

that the colony affords would thus be brought within the reach of those boys or girls possessing that natural aptitude which alone would enable them to derive permanent benefits therefrom, and no portion of the district would have a ground of complaint on the score of being shut out from participation in the benefits arising from such a disposal of the public money.

BONUS FOR RESULTS.

The present regulations for the payment of bonuses for results I find after trial to be open to two serious objections. One is that, while in large schools the teachers are able to add considerably to their income, in consequence of the large number of children in the fourth and higher standards, the teachers in small schools, who have an equally hard and more embarrassing task to perform, are practically debarred from the benefit of the bonus system, on account of the small number of pupils who remain at school long enough to enter the upper standards.

The other objection is, that the present arrangement has a tendency, especially in small schools, to divert too large a share of the teacher's attention from the lower, and at present unprofitable, classes, to those for which a bonus is paid. The scheme I would propose is, to reduce the bonuses now payable for passes in the four upper classes, and attach a bonus to passes in every class, adjusting the amounts in such a manner that the possible earnings of the large schools would not be materially altered, while the teachers of smaller schools would be able to share in the benefits, and the temptation to push forward the upper classes at the expense of the lower would be removed. I have prepared, for the consideration of the Board, an amended scale of bonus payments.

BOOK DEPÔT.

The management of this department has hitherto devolved upon me, but the accounts are kept by the Secretary: thus a divided responsibility exists, which is not satisfactory or advisable. Moreover, the increased area of the Westland Education District will entail a considerable increase of my more peculiar duties; and the work of receiving, checking, arranging, packing, and distributing the stock of school material, making out invoices, &c.—which now occupies an undue portion of time that might be more beneficially employed—will either be neglected or trespass still more heavily upon my legitimate duties. As it is, much inconvenience is occasionally experienced by teachers being without school material, which my absence has prevented me from supplying; and for want of closer attention the stock of some particular article is liable to run out, and great delay necessarily arises in the interval between the despatch of an order for books and their arrival.

For all these reasons I think it would be better to give the Secretary the sole charge of this department, with the understanding that my assistance shall be available whenever my other duties will permit me to offer it.

UNCERTIFICATED TEACHERS.

There are still in the employ of the Board six uncertificated teachers in charge of small schools, besides several acting as assistants in larger schools. Respecting the former, I remarked in my interim report to the Board in July last,—

“The small schools, under the charge of uncertificated teachers, which made great progress at the outset, are, in some cases, beginning to show signs of weakness as the children are advanced to the higher standards, and I think it will soon be necessary to give all the uncertificated teachers an intimation that they must obtain the necessary certificates, or receive the usual notice to relinquish their situations.”

The new Act having taken the power of issuing certificates out of the hands of the Board, the examination of teachers, which would have been held in January, did not take place, but the results of the present examination have in no way altered my opinion respecting the schools alluded to.

I have, &c.,

JOHN SMITH,

Inspector of Schools.

E. Patten, Esq., Chairman of Education Board.

CANTERBURY.

1. MR. RESTELL'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Education Office, Christchurch, 18th March, 1878.

I have the honor to report that during the year 1877 I have inspected and examined every school in my district, some of them a second, and one a third time, for special reasons in each case; but I have been too fully occupied to permit of my making more than a very few casual visits of inspection. I have made eighty-two thorough inspections of sixty-four schools in fifty-three districts, examining in all 5,765 scholars, or, including second and third visits, a number equal to 6,500 examined.

I am glad to be able to report the following phases of improving efficiency:—

1. Several more or less incompetent teachers have been removed during the year.
2. Some others who could not adapt their work to the standard regulations are now better able to do so.

3. The provision made for teachers to attend the Normal School lectures has been attended by generally beneficial results.

4. The pupil-teacher staff pass their examinations better than in former years.

With reference to the Normal School lectures, it is very gratifying to be able to record that trained and experienced teachers have been refreshed in their knowledge and appreciation of the principles and method of their art, and that a more intelligent interest in their work has been diffused among the less experienced part of the staff.