

out it was discovered that a child had actually lost the use of one of his eyes. Of this fact neither parent nor teacher had been previously aware. The loss to the child is irreparable, and the instance serves to show how important it is that every teacher should have some elementary knowledge of such tests as we have been undertaking. It is surely something to be able to discover defects and report upon them to the parent, who in his turn will hand the case over to a medical officer for treatment.

*School Furniture and Equipment.*—If we are to make headway with the work of education we must have our eyes directed not only to the subjects we teach, but also to the conditions under which instruction is given. The equipment and furnishing of class-rooms is therefore a matter of the first importance. Two subjects which have received some prominence during the year in the Practising School are “blackboard equipment” and “seating.”

(a.) Blackboards: How much blackboard space should be provided in any given room? It may be fairly claimed that that condition is best which allows at least half the pupils in a class, if necessary, to stand and do their written exercises at the blackboard. It has been estimated by some that not more than one-fourth of the time of the child should be spent in his seat at the desk in the sitting posture. If we say that at least one-half of his time in school should be spent in doing work in the upright position at the blackboard we are probably near the mark. Less will suffice in the upper school, more is necessary in the lower. To enable this to be carried out it is necessary that a blackboard 3 ft. or 4 ft. wide should be placed as a dado all round the room. This condition has been carried into effect in the infant-room just erected, and in all the class-rooms an approximation has been made to it. If it were more fully realised how much the problems of discipline and management are simplified, and how greatly therefore the work of the teacher is lightened by such an arrangement, reform in the direction indicated would soon become universal.

(b.) Desks: How shall we seat our pupils? This is an important question, and one that is ripe for discussion at the present time. The Practising School in connection with the Training College may with advantage be used in experimenting with various kinds of school furniture. In this way the value of any particular desk or other piece of furniture could be fairly tested, and its suitability for use under the ordinary school conditions be proved. With such an object in view, various kinds of seating have been introduced; some of the rooms have been fitted up with American single desks, some with American dual desks, and some with locally made singles or duals. One of the plates given in this report shows a locally made single desk which embodies most of the best features required by experts in a hygienic and useful desk [plate not reproduced]. With this type of desk the Model Country School has been equipped. The room measures approximately 21 ft. by 22 ft., and seats comfortably thirty-five pupils, allowing at the same time ample passage-way and floor-space, and room for a row of chairs for the use of students.

*Some other Problems of the Training College.*—Needs of Schools: One of the problems always before the Training College will be to keep in touch with actual conditions of work in the various classes of schools, and more particularly with the class of work required to be done in the country schools. I hope to be able during each year to visit as many schools as possible, in order that I may obtain at first hand information regarding the conditions under which work is being carried on, and so be able to adapt the College course to their needs. During the present year an announcement was made through the various Boards in the Middle University District to teachers of country schools that a special course of instruction in professional subjects, and special opportunities for observation, would be given during the last week in July and the first week in August. The announcement was made too late to allow teachers to take advantage of it; but several Boards have taken the matter up, and a scheme has now been matured whereby teachers in the remoter schools may have an opportunity of spending a fortnight or so in the Training College, and of thus keeping themselves in touch with recent developments in methods of teaching. The course as arranged includes instruction in the management of the country school, educational handwork, blackboard drawing, nature-study, and observation of methods in the various departments. It will not be possible to take more than twenty students in any one year, and it will be for the Committee of Advice to recommend to the Board how such a number may be allotted among the several Boards represented by the College.

*Accommodation of Students:* One of the most serious problems confronting many of our students relates to the matter of board and lodging. It is almost as important that the “domestic” life of the student should be properly safeguarded and adequately provided for as that he should receive suitable instruction and guidance in his studies during college hours; and it is only when the “home” surroundings are conducive to habits of study and to congenial social intercourse that we may expect our colleges to produce the best results. Many students have the utmost difficulty in securing lodgings that can in any way be regarded as suitable, and not a few were obliged to change lodgings more than once during the session. When it is further borne in mind that about two-thirds of our students are obliged to live away from home, the pressing nature of this problem will be seen. It is to be hoped that the efforts made by the committee of ladies recently set up in Wellington for the purpose of establishing a hostel for students may soon be crowned with success, and that before long the benefits of a well-conducted and carefully supervised college home will be available for our students.

In conclusion, I desire to thank the Inspectors, Secretary, and staff of the Wellington Education Board for the assistance they have given me from time to time during the year. The thanks of the College are particularly due to Mr. Fleming, Chief Inspector, for his four “talks” on the “Study of Literature,” which were very much appreciated by the students. I desire also to record my appreciation of the services rendered by the staff of the Training College. The first year was necessarily a difficult and trying one for them; and the sustained interest shown by one and all in the development of the plan of training, and their ungrudging services on behalf of the students, merit a word of special commendation.