

5. *The Chairman.*] You think that the Department should not interfere with the privileges of the Board as paymasters?—It should not. On page 4 of this circular there is an estimate of the distribution of payments on the scale of the £4 capitation grant, an estimate that was arrived at practically in detail, and on the following page—5—there is the proposed scale of staff and salaries. The estimate on page 4 shows that the amount payable for salaries for the December quarter, 1899, according to the proposed scale, would be £379,960, and the statement is drawn up in this way in order to show that the Boards would be certain of an income of £65,303. Under the present scales the balance available for the Boards' general expenses would have been for the December quarter, 1899, £59,973. According to the proposed scale, the balance to the Boards is £250 for each Board and a capitation of 11s. 3d., showing clearly that there is more available for the Boards under this scheme than there was before.

6. *Mr. Stewart.*] I understand that Mr. Hogben has taken the figures for the years ending 1899 and 1900, and has worked his scale against the total amount of capitation allowance for each of those annual periods, and has found that the Boards would still have a larger amount to meet their general expenditure than they had spent in the years he has mentioned; that the scheme which he has laid on the table is applicable to the whole colony, large and small centres, and that it does not curtail the amounts spent by the Boards, but leaves them a balance?—Yes. The Commission is aware of the difficulties the various Boards laboured under, not having sufficiently large allowances to meet their expenditure, and it is a question which has been brought before the Minister several times. The only direction in which the Minister saw his way to deal with the question was by giving a larger amount to the Boards in order to enable them to make better allowances, and hence one of the objects in drawing up this scheme was to give the Boards, as well as the teachers, larger allowances than before.

TUESDAY, 23RD APRIL, 1901.

Mr. G. HOGBEN's examination continued.

*Mr. Hogben:* In addition to my proposed colonial scale of staff and salaries, I have a supplementary scale of proposals for salaries where the boys' schools are separate from the girls' or infants' schools, called "Salaries for assistants of separate schools" [Exhibit 3]. Another table shows the number of schools in each grade shown by the suggested scale [Exhibit 4]. On the top of page 4 of Exhibit 2 is a financial summary showing the distribution of the capitation vote and the inspection subsidy according to the proposed scale, based on the returns for the December quarter, 1899. I have a similar summary for the December quarter, 1900 [Exhibit 5]. In making my general statement, Mr. Chairman, I propose to go through the different headings of this memorandum, and to make a few remarks explaining what is already set down there. The opening part I have already referred to. With regard to staffing the schools, the first thing that I should impress upon the Commission is that it is impossible to have a uniform scale of salaries without a uniform scale of staff; one necessarily involves the other, both as to the numbers of the staff, and to the same extent, though not absolutely in a fixed manner, to the constitution of the staff. It would not be possible to have a uniform scale if, for instance, in some districts the first assistant after the head-teacher was a pupil-teacher, while in other districts the first assistant after the head-teacher was a certificated teacher; such a condition would destroy the possibility of having a uniform scale of staffs and salaries. It would interfere with the one I have suggested, and I do not see any way out of that particular difficulty. In large schools it might be possible to have slight variations of staff without interfering with a colonial scale. For instance, it might be possible sometimes to appoint two pupil-teachers in lieu of one assistant, the salary of the assistant—a junior assistant—being equal to those of the pupil-teachers. There are thirteen Boards and thirteen systems of staffing schools in the colony. Sometimes, especially in the case of neighbouring Boards, although the details may have diverged a little, there is the same essential principle at the base of the scales of two or three Boards. At present in eight districts the first increase of a staff takes the form of the addition of a pupil-teacher. I take objection to that—of course, I am expressing my own views, and indicating one or two reasons why I hold those views; the chief argument in favour of the addition of a pupil-teacher is its cheapness, and I do not know of any strong argument for it with that exception. It is true that the pupil-teacher system performs in this colony a very important function in supplying a place for the training of teachers, but that is not essential if you have a complete system of training-colleges: it would be essential to have a period of probation, but not a pupil-teachership. Pupil-teachers learn their profession very largely at the expense of the children. The objection in the small school to the pupil-teacher is that if he is to do his work for the benefit of the children he must have a very large amount of supervision from the head-teacher, whose work is thereby interfered with, and even then his work is the more mechanical part. In fact, by putting in a pupil-teacher it seems to me you interfere too much with the teacher's own opportunities of teaching the remainder of the children directly under his charge. It may be said that if you give an assistant at 36 you are over-staffing the school; but I hold that it is very doubtful whether you could maintain that it was an over-staffed school. There are from six to eight classes; they may be reduced possibly to five by grouping, but I do not see that you can reduce them below that. There is no question of over-staffing; you can relieve the pressure in a school with a sole teacher, as I hope it will be relieved very shortly, by differentiating the syllabus for the town and country schools, although by differentiating the work in schools where the ages of the children are from five to fifteen does not take away the difficulty altogether. The teacher has not really the time to give that supervision to a pupil-teacher that an ordinary pupil-teacher in a country school would require without inter-