

96. Would you recommend that the whole of the schools of the colony be under the supervision of the central Department?—The erection of new schools should all be supervised. Everything should be done for the benefit of the Board, and, if you liked, the new schools should be given to the Board. I would prefer that plan. Every new school should be erected and equipped ready for the use of the Board.

97. Take our own district: Have you found in your experience that the judgment brought to bear upon these things by the local men is altogether desirable? I will take Hatuma as an instance. You are aware that an application was made a short time ago for a school at Hatuma?—Yes.

98. The number of scholars that were supposed to attend the school was ten, possibly twelve. The Board made an application for £190 for the erection of a school to accommodate those twelve children?—That is at the rate of £19 a head. I do not think the Government is entitled to build a school for any number of children below twenty. They should give a building capitation allowance to a district as a building subsidy, and encourage a little help on the part of the people.

99. You are aware from your own experience that in certain sparsely populated districts in Hawke's Bay you find people who are willing and have intimated their desire to erect buildings for themselves?—There is nothing to stop them from doing so.

100. They must have the consent of the Education Board?—What for?

101. For the erection of the building?—Indeed, I did not know that. If the people in a place like to erect a building and go to the Board and say, "We will give you this building if you will take it over," I think the Board will show its appreciation.

102. You are aware that the Hatuma people offered, if the Government would provide them with a certain amount of material, to find expert men who would erect the school, and yet in the face of that you sent an application to the Government for £190 with which to erect a school for twelve children?—I have never made an application.

103. Well, that is actually a fact, and I want to ask you whether you do not think there should be a central Architectural Department for dealing with school buildings?—I would like to see it. I am suggesting it. I said in my evidence that, although the education system has been in existence twenty-five years, the Government has never taken the trouble to formulate a scheme for sending out plans of types of schools, furniture, &c. Every district has sprawled about as it liked.

104. Then, I understand you to say you would be in favour of a differential rate according to the quality of the school that is built?—I would have the Department carry out the erection of the buildings, and then the differential rate would not exist—it would be an average.

105. *Mr. Sidey.*] When was it, Mr. Hill, that your Board first received this circular from the Education Department containing the information about the grant for maintenance?—Well, I can only say that I saw it on Saturday for the first time. I went to the office at Napier and I was shown the circular.

106. So that before Saturday last you were not aware that such a regulation had been brought into force?—No, I was not aware of that being in existence.

107. No difficulty has arisen in your district as the outcome of that circular, to your knowledge?—They have followed the old plan of doing as they liked. We have a definite scale.

108. I understand that you understand from the circular that no money is to be applied out of that maintenance grant for such a purpose as an addition to a class-room or the erection of a little outbuilding?—I should not so interpret it.

109. Your board have not interpreted it so?—I do not know what the Board have done. I do not know whether our Board have followed or interpreted the circular exactly as the circular stands. I have only tabulated the amounts that have been spent, and certainly according to these our Board has spent a great deal more than anything contained in the circular, both on maintenance and building.

110. So that you are satisfied of this, that there has been money expended by your Board out of the maintenance grant for purposes which would not come within the definition of maintenance under the circular?—I am only dealing with totals. I do not know the details.

111. You assume from the totals that the Board has done so?—In most of the districts I think they spent more than the grant. Auckland, I think, was the exception. The Board there got 10s. 4½d. a head as a vote and spent 10s. 1¼d. a head, while Wellington got 8s. 3d. a head and spent £1 0s. 4½d.

112. Spent that on maintenance?—Well, you see, the term is used indefinitely here.

113. Where did the money come from?—That is another question. I do not know where the money comes from.

114. It is more than they have been granted?—That is so with nearly all of the Boards.

115. To your knowledge, at any rate, no difficulty has arisen with your Board as the outcome of that circular?—I have nothing to do with that.

116. To your own knowledge, I mean?—I do not know anything about it. Our Board is always wanting money, I know, for buildings; and I say this much, although the Assistant-Secretary for Education is here, that in my estimation it is a disgrace that no vote has ever been given for the Dannevirke Public School—following my own memorandum upon the subject—when the facts are so patent.

117. Would you not be likely to have heard it if there had been any difficulty in the Board's getting money for other than maintenance purposes as the result of that circular?—The Dannevirke School has been overfull for a long time, and any gentleman who wants to see the condition there can walk into the school and see a state of affairs that, to my mind, is a disgrace to the Education Department.

118. To your knowledge, there has been no difficulty—I mean under similar circumstances to those of the North Canterbury Board, which Board has been placed at a disadvantage in