

28. Then why do you not pay as much as Hawke's Bay?—What is Hawke's Bay paying?

29. They are paying £575?—Well, what are the travelling-expenses in Hawke's Bay?

30. The travelling-allowance is £100?—Well, our travelling-allowance is £150, so that our Chief Inspector gets an extra £50 for travelling-expenses.

31. Are you quite satisfied that the Inspector in an Education Board district is free from all influence that may affect his judgment?—Yes, I am perfectly satisfied of that. I have sat upon the Otago Education Board for seventeen years, and I have never known that any hint has been given to the Inspector as to any particular matter he has to deal with.

32. And are you satisfied that the provision with regard to free places is uniform in the various districts?—Yes, it is controlled by regulation—the method of examination and value of every subject is controlled by regulation.

33. But who makes the examination?—The Inspectors in the district.

34. What uniformity is there between the judgment of the Inspector in your district and that of the Inspector in the Hawke's Bay District?—I cannot say there is any uniformity, and I take up the position that it does not matter whether the Inspectors are under the control of the Department or the Board you cannot get absolute uniformity, because the whole matter of inspection in an examination of that kind depends largely upon the man and upon the estimate that Inspector is prepared to place upon any particular number of pupils. You could not get your Inspectors to act uniformly any more than you could get a number of other men to act uniformly. You lay down a general method at the outset, and you expect the Inspectors to act as nearly as possible up to the regulations they have to interpret.

35. *Mr. Sidey.* Has your Board considered the proposals in the Bill with regard to the consultation of Committees?—Yes, we approve of the proposals in the Bill. The proposals contained in the Bill are practically an endorsement of the policy pursued by the Otago Education Board.

36. For how long?—For many years.

37. That is the sending-down of one name only?—Under the Bill it is not proposed to send down one name only. It gives to the Boards—and rightly too—the option, where there is one candidate with outstanding claims, to send forward one name only, but we have gone to the full extent provided of sending on four names when we are satisfied that there are four men or women having equal claims to promotion.

38. Has it not been your rule to send more than one name?—I would say this: that out of any hundred lists sent forward to the Committees there has not been 3 per cent. of single names.

39. Does not this Bill therefore propose a very radical alteration in the methods of the Otago Education Board?—It is not radical.

40. I thought you started by saying that it practically confirmed what you had been doing?—We have adopted the principle that where there is one candidate with outstanding claims that name only is sent on. It does not often happen that you get one person with outstanding claims either in the matter of ability or length of service.

41. Is it not very rare that you will find three candidates whose qualifications are equal?—It depends entirely upon the position you are calling applications for. In my experience on the Board in consultation with the Inspector I find that there have been some positions in which we have had eight and ten candidates whose qualifications it has been most difficult to separate.

42. We have been told in evidence that it would be extremely unlikely that there would be any occasions where the qualifications of all applications could be said to be exactly equal to one another?—Possibly not equal on all points, but in making a selection of a teacher you have to consider more than one point. An applicant may be better qualified from one aspect than another.

43. Then from your reading of the Bill you consider you will still be able in the majority of cases to send down more than one name?—I think so. At any rate, the Board sees no reason to take exception to the clause in the Bill as it stands.

44. Do you speak for the Board when you give your interpretation of the clause?—Yes. We have carefully considered it.

45. What alteration is proposed in the Bill in the present boundaries of your district?—The proposed alteration is to take away from us the County of Clutha and to give us the County of Waimate from the South Canterbury District.

46. You object to that?—We object to Clutha being taken out of our district. We say it can be better managed from Dunedin than from Invercargill. The means of communication are better. Take almost any part of Clutha, it will be necessary for the Inspectors to go right up from Invercargill to Balclutha, which is the extreme northern end of the district, in order to get into any other part of the Clutha County.

47. You do not object to the inclusion of Waimate?—We are perfectly content to remain as we are, but if it becomes necessary to make an alteration then we look for compensation, and the compensation offered in this case is not equal to the loss either in the number of schools or in the attendance.

48. But do you not think it would be to the general advantage of the teachers to have large districts whereby they would get wider opportunities for promotion?—No, I do not think the advantages are so great as some people imagine. You are certainly increasing the number of plums, but you are making the pudding a great deal bigger, and the proportion of plums is no greater to the pudding than it would be in a smaller one with less plums. If you extend your districts, unless you are taking a district where the proportion of very small schools is great and the proportion of large schools very small, they gain nothing at all by being taken into another district unless the proportion of big schools is very much greater than the proportion of small schools.

49. You have given your opinion, at any rate, and that is that you do not think that large districts necessarily offer greater facilities for promotion?—I do not think they do.