

168. I suppose you would have some difficulty in grouping these household schools?—Yes, in most instances.

169. Is the cost of living higher here than elsewhere?—A little higher in Nelson; much higher on the West Coast.

170. Would there be any difficulty in transferring teachers?—Yes, in many cases; it would lead to a good deal of friction.

171. Do you pay your teachers for giving instruction to pupil-teachers?—Yes; £8 a year, and half-rates in cases of failure.

172. Does your Board favour giving female pupil-teachers the same salary as males?—I should have no objection if the males were not brought down.

173. How many pupils is a teacher able to teach?—Thirty-six in the country districts, where one teacher has to take several standards.

174. Is a female teacher as efficient up to 30 pupils as a male?—Yes.

175. Still, you do not care about paying the same salary?—I do not know that. If the salaries were equal we should not appoint so many female teachers.

176. Have you a difficulty in getting assistant teachers here?—No; there is not much difficulty in getting assistant or pupil teachers.

177. *Mr. Smith.*] You said that the Nelson District had a larger proportion of smaller schools than any other district. Nelson has forty-three small schools out of 143, whereas Marlborough has forty out of sixty-two?—Yes, I believe that is so.

178. How far apart are the Brightwater and River Terrace Schools?—Not much over a mile.

179. Perhaps under a mile?—It is not a great distance.

180. One had an attendance of 41 and the other of 43: would it not be advantageous to amalgamate them?—It would be a great advantage. We have tried several times to do so.

181. How far apart are the Wakefield and Pigeon Valley Schools?—About two or three miles. Some of the children attending the Pigeon Valley School come a long way down the valley, and the roads are very rough.

182. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] What is the amount of your building grant?—Just over £2,000.

183. Would there be any difficulty in moving school-buildings?—In some cases they might be joined, but in most cases new buildings would be necessary.

184. *Mr. Hogben.*] If the Board had the power to appoint and transfer in its own hands, would it be satisfied with the colonial scale of staffs and salaries?—Yes.

185. Are you aware that the power to transfer is now in the hands of the Boards, as provided by the Act of 1877 [section read]? Is there any difficulty about your Board using that power?—There is a difficulty, inasmuch as the Committees have to be consulted.

186. Would there be any objection on principle to the Board carrying out a reasonable transfer in spite of the opinion of a Committee, supposing the Board still considered it necessary?—Yes; it would not be considered expedient to do so.

187. What is the nature of the expediency?—To do so would put the Board on bad terms with the Committee, I presume. It is the general idea here, whether correct or not, that the Board cannot appoint unless the Committee approves.

188. But you do not find that in the Act?—No.

189. Have you any number-definition between household and aided schools?—Yes. Not less than three for a household school, and not less than twelve for an aided school. That rule has just been made, but was not retrospective.

190. The returns for the December quarter of 1900 show twenty-four schools with an average attendance of 20, and fourteen with an average of from 1 to 5: are these latter all household schools?—Yes.

191. There are ten schools with an average attendance of from 6 to 9?—Yes, I suppose so.

192. *Mr. Hill.*] Do you pay the teachers a fixed amount?—No; we pay them £4 a head.

193. *Mr. Hogben.*] Do you consider there should be a minimum salary for teachers, whether certificated or not?—Yes.

194. What should be the minimum for an uncertificated teacher?—I should say, about £50 or £60.

195. What is the board of these teachers worth?—£20 or £25 a year.

196. Taking £25, that would leave £35, or seven pupils at £5 each required to bring the amount up to £60?—Yes.

197. Do you not think it hard to expect the householders to give money besides board and lodging?—Yes; but what else can be done under the circumstances?

198. What is a good domestic servant paid in the country districts of Nelson?—About 10s. a week.

199. With board and lodging, that is practically £50 a year?—Yes.

200. Do the teachers of household schools perform other duties?—As a rule, it is optional with the teachers.

201. I suppose, of course, they give four hours' tuition?—Oh, yes.

202. You have looked through the proposed scale of payment of pupil-teachers: is that for males higher or lower than your scale?—It is higher than ours, and, of course, much higher for female teachers, as they are all to be paid alike. On the whole the general scale is rather high.

203. *The Chairman.*] The large increase in your smaller schools is owing to people going back into the country where there was no settlement before?—Yes. These people are generally poor, and cannot afford to contribute towards salaries.

204. They are generally a long way from each other?—Yes.

205. Before you establish aided schools do you make ample inquiries?—Yes; we get lists of children from parents, and applications are often deferred time after time for the purpose of getting further information.