

teach all the pupils on his roll, and is responsible for their education, and he should be paid for it. It has been suggested that there might be fraud under such a system, but I think that is an unworthy statement; I believe the teachers are incapable of fraud.

591. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] All of them?—Yes; of course, there may be a black sheep in the flock, but my opinion is it is quite as easy to perpetrate fraud by paying on the average attendance.

592. *The Chairman.*] You do not say that teachers are infallible?—I mean as a class.

593. You would prefer to see appointments made by the department rather than by the Boards?—Yes, for the reason that they would know the teachers better. There should be no such thing as handing in testimonials as to character, and certificates. It should be, as in the Old Country, a "Model School System."

594. Do you think the central department in Wellington would know the capabilities and general conduct of teachers as well as a School Committee, or the Inspector of an Education Board?—Yes, I think so. There is only one national education system and one National Board in the whole of Ireland—where, of course, there are a great many more schools than in New Zealand—and in one department, the Model School System, you can get everything connected with a teacher by application at the head office.

595. What is your opinion with regard to the payment of salaries to pupil-teachers: do you think they are sufficiently remunerated?—No, I certainly do not.

Miss W. AITKEN, Assistant, Hokitika District High School, examined.

*Miss Aitken:* I would like to draw the attention of the Commission to the great inequality in the salaries paid to male and female teachers for the same class of work. It seems to me that the female teachers are expected to possess the same qualifications as male teachers, and, such being the case, it is only right that they should be paid an equal salary. Under the proposed scale a first assistant, if a male, is to receive a salary of £130 a year, while a female assistant for the same work receives £105. Why is her work valued at £25 less? It is acknowledged that the work of female teachers is better than the work of male teachers. A female teacher has more control; she is a better disciplinarian than the male. In the case of the next assistant, if a male he is to receive £100 a year, while the female assistant receives £90. In this case her work is only valued at £10 less. In the case of the third assistants a male and female receive £80 a year each. What suddenly makes their work worth the same salary in this grade if it is not worth the same salary in the higher grades? I think that is a point that wants explanation. There are a great many female teachers in the service at the present time, and I think it is only right that they should be encouraged. I think they employ their money to as great an advantage as men. On page 5 of the proposed scale there is a note to the effect that in mixed schools with an attendance of from 36 to 250, if the head-teacher be a master, the first assistant must be a mistress, and *vice versa*. I think this is an anomaly according to the salaries to be paid under the suggested scale. I think to propose to pay a female teacher under the scale £80 an insult, considering the work she has to do after going through her pupil-teachership course. I speak from experience, because this is the position I am fulfilling myself at the present time. I have had 12½ years' teaching experience; I had control of a country school at a salary of £120 a year, and now, on coming into a town school, I am paid a salary of £80. It is not as though I taught only one class, for I teach various subjects in other classes.

596. *Mr. Hill.*] Do you teach sewing?—Yes. I would like to say that a witness this morning, in his remarks, said he considered that male teachers exercised more control than female teachers; I wish to contradict that statement emphatically.

597. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] You occupy the position of second assistant, do you not?—Yes.

598. You are of opinion that the cost of living is as great to a female as to a male?—Yes.

599. Is it not more so in the case of a single woman than a single man?—I would not say that. I should say it was about equal; but if you consider fashions it is more so in the case of women.

600. It would cost a woman more a year for dress than a man?—Yes.

601. Speaking in regard to the question of control, up to what size of schools do you consider females can exercise the same control as male teachers?—I should say, any size of school. If a female can exercise as much control in a small school, it is my opinion she can as efficiently control a large school.

602. You think it depends on the individual power of the teacher rather than of the sex?—Yes.

603. *Mr. Davidson.*] You are of opinion that the disparity between the salaries paid to male and female teachers in New Zealand is too great?—Yes.

604. Are you not of opinion that in many cases, if there was an equality in salary and positions were thrown open to either sex, it would mean the pushing-out of females altogether?—No, I do not.

605. If the salaries paid to male and female teachers were equal, and School Committees had the option of choosing between the sexes, do you think they would prefer to take male teachers where they now take female teachers owing to the fact of paying lesser salaries?—I do not think so; I think they would prefer female teachers.

606. *Mr. Stewart.*] You stated you were in charge of a country school for some time?—Yes.

607. What was the size of the school?—When I first went there the attendance was 25, but within two years it ran up to 54, and remained at that for some time; now it is only 21.

608. May I ask what led to your transfer to the Hokitika School?—I had been there many years, and I saw no other opening.

609. You suffered a reduction in salary?—Yes.