

1904.

NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: SOME ASPECTS OF EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND.

(REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (MR. F. TATE), PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES
OF PARLIAMENT OF THE STATE OF VICTORIA.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Melbourne, 18th June, 1904.

I have the honour to present the following report in connection with my recent visit to New Zealand. In accordance with your expressed desire I have written at length, and have commented freely upon Victorian practice wherever I felt the circumstances warranted it. I had specially favourable opportunities of learning the system of educational administration which obtains in New Zealand, and the ideals which animate those who are placed in control of the schools, from the fact that I accepted an invitation to attend the Educational Conference held in Wellington for the purpose of considering the recently revised syllabus of instruction. This Conference lasted some two weeks, and was attended by all of the district Inspectors, and by representative delegates from the Teachers' Institute. I next visited the Wanganui, Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury, South Canterbury, and Otago schools districts, and was given the fullest opportunity of inspecting the schools in order to make myself acquainted with the methods of instruction employed, and the character of the buildings, furniture, and fittings. Unfortunately, my time was limited, but, owing to the uniform kindness of the members of the School Boards, of Inspectors, and of teachers, in placing their services at my disposal both early and late, I was able to gather a great amount of information in a comparatively short time.

AIM OF THIS REPORT.

I desire to say at the outset that I have not endeavoured to report upon New Zealand education in itself, but my chief concern has been to notice points of difference from and superiority to the Victorian system. In Victoria the Education Department is directly concerned with primary education and technical education only. There is among us no public conception of a fully organized national education scheme from the most elementary to the highest grade. The example of New Zealand is, therefore, worthy of consideration, and I have commented upon it at some length. Our indifference and ignorance in the matter of co-ordination of educational agencies must be removed if we are to hold our own in the competition of States. Co-ordination means economy of money and of effort, and at the same time increased efficiency. All parts of the national education scheme must be organized sooner or later through a central authority, and the sooner we are alive to this fact the better. There is in progress at present throughout the British Empire, and in a still more active form in the United States, a complete change of attitude towards public education, both as regards the subject-matter of instruction and methods employed, and as regards the part which a completely organized education scheme should perform in national life. No student of education in other lands can fail to recognise the truth of this. The report of the Mosely Education Commission, 1904, emphasizes it strongly, and so also does the report of the New South Wales Education Commissioners, 1903. While in some respects Victorian education can hold its own with education in neighbouring States, there is great need of a popular awakening to the possibilities of a national scheme. So far as I can judge, there is in no other Australian State or in New Zealand any considerable section of the people holding the illiberal opinion often of late expressed in Victoria, that the State's duty is to provide as a complete education merely a narrow treatment of the "three r's," while other subjects which have been adopted in every progressive community, including the other Australian States, are designated "luxuries" and "fads."

GENERAL VIEW OF THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM.

The education system of New Zealand differs very materially from the systems in vogue in the Australian States. In Australia each State has its central Department, controlling, from the capital, the minutest details of administration. In New Zealand decentralisation has been the aim. The colony is divided into thirteen districts, and the administration of education in each district is placed in the hands of a local Education Board. A central Department at Wellington, presided over by the Minister of Education, exercises general control, and allots the grants for instruction and administration, for maintenance of buildings, and for the erection of new buildings. It also prescribes the syllabus of instruction in schools. But all the details of administration, the building of schools, repairs to existing buildings, the appointment and payment of teachers and Inspectors, the working of the compulsory clause, &c., are intrusted to the Education Boards. The system is still further decentralised by allotting definite functions to School Committees. The members of Education Boards and of School Committees receive no fees for their services.

The School Committee.

The School Committee is a most important factor in New Zealand educational administration. Every school has its Committee; it matters not whether the school has an attendance of 800 or 18. The Committee varies in size from five to nine members, according to the size of the school. Committees are elected annually by the householders of the district, gathered in public meeting. Subject to the general supervision and control of the Education Board of the district, and to inspection by an Inspector, who is an officer of the Board, the Committee often has a large share of the management of educational affairs within the school district, and administers the School Fund—*i.e.*, certain moneys granted by the Board, together with donations and subscriptions raised locally. The extent to which the Committee is used varies somewhat under different Education Boards, but, on the whole, the School Committee is a most useful aid in administration, especially in dealing with purely business matters, such as repairs to schools, the raising of funds locally for providing apparatus and school comforts, advising in the selection of school-sites, providing for the adequate cleaning and general maintenance of the school and other such matters. The Committee has also an important duty in the administration of the compulsory clause. One function of the Committee, which will, no doubt, seem strange to Victorians, is its power in connection with the selection and appointment of teachers. In Victoria the people served by the school have no voice in the selection of the teacher; his appointment is purely a departmental matter. In New Zealand the vacancies are advertised, and applications from qualified teachers are sent in to the Education Boards. The Boards, from the records of teachers, and with the advice of their Inspectors if necessary, make a list of the most suitable applicants. This list is sent to the Committee, and the Committee makes a choice from the names on the list. Thus the Committee chooses the teacher, but only with the approval of the Education Board.

The Education Board.

The Education Board, which has its offices in the most important towns of the province, controls the educational administration of the province. It consists of nine members, elected by the members of School Committees voting as individuals. The Education Boards appoint a Secretary, Inspectors of Schools, teachers, and other officers necessary for the carrying-out of their work, and they are allowed to appropriate for the purposes of general management, irrespective of teaching, a fixed proportion of the capitation grant paid to them by the central Department for instruction. It will be observed that all of the persons employed in the actual work of teaching, or of supervision, or of administration, are servants of the Board, and not of the central Department. The methods of administration, therefore, vary considerably in the different provinces, and there are great discrepancies in the salaries paid to officers; but the teachers, since the coming into force of the Public-school Teachers' Salaries Act in 1901, have been paid according to a scale which applies to every district in the colony. This Act provided that the money voted for the administration of the Education Act shall be sufficient to pay to the Board of every district (a) the salaries of teachers and pupil-teachers in the district, in accordance with the new scale, and (b) a sum of £250 per annum, and, in addition, a capitation grant of 11s. 3d. per annum for each child in average daily attendance at a public school. It is understood that the provision above is sufficient for the salaries of teachers and of administrative officers, and for other expenses of administration.

As regards buildings and upkeep, special grants are made by the central Department. These grants have in the past been based mainly upon the average attendance of children to be provided for by the Board. In perusing the figures showing the expenditure under "Buildings" thus incurred by the central Department I could not but be struck with the fact that the amounts provided each year were approximately the same. This is in striking contrast to the system followed in respect of buildings in Victoria during the past fifteen years, and, as a consequence, the distressing problem of overtaking belated repairs is not in evidence in New Zealand.

The above are the main sources of revenue of the Education Boards, but various grants fixed by capitation have from time to time been made for special purposes; thus, a capitation of 1s. 6d. on the average daily attendance is voted for the maintenance of scholarships tenable at secondary schools; a special capitation payment is made for various forms of manual instruction, and, generally speaking, when changes have been made throwing increased duties upon the Boards, special capitation grants have been introduced.

Higher Primary and Secondary Education.

The above remarks apply specially to the administration of elementary education. The Education Boards, however, have control of district high schools, in which a more advanced education is given. Up till recently, although these schools were under the direct control of the Education Boards of the

Education Department, fees were charged to all children receiving higher education. In fact, the district high school was an ordinary district school which was allowed to form certain senior classes for higher work, provision being made by the Board for a supply of specially qualified teachers for the work. Of late years, however, instruction in the district high schools has been made practically free. A most gratifying feature in connection with New Zealand education is the liberal system of land endowments which has been provided for all branches of education. As a result, not only is the public burden with respect to primary education lightened each year to the extent of £44,000, but about £30,000 is contributed towards the maintenance of twenty-five corporate endowed secondary schools subject to inspection by the Education Department. These secondary schools are not under the control of the Education Boards, but have their own independent governing bodies. Thus New Zealand has its primary-school system and its higher-primary or district-high-school system under the control of the Education Boards, and, apart from these, but with many links of connection, its system of endowed secondary schools. An excellent understanding appears to exist between the secondary and the primary schools. The teachers in the former schools are very often men and women who have received their training in primary-school work, and it is by no means unusual for teachers to transfer from one system to the other. The primary system is linked to the secondary system by a remarkably liberal system of scholarships described below.

Private Schools.

In Victoria the feeling survives in some circles that the State schools should not be availed of by parents who can afford to send their children to private schools. Accordingly, private primary schools flourish, although there is no system whereby the teachers of these schools can be trained in methods of teaching. In the most recent Victorian report the number of private and denominational schools is given at 798, with an enrolment of 42,229 pupils. I have no hesitation in saying that Victoria would be richer educationally if the great majority of the private primary schools did not exist. In New Zealand, on the other hand, private schools are few and unimportant. As most of them are denominational schools, they are on a higher plane educationally than the great majority of Victorian private schools. A recent computation shows only 300 private schools (including those engaged in secondary as well as in primary work), with an enrolment of but 15,600 pupils. Broadly speaking, therefore, the Board schools of New Zealand educate all of the children of school age, and there is consequently little chance of class or sectarian feeling being engendered.

