

ment is quite aware of the overlapping above referred to, and intends to take steps to remedy what it considers a most undesirable condition. Indeed, it has already done something in this direction by reducing the grants in commercial and domestic courses, which reduction has seriously hampered controlling authorities in carrying out engagements entered into on the basis of the original capitation-rate. Without the income earned by pupils taking these two courses, a technical day school in Invercargill could not be carried on, and the project must, we fear, be abandoned—with some regret on our part, we have to admit. We believe that many pupils now attending high schools would profit more from attendance at a day technical school; moreover, at and near all the larger centres there are considerable numbers of pupils holding proficiency certificates whom the local high schools fail to attract, or for whom they do not provide suitable courses of instruction. Some of these pupils remain for longer or shorter periods in the primary schools as Standard VII pupils, doing work of a more or less (generally less) useful kind. But a very much larger proportion of these pupils leave school and engage in various temporary occupations until they reach the age when they may enter upon their chosen industry or pursuit. The period from fourteen to sixteen, during which the young people might, and should, make valuable preparation for industrial pursuits concurrently with the extension and deepening of their general education, is almost entirely wasted because we have at present no means, or quite inadequate means, for supplying this preparation and checking the economic waste. In the technical day school the course of instruction, while providing a sound general education, is definitely arranged to prepare pupils for the careers for which they are intended and for which they will afterwards specialise in the evening technical school. And if it is true (as we are assured it is) that the attendance at high schools in the towns in which there are day technical schools has not only not been prejudicially affected but has actually increased since the establishment of the latter, it would almost appear that, in the larger centres at least, there is for each of the institutions a province that it may profitably occupy. In this connection it may be noted that in the State of Victoria, where secondary education has been left hitherto almost entirely to private enterprise, there is now before Parliament a Bill which embodies the recommendations of Mr. Tate, Director of Education—the outcome of his observations during a recent visit to European countries and to America—and which provides for the establishment of a large number of high or intermediate schools intended to be largely technical in character. These schools will, we presume, closely correspond in function to the day technical schools of New Zealand.

We made special inquiry regarding the control of the technical and continuation classes in the various centres throughout the Dominion, and we found that at all the principal centres the local bodies had associated themselves with the Education Board as controlling authority, and that the work was being administered by a separate Technical Committee consisting of representatives from the Education Board and the contributing local bodies. The advantage of this system of control lies in the fact that an increased interest appears to be taken by the local bodies in technical education; and, as a result, they contribute somewhat liberally of their funds to the support of the schools in their midst.

Hitherto the work in Invercargill has been controlled by the Education Board alone, and no assistance has been asked from or given by the various local bodies in support of the classes, except in one instance when the Builders' Association generously contributed £12 10s. towards the equipment of the building-construction class-room. At Gore the Borough Council has contributed £25 per annum for the past two years in support of the classes at that centre, while at Bluff a number of private contributions were made last year. The fact that no such outside support has been asked for or received in Invercargill has not detracted from the success of the classes, as the returns compare most favourably with those in the centres where associated classes are the rule. But no extension of any magnitude—if such extension is at all possible—can take place unless the local bodies contribute towards the support of the classes, or the Board itself out of its ordinary funds is willing to provide a fairly substantial amount. The Government capitation is insufficient of itself to meet the expenditure, even under the present economical administration. As a matter of fact, the evening classes are not self-supporting. Since 1901—the year in which the Board took over the control of the classes from the Technical Classes Association—to the end of last year, the net receipts, not including the building account, have not equalled the expenditure by the sum of £414 16s. The deficiency has been met out of the capitation earned by the school classes, and constitutes a somewhat heavy and unfair tax on the school fund, which is entirely separate from the technical fund. As during all these years the cost of administration has been only £98 11s. 2d., the position is apparent. We know that the officers of the Education Department hold the opinion that the formation of associated classes should be encouraged, and we therefore submit the proposition to the Board. If the local bodies would pledge themselves not only to increase their interest in the classes, but also to provide half of the necessary amount to pay the Director a sufficient salary, the other half being obtained from the Education Department by way of pound-for-pound subsidy, then the experiment might be made. There is a danger, however, that the Department might at any moment reduce the capitation now being paid (as has already been done on more than one occasion), or the local bodies might withhold their donations, or both contingencies might have to be faced, and the situation would then be somewhat serious. We wish it to be distinctly understood that these remarks refer only to the control of the evening classes. The school classes are entirely self-supporting, and must be kept directly under the control of the Board, as at present. We have to express our grateful thanks to the Board for its kindness in allowing us the opportunity of making these investigations. We gained much valuable information not only in an enlarged conception of the best methods of carrying on the work in our own district, but also in learning what to avoid.

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