

22. Has the North Canterbury Education Board ever tried the half-time schools?—The Board has one such school at the Bealey. That is the only district from which such an application has been made, and it is working very well.

23. *Mr. Gilfedder.*] From your experience you would favour the adoption of a colonial scale of staffing schools and of paying salaries?—With some reservation, I would.

24. How far do you consider the proposed scale of staffing schools will affect the teachers in the North Canterbury District?—The effect will vary a good deal. It will benefit some of the teachers, but others it will affect adversely.

25. And, in the event of its adoption, would you suggest that the salaries be decreased when the proposed scale came into operation, or not until fresh appointments were made?—Well, so far as this district is concerned, this scale would come into operation at once. Very few alterations would be necessary.

26. How many pupils do you consider a sole teacher is capable of instructing—a male in the first place, and a female in the second place?—I think a master in sole charge of a school can manage fairly well up to an average of 41. Of course, a good deal depends on the circumstances. If the average attendance of 41 is drawn from a large number—the attendance being very irregular—the master would have many more difficulties to contend with than he would have if the average was from children attending very regularly.

27. Could you give us an idea of the number of schools in the North Canterbury District with an average attendance of less than 50?—Yes; 133 schools.

28. What is the total number of your schools altogether?—There were 202 at the end of last year.

29. More than half of them have an average attendance of less than 50?—Yes.

30. How many pupils, then, can a sole mistress efficiently teach?—I think a mistress would have considerably more difficulty as the school became larger. The number of boys would, of course, be larger as the school approached 41, and she would not on that account be able to conduct the school quite so efficiently as a master. I may say that this Board, after a certain point, does not engage mistresses for sole charge. Up to 20 pupils a mistress is appointed; between 20 and 30 it depends a good deal upon circumstances; over 30 a master is always appointed.

31. Your Board considers that up to 30 pupils a female is just as efficient as a male, except under exceptional circumstances?—Yes.

32. Do you give her the same salary?—In this district the salaries are equal.

33. I notice that in the proposed scale of salaries a teacher with an average attendance of 40 gets £150 a year, whereas if the average attendance is 41 he gets £140 a year?—Yes.

34. It would pay the teacher if the forty-first pupil did not put in an appearance?—Not altogether. Financially, it would; but as regards work he would have double by keeping it all to himself.

35. Are there too many pupil-teachers in the employment of the North Canterbury Education Board?—Not at the present time.

36. You have a preponderance of females in both pupil and assistant teachers?—The number of female teachers is larger than the number of male teachers.

37. Do you meet any considerable difficulty in getting male pupil-teachers?—There is some difficulty, but I do not think it is insurmountable.

38. That is to say, there will be a sufficient number of male teachers forthcoming to fill the positions that will be more efficiently filled by male teachers?—Yes, provided the regulations are framed to meet the difficulty.

39. Is it not a fact that your Board gives a preference to female pupil and assistant teachers?—No, the Board does not give a preference to female pupil-teachers. It gives the preference to mistresses for small schools, because up to 20 pupils a school is better with a mistress.

40. How do you account for the great preponderance of female pupils attending the training-college here?—That is a good deal owing to the recommendations of the various School Committees. They almost invariably recommend female pupil-teachers.

41. Do you consider it advisable to adopt a system of retiring-allowances or giving superannuation to teachers who have grown old in the service?—I do not think so.

42. You consider they can lay enough by from the salaries they get to maintain them after they are too old to follow their occupation?—I have not considered that question; but, on the face of it, I do not see why a teacher is entitled to a pension more than a person in any other calling.

43. Do you consider that Inspectors should be under a central Board in order to secure uniformity of examination?—I think the centralisation of Inspectors would lead to many difficulties.

44. Would the benefits not outweigh those difficulties?—A good deal would, of course, depend upon the instructions received from the department by the Inspectors as to their duties. If the Inspectors were to continue doing what they are doing now, things would go on very much the same; but if the duties were considerably altered, and they became servants of the department, responsible to the department rather than to the Boards, I think there would be difficulties.

45. Your Board receives a good round sum annually from the reserves—something like £12,000?—The Board derives no revenue from the reserves. It is paid by the Commissioners to the Board, say, one quarter, and the next quarter it is deducted by the department from the capitation allowance.

46. You are getting an allowance for district high schools?—The Board has no district high schools. The Board is proposing to start a district high school at Akaroa.

47. You have district high schools at Rangiora and Kaiapoi?—No; they are established by statute, and the Board has nothing to do with them.