

UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOLS.—There are six schools classed unsatisfactory—namely, Newtown, Masterton, Karori, Makara, Johnsonville, and Tauherenikanu. Of these, an entire change has been made in the management at Newtown and Johnsonville; and they may therefore be dismissed with the hope that they will show very different results at the next examination. The Tauherenikanu School is under a new teacher who will be expected to do better another year. Masterton School has been under the present headmaster for the past three years, and the reports have not hitherto been unsatisfactory. I attribute his failure this year to errors of judgment, to trusting too much to subordinates, and to irregular habits by which he loses the respect of his scholars, and occasionally incapacitates himself from work. It is evident that he must in future do better. The Karori and Makara Schools have been in an unsatisfactory condition for several years. The discipline, management, and teaching are helplessly weak. Under good management the Karori School might have been in as good condition as either the Taita or Tawa Flat Schools. It is now little better than a racket-ground for infants. So long as the Makara Schools were worked on the half-time system, I accepted to some extent the plea of the master, that his energies were worn out in travel, and that the time for work in each school was too short. Now that the schools are amalgamated, it is clear that he cannot produce good work.

TEACHERS.—How much depends on the character, disposition, education, and example of the teacher! Every school differs, in some respects, from all other schools, the difference being mainly attributable to the individual character of the teacher. The position of the teacher, both in relation to his scholars and in his social relation to the people amongst whom he labours, is very much of his own making, and depends for the most part on his own personal worth. So far as I have opportunities of judging, and as far as I can gather from the members of School Committees, the teachers are faithful in the discharge of their duties. If teachers fail in producing good results, it is not from idleness, but from want of judgment, want of training, or from sheer incapacity; and of these cases, I have already shown, there are very few. Teachers are, however, occasionally to be met with who have loose notions of their position, and think that such matters as excesses in their habits and living beyond their means are to be thought nothing of, if they do their duty in the school. Parents who intrust their children at an impressionable time of life to the school-teacher *in loco parentis* will naturally look for good example of life and manners in those who have the care of their offspring. The teacher, then, if he wishes to win the respect of his pupils and their parents, will be a bright and honest example, and, in all his acts, an honorable man, sensible of his responsibility and mindful of his influence. Further, I think teachers should manifest towards each other greater kindness of heart, and less jealousy of each other's successes; also, on the other hand, the successful teacher should wear his laurels modestly. There is room, I think, for greater *esprit de corps* and fellowship. I have observed, not without pain, that, in the cases in which some men have broken down, the circumstances have not always called forth expressions of regret on the part of their fellow-teachers. Matters which taint the character of one teacher bring more or less discredit on the whole body; nay, more, the success of one teacher in any locality adds to the credit of the whole service. These remarks are made not without reason; but I am pleased to say there are many teachers who evince no reticence when their advice is asked for, who ever lend a helping hand, and who have been the means of largely benefiting the service by practically training others in their work. The training college for teachers, Hobson Street, will shortly be opened; and I hope many of our teachers, whose experience is limited, will have an opportunity afforded them of acquiring more knowledge of modern methods. Teachers of some up-country schools often see nothing outside their own work year by year. As an instance of this state of things, one teacher at the last examination did not know that the colonial standards were in force. She had worked by the old standards, and, being a competent and hard-working teacher, her scholars passed well. The position of the teacher throughout the civilized world is now an honorable one; and although he may not meet with as much gratitude as his work deserves, he has the satisfaction of feeling that he is engaged in bringing into play mental energies which can never be annihilated, and which will probably be largely and usefully reproductive.

BUILDINGS AND PLAYGROUNDS.—The planning of school-buildings and the laying-out of the school grounds are very important elements in a school system; and, as schools become more generally established, attention will be more directed to the consideration of improved designs in buildings, furniture, and appliances. For the past few years much of my spare time has been given to these subjects in their practical application to this district. The general principles of school architecture should be known by all who take part in the instruction and management of schools. In countries where education is advanced, as, for example, in Germany, France, the United States, Holland, Switzerland, and England, very great improvements have been made during the past few years in school plans, lighting, ventilation, furniture, and apparatus. In this district many of these improvements are already introduced; but very much remains to be done in certain directions, some of which I shall indicate. School grounds should have as large a clear space as possible for playground; and, except in rural schools, two gravelled yards at the back, with separate outhouses for boys and girls. The playground should be level, planted, and provided with rotary and vibrating swings, parallel bars, and spring-boards, and inclined-planes for infants; water should be laid on so as to be accessible to children in the playground, and sheds should be provided so as to save the schoolroom from rough usage in wet weather, and to give shelter or shade to the children at any time. In the City of Wellington, the Terrace School is the only one with any pretensions to an appointed playground, and it is deficient in some respects. And, as to the rest of the schools, they are all (except Clareville) more or less unprovided with the surroundings of a well-ordered and well-furnished playground. At Featherston wet-weather sheds and a horizontal-bar are erected. The buildings are improving year by year in convenience and style. The new structures at Thorndon, Newtown, Mount Cook, Kaiwara, Tawa Flat, and Upper Hutt form a marked contrast to those which formerly existed. Except in rural districts, I believe it is bad economy, in a public sense, to allow the buildings to be used for any other purpose than the work of primary secular education under the same teachers, who should be held responsible for the fair wear-and-tear of the building and the well-ordered condition of the rooms. A schoolroom should be kept as clean, as neat, and as attractive as a home; and how can this be done if the order is liable to rude disturbance, and the responsibility is divided or removed? I can assure the Board that the annual damage to school-