

1907.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE) ON THE PETITION OF G. F. BOOTH AND OTHERS AND THE PETITION OF
D. P. EVANS AND OTHERS, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(MR. HANAN, CHAIRMAN.)

Brought up on the 6th November, 1907, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 11TH DAY OF JULY, 1907.

Ordered, "That a Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to consider all matters relating to school-teachers, education and public instruction generally, public-school training of teachers, higher education, technical education and manual instruction, and such other matters affecting education as may be referred to it; to have power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. J. Allen, Mr. Baume, Mr. Budde, Mr. Hanan, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Lethbridge, Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. Sidey, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. FOWLDS.)

REPORT.

THE Education Committee have the honour to report that they recommend that the petitions of G. P. Booth and others and D. P. Evans and others, together with a copy of the evidence taken by your Committee in connection therewith, be referred to the Government for consideration.

6th November, 1907.

J. A. HANAN, Chairman.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 1907.

C. G. SMEATON examined. (No. 1.)

1. *The Chairman.*] I understand you are first assistant at the North-east Valley State School?—At the Macandrew Road School, yes.
2. How long have you been teaching there?—Eight years.
3. How long is it since you qualified as a teacher?—Twenty-four years in New Zealand.
4. How many pupils are there in the Macandrew Road School according to the average attendance?—395.
5. How many teachers have you?—Three males and four females.
6. Can you say what the salary of each teacher is, from the headmaster down?—Yes. The headmaster receives about £310; the first assistant, gross £215, net £195; the second male assistant, £145; the matron, £140, I think; the next lady teacher, £115; the next, £105; and the last, £90. I do not guarantee that those figures are absolutely correct, but they are approximately so.
7. What is the class of work that is undertaken by you in your school as first assistant?—I have to take the work of the Fifth and Sixth Standards, averaging at present on the roll eighty-four, and with an average attendance, through the bad weather and illness we have had lately, of about seventy-five, I think—perhaps ten off the daily roll. I have no extra work in the way of training pupil-teachers, nor have I any secondary work to undertake. I am practically confined to the primary work of the school.
8. Who undertakes the work of training the pupil-teachers?—The headmaster.
9. What is the amount paid by you under the Teachers' Superannuation Act?—Very nearly £20—£19 7s.
10. Out of a salary of—?—£215 a year.
11. Do you find that that unduly presses on you?—Not at all, because I am a single man and can supplement my income.
12. Can you say, generally, if it presses on the first assistant teachers?—Yes, it does press heavily, I think, on the majority of them in our town.
13. What do you base that conviction on?—I have to take my information at second hand, and I take it purely from statements made by the first assistants themselves, to the effect that the increased cost of living, and the growth of their families, and the fact that under the Otago Education Board in the past very much better salaries were paid than are now paid under the colonial scale, go so far as to make their condition a very much less desirable one than it was some seven or eight years ago. This statement that I am making now, however, is purely a matter that was conveyed to me by hearsay.
14. When did you receive your last increment as a first assistant teacher?—I think it was under the Staffing and Salaries Act of 1901.
15. What was the increment?—I could not tell you whether it was £5 or £10. I think it was more likely to have been £10.
16. What were you receiving then—do you remember?—No. That is the difficulty. My salary varied slightly within two or three years owing to fluctuations in the attendance, and I cannot state whether I was receiving £205 or £210 before the increment came. That is how I am not able to give you a definite answer.
17. Can you give us the average increase that the first assistant teachers have received during the last seven years?—No, I cannot give you any information in that direction at all, because I have been looking at the matter mainly from the point of view of the Otago teachers, and in their case, instead of receiving any increase, the majority of them have received no increase at all, and in one or two cases their salaries have been subject to a small reduction.
18. Will you give us some particulars of this reduction which you complain of?—The most striking instance is that of a man who has been teaching for twenty-nine years as an assistant—for ten years as second assistant and nineteen years as first assistant. His present net income is £20 less than it was in 1887, when he was a second assistant. Of course, you have to remember that in 1887 there was no colonial scale, and the different Boards made different rates of payment to their teachers, and this man, who has been employed as a first assistant for nineteen years, is now receiving less by £20 than he did when a second assistant. He was getting £242 10s. when the colonial scale came in, and now he is paid at the rate of £235, but his deductions bring his salary down to £213.
19. How has the attendance at the school during that time affected it?—The attendance is slightly lower now than it was seven years ago, owing to the introduction of the tramway; but that does not obscure the main point that this man under ordinary circumstances, even if there were no reduction in the attendance, would be paid a considerably lower salary now than he would have had if he had remained a first assistant under the Otago Education Board. I have not the figures in connection with the other teachers. They were to have been sent to me, but they miscarried owing to the illness of our secretary.
20. You simply mention that as an instance?—Yes.
21. Would you say that is a typical case?—No, that is an extreme case.

22. Can you give us any information in the way of comparing the salaries paid to second assistant teachers and first assistant teachers seven years ago?—I can only speak from the point of view of what obtained in Otago. In Otago second assistant teachers who were paid salaries of from £180 to £200 would now be receiving from, say, £150 to £170.

23. *Mr. J. Allen.*] That is a reduction?—That is a reduction as compared with the Otago position, but not as compared with the colonial position. The second assistant in the school at which I am employed is receiving £140, and that, it seems to me, is one of the drawbacks of the present Act—that one or two weak spots are created in this direction. I shall take our own cases as typical. The grade of our school is from 390 to 420, and the staffing provided for a school of that grade is such that we are one teacher short. The consequence is that either the headmaster must undertake the work of teaching a class or else some other assistant must take two classes. Therefore, in our school I have to undertake that work, and I am employed to teach eighty-four pupils. I do not object to it; I rather like the work: but there are some educational authorities who would say that eighty-four pupils were too many for one man to teach—in fact, the Act practically says that no teacher should teach so many children.

24. *The Chairman.*] What do you suggest should be done—that the whole scale should be amended?—No, not at all.