PUBLIC INTEREST IN EDUCATION.

The above are the leading features of the New Zealand system, and it will be seen how radically different it is from that of Victoria. One fact which strikes the most casual observer is the intense interest taken by the public of New Zealand in educational questions. There is little doubt that this is due mainly to the system of local management. In Victoria the school is the "State school," and its efficiency or inefficiency is a concern of a far off, slow-moving Department. The most ordinary concerns, such as the erection of a fence or a porch, a couple of coats of paint, are matters for inspection and report and interminable delays. In New Zealand the school is regarded by the people of a district as "our school"; the provincial Board and the local Committee, both representing the householders, are responsible for keeping the building in repair, for providing for the comfort of teacher and children, and for maintaining the efficiency of their school. This public interest is reflected in the speeches of public men, and in newspaper articles, and it was certainly strange to me, as a Victorian, to find the newspapers throughout New Zealand printing telegraphed reports of great length concerning the proceedings of the Educational Conference in Wellington, dealing with such highly specialised subjects as the details of the programme of instruction, methods of inspection and examination, and the advantages of various suggested methods of training teachers.

While there are many economical advantages in a centralised system such as that of Victoria, it should not be forgotten that one of the greatest factors in educational efficiency is sympathetic co-operation between teachers and parents. The most important practical problem before the educationist to-day is to bring together school life and home life, to concentrate and unify all of the agencies which are ministering to the development of the child through his æsthetic, constructive, intellectual, and spiritual interests. How to make the schools minister directly to the needs of the community is the important matter, for that is the best system of education which turns out the type of men and women of which the country has most need. This will never be done satisfactorily while the school system is left wholly in the hands of officials and politicians, with the parents and the organized manufacturing and commercial interests holding aloof. The schoolmaster and the departmental expert must come out of their educational isolation and find out what the world of struggle and action outside the school requires of them. And at the same time it should be the ambition of the best representatives of genuine national progress, in whatever domain they are working, to make their influence felt in the national education system. The architects of Laputa, so Gulliver tells us, endeavoured to build from the roof downwards. Is this not the method of those who, while striving for national well-being, yet have no thought of or interest in the great work the schools are capable of doing? How this desideratum may best be obtained may be a matter for argument, but in a decentralised system, such as that of New Zealand, every great factor in national life can be brought to bear upon the school system at once.

Naturally, from the pure educationist's point of view, there are compensating disadvantages to local control, and even in local interest. Unintelligent interference with the work of the expert, favouritism, and petty tyrannies on the part of governing Committees, and neglect of important duties, are not unfrequent. But these results are really due to deficiency of interest in education on the part of the best men in the community, with the consequent handing-over of important functions to unworthy men. It may be that popular interest in educational problems often hampers and hinders the enthusiast and extremist, but it has this great advantage: that it compels him to demonstrate the

wisdom of his proposals and to make the foundations of his work sure. Having done this he is in an assured position broad-based upon popular appreciation, whereas in a community where all is left to the expert and the politician, matters are in a state of continual ebb and flow.

So far as I could judge, the decentralised system is popular both with the public and with the teachers of New Zealand. It is interesting to compare the steady growth of New Zealand education, the gradual perfecting of co-ordination and interlocking of various grades of instruction, and the consistent policy followed throughout, with the spasmodic efforts made in Victoria. Our educational history of late years has been a succession of upbuilding and destruction, with constant change of policy, justified at the time in the name of economy, and railed at a few years later as extravagance of the worst kind. The different grades of Victorian education are quite unorganized, and there is consequent educational waste and inefficiency in the system as a whole. It is difficult to see how in our present condition any different result may be expected with any degree of certainty. Public interest in the work of the schools and in the ideals which administrators are trying to realise is very slight, and so, although good work may be done for the moment, by watching a favourable opportunity for advance, there is no guarantee that in one of our oft-recurring fits of national hysteria the good results may not be destroyed. We have a good illustration of this uncertainty in the history of the scholarship regulations. Up to 1886 the only provision in Victoria for secondary education to State scholars was by twelve exhibitions. In 1886 the Minister created 200 scholarships per annum, in addition to the exhibitions. In 1893 the scholarships were abolished, and the Department solicited free scholarships from the proprietors of secondary schools, although these schools are private business adventures. In 1900 the scholarships were again introduced, the number being fixed at sixty per annum. In 1902 they were reduced to forty, and now stand at that number. As I write there is a proposal to make a great increase. It is manifestly impossible to make an adequate connection between two important grades of education under such circumstances.

The history of the introduction of manual training into Victorian schools is also a specially good example of spasmodic policy resulting from absence of organized public interest. In 1898 there was a clamant public demand for improvement in technical education, voiced by public men and the leading newspapers. As a result, a Royal Commission on Technical Education was appointed. The attention focussed on the subject gave an opportunity to those educationists who were following the trend of education throughout the progressive countries of the world to advocate the claims of manual training as a primary-school subject. There is a consensus of opinion among enlightened educationists that manual training justifies its place in a primary-school course as an agent in mental development, quite apart from its purely utilitarian aspect. But viewed from the standpoint of a preparation for an after technical training it becomes an essential. This is the experience the world over. Accordingly, arrangements were made to engage expert organizers and instructors in drawing, manual training specially so called, kindergarten occupations, and cookery. Excellent appointments and an enthusiastic beginning were made. The teachers responded magnificently. They came voluntarily to central classes at their own expense, they gave up holidays to attend the summer schools, and the work bade fair to be well inaugurated. Then came changes of policy, and discouragement after discouragement. The cookery centres, which in their organization and instruction will compare favourably with those of any Department, have been limited to eleven, instead of the twenty-four planned. The experts engaged have been compensated for loss of office, and have left the service; the specially trained teachers have been sent back to their ordinary work, and, save for eleven centres, the work is at a standstill. The value of it is unquestionable. Organized public opinion would, I feel sure, have made an effort to extend rather than to diminish the scope of such work. Similar results followed the introduction of kindergarten work. Money was not forthcoming for material and equipment, and so this branch of junior school-work has suffered. The Department found itself unable to respond to the legitimate demands of the expert organizer, and consequently had no alternative but to terminate her contract. In manual training the effect has been in some respects disastrous. Woodwork centres were established, under specially trained teachers, and ordinary staff teachers qualified in great numbers to teach cardboard modelling and paper-work. Then came the question of supply of material, and when it was decided that the Department was not to grant supplies the work fell off. No organization existed to raise funds locally, or to impress upon the parents the value of the work. Attendances at sloyd centres diminished, and the very type of boys most likely to be benefited were often excluded. As a result, in some case the teachers were soon working at only half-pressure. As for cardboard modelling and paper-work, they are practically extinct in Victoria, and we have gained another addition to the long list of discouraged enthusiasms. Of course, it is not certain that any other result would have followed from a decentralised system, but I feel sure that had public interest in education been organized this new work would now be in a healthy state. I was struck by the evidence of public appreciation of educational problems when I first landed in Wellington, and in all parts of the colony this evidence was confirmed. It depends, I am sure, upon local administration. New-Zealanders are all interested in their schools, because all share in their management.

The Victorian Board of Advice System.

The only approach to local control in Victorian education is in the Board of Advice. No one would, I think, seriously contend that the present Board of Advice system is satisfactory, either to the Department and the public or to the members of the Boards themselves. The Boards have comparatively little to do, and therefore it is no wonder that members who are genuinely interested in educational progress, and who desire to help, are soon discouraged out of the Boards, till a contested election becomes a rarity, and in some cases it is impossible to get even nominee members.* The

* NOTE.—The recent triennial elections of Boards of Advice (November, 1902) resulted as follows: Number of districts in which elections should have taken place, 367. Contested elections, 49 Boards. Elected without contest, 125 Boards. Nominations not sufficient to fill all the seats, 95 Boards. No nominations at all, 98 Boards.

Boards of Advice should certainly be given increased duties and responsibilities, or be abolished altogether. How can intelligent men and women, with a sense of the value of their time, be expected to travel long distances to attend meetings of a Board whose chief duties are a few quarterly investigations of default in attendance, the granting of four odd holidays to schools, and the supervision of repairs to an amount not exceeding per annum £5 upon each school? Even with the present centralised system it should be easy to devise means whereby purely business concerns, such as general repairs to schools, the maintenance of class-rooms, and the general supervision of arrangements for the comfort of the scholars, might be intrusted to the Boards.

