

smaller districts it is possible for every member to become acquainted with most of the schools in the district, and that is a great advantage when matters affecting schools are dealt with. In a very large district it would be quite possible for every Board member to be ignorant of the position and needs of many different schools. Now, as regards cost of meetings, it is worth while making a calculation. One meeting of the South Canterbury Education Board costs £4 14s. but a Board meeting in Christchurch might cost as follows:—Four Christchurch members at 5s., £1; two Timaru members at £1 5s. plus 10s. for three days, £5 10s.; two South Canterbury members at the same, £5 10s.; two North Canterbury members at 15s. each, £1 10s.; two Westland members at £2 10s. plus 10s. for three days, £8; total, £21 10s. Thus even for twelve meetings per annum the cost would be at least £258 and might easily be £300. To this must be added the cost of many special trips, necessary if members are really to know the district. Further, the travelling-expenses of the Board's employees—its foreman, clerk of works, architect, &c.—would be greatly increased. Now, as regards the cry from our teachers that in the smaller districts there are not enough opportunities for promotion: is this the fault of the size of the district or of the methods of appointment? And if it be not the result of area, why seek to remove the evil by enlarging district areas? Surely this is only widening the barriers. If every district had followed South Canterbury's policy no such cry would have been heard from our teachers. Of our thirteen largest schools only four headmasters were trained in South Canterbury—the other nine came from other districts. The only real remedy for this complaint from teachers is a Dominion scheme of promotion; and the Bill paves the way for this by its proposals to centralize the inspectorate and so provide for a central grading scheme.

3. *Mr. McCallum.*] You favour centralizing the appointment of Inspectors?—I have always voted against that.

4. Then you do not believe in it?—I do not say I do not believe in it, but I think the Inspectors might be still under the Education Boards with a scheme of salaries as proposed for the teachers.

5. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] Do you mean that those who pay should not employ?—I do not know. I am speaking from the point of the efficiency of the work.

THOMAS REED FLEMING examined (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am Chief Inspector for the Wellington Education District.

2. Will you make your statement to the Committee?—First of all, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I desire to thank you for your readiness in receiving our deputation. I wish to speak on behalf of almost all the Inspectors—in fact, I think I can say on behalf of all the Inspectors in the Dominion. Auckland is the only district which is not represented by this deputation, because they have approached you separately. The first point we desire to make is that there should be at least one Inspector for every fifty primary schools. Mr. Hill, our senior Chief Inspector, has signed his name to our list of suggestions, but he asks me to state that he does not approve of this proposal coming in here. That does not mean that he does not approve of it as a matter of principle. It is a matter dealing with the administration, but we thought it advisable to point out what we thought the extent of an Inspector's duty should be. Our second suggestion is that in the event of the control of Inspectors being placed in the hands of the Department, no Inspector at present in the employ of any Education Board in the Dominion should suffer loss in rank or in salary, and that the present inspectorial staff should have precedence for promotion.

Mr. Hogben. That is already provided for. It is the intention of the Minister to reserve the question of the salaries of Inspectors.

Witness. I am glad to know that. We think the Inspectors should be given that consideration when the question arises. The third proposal we bring forward is that, in general, the headquarters of the Inspectors appointed to each education district should be the chief town of that district. Our idea is that we have found from experience that the fortnightly or monthly meetings of the inspectorial staffs are advantageous, and we are strongly against the idea of an area Inspector. Our fourth suggestion is that the salaries allotted to Inspectors should range from £500 with annual increments to £650, exclusive of travelling-expenses. These amounts were recommended by the Conference of Inspectors in 1913, and of Chief Inspectors in 1914, and the minimum of £500 has also been recommended by the Otago and other educational institutes. The Auckland suggestion is for a higher amount than that, and if the Committee could agree we should like to see the Auckland proposal substituted.

3. *The Chairman.*] I understand there will be no reduction in salary where a Board has already appointed an Inspector at a certain salary?—In our fourth suggestion we are simply laying down a general principle more than anything else. The fifth suggestion we made, which should really be taken with the fourth, reads—that this request with regard to salaries is in accord with the general principle that no Inspector should receive lower remuneration than that of a headmaster of the highest-grade primary school; and is also in accord with the sound business principle that a supervising and reporting officer should receive higher remuneration than those whose work he has to supervise and report upon. This is our strong point. Under the Act the highest salary is £520—namely, £440 salary, £30 for district high school allowance, and £50 house allowance, making about £520. We consider that no Inspector should be placed in the position of going into a school at a lower salary than the officer he is reporting upon. We consider that a sound business principle, and the principle upon which the salaries of Inspectors should be allotted. Then our sixth suggestion is that in drawing up a scale of salaries for