25. What form would your suggestion take with regard to the salaries?—Well, I think that most of the persons that have given any consideration to the question of staffing and salaries admit that the sole teacher is the teacher most deserving of consideration. I have been inclined to give my adherence to that contention too, and I see no reason at the present time to seriously modify my past opinion on the subject; but I might be allowed to say this: that the sole teacher in the past was in a very much worse position than the sole teacher is in at the present day, for two reasons. First, because the sole teacher in the past might have been called upon to teach up to a roll-number of sixty pupils. Now he is not called upon to teach more than thirty or thirty-five as a sole teacher. Therefore, from the point of view of numbers alone his work is lighter. Now take it from the point of view of salary. The salary of a sole teacher of a school of thirty some years ago was considerably lower than the salary of the sole teacher at the present day. So that from the points of view of both numbers and salary the sole teacher is considerably better off to-day. He still, of course, labours under the drawback and defects of teaching in an isolated position, but there is no difference between the past and the present as far as that is concerned. Now, having mentioned the position with regard to the sole teacher, I should like to draw attention to the position of the first assistant teacher. It has been assumed in the past that the position of a first assistant was a particularly favoured one, and that he should not be encouraged to remain in a city any longer than was absolutely necessary to do his work, and to qualify himself for advancement to a higher position in the country. Well, it may be that that is a practical view to take of the situation, but in different places difficulties arise which may prevent a man from carrying into effect the ideas with regard to transfer. As an illustration of that, in our own province the Education Board consists of nine members—six from the country and three from the town—and the idea there is a very good one, that country teachers should be encouraged to come into the town, and that therefore town teachers should be encouraged to go into the country. But in the case of several of the first assistants who would wish to go to the country, it is found that a difficulty arises in this way: When they place an application before the Education Board, instead of finding that their position as town assistants is a qualification for them to obtain promotion in the country, they find that it is a disqualification, because some of the country headmasters take precedence over them, owing to the fact that there is this desire to encourage country teachers at the expense of the town teachers. Mr. Mackenzie can bear me out in that direction, because he is a member of the Otago Education Board himself.

26. Do you think all schools should be graded?—I see no reason to alter anything contained in the Act at present. I think the system of grading is a fairly good one, but the matter of the staffing for the different grades seems to me to require alteration.

27. What do you suggest in the way of improvement?—At the present time I can only take a selfish point of view, although later on I should be prepared to point out two parts of the Act in which an alteration could be made. At the present time I can only suggest one, and that is the one which, unfortunately, I happen to be connected with myself—I mean the grade of from 390 to 420. I think that a school of that size is too large to allow of its being taught short-handed to the extent of one teacher and practically one male teacher.

28. You have only considered the question of increasing the salary from the standpoint of the first assistants?—Certainly.

29. You have not considered the scheme as a whole?—I have given no attention to the scheme lately at all.

30. You cannot say how your suggestion would fit in with other improvements?—I am ignorant on that subject at present.

31. Have you considered the scheme put forward by the Otago Educational Institute or the Southland Educational Institute?—No, but I know that its principles are based upon experience and efficiency of work, instead of looking to the idea of basing salaries upon average attendance.

32. In making your claim for an increase you have not considered the bearing which it would have, if given effect to, upon teachers in other grades in the service?—Do you mean of other grades of teachers or schools?

33. Teachers?—If an increase were given to us, other teachers might say, "Well, we deserve an increase as much as you." But one of the reasons for putting forward a suggestion for an exceptional method of treatment with regard to the first assistants was this: Between the first and second assistants too wide a gap existed in the way of salary, and it was considered inadvisable that that wide gap should be maintained. Therefore, the first assistants' salaries were not increased

except in exceptional instances, and second assistants' salaries were considerably improved. But the gap between the first assistants and the headmasters was just as large as, if not larger than, that between the first assistant and the second, so if it were a question of removing gaps then the first assistants should not have been selected, in my opinion, as the one set of teachers to be penalised.

34. How many first assistants in the colony are receiving over £300 a year?—I should say not more than about two.

35. How many headmasters?—I should say about thirty-five, from guesswork.

36. I suppose you take an interest in the working of the Teachers' Salaries Act?—I did some time ago, but lately I was approached by the first assistants and asked to appear before you, and I have not been giving the close attention to the Education Act and the various Acts connected with it that I should have been giving. I have put in my time at this for the last two or three days and have looked at nothing else.

37. Are you aware of the amount that we increased the teachers' salaries by in the last Act we passed?—No.

38. Do you not consider that the Teachers' Superannuation Act assisted to increase your salaries?—Yes.

39. You say here in your petition that first assistants were unable to contribute towards the Superannuation Fund by reason of their salaries being too low?—I do not know personally that any of them have refused. I know that I pay towards the superannuation myself. That clause in the petition I think the first assistants in Otago have not gone into, because I know of none that have refused to pay.

40. You know of no first assistant who has refused to join the fund?—I think they are all on the fund in Dunedin.

41. Are they generally well satisfied?—No.

42. If not, why not?—Because they consider, as I said before, that with the increased cost of living, and the fact that they are now earning less than they did under the Otago Education Board, they are not so well off as they expected to be.

43. Would not the giving of an additional increase to the first assistants mean a levelling-up—an increase from the lower grades?—That would be a matter for Parliament to determine. They could, if they pleased, increase the salaries of the first assistants and of no other teachers.

44. Can you say if the second assistants are satisfied?—No, and I do not think that, as far as Otago itself is concerned, either the Board or the teaching staff generally are satisfied with the treatment of second assistants. They find that the work done by the second assistants now is considerably inferior to what was done by the second assistants under the Otago Education Board.

45. You say it is inferior: Would you elucidate that view a little more?—Yes. Four years ago I had work done by a second assistant sent up to me that was practically reliable work when it came to me. I knew where to commence, and I know what to expect in the way of knowledge and knowledge remembered. At the present time I assume when the second assistants come to me that I must be satisfied with 50 per cent. of the knowledge that I got in the past, say four years ago, when we had a teacher appointed under the Otago Education Board's *régime*; and I am not singular in that respect. Headmasters and first assistants have told me that the work done by second assistants now is considerably lower. I am speaking of Otago alone.

46. That is by reason of the class of teacher?—The salary now paid does not attract as good a class of men as it did before.

47. Do you know any second assistants who have left the service?—At the present moment I can only remember one. He left last week.

48. Do you know why?—He was attracted towards journalism. He thought he had better opportunities in that direction.

49. Are you speaking on behalf of the first assistants of the Dominion, or of the first assistants of Otago?—The first assistants of Otago.

50. What qualification do the majority of first assistants hold throughout the Dominion—B 1?—I should say that perhaps one-third hold D 1, one-third C 1, and the remainder B 1 and A.

51. The majority would be D 1?—D and C.

52. Is that not rather low for a first assistant?—No. Many of the headmasters in the Dominion are D 1. Then, you see, the older a teacher is the greater probability have you of finding that his classification is not high, but that he has maintained his position by virtue of his ability as a teacher to impart knowledge.

