

rule but little encouragement in the shape of apparatus. The school drill then represents almost all that they directly receive from the teacher or school in the way of physical culture—all that goes to make the *corpus sanum*. The ancients had clear ideas on the value of body training, and our modern Sandows are a living protest against the tendency of ages to cultivate the intellectual at the expense of the physical. Recent legislation makes physical drill compulsory for all girls as well as boys that are over the age of eight years. The Department has taken steps to have the teachers instructed, and we hope that in future our teachers, who we know have at heart the general development of their charges, will now devote attention to the physical as well as to the intellectual and moral. Among the signs of the times it may be noted that Cecil Rhodes, among the conditions affecting his famous scholarship bequests, in which we hope some of our scholars may yet be interested, attaches a very high value to physical efficiency.

The schools that presented some form of handwork for examination were very few in number, but we consider the work satisfactory so far as it has been attempted. The most important of our school technical classes were those for cookery conducted by Miss M. Tendall at Reefton, Westport, and Nelson. We commend to the notice of our teachers some useful hints by the North Canterbury Inspectors, in their report for 1901, upon the value of handwork, especially in correlation with other subjects of the syllabus, such as science, arithmetic, geography, history, and drawing. By the Manual and Technical Instruction Act of 1902 school classes may now, if desired, be carried on after school hours, so that one of the chief difficulties in introducing a fresh subject—the necessary shortening of the school time for the ordinary curriculum—has thus been removed.

During the year instruction classes for teachers in plasticine modelling, ambulance, woodwork, cookery, physics, and drill have been carried on. Sewing in schools managed by sole male teachers now come under the technical regulations. We would be pleased to see singing receive similar encouragement.

In addition to new teachers' certificate regulations, we understand that the Inspector-General has in hand a scheme for the establishment of a training-college that would greatly benefit districts such as ours, for which no provision of this nature has yet been made. As the number of pupil-teachers is now so reduced, a greater proportion than formerly of our teachers must enter the service through small country schools. Being in remote parts, their isolation places them at a great disadvantage in the matter of training and instruction even when compared with pupil-teachers. A colonial training college cannot fulfil its high mission unless the interests of this class are considered. Promising sole teachers should after two or three years' service receive the same advantages as pupil-teachers, and in the form perhaps of scholarships obtain free instruction with board at the training college. We hope that to make the scheme complete the authorities will yet see their way to establish the proposed chair of pedagogy at Victoria College.

Three district high schools—Westport, Motueka, and Reefton—have now been established, and the secondary classes were all at work during the last quarter of the year, the pupils numbering respectively fifty-three, forty-three, and thirty-two. The two first mentioned were examined by us, and reports showing very satisfactory progress have been duly laid before you. The secondary work of the third school was not begun until after the examination of the primary division. The establishment of these classes and of those undertaking manual and technical work has added considerably to our duties.

The close of the year marked another great advance in educational matters, one that linked more closely the bonds between primary and secondary education. New regulations were announced providing free tuition at Nelson College, among other secondary schools of the colony, for all pupils that had passed the Sixth Standard examination and were under fourteen years of age on the 31st December. This practically confers on Nelson City the advantages of a district high school. At least sixty-five scholars this year will be able to avail themselves of this great privilege. The majority of children—in fact, all except those that are out of reach of high school or college—have now a good prospect of free secondary education. The way to the university has yet to be cleared before we realise the ideal of free education from the alphabet to the degree. The rearrangement of the Nelson City schools, in order to make them comply with the terms of the colonial scale, has led to considerable discussion. As a compromise between the views of the Board and those of the local Committee an arrangement for the present year has been agreed upon. The effect is to make as little alteration as possible, to retain as hitherto separate boys' and girls' schools for the higher standard children, and to unite the four so-called infant-schools into two groups. We think that in the interests of education further amalgamation should have been made. The schools are too large and too scattered to be placed under one head, so that the simple and natural outcome—two groups of mixed schools, each under a capable headmaster—would, we consider, insure effective supervision throughout all classes, and conduce greatly to more uniform methods of working and improved efficiency.

Suitable accommodation for the secondary pupils at Reefton High School has yet to be provided. Other pressing building requirements of the district are, we consider, those in connection with schools in which two teachers are compelled to work in the same room. Additional rooms are urgently needed at Millerton, Coal Creek, and Dovedale. At Foxhill, Spring Grove, and Lower Takaka the difficulty is partly overcome by the use of a side-room for some of the oral lessons, but these arrangements are not entirely satisfactory.

As yet neither the half-time system nor the conveyance to centres of children from outlying parts has had a practical trial in this district. These expedients might remove some of the difficulties at present experienced in the way of efficiently staffing our small schools.

The Department has, we are pleased to see, made some provision for relieving teachers when incapacitated through illness. Relief of another kind will shortly, we hope, be provided for the teachers of small schools when the new syllabus promised in the last report of the Minister of Education is issued. To fulfil expectations the number of subjects obligatory upon a sole teacher must be considerably reduced.