

134. Do you think it is possible or advisable that the Dominion should be divided into four education districts the boundaries of which would be coterminous with the present university districts?—I would have more districts than four.

135. Then, to prepare for the satisfactory working of such a scheme as you suggest, you would certainly wish to see some of these small districts amalgamated?—Not to prepare for the working of the scheme. I think the scheme might prepare for the amalgamation.

136. You referred to the staffing of the schools, and pointed out that in some schools a single teacher is now teaching 60 or 70 pupils in one class?—Yes.

137. Have you noticed that in the scale of staffing that schools with an average of 401 receive no addition to the staff until the average attendance is 481?—Yes.

138. Do you think it would be advisable that a new scale of staffing should be introduced to meet the requirements in such cases?—Yes, I think it would be. I certainly think there ought to be another assistant in schools where the average attendance is well over 401, but has not reached 481.

139. Of course, it will be all right when the new scale of staffing comes into operation?—Yes; but there is another question that enters in there. If we are going to put assistants into schools of that grade our smaller schools must necessarily suffer.

140. Is not the number of schools in the unfortunate position of ranging between 450 and 480 in average attendance and getting no increase in staff very small?—Yes, it would not make a great deal of difference.

141. In trying to account for the shortage of qualified teachers, you pointed out the length of service required of a man before he received any fair remuneration for his work, and the poor salary he then received, and so on; but what is your opinion about the difficulties of entering the teaching profession: For instance have you carefully studied the new regulations for the examination and classification of teachers?—Yes.

142. One of the clauses provides that "candidates will be required to produce evidence of having satisfactorily attended approved courses in first aid and ambulance": do you think it is possible for some of the teachers in the backblocks schools to attend satisfactory courses in first aid and ambulance?—The Department last year allowed us the sum of £225 to enable uncertificated teachers to qualify, and they are allowing us the same this year. We mean to use a portion of this money in providing this necessary instruction for the uncertificated teachers.

143. How will you provide for their going to a centre where such a class of instruction is held?—We are not providing for the expense of travel. All people have to make certain sacrifices in order to get on. There is no reason why in the smaller centres the teachers should not arrange with the local doctors for a course of instruction to satisfy the Department. That should not be a difficult matter to arrange. They are having these ambulance courses in quite a large number of centres—Rotorua, Hamilton, Cambridge, and Whangarei, and centres of that kind.

144. In order to qualify for the C certificate it would be necessary for a teacher to give eighty hours in the year to this work, and some of the teachers in the back districts who hold these certificates are particularly anxious to become more highly qualified; but will it be possible for them to do eighty hours' practical work in these science subjects?—Probably not for quite a number of teachers; but what would happen would be this: they would gradually get away from the back districts. Of course, teachers do that as they get on, and when they are nearer to a centre they can raise their certificate.

145. *The Chairman.*] How long does it take to get out of the backblocks?—It depends on the individual and the record he shows.

146. *Mr. Davidson.*] You would not encourage these people to get their C certificate in order to get out, and the getting of the C is made particularly easy in the training colleges, while it is made particularly difficult for the outsider?—I am sorry that on this particular occasion I cannot agree with you. I do not think the obtaining of either C or D is by any means made easy in the training college. It is not the examination that counts, but the course of instruction which leads up to the examination, and in the training college here a great deal of care is taken to see that both in regard to preparation and acquisition of knowledge the teachers acquit themselves creditably, and if they do not do that they will not get either C or D.

147. Some of the Inspectors in the South say that it is utterly impossible for some of the backblocks teachers to attend first aid and ambulance classes?—I think that is quite true.

148. And yet an impossible condition is made here for certain teachers. In your opinion, would it not be better if this science were left until a teacher could get his D or C certificate, and then he could afterwards take science and get a certain certificate for it?—What is the object of this examination? The object is to ensure that the teacher will possess the requisite knowledge for giving instruction in schools, and I do not think any teacher should possess a certificate to give adequate instruction unless he has reasonable knowledge of science.

149. Would you not do what they do in South Australia—issue a provisional certificate?—A teacher can get a partial D.

150. Have you thought it wise to put insuperable difficulties in the way of backblocks teachers?—I should say, in answer to that general question, is it unwise; but I do not think we have put insuperable difficulties in the way of them. It is not possible to legislate for special cases. The great bulk of our backblocks teachers in Auckland will be able to reach a centre where they can get instruction in ambulance-work.

151. Do you think it possible, with the opportunity offering to the individual students in these training colleges in New Zealand, for the students to get sufficient practice in learning to control a class?—I do not know how to answer that question. I think, so far as the control of the class is concerned, that the teacher would probably do better if put in control of a large class and allowed to work out his own salvation, but whether that teacher would eventually be a better disciplinarian I am not prepared to say.