However, it seems to me that a fatal weakness in the present system lies in giving a Board control over several schools in a district. Unless a very great change is wrought in the direction of decentralisation, sufficient power cannot be intrusted to district Boards to encourage the best men in a community to devote the time and attention necessary to the supervision of a district. Such work as I have indicated is properly the function of a School Committee. I can readily imagine efficient School Committees, representing the householders served by the school, doing excellent work in promoting the well-being of their own school, and contending in generous rivalry with the neighbouring schools. Such Committees might well foster local pride and feeling for "our school," and might well make its welfare a live question in the district. The work of the School Committees of New Zealand is seen in the excellent condition of the buildings, the playgrounds, apparatus, fencing, &c. Nor must it be supposed that they have merely spent moneys granted to them. The regulations of the Otago Education Board, after rehearsing the amounts contributed each year by the Board out of their grant to the "School Fund" of schools of different sizes, run,—

The sums contributed to the "School Fund" under the above scale are intended to meet the cost of cleaning school buildings and premises, sweeping chimneys, providing fuel for school-rooms, making all necessary repairs to school buildings, premises, and fences; repairing the school appliances, furniture, apparatus, &c.; improving the school grounds; and the expenses incurred in connection with the Committees' meetings and correspondence. The Board cannot undertake to make any further allowance for the above purposes. No portion of the Board's contribution to the "School Fund" shall be spent on prizes, certificates of good attendance, fêtes, or entertainments. Committees may purchase out of the "School Fund" pens, penholders, ink, and pencils for the pupils' use in school, and writing-paper and blotting-paper for their use at the examinations.

To encourage Committees to improve the condition of the school and grounds under their charge, the Board will be prepared to subsidise at the rate of £1 for £1 all moneys raised locally and expended wholly on the undermentioned works: Asphalting grounds, renewal of fencing of school premises and glebes, painting and papering interior of residences, painting and distempering the interior of schools, erecting shelter-sheds. A subsidy shall on no account be paid unless the Board's sanction to the expenditure has been obtained prior to the works being carried out, and all applications for such sanction must be accompanied by a full statement of the proposed works and an estimate of their cost.

From a return furnished me by Mr. P. G. Pryde, Secretary of the Board, it appears that the School Committees of the Otago District have collected in voluntary subscriptions a sum of £7,298 during the past three years. This local subscription, I was assured, had averaged over £2,000 per annum for many years. The school district of Otago has a population about one-tenth of that of Victoria. As a result, every school of any size in the Otago District is supplied with a good gymnasium, playgrounds are well asphalted and kept, and teachers are comfortably housed. Other School Boards can show as good a record of the work of their Committees. Here is one way in which Victoria can follow New Zealand's lead.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS, AND SCHOOL FURNITURE.

Victoria has much to learn from New Zealand in the matter of supply and maintenance of buildings and grounds. It is no unusual sight in our State to find even in country districts a school and a teacher's residence placed on a single-acre block. In New Zealand I was much impressed with the consideration and forethought which have been shown in providing ample space for the children and the teacher. Playgrounds of large size are the rule; and the teacher invariably has his portion of glebe land for cultivation or other use. Education Boards have wisely refused to build unless an ample area is given them, and I was informed that the Southland Board, for example, had determined not to build a school upon less than a 7-acre block. Of course, there are, as with us, many examples of wretchedly small playgrounds attached to city schools, but, generally speaking, the comfort and convenience of the children and the teachers have been studied throughout the colony to a much greater extent than in Victoria. I feel strongly that we should amend our methods while there is yet time, and should insist upon at least 3 acres for our small schools, with provision for the teacher's residence in addition, and that in towns and cities the attempt should be made to increase playground-space wherever it is possible.

Teachers' Residences.

I inspected many of the residences belonging to the schools. Although I made no selection, but visited all the schools along the road I was travelling, in no case did I see residences of the poor type provided for the Victorian teacher, or so poorly maintained. In the great majority of cases the house of the Victorian teacher is either a lean-to or is attached to the schoolhouse, and all noises from house or school can be heard through the thin partitions. Distractions to school-work and discomfort to the teacher's family result. Moreover, there is often a serious menace to the health of the children on the one hand, or to the teacher's family on the other, when infectious diseases are rife. It is no unusual experience to lose the work of a school on account of infectious illness in the teacher's residence. The New Zealand teacher is housed comfortably at a little distance from the school. He has a roomy cottage and his own domain, and, accordingly, his home is a genuine home with its garden and poultry-yard and paddocks, not a mere appendage to a public building with no privacy and no comfort. It is not mere sentiment, but shrewd common-sense to pay attention to these matters. The real and permanent influence which a teacher exerts on a district depends on what he is in himself, not on what he knows, or on what he says in the class-room. Above all questions of administration, of methods of teaching,

and of syllabus of instruction is the great question, "What kind of men and women are your teachers? What are their ideals of life? What is their power of influencing others by example?" An education system to be efficient in the highest sense must be able to attract to its service the capable and enthusiastic, and must treat them fairly when it has them. Is it reasonable to expect that our service will continue to attract cultured men of gentlemanly instincts if they must inevitably look forward to life in a sparsely settled district with no better provision for their wives than the wretched quarters now supplied? And if we do not attract such, and are forced to employ the coarse-grained and boorish, or the social misfits and failures, no amount of expenditure upon administration will give us good results. As well might we run a draught horse in a smart hansom and expect him to hold his own because we have put a silver-plated harness on him and flog him with silk whipcord at 6d. a knot. In a New Zealand town a stranger judges from a view of the school property that the teacher's office is held in honour and that he is given a chance to hold his own in the life of the district. I should be sorry to think that public appreciation of the work of the teachers of Victoria is reflected in the accommodation provided for their families. It is not, I think, an exaggeration to say that of some twenty-five residences which I noted in different districts of New Zealand the worst was equal to the best I have seen in Victoria. It is, perhaps, worthy of remark that these residences and grounds have been provided at the instance not of departmental officials, but of Education Boards and Committees representing the world of business. Business-men probably see that in education the only economy is to get the best, and that anything much short of the best is extravagance. Would that the Victorian public would realise what a potent influence for good in a district is a high-minded teacher, and what a potent influence for ill is the man of the opposite type. The one cannot be valued enough, the other is a source of active mischief. It is possible to find in our midst school communities not five miles apart which vary so much in manners, in mental activity, and in general resourcefulness that they might be in different continents. And the whole difference lies in the character of the teachers of the local schools. I repeat, most emphatically, that it pays to employ the best men and women as teachers and to spend money in getting them, in training them, and in keeping them. And in this connection we cannot do better than follow New Zealand's example and provide residences where a worthy home life is possible.

School Buildings.

In my annual reports of 1902 and 1903 I spoke very strongly of the bad architecture of the Victorian school buildings. But one does not realise so fully how faulty is the lighting of our rooms, how deficient they are in reasonable comfort, and how ungenerous is our allotment of air-space for each child, until he travels in such a country as New Zealand, where different provincial districts have vied with one another in producing a suitable type of building. It is natural to expect that the buildings erected from twenty to thirty years ago, before so great attention was paid to school hygiene, should be more or less deficient, and the older buildings in New Zealand resemble those in Victoria in being copies of poor English models. But, while our educational experts and our departmental architects have not been sufficiently aware of the great improvements in school architecture of recent years, the ordinary business architects employed by the School Boards of New Zealand have steadily improved their type of buildings. Consequently the great majority of buildings, especially in the North Island, are good specimens of modern school architecture. In the Auckland District and in the Wanganui district I saw what I considered the best types of schools—well lighted, well ventilated, and warmed, roomy, and admitting of satisfactory organization of school-work. I have arranged to secure plans of several buildings. I was much impressed by the experiments in school architecture in progress in the Wanganui district, and admired the buildings recently provided at Hawera and Palmerston North. These consist of well-planned class-rooms grouped round a central assembly hall. They are excellently lighted, and the architect has kept in view the utility of his building rather than the outside appearance. Separate rooms, with special equipment, are provided for science, for drawing, and for manual training, and the teachers find the school building a delight to teach in.

The following quotation from the report of Mr. P. Goyen, Chief Inspector of the Otago Board of Education, who visited Victoria in 1902, is unfortunately too true:—

I visited the Victorian schools after an absence of nearly a quarter of a century; it was natural, therefore, that I should expect to see great improvement in buildings, in equipment, and in methods. I was disappointed, for I found that what these were twenty-five years ago they are in great measure now. There are the same ill-lighted rooms, the same ill-designed and comfortless seats and desks, the same absence of class-rooms for infant departments, the same sacrifice of utility and internal neatness to exterior architectural effect, the same distractions from the teaching of three or four classes in one long room, the same insanitary method of disposing the hats and cloaks along the back wall of the school-room, and the same dismal lobbies. . . . Some of the country residences I saw are unworthy of the name "residence"; they are properly denoted by the term by which they are sometimes officially known—"quarters"—and they possess all the qualities connoted by that ugly term. One would think that the Education Departments had gone out of their way to belittle their teachers in the eyes of those among whom they send them to live. Great State Departments seem to have in them very little of the spirit of humanity.

