

the reduction. But at the same time by closing these schools they reduce the Government grant as a whole by £67,000. Therefore the Government, who intended to save £30,000, save £97,000.

The possibilities attendant upon the suppositions I have been asked to discuss are so indefinitely numerous that I trust I may be excused for carrying the investigation to a greater length. The debate of 1877 shows what difficulties stand in the way of a capitation tax such as was then proposed, and difficulties appear to me to attend on every proposal that can be made. I do not think it would be difficult to frame a scheme that would be systematic, perfectly general in its application, automatic in its action, and surely tending towards a reduced rate per head. I drafted such a scheme six or seven years ago, and I will furnish a copy of it if the Committee wishes to have it. The work of framing such a scheme, applicable to the present number of schools and children, would occupy so much time that I cannot ask the Committee to wait for it. I will however proceed to do this work. The outline of the scheme which I drafted in 1881 is as follows: A sum amounting to a capitation of £3 15s. on average attendances is placed in the hands of the department for distribution. 10s. a head is for the incidental expenses of schools, and for Boards' office expenses and inspection, 7s. is applied in the form of bonus according to the classification of the individual teachers, and £2 18s. is distributed according to a scale which allows a certain staff with certain salaries for a school of a certain size. The tendency to a reduced rate depends on the principle that as population increases the average number in each school increases, and a large school can be more economically taught than a smaller one. According to this scheme the £2 18s. per head distributed according to scale (the allowance minus the bonus and the inspection and management of office matters, and incidental expenses of schools) would give £2 a head for schools of about 250 and upwards, about £3 to a school of 100, about £4 to schools between 15 and 35, and £5 or £6 to smaller schools. I am of opinion, however, that the system ought not to be encumbered with the weight of very small schools, which, if they are efficient, must generally be costly. I think that at most the allowance to a school of very small numbers (up to 12 or thereabouts) should be the Government capitation allowance, and that even that should not be granted without sufficient guarantee for the competence of the teacher. I may say that the scale as I drafted it allows one teacher for 35 children, 2 for a school from 36 to 70, 2 and a pupil-teacher for a school of from 71 to 105, and for every 70 beyond that number 1 assistant or 2 pupil-teachers.

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ANSWERS to FURTHER QUESTIONS put to Mr. HABENS in writing by the COMMITTEE.

A. Whether he considers the plan of Inspectors constantly inspecting schools in the same district a good one? Would it not be better that Inspectors should, every now and then, change their districts?—I think that an occasional change of Inspectors from one district to another would be useful, and would constitute an improvement.

B. Does he consider School Boards necessary? Would it be safe or reasonable to trust their work to School Committees? Is not the power of a School Board, in case of dismissal of a teacher, too great? What right of appeal has the teacher in case of wrongful dismissal?—I cannot say that I consider the Education Boards necessary, but I think they are very useful, and that the School Committees, as at present constituted, are not competent to do the work now done by the Boards. The Act endeavours to limit the Board's power of dismissal by requiring a previous consulting of the Committee. The Board is less likely to be partial than the local Committee that is in personal relation with the teacher, and therefore the Board is, in my judgment, better fit than the Committee to have the power of dismissal. The only appeal the teacher has against the decision of the Board is an appeal to the law courts. I fear that if there were a right of appeal to the Minister it would be so frequently exercised as to cause great trouble and annoyance with no adequate gain.

C. What is the cost to the State of pupils in secondary schools who could not pass the Sixth Standard in primary schools? What would be the cost of such in the primary schools if kept there till they passed the Sixth Standard?—The data for an answer are wanting. It is possible that the studies of a secondary school may not qualify any one of its pupils to pass the Sixth Standard. I have no means of knowing how many of the secondary-school pupils could pass the Sixth Standard, nor of distinguishing between the cost of pupils in the upper and lower parts respectively of any secondary school.

D. What does he think of the bonus system in regard to teachers in Otago? Does such prevail elsewhere?—I very highly approve of the plan of making a teacher's salary depend partly on the class and grade of his certificate. Otago is not singular in following this plan. North Canterbury, Wanganui, Wellington, and Taranaki Districts act upon it. I do not think the bonus given in Otago is excessive.

E. Does he not think that in Standards III., IV., V., and VI. grammar and composition could be done away with as pass subjects? Does he think too much history and geography taught?—I do not think that the syllabus requires too much grammar, composition, history, or geography. If the Government paid by results I should be willing to allow a lower rate of pay to schools that did less work than the programme contains. But I have always understood that £3 15s. a head was meant to pay for a good sound primary course carried on by efficient teachers. And if teachers are efficient, and inspection is reasonable and wise, I think there ought to be no difficulty in carrying out the programme now prescribed.

F. Does he not think we might with advantage make our system far more technical?—I think that for the present and for some time to come elementary science taught experimentally, taught *con amore* and in the spirit of the standard regulations, and such drawing as the regulations prescribe, constitute the proper amount of technical training for the primary school. Two years ago there was a very instructive paper laid on the table (E.-1D), which showed, I think, how tentative and uncertain all efforts beyond this range are likely to be. I have been grievously disappointed at