

the public interests demand. Length of service and the reports of Inspectors furnish sufficient additional data upon which Boards may base their estimation of the capabilities of teachers. The holders of literary qualifications higher than those recorded in the suggested certificates may obtain official recognition of the same by passing university examinations. It is therefore unnecessary that the department should issue to a graduate of the university a diploma higher than the present C certificate.

7. SCALE FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

There are a few schools that do not conform to the type of mixed school to which we have already made reference. In certain districts there are separate schools for infants, girls, or boys. We have presented (Appendix C) a scale of staffs and salaries for these when they exceed 200 in average attendance. The number of schools coming under this scale is only six, and we are unanimous in the opinion that these should, without delay, be brought into line with the other schools of the Colony. In the case of a side-school that is carried on as a branch of a main school, it is sufficient, we think, if the staffing be allotted on the combined average attendance of the two schools, with extra provision such as the substitution of an assistant for a pupil-teacher.

8. THE TEACHING STAFF.

At the present time the teachers in the schools of the colony may be classed as—Head or sole teachers; infant mistresses; heads of departments; assistants; ex-pupil-teachers; pupil-teachers; sewing-mistresses. Under the proposed schemes only three classes are recognised—namely, head or sole teachers, assistants, and pupil-teachers. In all schools where there are assistants the head-teacher is the controlling authority, and is responsible for the organization of the whole school. To use the terms “head of department” or “infant mistress” is liable to lead to a wrong conception of the positions of such officers in relation to the head-teacher, to whom every member of the staff should be amenable for direction in carrying on the work of either class or department.

In several education districts it is usual to appoint sewing-mistresses to small schools in charge of male teachers. The salary paid to the sewing-mistresses is in many cases nominal, as the time occupied in this service does not amount to more than two or three hours a week. We carefully considered the probable effect of the abolition of this position, and are satisfied that the result will be beneficial, as the increase in salaries will attract into the smaller schools teachers capable of providing for instruction in sewing and at the same time supplying a higher standard of general training.

9. THE PUPIL-TEACHER SYSTEM.

We are in accord with a number of witnesses who consider that the least satisfactory part of primary education in New Zealand is the pupil-teacher system. This objection does not go so far as a recommendation of its abolition at the present time, and we confine ourselves to suggestions for important modifications.

A great want of uniformity is disclosed in the selection, appointment, instruction, and examination of pupil-teachers. The most important point brought under our notice relates to the Entrance Examination. This varies from a pass for the Sixth Standard to the Matriculation Examination, and the age of admission displays corresponding variations. It is found in all districts, however, that there is considerable reluctance on the part of boys to enter the profession, and the chief reason assigned for this is the long and arduous apprenticeship at a low remuneration.

The scales submitted show a reduction in the number of pupil-teachers from 962 to 681. This reduction can be effected gradually as opportunity occurs, so that pupil-teachers already in the service may not be prejudicially affected. The payment proposed is equal to the highest now allowed by any Board, and the duty of giving instruction to pupil-teachers has been allotted to the head-teacher and assistants without special remuneration. We think, further, that the qualifications required for entrance should be greater than a mere pass in the highest standard of the primary course; that the age of candidates should be raised; that, if possible, the period of apprenticeship should be shortened; and that a uniform system of examination should be instituted. If the age and qualifications required at entrance are not raised, the question arises whether in this colony, as under the