The pity is that Victoria has got such a poor result from so large an expenditure of money. Our buildings are more elaborate and costly than those of other Australian States, but, unfortunately, external elaboration cannot make up for faulty internal arrangement, and we could well have spared the architectural "features" in favour of reasonable efficiency. As it is, some of our costly piles are but brick and mortar out of place. On dull days it is no uncommon thing for the children of a class to be unable to see to write efficiently, while the prevalence of colds and other ailments in our city schools in the winter months is directly due to bad arrangement of rooms and corridors. In addition to the unwelcome legacy of belated repairs which the Department has to face, there is the undoubted duty of undoing the mistakes of the bad architecture of the past. Efficient education is concerned with the physical development of the scholars, as well as with their mental and spiritual development, and these three interact upon one another. The experience of educationists the world over is that true

efficiency in a large school cannot be gained unless the building is suitably planned. At present we are committing the most flagrant sins against the physical well-being of our teachers and pupils. We compel children to attend school, and, in our large schools especially, we often overcrowd them in ill-lighted, badly ventilated rooms, which are cold and draughty in winter. Education Departments are endeavouring to provide as much as 15 square feet of floor-space per child in well-planned rooms. In Victoria we are forced to work in some cases on 8 square feet per child, in badly planned rooms. I have heard medical men speak in the very strongest terms of the injury we are inflicting upon the health of our children by the present condition of our large schools. The harm we are doing in weakening eyesight is undoubtedly great, and some day the loss in national efficiency thereby will be more fully realised. There is no escape from the obligation to remodel many of our existing class-rooms. The practical proposal I submit is that a sum of, say, £5,000 be specially set apart each year to be expended under the personal direction of an educational expert. In this way the lighting and ventilation of the worst school buildings can be gradually remedied.

As regards the upkeep of existing buildings, I am strongly opposed to the present practice of submitting every petty expenditure to the Public Works Department. I have indicated the New Zealand system of carrying out works through the School Committees and the officers of the Education Boards, and I consider that this eminently common-sense plan should be followed in the case of small expenditures. In my annual report I have drawn attention to the impossibility of keeping the school properties in proper order with the varying amounts granted from year to year, and I commend the following extract from the annual report of the New Zealand Education Department in 1903 :—

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.—As was pointed out in last year's report, the expenditure on school buildings may be classed under two heads, according as the items to which the grants are devoted are recurrent or non-recurrent in character. To the class of recurrent expenditure may fairly be assigned such items as the maintenance and repairs of existing buildings and furniture, the rebuilding of worn-out schools and teachers' residences, and the rent of premises used for school purposes. The new or non-recurrent expenditure includes the cost of building new schools, and of additions to existing schools, where such new schools or additions are required to meet the needs of newly settled districts, or of an increase of population in districts already settled; and with such items may be reckoned also the cost of sites, where these have to be purchased, and the initial cost of fencing. The ordinary building grants to Boards are intended to cover all the items named above as recurrent, and others of a similar nature; these may again be conveniently subdivided into (a) the cost of rebuilding, and (b) all other recurrent items. If we assume that a school building in wood, well constructed in the first instance and kept in good repair afterwards, will last for thirty-three years, then, roughly speaking, a Board will have to rebuild, say, one thirty-third of such buildings each year, and to enable the Board to do so it would be sufficient if it received each year a grant of 3 per cent. of the value of all the buildings when new, or more strictly 3 per cent. of what it would cost to re-erect them all new. Similarly, the cost of maintenance, painting, and repairs might be reckoned within close limits as a percentage of the cost of the buildings. Brick and stone buildings last longer, and generally cost less for maintenance than wooden buildings; hence the percentage to be allowed to these buildings would be lower both under (a) and (b) than in the case of wooden buildings. These principles were followed with a fair degree of approximation in the distribution of last year's ordinary building votes.

Some such businesslike method should be followed in Victoria. It is manifestly impossible to meet recurrent expenditure successfully on a constantly fluctuating income.

School Furniture.

Victoria has of late years progressed hardly at all in the matter of school furniture, and here again the present administration has a woful legacy of trouble. An attempt was made three or four years ago to introduce a more modern type of desk suited to hygienic requirements, but the movement was abandoned, owing to the increased cost involved. The desk at present in use in Victorian schools has little to recommend it except its strength and cheapness. It certainly cannot pass the test which should be applied to modern school furniture. Our infant-rooms and class-rooms are fitted with a very bad pattern of "gallery," in which the children are ranged in rows above one another in such a way that free bodily movement is impossible, and the teacher cannot give any individual attention to the scholars. These "galleries" are quite unsuited to modern methods of teaching. Besides, the "gallery" takes up a large share of the air-space, and some of the children are placed in a position to breathe none but the vitiated upper air of the room. In New Zealand I saw no rooms of this type. The infant-classes were provided with comfortable "backed" seats, ranged on "stepped" floors, the stepping being so arranged as to raise the rear desks but two or three feet above the floor-level. In the North Island the type of desk and seat used throughout the school is the "dual desk," with back-rest. These desks are very efficient indeed, and when fitted with a "lift-up" seat come as close to the ideal school-desk as is practicable in a public-school system in which moderate cost is an essential factor. All future supplies of furniture to Victorian school should be of this pattern. There are difficulties in the way owing to the shape of our class-rooms, the stepping of our floors, and the unwarrantably large size of our classes; but these difficulties must be gradually overcome. In the Otago District a desk and seat somewhat similar to the Victorian type is the rule in the senior classes, but the seat is detached from the desk, and when a class is engaged in oral work the seat is moved backwards, so that the front of the desk in the next row forms a "back-rest" for the children. This type of desk might well be kept in view when supplies are being made to school-rooms in which the "stepping" will not allow of the "dual desk."

ESTABLISHMENT AND STAFFING OF SCHOOLS.

The last annual report of the New Zealand Education Department shows that the number of schools in operation for the year 1902 was 1,078, made up as follows :—

Schools with an average attendance below 20 pupils	..	..	499
" between 20 and 50 pupils	..	..	709
" " 50 and 200 pupils	..	..	374
" " 200 and 700 pupils	..	..	119
" over 700 pupils	..	..	7

From this it will be seen that in New Zealand the practice of establishing huge schools under one headmaster has not been favoured. Out of 1,708 schools only seven have an average attendance of more than 700, and only two have an attendance of over 800. In Victoria, at the present time, out of a total of 1,882 schools forty-eight have an attendance of over 800. All educationists will see the wisdom of the New Zealand plan of restricting the size of schools within manageable limits. If a school is to be an efficient organism its size should be such as will allow the controlling mind of the head teacher to make itself felt upon every detail of the school-work. A true head teacher should know each of the children of his school, and be able to gauge the educational health of each class. This cannot be done effectually in our large schools of from 1,000 to 1,400 pupils in average attendance. In these schools the head teacher knows no more of the mental physiognomy of the individual scholars than a squatter does of the physiognomy of the sheep he is running through his drafting-yards. It should be mentioned that a few years ago it was the policy of the then Minister (Professor Pearson) to limit the size of new schools, and this was kept in view in the buildings provided, but from motives of economy a policy of amalgamating two schools under the one head teacher and staff has been followed since 1892, with very unsatisfactory results.

As regards the staffing of schools, the Victorian system is far behind that of New Zealand. Efficient education demands the trained adult teacher. It is a truism to say that the strength of a school system is the professional ability of the rank and file of the teachers.

The 1,708 schools of New Zealand give employment to the following staff:—

Head teachers of schools with more than one teacher	..	..	..	668
Sole teachers	..	..	..	1,040
Assistant teachers	..	..	..	1,249
Total adult teachers	..	..	..	2,957

Pupil-teachers	..	..	..	747
----------------	----	----	----	-----

The 1,882 schools of Victoria give employment to the following staff:—

Head teachers of schools with more than one teacher	..	..	..	900
Sole teachers	..	..	..	982
Assistant teachers (including relieving teachers)	..	..	..	1,039
Total adult teachers	..	..	..	2,921

Pupil-teachers	..	..	..	1,392
Monitors	..	..	..	271

1,663

The proportion of pupil-teachers to adult teachers in New Zealand is 1 to 3.95. The proportion of monitors and pupil-teachers to adult teachers in Victoria is 1 to 1.75. The defects in the Victorian staffing are seen most plainly when the number of assistants (1,039) is compared with the number of pupil-teachers and monitors (1,663). It is of the essence of an efficient pupil-teacher system that the pupil-teacher shall work not as an independent class-teacher, but under the direction and supervision of a skilled assistant, and that, moreover, he shall have time during school hours for preparation. It is, however, only fair to point out, as I have done in my recent annual report, that, owing to the fact that a large proportion of our so-called pupil-teachers have served long periods after the completion of their courses, many young women are really doing the work of junior assistants although graded and paid as pupil-teachers.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

THE WORKING OF THE COMPULSORY CLAUSE.—It should be fully understood that the New Zealand system of primary instruction is, as in Victoria, free, secular, and compulsory. The Board schools number 1,708, and there are, in addition, primary schools for Maori children, which are directly controlled by the central Department. The period during which attendance at school is compulsory is between the ages of seven and fourteen. Children begin to attend at five years of age. In Victoria the period is from six to thirteen years of age. As in Victoria, provision is made for the issue of "certificates of exemption from compulsory attendance," but these certificates are not issued unless application has been made by the parents for a special examination. As a result, attendance is far more regular in the senior classes than with us. In Victoria the practice hitherto has been to grant these certificates of exemption from compulsory attendance to every child who passed in the prescribed subjects in the Fourth Class, whether it was expected that his parents were desirous of removing him from school or not, so that the certificate became in the eyes of the public a certificate of proficiency rather than a certificate of exemption from further attendance in case of need. There is no doubt in my mind that the New Zealand plan, backed up by the popular belief in the desirability of giving children a really efficient preparation in the schools, is a wise one. The indiscriminate granting of certificates representing proficiency in the minimum standard demanded by law has had a distinctly bad effect both upon the attendance of the senior children and upon the popular ideal of what should constitute a course of primary instruction. Satisfactory action has been taken in the amended regulations for the inspection and examination of schools to remedy this defect in our practice.

