

WEDNESDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 1894.

Conference met at 10 a.m. The same members were present as at yesterday's sitting, with the exception of Mr. Smith.

The minutes of Tuesday's meeting were read and confirmed.

Dr. Anderson put in a protest as follows: "I request that my protest be recorded on the minutes against the decision of the Conference to recommend the establishment of a percentage of passes calculated on the work of the standard classes, S3-S6, as the criterion of a school's efficiency in pass-subjects. The grounds of my protest, which I wish recorded, are the following: That I cannot allow myself to be associated with the adoption of a quotable percentage of a kind which, if unprovided with safeguards, is liable to great abuse, which in a slightly different shape in former years exercised so pernicious an influence that its evil effects are still a subject of reference in official documents, and the use of which, in common with the use of all other percentages of passes, with one exception, has been solemnly condemned in the Government regulations as highly reprehensible."

Mr. Bindon obtained leave to move, and Mr. Morton seconded, That the Inspectors assembled in Conference in Wellington regret that Mr. E. T. Robinson, of the Grey District, was unable on account of illness to attend the Conference, and they trust that he will soon be restored to health.

Motion carried, and the Secretary was requested to communicate the resolution to Mr. Robinson.

Mr. Lee moved, and Mr. Spencer seconded, That, with the view of more accurately and more conveniently defining the instruction in science, and in order that sets of diagrams or suitable and inexpensive apparatus for teaching the same may readily be supplied to schools, it be an instruction to the Inspectors of each district to draw up programmes of work in each of the several sections of the subjects.

Mr. Hill moved, as an amendment, and Mr. Hendry seconded, That the science programme be drawn up by the head-teacher, but subject to the approval of the Inspector, the course to be based upon regulation 12 of the requirements in elementary science for teachers.

Motion negatived by adoption of amendment.

The amendment was then put as the substantive motion, and rejected.

Moved by Mr. Fleming, seconded by Mr. Petrie, That the science syllabus remain as at present. Motion carried.

Moved by Mr. Petrie, seconded by Mr. Taylor, That, while the teaching of science should, as far as possible, be experimental and illustrative, it would be an advantage for revisal and for securing a sufficient mastery of the matter taught to have a suitable set of simple text-books in the hands of the pupils. Motion carried.

Dr. Anderson moved, and Mr. Bindon seconded, That the comprehension 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.

Amendment moved by Mr. Petrie, seconded by Mr. Morton, That the words "of the language" be added to the resolution after the word "comprehension."

The amendment was carried.

The motion, as amended, was carried.

Dr. Anderson moved, and Mr. Petrie seconded, That the use of the term "additional subjects" be given up, and some other substituted which would properly include any matters worthy of special mention in an examination summary (whether optional subjects or not); for example, comprehension of reading-lessons, and order and discipline as observed in the course of examination. Motion carried.

Dr. Anderson moved, and Mr. Morton seconded, That, in the opinion of the Conference, the general estimates (in the subjects now known as pass-subjects) approved in connection with the adoption of Mr. Wood's scheme of examination in classes P1, P2, S1 and S2, be expressed either by way of comment in the Inspector's general remarks on the school, or by means of an approximate mark recorded in the tables of summarised results, or, preferably, in both ways. Motion not carried.

Dr. Anderson moved, and Mr. Dickinson seconded, That the summary information given as the result of a school-examination should include (1) the proportion per cent. of the school-roll presented in Standards III. to VI.; (2) the proportion of the school-roll passed in these standards. Not carried.

Mr. Lee moved, and Mr. Hill seconded, That there be one pupil-teacher system for the colony, and one annual examination. Motion carried.

Mr. Hill moved, and Mr. Spencer seconded, That in the opinion of the Conference the opening of evening continuation-schools in the larger towns would supply a much-felt want. Motion carried.

Mr. Hill withdrew his motion relating to the granting of scholarships.

Mr. Braik moved, and Mr. Fleming seconded, That the Conference recommends to the Senate of the University the propriety of adding to their course of instruction subjects which will induce the various University College Councils to establish lectureships on education. Carried.

Mr. Hill moved, and Mr. Petrie seconded, That district high schools ought to be maintained and extended as a part of the public scheme of education, especially in districts where communication is difficult and population scattered. Motion lost.

Mr. Wood moved, and Mr. Crowe seconded, That the principal change in the examination of schools approved by the Conference may be expressed in the following terms: "That the Inspectors shall not in future examine classes S1 and S2 for individual pass." Motion carried.