53. But having regard to the facilities now given for higher education and for training of teachers, do you not think that we should have a higher grade for first assistants than D 1?—Certainly you should in the time to come.

54. And with increased salaries, do you think we shall command a teacher of higher status?—I dare say you will, but possibly for some seven, eight, or nine years you may have a difficulty. At present there is a certain amount of discontent in the air, but when the young fellows come on the probability is that the present discontent will wear away, and that young men will come into the positions and qualify themselves with university degrees.

55. In what class of the profession particularly do you find there is dissatisfaction with the salary?—Speaking from the point of view of those with whom I mostly come in contact, but not speaking personally, the first assistants are the most disappointed.

56. Of course, you have said that you cannot say much as to the position of other teachers—that you really considered this matter from the standpoint of the first assistants?—Yes.

57. And you base that opinion which you expressed just now upon really a limited knowledge?—Certainly.

58. If there is anything in your evidence that you would like to amplify, you may do so?—You have put your questions in such a way as practically to have educed from me nearly all the points I was going to make.

59. My questions have covered all the ground?—Yes. I have added on a little, but if I were to go over the ground again it would be wasting time.

60. *Mr. T. Mackenzie.*] You are under the impression that the Otago Education Board gives teachers in country schools a preference over first assistants. Can you give us instances of first assistants who have applied for vacancies in country districts and have not had their names sent on?—Well, I do not think I could answer it quite in that way, but I will say this: that I can point to two first assistants who have applied for promotion to a country school, and I say of my own motion that I consider they had better claims than some of the country teachers whose names appeared on the list above theirs. Their names were sent on, but they were sent on in an inferior position.

61. With regard to the class of schools they applied for, were the salaries attached to them much above the salaries they were receiving as first assistants?—In this one particular instance the salary would be £50 a year more.

62. You referred to the increased cost of living: Could you give us some particulars of the items of increase the first assistants have to pay?—No. Unfortunately, I am not a married man. I had to take this information from hearsay.

63. *The Chairman.*] Anyhow, it costs you more to live now than it did seven or eight years ago?—It costs me more, and I suppose it would cost a married man more in a higher ratio.

64. *Mr. T. Mackenzie.*] Is the increase in food, in clothes, or rent?—In both food and clothing. I cannot say as to rent.

65. Is that statement mere hearsay?—It is a positive statement made to me by these first assistants. I have gone round to half a dozen of them, and they have all told me that the increased cost is pressing heavily upon them.

66. Do you not know that a great many articles of food have gone down very much in price?—Unfortunately, I am in a position of having to express my supreme ignorance on that point; but I do know something about the price of wheat at the present time, and it is in a very unfortunate position.

67. Such articles as sugar, tea, sago, rice—articles in use in every-day life—have gone down in price?—An alteration in the tariff has been made lately.

68. I mean apart from that. Is sugar not just half the price it was twenty years ago?—I do not know that it is half the price. I submit that it is not fair to put questions to me with regard to food; I came here to answer questions on education.

69. You have not given us the scale of pay, have you, that you thought should be adopted for first assistants?—No. It would not be a difficult thing to do, but I feel in rather a delicate position in suggesting anything of the kind. The matter might be looked at from, say, two points of view: First, should the salaries of all first assistants in large schools be increased; or, secondly, should only the salaries of first assistants who were appointed before the Education Act Amendment Act of 1905 came into force be given increases? I want to make that as clear as I can. Divide the first assistants into two groups—first, those that were in their positions prior to increases of salaries being made, and those who were appointed to their positions afterwards knowing what salaries they were entitled to expect. Naturally these two classes are on two different planes. One, it seems to me, has far less claim to an increase than the other. Those appointed after the passing of the Act, while they may be dissatisfied, have not, from my point of view, the same claim that the teachers have who were appointed before.

70. Following up that question, can you tell us how many teachers who were first assistants in Dunedin in 1901 are first assistants now?—There would be fully nine out of twelve of them in their positions still.

71. *Mr. Buddo.*] You made a statement that the work of second assistants in the primary schools in Dunedin has largely deteriorated during the last four years: would you tell the Committee in what direction it has deteriorated?—The decreased salary has not attracted to the ranks of the second assistants the class of man that was obtainable by the Otago Education Board some years ago, when that Board paid salaries very much better than are now paid under the colonial scale to second assistants.

72. Is the deterioration mostly in connection with the class-work, or is it in examination-tables?—It is pretty keenly felt with regard to the class-work. As subject after subject comes along to the teacher, even he finds that the quality of the work supplied to him at the present time is considerably inferior to what was supplied to him some years ago.

73. General organization work?—No. The organization work is practically the result of supervision by the headmaster, but the work of class-teaching has deteriorated.

74. It is on a lower scale now?—Yes.

75. Is it a fact that the first assistants are inclined to be discontented owing to their receiving no house allowance, rather than that they desire an increase in salary?—I think the application by the first assistants for house allowance was absolute nonsense. I have no sympathy with it at all.

76. You would prefer that an increase in salary should be granted?—Yes; and not by any means an increase of salary equal to that required to provide house allowance. I think it was a piece of sublime nonsense to ask for that.

77. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Not being a married man yourself?—It would not make any difference if I were.

78. *Mr. Buddo.*] If the salaries of first assistants were raised, do you not think it would have the effect of practically tying first assistants to their present positions and preventing Boards of

Education, and the children, of course, from getting the benefit of their experience when they wanted men to take up headmasters' positions in smaller schools, such as the country schools?—Well, if you can show that there are no positions in the country that would justify a man earning £245 or £250 a year in going to the country, why not let him stay in the town? Surely there is no very great prize in £250 a year!

79. That is to say, you do not see any advantage in the system of attracting first assistants to take up headmasters' positions in the country schools?—I do. I see a very great advantage in attracting any class of assistants into the country, but surely you must make those positions attractive before the men are willing to go. And you may have grave difficulty in the way. For instance, in Otago there are very few positions now in the country to which a first assistant would be willing to go. The majority of the first assistants in the largest town schools in Dunedin are getting £235. That cannot be called a magnificent wage. It is enough for a married man with a family of five or six to live fairly comfortably on, but how many country headmasterships are there in Otago that would be good enough from the point of view of financial remuneration to justify that man in taking his family to the country? Speaking from memory, I do not think there would be more than a dozen.

