

unfairness of the system. Clause 38 (4): When a new school district is proclaimed it should take effect on a date to be fixed by the Board, so that a new Committee could be elected at once and placed in charge of the school, which might otherwise have to be placed for some months under the control of a neighbouring Committee with no interest in it. According to the Bill the new Committee would not be elected until the annual election of Committees in April. We have an instance of where that will happen in Invercargill. Clause 53 (7): It should be made clear that Committees are not compelled to provide out of their ordinary funds the stationery used by pupils. Clause 96: The number of scholarships for each district should be defined, and the present provision for Junior National Scholarships for sole-teacher schools and also for schools under 200 should be added to the Bill. Clause 111 (1): Boards should be allowed a small percentage on moneys received for managers of technical classes to help to pay for the Board's cost of administration. Fifth Schedule, teachers' salaries: Teachers of the largest sole-teacher schools should be paid as well as if not better than head teachers of the smaller two-teacher schools. This could be provided for at no additional cost by increasing the salaries of the former and decreasing the salaries of the latter. Then Grade III in the Bill would have to be divided at, say, an average of fifty. The largest Grade II school is much more difficult to manage and requires greater skill on the part of the teacher than the smallest Grade III school, and when a school rises in grade there should be an increase of £60 in possible salary and at the same time such a material reduction in the work required. The minimum salary for Grade I schools should be increased to £120.

2. *Mr. Hogben.*] Have you calculated what your Board will get by way of capitation grant under the Bill?—Yes.

3. Will it get less than it is getting now?—We will be in just about the same financial position. We are relieved of the Inspectors' salaries, but then our capitation is reduced, and we have extra expenditure placed on the Board. The decreases in revenue and expenditure are almost equal. Of course, my point is that, while in Southland we will be no better off under the Bill, in some of the other districts they will be much better off and will be able to treat their Committees much more liberally.

4. Take the question connected with it—clause 34, School Committees' allowances: the method in the Bill does not differ in principle from the method in the present Act, does it?—Except that the £250 is withdrawn. The method is the same, but under the provisions of the Bill these larger districts would be able to treat their schools still more liberally. The difference between the two allowances will tend to get greater. I can bring evidence to prove that.

5. You think there is opportunity for reform in the present system?—I am quite sure of it.

6. Have you worked it out to see what grant per school would make it as nearly as possible equitable?—No. Of course, I prefer a Dominion scale to Committees.

7. What do you mean by that?—The Government should take 6s. or 6s. 6d. of the capitation to Boards, and out of that provide a scale of allowances to Committees, and should pay the Boards the total sum earned by the Committees in their districts and give the Boards the balance for their administrative expenses. Another remedy would be an allowance per school plus a capitation allowance.

8. You would not make that allowance the maximum as well as the minimum?—It might be necessary to give more, because if you take 6s. 6d. you would not be able to treat some Committees as liberally as they are treated now. It might lead to a reduction in the allowances in some of the more favoured districts.

9. Is there not another point? How many months of the year do you require to have fires in Southland?—I suppose for quite eight months of the year, whereas in Auckland, I suppose, they have not to provide fires at all in some districts.

10. The Board should have the power to increase the grant above the minimum in order to provide for that?—Yes. That seems to imply that Southland should get more than Auckland to make up for climatic differences, but we are not asking for that.

11. If clause 111 (1) was altered so as not to conflict with clause 31 you would be satisfied in regard to that?—I think we would.

12. *Mr. Malcolm.*] I was much impressed with your proposal for a system of capitation framed not only on attendance but on the number of schools. You would suggest an amendment in that direction?—Yes.

13. Would it not be better to make it on the number of rooms, otherwise mixed schools would be penalized?—That might be even better than my suggestion. In drawing up the scale of allowances for Southland I was guided by the number of rooms—an allowance plus so-much per room.

14. Have you any Grade 0 schools?—Nine or ten.

15. Have you any suggestion as to the minimum capitation for those schools?—I think I would favour an increase from £6 to £10 if possible.

16. It would not be a big matter in your district?—No.

17. *Mr. Hanan.*] You heard the evidence of Mr. Mitchell, Chairman of the Otago Education Board, with reference to the boundaries: what is your opinion in regard to them?—I think he suggested that Clutha should be retained by Otago. He said they would rather have Clutha than Waimate. Tapanui district and Waipahi are much nearer Invercargill, and should be added to Southland.

18. What schools at present in Otago would be ceded by this Bill to Southland?—There are forty-three schools—one Grade VIII, two Grade V, six Grade IV, and thirty-four sole-teacher schools. With regard to allowances to School Committees, I may say that this makes our task much harder because of the number of small schools. It tends to lower our allowances to Committees.

19. Have you any observation to offer with regard to that?—I have gone into figures. Our present School Committee allowances in Southland cost us a capitation of 6s. 0½d. last year, and these Clutha schools would cost 7s. 1d. on the same scale.