

54. *Mr. Wells.*] Can you offer any opinion as to the Inspectors being placed under the central Department?—When I was an Inspector I wanted to be under the central Department, but now I think otherwise.

55. Do you think the Inspectors should be paid according to a Dominion scale?—I think the salary of an Inspector should not be less than that of a headmaster. I would be inclined to say that it should be more, but I recognize that in the Auckland District many headmasters of large schools would decline to accept an inspectorship, because of the hardship involved in that position. A man requires to be in the prime of health and strength in order to stand the strain. But an Inspector should certainly be paid as much as a headmaster.

56. If the life is so hard, is not that an additional reason why an Inspector should be well paid?—That is so. My point is that some headmasters could not possibly do the work on account of the strain.

57. Has the grading scheme in this district been a success?—Not an unqualified success, but it has been a success.

58. You think that the present conditions are distinctly ahead of those that formerly prevailed?—Decidedly.

59. From your long experience as an Inspector would you say that the syllabus required simplification?—Yes.

60. In what direction?—It should be made up in a much less complex way, so that the teachers could understand exactly what they are required to do in the various grades of schools. It is more important to the sole-teacher school—the Grade 4 school—than to the others, where the headmasters are responsible for the interpretation to some extent.

61. In what way might the work be lightened?—I have not thought much about that. I feel that the syllabus could be simplified, but I cannot go into details.

62. Can you offer any opinion as to the success of taking into the Training College students who have had no previous experience in teaching?—I have had some experience with teachers who have been through the Training College, and that experience has been decidedly unfortunate. I think the students themselves were placed in an unhappy position. They did not seem to know either the theory or the practice of teaching. I speak now of Division B students who had matriculated and gone through the Training College without previous teaching experience, and after their course of training had been sent out to teach. My knowledge of them dates back to the time when I was an Inspector. I have had some indirect experience of them since, and I think it is an unfortunate position for any person to be placed in.

63. *Mr. Kirk.*] Does not your district adjoin Hawke's Bay?—We go to Opotiki, and the district has lately been extended for thirty miles beyond Opotiki. There is a no-man's land between us and the Hawke's Bay District.

64. Can you work the district satisfactorily?—Yes, the roads are reasonably good.

65. Would it be in the interest of education if the Auckland District were curtailed in that direction?—The district is not at present too large. It is quite large enough, but it is not too large in that direction. We have comparatively easy access to Opotiki; there are good roads from Rotorua. The Bay of Plenty is considered the plum of the Inspectors' districts in the Auckland Education District. It is the most easily worked, has the most comfortable travelling, and the best climate.

66. *Mr. Thomson.*] Has not the clerical work in connection with returns increased in recent years?—Yes.

67. Is there not more departmental correspondence—greater supervision by the Department over the operations of the Board—than there was ten years ago?—Yes, considerably greater.

68. May not a teacher be uncertificated and at the same time do good work?—Several uncertificated teachers do excellent work.

69. Supposing that all the teachers were certificated, would they be content to go to out-of-the-way places for the salaries offered?—They would go if there was nothing better offering.

70. May it not be that it is because the salaries are so low in the case of the backblock schools that you cannot get certificated teachers?—The real cause is that the certificated teachers are not here.

71. How many district high schools are there in the Auckland Education District?—Eleven, with 299 scholars.

81. Are these district high schools a success?—It depends upon what you consider is a success. Some educational enthusiasts would not consider them quite a success. The majority of them are for the purpose of getting students through the Matriculation and Junior Civil Service Examinations.

73. Have you closed any district high schools since the inauguration of that system?—We frequently close them when they dwindle away for want of attendance.

74. How do you deal with School Committees when they apply for works incidental to the maintenance of outhouses, fencing, gravelling, &c.? We provide shelter-sheds, fencing, and all the repairs generally necessary in the way of maintenance. For improvements to grounds and gravelling we usually make a pound-for-pound grant, but we sometimes pay the whole cost, if the circumstances of the Committee are such that the Board consider it advisable. There is no fixed rule as to the improvement, but generally half the cost is granted.

75. Is not the statutory grant to School Committees 5s. 6d. for each child in daily attendance?—We are paying 6s. 3d.

76. Do you find that sufficient for the Committee?—It depends on the Committee. Some Committees have good balances in hand, but others are always coming to us for grants. I think that, on the whole, under ordinary circumstances, the grant is sufficient.

77. Do the Committees complain much?—I think the majority of the Committees do not complain.