80. Then, in your opinion, the wisdom of attracting first assistants to take up headmasters' positions in small town schools would not be desirable from any point of view?—I cannot answer that question quite as straightforwardly as you would like. You see, there are colonial difficulties in the way of working out the idea which you think is a good one, and which I myself am prepared to admit is a good one. I should say, do all you can to attract all classes of assistants to the country, but the main fact that you have to look to is this: Before the men are willing to go, the positions in the country must be made sufficiently attractive. Given the attractiveness, and the men will go.

81. I do not wish to labour the question, but it seems to me that we are getting along to the same object on different lines. If you raise the first assistant's position financially, it is very evident that you will also, from your point of view, have to raise the position of the headmasters?—Very likely; that would be a logical deduction to make.

82. The 9th clause in the petition says, "Owing to the increased cost of living the purchasing-power of our salaries is much less than it was some years ago." Would you not put down the increased cost of living to the raising of the standard of comfort rather than to the increased cost of the necessities of life?—Speaking for myself, I know nothing about the cost of living. I have enough to live upon, being a single man, and I tell you that I take the statements made to me with regard to the cost of living as a matter of hearsay from the men to me; and certainly the standard of comfort they live in does not seem to be a particularly high one.

83. *Mr. J. Allen.*] The departmental report that was read to you referred to an increase in higher proportion to the first assistants in 1901 and 1904—twice: is that correct?—There was no increase made to first assistants in Dunedin in 1904.

84. Then the departmental report is not correct in that respect?—Oh! I see what you mean.

85. *The Chairman.*] An increase to them in higher degree than the increases of other teachers?—The first assistants taken throughout New Zealand certainly did receive an increase.

86. *Mr. J. Allen.*] In both years?—I cannot say. I remember speaking to some first assistants some years ago who had received increases, and I was rather astonished to find that they had received such large increases. The explanation was that they were now getting comparatively high salaries but their salaries were particularly low in some districts before.

87. The difference arises from the difference in the education districts: is that it?—That is the trouble. Otago occupied a very much better position than some of the other districts, and naturally the discontent is greater in Otago than in any other part of New Zealand.

88. Now, the petition, I understood from somebody or another, is a petition not from Otago, but from all the first assistants in the Dominion: is that so?—Again I have to explain that there is more than one petition in existence. This one was practically the work of the Dunedin teachers. Nearly all the clauses here were worded by Dunedin teachers, but one or two ideas were taken from an Auckland petition. With regard to the signatures, it was a New Zealand petition, with the exception of the Auckland City School. They wired that it was too late to get their own sent on, but to go on with our own petition. Therefore, they are in accord with us. They originated the petition idea.

89. You referred to some difficulties about the first assistants getting transferred to the country. I did not quite understand those difficulties. Would you mind explaining?—Owing to the fact that the Otago Education Board has considered it advisable to bring about as far as possible a system of interchange between town and country, it is felt by the first assistants that country headmasters would have a better chance of promotion than any first assistants would have. Say a dozen names were sent to the Education Board, and out of the dozen some three or four were first assistants, the probability is that they would occupy inferior positions upon the Education Board's list to the country headmasters. The intention of the Act, of course, is to deal fairly enough with all classes as far as that is concerned; but now and again, unfortunately, it may happen that the Board may have their own way of dealing with these things.

90. The Committees have the selection finally, have they not, after the list has been sent on?—They have a good deal of power, yes; they recommend to the Board, and in nine cases out of ten I think the Board is in accord with the recommendation of the Committee.

91. Is the tendency of the Committee, when the names are sent on, to select the first assistant from the town, or somebody else, as sole teacher?—I do not think you could take the average at all. You would have to take the positions as they arose.

92. Do you know of cases where the name has been sent on, high on the list, of a first assistant, who has not got the appointment in the country?—Of late years I have not known of any first assistants applying for country positions except in the last month.

93. And none of those have been high on the list?—No. The country teachers were higher on the list.

94. Can you explain why that is so?—It may be that the country teachers' qualifications were the best qualifications. It may be that they were not the best, and that the country teachers were placed in this position by virtue of the fact that they had more influence, or, perhaps, their religious connections were more powerful, or something of that kind.

95. That is a statement you had better amplify, because that is important?—The statement is one that I do not mind making. It is stated by more than one person that this kind of thing goes on.

96. *The Chairman.*] What do you mean by "this kind of thing"?—That influence comes in.

97. Local influence?—Yes, or clerical influence.

98. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] With the Committees or the Boards?—It happens in both cases.

99. *Mr. J. Allen.*] Can you give us some more information about it?—No. I cannot say definitely that this kind of thing is done. I cannot say that I know any man has used influence, but this is the statement that is made.

100. Where do you get your information from?—From other teachers.

101. The information is that influence—religious, political, or otherwise—is used?—Yes. When I say "political," it may be municipally political, or political in some form, but this is the statement that is made: that without influence you have a very small chance of securing promotion, and, therefore, it is to your advantage to secure influence.

102. *The Chairman.*] In other words, the appointments are not made by the Boards on the merits of the applicants?—A great many may be made fairly, but it just happens now and again that if a man is disappointed he says, "Influence must have been used against me."

103. *Mr. J. Allen.*] You cannot give me any special instance?—No, because these things are exceedingly difficult to prove.

104. And you cannot give me any special instance of a first assistant being placed low on the list when, in your opinion, he ought to have been higher?—I cannot say that influence has been used, but I merely say this: that when these things are discussed dissatisfaction is expressed at the positions occupied by assistants on the list, and they say that influence has been used to put other people above them. The statement is made fifty times in the year.

105. You stated that the gap between the first assistant and the headmaster was just as large as that between the first assistant and the second: What time were you referring to?—The time when the colonial scale came in.

106. 1901?—No, 1904.

107. Do you know what the gap was between the headmaster and the first assistant in 1904? Can you tell us what it was then and what it is now?—Yes. It would be about from £80 to £90 then.

108. What is it now?—It is just about the same, I think.

109. What was the gap between the first assistant and the second assistant in 1904?—It varied—£70, £80, and £90.

110. What is it now?—It varies in different positions. I have known it go as high as £70 or £80, and as low as £50 and £45; there is considerable variation.

111. The 1904 Act, which provided for the colonial scale—I want to know the result of it, as between the headmaster and the first assistant, and as between the first assistant and the second assistant, in increasing or decreasing the gap?—It has lessened the gap between the second and first assistants, but I do not think it has made any difference between the first assistant and the headmaster.

112. From your experience and knowledge, where is the greatest dissatisfaction amongst the school-teachers?—I am not brought closely into contact with sole teachers. I have met very few indeed, and, as I remarked before, the present dissatisfaction, as evidenced by those whom I meet, is felt more by the first assistants than any other class.

