

121. Do you think a central Department would have a better knowledge of the abilities of teachers, and be able to promote them more justly?—We depend absolutely on a wisely chosen inspectorate. The central Department, having control of the best men in its service as Inspectors, ought to be able to gauge its servants accurately, as other services do. I may say that I have inquired among other services under the centralized system, and all those that I have been able to question are entirely satisfied with the conditions of their service and with the treatment they receive.

122. Is not one result of the Board having control of the Inspectors, and keeping them, therefore, within the one district, an intimate knowledge by the Inspectors of the worth of all the teachers under them?—That is so.

123. With regard to the paragraph in your resolutions concerning Inspectors, do I understand you to recommend that Inspectors should be drawn solely from the ranks of the highest-graded headmasters?—Not necessarily so. That is just one of the points that we wish to press—that a man should be graded according to his value at the time of grading.

124. In regard to the appointment of Inspectors, do you recommend that they should be drawn only from the highest-graded headmasters?—I do not think we make any recommendation. After a few years in practice it would naturally occur so; but I do not think there is any reason why it should invariably. We try to cultivate the point of view that the Inspectors are a part of the teaching service, and are not a separate caste from teachers.

125. How long have you been a headmaster?—Counting small schools and large, some twenty-one years.

126. You recognize that the work of controlling a small school in which the work is chiefly done by the headmaster is very different from the work of controlling a large one?—Exactly.

127. You recognize that a man can only reach the headmastership of a large school when he is fairly advanced in age?—That is so, as a rule.

128. Do you not believe that in inspecting the schools, say, in a backblocks district, energy and driving-power count for a very great deal?—Yes.

129. Are not energy and driving-power more likely to be found in a young man than in an old man?—It depends so much upon the man. You cannot lay down a rule.

130. But as a general thing?—Yes, you would say it should be so.

131. Would it not therefore be an advantage to secure for the inspection of our smaller and backblocks schools men with actual experience of them, and men who have the necessary energy and driving-power?—What is more, I could only say that a man should be selected for an inspectorship because of his proved fitness for it.

132. Would not his experience of these schools and his youthful energy make him fit?—It ought to; but *per contra* I should not like to say anything that would lend support to the idea that there should be one kind of Inspector for the country school and another for the town school.

133. An Inspector who would be drawn from the ranks of the teachers at the smaller schools—would he not be likely to gain experience that would entitle him to inspect the larger schools?—I think the kind of man that would naturally be chosen for inspectorship would have a comprehensive kind of mind that would qualify him to gain all by experience.

134. In regard to subsidies on local contributions, do you see a danger here that the system would advance the interests of districts where the people were well-to-do, as against the interests of districts where the people were not well-to-do?—What I see in it is that every kind of district will be able to avail itself of assistance to the limit of its own will.

135. Would you not say to the limit of its own resources?—I do not suppose that any district is likely to go to the full limit of its resources. A poor district can put in a five-pound note to get some apparatus for its school, and the Government will give it £5 more, and a small school will be well equipped. A well-to-do district, where the squatters have their motor-cars and so forth, might easily put in £100. Plenty of schools will get in £100, and they will have a good gymnasium, or perhaps an agricultural experimental plot or something of that kind.

136. Then there is another school of exactly the same size and grade, say, in a backblocks district where the people are fighting for existence, and it could not raise £10, far less £100?—Perhaps they could raise £1, and that would give them a start.

137. Is not the danger this: that the rich district that does not deserve assistance will get £100, while the poor district can only get £10?—The distinction does not apply, to my mind. All the schools are treated alike as a general basis. Beyond that it is heaven helping those who help themselves. I cannot see any danger or objection.

138. Are all schools able to the same extent to help themselves?—Certainly not.

139. *Mr. Guthrie.*] I gather from your evidence that you are absolutely in favour of the abolition of Boards?—I personally, yes—that is to say, the duties that the Boards now perform are so relatively small and cost so much money that they could be more economically and not less efficiently performed by making use of the Borough Councils and County Councils. I have a note here of the relative cost of the administration of the Board. Twenty-nine per cent. of the funds that the Board has at its discretionary disposal are used up in official salaries. If you count the Inspectors as being at the Board's discretion it is nearly 45 per cent.

140. Have you looked up the education return for last year in this matter? I think it shows a very different figure?—I have taken the figures from the 1912 report.

141. *Mr. Hogben.*] The return shows the whole expenditure?—I have abstracted those funds which the Board disposes of at its discretion, not those which are appropriated by Act.

142. *Mr. Guthrie.*] You say that the duties of the Board are of a very trivial nature?—I would not say "very trivial."

143. You said something of the kind—"the Boards have very slight duties to perform." Have you ever been on an Education Board?—No, sir.