

London, Glasgow, Birmingham, and other School Boards of Great Britain, pupil-teachers should be required to engage in the instruction of pupils for only half of each day, devoting the remainder to study.

10. TRAINING-SCHOOLS.

A matter of still greater importance, although perhaps beyond the scope of our inquiry, is the training of teachers during the period immediately following the pupil-teacher course. The only institutions at present established for this purpose are the Normal Schools in Christchurch and Dunedin, and a Training-school in Napier. Each of these includes a primary school with special arrangements for the training of teachers. The Normal Schools undertake, in addition, instruction in literary subjects for the departmental examinations. This appears to us to be superfluous in centres provided with university colleges. It is sufficient that training-schools should confine themselves to the preparation of students in the art of teaching, in the principles on which methods are based, and in subjects that require manual training and practical exercise, such as drawing, music, drill, and handwork. What are required, in short, are technical schools for teachers. These should be established in each of the chief centres by removing the pupil-teachers from the staff of an ordinary primary school and substituting a certain number of ex-pupil-teachers who have qualified themselves by success in examination and by satisfactory progress in the art of teaching in its elementary stages. This scheme would be comparatively inexpensive, as the extra cost would be, in some cases at least, confined to the payment of such students at a salary of, say, £60 per annum, less the sum set down in the scale for the pupil-teachers that are replaced. More advanced instruction in theory might well be left to lecturers on the science of education in connection with university colleges.

Whether or not the scheme here outlined is adopted, it is essential that increased provision be made for the training of teachers, as upon this depends to a large extent the efficiency of our primary schools, which supply for nine-tenths of the population the only means of education, and which form the chief basis not only of the progress of secondary education, but also of social, moral, and economic conditions. The greatness of a country is founded on the right upbringing of its children, and the schools, whose first care this is, depend for their power for good upon the character, skill, and intelligence of the teachers. We urge, therefore, that hardly any sacrifice is too great for the colony to make on behalf of the sound training of its young teachers. The nobler the influences and the greater the intelligence brought to bear on true education the higher will be the ideals of private life and citizenship of the men and women of the future.

11. CONCLUSION.

We have now dealt with the most salient points bearing upon the primary schools. Our purpose has been to bring into view what benefit will accrue to the public-school teachers and to education generally from a colonial scheme, and how that scheme will affect directly and indirectly the work of Boards. We admit that the division of the Colony into education districts has materially assisted in the spread of primary education. The independence enjoyed by Boards has enabled them to adapt their schools to the special conditions and requirements of districts. Noting the good work that has been done, we have endeavoured to so guard the introduction of a colonial scheme that the influence of Boards will in no way suffer. The evidence accompanying our report is full of suggestions bearing on the success of the primary schools. Some of these we can merely mention, as they form subjects for separate inquiry. We refer to the control of Inspectors, the appointment, transference, and promotion of teachers, besides such subjects as superannuation of teachers, compassionate allowances to representatives of deceased teachers, truancy, scholarships, and the amalgamation of certain education districts. The valuable evidence that was given by members and secretaries of Education Boards stands as a monument of their earnestness and capacity in fostering the interests of the primary schools. So, too, the evidence of teachers shows that Boards have not been unmindful of the importance of selecting men and women of intelligence and wide influence for good.

Should the colonial scale advocated by us be approved, we feel confident that the event will mark an era in the history of primary education in New Zealand. Teachers and children will be alike benefited—teachers by the improvement of their social status; children by the higher influences that must follow the gradual replacement of pupil-teachers by capable assistants and the general advance in the efficiency of the teaching staff as a