113. Do you know anything of the sole teacher in country districts?—Not within the last five or six years.

114. Do you know of any dissatisfaction there?—I have heard of it.

115. *Mr. Hardy.*] You speak of dissatisfaction generally: Is that of your own knowledge, or is it merely hearsay?—Well, personally, I am not dissatisfied. You see, I am not a married man. But I have met assistants who are married, and who are dissatisfied. I take their word for it.

116. You are only giving hearsay evidence on their account?—Yes, but I take their word for it. These men have asked me to appear for them.

117. Hearsay evidence, as a rule, is not of very much value, is it?—I admit that.

118. How long have you been a head assistant?—I have been eight years in my present position.

119. Have you applied for positions in the country?—Yes, once.

120. Was it an important position?—Yes, it was worth considerably more than I am earning at the present time.

121. I am not speaking of that. Was it an important position?—It was not as important a position as the smallest headmastership in a city school. Perhaps it was about the same as the very smallest.

122. Do you know how many applicants there were for the position?—Yes, seventeen.

123. Was your name sent on to the Committee?—Yes.

124. So that, in your case, you have no occasion to blame the Otago Education Board for harsh treatment, have you?—No. I cannot say it was particularly harsh treatment in my case. I consider that it was in the case of another man I know.

125. So far as you are concerned, then, you have no reason to blame the Board of Education in Otago for favouritism?—Not personally.

126. Do you know of any religious feeling, or any religious influence, being brought to bear on the Board of Education in Otago?—Well, you see, the Board is a Board as a whole. I do not think any body of men would approach the whole Board and try to induce that Board to show favouritism to a candidate. I should not think that for a moment.

127. Do you know, then, of any one approaching the individual members of the Board and bringing pressure to bear?—Yes; the statement is made that individual members are approached sometimes by friends.

128. Do you know this on your own account?—No. You see, I do not come into contact with any member of the Education Board, or only very seldom, and I do not know it of my own knowledge.

129. Then, so far as you are concerned, the Otago Education Board is a good Board, and deals fairly with its teachers?—I am not going to say anything about that. I do not know whether it deals fairly or not. Apparently it does deal fairly in most cases.

130. Do you know of your own knowledge that it has dealt unfairly with any cases?—There might possibly be a member of the Education Board who was interested in a particular candidate, and this member of the Education Board might say, "Well, I think this candidate ought to have a chance," and the other members of the Board might say, "Mr. So-and-so would not recommend that candidate unless he had strong reasons for recommending him." If this kind of thing were left to the Inspectors alone, several classes of teachers think that a different position would be accorded to a teacher on the list. Therefore they are justified in saying, when the Inspectors take a different point of view from that taken by the Board as a whole, that some member of that Board has used his personal influence, or some friends have used their influence with that member of the Board, to get a certain candidate placed in a position.

131. Have you any knowledge as to how the Board arrives at its decisions? What is its method in sending the teachers' names on?—I can only speak from the point of view of the Otago Education Board.

132. That is the one I am dealing with?—The Inspectors make up a list of the candidates, and place them in order of merit. The whole list of applicants is placed before the members of the Board, and they go through all these, and confer with the Inspectors after they have looked through the list. Sometimes they ask for the list made by the Inspectors, and sometimes approve of it, and in one or two instances they make some alterations. So, you see, these things appear in this way, and if members of the Board make a different selection from the Inspectors—and the Inspectors are, in our opinion, the people best qualified to make that selection—grumbling arises, and people say "This is favouritism."

133. What are the Inspectors? What is their position with regard to the Boards of Education? Are they not experts?—Yes.

134. And they know a good deal, of course, about the staff teachers?—Yes.

135. They give their recommendations to the Board, I presume?—Yes.

136. Are the members of the Board fairly capable men?—Yes.

137. Are they able to read between the lines and judge for themselves whether a certain teacher is suitable for the position or not?—Do you mean that other factors are to be taken into consideration than ability to teach?

138. I want you to answer my question: Do you not think that the Board is able to judge, itself, after it has had expert advice, which are the most suitable teachers for the several positions?—I practically have to go back to my question again. If you ask me whether they are as well capable of judging the teachers from the point of view of their ability to impart instruction, I say they are not; but if you wish me to say whether they are well capable of ascertaining whether some other points are required beyond the ability to impart instruction, then I say the Education Boards are in a good position.

139. After the Board has had the expert advice of its Inspectors, do you not think, then, that as a Board it is capable of judging who are the most suitable people to have their names sent on to the Committees to choose from?—It is capable.

140. Then, after all said and done, what you stated about the Board, with regard to the unfair treatment that it was meting out to some of the teachers, was merely hearsay evidence?—That is what you might call partly hearsay and partly deduction made from more or less closely observed facts.

141. You have given evidence about the first assistant teachers remaining so long in their positions in Otago: What is the reason why they remain so long now? What is the reason why they do not become head teachers, for instance?—In the first place there may be a very limited area for promotion. If you have only four or five towns where there are headmasterships that may be attractive to a first assistant, you cannot expect these men to go to the country. You see, Otago has not many rising country townships—it is not like the North Island in that respect; and the consequence is that there are very few positions in Otago that are sufficiently attractive to first assistants. I quoted the case of one man who has been nineteen years a first assistant. I do not know that he has had very good opportunities to remove into the country.

142. Is it advisable that men should remain so long in these positions?—No, it would be better a long way to have a change.

143. You spoke of the teachers under the Otago Education Board not being so favourably situated as they were in the past?—Yes.

144. Is it because they have less work to do now than they had in the past?—No, I do not think there is any less work. I think if anything they have slightly more.

145. Do the Inspectors require them to do more?—No. There is a more extensive syllabus than there was. It is a better syllabus, but it is more extensive.

146. Is it not a fact that the average in Otago for the country schools was much higher than in other parts of New Zealand?—Yes.

147. And it is not so high now?—No.

148. Therefore the work must be easier, must it not?—I fail to see that there is any close connection between the salary paid and the work done.

149. I am not speaking of the salary at all; it is the number of scholars. The staffing is more liberal?—Oh! there are exceptions, you know.

150. If the staffing is more liberal, is not the work easier?—Yes.

151. You would prefer doing more work if you got more pay?—Yes, but I am afraid this question is not being put quite fairly to me. You are putting it from the point of view of the colonial scale, and the effect of the colonial scale on teachers generally, are you not?

