

course, these things take some time to set in motion, but I hope before very long something will be done that will make it unnecessary for the Boards to draw on their general funds for the training of teachers. As you are well aware, as far as concerns the training of teachers in the subjects of manual and technical instruction, a special sum has already been granted for this specific purpose—a temporary grant until more permanent provision for the complete training of teachers can be made. I think that the cost of examinations to the Boards might be reduced. I allude to the cost of scholarship examinations and of pupil-teachers' examinations. The cost of the latter might be reduced without interfering with the discretion of the Boards if the pupil-teacher courses were more uniform. I may say there is already an examination the papers for which are supplied by the department, but only one Board has availed itself of the arrangement. I think, when the new regulations are in full operation it will hardly cost the Boards anything at all for manual and technical instruction, and is not the intention that it should. With regard to district high schools there is a separate vote, and the difficulties of district high schools have, I think, disappeared. The grant is enough to pay all the extra salaries, allowing the rest of the school to be staffed as fully as if there were no secondary pupils, and without charging any fees to the secondary pupils. That may involve other grants for giving free secondary education; it will certainly not touch any salaries on this scale. Then, there is the question of transition from the old system to the new. I have tried to devise suggestions for this, but the method of transition would necessarily differ in every district, because the present scale is different in every district; and it seems to me that the best thing to do would be to leave to the several Boards the method of transition, it being understood that the Boards should take what I might call the shortest way consistent with efficiency—that is, without dislocating their schools. I suggest that the time allowed for making the transition should be four years. Of course, it might be made in less.

9. You would work it out by degrees?—Yes, the Boards would, the Department giving all the assistance in its power.

10. Do I understand you to say that the new system should not come into operation at once?—Yes; it will be seen that such a system cannot come into operation all at once.

11. How do you propose to gradually work it in?—To gradually work out the number of pupil-teachers in excess.

12. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Or, say, to call them assistants?—Yes, where that could be done.

13. *The Chairman.*] That would be chiefly with regard to the alteration of the staff?—Yes.

14. *Mr. Weston.*] The salaries depend on the staffs?—Yes.

15. You work a hardship in some instances by cutting down the salaries—that is to say, if you bring it in at once?—Yes, if the scheme were brought in at once. Under one system a teacher might be paid a certain high salary, and to bring in another system of staff under which he might not have all those duties to perform, and consequently would not be worth the same high salary—to suddenly reduce him to a salary corresponding to his reduced duties would be too great a hardship. Time should be allowed for his transfer to a position in which he would not suffer a loss of salary.

16. If your capitation grant be worked out upon a scale, and you do not bring that scale into operation all at once, how will you manage?—As I said before, it will have to be worked in gradually. I think it is possible if you make a condition that in no case shall teachers be paid less than they are receiving now. To change the system of staffing suddenly must cause hardship.

17. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Not only to the teachers, but also to the pupils?—Yes. A certain time must be allowed to elapse, and, as I suggested before, the length of time should be four years. Of course, it is possible that some Boards might work into the new system in two years, perhaps by a little transfer of pupil-teachers, but to allow four years as the extreme limit of time is fair. To my mind, the natural method of payment would be for the Boards to pay, as I made clear in my introductory remarks last night. The Boards' officers are acquainted with the movements of the teachers in the various districts, and also acquainted with other facts necessary for the distribution of the money; and as a matter of convenience the thing seems to me to be very obvious. The whole amounts would be paid over as the grants are paid over now to the Boards, and would have to be distributed under one scale instead of various scales. Another point arises now that will come into discussion later on—will probably be brought out in the several districts. Supposing you have a school with an average attendance of 24, under the proposed scale the teacher would be receiving £128; if the average attendance dropped to 17 the next quarter his salary would fall to £90. The question, then, is, How is the possibility of that hardship to be avoided? I have not put forward a definite scheme here, but I am prepared to suggest that the salaries payable, in order to obviate hardships in regard to such a sudden fall in attendance, should not be calculated on the average attendance of one quarter, or even of two quarters, but on the average attendance for the whole previous year, subject to some further condition that if the attendance of a school suddenly rose or fell from one class to another the Board should be asked to take the first opportunity—say, by transfer or otherwise—of putting a suitable teacher in charge, but that meanwhile the teacher's salary, if it fell, should not fall beyond a certain limit. I think there should be a limit to what the teachers lose. If the salary is paid on the whole of the previous year's average the number of schools in which it would vary very materially would be very small indeed, and it is only because the average is taken for shorter periods that there is this variation, for in a place like New Zealand, with a population in which there is such an up-and-down movement, it must always be so; but, of course, there should be a further limitation, for if a school fell from, say, 40 to less than 20 it would not do to go on paying on the whole of the previous year's average.

18. *Mr. Weston.*] Suppose the school suddenly rose, we will say?—Well, then it would be necessary to apply the same rule. I have made a sufficiently close examination of this question, and I find that the Boards generally could not afford to run the risk of paying for the whole year,