

on manual and technical education; our aim has been in spreading the benefits of education, and the Board has no chance of doing anything in the way of manual and technical work. We did establish a shorthand class that did good work for a time, but owing to the insufficiency of the grant that class has fallen through.

101. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] You say, logically, the principle should be to extend the surplus profits from the larger schools to the smaller schools: would it not be equally logical for districts like Otago to establish very small schools, as done here, to absorb their own surplus?—It would be only fair.

102. That being so, it would upset the whole question of the colonial scale on the basis on which it is submitted. I am aware that in many parts of the colony, and in the education district I am connected with in Otago, the difficulties to contend with are quite as great as in the Sounds, and we have never established a school for less than 15 or 16 children. Within what distance are some of these Sounds schools located?—I should say, within seven or eight miles.

103. Are not some of them within two or three miles of each other?—I am not aware of it. We certainly should not allow them to be too close together; there is a school or two at the head of Port Underwood.

104. Have you not a school in the next bay—Ocean Bay—two miles distant by good track from Robin Hood Bay School?—I understand there are three schools in Port Underwood. I am personally against them.

105. This must be very carefully guarded against in granting educational advantages in these remote parts. If Otago were to do as this school district has done it would require to spend about £12,000. You say, to be logical, the same principle ought to be extended all over the colony?—I am not saying that it should not; we should not deny to other districts what we give our own.

106. Whilst you stated that your Board was prepared to adopt this scale as submitted, your advocacy at the close of your remarks would involve a very great increase on the basis on which it is worked out—that is, on the £4 capitation?—I said I thought it would take more than £4 capitation to work Mr. Hogben's scheme satisfactorily.

107. *Mr. Hill.*] I notice that you have, according to a return before me, 224 pupils in thirty-nine schools, with averages varying from 1 to 9?—Yes.

108. In Regulation 40 of your regulations it says, "For the first five, £5 per head per annum; for the second five, £4 per head; for the third five, £3 per head; for the fourth five, £2 10s. per head; for the fifth five, £2 per head." Consequently, on those 224 children you lose at the rate of 15s. per head capitation, and on the thirty-nine schools £168: is that so?—Yes.

109. I notice also in the same return four schools with an average attendance of 48, between 10 and 14, and you lose on those four schools capitation allowance of 5s., amounting to £12, so that you have forty-three schools which you work at a loss of £180?—Yes.

110. Against that you have four more schools with an average of 56, and you work them at a gain of £8 5s.; and yet your complaint is that the great loss in your district is in consequence of these small schools, and, notwithstanding all this complaint, you are working these latter schools at a less amount really than the Government are giving you at the present time?—The loss of a few hundreds is a great matter to us.

111. Then, how do you account that you are working them at a loss?—A living-wage only is paid by our schedule, and the small amount beyond this is of great consequence to us.

112. Supposing the Government gave a £5 capitation grant on the small schools below 20, do you think it would be beneficial to your district?—Yes.

113. You find great difficulty in consequence of the small amount of the building grant?—Yes.

114. Have you expended any of the capitation grant on buildings?—No. We have borrowed money from the capitation grant for the Building Fund, but we have always paid it back.

115. You have expended all your capitation grant mainly on two things—payment of teachers' salaries and in assisting School Committees to carry out their duties?—Yes; and in office expenditure, £500 or £600 a year.

116. The office expenditure?—Yes, including the Inspector's salary.

117. But you have a grant for that?—Yes; I am wrong; there is a special grant for that.

118. What do you think would be a fair thing in the matter of a building grant: have you formed any idea?—It depends upon new settlements. Last year the Government made a special grant for two schools.

119. You think that absolutely everything that is required for educational purposes should be given by the Government; that there should be no local effort at all? What do you think of rating, for example, in the case of a district, or Road Board district, where there was a chance of having a school: do you think any rating authority would help that district by means of a subsidy?—It would not be fair to rate for educational purposes; it would be a retrograde policy.

120. I mean a voluntary payment?—I think the British public would revolt against a rate.

121. *Mr. Stewart.*] I take it from the evidence that you are of opinion that a colonial scale is absolutely necessary in the interests of the public?—Yes.

122. Is it not a fact, with regard to the teachers in the employ of your Board, that the average age is rapidly rising?—Yes, no doubt.

123. It is also a fact that there are no male teachers coming on?—From Mr. Sturrock I gather there is only one male pupil-teacher at the present time.

124. With regard to the question of the rising of the average age of teachers, what do you think will happen in the near future?—I think greater inducements should be offered now; that is my opinion.

125. What becomes of your teachers when they get to the age of, say, sixty: do you pension them?—I am afraid we treat them rather badly; they work off our hands like old horses.

126. Do you think, in the interests of the public, that should be allowed to go on?—No; I think, myself, an insurance or provident fund ought to be established.