152. I want to arrive at the reason for the dissatisfaction of the Otago teachers. You speak of great dissatisfaction in Otago?—I did not say among all classes of teachers. I have not said anything at all in that direction—that there was general dissatisfaction. I merely confined myself to the dissatisfaction expressed by first assistants.

153. Does not the more liberal scale with regard to the number of teachers affect the assistants as well as the others?—Yes, the assistants; but not the first assistants.

154. The first assistants are still in as hard a position as they were in the past?—Yes.

155. And that is the reason why you are here with this petition?—Yes, one of the reasons.

156. *Mr. Sidey.*] You say you are of opinion that the work of the second assistants has deteriorated?—Yes.

157. Have you come to that conclusion simply from the one instance that you gave us?—No.

158. What other evidence have you had?—Hearsay evidence from other first assistants and from headmasters.

159. That was the only specific instance that you met with?—No; I can point to two instances that came under my own observation.

160. Since when do you think this deterioration has started?—Since the decreased salaries paid to second assistants came into force.

161. How long ago would that be?—From 1901 and 1902, and onwards.

162. Assuming that there is such deterioration, do you think it would be in any way due to the alteration which took place in the Inspectors' examinations?—No, not in the slightest degree. It is a thing that may work its own cure in time.

163. Do you think that the increase given recently to the second assistants will have the effect of removing the cause of the deterioration?—Yes; but the removal of the cause will not be brought about within, say, the next two years. It will possibly take a little longer.

164. But you think that in time it will have that effect?—Yes, I think that in four or five years' time the position of the second assistants will be considerably better.

165. Coming to the first assistants, since when has this dissatisfaction grown up that you speak of, with regard to the salaries?—Since 1905.

166. Is it since the last increase was given?—Yes.

167. Or is it since the date of the passing of the Superannuation Act?—Well, of course, there is only a year difference. That may have, to some extent, intensified it.

168. What I meant to ask was this: Was it the fact that the salaries of the other teachers were increased without the first assistants being increased, or was it the fact that you have had to make a contribution from your salaries to the Superannuation Fund, that has caused the dissatisfaction?—The fact that no increases were given to the first assistants is the main cause. The other is not a cause of discontent so much as an indication of their inability to keep within their means.

169. You think it is because of the other teachers having received increases and the——?—Yes, and not only the sole teachers, but the masters.

170. You do not think, then, that the reason why the increase was given was in order to meet the superannuation contribution?—It has not been absolutely clearly stated, except, I think, by the late Mr. Seddon, that these increases were given in order to enable the teachers to pay their superannuation contributions.

171. You did not understand that, at any rate?—No, I did not take it altogether in that way.

172. You are aware that the petition states that the Superannuation Act was passed——?—But, then, there are some mistakes in that petition. At the end it speaks of "The Education Act Amendment Act, 1906." Well, there is no such Act.

173. You have spoken about the gap between the headmaster and the first assistant, and between the first assistant and the second assistant: are the first assistants dissatisfied with the gaps as they are just now?—Yes.

174. What is the gap, then, at the present time? Is it £80 between each?—Somewhere about that. There are gaps of £80 and £90.

175. Do I understand, then, that you consider the gap should be less between the headmaster and the first assistant, and greater than it is now between the first assistant and the second?—No, I do not say so. This is a matter that teachers should not be called upon to express an opinion about. I think we are altogether the wrong class of people to deal with a difficulty like that. We say that if the gap is too great between the first and the second assistants, therefore it must be deduced that the gap between the first assistant and the headmaster is too great also; but it is not for us to say how these gaps should be altered. It is for business men.

176. How much increase do the first assistants ask for now?—I believe if they got an increase of £10 a man they would be satisfied.

177. So that would lessen to £70 the difference between the first assistant and the headmaster, and increase to £90 the distance between the first assistant and the second?—It is not so much as that.

178. Is that not so?—I do not think it is worth while to ask me to give all these figures, because I have not come prepared.

179. If the distance between them is £80 on each side?—It is not so. That is not the evidence I gave.

180. Your opinion, then, is that the increase that the first assistants ask for, which would lessen the gap between the headmaster and them, would not in any way be unfair to the second assistants?—I do not see how it could be. If there were any unfairness in the position, the first assistants would not be responsible for that unfairness, no matter what increase they got.

181. I mean to say, it would not make the disproportion to the disadvantage of the assistants below the first?—I do not think the second assistants would be prepared to make any complaint, and I do not think they would be justified in feeling that they had any grievance on that account.

182. *Mr. Baume.* Something has been said about hearsay evidence: I take it that you are appearing for the whole body of these first assistants?—Well, I cannot say so; but the fact of there being a colonial petition in connection with the matter may be taken as evidence in that direction.

183. And what you tell us cannot necessarily be based altogether upon personal knowledge on your part?—Certainly not. I read that tea comes from China. I have never been there, but I assume that it is correct.

184. When you speak about cases of injustice, if they have not happened to yourself, then you cannot speak from personal knowledge?—No.

185. Have you any reason to doubt the statements that have been made to you by teachers complaining of injustice and unfair treatment?—No. I am inclined to accept them as being in most cases correct. There may be supposed cases of injustice which, on investigation, may turn out to be without foundation, but I do think that some of these complaints are well based.

186. I take it that with regard to some of the cases, at any rate, you are acquainted with the circumstances?—Yes. There is a certain amount of detail that gives an air of verisimilitude to the statement made to me.

187. And you believe that in certain cases, at any rate, injustice has been done?—Yes.

188. Does that lead you to the belief that the present system should be exchanged for a system of scientific and regular promotion of teachers?—That is too difficult a question for me to go into just now. I have seen the scientific method of dealing with teachers tried in Victoria, and I consider that it was a comparative failure. I am a great believer in local control myself, more particularly if there is any chance of securing an approximation to honesty, and I could not say offhand which is the better method. With all its drawbacks, I prefer the local system to the Victorian one.

189. Do you think that you are voicing the opinions of the first assistants generally when you say you would not prefer to see instituted a comprehensive scheme of promotion?—No; I think that most assistants and most headmasters—in fact, all classes—would like to see a comprehensive scheme of promotion introduced, based upon experience and ability to teach.

190. In which the personal judgment of the School Boards and School Committees should have very little weight?—Considerably less weight than they have at present.

191. You said something about local influence being brought to bear upon Committees: I think your remarks apply more to School Committees than to Boards of Education, do they not?—Yes.

192. And that selection by the Board would be more satisfactory to the general body of teachers than dependence upon the local Committees?—Yes, I think that is so.

