

678. You do not know whether it is the case in the country schools or not?—No.

679. *Mr. Hogben.*] How do you compare the cost of living in Nelson with that of other districts you have lived in in New Zealand, especially in regard to food and clothing?—I know by the prices I have to pay in the shops here as compared with elsewhere that it is very much higher. I was ten years in Southland.

680. Is your acquaintance with those other places at all recent?—I have been nine years here.

681. And you have not renewed your acquaintance with those other places?—Not recently.

682. Does the cost vary greatly between different parts of the Nelson District and other places?—I have no experience in regard to that.

683. With regard to the site you want for the Girls' School, you say it is still available?—Yes, still in the hands of the Government.

684. You are aware that the Board made application to the Education Department—to the Minister of Education—to endeavour to get the site, or part of the site?—Yes, I think the Board went a certain length.

685. The application was made: do you know what answer was given to that application?—No.

686. Would you be surprised to hear that it was absolutely needed for the purposes of the Police Department, and that the Education Department did its best; but the Police Department represented its needs in such a way that the Education Department could not contradict them?—I have good reason to believe that if the Board had agreed to move the school we would have got the site.

687. With regard to the consultation of Committees in the matter of transfer of teachers, you think there would be no strong feeling if the Boards consulted the Committees in the full sense of legal requirements, and yet after that transferred the teachers contrary to the wishes of the Committees: do you think any serious objection would be taken?—I do not think so, if the Board consulted them properly.

688. You think there would be no serious trouble?—I do not think so.

689. In your opinion, the point is that the Committee should be properly consulted?—Yes.

690. *The Chairman.*] I understand you to mean that either the Board or the Committee should have the power to make transfers or payments, but you object to dual control?—Yes.

691. You had legal opinion on the subject to the effect that the Committees must be consulted?—Yes; it must be a reality, and not a sham.

692. Assuming that a Committee is consulted and is subsequently overruled, do you think there would be any illegality on the part of the Board?—No; it is quite legal, evidently.

693. You say that the site you wish for the Toitoti School is in the centre of the town, and has been used as a gaol-site?—Yes, many years.

694. How long has it been abandoned? Is there any gaol there now?—The buildings are there, but they are not used.

695. They are no longer required for that purpose, then?—A new building has been put up convenient to the police-station.

696. For what purpose?—A gaol.

697. Is it used as a gaol?—Yes; those who are to serve longer terms are taken to Wellington, I suppose.

698. In that case, do you think it is desirable to have a school alongside a gaol?—These buildings are far apart; the site is in the centre of the town, and in the sunniest part of the town.

699. Then, the site is not being used for any useful purpose now?—It is not being used at all.

700. You believe that if the question of the site for the establishment of the Girls' School had been urged by the Education Board properly the Government would have given in to popular pressure?—Yes, I believe so.

701. You do not think the present system of appointing pupil-teachers desirable?—I think that our experience in Nelson shows that it is not.

702. Is there any defined age, any limit at which pupil-teachers are appointed?—Yes; I think the age is fifteen.

703. Are they required to undergo any preparatory course before they are admitted to the schools as pupil-teachers?—Yes; there is an entrance examination. Candidates are expected to appear at this examination—that is, if they have not been attending examinations at the college, or lectures, and are thus equal to the preparatory or entrance examination.

704. Do you consider it is possible for all those young female pupil-teachers to properly attend to their duties in school and teach, as apparently some of them are doing, a considerable number of children, and at the same time prepare for their future examinations?—I do not think they can thoroughly.

705. A case was mentioned of a teacher who left one of your town schools and returned to the country school because she was worked too hard in town?—Yes.

706. Have you known cases where girls have broken down under the severe mental strain of having to attend to their school duties and prepare afterwards for their annual examinations?—We have had a good many break down in health.

707. Did they have to give up their employment?—I was trying to think. I know we had one or two cases.

708. Have you had any fatal cases where girls have broken down in health under the strain?—No, I think not.

709. Do you think that if pupil-teachers were better treated and better paid you would have applications from boys as well as girls?—Yes, I do.

710. You consider the payment of pupil-teachers inadequate to attract both sexes?—Yes.