

88. As the State's corrective school discipline ends just at the time when the life of the boy or girl is changing, is it desirable, in your opinion, that some compulsory system of continuation classes should be made general, so as to keep their minds employed?—You have given grounds on which I should say yes, but there are other grounds on which I should say that you must educate public opinion first. I believe it ought to become compulsory, but I also believe that if you get too far ahead of public opinion you will put off the reform for many years. You may lead public opinion, but if you get out of sight of public opinion there is no chance of its following you. I believe the best way is the way in which we have made a small beginning in New Zealand, making it depend upon local option. It began that way in Switzerland, and is still carried on in that way in Switzerland. It began that way in Germany, and in some parts of Germany it is still carried on so. Local option in the matter failed in some parts of the United States, and that is the dreadful example against it.

89. Assuming that the control of education was given over entirely to the Education Boards, should the powers of the School Committees be widened or restricted, or have you any suggestion to make with regard to the School Committees' powers?—I think the Committees might become somewhat modified. I am afraid that I think their powers ought to be lessened in one or two respects, but in some ways they might be extended.

90. Of course, the demand is that they should be extended?—I think that the Committees as a matter of fact—I do not say as a matter of law—have too much voice in the choice of teachers. I do not say it because of any want of capacity on their part, but because of their want of knowledge. They cannot possibly know.

91. *Mr. Pirani.*] Have they any voice?—I do not say they have as a matter of law, but as a matter of fact.

92. Is it not the way the law is applied by some Boards?—I think the Committees in some parts of the Dominion have too much voice in the selection of teachers, and the misfortune arises not so much because they are not competent, as because they cannot possibly know.

93. *Mr. Thomson.*] Will you explain the law as to the appointment of teachers as it now stands?—It is contained in three long sections of the Act. Section 55 of the Act as now amended lays down the method. If it is proposed to transfer a teacher the Board has to send to the Committee the name of the person proposed to be transferred, together with a statement of his or her service and qualifications. It consults the Committee in this way. In any other case the Board sends a list containing not more than four names of the teachers it considers best fitted for the appointment, stating their length of service and other qualifications, and if applications have been invited it shall also send the list of applicants. In all cases the Board shall give notice to the Committee. In case the Committee expresses its opinion, the Board, having received that opinion, or given the Committee an opportunity of expressing its opinion, makes the appointment.

94. *The Chairman.*] Is it not the case that where four names are sent to the Committee and the Committee makes a recommendation out of the four the Board can set aside the recommendation? Can they legally refuse? Can you tell us of a case where the recommendation of a Committee, after four names have been sent down, has been set aside—where a Board has gone against the recommendation of a Committee in favour of an individual named in a list of four?—My knowledge in regard to matters of that kind is only hearsay. I have no direct official knowledge, but I have heard of it. But that was prior to the present Act coming into force. I do not remember any such case since the present Act came into operation.

95. *Mr. Pirani.*] Subsection (c) is very clear. It says, "In any case in which the number of names in the above-mentioned list is more than one, the Committee shall select one of the persons named in the list, and shall in writing notify the Board, not later than three days before the day on which the appointment is to be made, of the selection so made, and the Board shall appoint the teacher so selected"?—That is mandatory. It was put in at the last amendment of the Act. It might seem to be better as a matter of policy to send on more than one name, but I have no hesitation in saying that I think the provision you have just read is a mistake. I think the Board should have the final power of appointment, but the Committee should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion.

96. *The Chairman.*] The Committee should send back the names, with its recommendation; but the Board should have the right of veto, if for good and sufficient reason?—Practically, but I would not put it in that form.

97. *Mr. Kirk.*] You are decidedly against extending the powers of Committees?—Yes, in regard to the appointment of teachers, because I consider that they are not in a position to judge. They are only in a position to get private evidence, or hearsay evidence, more or less remote, or else the evidence of those who interview them. Some of those influences would not necessarily lead to the appointment of the best candidate.

98. You have probably read in the newspapers criticisms upon the policy of establishing so many small schools, and the contention that instead of opening so many schools greater facilities should be given for the conveyance of children to more distant schools. What have you to say on that point?—I agree very much with the idea. I think the advantages where the roads are good is very great indeed. If you were to provide proper drivers and establish the system of proper vans it would be an extremely good thing. But it would not be possible everywhere in New Zealand. I know of one very notable case upon which I had to report at one time. I addressed a meeting of the inhabitants of the district, and the idea was scouted by them. The district was one of the best roaded in the South Island, so that reliance could have been placed upon vans at all times. There was also a railway-station opposite the place where it was desired to build a school, so that the facilities for getting to the train would have been equal to those for getting to the school. Moreover, the train would arrive at a station five miles away where there was a large