A perusal of the statistics of attendance in the New Zealand schools reveals the fact that attendance in that colony is far more regular than in any of the Australian States. I attribute this to two causes—(1) the very great interest taken in the work of the schools by the New Zealand public and the high

ideal of education which obtains generally, and (2) the excellent provision made by the existing Education Act for the administration of the compulsory clause. "The New Zealand School Attendance Act, 1901," provides—

3. (1.) Subject to the provisions of the principal Act and of this Act, every child between the age of seven years and the age of fourteen years is hereby required to attend some public school not less than four times in any week that the school is open six times, six times in any week that the school is open eight times, and eight times in any week that the school is open ten times, morning and afternoon attendance being separately counted.

7. (1.) Where any child required by this Act to attend a public school has been enrolled in the register of a public school, and does not attend as provided in subsection one of section three, the parent of such child shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten shillings and not less than two shillings for every week in which such child failed to attend school as required by this Act.

From this it will be seen that a defaulter can be dealt with at the end of the week in which the default occurred, and, further, that in the case of persistent default over comparatively brief periods charges can be made cumulative. For example, while I was in Dunedin a parent was fined on three charges, representing defaults in three separate weeks, taken from a period of five weeks of the school term. The popular appreciation of education in the colony is shown by the strictness with which the Magistrates administer the Act. In New Zealand the maximum fine for a default during a week is 2s. In Victoria fines of 1s. and 2s. 6d. for serious default extending over three months are common, and instances of Justices expressing want of sympathy with the Act are not unknown. But the real obstacle to the efficient carrying-out of the compulsory clause in Victoria is the obligation imposed upon the Department to wait till the end of the quarter before a prosecution can be entered upon. This makes the work of street-supervision almost impossible, for a Truant Officer may observe a child playing in the streets or on the wharves for a week at a time, but he cannot do more than make an inquiry into his attendance during the past quarter, or take a note of him for use at the end of the current quarter. Probably the child will be lost sight of before the end of the quarter, for these defaulters often belong to families which are continually on the move. The best preventive of systematic irregular attendance is such a clause as that of the New Zealand Act. Under its provisions a defaulter has to be observed but two days in succession and a case has been made out against him. Again, irregular attendance is largely a matter of habit, and the attendance of other children than street *habitués* is greatly improved when the beginnings of lax attendance are dealt with. It may be argued that the power to fine a parent for the temporary irregular attendance of his child during so short a period as a week places the parent at the mercy of the administration, but in practice none but genuine defaulters are prosecuted, and there is provision for the registration of reasonable excuses with the teacher or with the School Committee, and power is given to issue exemptions in case of need. As a matter of fact, although the individual fines are heavier than with us the number of prosecutions throughout the year is less. The Truant Officer staff is much smaller than in Victoria. The expenditure for last year in salaries and allowances to Truant Officers was £1,163 7s. 11d.; that of Victoria was £6,045 16s. 5d. Here is another example of efficiency and economy due to a good law and local administration.

In the recent annual report of the New Zealand Department it is claimed that the average attendance expressed as a percentage of the number of children on the roll was 84·9—a really excellent record. In the report of the Victorian Department of the same date the percentage claimed is but 67·2. While I am convinced from my inquiries in the New Zealand schools that the average attendance in that colony is better than with us, the difference in computing educational statistics must be taken into account if a right comparison is to be made. It is, in fact, very misleading to take educational statistics without inquiring into the method of computation. The finances of the New Zealand School Boards are based upon capitation, and therefore allowances and exemptions must be made for wet days, epidemics, and other influences disturbing attendance. In Victoria not only are the conditions governing the attendance-mark very rigidly observed, but every day, whether the attendance is unavoidably low or not, is taken into account in computing the average attendance. As regards its statistics of enrolment and average attendance, the Victorian Department stands on very firm ground indeed.

It is true economy to spend thought and money upon increasing the regularity of school attendance, for not only does it train scholars in many laudable habits, but it greatly increases the efficiency of the teaching-machine. Good education is possible with an attendance such as that of Otago—viz., 88·1 per cent. of enrolment. Irregular attendance leads to systematic truancy, and nomadism, and afterwards to larrikinism on the part of the delinquents themselves, while every absence from a class affects the progress of the whole of the members of the class.

INSTRUCTION.

Primary education in New Zealand is, as in Victoria, in a state of ferment, owing to the introduction of a new syllabus of instruction. The movement is part of a larger one which is making itself felt all over the world, and is leading up to momentous changes in popular education. It was most interesting and gratifying to me to see that leading educationists in New Zealand are treading in the same path as we are in Victoria. The ideals held up and the methods prescribed for attaining them are almost identical in the two countries. All of the subjects of the Victorian programme appear in that of New Zealand, but their scope is widened, and the prescriptions under each are less definite. The Victorian syllabus has been criticized as too elaborate, that of New Zealand goes far beyond. Whether it does not err on the side of too much is a matter of opinion. In the higher standard, too, the Seventh Standard, additional alternative subjects unknown to our course of free instruction appear. These are geometry, algebra, book-keeping, shorthand, a more elaborate treatment of some sciences—e.g., electricity—and in some cases Latin, French, and German. These subjects are, no doubt, accounted for by reason of the fact that the State in New Zealand is concerned with higher primary and with secondary education, as well as with primary education. In other words, in New Zealand

an attempt is made to develop a linked and co-ordinated scheme worthy of the name of national education. Victorian national education is as yet a patchwork.

The New Zealand syllabus, and the notes thereon, are permeated with the best of modern educational thought. There is throughout an attempt to import reality into school-work, to bring the teaching into closer contact with the outdoor life of the pupils, to throw overboard merely conventional information in favour of what will be genuinely interesting and serviceable. It demands rational methods, by making use of the principle of interest, by cultivating the self-activity of the pupil, by aiming at developing his individuality and generating real mental power. It affords great scope for the immediate application of a knowledge of facts and of the principles underlying them. In a word, it gives a chance to realise a true definition of education.

So much for some of the aims kept in view. Naturally, as was the case in Victoria, the teachers were alarmed when they saw the amount of work involved in the programme put forward, and during my visit feeling ran very high against the new syllabus. Most of this was, however, due to misconceptions as to what was prescribed and what was merely suggested. The New Zealand syllabus, like the Victorian one, gives to the teachers in some subjects freedom of choice as regards subject-matter. This is very different from the elaborately and definitely prescribed programmes which were issued when examinations were considered more important than they are at present. However, the following quotation from the instructions to Inspectors and teachers shows the spirit in which the syllabus has been framed :—

It is to be considered as important that the programme of instruction in any school shall be drawn up with a due regard to the principle of co-ordination, so that the various portions of the work shall be regarded not so much as separate subjects, but as parts of a whole linked together firmly by immediate reference to the facts and needs of the children's daily life. Accordingly, the requirements of the syllabus are not to be interpreted too rigidly, but for the several classes in various kinds of schools are to be adapted to the children in those classes, to the circumstances of the district, to the staff of the school, &c.

In my visits to the schools I observed the methods employed. On many occasions I took classes and gave lessons in order to try and ascertain the mental attitude of the pupils to a subject, and I examined classes orally. On the whole, I was satisfied that, class for class, the Victorian work will hold its own with what I saw. Where I have most doubt is in the case of our city schools. Our pupil-teacher system makes in these schools an element of weakness which the New Zealand schools have not.

As regards knowledge of modern methods and the application of them, I am inclined to think Victorian teachers, as a class, are ahead. The recent great educational revival in Victorian primary education came partly from the teachers themselves; and the teachers' congresses, the summer schools, the regular meetings convened by the district Inspectors, and the stimulus given by the Department's *Gazette and Teacher's Aid*, have produced a spirit of inquiry and a power of applying new methods which is sure to produce potent results. My impression is that in those Victorian inspectorial districts which have been roused and led by a vigorous Inspector I have seen more evidence of reading and thought upon educational methods; more attention to the details of preparation and organization, more energy and interest in school decoration and equipment, than I met with in the schools I visited in New Zealand. Here we meet with one of the advantages of centralisation. It is comparatively easy for a vigorous central Department to bring about a great improvement in methods in a comparatively short time.

Manual Work in Schools.

Great interest is evinced just now in New Zealand in the introduction of manual training and of improved methods of instruction in the infant-school. The Education Department has treated the Boards liberally in the matter, and central classes have been established for the instruction of teachers in the new work. The departmental report of 1903 says,—

There is no doubt that the training of our teachers is one of the most important questions calling for action at the present time. The reform of the syllabus will have very little practical effect unless those who are to carry it out receive the best training that the colony can afford to give them, and the introduction of manual training, which in its essence is far more a change of the methods of teaching than of the subject-matter of instruction, will fail in its purpose unless the teachers themselves are trained in the principles that underlie these modern ideas. . . . As far as manual subjects are concerned, provision has been made to a certain extent for the training of teachers therein by special grants to the Boards for that purpose, by grants of apparatus and material to teachers' classes, and by the concession of free railway passes to teachers attending any training classes approved by the Education Board of their district. (Report of Minister of Education, New Zealand, p. xvii., E.-1.)

