

experience in up-to-date methods of teaching. Here they would see the best work of the pupils, and thus have set before them an ideal or standard to be aimed at. They would also at the same time see the pupils at work, and have an opportunity of observing the best methods of organization, and the means by which the high standard or results were obtained. (2.) That the schools set apart for this purpose should be of Grades II, III, and IV respectively, as it is in these grades of schools that the majority of our inexperienced teachers will ultimately be placed, either as assistants or head teachers. (3.) These schools should be so situated—(a) That they are in a neighbourhood where accommodation may be easily obtained by the trainees; (b) that they are within reasonable distance of the Education Office, so that the Inspectors may be in close touch with the work going on. In our district these conditions would be best met by establishing special schools at Norfolk, Waiongona, and Lower Mangorei. (4.) That all the needs of this district would be met by sending one trainee to each of these schools per month. By this arrangement we would in the course of a year be able to give increased experience in the practice of teaching to at least thirty teachers. (5.) So as to retain in these schools the services of the very best teachers available, the Department should recognize these schools as special schools, and grant a salary commensurate with the importance of the school and the responsibility placed on the shoulders of the teachers. (6.) It might also be arranged that a portion of the grant now given by the Department for the instruction of uncertificated teachers should be paid to the head teachers of these schools should they be willing to instruct and direct the trainees in their literary studies for the teachers' certificate. If this system were adopted it would be a benefit not only to inexperienced teachers, but to other teachers who, on the recommendation of the Inspector, would be granted a few days' leave of absence to visit the special schools. The vacancy caused by the withdrawal of a teacher from a school would necessarily have to be filled by a relieving-teacher. It will be evident that the extra cost to the Department if this system were introduced throughout the whole of the Dominion would be little, compared with the advantages derived from it.

*The Tisch Shield.*—The shield presented in 1909 by the late Mr. Tisch to encourage schools to improve their surroundings was this year secured by the Korito and Norfolk Schools, which each obtained 181 marks out of a maximum of 200. The following schools were also highly commended for the efforts put forth to beautify the school grounds and premises: Bird, Kaimiro, Huiroa, Toko, Pihama, Marco, Huiakama, Raupuha, York, Egmont Village, Ngaere, and Oaonui. In connexion with the improvement of the school-grounds, it is now quite a common occurrence to hear of a "working-bee," when parents assemble at the school, and, under the teacher's direction, set about improving the grounds.

*Returns.*—As many of the returns sent in by teachers continue to be incompletely or inaccurately filled in, we think it wise to again quote the pertinent remarks made by an Inspector of Schools on the returns furnished by the teachers in his district: "I cannot report favourably on the manner in which returns are compiled. I have not in any year known so many errors in the returns sent in at the end of each quarter. Ten only of my thirty-seven schools succeeded in furnishing, at first try, four correct quarterly returns during the past year; whilst two teachers each had to have their returns sent back for correction four times, another two had to make a second try on three separate occasions. If teachers fully recognized the inconvenience and additional work caused by their sending in inaccurate returns, no doubt they would exercise more care in their compilation. A return has little value unless it is absolutely correct; and the teacher who averred that the Inspector who had sent back a return for adjustment 'seemed to have a passion for accuracy' indicated, in a crude way, an attitude of mind which one hopes is not very general."

*General Efficiency.*—Each school has been visited by us twice during the year, and we are pleased to report that the standard of efficiency has been well maintained. The teachers generally have shown an earnest desire to carry out as efficiently as possible the important work entrusted to them. There are, however, a few suggestions we think it advisable to make regarding the treatment of some of the subjects of instruction.

*Written Work.*—Writing, as a rule, is very satisfactory. In some schools, however, there is ample scope for improvement. Our experience goes to show that in the latter class of schools the children are allowed to occupy thirty minutes or so with their pens whilst the teacher is in charge of another class. Where the best results are secured it is not owing altogether to the system adopted: any system will probably produce good writing if the teacher exercises a close supervision, and insists upon care and attention to detail. Excellence in the formation of the letters is often sacrificed to speed. The whole of the written exercises in some schools are characterized by neatness and accuracy. Nothing reveals more unerringly the earnestness of the teacher and the merits of the teaching than the manner in which corrections of the written exercises (home and school) are attended to. We would again remind teachers that we expect them to keep for our inspection the dictation exercises, composition, notes of lessons, &c.; and all such work should be dated. It is expected that books will be presented written by the pupils which contain work which will be of value to pupils after they leave school. Too much work is committed to loose sheets of paper, ostensibly chiefly for the convenience of correction. There is, however, need that a more permanent record of the pen and pencil work should be kept.

*Spelling.*—Some teachers negligently allow errors of spelling in the written work to pass unchecked, and apparently fail to recognize that the words selected by the pupil are of far more importance than words culled from the spelling and dictation exercises. At our visits it is commonly found that children who have no mistakes in the spelling and dictation test misspell simple words in the other written work.

*Recitation.*—In too many schools the poetry prepared for recitation is not thoroughly memorized. Poetry only half-learned is but of little use. Thoroughness in word-accuracy should be scrupulously insisted upon. The delivery, moreover, is often mechanical, droning, and depressive, whilst the