

DAVID ANDERSON STURROCK, Headmaster of the Blenheim School, examined.

*Mr. Sturrock* : There is one matter I would like to call attention to, and that is in regard to the attendance. The point I wish to bring out is the difficulty as to the roll-number and the purging of rolls. In Great Britain no teacher would think of doing that. If he did so it meant having his name placed in the blue-book and part of the Government grant forfeited. With regard to pupil-teachers, the boys will not come forward as the salary is not sufficient. For the whole of the District of Marlborough, I think, you will only find at the outside six male pupil-teachers extending back twenty or thirty years. An anomaly that exists is in regard to salaries. I was second master in the Napier School for a number of years at a salary of £360 a year, while first assistant masters in Wellington were receiving only £220. I brought that matter up at the Institute in Napier, pointing out how unfair it was, and I said I was willing to lose part of my salary if I benefited the teachers as a body. I agree with the system in the proposed scale of an advance step by step.

395. *Mr. Hill.*] Do you think that several departments tend to efficiency?—No.

396. Have you female pupil-teachers in your department?—Yes.

397. Do they put male teachers in the female department?—No.

398. Who trains the pupil-teachers?—I do with regard to my own school.

399. You receive payment?—Yes.

400. In reference to the instruction carried on in the several departments, you take your own pupil-teachers, and the mistress takes the female pupil-teachers in the girls' department?—Yes.

401. What is your opinion with regard to the centralisation of the inspectorate?—I believe in it.

402. In the case of men in small schools, do you think it would be beneficial to give a special grant on account of such pupils who had passed Standard VI.?—I do not think I would give a bonus when you have a colonial scale of staff and salaries.

403. If such is the case, then you think that the salary for a teacher in a school below 35 is ample?—No, I do not.

404. I thought you approved of the scale?—I believe, in the first instance, you should pay a man more than £80 a year.

405. What is your opinion as to the employment of a mistress instead of a master in such schools?—I think a female better.

406. Why?—She is better able to take the infants.

407. You think that in small subsidised schools, such as you have in this district, females are preferable to males?—In side-schools.

408. I mean the small aided schools, with an average of 3, 4, and 5 in attendance?—Yes, I think so.

409. Would you put a female in a school below 35 in preference to a male?—It depends on the certificate.

410. Never mind the certificate. Do you think it would be best to place a competent female, the best material you could get, in schools below 35 in preference to males?—It is a hard question to answer; I think I would put a male.

411. At what limit?—From 35 upwards.

412. Then, in schools with an average attendance below 35 you think it preferable to put a female?—I think so.

413. Do you think her moral influence in such a district would be better than that of a male?—I think it would be as good.

414. You would not say better?—I do not think so.

415. From 35 upwards you would place a male?—Yes.

416. Over 35 there must be an assistant; should that assistant be a male assistant?—Yes.

417. Then, you would staff a school of from 35 to 75 with a headmistress and a male assistant?—Yes; you would need to do that.

418. Do you think the school would be efficiently worked under such conditions?—I am afraid it would not.

419. You say, supposing you had a growing school over 35, it would necessitate a rearrangement in the staff, and that the mistress would suffer in consequence, not from inefficiency, but because of the increase in attendance?—Yes.

420. It would necessitate a change of salary in her case by the very simple means of removal to another school, would it not?—Yes.

421. Would not this imply that in such a case a regulation would be necessary to the effect that a female who is in charge must be transferred?—Yes.

422. It would give the right of transference to the Education Boards, irrespective of School Committees?—Yes.

423. You think that would be a good plan?—Yes.

424. Is it more difficult to teach 26 children than 25?—I do not think so.

425. Do you think it more difficult to teach 51 than 50?—No.

426. Do you think it would be more difficult to control and organize a school of 250 than one of 150?—A little more, I should say.

427. Why? Are there not the same classes, the same standards?—Yes; but you have more teachers in the one case. I think it would be harder to control 150 than 250, because of the fewer teachers.

428. You think it requires greater skill and organizing capacity?—Yes.

429. In schools of 300 and 400 do you think it requires greater organizing capacity in one of 400 than one of 300?—No, I do not think so.

430. Take 450 and 550: does it require greater organizing capacity in the case of the school of 550?—No.