It is interesting to compare the methods followed in Victoria and in New Zealand in introducing new work to the teachers. In Victoria the teachers paid all their expenses of travelling, were given no concessions in the matter of leaving or reopening their schools, and were required to pay for all material used. Much of the instruction was given without fee by honorary instructors. The New Zealand teacher is carried free on the railway, his instructors are well paid, and material is served to him with a most liberal hand.

In 1902 Victorian teachers were trained in central classes as follows :—

Instruction.	Classes.	Students.	Cost. £
Drawing	42	1,350	450
Manual training	30	830	222
Summer school, two weeks	..	600	30
Total	..	..	£702

[NOTE.—This amount should be reduced by £60, paid by teachers for material.]

In the 1902 report of the New Zealand Department (p. 7, E.-1, and p. 9, E.-1) appear the following items:—

Training classes approved by Education Boards—railway fares of				£	s.	d.
teachers and instructors	..	..	..	..	2,912	14 8
Grants for training of teachers	..	..	..	..	2,325	0 0
Material and apparatus for classes	..	..	..	..	291	19 7
Total	..	..	..	..	£5,529	14 3

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

In respect of this important provision Victoria has at present a great advantage over New Zealand in her well-equipped residential Training College in the University grounds. No such institution exists in New Zealand, but training has been conducted on the normal-school plan in Christchurch and Dunedin. However, a very potent influence in the education of New Zealand teachers lies in the four University Colleges, situated in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and in the excellent secondary schools, which exist in every province. So far as scholarship goes, New Zealand teachers can show a much better record than Victorian teachers. University teaching is, by means of the colleges above mentioned, disseminated through the colony, and as lectures are held in the evening, there is every facility for teachers to study for University degrees. Again, there is in New Zealand no public-service system of classification of teachers, and, as a consequence, a clever ambitious young man may rise rapidly by securing coveted advertised appointments, either under his own Education Board or under other Boards, or he may elect to seek appointment in a secondary school. As a matter of fact, a large number of the masters of secondary schools have received their training in the primary schools. There is thus a widespread opportunity for self-culture among the teachers, and a very great inducement to take advantage of it. The New Zealand system certainly lends itself to the rapid advancement of the talented and enthusiastic, and I observed that a large number of the prizes of the teaching service—the headmasterships of important schools, and the inspectorships—were in the hands of comparatively young men.

The New Zealand system of training teachers must, therefore, not be judged solely by the work of the normal schools at Christchurch and Dunedin. It is the intention of the Government to found training colleges in the four large cities of the colony, and when that is done an attempt will be made to realise the worthy ideal laid down by the Inspector-General—

Such training they can receive only at properly equipped training colleges, to which shall be admitted not merely a small fraction of the future staffs of the schools, but as nearly as possible all individuals who are destined to take part in the management of our schools, primary and secondary alike.

In my recommendations in the annual report, 1902, I dealt fully with the pupil-teacher system and its faults, and I outlined a practicable scheme of training for Victoria. Its main details were—

- (1.) The establishment of a secondary-school course for future junior teachers (pupil-teachers).
In the junior training colleges proposed, the ideal should be to give a good foundation of scholarship, together with an insight into elementary facts about practical teaching.
- (2.) A period devoted to practical teaching in schools as “pupil” or junior teachers. The ideal of this period should be to give power to manage a class, and ability to develop subjects and courses of lessons.
- (3.) A course in the senior or University Training College. Here, in addition to general culture, the ideal should be to give a broad grasp of educational principles.

Victoria has one efficient aid to training in the existing Training College at the University, but the preparatory work rests upon a very faulty pupil-teacher system, which should be radically changed.

With the establishment of the new training colleges New Zealand should be in a very enviable position. The admirable system of secondary schools with the concession of free “places” to every child who passes the Sixth Standard by the age of fourteen years makes the higher education of the pupil-teachers easy of attainment. The staffing of New Zealand schools allows the pupil-teacher system fair play, and gives the pupil-teacher a chance of skilled direction by an assistant. The training colleges and the University colleges, so far as they train teachers, will thus rest on a sure foundation of scholarship and skill in teaching. If, as set out in the departmental report, training is insisted upon from “all individuals who are destined to take part in the management of schools, primary and secondary alike,” then New Zealand will have shown the way to the Australian States in making true education possible, for it is not possible in a community which is content to employ large numbers of untrained workers in such delicate, difficult, and momentous work. When will Victoria grapple with this problem in real earnest?

HIGHER PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

One leading difference between the education systems of New Zealand and Victoria is in the provision made by New Zealand for higher primary and secondary education. In Victoria the State system controlled by the Education Department deals with primary education only, all the higher work is left to private enterprise. As a result, many important centres of population have no establishment worthy of the name of a secondary school, or even of a higher primary school, and therefore higher education is possible only to the children of parents who can afford to send them to boarding-schools. There exist no agencies for training teachers other than State-school teachers, and the trained State-school teacher is a public servant with security of tenure, so that the system of exchange of teachers between primary and secondary schools which obtains in New Zealand is unknown in Victoria. That widespread inefficiency should result from the absence of trained teachers might be expected. There is, however, no adequate supervision or examination test, so that the work of private schools is left to conjecture.

In New Zealand the problem of registration of trained teachers does not make itself felt; in Victoria it is an urgent necessity arising out of want of organization, and its satisfactory solution must be regarded as a first condition of efficiency.

Higher Primary Education.

Higher primary education is provided for under the Education Boards by a provision which gives a fixed grant of £30 per annum for each district high school established, and a capitation grant, varying according to the number of higher-subjects taken up, for each pupil who has passed the Sixth Standard examination. In 1902 there were thirty-eight district high schools distributed throughout the colony, giving free higher primary education to 1,426 pupils at an added cost of £5,199 13s. 8d. At the date of my visit the district high schools had increased to fifty. These district high schools may be made a most effective aid in developing a good system of technical instruction. At present they appear to me to devote too much attention to what are usually called "high school" subjects. No doubt, before long the work will become genuine "continuation work" of a distinctly practical nature, having close relation to the material needs of the districts served by the schools. They will thus become elementary technical schools, and with vigorous and capable handling they should, in country districts especially, be able to solve many of the problems involved in agricultural education. Here again the wise forethought of the New Zealand pioneer scores, for most of the schools have generous areas of land surrounding them. In some of the recently built district high schools, such as that of Palmerston North, elaborate provision is made for laboratory work in science, and for manual work, cookery, and drawing. The district-high-school plan is certainly the cheapest form of continuation work. It really amounts to the establishment of two or more senior classes in favourably situated primary schools by supplying additional staff. The benefits of the system to the residents of country districts are very great indeed, and it was no uncommon sight to see the horse-paddock attached to the school filled with the ponies which had brought the senior scholars in from the surrounding farms. There is little fear for the future of the district high schools if they are worked in accordance with the admirable advice tendered by the Inspector-General (Mr. G. Hogben) in his latest report:—

It seems to be necessary to utter a note of warning with regard to the syllabus of work that is being taken up in the district high schools. It may be safely laid down that the secondary instruction given in these schools should have a bearing on the future life of the pupils. . . . There is too much tendency at present in the district high schools to give the secondary pupils a little Latin or French and a little elementary algebra or Euclid, and to avoid science and manual and commercial training. The aim in view in establishing district high schools will probably be gained if these schools give the pupils a good taste for standard English literature, a thorough training in ordinary English composition, and in arithmetic and mensuration, and such knowledge of history and geography as will enable them to understand better their duties as citizens of the Empire; adding thereto a course in elementary science in which the observations and experiments are carried out by every pupil for himself, and a suitable course of manual work or of commercial work where local conditions demand it. These essentials being secured, other subjects may be taken up if room can be found for them. . . . The grants for manual instruction (including practical science) under the Manual and Technical Instruction Act are payable to the school classes in addition to the special district-high-school grant, so that there is no excuse on the ground of expense for the comparative neglect of those subjects. There is no reason why any of our district high schools, or, indeed, any of our secondary schools, should take as their model the lower forms of an old English grammar school. (Report, 1903, page 8, E.—12.)

I commend again to the notice of the Government the desirability of establishing district continuation schools on some such basis as those of New Zealand.

Evening Continuation Work.

