

suitable for the office. Under the present system this is for the most part beyond the control of the Board. But, no matter with whom the appointments rest, the same state of things must in a measure continue so long as there is not a number of qualified teachers to choose from, and so long as such inadequate inducements are so often offered to competent persons. It is to be hoped that the building of teachers' houses, about to be proceeded with, will do away to some extent with the latter objection. To be effective in this way, these houses must be made sufficiently large and comfortable, and be constructed with due regard to the laws of health. They must have attached to them a reasonable amount of land, fenced, subdivided, and laid down in grass (except the garden), that facilities may be afforded for keeping a cow and a horse. If obtainable, not less than five acres should be devoted, in a country district, to the site of a school and dwelling. From one to two acres will be required for the school site. This should be fenced and laid down in grass, both as a playground and as a paddock, where pupils who live at a distance may keep their horses. I know that serious inconvenience is felt in many places for want of such an enclosure. I feel sure that it would be economy to provide it, as it would lessen the demand for small schools so often persistently urged on the Board with some show of reason. It would be impossible to provide anything like the number of these small schools sought for, even by means of half-time schools. Pupils must come from a distance, but their coming should be facilitated.

I am happy to say that among the junior assistants there are several who promise to make efficient teachers. A considerable number of these teachers will have to be employed in the large schools now in course of construction. As many of them are wanting in experience, it will be necessary to give ample aid to the head teacher to enable him to exercise sufficient supervision over his juniors. This supervision will be best exercised by his devoting an hour or more daily to ascertaining by inspection how his assistants teach their classes, in order that he may point out to them their errors, and show them the better way. This will be found a much more effectual plan and one more economical of time than that usually adopted, where the teacher generally takes an assistant's place, sending the latter to do some other work. It need not, of course, preclude the teacher from sometimes ascertaining the results of the work of his assistants.

The rules and regulations of the Board as regards teaching continue to have a beneficial influence. Stringent measures have been taken during the past year, and are still taken, to insure that these regulations are honestly carried out. Unceasing vigilance and untiring effort are required to overcome the *vis inertiae* of stupidity. It has been lately found necessary to add to the stringency of the rules with reference to the use of school buildings for other than school purposes. People require to be educated on this point. Many seem to think that the schoolhouse ought to be at their service for all sorts of purposes, and that the school arrangements should be altogether subordinate to their convenience. They feel aggrieved at any attempt to control them. No doubt this state of feeling is a tradition from the dark ages, when the parish clerk and the schoolmaster were one and the same person. It is my opinion that teachers and teaching will not be held in the estimation in which they should be held so long as school buildings are not kept sacred to school purposes alone.

The training class for teachers in Auckland continues to be conducted in a very satisfactory manner by Mr. Worthington. It was opened at the end of January, 1876. Fifteen teachers then attended. The number for the June quarter of that year was 34. For the quarter ended 30th June last the number was 55. Many teachers from the country attend the class on Saturdays. The training class at the Thames is conducted efficiently by Mr. Halliwell: the number attending is 17.

The boys from the district schools who have gained scholarships are favourably reported of by the Headmaster of the College and Grammar School. A programme of the conditions under which scholarships will be competed for in December next is appended. It will be seen that the number of scholarships has been increased.

The state of education cannot be called satisfactory while so many unsuitable persons are employed in the schools—persons who never have been, and persons who never will be, teachers. Notwithstanding, I think it may be said that the efforts made during the past year to bring about improvement have not been fruitless, and that some not inconsiderable advance has been made.

I have, &c.,

RICHARD J. O'SULLIVAN,  
Inspector of Schools.

The Chairman of the Board of Education, Auckland.

#### MEMORANDUM on School Inspection, furnished by request of the Department.

INSPECTION and examination are combined. An Inspector who merely examines schools does less than half his work. The most important part is to note the defects in organization, discipline, classification, methods of teaching, &c., and to show the teachers how to set them right. Inspection without these last is of very slight use.

Standards have not been adopted in the Auckland schools. Within certain bounds I believe they are useful. From all I can learn on the subject, I am of opinion that the adoption of what is called payment for results has an injurious effect on education.

RICHARD J. O'SULLIVAN,  
Inspector.

#### NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 31st December, 1877.

I have the honor to transmit my report of the Board schools for the half-year ending this day. I greatly regret that ill-health has prevented my visiting the schools during the past half-year as often as I find it very desirable I should do.

I have, &c.,

WM. M. CROMPTON,  
Inspector of Schools.

B. Wells, Esq., Chairman, Board of Education.