

teacher is sent, and there are two breaks instead of one. This could in some instances, I am sure, be avoided if promotion were offered to deserving teachers, for the appointment could be made without loss of time. Wherever this has been done the result has been satisfactory.

The colonial scale of staffing reduces the number of our pupil-teachers by about 50 per cent., and thus curtails the chief source of our supply of teachers. Even with the larger number of pupil-teachers vacancies had to be filled by appointing teachers from other districts. But even this source of supply will in great measure be cut off, for all over the colony there will be an increased demand for teachers, as in many schools teachers are being displaced by assistants. Even at the time of writing there is great difficulty in procuring teachers, and it has been found necessary to give our fifth-year pupil-teachers appointments as assistants or sole teachers. I am afraid it may be found necessary to go further, and give such appointments to pupil-teachers who have not completed their four years' course of training. Another result of the colonial scale of staffing will be that most of the pupil-teachers will be trained in the larger schools, and though they may have good opportunities for studying class-teaching they will have little or none for studying organization, and will be at a great disadvantage when placed in charge of country schools as sole teachers.

There is a general impression that, as the teachers examine Standards I. to V., there is a great saving of the time of an Inspector in carrying out the examinations. That the excessive night-work which was formerly general has been diminished, and not before it was time, I will admit; but in this and similar districts there is very little saving of time, if by that is meant that the work of examination occupies fewer days in the year. The majority of schools are small, and, as it is impossible to take more than one a day, in these there is no such gain. A school of about a hundred pupils may be taken in one day if the teacher's examination be satisfactory; but, if not, it will take two days as formerly. In large schools, however, a day, or even two, may be gained; but, as there are only two what may be termed large schools in the district, and in the Stratford School the examination of the secondary work more than absorbs any gain in examining the primary work, it will be seen that the "saving of time" is considerably overestimated. The labour entailed in an examination depends upon the efficiency of the teacher's examination. If he has carefully examined his pupils there is less; if not, there is more. From an Inspector's point of view, however, there is a distinct gain under the present system. As I have stated above, in the majority of schools the teacher's examination is satisfactory, and not so much of the Inspector's time is occupied in correction. More attention can therefore be given to teaching classes, discussing methods, and to giving general assistance and direction such as had formerly to be left to the inspection visit. The annual visit may thus be made to partake more of the character of a combined examination and inspection.

"The Public-school Teachers' Salaries Act, 1901," came into force at the beginning of this year. Teachers under the several Boards receive equivalent emoluments for similar positions, whereas formerly the teachers in the districts containing large centres of population were paid at a much higher rate than were teachers in districts with a large preponderance of small schools. The change is undoubtedly for the better, but at the same time some of the assistants in the larger schools are underpaid. The backbone of the staff of a large school comprises the infant-mistress and the first and second male assistants. The mistress of a school with an average of from 511 to 570 has, as a rule, charge of the infants, numbering probably 120 to 150. She is responsible for the groundwork of the pupils' training, and for much of the training of the pupil-teachers. She receives £150 a year without house allowance, while as teacher of a school of fifty pupils she would receive £150 per annum and a free house or £20 house allowance. Again, in the same class of large school the second male teacher receives £130 per annum, whereas a male teacher in charge of a school with an average attendance of twenty-nine receives a slightly higher salary, and in addition has a free house or £20 house allowance. The former has to be responsible for a large upper standard, and usually plays an important part in the general organization of the school. Not infrequently he is a teacher of experience and proved skill. The teacher in charge of the small school has often only just completed his apprenticeship. The absence of recognition of certificates in the payment of salaries is to be regretted. To my mind, the recognition of the value of the certificate—especially the division of the certificate which depends on skill and experience—as proposed by the Inspector-General, was admirable; fair, equitable in its incidence, not oppressive, but at the same time an inducement to a teacher to improve his status. It was a bonus for length of service and improved skill, and a means whereby a teacher, without being transferred, could improve his position financially. Now salary is dependent only on the average attendance, and the teacher's skill, whether good or only fair, is not taken into account. It is to me incomprehensible that no provision has been made for an allowance to teachers who are compelled to obtain sick-leave, and they cannot be expected to enjoy a special immunity. As the matter stands at present, on the day a teacher obtains leave from any cause whatever his pay stops, or else the school remains understaffed, and in the case of a school with a sole teacher must be closed. If a relieving teacher is sent he receives the salary of the position, and the unfortunate teacher who is compelled to obtain leave has his pay stopped immediately, no matter how long and valuable his services may have been. For administrative purposes 11s. 3d. per unit of average attendance, together with an additional sum of £250, is allowed to Boards. So far as the Taranaki Board is concerned, the amount is considerably less than administration has hitherto cost, and will result in impaired efficiency. If to meet the decrease in income the Truant Officers are dispensed with there will be, I am convinced, a considerable falling-off in the attendance, despite the more stringent provisions of the new School Attendance Act. Teachers will be harassed by irregular and poor attendance, and work will consequently suffer. Grants for school libraries may have to be stopped; nothing can be done in the way of establishing classes for the instruction of teachers and pupil-teachers; and in every way there will be educational stagnation instead of progress. But the basis on which the grant for administration is calculated is altogether erroneous, for the cost of administration, being dependent upon the distribution of