

education of the pupil, while rendering it possible for each pupil to fit himself by his own powers and abilities for the future calling that his parents or schoolmaster choose for him. In the large towns there seems room, therefore, for something else besides the secondary school, and in two of the towns of the colony there are already technical day classes. As far as regards the work that is being done in those classes, I have no hesitation in saying it is very good in both cases. As far as regards accommodation and suitability for school purposes, I am afraid that is rather a different matter. We must be human in our school arrangements, and must make provision not merely for mental training, but also for the physical and natural wants of the boy or girl of fourteen to sixteen or seventeen. That is hardly the case as yet, so that with regard to day technical schools at the present time I think the position wants reviewing, and any recommendation that comes from this Conference will, I am quite sure, be well considered. It seems to me there is room in these large towns for something else besides what is now called the secondary school. We want another form of secondary school in the shape of a day technical school; I do not think its place is properly taken by the district high school in the large towns for the reasons I have given.

Then there are other aspects of technical education. There are the means of going on for those whose parents send them to work at a comparatively early age. I should like to feel that no child went to work in this colony until he had had an opportunity of passing the sixth standard.—(Hear, hear.)—Of course there are a good many considerations to be taken into account, and no doubt it is not quite a simple question. People must live, and must get the help of their children at an early age; but I could wish that all children before they went to work should, whether they passed the examinations or not, have instruction of the kind and standard that is prescribed for the class S6. I think, however, that a large proportion of these children who go to work early might be caused to attend the continuation classes. Our duty does not end with them when they leave the primary schools, and if we could give some advantage to the youth of both sexes who attend such classes—could persuade a larger proportion of them to do so—if we could give such inducements as almost amounted to a mild form of compulsion, I believe it would be a great advantage to the individuals and to the community. What I mean by continuation work is something in the nature of a continuation of their general education.

Much better work is being done in giving them technical preparation for their future trades. The two ought to go together, continuation of general education and technical education. There is a good deal more being done in technical education—about three or four times as much, as far as figures go—as there was when we last met three years ago. The advance is very great, but it is not quite so healthy as it might be, because there is not a sufficient amount of continuation work.

The free places in technical schools have very largely increased. There are now at least seven or eight hundred. I think there were then about one or two hundred, so that the number has increased very largely, and I am very glad it has, because in those free places we require a definite course to be taken up; it is a very simple course and the requirements are very moderate. They must take some arithmetic, or a substitute for arithmetic in order to do it. It recognises the principle that general education must be continued while technical education is being carried on. Thus the increase of technical free places is an indication that the number of those who are taking definite courses of technical work, instead of merely isolated classes, is on the increase, and this is always a healthy sign. Then we have senior free places in technical schools, in secondary schools and district high schools, tenable until the pupil reaches a standard that we might call roughly the university standard or the standard of a higher technical school approaching university rank. The number of openings for university education or technical education of university rank is very large, larger than it was; the openings are given by means of National Scholarships, Queen's, University Junior, and Taranaki Scholarships. The number is almost two or three times what it was three years ago, and last session I am glad to say Parliament sanctioned a vote that enabled all those on the credit list of the University Junior Scholarship Examination to have their fees paid up to £20 a year. I think that is a distinct advance, for another reason I am coming to presently. A bridge still remains to be made for those who have not been through a course in the secondary schools, but have done so well in the technical schools that they ought to have facilities for the highest stage of technical education. I have really no doubt that bridge will soon be made, and it will then be as easy for them to go into the highest grades as it is for those who have gained University or National Scholarships.

There are at present in the colony four technical colleges of university rank—the Lincoln Agricultural College, the College of Engineering at Canterbury, the School of Mines of Otago, and the School of Mines in Auckland. All these are affiliated to the University. We have heard that a dairy school of higher rank is to be established very soon, and that I suppose will be the fifth institution, and as the wants of the colony increase no doubt we shall have others. I hope that one of the earliest additions to the number will be a school of domestic science—to train those who are to give domestic instruction to the pupils and teachers in the various parts of the colony.

In regard to the next stage—the stage beyond the ordinary degree course in the University College or the corresponding stage in the higher technical colleges—we have seen from the newspapers that it is in contemplation to establish research scholarships and higher technical scholarships. To make the national system of education complete, there ought to be at least these two series. The former, the research scholarships, are intended to provide those who have graduated in the University with the equipment required for research, and to pay them in money £100 a year for two or three years for personal maintenance; the higher technical scholarships are meant to make a similar provision for those who wish and are qualified to continue their technical education on special lines beyond the stage to which it can be carried in the ordinary course of the higher technical colleges or of the University colleges. There should also be a few travelling scholarships. Some people have condemned this proposal, but surely, if we cannot provide everything in this colony, we are not going to be so narrowly patriotic as to deny to our own people the means of getting instruction elsewhere. I put it in this way because it seems to me that that is