

Inspection.—It is satisfactory to note that the Education Department have adopted the plan of payment upon attendance, instead of the English method of partial payment on results, the evils of which are undoubtedly great. The inspection of technical schools is a necessity, and if efficiently done will tend greatly to strengthen the system, for in many cases advice is urgently needed. It is to be hoped the Technical Education Bill will be passed this session, in order that relief may be afforded to many very deserving institutions.

4. THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

The training of teachers is of the highest importance to education, and is a subject which receives every attention from the education authorities and County Councils of Great Britain. Almost every County Council provides instruction, generally free, with a refund of railway expenses, to teachers in such subjects as the following: Manual instruction, wood or metal; domestic economy and hygiene; elementary agriculture; drawing and brush-work; elementary science. Regular and systematic courses of instruction are given in these subjects, and, although many years ago these subjects were not taken into consideration, an enormous development has now taken place, and these classes are fully taken advantage of.

I suggest that classes similar to the above should be established throughout the colony, and that kindergarten schools be established in each Island for the training of teachers in the Froebel system. Kindergarten training is undoubtedly the foundation of technical training, and if success is to be obtained it is necessary that our primary system should be made as efficient as possible, every possible assistance being given to teachers to enable them to obtain a very thorough grounding in the best and latest methods of education. Unless this is done little progress can be expected in technical work, and it is for this reason that I have paid particular attention to the work of the primary schools visited.

In such subjects as manual instruction and domestic economy it would be wise to obtain a number of efficient instructors having experience of their special work in England; these instructors to organize systems of work, and particularly to undertake the training of teachers, in order that the work may be effectively dealt with throughout the various districts.

I have, in the various sections dealt with under the heading of "Primary instruction," suggested a small bonus being given to teachers who complete special courses of work in elementary science, drawing, domestic economy, and manual instruction. The amount suggested is more in the direction of covering sundry expenses which teachers may be put to than as a direct bonus. It would, I think, help to encourage the work, the cost to the State being very trifling in comparison with the benefits to be derived.

Technical Teachers.—In the matter of teachers for science and art we are fortunate in having many capable instructors in various parts of the colony, but in the teaching of trades classes we are not so fortunate. Great difficulties are met with in procuring men of experience, for, whilst they may have a practical knowledge acquired in the workshops, they do not, as a rule, understand the theory or principles of the science and arts applicable to their work; nor have they the teaching capabilities, except in rare instances. The difficulties of this work can only be overcome by time and patience, and by a judicious selection of likely men from amongst the student workers in any particular branch of work, and the careful training of such men as far as circumstances will permit. It is out of the question to establish a training college for the colony for such requirements. I hope, however, that the travelling scholarships may be awarded, for such scholarship-holders would be invaluable to the colony upon their return. In this sense the scholarships generally should prove of considerable value in enabling likely persons to undergo such training as will be serviceable alike to themselves and the State. Care should be exercised in appointing technical teachers to see that they are not simply prepared to coach up classes for examination to obtain certificates, but are genuine, capable, and enthusiastic teachers, prepared to give useful information, and having a thorough knowledge of their work.

5. BUILDINGS AND APPARATUS.

Particular attention is paid in Britain to the construction of buildings, and to the nature of the appliances used in connection with technical classes. I would suggest to the department that, as it is proposed that funds to the extent of £1 for £1 shall be provided by the department towards the erection of buildings, or the alteration of existing buildings, for the purposes of technical work, no grant should be made unless the department is satisfied that the school is required and likely to be maintained, and that the site, plans, title, &c., are satisfactory to the department. This condition is insisted upon by the Science and Art Department, particular attention being given to the size, arrangement, and lighting of the various rooms. The Science and Art Department very kindly, at my request, provided me with the plans of two new institutions of a character and size useful to our New Zealand towns. These plans of Accrington and Swindon technical schools I have had photographed, as likely to be of service to this colony. The former institution I visited at the suggestion of the department, and noted particularly the general arrangements.

I may say that enormous sums are now being spent in the building of technical institutions, as, for instance, Manchester; the estimated cost of the building alone, exclusive of equipment and land, being upwards of £130,000. The new technical school of Birmingham, and the Northampton Institute, are also examples of the care and thought bestowed upon the arrangements for successful working. I forward with this report, for the department's information, views of the three buildings mentioned.

Aid for Appliances is also necessary to enable the schools to efficiently provide apparatus, diagrams, and examples, without which it is impossible for schools to satisfy the requirements of the Education Department and earn capitation. In each case a complete list of the apparatus, &c.,