

the set-back mainly to the operation of the new principle of capitation adopted by the Department from the beginning of the year, and he offers proof that appears to be conclusive. The principle has told against the successful working of classes all over the district, and nearly all the Committees have passed resolutions condemning it. All would be well if it were possible to persuade country students that courses of work are better for them than single subjects, but the country student does not see it in quite that way. The consequence is that he is deprived of half of the loaf because he is not in a position to take the whole. The root of the trouble lies in a fallacy: it is assumed that what is desirable and possible in towns is also desirable and possible in the country.

The principle of compulsory attendance has been adopted by the Wanganui, Wanganui East, and Gonville Committees. There is no question but that the influence of the classes will be far-reaching, and there are indications that they will not be unpopular. It is a testimony to the educational fervour of these Committees that they were the first in the Dominion to ask that the principle should be established, and the first to see it actually in operation. It may be added that the establishment of these classes secures an educational reform of the first importance. The educational history of each pupil in attendance, including his primary-school course, will be recorded till the close of his seventeenth year, and an effort will be made to keep a note of his career even after that. This record will serve a double purpose: it will be a history of educational progress and a history of the pupil's advancement in his chosen walk of life; indeed, one of its main purposes is to enable him to choose his occupation aright. The school authorities thus undertake not merely to make the pupil's attendance at school as pleasant and profitable as possible, but also to secure as far as possible his material advancement. It is easy to see that great good both to the pupil and to the State may follow from the effective working of this plan.

To give finality to each course taken in manual or technical work the Board issues to deserving pupils certificates of merit. Girls on completing a year in Standard VI in cookery, needlework, and hygiene receive the "Home Arts" certificate, and the boys of the same standard receive the "Practical" certificate in woodwork. To free-place pupils and pupils in attendance under the compulsory clause at evening continuation and technical classes there are given certificates at the close of each year if by work, attendance, and conduct they are merited. To pupils in attendance at day technical schools and at district high schools certificates are given for excellence in given subjects. Similarly, fee-paying pupils receive certificates if merited. In addition to these there are, of course, the more important certificates issued by the Board of Education, London, and the City and Guilds Institute, London, a goodly number of which is won by the district; and, lastly, there may be mentioned the Board's book-keeping certificates—preliminary, junior, and senior—which, besides being passports to employment, are taken as *prima facie* evidence of the fitness of students to take the courses of instruction leading to the University examinations in accountancy.

What developments are ahead of us? In the first place, it is certain that we shall infuse more of the scientific method and spirit into our teaching of agriculture. If educational waste is to be prevented, and if a high ideal of teaching is to be set in our new agricultural colleges, the pupils must be recruited from our secondary schools. As soon as colleges are ready our schools will send to them students with disciplined minds and a sound knowledge of elementary agriculture. We have already begun to send pupils to the State farm; one, indeed, has gone to Hawkesbury. In the second place, we may expect a closer relationship to be established between our schools and the Agricultural Department. The attendance of some of the Department's experts at the recent Moumahaki instruction class was a good omen. There is a crying need in our rural classes for an expert in wool-classing, but because we cannot afford to keep an expert the whole year through the instruction cannot be provided: a strange admission this, in view of the fact that wool bulks so largely among our exports. In the third place there should be found some method of linking up more closely the work of the technical schools and colleges with the teaching agencies in the Public Service. The schools can provide the equipment and the teaching-power, but the Public Service Departments do not appear to be aware of the fact. This is a matter that might well be brought under the notice of the Public Service Commissioners. In the fourth place, the application of the compulsory clause must be extended to more of our schools if our young people are to take their places in the van of efficiency. It is not for bread-and-butter alone that our youth should fill our continuation classes, but also for those elements of culture that tend to round off character. In dealing with this phase of the work of our technical schools the Committees are face to face with a problem worthy of the most thoughtful consideration. I have to thank the editor of the *Journal of Agriculture* for sending to each of our technical and district high schools one or more copies of his excellent publication.

It is my pleasant duty, as in previous years, to testify to the excellent work done by the Committees in furthering the interests of the schools. Loyal and disinterested service has been rendered by the Directors in the three districts, and the special instructors one and all have carried out their onerous duties with credit. To Mr. Swanger, Secretary, and Mr. Bell, Chief Clerk, credit is due for the expeditious and businesslike handling of the returns, accounts, and correspondence.

GEO. D. BRAIK, Superintendent.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SUPERVISOR FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT.

As regards school classes in agriculture and dairy-work, 1912 was a year of distinct improvement. Increased attention was paid to improving the appearance of the grounds, especially in the smaller schools, where in many cases admirable work was carried out. The efforts of the teachers were well seconded by Committees and residents, and before long there will be few schools with gaunt buildings set in bare paddocks. In the competition for best-kept grounds, Manutahi