

include the town and district of Oamaru, whose interests are essentially those of Otago, and would reach within forty miles of Dunedin.

As regards Nelson, no suggestion that was offered for the extension of its area showed a satisfactory district from the point of view of population, or of administration (including finance), or of the promotion of teachers.

The absorption of Marlborough would only accentuate the existing difficulties; still more would this be the case if Grey and Westland were added. (See Tables A3 and B3 in Appendix I.)

The organization of technical education (including agricultural education) in such a district as Nelson, enlarged in the manner just indicated, would be extremely difficult. The local industries seem to call for the training of workers in fruit-culture, dairying, general agriculture, and mining, as well as in the ordinary branches of mechanical engineering, carpentry, building, &c. Only by its attachment to a large and comparatively wealthy district could the West Coast expect to have these wants supplied in even a moderate degree. To a less extent similar difficulties would present themselves in the organization of the manual instruction in the schools, which forms an important introduction to the subsequent technical course.

As to Taranaki, the extension of territory suggested by the Board did not commend itself to the Commission. It involved the transference of certain counties—namely, Awakino, Ohura, West Taupo, Waitomo, and Kawhia—from the south of the Auckland District; and, in addition, the taking of four counties—namely, Eltham, Waimate West, Hawera, and Patea—from the Wanganui District, the latter being compensated by taking from Hawke's Bay a large area east of the Manawatu Gorge, including the counties of Woodville, Weber, Dannevirke, Patangata, Waipukurau, and Waipawa, which could have no community of interest with Wanganui. Hawke's Bay in its turn was to receive compensation from the Auckland District by the addition of certain counties, including Opotiki, Whakatane, East Taupo, Rotorua, and even Piako, Tauranga, and Matamata. Only in this way could a Taranaki District of reasonable size be obtained. It appears to us that such an arrangement would create greatly increased difficulties of administration in all three districts without any compensating advantages.

The weakest of the proposed districts, as measured by the school population and the number of teachers employed, are Southland and Hawke's Bay; these must be retained, as their incorporation in other districts would involve the reduction of the total number of education districts below seven, the minimum fixed by the statute.

The suggested division of the Auckland District into a North Auckland District and a Waikato or South Auckland District was fully considered. The effect of this would be to create a district (Waikato) that would be weaker, both from the point of view of administration and from that of the promotion of teachers, than some of the districts that it had been found necessary to abolish. This will be clearly seen by a comparison of the Tables A3 and B3 (iii) with Tables A1 and B1 in Appendix I. The division would also involve making the remaining portion of Auckland—still a large district—specially attractive to teachers, thereby giving it a marked advantage over the other education districts of the Dominion.

Appendix I shows in Tables A1, A2, and A3 respectively the number of positions on the staffs of the schools classified according to the emoluments attached to them: (1) for the existing districts, (2) for the districts recommended by us, and (3) for certain districts as suggested to us, but not adopted in this report.

Tables B1, B2, and B3 give for the same groups of districts—(1) existing, (2) recommended, and (3) suggested but not adopted—the number of schools for each grade under the Act, and the number of children in average attendance.

The figures in all these tables are compiled from statements furnished by the Education Boards showing the various numbers as on 31st December, 1914.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands this ninth day of June,
in the year one thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

AND. D. THOMSON, Chairman.
G. HOGGEN.
D. PETRIE.
JOHN STRAUCHON.
GEO. M. THOMSON.