

of economy is concerned, the cost of management of the Marlborough Board for the year 1912 was 5.2 per cent. Our district is a most peculiar one, and the main part of the cost of management is taken up in the work of inspection. The configuration of Marlborough is unique, and we have a greater number of aided and household schools than any other part of New Zealand. That is a very strong argument in favour of local administration. Deducting the cost of inspection from the cost of administration, we find that for 1912 the cost was 2.3 per cent., and in 1913 2.6 per cent. For 1912 the cost of administration in the Nelson District was 5.6 per cent. Then, in regard to the question of the interests of the teachers, we are quite ready to admit that the smaller districts do not give the same opportunities for promotion as the larger districts, but the joining of our district to the Nelson District would be of no advantage to the teachers. The argument in favour of the interests of the teachers for joining us with Nelson is quite absurd. There is very little chance of our young men receiving any benefit by being attached to Nelson. There is no community of interest between Marlborough and Nelson, and there is a lot of rough country between, and travelling takes up a considerable amount of time. Those are the main arguments. The peculiar configuration of Marlborough requires local administration more than any other district in New Zealand. We have to meet the teachers as far as possible, and it would be better to have a Dominion scheme of promotion, and our Board is quite in favour of that. In the past it has been found necessary to have a Dominion scale of staffs and salaries, superannuation, and so on, and we think, in the interests of the teachers at any rate, they would be better served by having a Dominion system of promotion. Under that we could then have a Dominion scale of grading for the teachers as well as for the schools. There are two other small matters I wish to bring forward. The first is in regard to the plea for aided and household schools. The salaries paid are altogether too small. The utmost a teacher can get in these small schools is forty-eight, but the average size of the schools in Marlborough is much less than six and probably about four. We suggest that there should be an increase to £10, and even then we would find that this capitation would not mean so much per pupil as the schools of the next grade—namely, Grade I. In Grade I a teacher may have a salary and house allowance amounting to £160, so that the cost per pupil would be nearly £18, almost double the amount I suggest should be given for each scholar attending an aided or household school. There are about forty-two household schools in Marlborough. Then, I would point out that right throughout the Sounds there has been very little expenditure by the Government for the erection of schools: not more than five or six have been erected at the Government expense. The accommodation is found by the settlers, and that is a saving in cost of education to the extent of 15s. per pupil. Well, our district is unique in respect to having so many of these small schools. It has also been unique in another respect—namely, that from the very beginning of 1877, when the Act was first brought in, right up to the present time not a member of the Education Board has ever taken any expenses. It was reckoned some ten years ago when the matter of secondary education and endowments was brought forward that there had been a saving of about £2,700 owing to the members not drawing their travelling-expenses. That money was saved to the district and went towards forwarding education. When I said that no members of the Board drew travelling-expenses, I should have mentioned that some eight or ten years ago two members who lived thirty or forty miles away did take their travelling-expenses, but during the last few years no member of the Board has drawn any salary whatever. As showing the interest taken by the local people in education, I might mention that some of the members of the Board have travelled sixty and seventy miles in order to attend meetings of the Board. That shows the advantage that is to be derived by having local administration. It is noticeable that a few country scholars take advantage of secondary education, and in Marlborough many of the country scholars are children of parents who are not able to pay the boarding-allowance for the secondary schools. Therefore I would suggest that it would be only fair to increase or make a special boarding-allowance for country scholars who have certificates of proficiency and who are perhaps recommended by the Inspector.

2. *Mr. Hogben.*] Do you remember what the capitation used to be for Grade 0 schools in Marlborough?—Yes, £3 15s. I moved for it to be altered so as to give something for the teachers who were down there.

3. Those are schools of from one to eight children?—Yes.

4. Was it ever raised as high as £6?—The funds at the disposal of the Board would not allow us to go higher than we did, and we distributed the money saved by the members not drawing their travelling-expenses.

5. What did you make it finally?—£4 15s. or £5. We were the first to adopt the system of an increased sum to be paid to the teachers in the schools in the Sounds.

6. The average number of pupils in those schools is about what?—4.4.

7. Could not four pupils be taught in a room in a settler's house?—In some cases they are taught in one of the rooms of the house.

8. Is it true that in some schools of Grade 0 members of the family are the teachers?—It is some years since I was a member of the Board, but it was the rule that no members of the family should be the teachers.

9. No members of the family or relatives?—There is a difference in that. I might recommend a relative. There is a difficulty in getting teachers to go there. If larger salaries were offered we could get better teaching and better education.

10. Do you think it requires a teacher of the same training and qualifications to teach four pupils as to teach a properly organized school?—I am inclined to think it does, because children vary in ages.