

14. What do you mean by "as far as the conditions will allow"?—We cannot approach the public now as we could by a Board of Trustees.

15. Are you dissatisfied with the amount of money which has been placed at your disposal?—No; so far I have had ample funds provided for the Museum as it is. For some years I have refrained from asking for money on account of insufficient accommodation.

16. Have you made any request which has been declined?—No. I am not referring to the building.

17. I am referring to the purchase of articles. In what respect do you think improvement could be effected by the substitution of a Board of Control?—It would give the Museum a better standing in the Dominion. It is a Dominion Museum and not a Wellington Museum.

18. You think you would get more money in the way of donations?—Yes.

19. Under the Australian Museum arrangements all officers and servants of the Museum the Board may appoint, and they have the entire management and supervision of the affairs and properties of the Museum. Do you intend that that should be done under your proposal?—No; my intention was that the final appointment should rest with the Government. I think it would be very unlikely that the Government would not appoint any one duly recommended by the Board of Trustees.

20. You think the Board should be purely a Board of advice?—Yes, and that they should direct the internal management of the affairs of the Museum.

21. And the moneys required from time to time?—There would be an annual vote which would be placed to the credit of the Board of Trustees. If it were not expended the balance would be available next year. That is not the position now, because if a sum is not expended this year it lapses. In that way the Board of Trustees would make provision for anything they saw offering.

22. You suggest that the Government should make a grant to the Board?—Yes, and in the case of any large expenditure which the Board contemplated, they would apply to the Government in the ordinary way and outside the ordinary expenditure.

23. What would be your position—would you still be employed by the Government?—Yes.

24. Would you take your instructions from the Board?—Yes.

25. Would you not be amenable to the Minister at all?—The Minister would be one of the Board.

26. Can you tell us of any arrangements to the same effect in the control of museums?—Yes, Sydney, Melbourne, and; I think, the Queensland Museum. I am not, however, certain about the Queensland Museum.

27. *Mr. Russell.*] Is there any more need to set up a Board of Control in your Department than there is in the Government Printing Office, which employs some six hundred people?—I hardly think they are on the same footing.

28. Why not?—A museum should appeal to the public.

29. Are you proposing to send out subscription lists to provide funds for the Museum, or to have garden fêtes?—Not exactly. Institutions of this kind require outside assistance. Many museums have outside societies, the members of which subscribe so-much a year for the benefit of the institution, and the sums raised go to assist the museum in the purchase of articles which the Government cannot afford the funds for.

30. You are still looking for the Government to provide funds?—Yes, the ordinary annual grant.

31. In what respect do you think the management of the institution would be improved if it were taken out of the hands of the Minister of Internal Affairs and given over to the Board?—I think that a large body would have more interest in such an institution, and they would be able to assist the Minister in any case of doubt.

32. In what way do you consider the present institution has broken down?—In no way.

33. Is it not a fact that directly I assumed control of the institution as Minister of Internal Affairs I gave you a second nightwatchman for the protection of the institution?—Certainly.

34. Is it not also a fact that in the few weeks during which I held office I had arranged for various matters in connection with the whole of the buildings and site?—Yes.

35. Everything wanted for the improvement of this Museum during my term as Minister of Internal Affairs was done?—Yes.

36. Do you not think that as this Board will probably only meet once in three months, questions of urgency can much better be dealt with by the Minister, who is able at once to give his decision on any important point and have the matter settled without waiting for a meeting of the Board of Control?—With regard to meetings, the general practice is to have them monthly, and to report recommendations. With regard to the Minister always being available, that is certainly so; but in case of his absence from Wellington, the Chairman of the Board or probably his deputy would be able to act. There is no great point in that, because I think the Minister under the present arrangement is quite available.

37. I see that, under the Act that controls the Australian Museum, the Board which is proposed to be set up would have full power of expenditure, and would issue recommendations for the whole of the money that is spent. Do you not realize that where it comes to the question of expenditure the immediate control and responsibility of the Minister to Parliament is a much better protection to the public than would be the case under a Board, which might incur large expenditure without authority?—I understand that to mean in practice that the Government vote a sum on the meeting of Parliament to the Board, and they cannot exceed that without applying again to Parliament. All accounts are subject to Government audit previous to the annual report, in which full details are presented.

38. *Mr. EU.*] It may be that you would have a Director who had a special interest in some scientific question, and who would not have that broad sympathy which is absolutely essential for a museum which embraces all subjects?—That is so.