

may justify its neglect. The group of seventeen small schools referred to above may be expected to diminish from year to year as the teachers gradually become more familiar with the nature of the exercises recommended.

Supply of Teachers.—During the year the matter of greatest moment in our educational sphere has been the introduction of the colonial scale. The staffing under the scale accepted, as stated by the Inspector-General before the Royal Commission on the subject, is almost identical with the North Canterbury scale previously in use—less liberal at an average of eighty-one than that scale in its best form, and somewhat more liberal in the case of suburban schools with an attendance of four or five hundred. The new principle has consequently been applied here with less friction than in other educational districts. But the change brings in its train an issue of the gravest import to our local interests—an issue not altogether unforeseen, but none the less alarming. Salaries being now identical for similar attendances all over New Zealand, we are experiencing a constant draining-away of the most vigorous young men of our service, who are able to obtain better emoluments in more “needy” districts, and see elsewhere a better prospect of more rapid and surer promotion. During the early part of the year nineteen men were lost to us from this cause, and subsequent withdrawals, making a total of twenty-seven for the year, have now reduced us to sore straits in making appointments. All the flotsam and jetsam of the past twenty years, who two years ago could never have hoped to obtain employment from us, have at some time or other during the year been employed by the Board under temporary or permanent engagement. The loss sustained is almost entirely confined to men, and these of a type that we could ill spare. It is not altogether a new thing for a certain number of our young teachers to seek employment elsewhere, but the tendency is now so pronounced that we stand a good chance of not retaining in North Canterbury a single one of the young men whom we are at considerable sacrifice in training. Of the fifteen male students trained at the Normal School in 1900, only five remain with us; nine (and these by no means the least promising) have preferred to accept service elsewhere, mostly in Wellington and Hawke’s Bay; and one has found a business career more attractive. What steps may be taken to counteract the tendency, or what inducements may be held out to retain men in our service, it is for those in authority to consider; and we trust the Board will seize every opportunity that the colonial scale presents, or that its own arrangements make possible, to secure so desirable an object.

The supply of pupil-teachers and trainees furnishes a cognate topic, on which the question of inducements has also an important bearing. Our present supply is short, and fewer pupils, and more particularly fewer boys, are year by year coming forward as candidates for apprenticeship. Happily we have here a remedy ready to our hand in a modification of the existing terms of service. There must be a number of young people of good standing—old scholarship-holders and matriculated students—who would only be too glad to serve an apprenticeship of two, or possibly three, years, and whose admission would greatly enrich the profession in ability and scholarship. That there are quite a number of matriculated students who are willing to serve for the full term of four years we have already ample evidence in the fact that nine of the twenty-seven nominally first-year pupil-teachers now on the roll take status in examination as third-year students. No better class of pupil-teacher could be desired, and if we can secure more of the same type by any reasonable concessions there are strong grounds for holding out the inducement. The device has been tried before and has failed, because of the reluctance of headmasters to recommend candidates entitled to the shorter services; but the present altered conditions are all in favour of the stronger claims, and the common good demands their recognition.

Whether the remedy gives promise of success or not, we have still another resource in the offer of training advantages (without pupil-teacher service) to those who seem specially qualified to profit by them, and that steps have already been taken by the Board in this direction affords us gratification. Teachers of ability, but limited experience, we can always turn into valuable public servants. Even two visits a year from an Inspector afford a training of profit.

We have, &c.,

L. B. WOOD, M.A.,
W. J. ANDERSON, LL.D.,
THOS. RITCHIE, B.A., } Inspectors.

The Chairman, Education Board, Christchurch.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

Classes.	Number on Roll.	Present at Inspectors' Annual Visit.	Pa-sed.	Average Age of the Pupils in each Class.
Standard VII.	330	207	...	Yrs. mos.
" VI.	1,532	1,476	1,189	13 9
" V.	2,163	2,059	1,581	12 11
" IV.	2,587	2,487	1,987	12 0
" III.	2,530	2,449	2,037	10 10
" II.	2,317	2,218	2,015	9 10
" I.	2,182	2,100	1,958	8 9
Preparatory...	6,108	5,434	...	...
Totals	19,749	18,430	10,767	11 4*

* Mean of average age.