

20. *The Chairman.*] Is there anything you wish to add?—Will you permit me to add, with respect to the question of the districts, that the line would be drawn under the proposed schedule just a little south of Auckland. The community of interest existing certainly down as far as Taumarunui is so great that it is highly undesirable to break the Auckland District up in the manner suggested. Not only would the large schools all come within the North Auckland area, and offer better prizes; but the Dominion scale of grading is not yet in force. I think that Dominion grading scheme can be brought about much more easily by the meeting of the representatives of five bodies for the purpose than by a larger number. You asked Mr. Mulgan a question I should like also to answer. You asked him if the Auckland Board did not realize that it would by refusing to acquiesce in the division of the Auckland District into two parts be sacrificing the teachers of the present smaller districts. The Auckland Board is strongly of opinion that the number of Boards should be curtailed, and it realizes the difficulty of effecting this curtailment. We suggest that the Auckland Board should remain as at present to a large extent, with this exception, that instead of having the nine districts you will have eight, and then gradually breaking up the smaller areas until a reasonable approximation is reached as regards size and community of interest. We think that community of interest should play some considerable part in the matter of the arrangement of school districts.

21. *Mr. Poland.*] As a member of the Board, and lately an Inspector of some years' standing, and also a teacher, are you strongly in favour of large Board districts?—Yes, unquestionably.

22. Do you believe that the five districts recommended by the Commission of 1912 are too many for this Dominion?—I think that if you are going to have Boards at all then five is the proper number.

23. You do not think that the present size of the Auckland District has done any harm, but rather that it has conduced to efficiency and economy?—I am quite satisfied that it has done no harm. There has been no complaint on the ground of administration or efficiency. As an Inspector I can say that the Auckland schools can hold their own with any in the Dominion.

24. Do you think that the teachers in the proposed North Auckland District will be at a disadvantage as compared with their present position if this change takes place?—No; I think that the whole of the North Auckland teachers will benefit, because there will be a large number of big schools for them to work on. If you took the consensus of opinion of the teachers within the proposed Waikato area I feel satisfied you would find that ninety-nine out of a hundred would be against the proposed subdivision.

25. In speaking about the proposal for the election of Boards you stated that under the Bill Auckland at present is electing four members, but that Greater Auckland would be able to elect six; that those six would really have the preponderating influence: do you adhere to that opinion?—I think it would be very likely that they would have the majority on the Board.

26. *Mr. Statham.*] In respect to military drill in public schools, it is permissive under sub-clause (6) of clause 54. Did I understand you to say that you think that provision should be made compulsory?—That is so.

27. In addition to the physical drill?—Yes.

28. Can you say anything more about that point?—The members of the Auckland Board are so thoroughly satisfied with the old Cadet system as a preparation for the present Territorial system that I think they would be in favour of the old military drill as against even the physical drill, because the old military drill did include a very large amount of physical culture.

29. You do not mean to suggest interfering with the physical-culture system?—No, I would not suggest that; but the physical-culture system has come in since my time, and I have not had the opportunity of personally observing the full effect of it as against the other system, so I would not like to offer an opinion.

30. *Mr. McCallum.*] The Auckland Board is not unanimous in regard to the division of the district?—It is practically unanimous with the exception of one member, Mr. E. C. Banks.

31. He belongs to the south?—Yes, to Matamata. We understood he would petition. Other than Mr. Banks the Board is unanimous. We think you may have a large amount of evidence, say, from the local bodies, from the Waikato area in support of this division, but on the other hand you will get evidence by the teachers against the division. We think it only natural that if you hold out to the Waikato people an inducement such as a Board of Education within their own area, the local bodies would all be in favour of it; but we really believe that in the interests of Waikato it ought not to be severed from the Auckland District, having regard to the quality of the teachers who will apply for positions. Under the present conditions I have not the slightest doubt that the Auckland Board will be inundated with a crop of applications by people within the Waikato area who desire to get into the North Auckland area in order to be on the side of the larger promotions it will offer.

32. You are aware of the underlying principle in regard to the Boards?—Yes; you are working up towards an abolition of the Boards ultimately. I want to say this not on behalf of the Board, but my own personal opinion is that one of the best things that could happen to New Zealand would be the entire abolition of the Boards of Education. I am a member of a Board and have opportunities of seeing evidence day by day why the Board should be abolished, but I am only offering that as a personal opinion. I am satisfied that the method of selection of members of Boards has failed completely.

33. Have you gone into the question of the Court of Appeal?—No, not deeply. I have always been under the impression, and have advised teachers in this direction, that they are too much protected by the Court of Appeal. The Board of Education has had very little trouble in respect of appeals, though I may say it has lost every appeal made against it. In one case I am quite satisfied it was wholly against the public interest that they should have lost the appeal. I have advised the teachers that they are too much protected by the Court of Appeal, and I have