

schools it would give real pleasure to find suitable provision made for a school-garden. The schools in Napier and Gisborne have no land available for garden purposes, but the purchase or lease of an acre of land in Napier South would supply a great want, as it could be used as a training and experimental plot for pupils at the Technical and Board schools. Land in Gisborne might easily be obtained for a similar purpose.

We would again urge upon the Board the importance of renewing the school-desks in all the older schools, substituting, however, the single desk whenever a change is being made. In all Canadian schools the single desk is in use, and the dual desk is being replaced by the single desk in England and Scotland in all the newer schools. In the case of apparatus and appliances the Inspectors are of opinion that the old plan of supplying the schools was preferable to the present arrangements.

It has been pointed out that every school should keep an apparatus-book in which lists are kept of all apparatus and appliances, with date of supply. This should be examined by the Inspector at the date of his visit, and the latest information would be available in the office whenever applications for apparatus or appliances were made by a Committee.

The rapid changes that now take place in the case of pupil-teachers and probationers have not been advantageous to educational progress. Formerly an Inspector was able to exercise a good deal of influence upon young teachers during their long period of training, but the new plan of examination, the shortening of the training period, and the seeming hurry that exists to pass them on to a training college have tended to lessen their technical training. Formerly this was given by a headmaster, with the guidance and encouragement of a visiting Inspector. It used to be to me a real pleasure to observe the growing power of young teachers who showed aptitude and interest in their work. But this plan has almost gone out of fashion, for the probationers and pupil-teachers pass through the schools at almost kaleidoscopic speed, the certificate of qualification being the one aim, and the preparation of a text-book will seemingly do it all. In the report for 1909 attention was called by us to the character of the departmental examinations in relation to probationers, &c., and we made suggestions as to the necessity of regulations being drawn requiring probationers and pupil-teachers to be tested in reading, writing, and practical teaching, such as was done when the Board carried out the training and examination of pupil-teachers on its own scheme of instruction and technical training. Among the finest teachers to-day in the Board's service are those who went through a critical course of training as pupil-teachers, and we are of the opinion that the old system of technical training should be continued, or that pupil-teachers should be abolished from the school and arrangements made for training candidates for teacherships in a training-continuation school previous to admission to a normal school. Certainly the present plan is not satisfactory.

Attention has been drawn to the large proportion of unclassed and untrained teachers in the service of the Board. The plan suggested in a separate report for their training would, it is believed, strengthen the smaller schools. Unless something is done the majority of small schools must continue to be carried on with little hope of success. The departmental regulations require all Board schools, as a general rule, to be visited at least twice in every year, and omitting household schools, which are balanced by private and Catholic schools, there is practically no time available which one could devote to the benefit of teachers in the smaller schools. If one could omit the "efficient" schools from inspection, the case would be different, but this is not possible under the regulations, and the only way out of the difficulty is that already recommended.

Saturday classes for teachers who reside so far away from a centre are quite useless, and yet it is in the outlying districts that influences are wanted to operate, and where the school-garden, carton-work, dressmaking, and similar practical and useful employments are particularly wanted, but are necessarily neglected because under present regulations the teaching of useful and particular subjects has become a question of earning money to provide for instructors! The plan as now recognized paralyses true educational advancement in sparsely scattered districts, and lovers of education are apt to lose heart when they find so many useless official lions in the way.

In the keeping of records and making of returns a good deal remains to be done by most teachers, and, on the whole, it can hardly be said that time-tables, both general and class, are neatly drawn. Of course, there are some splendid exceptions to be found. The schemes of instruction to be drawn up by teachers under Regulation 5 do not usually give sufficient detail as to the sequence of lessons in a given subject, it being understood by some teachers that the division of the arithmetic course of a standard under the regulations into three-term periods represents a scheme of work. In some of the schools visited trouble has arisen in the matter of free books, and either the new plan of supplying the necessary books to the schools does not work well or teachers fail to realize the importance of reporting to the office any delay in receiving the necessary supplies. In the matter of class-books for the use of teachers, it should be clearly understood by every teacher in charge of a school or a class that the absence of a class-book supplies the very best evidence that a lesson has not been prepared beforehand. It is feared that much of the ineffective reading in the schools may be traced to absence of preparation on the part of teachers themselves.

The freedom of classification and promotion that was conceded to teachers some years ago has been sufficiently long in operation to test the wisdom of the course adopted. The preparatory classes continue to be made up of a comparatively large percentage of the whole number belonging to the schools, but it is probable there is a tendency to send children to school earlier than was the case a few years ago, and in the upper classes, as already pointed out, the leaving-age is correspondingly lowered. Where good preparatory departments are found the time spent in widening the foundation-work is time well spent, and we are satisfied that a course of sound preparation in the lower department is of more importance to young children, and to education generally, than the hurried lop-sided promotions that are sometimes made by teachers. One noticeable