

receiving full marks. Questions relating to the application of the provisions of clause 13 of the pupil-teachers' regulations in certain cases will be submitted to the Board in another place. One pupil-teacher from Kumara took up freehand and model drawing, and was examined at the annual examination of teachers. There are two matters in connection with pupil-teachers which I wish to refer to here. First: It occasionally, indeed frequently, happens that on the occurrence of a vacancy for a pupil-teacher in any school there are several candidates anxious for the position, and sometimes the applicant who has the most friends on the Committee is appointed in opposition to the expressed opinion of the head-teacher. Some Committees, in order to avoid the imputation of partiality, decide the matter by reference to the number of marks gained by the several candidates at the ordinary or a special examination. In both cases the gravest error is committed, the latter being perhaps the more mischievous inasmuch as it bears a plausible appearance of justice and impartiality. Under no conceivable circumstance is it just or desirable to appoint a pupil-teacher to a school without the fullest consent of the head-teacher. He alone, if at all fit for his position, is capable of judging of the fitness of any of his scholars for the office, and it is as much his interest as his duty to select that one in whom he recognizes the most desirable qualifications. Now, mere ability as a student may consist with an utter unfitness for the work of teaching, and, even were it not so, the gaining of a few more marks at a single examination is by no means a conclusive proof of intellectual superiority; and, unless this superiority is combined with the many other qualities which are desirable in the character of one destined to exercise so much influence over the young, it should not be allowed to unduly influence the choice. The head-teacher who has been daily and hourly observing his scholars, probably with this object in view, perhaps for years, whose anxieties will be increased, whose reputation will be imperilled, and whose increased labour will be unrewarded if the object of his choice should prove to be unfit for the position, may surely be trusted at any rate to look after his own interests, which in such a case are identical with those of his school. I am happy to say that the Board has shown itself alive to this important question by resisting an attempt to appoint a pupil-teacher to a school against the wishes of the head-teacher. But I have reason to believe that other appointments have been made which are not approved of by the head-teachers, although they have been naturally unwilling to oppose, and, perhaps, seriously offend, the Committee. The remedy is entirely in the hands of the Board, for local Committees have nothing whatever to do with the appointment of pupil-teachers. The only clause relating to the subject is the 50th, which reads, "The Board of any district may engage and employ any number of apprentice pupil-teachers," &c., and the Committee is not once named in this connection.

I would therefore ask the Board to ascertain the views of the head-teachers of all schools to which appointments of this kind have been recently made as to the desirability or otherwise of rescinding them, especially under the latter portion of clause 2 of the pupil-teachers' regulations; and I strongly recommend the Board to refuse steadfastly to appoint any pupil-teacher not approved of by the head-teacher, such approval to be given in writing. In the event of a teacher making a recommendation which appeared to be injudicious, the Inspector might be consulted. The course recommended above is rendered absolutely necessary on account of the recent alteration in the scale of staffs, which has reduced them to the lowest point compatible with any hope of efficiency, and which is based on the hypothesis that *every* member of a staff is thoroughly competent.

The second matter which I wish to bring under your notice is the necessity of restricting in some way the appointment of pupil-teachers. For reasons into which I entered very fully in a letter to your Board in May, 1881, when the present regulations were under consideration by the department at Wellington, I consider that certain conditions should be complied with before the Board fetters itself with the responsibility and expense of training up a young person for the office of teacher. One of these conditions is that the head-teacher of the school be thoroughly competent, not only to teach, but to train in good methods of teaching, the pupil-teacher committed to his charge. Another should be that the school itself be sufficiently large to afford ample opportunity for the practice of every branch of teaching required under the standard regulations, and that the person to be appointed be not merely the most suitable that could be selected from amongst the scholars, but absolutely fit for the position. These desiderata might be secured by some such regulations as these: (1.) No head-teacher to be trusted with the teaching and training of pupil-teachers whose certificate is of a lower grade than D1, without the approval of the Inspector. (2.) That no school having less than sixty scholars on the roll shall be allowed a pupil-teacher. (3.) That, in cases where it may be deemed necessary to provide assistance to schools not entitled to the services of a pupil-teacher, stipendiary monitors may be employed, as in England, under regulations and at a rate of pay to be fixed by the Board. These stipendiary monitors would differ from pupil-teachers in two important particulars. They would not be engaged for any fixed time, but would be liable to be dismissed at a month's notice. They would have no claims on the Board for training or special instruction, and would, consequently, be less costly to the Board. The object aimed at is to provide the teachers of small schools with assistance, when required, at a moderate cost; to avoid the possibility and responsibility of inducing young persons to take up teaching as a profession without being in a position to afford them the instruction, and, above all, the training, so indispensable to success; and consequently "to guard against the inevitable failure and disappointment that must, sooner or later, arise, if teachers of inferior and limited experience, and having charge of small schools, are allowed to undertake the instructing and training of pupil-teachers."

In all the calculations necessary for the compilation of the tables appended to the report, I have, as usual, omitted fractions, unless they exceed $\frac{1}{2}$, when the whole number has been increased: thus 94·6 would appear as 95, but 94·5 as 94.

The Chairman, Education Board.

I have, &c.,

JOHN SMITH, Inspector.