

3. Does it make any difference at all?—I am not prepared to answer the question.

4. *Mr. Hanan.*] What is the ratio as between man and woman?—I do not know what the position is at present. I am not formulating my own opinion on it, but I am stating the opinion of the assistant teachers generally, and they imagine, upon what grounds I do not know, that there will be a definite attempt to drive the males out of the service and increase the number of women teachers.

5. Is it not a fact that a number of women teachers leave before their period of training is completed?—I have not heard so.

6. Do you know what the proportion of males and females is in schools of one to fifteen?—No.

7. Do you know the maximum salaries in these schools?—No. I may say I have not read the Bill yet.

8. Have you read the report of the Education Department for 1912?—No.

9. You have not seen the figures given on pages 13 and 14?—If I have not read the report I have not read those pages.

10. I suggest that you read them?—What difference does it make? I told you I was giving you the opinions of men who fear there is going to be a greater proportion of females than males in the teaching profession in the future, and they hold that view with considerable apprehension.

ROBERT RUSSELL HUNTER, School-teacher, Dunedin, examined. (No. 27.)

1. *The Acting-Chairman (Mr. Statham).*] You represent a body of teachers, I understand?—Yes. I am here on behalf of the male assistants of Dunedin and suburbs. I do not intend to waste your time by citing too many cases of injustice suffered under the new Bill, but only a few cases will suffice to convince you that the Bill, while benefiting many teachers, causes distress and honest dissatisfaction among other men who deserve well at your hands. The male assistants believe that it is the earnest wish of this Committee to mete out justice as far as it is humanly possible to do so, and also that you cannot satisfy everybody. Because of this faith in you we have been sent up to lay our claims before you, so that you may hear all sides of the question and judge and act accordingly. I shall now proceed to give you some cases where through mere luck teachers have been graded and paid a salary beyond their merits, while others of long and faithful and successful service have through ill fortune been practically disrated. A has nineteen years' service (D2); first assistant, Grade VII school, £290–310; was appointed seven or eight years ago to this position, when the school was built (salary, £180–£210). B has twenty-five years' service (C1); first assistant, Grade VI school; 481 average attendance (£260–£280). Inspectors' reports in this case are immeasurably above those of the first cited; in fact, they could hardly be surpassed. C has fourteen years' service (C1); first assistant, Grade VII school (£290–£310). This teacher was appointed three years ago to this position at a salary of £210–£240. His reports are good, but no better than B's, therefore why should he be treated better than B? D is second assistant, Grade VII school; twenty years' country service, total service thirty years; certificate, B1; reports excellent; salary, £230–£250. E is first assistant, Grade V school; service, eight years; entered service as an untrained teacher; C2 certificate; salary by new Bill, £230–£250. We fear that under the new Bill the merits of these gentlemen will not be considered on their length of service, but on the salary paid. In that case E receives unmerited favour in comparison with D. F has twelve years' service; B2 certificate; second assistant, Grade VI school; salary by the new Bill, £190–£220. Compare that once again with E, who has only eight years' service. G is fourth assistant, Grade VII school; appointed two months ago, and is six months out of the training college; present salary, £140–£170; salary under the new Bill, £190–£220; certificate, B4. You can imagine, gentlemen, that teachers with longer service who receive the same salary, or even less than G, feel that they have been disrated. Now I desire to deal with the roll number, and very shortly. If it is impossible—but we think it is not—to grade teachers by service and efficiency, then we would plead, for the sake of justice, that the schools be graded on the roll number. Is it any fault of a teacher that ten out of a hundred children absent themselves from school? What is the result of the absentees becoming backward in their work? Is it any ease or any relief to the teachers when these children stay away? We affirm that teachers are harassed by irregular attendance of certain children, therefore why should these teachers be still more harassed by the fact that for these children they receive no payment? As a matter of justice we recommend this to your earnest consideration. In the old scheme Grade IX school was from 451 to 600 average attendance. This being so, teachers in a school from 451 to 500 did not consider it necessary, when vacancies occurred in schools from 501 to 600, to apply for these positions, as the position and salary remained the same. This gave chances for much younger teachers to obtain these positions in schools from 501 to 600, and they now find themselves holding a higher and more lucrative position than many of their older and more experienced fellow-teachers. These gross injustices occur throughout the grades, but this is given as a sample case. We believe, from a study of the Bill, that an attempt has been made to drive assistants into the country, but it must be remembered that most of these assistants spent long years in the country before they came to the cities. We believe, and would respectfully suggest, that the positions of first and second assistants in our large schools should be held by men who have had long country experience, and whose families are at an age to require secondary, technical, and university education. Could not these positions—and there are not so many of them—be given a salary that would be a reward for long country experience, and that would encourage country teachers with families to accept these positions