

**SCHOOL COMMITTEES.**—In making the necessary preparations for the successful working of the Education Act, the Board might be materially assisted by the District School Committees. At present the duties of Committees are new to many of those who undertake to act as committeemen. A School Committee working in harmony, and desirous of promoting the interest of the district school, can greatly influence for good both teacher and pupils. I should like to see each Committee appoint, either monthly or quarterly, a sub-committee, who would be expected to visit weekly the district school, to see if anything required their special attention. Plenty of work is waiting to be done before the district schools under the Board become models of neatness, and worthy the imitation of children. Schoolhouses require painting; the schoolrooms and windows require to be cleaned of the dirt and cobwebs which form such special features in some schools; the grounds must be fenced and well ordered; gymnastic apparatus erected; and proper arrangements must be made for supplying suitable and separate conveniences for the boys and girls. There is no power so competent to carry out the above works as the District Committees, and it should be the aim of such Committees to make the schoolrooms and grounds pleasant and attractive to the children, and worthy of their appreciation. For it must be remembered the training of the young does not consist merely in cramming them with geography and arithmetic: education has a far higher aspect than the merely mental one, and Committees that set before the children neat and orderly-kept schoolrooms and grounds are performing a good work, and materially assisting the work of the teacher.

**COMPULSORY CLAUSE.**—The power conferred upon School Committees of enforcing attendance is, in the majority of cases, a dead-letter, and will continue to be so until the clause in the Act is modified. Either direct compulsion must be enforced by the Government, or the power must be placed in the hands of the Board, but only to be carried into effect on the recommendation of the School Committees. I think the Committees generally would like to see the compulsory clause introduced, but no Chairman or Secretary is willing to perform the duties of a policeman, especially if he happens to be a storekeeper or man of business in the district. I think a modification in the Act might be introduced with great advantage in section 89, which provides that a child shall be sent to school "for at least one-half of the period in each year during which the school is usually open." Two hundred and fifty attendances can be made in little more than half a year, and I do not think they are too many to expect from every child attending the public school, where the education is free.

**LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS.**—I hope the Board will see its way clear to assist in the formation of a school library in every school district where there is no public library. Section 57 of the Education Act states that "the Board may from time to time expend in the purchase of books, to be placed in the school library, any sum or sums of money equal to any sum of money which shall have been raised by public subscription or otherwise." Perhaps, if the Board offered to grant aid for twelve months, in accordance with the above section, a number of School Committees might avail themselves of the grant. A school library, and a case of objects, I believe to be two of the greatest aids in the successful training of children, and I shall not rest satisfied until the library, and the embryo museum, are to be found in every school under my inspection. Bacon has said, "Reading makes a full man." I think he might have said, with equal truth, that "observation makes a thoughtful man." It is the combination of reading and observation that I am anxious to see forming a part of the training in the district schools. By the process of exchanges, a large collection of objects might be obtained in every school. Children living near the sea might collect shells, sea-weeds, bits of sponge, and scores of other beautiful objects, and, through their teachers, forward samples to the country schools in exchange for wild flowers, ferns, leaves of trees, woods, grasses, mosses, lichens, &c. The amount of knowledge stored in such little things as here mentioned cannot be estimated. The observant faculties of children would be thus aroused to every object of interest around them, and science, which the present educational system requires to be taught, would become a reality in the schools from the study of common things.

**BUSH SCHOOLS.**—I should like to see the attention of the Government drawn to the condition of education in the bush settlements in this district. It is impossible for the Board to spend large sums of money on the erection of schools, and the payment of teachers' salaries, where the population is so scattered; but certainly no people in the country have greater claims for assistance than these pioneers of settlement. There must be at least 350 children of school age in the Blackburn, Makaretu, and the other settlements of the Forty-Mile Bush, who are receiving no education whatever. The difficulty might be easily met by the Government making a special grant for the employment of itinerant teachers in the bush settlements.

**NATIVE SCHOOLS.**—It seems to me a cause for regret that the Native schools in the district are not under the direct control of the Board. Mr. Gill, the Under Secretary for Native Schools, has requested me to visit and examine these schools. I have done so in several cases, but their condition is such that I am inclined to believe they would be better closed. Native children can be well taught, as exemplified in the two Native girls' schools established in Napier, both of which might well be imitated by the majority of the district schools under the Board.

**MORAL TRAINING.**—Before concluding this report, I venture to draw the attention of the Board to what I consider an important omission in the new education system now being introduced. When the Government decides upon a national plan of education, it is absolutely necessary to inquire what subjects should be taught in the schools, and why they should be taught. To be complete, the training of children should be of three kinds—mental, physical, moral. Any system of education which does not recognize these three is necessarily imperfect, and cannot produce the results indispensable to the well-being of a community. The recent system deals with the mental and physical training of children, but I regret to find that direct moral training has been entirely ignored. Why, I am at a loss to understand, for, after many years' experience as a teacher, I am fully convinced that the moral training of children cannot be neglected. In my opinion it is a vicious system to teach children to imagine that the culture of the intelligence is "the be-all and the end-all" in learning. Because we have a nation of educated men, it does not follow that virtue and integrity will abound, but both these qualities are essential to the well-being of a nation, and moral training is the fountain-head from whence