

38. Do you think that this principle of maintenance—3½ per cent. upon the value of the whole buildings—can be replaced by some other principle?—A much better one, the factor average of wear-and-tear being known.

39. Which shall be based upon difference in locality?—Yes. Take what I said a few minutes ago with regard to the Government fixing a type of school, and that no building in a district should be carried out until that type had been approved by the Minister of Education or this Committee—I do not mind so long as it is a central authority, with all the facts before it—so that the buildings could be put up in a proper manner. I say that that can be done.

40. Supposing that you adopted another principle for providing the money for maintenance and giving the maintenance-money provided by the Crown—whatever the principle of allotting it may be; would it be used for maintenance only?—I would earmark it.

41. As to the question of rebuilding: Supposing the Government set up a fund to replace the buildings when they got old, should that be earmarked also?—Every penny-piece.

*Sir W. R. Russell:* I do not think Mr. Hill quite understands what you are getting at.

42. *Mr. J. Allen.*] If the Committee allot a certain amount per annum to replace buildings as they get too old for use, should that money be earmarked for replacing alone?—Yes.

43. *Sir W. R. Russell.*] Does Mr. Hill understand that that replacing takes place thirty years hence?—Not necessarily.

44. Well, a long period hence?—It is taking place every year, on the average. I am assuming there is a grant every year for replacing, as renewals are required somewhere every year.

45. *Mr. J. Allen.*] That is so—that is the principle here?—I say the facts shown here in the returns from the various Education Boards show that your principle is altogether wrong.

46. That is not the point. I am getting at the principle of allotting the money for those purposes and tying it up for those purposes. That was the Committee's report—that the money should be tied up for maintenance and rebuilding?—I approve of that.

47. The Committee also suggested that a sum should be voted by Parliament and allocated by the Government for extensions and new buildings. Do you approve of that principle?—Certainly. That is the principle that should be adopted.

48. Difficulty has arisen in this respect: We recommended the allotment of money for maintenance, for rebuilding of old schools, and for extensions and new buildings, but we apparently did not provide for small alterations, such as the enlarging of one class-room at the expense of another, the erection of a porch, or a w.c., and so on. We apparently made no exact provision for that sort of thing. What would you suggest as a principle for dealing with that?—I say that comes under maintenance. I say it ought to be part of the maintenance vote.

49. Supposing you admit that principle, is there not this danger, that if you allow the money for such purposes to come out of the maintenance vote, the Education Boards may utilise money which ought to be devoted to upkeep in making alterations, and make upkeep suffer?—No, I do not think so, if the circular defined what upkeep was.

50. Would you limit the alterations that the Boards might make out of their upkeep-money to a certain sum?—Absolutely. I would define exactly what "upkeep" meant, and when the maintenance grant was given it should only be expended upon upkeep and nothing else.

51. We are talking of another thing than pure upkeep—the alteration of a class-room, or the erection of a new porch, or the rebuilding of one. Should that come out of the maintenance vote in your opinion?—I think so.

52. Where do you draw the dividing-line between these small alterations and your additions?—There is no difficulty at all. If the school, which has been erected and approved by the central Department, has not sufficient accommodation, there is an extension. I want to fix the type of certain schools. There should be grades 1, 2, 3, and 4. You would at once know that that school should accommodate so many, and that it would cost on the general average a certain capitation. You say that that school shall be built to represent a type of school to accommodate, say, fifty on the average attendance; you know exactly what the vote will be.

53. The North Canterbury difficulty apparently is this: One class-room got too small, and there was room available in another class-room; and they wanted to make an alteration, I suppose, by means of a dividing-wall. Should that come out of maintenance?—I should think so. It would with us.

54. The only danger I see in it is this, that if the principle is right that the maintenance-money should be for pure maintenance, and you allow these alterations to be made, how are you going to limit the alterations so that the pure maintenance vote will not suffer—that is, the painting and actual repairs?—They have a certain amount of money available, and that has to be so allotted—just the same as the 11s. 3d. capitation has to be allotted—so that it shall carry out the work. It is simply giving the Boards that kind of power which it is necessary they should have. If a man has a small income and he spends too much on one side, he knows what is going to happen on the other.

55. What do you mean by your word "extension"?—Would you consider the erection of a porch an extension?—Certainly not; that is ordinary upkeep.

56. How about the erection of a w.c. where one did not exist?—I do not call that "extension." That is maintenance. It should be "extension" when the accommodation in the buildings provided by the Department is insufficient to satisfy the requirements of the school.

57. *Sir W. R. Russell.*] How would you propose to put the Boards in a more independent position than they are in now with regard to finance, so as to obviate their going back continually for money for additions?—They would not need to if there were proper organization—if arrangements were made so that applications should be considered, say, by a Council such as this every half-year. On the facts which are presented in the returns sent to the Department you could always test the question of extension. The Inspector for the district should, after a Board received an application for a new school, be required to go there and give an independent opinion