

Schools of 600: The salaries range from £258 to £375. For a male teacher it is proposed to make it £324. The average salary for a head (or sole) teacher in New Zealand actually paid is £149 11s. 9d. For the year ending December, 1899, the average that would have been paid if this scale had been in existence would have been £160 11s. Certain figures are given also for Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia. The salary of the infant mistress or first assistant mistress has a very wide range in New Zealand, with a commencing salary of from £42 up to £85. An infant mistress in one district may receive £42; in another district, where she may be called first assistant mistress, £48; and so on up to £85, which is the highest on the scale. The Boards have not in all cases kept to their scales. In saying this, I do not wish to cast any reflection on the Boards; but no doubt they found it difficult to avoid departing from their scales in some instances. The salary paid to an infant mistress in South Australia seems rather low as compared with that paid in the other colonies. According to the proposed scale, the highest salary for an infant mistress is £200, and the lowest one, £80. The next point is rather a difficult one to deal with, and that is the question of house-allowance. As you are aware, in some districts there are a very large number of schools without school residences. Taking only schools with an average attendance of over 20, there were, at the end of 1899, 351 without residences—in Auckland 113, Taranaki 17, Wanganui 38, Wellington 65, Hawke's Bay 29, Marlborough 2, Nelson 22, Grey 9, Westland 5, North Canterbury 18, South Canterbury 11, Otago 3, Southland 19. If in one school of an average attendance of 20, say, the headmaster is paid £120 with a house, and in another similar school the headmaster receives £120 without any house, the salaries are not in the strictest sense equal, and we are thus face to face with a difficulty at once. At the same time, to deal with this question on a sound basis would involve interference with what are the recognised functions of the Boards—interference with the discretionary powers of the Boards; so that in putting forth this scheme I do not propose to touch the question of house-allowance, because it is not proposed to interfere with the discretion of the Boards. You might say the scheme is defective, or would be defective, because it overlooks that point altogether, unless the question of house-allowance, as I would recommend, be taken as a separate question and dealt with on its merits. There are several ways of dealing with it: one way is indicated in the last annual report of the Minister, but only a very partial way, as there was no contemplated interference with the Boards. One way to overcome the immediate difficulty of supplying schools with residences where there are no residences now is to provide that for the future it should be left to the option of a Board as to whether it should build residences or not, according to the circumstances. It seems to me that the Board is in a better position to judge of it. At the same time the Board would take a proportion of its building-allowance in the form of a house-allowance from year to year. The building vote is not all used for capital purposes; part of it is used for strictly capital purposes—building new schools, additions to schools, and residences—and part for repairs and rehabilitation of old schools and other purposes of that kind which are not capital charges, but annually recurring charges. In the same way the Boards may make the house-allowance a charge on their building funds if there were power given to them by legislation to do so. It should be left to the Board whether in any given case it should build a residence or pay house-allowance. I may say I have made several attempts at drafting a scale of salaries. This draft I have now is the fifth. In the first three drafts I attempted to deal with the question of house-allowance in conjunction with that of salaries, but it was a disturbing factor, and, as I stated before, the best way of dealing with the matter is to treat it as a separate question altogether. To give house-allowances where there are no residences would require from £8,000 to £10,000, beginning with the minimum house-allowance of £20. The average that I work it out at is £21 10s. for house-allowance. I do not suggest that house-allowance should be met out of the £4 capitation. Several of the Boards give no outside payments in the way of fees for the instruction of their pupil-teachers. The Auckland Board gives none whatever; Wanganui does; Wellington does in some cases, and in some cases it does not. My own feeling is against it. I think if you are going to have a colonial scale it is much easier to draw it up if you do not disturb it by bringing in extra remuneration of any kind whatever. Of course, it would be open to the Commission practically to include the fees in the salaries. In regard to the general expenses of Boards [Exhibit 10]—namely, those included [see Exhibit 2, page 3] under "General Expenses of Boards"—I might say it is extremely difficult to analyse the returns of the general expenses of Boards. For instance, under the head of "Training of teachers" some Boards put fees for pupil-teachers, while some do not. I hold that fees for pupil-teachers should not be put under the head of "Training of teachers," but under that of "Allowances to teachers." As the result of a very careful analysis of one year, 1899, we found there was a balance of £59,973 available for Boards' general expenses. We have not been able to make an analysis for the year 1900, and I do not know that I could promise to get such a return, even if you asked for it, before the rising of the Commission.

8. *Mr. Weston.*] If the Commission asked for what?—For the Boards' expenses for the year 1900. [Details given by Mr. Hogben, Exhibit 9.] The cost of manual and technical instruction, as far as Boards are concerned, will be met out of the funds for carrying out the new Manual and Technical Instruction Act. With regard to some of the expenses of Boards—allowances to School Committees, and so on—I think I ought to state for the information of the Commission that the Minister has received a good many letters from Boards and School Committees complaining that the amount given to School Committees at the present time is too small. The Boards say that the amounts now given are the utmost that can be given with the money at their disposal. The answer has been that the matter will be put before the Commission when it meets, and I am now conveying that fact to the Commission. Members' expenses is an item that must be met—not a very large item. Expressing my personal opinion in regard to the cost of training teachers, I hope that the Boards will be to a very large extent relieved of that very soon, in regard to the general training of teachers as well as their training in the subjects of manual and technical instruction. Of