

11. What organization is required?—Well, I suppose organization is required even with four as with fifty. I hold that children even in the Sounds, and even where only four are gathered together, require the same opportunity for the best education as in places where the parents happen to be in the larger centres.

12. What would be the effect of raising the amount to £10: do you think it would tend to increase the number of such schools or demands?—I am hoping that not alone will there be a greater number but greater settlement.

13. But if there is greater settlement would it not do away with these schools by larger schools being erected?—It is almost impossible to have larger schools. You know the Sounds, and if you could institute a scheme by which those children there would be gathered together you would be a public benefactor. I would suggest, instead of making it £10, that the amount to be made available for these small schools should be the same as in Grade 1.

14. You recognise that the scholarship system here is not competitive, but that any one who qualifies will get a scholarship?—There are certain Junior Scholarships which are open to town children as well as country children. Our country scholars do not have the same opportunities for education.

15. The Bill provides that regulations shall be made?—If you are favourable you might draw out regulations to suit the country places.

16. The power there is to extend it and not limit it?—Yes.

17. If they do qualify do they not in every case get an additional £35 a year for board?—That is for Junior Scholarships. I would be prepared to advocate doing away with scholarships altogether.

18. The Bill does away with scholarships in the ordinary sense. Anybody who qualifies can get one of those scholarships?—Yes. I am not too familiar with the provisions of the Bill.

19. *Mr. Malcolm.*] If in the interests of education it is considered necessary to enlarge the Boards, do I take it that Marlborough would sooner be attached to Nelson than Wellington?—The opinion of the people there is that local administration is better than any attachment, and that to be merged with Nelson would be altogether unthinkable in the interests of the teachers.

20. Would you prefer to be joined with Wellington?—If it is a question of choice.

21. But if there is no choice?—Wellington would be better for us because it would give a wider and better scope for promotion for our teachers. At the same time, we hold that it would be better to have a Dominion scheme of promotion.

22. Where are the household schools situated?—In all parts of the Sounds, Port Underwood, Queen Charlotte Sound, and Pelorus Sound.

23. The difficulty of having the children gathered together in one school is the water. Would it not be possible to convey them to the school by motor-boat?—Very little. If there was an increase in the travelling-allowance it might assist, but not to any great extent.

24. You say that no travelling-expenses have been drawn by the members during the last five years. Do you mean that the members of the Board present here to-day have come at their own expense?—I do not know about the members of the Board nor the inner working, but I have not asked for my expenses.

25. *Mr. Hanan.*] Have you a high school or High School Boards in your electorate?—Yes.

26. Have you a separate Board of Management?—No, they are controlled by the members of the Education Board.

27. Have you a separate Secretary and Treasurer for the High School Board?—I am not directly connected with it now. Some years ago when I was a member of the Board the positions of Secretary and Treasurer were held by one man.

28. You have a separate Board dealing with high schools and another body dealing with primary education?—Yes, you may call it that.

29. What number of children have you attending the schools in Marlborough?—2,462.

30. Do you know the salary paid to the Secretary of the Board?—No.

31. Or of the salaries of the Inspectors?—No.

JOHN JAMES WINSBURY WHITE examined (No. 15.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Chairman of the Marlborough Education Board.

2. Will you make your statement to the Committee?—Yes. The Marlborough Education District at present comprises the counties of Sounds, Marlborough, and Awatere, and is, roughly speaking, about one hundred and twenty miles long by sixty miles wide. We have one hundred and two schools, of which ninety-six are public and six private. There are two additional public schools now being established, one at Hillersden and one at Wantwood. There is also an endowed High School, of which the members of the Marlborough Education Board are the Board of Governors. We have one Inspector, a Secretary, and a junior clerk in the office. There is a technical school at which cookery and woodwork are taught. The cost of administration incurred by the Board in 1912, exclusive of the cost of inspection, was 2.3 per cent. The cost of school inspection is heavy owing to the difficult means of travelling. The Sounds have a coast-line of between one thousand two hundred and one thousand five hundred miles, and as the occupation of this country increases so the number of aided and other schools will increase. The importance of close attention to such isolated schools would be apparent to all interested in primary education. In addition to the Inspector's visits and reports, the Board has the advantage of the local knowledge. If the Marlborough Education Board were abolished and the country comprising the district represented by one or possibly two members, the education of the children in all the outlying parts must, generally speaking, be seriously impaired. It will always be necessary to