

been debarred from making the progress I might have made had there been possibilities open to me. If a colonial scale had been in operation, it might have been arranged that I could change places with a teacher in Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch, as the case may be, and so have had facilities to pass on to a university degree; but, of course, I have not been able to do so, as there has been no opportunity.

718. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] Do you think it would be an improvement in the education of the children and the efficiency of the teaching, as far as the Nelson town schools are concerned, if there was an amalgamation brought about?—It is rather a difficult matter to say. As regards the efficiency of the teachers, I think that is quite satisfactory; but I think, on the whole, if there were amalgamation there would be a gain in efficiency.

719. *Mr. Davidson.*] You object to the arrangement of the salaries so far as male assistants are concerned?—Yes, for the reasons I pointed out just now.

720. If you take a school of from 570 to 600 you find the salary of the first male assistant £220; from 960 to 1,050, £250; and yet with the great increase in the number there is only an increase of £30 in salary: do you think the responsibility of what might be called the deputy headmaster is not worth more than an additional £30?—Yes; I mentioned that with regard to the first assistant; I quite recognise that he should be capable of taking charge of the whole school. With regard to the other assistants, I do not think it applies; I do not think the second assistant should receive as much.

721. Do you know of any district in New Zealand, or any district in the world for that matter, where such an arrangement as you suggest obtains?—No, I do not.

722. You say that you think there should be a limit to the number of pupils an assistant is required to teach: have you looked through the scale and struck an average of the number of children per teacher in the different grades of schools?—Yes, I have done that; but it frequently happens that the number in a class varies; a Fourth Standard class might be overloaded.

723. You have found in the analysis of the scale that the largest number of pupils any teacher should have is not more than 40?—Yes; striking the average, that is so, but it does not work out in practice. As I said, you may have one class overloaded, while the other classes may be very moderate ones.

724. You admit that is a fault in the arrangement of the staff?—One not easily remedied.

725. You pointed out the fact that the introduction of so many of the small schools would reduce the salaries in the Nelson town schools, did you not?—Yes.

726. You consider that there should be an amalgamation of the schools, by the abolition of one or more of them and the establishment of a central school, with the headmaster of the Boys' Central School or the headmistress of the Girls' School having supervision of the whole of the six schools brought under amalgamation?—Yes; I think one head-teacher could supervise all the work; there should be the head of the boys' department and the head of the girls' department.

727. Do you know that the amalgamation of such schools under similar conditions has taken place to a very large extent in Victoria?—No.

728. Do you know that a head-teacher has charge of two schools sometimes a mile and a half apart?—No.

729. *Mr. Stewart.*] You have a son a pupil-teacher at the present time?—Yes.

730. In what school?—Haven Road.

731. Do the conditions of that school admit of proper supervision of a pupil-teacher?—The head-teacher is in one part of the room, carrying on what is especially her own class, and perhaps exercises a certain amount of oversight.

732. Do you think that is proper supervision for a pupil-teacher?—No.

733. You know the country districts of Nelson fairly well?—Yes.

734. Do you think that all the country schools you have seen are necessary?—No; I have frequently seen schools I thought unnecessarily close.

735. Would there be any simple expedient of uniting those schools in any way?—Yes; it appears to me that at times the matter of a little bridge or so would make it possible for the children to get to a school not far away.

736. Your School Committees generally have a fair allowance made them by the Board, do they not?—Yes.

737. Has it ever come under your knowledge that at present School Committees are finding their books and other school requisites out of the Committee funds?—Yes; everything found for the children—all their school requisites.

738. *Mr. Luke.*] You say that the average attendance at the Toitoe Valley School is not as high as it should be?—Yes; according to the number of females in the town the attendance should be higher.

739. Is there any other reason besides the unhealthiness of the situation that would cause the small attendance?—I cannot say; I cannot imagine any other reason. I have had considerable experience of that school; my wife taught there, and my daughters attended the school, and I think the site very undesirable and unhealthy.

740. Is it not a central position?—No; but the worst feature is the dampness of the locality. It loses the sun very early in the day in the winter.

741. Supposing you were transferred to another education district where there was a university college, would you be prepared to keep terms and attend lectures?—Yes.

742. *Mr. Hill.*] I notice that you said you would like the assistants in schools graded and classified, and that you thought an assistant in the first class, where also the schools were placed in certain classes, should be equal to the headmaster of a school of the second class?—I said I thought assistants should be classified as first, second, and third, according to their certificate and length of service, and that the larger schools should be entitled to two assistants in order to equalise the amount of work.