

with an official utterance. Individually, not being a socialist, I cannot say that I see the necessity of the Government doing everything for us that might be as well done by private enterprise; but, since education has been taken in hand by the Government, and made free and compulsory, I am of opinion that fees should not be exacted under the present system.

77. Then, bearing on that, it follows that you think the full six standards should be taught free?—Yes; under the present system.

78. In effect, then, you think that it is the duty of the State to find a free education?—Under the present system of education I think fees should not be charged, because the Government, in monopolizing the whole of the education of the people, has shut the door against any private enterprise in this direction.

79. *Mr. Allen.*] Do you know that there are many boys in the higher schools who could not pass the Fifth and Sixth Standards in the elementary schools? Could you give us any comparative estimate of the cost of teaching boys in the elementary and in the higher schools?—I could have prepared such an estimate if I had known it would be required.

80. We have heard that the difference of cost is something considerable?—This is to be borne in mind, that without the attendance of the lower forms in the high schools—I presume you mean the boys in the lower forms—it would be impossible for the higher schools to keep up the requisite staff. This overlapping is necessary to some extent in order to obtain a sufficient staff for the higher instruction.

81. Are they more costly in the higher schools?—Necessarily so, but not to the extent that is generally imagined. If the Committee wish it I will send up what notes I have on the subject. You will then find that the realative cost has been much overrated.

82. *Dr. Fitchett.*] Do I understand you to say that it is necessary to keep up these lower classes?—The fees derived from the attendance of children below the stage at which they would pass from the elementary school are a necessary source of income to the higher schools, if the higher schools are to be fully equipped for their work.

83. Is it not a fact that there are separate teachers in some schools, and will not these fees go to pay these teachers?—Undoubtedly.

84. *Mr. Allen.*] I understand you to say that the surplus does not come from what the State pays, but from what the parent pays?—Yes.

85. Can you say what effect the abolition of the Sixth Standard would have on the pupil-teachers?—It would be very prejudicial not only in respect of the supply, but also of the quality of the pupil-teachers generally. I think it would be one of the most disastrous things that could happen in our education system if we were to adopt any plan by which the standard of culture among our teachers should be lowered, and that would be the result of abandoning the Sixth Standard.

86. I take that to imply that if the Sixth Standard were abolished some equivalent would have to be provided for procuring teachers to do the work they do?—Yes.

87. *Hon. Mr. Fisher.*] You say that because the State assumes a "monopoly" of education, and because it exercises a compulsory power, therefore the State ought to pay for all the education given in the higher standards; but, if that compulsory power exists only between the ages of, say, seven and thirteen, do you think the State should pay for the education that is given beyond these compulsory limits?—Yes; for this reason: By the present system of education all effectual private enterprise in the way of education is shut out. There are comparatively few teachers who can make a living by teaching outside of the Government employment. If you do not provide an education up to the Fifth or Sixth Standard the position in regard to fees, I imagine, will be this: a serious effect upon attendance after passing the Fourth Standard, so serious that it must greatly lessen the capitation allowance, and in that way lessen the efficiency, and so cripple the working of the Act very considerably.

88. In addition to being a medical man, Dr. Brown, you are the Chairman of the Otago Education Board. What is your opinion on this point: Is it possible to give a sound and useful education within the period of the six compulsory years?—It depends on what is meant by a sound and useful education. If it is meant that you are to teach the use of the tools and instruments of knowledge, such as reading, writing, and casting up accounts, certainly it is possible.

89. You say it is?—Certainly.

90. *Mr. Barron.*] I heard you say that you thought four hours a day in school too much for very young children?—Yes.

91. Are you aware that it is more frequently the home lessons that do harm?—There are no home lessons for infants.

92. You spoke of children under seven years of age?—With reference to home lessons I have a very strong opinion. The mischief done by them is often very great. Home lessons from seven up to nine and ten years of age are often more detrimental to health than in any way helpful to the intelligence. When imposed upon children before nine or ten years of age they are a farce and a cruelty.

93. *Mr. Fisher.*] Not only a farce, but injurious?—Yes; injurious.

94. *Mr. M. J. S. Mackenzie.*] Are you now speaking of the mental strain caused by them?—The mental strain, the anxiety, the worry they occasion to undergrown children. Add to this the effects which are caused by the defective accommodation which we all know must exist in the ordinary workman's home. The child has to be in a room where the other members of the family are busily engaged about their own duties; under frequent interruption he has to do what is very difficult for even grown people to do, that is, to keep his mind concentrated on one subject. Then there is the anxiety of writing his paper, then the writing by an artificial light, so that we find when the child goes to bed he dreams about these lessons; all this leads up to a life of worry and a dislike