

SECONDARY AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

I do not see that a technical school upon the principle or scale of either Sydney or Melbourne could well be established in New Zealand—that is to say, a central school in Wellington or other large centre, entirely supported by the State. This school, being of a strictly technical character, would entail considerable cost in buildings and apparatus; further, it would be impossible for lads in other parts of the colony to take advantage of such an institution without considerable cost to themselves. Again, the number of lads joining any special class—as, for instance, carriage-building, plumbing, cabinet-making, &c.—would be insufficient to support such classes, taking into consideration the present population of the various centres. I therefore suggest that schools of design and technical drawing-classes be established in all the principal centres of New Zealand. Many Education Boards could afford a sum of, say, £100 per annum as a salary for an instructor to their teachers during the week, £100 should be obtained in such townships from classes in art subjects during the day, and £100 from evening technical drawing-classes; making a total of £300 per annum. Special classes in architecture, building, construction, and applied mechanics should be attached to these schools, and classes should, if possible, be formed for any special branch of industry connected with the district, to include workshop practice.

Technical training is undoubtedly necessary, and, if this colony is to be equal in the race with Australasia, technical classes must be established and well supported. New South Wales and Victoria, as will be seen by information herein contained, spend respectively £21,000 and £16,000 annually upon education of this character: are we to be left altogether behind? If not, then State-aid is necessary. If our trades and professions are to maintain or are to reach the standard set up by other colonies, these classes must be energetically carried on, and our workmen and apprentices given every opportunity of perfecting their knowledge with regard to their various vocations.

It would be an advantage, in accordance with the above suggestion, and, indeed, for the benefit generally of this branch of education, that an Art Department directly responsible to the Government should be established. This should be upon the lines of the Science and Art Department of South Kensington, and should be affiliated to that institution, as suggested in my report of 1887: “1. Object of the Art Department—(a.) To establish a thorough system of drawing for the primary and secondary schools of the colony. (b.) To supervise the training of teachers in such schools in drawing. (c.) To formulate a proper standard of examination in drawing. (d.) To establish schools of art and technical-drawing classes. (e.) That the system to be formulated shall provide for a gradual development and connection from the primary to and through the technical and secondary schools. 2. Departmental—(a.) The department of art to be a separate and distinct department from the present educational one, in order that fees may be charged for instruction in art and technical classes. (b.) Salaries of officers of the department not to exceed the sum of £800 per annum. (Note.—If the clerical work is done by the Government clerks this amount would be less.) (c.) The head of the department shall be responsible to the Minister of Education for the organization, development, and results of the department. (d.) The Inspector-General of Schools and the headmasters of the Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, and Wellington Schools of Art to be constituted a body for consultation, if necessary.” Local or branch schools should be controlled by a committee. The classes may be held in mechanics’ or literary institutions, schools, or other educational institutes.

Full information with reference to all the classes here suggested is given in the following pages, with text-books, courses of study, &c. The syllabus of the Sydney Technical School will be found especially useful in this respect. With regard to existing institutions, these might or might not, as they thought fit, place themselves under the department, though I see no reason why they should not do so. Many advantages would be gained by them that under present circumstances they would be unable to obtain. The fact of their obtaining their funds from various sources need not interfere with their joining the department, as their funds would be entirely under their own control, and they would be governed by Boards or committees as at present.

The following rules are adopted for formation and continuance of local or branch School Committees in the Wellington District, and could apply to the colony: 1. Every art-school or art-class in connection with the Science and Art Department or District Education Board must be under the superintendence of a Committee. The Committee must consist of a Chairman, a Secretary, and at least three other members. The offices of Chairman and Secretary cannot be held by the same person. All the members of the Committee must be well-known, responsible persons, who have no personal interest in the teachers of the school. The following are not eligible to be members of the Committee: Candidates for examination by the department or Board or their teachers in any subjects, relatives of such a teacher, and all persons who are disqualified by the Education Act from being members of Boards or Committees. 2. The gentlemen* who intend to act on a local Committee must sign and complete this form. No one can be a member of a Committee or assist in the conduct of an examination whose signature to the undertaking below has not been previously approved by the department or the District Board of Education. Care must be taken that the members who sign the form are properly acquainted with their duties, a summary of which is given below. 3. When a school or class is first formed the following undertaking must be signed at a general meeting of the Committee. 4. The department or Board requires that the local Committee shall—(a.) Be responsible for the safe custody on the school-premises of all apparatus and examples towards the purchase of which the department or Board has granted aid or which it has lent. (b.) Provide a room or rooms of sufficient size to carry out the examinations, and advertise such examinations. To these examinations all persons who wish to present themselves, and not only those attending the school or class, must be admitted, provided that they have given due notice according

* Ladies may act on a local Committee. On signing this form they should state whether they are spinsters, married women, or widows, and give the occupation of their fathers or husbands.