193. Coming back to the question of the first assistants, do I understand that the first assistants make no comparison between their salaries and those of the headmasters on the one hand and of the second assistants on the other?—They make no comparison at all. They simply ask as a matter of absolute justice.

194. It is a question of absolute rise, not relative rise?—That is so.

195. The question of adaptation of the scale afterwards you express no opinion about?—No.

196. May I take it that you do not care to express an opinion?—I should not mind giving one if I had formed one.

197. Have you formed one?—Yes, based on the experience of the past. If it were considered necessary to lessen a gap, then the question of the gap between the first assistants and the headmasters should have been considered, because I consider the headmasters are relatively well treated, compared with first assistants.

198. Do you not think that the gap between the first assistant and the headmaster should be, at any rate, equal to the gap between the first assistant and the second?—Yes, I think it should, because I consider that even where the highest salaries are paid to the headmasters, those cannot be looked upon as very great prizes in the profession.

199. With reference to the deterioration of the second assistants, do you attribute that to a general deterioration in teaching-power amongst the junior assistants of the Dominion?—No. I think that, if anything, the effect of the introduction of the new syllabus and the introduction of the Act for staffing and salaries has been to bring about a considerable improvement.

200. How do you account, then, for the specific deterioration of the second assistants?—I do not say that the second assistants throughout New Zealand have deteriorated at all. I merely meant that that was the position as it affected Otago.

201. Is that a question of bad selection, then?—No.

202. Will you give us your reason for stating that the second assistants in Otago are specially weak?—I have already given that. Under the Otago Education Board, before the new Act came in, salaries were paid to second assistants amounting in many cases to as much as £200. If you expect to get the same quality of work done by a man who is in receipt of only £130 or £140 you must look for disappointment.

203. Then, what becomes of the man who would previously have applied for the second-assistantship, if he does not become a second assistant?—Practically he is a second assistant and he has to stagnate.

204. You do not answer my question. You say that the second assistant has deteriorated, and he has deteriorated for a reason?—I did not say that. What I meant to say was that the class of men promoted to the position now is not so good as it was before.

205. Then, what becomes of the man who would have been promoted previously?—I suppose he has gone to the country or into other walks of life. I have not made a complete study of the animal. I do not know where he has gone to.

206. But, then, where are you going to get your first assistants from? Are they going to be worse too?—They would be recruited from the country. They may not be recruited from the second assistants. I am speaking of Otago, of course.

207. But are they going to be worse too?—There is no possible chance of that happening.

208. You spoke about the disinclination on the part of the first assistants to go to the country: Does that disinclination exist solely and simply because there are very few desirable positions in the country?—It is partly that, but I may tell you this: that in the last two or three years some first assistants who a little while ago would not have gone to the country are now willing to go, simply because as they are growing older they would like to feel that they occupy a more independent position than they would while in the position of assistant. Supposing a man is fifty, and will be marking time from fifty to sixty, it does not suit him to be acting as an assistant.

209. You have already told us that occasionally headmasters of country schools are preferred to first assistants?—Yes.

210. Do you not think that that fact ought to induce first assistants who are desirous of promotion in their profession to apply for a country position, in order to qualify themselves for the best positions going?—That will be the ultimate effect, and it will be a very good effect; but, at present, the unfortunate position existing in several of the big centres in New Zealand is that the first assistants have had years and years of experience in their present situation, and there is very little to offer these men now. There is no favourable outlook for them at all; and unless something is done in the way of supplying them with a financial reward instead of the ordinary avenue of promotion, then these men will be a disappointed class.

211. But will they not be disappointed simply because they have made up their minds to remain first assistants? Do you not admit that it would be a very bad state of things which enabled a man to look forward to a position as first assistant as being the sum and summit of his work in the Department of Education?—I think it would be a bad thing in the interests of education that he should do so.

212. That being the case, is it not advisable that promotion to the positions of headmaster in city schools should be given to those first assistants who have qualified *via* the headmastership of country schools?—Yes; that is advisable.

213. Then the extra salary that you are asking for now is for what purpose?—To help men who have been used to a higher salary in the past, and who are now receiving a lower salary.

214. That is the whole thing?—Yes. On this point I am referring to Otago teachers.

215. *The Chairman.* Are you aware that the first assistants in Auckland have sent some petitions to this House, and the only request that they make is for house allowance?—Well, I do not know whether that is the only request they made, but I know that that was embodied in their petition.

216. They "humbly pray that a house allowance be made to all first assistants of Grade 12 or higher, such allowance to equal half of that granted to the headmasters of the same schools." That is the only request they make?—I am not in sympathy with it, for the reason that if once you start giving house allowance you must give it to all classes.

217. What yearly increments do you suggest should be given first assistants?—Ten pounds as a minimum.

218. *Mr. T. Mackenzie.* In connection with the appointment of teachers and the selection of candidates by the Board, are you really aware of the process that obtains with the Otago Education Board in connection with sending the names on to Committees?—For appointments?

219. Yes, in the country districts or anywhere?—Yes. Well, I have been told by a member of the Board and by an Inspector.

220. At any rate, speaking for the time I have been Chairman of the Board, I can say that the whole Board—or, let me put it as a question. Are you aware that the whole Board is a Selection Committee?—Yes.

221. Are you also aware that when the Selection Committee meets the Inspectors are there—if not all, at any rate two or three are. The list of applicants is sent to them, and they are asked for their recommendations, and before a single word of discussion takes place the list is given and the opinion of the Inspector on that list is obtained?—Yes.

222. The next process is that almost invariably after a little discussion the whole list goes out as submitted by the Inspectors. If that is not the case the members revise with the aid of the Inspectors. Perhaps an applicant may have been for a very long time in a remote place, and that person may, because of special service, receive preference over a teacher who may have slightly higher qualifications but who has not given the service in the back-country districts. Are you aware of that?—I am aware that that is the position taken up by the Board.

223. Then you referred to one assistant who had applied for Tapanui. Do you know what his qualification was?—Yes, C 1.

224. Was his name sent on?—I am not sure. He did not get the position. As a matter of fact he did not apply, as he changed his mind at the last moment.

225. What salary was he getting when he applied?—£235.

226. And the Tapanui School is worth £340?—Is it as much as that?

227. That includes house allowance: it is £300 without house allowance?—Yes.

228. Are you aware that it was the first assistant in a Dunedin school who had the appointment prior to that at the district high school?—Yes.

