

primary education in New Zealand, and we cannot at present see our way to recommend its abolition in favour of any scheme yet proposed as an alternative.

We think, however, that there are strong reasons for modifying its operation in the directions hereafter indicated, and we make the following recommendations (1.) That the system of examining Standards I. and II. for individual passes be discontinued, the form of the examination and the report to be similar to those at present required for the preparatory classes. (2.) That the pass and class system be retained for Standards III., IV., V and VI., with some modifications in the direction of reducing the number of subjects in the pass-group by the exclusion of grammar and geography

After this principle had been affirmed, the Conference proceeded with the details of the various subjects.

#### A.—PASS GROUP.

##### *Reading*

As regards reading, it was resolved:—

1. That for Standards I. and II. a second reading-book be required.
2. That in Standards III., IV., V., and VI. the examination in history as a class-subject be discontinued, the history books to be used only as supplementary reading-books, the language of which, however, will have to be explained.
3. That the comprehension of the language of the reading lessons is of sufficient importance in itself to justify a separate judgment as "Excellent," &c., by the Inspector, in every examination summary, and that such brief estimate might conveniently occupy the position which the subject-matter of the reading lessons has hitherto occupied, but should refer to all the standard classes.

##### *Spelling*

As to spelling, it was resolved:—

1. That in Standards I. and II. the pass be two-thirds of the words set, the words to be taken from one of the standard class reading books chosen by the teacher
2. That in Standard III. about five lines and five words be written to dictation from the class reading book, not more than three errors to be allowed.
3. That in Standard IV about eight lines from the class reading book to be written to dictation, and not more than three errors to be allowed.
4. That in Standards V and VI. about eight lines from the class reading book to be written to dictation, two errors to be allowed, but, at the discretion of the Inspector, an unseen passage may be substituted in Standard VI. of equal length, and in such case not more than three errors to be allowed.

##### *Writing*

As to writing, it was resolved that in the writing for Standard I. short words be included.

##### *Drawing*

As to drawing, it was resolved:—

1. That the course of instruction in simple geometrical figures contained in the regulations issued in December, 1891, and rescinded by a recent Order in Council, be restored.
2. That the course of geometrical drawing for Standard IV be reduced.
3. That in Standard VI. solid geometry be omitted.

##### *Arithmetic.*

As to arithmetic, it was resolved:—

1. That the arithmetical tests used in each of the standard classes above Standard I. should be issued by the Minister to all Inspectors in the colony At least fifty separate sets of tests for each standard above the First should be provided yearly
2. That the Minister supply Inspectors with a few samples of questions which might be set in examining the arithmetic of Standard I.
3. That in arithmetic five questions be given to each standard class, boys to pass on having three right, and girls two and a half. In questions that are not purely mechanical, half marks to be allowed for correctness of method.
4. That in Standards III. to VI. mental arithmetic may be given on the following basis Either as one of the questions, or as a substitute for one that may be omitted, at the option of the pupil. Three mental arithmetic questions are to be set, two correct answers to carry full marks, and one correct answer half marks.
5. That the arithmetic of the higher classes be reduced by limiting the treatment of compound practice, compound interest, present worth, discount and stocks to simple cases.
6. That simple cases of mensuration of solids be added to the syllabus.
7. That the limitation of the work of the lower classes to problems involving only one principle is uncertain of application, and very undesirable in the true interest of an intelligent treatment of the subject.
8. That the best method of developing the arithmetic of the lower classes, in the interests of intelligence, is to limit the operations to successively higher numbers at the several stages, making no difference in respect of simple rules in the order of introduction, and to apply as fully as possible the tables learnt to all sorts of operations within the limit specified.
9. That the Inspectors would welcome with great pleasure any attempt on the part of the Legislature to substitute a decimal system of money, weights, and measures for the present anomalous but time-honoured variety, which unnecessarily obstructs the progress of our children, makes the work of producing good calculators needlessly tedious, and stands in the way of improving the course of school instruction in other directions.