

95. Do the Committees ever make application for male teachers in preference to female teachers?—Yes, we have had applications of that kind in the large schools.

96. What are the reasons given?—They consider male teachers far better in schools of 70 or 80 to 100.

97. Take these schools with an average attendance of from 30 to 40: is there any disadvantage, as far as you are aware, in having female teachers at the head of such schools?—I do not think so.

98. You think the discipline just as good under a female teacher as under a male teacher?—From what I have seen I should say so.

99. Do you think that the salaries paid in these small schools are inadequate?—Yes.

100. Are you referring to the female teachers?—Yes; I said they required a higher salary.

101. Do you consider the headmaster and assistants in large schools fairly well paid?—Yes.

102. If they were to resign their positions, would you not have much trouble in getting the vacancies filled?—No, I do not think so.

103. *Mr. Stewart.*] Do you lose any of your male teachers through taking up other professions?—Yes.

104. Have you lost any recently from that cause?—Yes; one recently.

W. R. KETTLE, Treasurer, Grey Education Board.

105. *The Chairman.*] I understand that you are the treasurer of the Grey Education Board?—Yes, I appear before the Commission in that capacity. I have been treasurer for seven or eight years, I have occupied the chair three years, and I have been on the School Committee about ten years, so that I think you will admit I have a pretty good idea of educational matters within the district. I wish particularly to bring before you the fact that we have an average attendance of 7 to 12 in about ten schools, and that on each of these schools the Board loses from £30 to £50 a year. In order to pay the salaries of the teachers, we have to deduct moneys from the teachers occupying positions as headmasters and assistants in the larger schools—in the Greymouth, Cobden, Taylorville, and Dobson Schools. These schools provide capital for the smaller schools, and were it not for these large schools it would be almost impossible for the Board to carry on. The Grey Board gets a small amount from the High School Board of Governors, periodically, to assist them. The school at Barrytown has an attendance of 12, and the teacher's salary is £64 a year. This is a very out-of-the-way place, and owing to the expense incurred in travelling to and fro—for the teacher must at times come to town to receive tuition—a salary of £64 is altogether inadequate. I might instance also the school at Red Jack's, the attendance of which is 9, and the salary paid is £56. We called for applicants for the position the other day, and we appointed a male teacher, I am ashamed to say, at the amount mentioned. I say it is practically impossible for that man to live and be honest. In the case of the No Town School the attendance is 8, and the teacher is a female whose salary is £56 a year. Of course, she is in a slightly better position, for she gets her board and lodging for about 12s. per week, though she is not able to go to town very often on account of the expense. It costs 5s. or 6s. to get to town.

106. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] By train?—By train and coach. I think, myself, that the teachers in these outlying districts, especially where the railway goes through, should receive a free pass, say, once a week to enable them to come to town for the purpose of completing their studies.

107. Do they come to town for tuition?—Yes. A teacher from Ahaura wishing to come to town would have to pay railway fares, and that I consider unfair. I think if the matter were represented to the Government, and something were suggested in the way of giving these teachers a pass, it would be found advisable to do so. I may state I am of the opinion that it would be advisable for the whole of the West Coast to be under one Board. A considerable amount of money is spent in departmental expenses, and the teachers have to pay for it. I think one Inspector would do for the whole of the West Coast, and a secretary with an assistant. If this were done there would be a considerable sum saved. I might say also, with reference to Inspectors, that I am strongly of the opinion that they should be the servants of the Government, and not servants of the Board, and that they should be changed or transferred periodically. One cannot get away from the fact that Inspectors do make friends in their district, for it is only natural they should do so, and on that account a system of transferring them from one district to another would be advisable. With reference to the capitation grant, I think that in districts like the Grey and Westland there should be a special capitation grant; each school should be graded, and paid accordingly. I think in some schools where the attendance is only 7 or 8 there should be a capitation grant of £5. In schools where the attendance is 15 to 30 there should be a capitation grant of £4 10s., and less for larger schools. As I said before, the Government are not providing the necessary funds for these small schools. They are maintained at the expense of the teachers in the larger schools. I have here a return of the salaries paid, and also the attendance of each school.

108. *Mr. Stewart.*] Up to what time?—Up to the 31st March. I may state that the Government has increased the salaries in these schools considerably, and deserve every credit for taking the matter in hand, and insisting that the teachers should receive the money instead of the Boards being allowed to spend in other directions. At the same time, I think the money should be given to the Boards, so that the Boards may allocate it among the teachers. I think the Boards are better able to judge what teachers are entitled to increased salaries, more so than the Government would be.

109. *Mr. Davidson.*] Have you given any special study to the question of a colonial scale?—Yes.

110. Is it, in your opinion, desirable that there should be a colonial scale?—Yes; I think it would be a very good thing if it were carried out, save that there should be a special grant to