equivalent as prescribed by regulations "), No. 4, and No. 5 (with the omission of the numbers 37 and 38), be approved.

That the following be substituted for the notice of motion submitted by Mr. Richardson : " That in line 2 of clause 6 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools the words ' in duplicate ' be struck out, and the following words inserted after the word ' Department ' in line 4 : ' and shall be a duplicate of the results of the annual examination as entered in the school Examination Register, which shall be the school record of such examination,' and, further, that the second paragraph of clause 7 be deleted."

The committee discussed the question of the supply of free school-books, and recommended that it be a recommendation from this Conference to the Department that in the future distribution of grants for the issue of free text-books children be required to purchase one literary reader.

16th February, 1910. E. K. MULGAN, Convener.

On the motion of Mr. Mulgan, the interim report of the Regulations Committee, except clause 5, was adopted, and the committee was granted leave to sit again.

Mr. Gray presented the final report of the Training Committee.

The report of the Training Committee was received, and it was decided to consider the report presently.

The final report of the Scholarships Committee was presented by Mr. Stewart.—Received ; to be considered presently.

Mr. Mulgan presented the final report of the Regulations Committee.—Received ; to be considered presently.

Mr. Harkness moved, Mr. Petrie seconded, That the Conference do now adjourn till 10 a.m. on Friday, to enable the Syllabus Committee to report.

Dr. Anderson moved, Mr. Fleming seconded, That the Conference do now adjourn till 3.30 p.m. to-day.

The amendment was carried on division by 26 to 14.

The Conference adjourned at 3 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 3.40 p.m.

Mr. Harkness presented an interim report from the Syllabus Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Harkness, it was decided to receive the report and consider it forthwith.

Mr. Harkness moved, Mr. Gill seconded, That the Conference go into Committee of the Whole and consider the report forthwith.—Carried.

Interim Report of the Syllabus Committee.

The committee request leave to present an interim report concerning the matters submitted to its consideration as follows :—

The following resolutions were approved by the committee, and are recommended to the consideration of the Conference :—

A. (1.) The subjects included in the course be arranged in the order of their significance and importance in primary-school subjects.

(2.) As far as practicable, subjects of co-ordinate value be placed together.

(3.) At the various stages in the course the subjects should be introduced in proper sequence as determined by the average pupil's physical and mental development.

B. That the syllabus in needlework in all standards needs revision, and that rearrangement be recommended to the Department.

C. That in Standard II geography be treated as a part of nature-study.

D. That the history programme for Standard III in the outline syllabus be amended by omitting the words "including civic instruction," and inserting the words "simple stories from English history."

G. A. HARKNESS, Convener.

The Conference resumed.

On the motion of Mr. Harkness, the interim report was adopted.

Dr. Anderson moved, Mr. Spencer seconded, That the Conference do now go into Committee of the Whole to consider the syllabus.—Carried, on the casting-vote of the Chairman.

The Conference went into Committee of the Whole.

The committee reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The Conference adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

FRIDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1910.

The Conference resumed at 10 a.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman made a personal explanation *re* his remarks on the matriculation standard.

Mr. Petrie moved, That the Conference do now go into Committee of the Whole.—Carried.

The Conference resumed, and the resolutions arrived at in committee were adopted as amended:—

1. "That geography, course A of Standard VI, be removed from the list of compulsory subjects, and made a compulsory additional subject" (Mr. Grierson).—Lost.

2. "That paragraphs (1) and (2) of clause 42 be expunged" (Mr. Grierson).—Withdrawn in favour of "That, though the use of suitable reading-books for the purpose of teaching geography and history should be encouraged, especially in the upper classes, no course of instruction in these subjects be considered complete which does not provide for a full share of vivid personal teaching" (Mr. Foster).—Carried.

3. "That geography, course B, be more clearly defined" (Mr. Grierson).

Mr. Mulgan moved the substitution of "That the teaching of course B, geography and history, be continuous in the classes S. 3 to 6, and that the regulations making it optional to omit these subjects during certain years or portions of years be modified accordingly."—Withdrawn.

Mr. Braik moved, as an amendment, That from S. 3 to 6, courses A and B and the alternative course in geography be fused into one complete compulsory course, and that instruction in this subject be continuous throughout in the classes S. 3 to 6.—Carried.

Mr. Richardson moved, That these words be added: "That the course in geography be arranged in divisions for the various classes from S. 3 to 6."—Carried.

