

266. Would you include those household schools in Marlborough and Nelson among those schools to which you say a minimum salary of £100 should be paid?—I have not sufficient knowledge of their position to answer.

267. Do you know anything of those schools?—We tried aided schools on the West Coast a good many years ago, but they did not work well. In small communities where they are found there is a certain amount of jealousy—parents find fault with the teacher, or the children find fault with the teacher, and the teacher's salary is made to suffer in consequence. I think it would be a good thing if the provision for those aided schools was struck out of the Act.

268. In any scheme that would be proposed would you contemplate giving a minimum salary of £100 in schools of 1 or 2, as in the Sounds and Nelson?—I should say in any district where there are 5 or 6 children it should be the duty of the State to do so, especially in the sawmilling districts about here, where the settlers are developing the country.

269. Do you think the salaries paid to any teachers in the service are too high?—I think the salaries are all too low.

270. All over the colony?—As far as I have noticed, in regard to the position the teachers occupy I think they are all underpaid.

271. You think the tendency should be to build up all, and not pull down any?—Yes.

272. *Mr. Davidson.*] Would you give a minimum salary of £100 in the case of any school?—Yes.

273. You give as a minimum attendance, 5?—Yes.

274. That means that the average cost per child might reach a total of £20?—Yes.

275. Would you allow unlimited power to Boards to establish these small schools, that might cost as much as £20 per head?—It would be a question as to whether the Boards are fit to be trusted with that authority. If the Legislature thinks so, I should certainly trust them.

276. If, for instance, you knew that in a certain district in New Zealand at the present time two out of every three schools were small schools would you not say that the Board had shown indiscretion in allowing so many to be established?—I could not say without knowing the circumstances.

277. Do not School Committees exercise influence over Education Boards at times, and bring pressure to bear upon them to establish these small schools where they may be unnecessary?—Not in this district.

278. What is your opinion as to amalgamation of the West Coast school districts?—If such were the case I think it would be an advantage, if local jealousy could be overcome.

279. *Mr. Stewart.*] Do you think the average age of your teachers is rising?—No. I should think not, for the reason that we are constantly appointing pupil-teachers.

280. Is the average age of your head-teachers rising?—No, I do not think so.

281. *Mr. Gilfedder.*] You stated that the teachers of the colony are underpaid?—Yes.

282. How do you account for the fact, or are you aware of the fact, that the teacher of the Ahaura, with an attendance of 61, receives a salary of £142 10s., while the teacher of the Blackball School, with an attendance of 62, receives a salary of £157 10s., or £15 for one extra pupil?—There is a residence attached to the Ahaura School.

283. What do you consider a teacher should receive for teaching 61 children?—I would not fix the salary on the attendance. It seems to me, if you do so, you place him on a level with unskilled labour, and that you do not recognise ability, training, or the profession.

284. Suppose he received £182, would that be sufficient?—No.

285. You are acquainted with the salaries paid to teachers in other educational districts?—I compared them roughly.

286. Would you be surprised to find that the teacher of the Walton School in Otago is receiving a salary of £184, with an attendance of 61?—I would not be surprised.

287. In making appointments do you consider the certificates that the teachers hold?—Yes.

288. As a rule, you do not appoint teachers with lower certificates when you have highly qualified applicants?—Not unless we have good and sufficient reasons for refusing the highly qualified applicant. In one or two instances we have applicants with most extraordinary qualifications for positions where the salary was less than £100, but on making inquiries we found reasons that induced us to decline their applications.

289. Do you make provision for the transfer from one part of the district to another?—We endeavour to do it as far as possible, although we have found great difficulty in doing so.

290. Do the pupil-teachers teach sewing?—In some cases.

291. Is it a fact that female pupil-teachers get preference so that they will teach sewing?—No; we are unable to get males, that is the reason. Mr. Adams, the headmaster of the Grey School, has endeavoured to get males and failed, for too often after they are out of their time of pupil-teachership they are thrown out of employment.

292. You consider that it is advisable there should be a retiring-allowance or superannuation scheme for teachers?—Yes, if it could be arranged.

293. You pay uncertificated teachers 10 per cent. less than certificated teachers under the scale?—Yes.

294. Is it invariably followed?—No; we have broken the rule very often. In peculiar circumstances where small salaries are paid the Board has sometimes made a slight increase of £10. I might say with regard to the case of the Blackball School there is a residence attached to the school, while at Ahaura there is none, so that would account for the difference in the salary.

295. In regard to salaries, you consider there should be an individual increase?—Yes.

296. *Mr. Hill.*] You suggest that a minimum salary of £100 should be paid?—Yes.

297. Would you pay the same minimum salary to males and females?—I have very strong feelings on the matter. I think if there is a difference it should be infinitesimal.