229. So that if one first assistant failed for that high school, another succeeded?—Yes, but that was some years ago.

230. He was teacher there until this vacancy arose?—Yes.

231. Are you aware that there are over a dozen prizes in the country districts, ranging from £340 to £393 a year?—I should not have thought there were so many. I was leaving out of sight the district-high-school emoluments. I had forgotten about them.

232. Do you not think it well for those who wish for promotion, to apply for such schools as those with a salary of £250 and a free house?—Yes.

233. Say £235 a year, like Waikouaiti?—I do not know that I should say that was worth trying for. A dozen positions, as you point out, do exist, but these have been held for a very long time, and the number of promotions is relatively small.

234. With regard to that matter of religious influence, you yourself do not know of it?—No, I have never known of any clergyman exerting it, but I have heard the statement made that it has been done.

235. That a clergyman has written to members of the Board?—No, but that he has influence with the members of the Board—that a certain candidate has influence with members of the Board by virtue of his connection with some clerical gentleman.

236. You have heard that, but you do not know it of your own knowledge?—No, I have never been brought closely into contact with that.

237. If that is so, you must feel how serious is a statement of that sort, because teachers would feel it very unjust to them that their service and merits should be overridden by clerical influence?—The statement is one that, if it does not appear before you as a matter of evidence, might appear before you any day of the week if you could hear what teachers say.

238. Do you think that that does not arise from disappointed applicants?—I cannot analyse men's motives in making statements. I assume that they tell me the truth as it appears to them.

239. Do you think, from your knowledge of these men and of the Board, that religious influence is brought to bear in connection with the names going to the Committee?—Yes, I am more inclined to believe that religious influence has been used in the past.

240. Although you do not know of a single case?—No; but making deductions from what I have been told, I should say it is more likely that it is true than that it is not true.

241. Do you not think that before making a statement of that sort you ought to be able to give, at any rate, one case in support of it?—You see, I am not brought closely enough into contact with it.

242. But you have made a statement, and a person before making a serious statement like that ought surely to have something to support it beyond mere rumour?—I am sorry I cannot give you anything more than the statement made to me.

243. Would you give us the names of those who made that statement, so that we could subpoena them to give evidence?—No.

244. So that you make a statement but have not the courage to give the names and endeavour to substantiate it: surely you should either substantiate the charge by names and evidence, or else withdraw it?—I have nothing to do with that.

ALBERT ERSKINE examined. (No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Erskine?—First assistant at the Terrace School, Wellington.

2. How long have you been in that position?—Fifteen years.

3. You have heard the evidence given by Mr. Smeaton?—Yes.

4. Do you indorse what he has said?—Well, as far as regards the salaries of first assistants, I indorse it. I could not indorse everything he has said, because a good deal of it had reference to Otago, and not to other parts of New Zealand.

5. Is there any statement you would like to make?—I should like, first of all, to state that I have come here on short notice to represent the first assistants of Wellington, feeling that it is the opinion of first assistants in the city that it is difficult to make both ends meet on the salaries they have been receiving under the present Salaries Act. That is accounted for, first of all, by high rents in the City of Wellington, and higher cost of living. I know very well that the latter is a moot point at present. It has been discussed from both points of view, but in many ways the cost of living is higher. That it is higher all round I am not prepared to state, as I am not a married man. But all the other first assistants in the town are married men, and consider the cost of living to be higher. One who promised to come here this morning failed to put in an appearance. Evidently he could not get away from his work. Several matters have been discussed this morning which I thought might be viewed from the Wellington point of view. For instance, the gap between the first and second assistants and between the first assistants and the headmasters. I do not know whether that has much to do with the actual salary of the assistants, but I might point out that the gap is very much greater in the City of Wellington. Under the old scheme the gap

between the second and first assistants was £70 all round. There was a fixed salary. Between the headmaster and the first assistant there was a difference of as much as £120, and that applied to every school. At present the difference between the second and first assistants varies from about £40 to £70, and between the first assistant and the headmaster there is a much greater difference, amounting to as much as £160. In fact, I might say that in every school in the city there is that much difference between the first assistant and the headmaster. I am only making these statements from memory, but they are pretty accurate, I think, and I only make them because the matter came before the Committee. With regard to the qualifications of the first assistants, I thought Mr. Smeaton rather understated them. I think the majority of first assistants are teachers of a good number of years' standing, who are in possession of degrees or C1 certificates, which entitle them to appointments as headmasters if they can get such appointments. The whole point, of course, with us is that, since the Superannuation Act came into operation, the first assistants have found it very difficult to make both ends meet in Wellington. They felt that in justice to themselves and their families it was necessary for them to come under that scheme. It means that they are paying from £12 to £19 a year out of their salaries for superannuation alone. Then, of course, house-rents are very high here, and it leaves the first assistants very little for actual living-expenses, especially in the case of a married man. It does not affect me in the least in that way. I am only speaking from the point of view of the married man. Those are the points that I thought I should like to elucidate a little more.

6. *Mr. J. Allen.*] Have you experienced the same difficulties in Wellington with the first assistants in getting out into the country?—Personally I have been in the one position for fifteen years. That would show that I had difficulties.

7. Have you applied for other positions?—Yes, and have not been promoted.

8. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] Because you are not a married man?—That has a lot to do with it, I believe. There is one other thing I should like to mention, and that is that since appointments have been left to Committees there has been a great deal more influence brought to bear on the Committees, and more appointments of that sort made, than was the case in the past.

9. *Mr. J. Allen.*] Does "buttonholing" act to the detriment of the first assistant who wants to get out into the country?—It may act to his detriment if he happens to be at the top of the list.

10. You know of cases in which that has happened?—I think it is common knowledge that the man placed first on the list by the Board is not always appointed by the Committee. I have known a case where they have selected the fifth man, and in order to get out of the difficulty they selected the fifth and sixth, so the Board was compelled to appoint the fifth.

11. What do you ascribe that to—buttonholing?—I should say that the Committees must be influenced in some way in order to bring that about.

12. What conclusion do you come to—that these appointments were better in the hands of the Board?—I think they were.

13. *Mr. Baume.*] Do you believe that the most satisfactory system would be a comprehensive scheme of promotion?—That is a matter which is being considered by teachers generally, and I have not come to any strong opinion on the subject at all. I should not like to see any promotion scheme adopted which was a cast-iron one, and which simply meant that a man would climb up to the next man's position when that position became vacant. There ought to be room for ability to show itself.

14. Under the present scheme you would sooner see more power given to the Boards, and less to the School Committees?—Most decidedly.

15. *The Chairman.*] Do you wish to say anything further?—No.

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