

schools, you do not mean to interfere in any way at all with the Board system, or that it should be superseded by a colonial system?—No; I think the Boards throughout the colony have worked well. The Boards, more than any other local bodies, have men upon them of standing who take an interest in education. We do not think that anything better could be done than to continue the present system of School Committees.

157. You think there should be colonial administration of the finances that are extra charges?—Yes; we leave it in your hands to formulate some scheme, and if you do so our Board will not resent the fact of not being asked an opinion upon the matter.

158. You think that there should be a colonial scale of staff and salaries, and strongly press for it as far as your Board is concerned; and you would like, if possible, some sort of supplementary scheme which would deal with those very special circumstances in which you are interested?—Yes; if there are other districts like the Sounds they should be treated in the same way.

159. You think exceptional circumstances demand an exceptional scheme?—Yes.

160. *Mr. Giffedder.*] Do you not consider that your Education Board has been too liberal in the establishment of these aided and household schools?—Yes, perhaps we have been too liberal; we should have been personally informed. On one occasion I did raise an objection in regard to Port Underwood School.

161. Is it not a fact that these aided or household schools take in boarders at so much a year?—I think it is rather rare.

162. Is it not the case at Robin Hood Bay?—It was the case some years ago. The main objection was that, owing to unusual advantages in the way of constant superintendence, and so on, they were getting all the scholarships.

163. Do you consider that the Education Board should discourage the system of taking in boarders?—Yes; it should not be allowed.

164. With regard to the system of appointing teachers, does your Board consult the Committees?—Yes; we invariably take the recommendation of the Committee, and we work very amicably.

165. Do you send all the applications of certificated teachers to the Committee?—Yes. The names of those recommended are sent back to us, and we communicate with the Inspector; if we find that the Inspector is unfavourable, we let the Committee know in an inferential manner that it would be unwise to appoint that particular teacher.

166. You have no difficulty in getting female pupil-teachers?—None whatever.

167. Are they appointed on the recommendation of the headmaster?—Yes.

168. Does the headmaster invariably favour the appointment of female teachers?—I think he has no choice.

169. How many pupils do you consider that a female teacher could teach with efficiency?—Each male or female teacher could teach about thirty pupils.

170. You say that there are many schools in the vicinity of Blenheim rather close together?—Yes.

171. Would you experience considerable difficulty if you proposed to close them?—Yes.

172. Do you find that the separation of the sexes means a great waste of teaching energy?—Yes.

173. *Mr. Davidson.*] Are you of opinion that in the Marlborough District some of these aided schools are unnecessary?—No, I do not think so. By means of a general scheme we might venture to go into the question with a view to reducing the number.

174. *The Chairman.*] By amalgamation in some cases?—Yes; I am aware of one or two cases where there might be amalgamation.

175. *Mr. Davidson.*] In admitting that, you mean they are practically unnecessary?—Yes.

176. Do you not think that in any part of the colony many of the schools are established owing to local pressure being brought to bear on the Boards?—Yes.

177. And that if a regulation was prepared by the department, and approved by the Board, that such schools should not be established unless with the approval of the department, it would be in the public interest?—Yes. I do not say we are always free from pressure; perhaps we are inclined to give in weakly.

178. I want to know whether you, as a member of the Marlborough Education Board, would approve of a departmental regulation preventing the establishment of aided schools unless with the approval of the Inspector and the consent of the department?—Yes, if necessary, to save the whole system of aided schools. I would sooner see them restricted than diminished.

179. *Mr. Luke.*] Are you aware that in some educational districts, and in Auckland particularly, itinerant teachers are employed in outlying and roadless districts most successfully? The whole of the Great Barrier Island is worked in this way. In regard to half-time schools, with a good certificated teacher, could not that plan be adopted in the Marlborough Education District?—No, I do not think so.

180. *The Chairman.*] You could not get an educated man to “paddle his own canoe,” and go from one place to another?—No.

181. *Mr. Hogben.*] Do you think that by grouping these small household schools, and employing female teachers to visit several families in the half-time schools so formed, you could considerably reduce the number?—Yes; no doubt the object should be to save the number of teachers.

182. Do you think it possible by this means in your district to reduce the number of teachers employed?—Yes; it would certainly reduce them.

183. I want to know whether you think this system would work in your district?—No; I do not think it would answer on account of the impracticability of travelling, especially when you take into account that the Pelorus Sounds have six hundred miles of coast-line and Queen Charlotte Sound three hundred miles.