

Appeal Board to revise the grading system, and the Appeal Board had sent only one case back to the Inspectors. It may be described in Auckland and Wanganui as an absolute success. In Taranaki it is not so pronounced a success, as the district is small, but they would not abandon it.

99. In regard to small districts, I understood you to say that one argument in favour of the large education district was that it gave a wider scope to the teachers in that particular district, and that a Dominion system would give the widest possible scope. You spoke of teachers with alert minds getting into good districts, and the poor teacher having to go somewhere else?—Yes.

100. A poor teacher must go somewhere even under the Dominion system of appointment?—But they should not all be drafted into one district.

101. You think the effect at present is that all the poor teachers go into one district?—There would be a natural tendency that way. I think even that tendency is visible in certain parts of the country; but what we want to get at is the national point of view, so that no district shall be subjected to the injurious effect of being reckoned a small district where there is no scope. I would like to mention that I have been requested especially this morning to bring before your Committee a very emphatic protest from Auckland against the proposed subdivision of the Auckland District, and I am asked to point out that it will have an injurious effect on the education in that district, because that district has been used as a kind of half-way house for the promotion of the best teachers. They create three second-sized schools in the Waikato compared with seventeen of the largest-sized schools in Auckland, and now the new district will cut off the supply of good schools in the Waikato, and the good teachers will not come down.

102. Is that a protest from the Auckland Educational Institute?—Yes.

103. The Committee has, I believe, petitions from every teacher in the proposed Waikato District against the proposal?—Then there is no need for me to say any more.

104. In regard to the alteration which you desire in reference to superannuation, does the present affect many of the teachers?—Not a great many, and under the new rules probably less; but it does affect some. I would like to point out that it hampers the Education Boards. They will not transfer a teacher who ought to be transferred.

105. *Mr. Malcolm.*] You approve of local government by Committees?—Yes.

106. And is it not a fact that in regard to the objection taken that Committees would not continue in office if they had no power of appointment, that there are very many Committee-men who have served for years, and yet have never had the opportunity of making an appointment?—I could not say as to that—I have no knowledge.

107. That is probable?—Yes, quite probable.

108. You know there are schools in which the same staff has been for many years?—Yes. I did not understand your question. That is so, and the more cases there are the better.

109. And yet we find those Committees quite agreeable to continue in office. You do not approve of the higher stage of local government by Boards?—Well, to say I do not approve of it is rather saying too much. I think that a more economical adjustment could be made. I am not commissioned to say that as representing the Institute. The Institute has not demanded the abolition of the Boards, but a reduction in the number.

110. Do I understand you to say that the Institute approves of centralization?—The appointment of teachers and Inspectors, decidedly.

111. And general administration?—Yes, they are asking for that in the Administrative Council.

112. You recognize the dangers of centralization owing to the fact that the administration gets out of touch and out of sympathy with the teachers and localities, and that it becomes hidebound and autocratic?—It has been mentioned and considered, but the reply to that is that the Council consisting of various heads and the members not too permanently in office will prevent that.

113. Have you any knowledge of the Australian or Victorian system of education?—Yes, but not very precise.

114. Probably you know that centralization was in vogue there?—Yes.

115. Was it not a fact that teachers in particular and education authorities generally considered our system very much superior because of its use of local government?—I am aware that there is an overestimate of the benefits of the Committee system—that is to say, the local interest as evidenced by the Committees. The local interest as evidenced by the Committees in very many cases is practically nil, because the Committees are limited in powers and finance, and sometimes limited in intelligence. We have no reason to believe that the Victorian system of education is to any decisive degree inferior to our own. We know there have been complaints among some of the teachers, but we also have reason to believe that the vast body of the teachers are quite satisfied, and certainly it is so in New South Wales. The New South Wales people strongly advise us to copy their system if we can.

116. Do you know of any unrest among teachers or injury to education through the control by the Boards except in regard to the district and the field for promotion?—Yes, I do.

117. In what way?—Especially some complaints of unjust promotions—that is, the promotions are not regulated justly. I think that is not too strong a word to use. That is the origin of the whole complaint.

118. You think that would be remedied if provision were made for appointments according to efficiency and service?—Yes.

119. And do you consider that so long as the present system is in vogue the administration from a central Department would remedy the defects you speak of?—Yes.

120. You believe a central Department would cease to use favouritism?—Yes, to all practical intents and purposes. There might be an occasional case, but certainly the cases would be divided by, say, thirteen at least of those that at present occur.