The motion as amended was carried.

4. "That in schools of Grades V and upwards the use of a suitable reader to supplement the instruction given in geography, course B, be made compulsory" (Mr. Grierson).—Withdrawn.

5. "That a definite course of instruction in civics be made compulsory in schools of Grades IV and upwards" (Mr. Grierson).

Professor White moved, That consideration of this subject be postponed until the remits dealing with geography have been considered.—Carried.

"That the *School Journal* should contain continuous lessons in history and commercial geography" (Mr. Braik).—Withdrawn.

Mr. Grierson now moved his motion No. 5, and accepted as an amendment, That courses in history and civics be amended as was suggested in the case of geography.—Carried.

"That easy questions in civics be included in the English paper for the proficiency examination" (Mr. Braik).—Lost.

"That a redistribution of the work in arithmetic is desirable with a view to an increase of the portion set down for Standard III" (Mr. Strong).—Carried.

On the motion of Mr. Gill, the standing orders were suspended to enable the following motions to be received:—

Mr. Gray moved, That in section (*b*) of the scheme of instruction for schools a paragraph be inserted dealing with the course of instruction in preparatory classes.—Carried.

Mr. Petrie moved, That the arithmetic now prescribed for Standard V be made somewhat less extensive in scope.—Carried.

Mr. Gray moved, That in cases of children who may be weak in arithmetic in Standard VI, and strong in geometrical and scale drawing and in construction-work, some compensation be allowed in consideration of their proficiency in the latter work.—Carried.

Professor White moved, That in the English of Standard IV, after the words "functions in easy sentences" there be inserted the following words: "grammar, simple outline, having reference particularly to correct oral and written expression."—Lost.

The Conference adjourned at 12.50 p.m.

The Conference resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Goyen moved, That in the English of Standard IV pupils be expected to recognize all the parts of speech.—Carried by 26 to 12.

Mr. Petrie moved, That on pp. 120 and 121 of "The Education Act, 1908," in the work of Standard V composition, the following words be omitted: From "as far as" down to "may be found convenient."—Carried.

Mr. Braik moved, That a paper on civics, health, and nature-study be included in the examination for Standard VI.—Lost.

Report of Training Committee.

A. Mr. Richardson's motion: "That this Conference is of opinion that arrangements should be made to enable candidates for teachers' certificates to take the various examinations in at least two sections if they so desire." Recommended: "That the provisions contained in Regulation 26, C Certificate Examination, which enables a candidate to take the examination in two sections, be allowed in the case of the D Examination."

B. Mr. Fleming's motion: "That in clause 2 of the regulations, regarding probationers, paragraph (*b*) be deleted." Recommended: "That in clause 2, paragraph (*b*) be deleted."

C. *Re* report of subcommittee concerning two years' training in training college being regarded as satisfying the requirements of Class C certificate: The committee has to report that the proposal be approved, subject to the following conditions: (1) That the student must have duly qualified for admission in Division A or Division B; (2) that there be a scheme of two years' work for each student, the scheme to be approved by the Department, the work done by the student to be reported on by the principal, his report to be based on the results of progress examinations; (3) that the principal's report may be deemed sufficient in itself, or, if not regarded as satisfactory, the Department should have the right to hold an examination on the lines of the approved course.

D. *Re* Hon. the Minister of Education's request for consideration by the Conference of the teaching of temperance in schools: "That after 'Temperance in eating and drinking' be inserted 'The harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco, or other narcotics on the organs of the human body' (see Department's Special Reports on Educational subjects, No. 8)."

On the motion of Mr. Gray, the report was adopted.

Second Interim Report of the Regulations Committee.

The Regulations Committee begs to report as follows:—

1. Mr. Hill's motion, "That the time has come for co-ordinating the work of the primary, secondary, and technical day-schools."—Adopted by the committee.

2. Mr. Hill's motion, "That the leakage in the school attendance of pupils between Standard IV and Standard VI is one of the weakest spots in the scheme of free education, and calls for the serious attention of the Government."

Resolved, That the compulsory-attendance clauses of the Act already in existence should be sufficient, if efficiently administered, to greatly minimize the leakage referred to.

3. Mr. Hill's motion, "That all children be required to attend school up to the age of fifteen years, irrespective of the school qualification gained."

Under present conditions your committee cannot see its way to recommend this proposal.

