

375. Do you think there should be a difference amounting to almost double?—I should not say double; there should be a considerable difference, though it depends greatly on the size of the schools.

376. If the proposed scale is carried into effect, what will be the result so far as the Hokitika and Kumara Schools are concerned?—In that case the salaries would be too low for the assistants at those schools.

377. The first assistants' salaries would be reduced and the headmasters' salaries would be increased?—Yes.

378. Perhaps you would prefer not to express any further opinion on the subject?—I am prepared to say that I think the salaries of the assistants too low.

379. Much too low?—I think if they were fixed at £150 instead of £130 it would be nearer the proper amount.

380. Do you not think it would only make matters a great deal worse than at present if such an alteration as that were brought about?—I think that the assistants' work is important enough to warrant larger salaries.

381. Who are the underpaid teachers—teachers of small schools or the headmasters of large schools?—The head teachers of schools from 35 upwards, especially those between 35 and 100.

382. Is it not the case that the same amount of teaching-power is required in the moderate-sized schools as in the larger schools?—Each individual teacher may have as much class-teaching to do, but the headmasters in the larger schools have a great deal more work to do in the training of the junior teachers of the schools.

382A. They require to exercise the power of supervision?—Yes.

383. Do you think their duties are as arduous or more so than those of teachers in moderate-sized schools looking after all the standards?—I think, on the whole, their work is harder and more responsible. More time has to be given by them.

384. Are you of the opinion that a headmaster who has considerable experience in a school of about 100 is not capable of taking charge of a school of 200, 300, or 400?—He may be able to teach well either class of school.

385. Do you think it requires a man of equal ability to take charge of the small as well as the large school?—So far as methods of teaching are concerned, an equally good man is required in both. The headmaster of a large school needs qualities not found in a class-teacher. He needs to be a good organizer and a good director.

386. Have you ever known the headmaster of a small school when promoted to a large school fail in the undertaking?—It is possible it would happen, though I do not know of a case in point.

387. As the result of your experience, would you say that the head teacher of a school of from 70 to 100 pupils is not equal to the task of managing a school of double that number?—I do not think it necessarily follows. A teacher who was successful in a small school might have the qualities to conduct a large school, and the work, physically and mentally, may be just as arduous.

388. Provided that there was some test by means of which the qualities of teachers could be ascertained, would you be in favour of fixing salaries according to the teachers' capabilities rather than according to the size of the schools?—I do not think that is practicable. I think the only basis of payment is on the work a man has to do—the only practicable basis.

389. You would not give a poorly paid master an opportunity of showing his proficiency by putting him in charge of a large school?—I should like to see it very much.

390. If he proves that he was equal to the position, do you think he should be given a larger school?—It should be recorded in his favour, and he should be given an opportunity, when a vacancy occurs, of exercising the ability he has shown.

H. G. WAKE, B.A., Headmaster of the Hokitika District High School, examined.

Mr. Wake: I have been deputed, as president of the Institute, to bring before this Commission several important matters which we would like looked into. The secretary of the Institute will deal with several matters, but it has fallen to my lot to discuss chiefly the workings of the district high schools. A resolution was passed by the Institute a few days ago that the attention of the Commission should be drawn to the inadequate staffing of the district high schools throughout the colony, resulting in serious overwork. I would like to inform the Commission that I have in my mind's eye not the Hokitika District High School particularly, but district high schools generally. I was engaged for several years in the Waimate District High School. There were 36 pupils, and this Commission will understand that in a school of that sort there are many divisions necessary. As a matter of fact, there were no less than five divisions, to do the work of which the only extra staffing allowed was one teacher. You will therefore see how arduous the duties must have been in conducting that school. It fell to my lot to do the extra work, and for three years I worked every night two and three hours extra, every Saturday, and frequently holidays. Since I have been here the Board has been most liberal in the treatment of the District High School. There are 27 pupils, and they are divided into four classes in many subjects. To carry on the work of this school there are two teachers, myself and an assistant. The assistant is only about two-thirds of her time in the secondary class, and I myself have to periodically examine the primary department, while, in addition, we have to prepare pupils for Civil Service examinations and for matriculation. Last year we sent up and passed eight for the Civil Service and three for matriculation, and they wish to be put through in two years after passing Standard VI., which means an enormous amount of work, and the staff is inadequate to cope with it. In the case of the Whangarei High School there are 31 pupils—only 4 more than I have—and they have three on the staff, whereas here, as you might say, we have only one and a half. I