

558. You are aware that in some districts it is not only the question of roads that has to be considered, but there may be a mountain or a river that it is impossible to cross?—Yes, I recognise the great difficulties in the way.

559. *Mr. Hogben.*] You are acquainted with the circumstances that affect the cost of living of people in the country districts round Nelson, are you not?—Yes.

560. Are you acquainted with similar circumstances in other parts of the colony?—No, I am not. I have lived for some years in the Nelson District.

561. Is the cost of living, as far as you are aware of the facts in the Nelson District, higher than in other parts of the colony?—Yes.

562. Within the Nelson District does the cost of living vary very considerably in one part from another?—Yes; on the coast it is somewhat higher.

563. Do you think it would be possible to adjust any scale of salaries by taking these facts into consideration?—I hardly think that is a sufficient ground to make any difference in the salaries.

564. Has it been proposed to make any difference in the Nelson District?—No.

565. You say you have been living here for some time?—Yes.

566. Can you form any idea as to the value of board and lodging in an ordinary country settler's house: take the case of a teacher in a household school, for instance?—I should say about £30 would be fair; 10s. or 12s. a week.

567. If you took the holidays into consideration it would hardly amount to £30 a year, would it?—No.

568. Then, £30 a year would be the outside amount?—Yes.

569. Would you have any objection to the transfer of a teacher from one district to another in order to bring into operation a colonial scale of staff and salaries?—No, certainly not.

570. Do you think your Committee would raise any objections?—No, I think not; that is, if the teacher was considered and would suffer no loss.

571. If the Board acted to its utmost discretion there would be no objection, would there?—No.

572. And, of course, you understand the Board would try to avoid any loss on the part of the teacher?—Yes.

573. You expressed an opinion—I hardly think you meant it—with regard to elementary technical work in a small primary school: you draw a distinction between manual instruction and technical work, I presume?—Yes.

574. Technical instruction has for its object training for one or more trades, has it not?—Yes.

575. Then, your answer—*i.e.*, that it was impossible to do elementary technical work in small schools—would not apply to manual instruction?—No.

576. It would only apply to the technical subjects taken, or suggested to be taken, in a small school?—Yes.

577. Could you name one of the subjects?—Woodwork, carpentry.

578. You think it would be impossible to teach woodwork in a small school?—Yes, with the present staff.

579. Do you think it would be impossible to teach clay-modelling or plasticine-modelling?—No; I think that could be taught; it is being done in small schools now.

580. And cardboard-modelling?—Yes.

581. Would that work be more difficult than elementary science?—No.

582. It would be all the easier to teach those subjects if the present syllabus was lightened for small schools?—Yes.

583. If that were the case you would not see any difficulty in carrying out the Manual and Technical Instruction Act in the small schools?—No.

584. *The Chairman.*] You say it is perfectly feasible to carry out manual and technical work?—Yes; it is done in our schools.

585. There are six schools under the control of your Committee?—Yes.

586. You have a Boys' Central School?—Yes.

587. A Girls' Central?—Yes; the Toitotoi School.

588. The other four are side-schools?—Yes; four mixed infant-schools, working up to the Second Standard.

589. Is the instruction given in the Girls' School—the Toitotoi School—equal in efficiency to that given in the Boys' Central School?—Yes, I think so; they have an excellent staff of teachers there. The situation of the school is very bad, and on that account we lose a lot of pupils in the winter-time. We applied for a new site—for the site of the old gaol—so that we could get the school removed, but we were refused the site. The Minister of Education visited that school with me upon one occasion, and he was strongly of the opinion that the site was a very bad one indeed. We applied for the new site thinking it would be greatly in the interests of education and in the interests of the girls attending the school. The school is right up against the hill; very little sunlight getting at it, and in the winter the children are nearly perished with the cold.

590. Then, on account of its situation the school is being worked under serious disadvantages?—Yes; and we lose a good many children; they go to private schools.

591. What is your opinion as to the efficiency of the staff and the character of the education given?—It is first class.

592. Do you think the school holds its own against the Boys' School?—I do.

593. The teachers in each school are equally competent?—Yes, I think so; fairly so. Of course, there is an advantage in having a man at the head of the school; under many circumstances, I think a male better than a female.

594. Do you think it would be an improvement if there was a master at the head of the Toitotoi School?—We are quite satisfied with our present headmistress. It is only my opinion, gene-