

MARY CAROLINE WILLIAMS, mistress of Marshlands School.

241. *Mr. Stewart.*] What is the length of your experience as a teacher in one of these aided schools in the Sounds?—Three years.

242. Were you in more than one?—No.

243. Which one were you in?—Kekerangu; it is thirteen years since I left there.

244. Have you seen any of the Sounds schools since that time?—I have been in one or two since then.

245. With regard to the question of board, would you kindly say what you think the board is worth on an average to the teacher in these aided Sounds schools?—Where I stayed the people were of comfortable means, and we lived very comfortably in regard to board and lodging. I have several times gone to other places where the living was very rough and uncouth, and the board and lodging worth very little indeed.

246. Is it a fact that board and lodging in many of these aided schools in the Sounds is very unsatisfactory?—I cannot answer for a great many. I was in one or two where it was not satisfactory.

247. I have been told that at the most it was not worth more than 1s. a day: is that so?—I have forgotten; I could not say as to that.

248. What school are you teaching?—Marshlands.

249. Are you in charge?—Yes.

250. Are you in favour of a colonial scale of staff and salaries?—Yes; I think we should profit by it; I know I should personally.

251. *Mr. Gilfedder.*] What is the average attendance at your school?—48 for the December quarter, 44 for this quarter.

252. Have you a pupil-teacher?—No; I am one of those who have a sewing-mistress. Though she is called by the name of sewing-mistress she does not do the sewing. Under the regulations of the Board there is something to the effect that, when the attendance increases beyond a certain number, the teacher is entitled to a sewing-mistress at £12 a year. At Marshlands we were the first to get a sewing-mistress, and the Board wanted to know the circumstances of it. At the meeting of the Board Mr. Smith said it was evidently because the word "teacher" was used instead of "master" that we were entitled to £12 a year for extra assistance. I do not require her help in regard to sewing, but it seemed there was no other name under which she could be appointed. As I said, she does not teach sewing, and she does not give a lesson. Her work consists of supervision, watching over Standard I., and the little ones. Since Christmas she has been working in another room, and when I go in that room to teach she comes into my room and supervises any lesson I may give; say, for instance, I start the girls sewing, she will watch over them.

253. *Mr. Stewart.*] She is not called a teacher, though she really is one?—No; she is not a pupil-teacher.

254. *Mr. Hill.*] How many do you think you could teach?—I do not think I could comfortably manage more than 32 with all the standards.

255. If you had one standard—Standard III., for example—could you manage more than 32?—Yes.

256. How many could you manage?—I once taught 60.

257. This young lady who supervises the lessons you set, has she received any training?—No.

258. Yet you make her responsible for the work of the children?—No, she is not held responsible.

259. What instruction does she give in the room where she is alone?—The First Standard may be doing arithmetic; in any case work that she would correct afterwards.

260. Does she take reading, for example?—Yes.

261. Does she give an object-lesson?—No.

262. What are the hours she is in attendance?—9.30 until 1, with an interval, and on in the afternoon till 3.

263. For £12 a year?—Yes.

264. She simply supervises and controls?—Yes; if I had no one there the children would be alone part of the time.

265. *Mr. Gilfedder.*] That state of affairs has to continue until your average attendance reaches 55?—Yes.

266. You heard the Chairman of the Board say that this work was purely voluntary?—Yes.

267. *Mr. Hogben.*] Do you think the young lady in your school regards the work as being purely voluntary?—She knew exactly the work required of her when she was appointed. Two girls made application for the position, and I put the position clearly before them. Several members of the Committee wanted to know how the girl could be appointed sewing-mistress when she did not teach the sewing.

268. When appointed she knew the nature of the work she would be required to do?—Yes.

269. *The Chairman.*] The girl was pleased to get the appointment, I suppose?—Yes.

270. *Mr. Hogben.*] Then, the girl did not regard the work as voluntary, seeing that she accepted the conditions as put by you?—No; it was on those conditions she accepted.

271. Do you think you went beyond your duties in telling her what work she was expected to do?—No; I thought it only right she should know the nature of the work expected, and the salary she would receive.

272. What made you think there were those conditions you mentioned attaching to the position?—I had asked the Inspector what he thought the meaning was, and he said if there was a master in charge he would be allowed a sewing-mistress at £12 a year, but seeing that I did not want a sewing-mistress I was entitled to assistance worth £12 a year.