

I do not favour the suggestion that it would be right to bring the salaries of the teachers up to £50 or £60 and board and lodging. In the case where you have a household school with an attendance of 4, and the teacher, a relative of the family, is receiving a salary of £20, you will see, on consideration, that it is, after all, a subsidy to that household of £20 a year, for the teacher generally is the eldest girl in the family, and lives in the house. Taking into consideration that view of the question, you will see that the cost of board and lodging does not count. Generally, I believe it would be a calamity to close these schools; but, on the other hand, to increase the salaries must result in failure, because the colony, in my opinion, is not able to stand it. In reference to the appointment of a teacher at the Kumara School, I may say that the Westland Education Board has not, generally speaking, excluded outside teachers, and the circumstances in this case were rather exceptional. We had applicants for the position who were well qualified, no doubt, but we thought that it was a very good opportunity for a case of promotion of one of the three or four teachers who had served under the Board for many years. In another case, where we made an appointment to Staffortown School, an outsider was appointed to the vacancy. I may say that a great number of the applications we get are from persons who have had no great teaching experience, and, while we may have applicants now and again with very high educational attainments, on analysing the position we find the bulk of the applicants have not the experience. Generally speaking, I strongly favour a colonial scale of staff and salaries, with a bush or goldfields allowance, where the conditions existing are very exceptional. I do not think the words "newly populated districts" meet the case.

265. *Mr. Davidson.*] Are you aware that one-sixth of the schools in the colony have an average attendance under 15?—I did not know, but I am not surprised to hear it.

266. You would favour the granting of a capitation allowance to such schools, as is done in the Westland District?—Yes.

267. The suggested scale allows a capitation grant of £5 to such schools: that is somewhat higher than the capitation allowed in Westland at the present time?—Yes.

268. Would there not be a probability, if unlimited power was given to Boards to establish such schools, that they would increase in number to a very great extent?—From a colonial point of view I think the answer must be Yes.

269. Would you be in favour of the department having power to prevent the establishment of such school unless on the recommendation of the Inspector?—Distinctly, Yes.

270. *Mr. Stewart.*] With regard to the appointment at the Kumara School, had the teacher you mentioned been previously employed by your Board?—Yes, for a number of years.

271. He was appointed to the head-teachership?—Yes.

272. I assume the Kumara School headmastership is one of the few prizes you have in your district?—Yes.

273. Do I understand you made that appointment first because you considered the teacher competent and entitled, and secondly with a view to encouraging your own teachers?—Yes. In the first instance, when the late headmaster resigned, the position was advertised. We then decided that we should confine the applications to the teachers in the Westland District, so that the whole of the names of those from outside districts were deleted from the list, and the names of three or four teachers submitted to the Kumara School Committee, and they selected the present headmaster.

274. Extending that principle all over the colony, are you not of the opinion that there should be a sufficient number of prizes in the profession?—Yes, I am.

275. Are you of the opinion that there should be a certain number of prizes in every profession?—Yes.

276. And you would apply that principle to the teaching profession?—Yes.

277. With regard to these household schools, I understand you to say, or imply, that you are not in favour of the employment of relatives of the family in such schools?—Not necessarily; the conditions prevailing render it absolutely necessary that you should employ them. No young person outside the family could live on £20 a year and pay board and lodging out of that amount.

278. Are those aided schools taught for a certain number of hours each day?—They are supposed to be.

279. Have you any doubt about it?—I do not think so. Judging from the Inspector's reports, we get a very good result on the whole, taking into account the fact of the fluctuating attendance owing to climatic and geographical conditions.

280. Do you not think there is a certain amount of danger in employing a relative of the family in such schools, owing to the fact that her teaching duties may be neglected for household or domestic duties?—Yes, I do; but it is the lesser evil of a great many others.

281. *Mr. Giffedder.*] You do not approve of the indiscriminate establishment of these household schools?—No; there should be some limit.

282. If a limit were placed by the department, would it not save the Board a great deal of trouble, owing to pressure being brought to bear on them by householders to establish such schools?—Yes.

283. What would you consider a fair minimum before you would allow the establishment of such a school: would you say 10?—I do not think we can deal with the case unless you take into consideration the fact that the teachers are members of the family. I should be very sorry to allow any teacher, if he had to pay board and lodging out of the salary he was receiving, less than £60 a year.

284. In connection with the appointment at Kumara, you stated that the applicant had spent a number of years in the service of the Westland Board: would that entitle him to be considered a more efficient teacher than a teacher who had spent a considerable number of years in the service of any outside Board?—No.