The New Zealand Act provides, moreover, for the payment of special capitation grants for evening continuation classes, and the Department is anxious to establish them in all centres. The following extract from the latest report is interesting:—

The number of continuation classes is still much smaller than it ought to be; technical education to be sound must have for its basis a reasonable standard of general education, and the way would be prepared for a larger and fuller measure of technical education in the near future if in connection with all our schools, primary and secondary, there were established continuation classes giving to those who have left the day schools the opportunity of continuing their general education at evening classes, and of beginning at the same time the technical education suited to the trade or profession in which they are engaged during the day. It is with the local authorities that the initiative must rest. There is no reason why every school except the very smallest should not have its continuation classes. I would earnestly impress upon the Committees and teachers of country schools the immense benefit they would confer upon the youth in their respective districts by establishing without delay classes in such subjects as English, arithmetic, and elementary mensuration, and book-keeping, adding thereto elementary agriculture, taken in a practical way, so as to give their pupils some idea of the nature of plant-life and of plant-growth, and of the structure and life-history of the animals useful or otherwise to the farmer. In mining districts elementary practical geology, mechanics, and surveying might be substituted for agriculture; and in most cases some drawing should be added, especially drawing to scale of a more advanced character than that done in the classes of the primary schools. No expensive apparatus would be required; grants are available to meet the cost of the necessary outfit for such instruction; and the capitation payable under the Act would be sufficient not only to meet the expenditure upon the maintenance of the classes, but, if a small fee were charged, sufficient to provide very fair remuneration for the instruction. If, indeed, courses were established complying with the very moderate requirements of the regulations for junior and senior technical scholarships, sufficient funds would be provided for all these purposes without charging any fees at all. . . . One of the most useful things, for instance, that an agricultural association could do in conjunction, say, with an education Board would be to establish in its district classes conducted by a well-qualified agricultural instructor for training young farmers and teachers in the elements of some branch or branches of agriculture suited to the district. The Department would do what it has always done when requested in such cases, send one of its Inspectors to explain what initial step should be taken, and generally to advise the local authorities as to the work of the classes. Similarly, in mining districts or in towns, good work might be done by local authorities or societies in encouraging the formation of classes.

Here is another lesson from New Zealand we can well take to heart. The higher technical schools cannot hope to be truly successful unless the gap from primary to technical school is bridged, and it is best bridged by the day and evening continuation classes. Interest is required, however, outside of the Department from parents, employers, and industrial organizations. Nor is the problem wholly an educational one. Many of the social dangers arising out of ill-spent leisure time would be avoided if our young people were more fully encouraged towards self-improvement.

Secondary Schools.

There are in New Zealand twenty-five incorporated or endowed secondary schools subject to inspection by the Education Department. They receive from endowments an income of about £30,000, in addition to occasional grants, and the payment of certain fees by the Government for "free places" for pupils from Board schools. The average attendance at endowed secondary schools during 1902 was 2,836 pupils. A remarkable concession in the direction of free secondary education was made in December, 1902, when the Government decided that "free places" entitling to a two-years course of secondary instruction should be even to all children in the public schools who had passed the Fifth Standard before the age of fourteen years. As a result, 781 children had, up to October, 1903, taken advantage of the concession, and the Government paid at the rate of £6 per annum for 584 of these. The remainder were accounted for by the "free places" which the schools must give for each £50 of income derived from endowments. At the time of my visit, the Minister, the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, in the course of a public address said that a thousand children would be provided for by "free places" during the current year, and that the Government hoped to find the number steadily increase.

It is too soon, of course, to determine whether this generous concession to popular education will be an unmixed blessing to those who take advantage of it. Much will depend upon the syllabus of work laid down in the secondary schools. But it is an evidence of the enthusiasm for education which animates the people of New Zealand and their readiness to make sacrifices for it. No Australian State has come anywhere near such a scheme. Its influence upon the secondary schools themselves, by the introduction each year of a considerable number of boys and girls from the public schools, is to be reckoned with. It must tend to break down class feeling wherever this exists. There is no greater or more beneficent democratising agency than widely diffused education, for with it the best results of democracy are made possible. New Zealand has in its political system all the forms of democratic government. It evidently aims at securing through its educational system the informing democratic spirit without which these may be merely mischievous. New Zealand has "accepted the consequences of democracy" in her education system at least.

Scholarships.

Scholarships are provided for New Zealand children on an exceptionally generous scale. As pointed out above, a capitation grant is made to each Board for the purpose of scholarships to secondary schools, and the report shows that in 1902 the Board thus expended £8,395 11s. 5d. upon 355 scholars. The value of the scholarships varies very much under different Boards, the amounts ranging from £5 per annum to £50 per annum to suit circumstances. The recent institution of "free places" in secondary schools for all children who pass the Sixth Standard at the age of fourteen years raises the question whether the Board scholarships, so far as they assist to pay school fees, are now necessary, and the method most likely to be adopted is to use the money thus set free for the purpose of procuring boarding scholarships for country children who have not the ordinary facilities for obtaining secondary education. At the present time, therefore, a thousand New Zealand children are occupying "free places" in secondary schools at the State expense, and the Boards spend, in addition, upwards of £8,000 per annum in scholarships to 355 pupils.

For the purpose of comparison it may be mentioned that in Victoria the amount expended upon scholarships to secondary schools during the year 1902-3 was £1,936 4s. 9d., and for exhibitions to the University, £2,350. The number of pupils benefited is about 230.

In addition to the above scholarships a new system of scholarships has been provided for by an Act "to encourage Higher Education in New Zealand by the Granting of National Scholarships" (23rd November, 1903). This Act was passed "for the purpose of bringing higher education within reach of deserving scholars." The national scholarships are of two kinds, "Junior National Scholarships" and "Senior National Scholarships." The junior scholarships are offered to children of less than fourteen years of age, and are for the purpose of giving facilities for obtaining secondary education. The term of the scholarship is three years, and its value is £10 per annum in addition to the amount of the tuition fees, if any, payable at the secondary school which the scholar attends. The term of three years may, however, be extended to four years with the approval of the Minister.

The conditions governing the award of the scholarship are different from any which obtain in Victoria. In Victoria none of the scholarships are ear-marked for special districts, and as the scholarship is barely sufficient to pay for tuition fees at a secondary school, no restriction is made as to the pupil who may hold it. The New Zealand plan, however, recognises clearly that the national scholarship does more than provide free tuition in a secondary school. As the facilities for obtaining this free tuition are now so abundant, the national scholarship really becomes a grant towards the maintenance of the scholar while he is receiving education. The Act, therefore, restricts the scholarship to the children of parents whose net income is not more than £250 per annum; and, moreover, it provides that not more than one scholarship shall be awarded in any year to candidates from any one school, that the scholarships shall be distributed over the whole colony, and that country schools shall have their fair share of awards. The principle laid down is evidently that every parent in New Zealand, whatever his income, has a right to a scholarship admitting his child without fee to a secondary school; but where the State is asked to provide subsistence-money in addition to free education the scholarship is restricted to the children of persons of small income. The number of junior scholarships is fixed at one for each 5,000 children in average yearly attendance, but with the proviso that the total number in any one year shall not exceed thirty-one.

The Senior National Scholarships are designed to provide for the most deserving of the holders of junior scholarships a further training in the University. They are awarded to junior scholars upon examination, and are tenable for three years. The annual value of a senior scholarship is £20 per annum in addition to the amount of the tuition fees, if any, payable at the University college. The following

very generous provision applies to both kinds of scholarships: "Where the holder of a Junior or Senior National Scholarship is obliged to live away from home in order to prosecute his studies, there shall be paid him an additional sum of £30 per annum."

Summing up, therefore, we find (1) that New Zealand provides about a thousand "free places" in secondary schools for selected children from the primary schools; (2) that free secondary education at district high schools is provided for about fifteen hundred pupils; (3) that £8,395 was spent in special scholarships by the Boards in 1902; and (4) that Parliament has now made provision for about a hundred Junior National Scholarships of the annual value of £10 over and above tuition fees, and forty-eight Senior National Scholarships of the annual value of £20 over and above tuition fees, with the proviso that any scholar necessarily resident away from home will be paid £30 in addition.

Technical Education.

So far as I could gather, Victoria has little to learn from New Zealand in methods of technical instruction; but, although New Zealand has evidently entered upon an organized system of technical education but recently, there are many points in connection with this organization which we can consider with profit. In Victoria the technical schools lie outside the other grades of our education system, both State and private; technical education is not co-ordinated with these, and consequently the less important schools are not in a flourishing condition. In New Zealand, on the other hand, co-ordination has been the aim kept in view throughout. "The Manual and Technical Instruction Act, 1900," makes provision for grants in aid of manual and technical instruction, and recognises as agencies in imparting this instruction—(1) "school classes" in connection with any primary school or any technical school; (2) "special classes," such as evening or day continuation classes, established apart from a primary or secondary school; (3) "associated classes" established jointly by an Education Board or School Committee and a school of art, agricultural college, or industrial or pastoral association, or some association in connection with a Municipal Council; and (4) "college classes" for higher technical work associated with the University.

Expenditure upon manual and technical instruction is governed as usual in New Zealand by capitation grants.

The recent report of the Mosely Education Commission emphasizes the importance to America of the fine work done in establishing and maintaining secondary, continuation, and technical schools in close correlation with an efficient primary-school system. New Zealand has all the elements of an efficient national system, and is in the favourable position of having them all readily amenable to skilled direction. Co-ordination of educational grades has been solved, and a healthy circulation of pupils and teachers throughout the whole national system has been provided for. All of the conditions of healthy growth exist, and the future is distinctly hopeful. Before the same can be said of Victoria much work must be done, and there must be a radical change in public opinion in the direction of giving increased responsibilities to the Department in connection with secondary education and continuation work.

