

711. What is your opinion as to the reason for girls applying, and not boys, for the positions?—I suppose the boys think they are able to do better elsewhere, for there are few applications.

712. The boys get more remunerative employment?—Yes, I think so.

713. Do many of the pupil-teachers or young teachers attached to the city schools seek situations in the country?—The tendency is to stay in town as far as possible. They live with their parents and other members of the family, and thus do not care about going into these out-of-the-way places.

714. Then, there is a difficulty in getting them to go into the country?—Yes.

715. On the other hand, is there any great difficulty in getting country teachers to apply for vacancies in the towns?—There is no great rush of country teachers to the town schools when there is an opening.

716. Not if there is a vacancy with a salary of £150 a year?—There are very few like that.

717. *Mr. Stewart.*] Has the Nelson Board ever had a dual scale—one for the Coast schools?—I think not.

WILLIAM F. WORLEY, Assistant Master, Boys' Central School.

*Mr. Worley :* I may say, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I have been very much interested in the question of a colonial scale of staff and salaries for many years. I have gone very carefully into the matter, and in all of them, this present suggested one included, I notice what I consider to be an error—that is, that assistant teachers are paid, or are proposed to be paid, according to the size of the school in which they are employed. In some cases, no doubt, that would work out fairly enough, say, in the smaller schools, where the assistant would take the lower classes. When, however, that school reached a certain size the first or second assistant would be doing exactly similar work to the work of an assistant in a larger school, but would receive very much less remuneration. The first assistant should be capable of taking charge—temporarily, at any rate—of the school in the absence of the headmaster, and I think assistant teachers doing the same work should receive the same salary. Under the proposed scale the first assistant in a school with an average attendance of 250 is to receive a salary of £150, but in a school of 600 he is paid £70 more—*i.e.*, £220—and the same thing applies to the assistants all through. Now, I think a better system would be to grade the assistants as first class, second class, and so on, according to the degree of examination passed, and length of service; then the larger schools would be entitled to two first assistants, a moderate-sized school would be entitled to one first-class assistant and one second-class, and so on according to the size of the school. I am also of the opinion that a limit should be put to the number of scholars an assistant teacher is expected to have charge of. At present the number varies considerably; sometimes we have had assistant teachers managing 90 pupils, with only a probationer to assist, and I think it is impossible for good work to be done under those conditions. Should a difficulty arise in doing as I suggest, then an increase to the staff would be necessary, even if it were only a temporary appointment. With regard to this suggested scale and the Nelson schools, the Nelson schools are isolated, and if the scale comes into operation as at present there are some of us who stand to suffer in the way of salary. If the teachers in the Boys' Central School were remunerated according to the scale, the first assistant would receive £150, the second assistant £100, and the others accordingly. The first assistant teaches the Sixth Standard and the second assistant the Fifth Standard, both of them doing exactly the same work as first and second assistants in schools in Wellington, Christchurch, or Dunedin, but who, by accident or otherwise, may be attached to a large school, and, by reason of that accident, be in receipt of a much larger salary. Then, again, if the Nelson schools were brought under the scale a difficulty would at once arise in connection with the side-schools. These side-schools are the feeders of the Central School, and if the salary is fixed according to the average attendance, after an examination, when a side-school sends up perhaps a draft of 30 pupils to the Central School, the salary of the teacher of the side-school would be greatly diminished, and teachers would suffer for the quality of their work; therefore it is obvious that it would be to the interests of the teachers in these side-schools not to send up more pupils than they could possibly help, and then only when absolutely compelled. If the whole of the town schools were amalgamated into one school, and the salaries paid according to the proposed scale, then many of the teachers in Nelson would benefit, and especially some of our underpaid lady teachers. We have a female teacher holding a C2 certificate, and another holding a D2, receiving £70 per annum. An amalgamation of the town schools, and these small side-schools as well, would total about 960 pupils, about the number at the Gloucester Street School in Christchurch. It is merely a geographical accident that we teachers in Nelson happen to be so split up and divided. If the object of the colonial scale is to administer justice all round, then it seems to me that consideration must be given to these facts. The total salaries of all the teachers in the Town of Nelson at present is something like £2,427, and according to the proposed scale they would total £2,552, an increase of £125. I should like to point out, in regard to the Toitoti Valley School, that the average attendance is 45 less than that of the Boys' Central; but at the census lately taken in Nelson the females are more numerous than the males. With regard to pupil-teachers, I have had pupil-teachers working under me—I have a son a pupil-teacher—and therefore I have special opportunities for noticing the strain upon them in doing their school-work and carrying on their own individual studies at the same time. I am strongly of opinion that the hours of labour of pupil-teachers should be at least shortened by one hour a day. I have a Fifth Standard class with about 70 pupils, and I make a point of giving my probationer at least one hour a day for himself. In some schools a pupil-teacher has to work the whole time, and carry on his studies as well, and I am absolutely certain that is too much. With regard to the removal or transfer of teachers, I have felt sometimes that I should like a change—a temporary change. I have been kept back by my inability to attend university lectures, and I have