

40. Well, could you do much centralization at the Thames under your proposal?—I said it would be a great desideratum to have schools of 500; but I would go further, and say that you might have schools organized with one headmaster in charge of several. I think there is a good deal to commend that system.

41. Would it not reduce cost and increase efficiency to have one headmaster over a number of schools?—If the schools were not built for over 1,000 children in the first place. If schools were built on modern lines, probably 1,000, or at any rate 750, scholars could be well dealt with.

42. Do you know of any other district where centralization could be applied?—I think it might be practicable in some of the districts of the Waikato, along the railway-line.

43. Do you think the money spent on the purchase of free school-books is wisely spent?—I think it might be much better spent on stationery. There is a great disability in the fact that the children cannot take the books home.

44. Do you think the money expended now is wasted?—A considerable amount of it is wasted, because the books are duplicated. Reading-books are bought by the children in addition to those supplied. I think I can say in favour of the system that it has done a good deal in extending the children's reading. The supplementary readers give them a wider range of reading.

45. Have you a library in your school?—Yes.

46. *The Chairman.*] Is it supplemented from time to time?—No. I think the system in connection with the libraries is one grant. I think a regular subsidy would be a gain.

47. *Mr. Poland.*] Would not a travelling library obviate that?—Yes.

48. *Mr. Thomson.*] You think secondary education should be compulsory?—I should like to see it compulsory up to the age of seventeen, and be of a vocational nature.

49. *Mr. Davidson.*] Do you know of any part of the British Empire where more liberal staffing is in operation than that allowed in New Zealand in the grade where you now propose a subgrade?—No; but New Zealand leads the world in most things, so we may have a little hope in that.

50. In a school of seventy-five, would there not be at least thirty-five in the preparatory classes and Standards I and II?—There would be more than that; nearer fifty.

51. That would leave only twenty-five in Standard III and upwards. Surely you will not contend that there is great difficulty in the headmaster having twenty-five scholars to deal with?—But the foundation work of the school is laid in the infant classes. If the headmaster did not get assistance, the infant mistress or woman assistant should have it.

52. I do not admit that there would be fifty in the preparatory classes and first two standards?—I have known a roll-number of forty-three out of sixty-eight.

53. What class of school do you consider most easily worked below Grade 6?—The school where the attendance is just over thirty-six.

54. Is it not the general opinion of teachers that the two-teacher school is the pick of country positions?—Yes, at one end, when it is near the minimum.

55. What is the attendance at your school?—There are sixty-eight on the roll.

56. What percentage of the pupils provide their own books although the books are provided by the State?—I was not speaking of my own school when referring to that matter.

57. Have you many free books stowed away in the cupboards unused?—No. They use them in the school, but in some cases they purchased books in order to get up their spelling and reading work. I have heard of some schools where all the children have provided themselves with books.

58. Do you know that many teachers encourage the children to purchase their own books?—Yes.

59. On the question of the conveyance of school-children to a central school, you had in your mind more particularly the country schools?—Yes.

60. Would the plan adopted in South Australia be workable here. There any parent whose children live beyond more than three miles from school may be granted a daily allowance in order to take his own children to that particular school, the parent being entirely responsible; the allowance is at the rate of 4d. a day for each child. Parents make arrangements for the conveyance, and take the whole of the responsibility?—I think that system would be ineffective here. A farmer would not be able to do it. The better practice would be to delegate some one to do the work. The only way it could be done would be by the parents combining to get a trap.

61. *Mr. Thomson.*] It is in operation now?—I was thinking of the dairy industry in our country districts.

62. The allowance in New Zealand is a minimum of 6d. per day for each child. The parent might get 2s. 6d. per week. Do you not think it possible that many parents would undertake the conveyance of their own children to school if they were allowed 2s. 6d. per week for each child?—I think it would be a precarious system to adopt.

#### PERCY GEORGE ANDREW examined on oath. (No. 12.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am secretary of the Poverty Bay School Committees' Association, and also a member of the School Committee at Te Haka, a suburb of Gisborne. I have been on the Committee since the school was started some two years ago.

2. The Commission will be glad to hear you on any question raised in the order of reference?—The School Committees' Association was formed in the district on account of the dissatisfaction felt with the administration of the Education Board. Our own school is a new school, which was opened last February twelve months. There was a guaranteed attendance at the outset of 156 children. The Board built a school to accommodate, roughly, 140 or 145. Twelve months after the school was opened the attendance was 220, but there was only accommodation for 140; so