Cost of Primary Education.

It has been the fashion of late for some of the Victorian newspapers to declaim against what they call the excessive cost of primary education in this State. It may be interesting, therefore, to compare the expenditure in New Zealand for the past year with that of Victoria.

	£	s.	d.
Victorian expenditure for 1902-3—			
Instruction, administration, buildings, and exhibitions and scholarships	640,196	5	2
Average attendance for 1902-3—150,268.			
Cost per head	4	5	2
Cost per head, exclusive of buildings (in order to omit a variable factor in Victorian administration)	3	19	11
New Zealand expenditure for 1902—			
Expenditure by the Education Boards for instruction, administration, buildings, and scholarships	586,064	15	11
Average attendance in Board Schools for 1902—113,711.			
Cost per head	5	3	0
[NOTE.—This takes no account of expenditure upon the central Department, nor of expenditure upon drill in schools, Native schools, or of inspection and instruction of manual work.]			
Cost, per head, exclusive of buildings	4	12	2

In addition to the Board schools, there are ninety-nine Native schools, which cost £21,204 during 1902. The average attendance for the year was 3,005, making the cost per head about £7. The work done is, however, so exceptional that it is useless for comparison with that of another State.

CONCLUSION.

I desire to place on record my gratitude to the educational authorities in the central Department at Wellington, and in the provinces I visited, for their unfailing kindness and desire to assist me. My experience at the Educational Conference was a most stimulating one, and I carried from it much that should be of value to me in my administrative work. The ability and untiring energy of Mr. Hogben, the Inspector-General, were shown not only in the drafting of the revised programme, but in his conduct

of the business of a protracted and difficult Conference. I was helped materially in forming my opinions of the New Zealand system by the district Inspectors attending the Conference, and they never wearied in placing their services at my disposal, although I must often have bored them after a long sitting of the Conference. My special thanks are due for many kindnesses to my friends, Inspectors Goyen (Otago) and Gray (Wanganui), the former of whom accompanied me through the greater part of my tour, and by his long experience of both New Zealand and Victorian education was able to give me valuable help and suggestion.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. The New Zealand system, like that of Victoria, is "free, secular, and compulsory."
2. There are no fees whatever charged in primary schools, and remarkable facilities are given for free secondary education.
3. The system is completely decentralised. The central Department at Wellington controls grants and financial matters generally, and prescribes the syllabus of instruction. Thirteen provincial Education Boards are charged with the details of administration, employ all teachers, Inspectors, and other officers, and supervise the establishment of schools and the erection and maintenance of buildings. To aid the Boards in matters of business detail, School Committees are elected by the householders. The members of these Committees elect the Boards. Members of Committees and Boards receive no fees.
4. There are 1,708 primary schools controlled by the Boards. The average attendance for 1902 was 113,711. The State also supports ninety-nine Native schools. The average attendance in these for 1902 was 3,005.
5. The Boards have power to establish district high schools, in which higher primary and secondary work are taken up. The number of such schools at present is fifty. The number of pupils thus receiving free secondary education was, in 1902, 1,426.
6. New Zealand has a system of education endowment administered by School Commissioners. In 1902 the amount thus contributed to primary education was £43,325 19s. 4d.; for the same period secondary education benefited by revenues from lands to the extent of £29,610.
7. Secondary education is to a great extent under departmental control. There are thirty corporate endowed secondary schools under the control of School Councils. Their revenue from land-grants in 1902 was £29,610. They are all subject to inspection by the Inspector-General. The fees are remarkably low, ranging from £5 to £12 per annum. "Free places" for children from the primary schools are now established. The State pays at the rate of £6 for the majority of these. At present about a thousand "free places" are filled.
8. Scholarships to the value of £8,395 11s. 5d. were awarded by Education Boards in 1902 to 355 children of primary schools. In addition to these and to the "free places" mentioned above, National Scholarships have been lately instituted. These contemplate the payment of subsistence-money during the period of education.
9. The pupil-teacher system obtains in New Zealand, but in a much better form than in Victoria. The number of adult teachers in 1902 was 2,957, that of pupil-teachers was 747.
10. The liberal facilities for secondary education make the improvement of the pupil-teacher system an easy matter. The New Zealand pupil-teacher should begin with a fairly liberal education.
11. The higher training of teachers is in a state of transition. It is intended to establish four training colleges in close connection with the existing University colleges.
12. New Zealand teachers have made great use of these University colleges. They are assisted by a system of evening lectures.
13. It is common for primary teachers to receive appointment to secondary schools.
14. School buildings, teachers' residences, and school grounds are much better cared for than in Victoria. The buildings are of a much less pretentious character, but are better designed and maintained.
15. The compulsory clause of the Education Act works admirably. It provides for the prosecution of defaulters for a week's default, and thus stops the beginnings of truancy. The average attendance obtained in the schools is remarkably good, being 84·9 per cent. of the enrolment—a higher percentage than is reached in any Australian State.
16. The cost of truancy-prevention for 1902 was £1,163, as compared with Victoria for 1902-3, £6,045 16s. 5d.
17. The subjects of primary instruction are the same as in the Victorian course. Provision is made for manual work and elementary science, and great attention is being paid to drawing.
18. In order to train teachers in the newer subjects introduced, special classes have been instituted, and liberal grants have been made to the Boards for this purpose, and for the supply of material to the scholars.
19. Higher primary and continuation work are developing in the district high schools. These are fast becoming free schools.
20. Technical education is receiving increased attention, but in this respect Victoria is more advanced.
21. The various grades of education—primary, secondary, technical, University—are being thoroughly co-ordinated, and an excellent understanding appears to exist between all grades.
22. The colony shows by its action that the people believe thoroughly in education, are determined to give ample facilities to all, and are satisfied to assume control of all grades of education as parts of one national system. The tendency is towards a unified though not uniform system.
23. The expenditure of the Boards for 1902 was £586,064 15s. 11d., being an average cost of £5 3s. per head. This includes all items of expenditure upon the Board schools, but omits the expenditure upon the central Department and the Native schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. The position of the Boards of Advice in educational administration should be considered. They should be either abolished or given increased duties in connection with purely business matters, such as those relating to buildings, maintenance allowance, attendance, &c. I consider that a Board or Committee for each school would be preferable to the present district system. The Committee should not be allowed to interfere in the expert work of the Department as performed by Inspectors and teachers.

2. The state of our existing buildings, and the conditions to be fulfilled by future buildings, should be seriously considered.

(a.) A departmental Committee, consisting of the Director of Education, the Chief Inspector of Schools, representative members of the architect staff of the Public Works Department, and a representative expert from the Public Health Department, should draw up in detail the conditions to be enforced in all future school buildings.

(b.) To remedy gradually the serious defects of lighting and ventilation in existing schools a sum of £5,000 should be set apart, to be expended under the personal direction of the Director in conjunction with an officer of the Public Works Department detailed for the purpose.

3. In future all school grounds in the country should be of at least 3 acres in extent. The playing-spaces for town schools should be increased in size wherever practicable. If necessary, Shire Councils should be asked to grant land under sections 239 and 650 of "The Local Government Act, 1903," or Boards of Advice requested to raise subscriptions for the same object.

4. Teachers' residences of much better type should be built in future, and no residence should form part of the schoolhouse. Teachers should be encouraged to make permanent homes at their schools.

5. The vote for buildings and their maintenance should in future be allocated on business lines. A percentage on the valuation of wooden, brick, and stone buildings, respectively, should be allowed for maintenance, instead of the present haphazard system. In connection with the matter of providing and maintaining school buildings the question of placing the buildings in charge of the municipal bodies should be considered.

6. A schedule of approved works and of school supplies over and above absolute necessities should be drawn up, and a grant should be provided to supplement local subscriptions by £1 for £1. The recent experience of local interest in Arbor Day shows what may be done when public opinion and interest are organized.

7. All future supplies of desks should be "dual desks" of the pattern in use in New Zealand. Where galleries are removed, the infant-desk and backed seat used in the Otago District should be used.

8. An amendment of the Education Act so far as relates to the compulsory clause is urgent. The New Zealand law is far superior to that of Victoria. The age of compulsion should be from six to fourteen years. This is the limit in England, New South Wales, and Western Australia.

9. The problem of co-ordinating into a national system the recognised grades of education—primary, secondary, continuation or higher primary, technical, and University—should be taken in hand, and the powers of the Education Department should be enlarged so as to allow of State-supervised continuation and secondary schools. The report of the Mosely Commission should be studied in this connection. The New Zealand system of district high schools should be established. These and evening continuation classes in centres where they are required would be a substantial gain at present.

I have, &c.,

FRANK TATE,

Director of Education.

The Hon. the Minister of Public Instruction.

I have read this report.

If this Government had not to pay £82,360 for pensions in connection with the Education Department it could provide everything recommended by Mr. Tate.

THOS. BENT, Premier.

15th August, 1904.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (3,750 copies), £13 11s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1904.

Price 6d.]