

there must have been a latent feeling there over the same matter, which reached its highest point when the Bill came out, with the retiring-ages set down as fifty-five.

36. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Seddon is referring more to the conference. Are you surprised to find that members of the conference are expressing indignation at these proposals?—If they are expressing indignation I am surprised.

37. *Mr. A. L. D. Fraser.*] If the general institute now are in favour of fifty as the retiring-age for women, that is opposed to what was agreed to at your conference?—Most decidedly.

38. Can you express a private opinion?—Well, I moved at the conference that the age should be fifty. The motion was seconded, but that was the only support it met with.

39. Are you aware that the local institutes through the colony are in favour of fifty being the retiring-age for women?—No, I am not. I moved personally for it.

40. *Right Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] You did that irrespective of the consequences, you were not aware what the consequences would be?—It was not the pecuniary consequences that I looked at so much. I thought it would be advantageous to the system of education if women were retired after they had spent thirty years in doing fairly trying nervous work.

41. You had not gone into the financial phase of the question?—No, I had not.

42. *Mr. J. Allen* (to Mr. Fox.)] I would like to know whether the Government Actuary understood what Mr. Gill meant by the purchasing of status?—Oh, yes, I understood it.

43. (To witness.) You can enlighten us later on as to how the suggestion would work out?—Yes. I have not studied that phase of the matter, but I can go into it.

#### JAMES JEFFERY examined. (No. 2.)

44. *The Chairman.*] We shall be glad if you will make a statement first, and then members of the Committee will ask you questions?—Yes. I must thank you, Sir, and the Committee, for your courtesy in hearing me. I did not expect to be heard before the Committee when I came up from Dunedin. I thought I would see some members and find out the bearings of the matter better than they were known to us in Otago. Knowing, of course, what the conference had recommended I naturally felt keenly on the question. Perhaps I might ask through you, Sir, for an interpretation of clause 13, section 2. It reads, "Every contributor whose length of service exceeds fifteen years, who retires medically unfit, shall be entitled to receive from the fund such amount in one or more sums as the Board, having regard to the circumstances of each case, determines, but not exceeding in the whole the present value of an allowance computed as mentioned in the last preceding section, and being not less than the whole amount of his contributions without interest." Does that mean that if a contributor retires medically unfit after fifteen years of service he shall draw a sixtieth for each year of service?

45. I understand so?—Well, the general interpretation of that clause—and that is one of the clauses which have caused a great deal of trouble—is that it will not bear that reading.

46. I understand the intention is that it shall be one-sixtieth for each year of service?—"Every contributor whose length of service." May there not be confusion there? A contributor may have contributed for two or three years, but his length of service might be twenty years. If he has contributed for two or three years will he be paid an annuity of sixtieths for his twenty years service? If it means that, as it appears to mean on the face of it, that would provide for back service counting, and that is the great bone of contention.

47. It does not appear to be meant to be so?—Before I go any further, then, I will clearly understand that length of service does not count unless the length of service is equalled by the contribution.

48. *Mr. Hogben.*] Not for the allowance?—No; retirement medically unfit after fifteen years of service carries the pension with it.

49. According to contribution?—Yes. Well, now there are good points in this scheme. One good point is that those under thirty years of age are fairly well provided for, although not as well provided for as those under the Police or the Railway schemes; but they are fairly well provided for, and, with one or two modifications, I think it would be pretty well accepted by all. In comparison with the original scheme there are two great benefits attached to this. It is based on sixtieths, whereas the Bill introduced some two or three years ago was based on eightieths. This measure also provides for two-thirds of average salary, as against 50 per cent. under the other Bill. In these two respects we think the Bill now before Parliament is a very good one. But sixtieths are almost universal in teachers' superannuation schemes, and, in some countries, to make sure that there shall be an annuity in case of breakdown early in life, there are more than sixtieths given for the first years of service. In Germany fifteen-sixtieths are given in the first ten years. In South Australia £52 a year is paid for the first five years' contributions, but after that the amount added to the annuity is less than £2. So that in the first five years of service the annuity goes up ten times as fast as it does after that. Some funds go up to fortieths—for instance, the London and North-western Railway Company's. But we think this is a good scheme on the whole. One or two modifications are desired for those under thirty; but where the criticism comes in very strongly is with regard to from forty to nearly sixty. Here the scheme seems to be very unfavourable, though the fund is strengthened in three ways as compared with the Railway Fund. Naturally, when there are two funds established already on such a favourable basis in services more popular than the teaching, a feeling of irritation is caused amongst the teachers. They see no reason why they should not be treated as well as others. There are two directions in which this scheme compares unfavourably with the Railways: it is on a 5-per-cent. basis, as against a 3-per-cent. basis, and the annuities are calculated on the average salary. You can see what this means. A man in the Railway service retiring when his salary is £600 has his annuity calculated on that amount,