

40. *Mr. Sidey.*] With regard to the district bounds, you suggest the Blue Mountains or the Clutha River as being the boundary between the Otago and the Southland Districts. Do you suggest that the Clutha River should be the boundary all the way, or only one small part?—We do not press the boundary matter at all, but a more equitable division might take place than what is proposed.

41. Do you think that Balclutha could be more conveniently worked from Dunedin than from Invercargill?—I think Balclutha town could be.

42. Do you not think that the district as far as Waipahi might very well be worked from Dunedin?—I think that as far as Clinton is nearer to Invercargill. At any rate, the tongue of land that is proposed to be left in Otago, running up to Crookston and Heriot, lies naturally to Invercargill, and could be more economically worked from Invercargill.

43. Do you propose that the Clutha River right up should be made the boundary?—We would take it, but we do not press it.

44. *Mr. Malcolm.*] Would you tell me from the railway time-table how far Balclutha is from Dunedin and from Invercargill?—Fifty-three miles from Dunedin and eighty-six miles from Invercargill. That is by the present railway. I do not know how far it will be when the Tokonui Railway is through.

45. *Mr. McCallum.*] Can you name a single local body in Southland that favours amalgamation with Otago?—No.

46. Or an individual?—No.

47. *Mr. Malcolm.*] Including teachers?—Yes. Miss Birse knows that the Southland teachers do not want to be joined to Otago.

48. *Mr. McCallum.*] What is your secondary school?—Invercargill Boys' High School. Invercargill Girls' High School, Gore High School, and the Southland Technical College.

49. How are they managed?—They have separate Boards.

50. Are they affected by this Act?—The Gore High School is. The Southland Boys' and Girls' High Schools are constituted under another Act, and are endowed schools.

51. *Mr. Hanan.*] You made a remark that the Director might become an autocrat. Are you aware that he would be subject to Ministerial control?—Even so, he has an immense power. Any officer is subject to Ministerial control.

52. You do not think the Boards would have the same confidence in the advice to be tendered by centralized Inspectors?—We do not.

53. What do you base that on?—They will be departmental officers. Their first duty will be to their employer. If there should be a question arise as between the Board and the Department, the sympathy of the Inspector will not be with the Board in an effort to get an equitable settlement.

54. In what respects have you found a clash between the Board and the Department, and why do you think the centralized Inspector will act detrimentally to the Board's interests?—The question of the establishment of a new school might lead to friction. The question of the interpretation of a syllabus might do so.

55. Do you not think it desirable to secure uniformity in the interpretation of the syllabus and regulations?—I do not think that uniformity makes for efficiency at all times.

56. You do not desire uniformity of interpretation of the syllabus and regulations?—Not all over.

57. You want a Dominion scheme of grading?—I prefer it, although I am not particularly in love with it. I think a Dominion scheme of promotion would be advisable, but a Dominion scheme of grading would be dangerous.

58. You do not believe in it?—I do not know that I do. There is this further point I would like to mention: At present the tendency is for the Education Department to come into conflict with the policy of the Government in regard to its land-administration. The effort of Parliament is to induce people to leave the towns and go into the country. If the people then go out into the backblocks, is it not a fair thing that the Education Department should follow these people and give them as nearly as possible the privileges they are forfeiting by going out? We contend that in the proposals of the Bill the country settler is not helped. On the one hand the country is asking these men to go out and settle the backblocks, and on the other they are asking them to forfeit the education of their children. That should be a strong claim on statesmen to frame some measure which will give the people who are willing to sacrifice something in the interests of the Dominion some compensation from the education votes that will partially make up for the loss they sustain in going into the outskirts.

JOHN FISHER recalled.

59. *The Acting-Chairman (Mr. Statham).*]—I understand the Southland Technical School is under the control of the Southland Education Board?—I wish to put forward on behalf of the Southland Technical College Managers the following suggested amendments of and additions to clauses dealing with technical education:—

- (a.) Clause 2: Definitions.—Existing "technical day schools" should be included in the definition of a "secondary school." The definition in the Bill appears to include only technical high schools to be hereafter established under clause 84.
- (b.) After representation in clause 8, (f), (h), to read: "one member elected by teachers in secondary schools" and "one member elected by teachers in technical schools." The object of this change is to secure representation of technical teachers on the Council.
- (c.) Managers of secondary and technical schools should be represented on the Council of Education.