

*Mr. Stewart* : I did not suggest two-thirds.

284. *Mr. Hogben.*] Well, suppose you raise it to any other definite proportion: supposing you did not allow to be counted days when the attendance was more than half, but less than that other proportion, do you not think that a higher average payment would be better than excluding these days?—Yes. I think it would be better than raising the proportion, although it might not fit in with the special requirements of a hop-picking district.

285. What is your estimate of the cost of board and lodging for unmarried teachers?—7s. to 10s. a week for females, and 10s. to 15s. for men.

286. What is the difference?—Well, men require more accommodation.

287. The cost of living is cheaper in the country than in the town?—I think it is. On some parts of the West Coast, such as Denniston, Burnett's Face, and Millerton, the cost would be 30 per cent. more.

288. Does it cost more for a man to keep up his status and dignity in the country?—Not more than in town.

289. Do you think it necessary to have separate scales for town and country?—No, I do not think so.

290. *Mr. Stewart.*] When the Inspectors advise as experts as to what shall be done in the staffing of the schools, is that advice followed?—Yes. In some cases there may be a protest from the Committee, which may cause the Inspectors to modify their views.

291. Was that the case with respect to the amalgamation of River Terrace and Brightwater?—No.

292. The Board has given way on that question because of the Committee's objections?—No. The residents generally objected. A public meeting was held.

293. *Mr. Hill.*] Some time ago the Board transferred some money from the General to the Building Fund, and thus what should have gone to salaries went to building?—Yes; but it has been paid back again. The Audit Department has raised some objection to that transaction—the paying of it back to general account.

294. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] Do you think that the Board should exercise more authority than it has at present in regard to transfers and promotions?—I think it would be a great advantage if the Board could make transfers involving promotion. If the Board were to transfer a teacher from one school to another at present there might be a very unpleasant time.

295. At present there is no real promotion of teachers except at Wellington: do you consider that this state of things should continue?—I do not.

296. Do you think that promotions should be made in the same way as they are made in other branches of the public service?—Yes.

297. Do you think Inspectors should be responsible to the Boards or to the department?—To the Boards.

298. Do you not think it would be an advantage to transfer Inspectors occasionally?—Yes.

299. Do you think it would be an advantage if secretaries were occasionally transferred?—I do not know. I do not like the idea of transferring Inspectors so as to cause them to break up their homes. But they might be allowed to visit other districts.

300. *The Chairman.*] Have you any difficulty in finding teachers to fill vacancies?—No. When the salary is from £100 upwards there is a fairly large number of applicants. In the case of one position, the salary of £180, there were over thirty applications.

301. There are usually plenty of young girls and boys willing to accept pupil-teacherships?—There are plenty of young women, but very few well-qualified boys.

302. Have you lost many teachers?—As a rule they remain with us.

303. Have you ever reduced teachers' salaries because of attendance falling off?—It is constantly occurring every quarter. The salaries go up and down automatically with the attendance.

304. As to the exceptional cases, such as that at Richmond, do you think that matters could be adjusted satisfactorily if the Board had the right of transferring without consulting the Committees?—Yes, if the Board had authority; but at present I am quite sure that if the Board made transfers contrary to the wishes of the Committee things would be unpleasant.

305. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] Following up the question of transfers of Inspectors and secretaries, do you not think that if these officers remain too long in a district they are apt to form prejudices in regard to teachers, favourable or otherwise?—I do not know whether the Inspectors form prejudices, but I am quite sure I do not. In all questions affecting teachers I always refer to the Inspectors' opinions.

306. It has been shown that in some instances teachers are receiving less than domestic servants: do you think that a teacher teaching two or three children in a household school gives more value than a good servant?—I think so; but the householders, as a rule, do not think so.

307. Do you think that a teacher teaching two or three children four hours a day does more valuable work than a servant who is able to cook a dinner and iron a shirt?—Yes. If the teacher is competent I think the work is more valuable, and deserving of higher wages.

308. Have you any information as to the proposals submitted by the Nelson teachers?—No; I have not seen them.

G. A. HARKNESS, Chief Inspector.

309. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] Can you tell us the distance that your schools are apart?—Of late years we have made a rule that none should be established within four miles of another. Of those of which complaint has been made in the town and in the Waimeas, I may say that they are very old-established schools, having been established about, say, thirty or forty years; and many of these are very much nearer than they otherwise would have been. Brightwater has four schools within its immediate neighbourhood, each within two miles. That state of things throughout the district