

much higher among women than men, but for both sexes there is a gradual improvement, for whereas the number of "analfabeti" for all Italy is 43.85 per cent. of all the men above 21, and 60.39 per cent. of all the women above 21, the percentage of such persons above 12 years of age is for men, 42 per cent.; and for women, 55.5 per cent. The figures are taken from the last available returns—those of the census of 1901 ("Nuovo Manuale Scolastico, 1907," by Dr. Bruto Amante, pp. 16–18). Want of money is at the root of the evil; the immense drain upon the national finances entailed by the vast military system makes a proper expenditure upon education next to impossible. This fact is recognised, even at the Ministry of Education itself; and the great interest taken by the educational authorities in the public-school cadets of New Zealand (about which, without any suggestion from me, they made particular inquiries) was due to the fact that they thought they saw in such a system a key to the solution of the problem of national defence without entailing upon the people burdens too heavy to be borne. "School cadets," said one person in a high position to me, "why, with a few weeks' training in each year afterwards, they would be soldiers!"

The appalling figures given above do not alter the fact that in the large schools of Rome, and even more in those of Milan and other northern towns, the teaching in the elementary schools reaches a very high level. In fact, nowhere, not even in Switzerland, Germany, or America, did I see better teaching of the mother-tongue, linked with the observation of the facts of nature and human life, than I did in some of the best Italian schools. This feature was, perhaps, still more marked in the various classes of the secondary schools. The standard of work reached, for instance, in the Liceo Visconti, with its preparatory Ginnasio, at Rome, was very high; in every class, in every subject, the main idea seemed to be to secure the adequate and clear expression of the pupils' thoughts on that subject in their mother-tongue. The beauties of Virgil, the epigrams of Horace, the narratives of Cæsar, Livy, Sallust, Tacitus, by means of their allusions and the sidelights they throw upon the contemporary history, taken in conjunction with the monuments that every Roman boy sees daily before his eyes, were made the occasion for the intelligent discussion of Latin and Italian literature, and of the political and social institutions of ancient and modern Rome. The standard of pure Latin scholarship was high, but the lessons were quite as much lessons in history and civics, and in the practice of ready speech in modern Italian, as they were lessons in Latin. It was the same with other subjects. I was present at a lecture on modern discoveries in electricity given by Dr. Matti (chief science-master of the school, and a distinguished worker in physics), illustrated by excellent experiments. After the lecture three students stood up and gave without hesitation clear and continuous explanations of the lesson. The first may have prepared his summary; but it was clearly not so with the second and the third (a girl), whom I picked out, and for whom I framed the questions to be answered. The pupils belonged to the two highest classes of the "Liceo," and were from 17 to 19 or 20 years of age. I am convinced that very few of the students in our University Colleges could have passed such a test as well as these young Italians did. The value of such exercises in mental development is, I think, sufficiently obvious.

The salaries in the elementary schools are very low indeed: the minimum legal salaries payable to teachers in primary and infant schools are: City schools—Men, £48 to £64 a year; women, £38 to £48 a year. Rural schools—Men, £36 to £40 a year; women, £30 to £34 a year. Many Communes make additions to these salaries, in some cases more than doubling them; additions are also made in the case of married men, and of men or women having parents or other relatives dependent upon them, and small extra grants are made for manual instruction. Where the commune is too poor to pay the minimum legal salary, the amount is made up by the Government, or the school is closed.

The pensions payable to retiring teachers with 25 years' service or over, and the allowances to widows, orphans, and other dependent relatives of deceased teachers, are comparatively liberal: for instance, a teacher with 25 years' service retiring at the age of 60 would get a little over three-fifths of his average minimum legal salary; if he retired with the same length of service at the age of 65 he would get 48 per cent. of his average minimum legal salary. With 40 years' service if he retired at the age of 60 he would get a trifle more than his average minimum legal salary; and with the same service if he retired at 65 he would get 1.32 of his average minimum legal salary. The additional allowances and the additional salary paid to him (if any) by the commune are not taken into account in assessing the pension. It will be noted that in the assessing of pensions a principle is taken into