4. Mr. Strong: "That the minimum requirements for a Standard VI certificate of competency be more explicitly stated."—Motion adopted.

5. Mr. Strachan's motion was adopted by your committee in the following form: "That capitation on elementary handwork be granted to the Boards not by class, but by a grant based on the number of pupils taking the work as shown in the quarterly returns."

E. K. Mulgan.

Regulations Committee.—Final Report.

Your Committee beg to report as follows:—

Mr. Braik's motion, "That the optional subjects for Civil Service Junior Examinations include domestic and handwork subjects, to allow technical and district high school pupils taking these subjects to compete on even terms with candidates that do not take such subjects."—Motion recommended for adoption.

E. K. Mulgan.

On the motion of Mr. Mulgan, the report was adopted.

Supplementary Report of Scholarships Committee.

Your Committee beg to report:—

"*Re* free places at secondary and district high schools, section 3 (*c*), that the age-limit of fifteen years be abolished."—Lost by 16 to 13.

"That it is desirable that all pupils qualified to hold free places should be supplied with a clear statement as to the avenues of further education open to them."—Carried.

"Immediately after the name of a pupil in Standards V and VI has been removed from the roll of a primary school, the headmaster should forward to the director of the local technical school the name of the pupil, and the name and address of the parent or guardian, such information to be on forms supplied by the Department."—Carried.

"That this Conference appoint standing committees to study problems appertaining to primary education, such as experimental psychology in relation to the child; comparative values of educational studies and methods of teaching, and school administration and equipment; and that each committee, through its chairman, should present to the triennial Conference of Inspectors a report on these or kindred subjects." This committee recommend this resolution to the favourable consideration of the Conference.—Withdrawn.

"That a committee be set up to consider the question of moral training in primary schools." It was decided that this proposal be considered in connection with the memorandum from the Minister *re* the teaching of temperance.—Withdrawn.

"That this Conference express its appreciation of the work of the *School Journal* as furnishing the pupils of our schools with interesting and instructive matter of a suitable character."—Carried by acclamation.

"That the erection of all buildings for school requirements throughout the Dominion be carried out under the direction of the Public Works Department after consultation with a committee of educational specialists; that the furnishing of all schools be carried out in the same manner." As this proposal involves an important question of public policy, this committee has no recommendation to make.—Carried.

"That it be a recommendation from this Conference to the Education Department that, at the option of Education Boards, district high schools, after their recognition by the Department, may be converted into agricultural high schools, with a head teacher independent of the primary school, the approval of the Department being first obtained." That the committee, being impressed by the importance of the remit, prefer to make no recommendation, but refer it to the full Conference for general consideration.—Withdrawn.

"That legislation should be introduced to provide that contributors to the Teachers' Superannuation Fund who retired prior to the 16th October, 1908, and whose allowances are lower than those provided under the Act of 1908 shall, from the passing of an amending Act, receive allowances calculated as under the Amendment Act of 1908."—Carried.

"That it is desirable that legislation should be introduced to enable those teachers who have hitherto found themselves unable to take advantage of the provisions of the Public Service Classification and Superannuation Amendment Act to become subscribers under suitable conditions and within six months, and be entitled to the privileges of original members."—Carried.

"That questions in model-drawing and in instrumental drawing be alternative in the Junior National Scholarship Examination." This committee has no recommendation to make.—Carried.

RALPH STEWART, Convener.

On the motion of Mr. Stewart, the report as amended was adopted.

Mr. Spencer moved, Mr. Goyen seconded, the following resolution: "That this Conference places on record its high appreciation of the long and valuable services rendered to education by Mr. W. S. Fitzgerald, Ex-Inspector of Schools, Otago, and that a suitable letter be sent to him expressing the hope that he may long enjoy his well-earned rest from arduous official duties."—Carried by acclamation.

Mr. Richardson moved, That a vote of thanks be tendered to Mr. G. Hogben, Inspector-General of Schools, for the skilful and courteous manner in which he has presided over the Conference.—Carried by acclamation.

The Chairman moved, That the Secretaries be thanked for their services.—Carried.

Mr. Gill moved, That the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes of the last day's proceedings.—Carried.

Mr. Fleming moved, That the Press be thanked for the excellence of their reports of the proceedings of the Conference.

The Secretaries moved, That the officers of the Legislative Council chambers be thanked for their services.—Carried.

The Conference then finally adjourned.

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