

by which neither the bright pupil will be retarded nor the dull pupil discouraged. With a different system of inspection I am hopeful much will be done in this direction during the next few years. As regards the provision of post-primary courses of instruction, I have long held the opinion that our district high schools do not serve the purpose for which they were originally established. Their curricula have been dominated by the older type of academic secondary education, which has been of little benefit to the majority of the pupils. In all district high schools few pupils remain longer than two years, and, though most of these after leaving school enter either on clerical work, farm-work, or household duties, they are generally given the same type of secondary education as those receive who intend to enter one of the learned professions. In short, the present type of secondary education takes cognizance neither of the mental and physical calibre of the pupils nor of the type of service they will subsequently be best fitted to render the community. In one district an attempt has been made since 1915 to evolve a scheme of secondary instruction on more reasonable lines, but the difficulty of securing suitable teachers and of inducing the academically trained secondary teacher to provide a less narrow and specialized curriculum has greatly hindered the development of the scheme. With the extension of the school age to fifteen will come the necessity to provide a syllabus of secondary instruction that will meet the needs both of the pupil who aims and is fit to enter the professions, and also of the pupil who is better fitted for clerical work or domestic duties, or whose bent is more in the direction of the mechanical occupations.

The grading of primary-school teachers in accordance with their relative efficiency is one of the most important duties of the Inspector, and I have been struck during my experience on the Board of Appeal with the marked uniformity of appraisalment by the more experienced Inspectors. Any lack of uniformity that may now exist appears to be due not so much to divergence in judgment, as partly to the effects of too liberal marking in the smallest districts at the initiation of the scheme, and partly to the very natural tendency on the part of grading officers to be swayed by arguments put forward on an insecure basis with the object of proving that this or that district is undergraded. I am quite convinced it would be much fairer to teachers throughout the Dominion if agitation of this kind were abandoned, and it were left to the Education Department to effect, through the grading officers, such adjustments as are shown by well-authenticated statistical tables to be necessary to effect a reasonable degree of uniformity. Notwithstanding, however, the undoubted difficulties of grading, there is a strong body of opinion among both Inspectors and teachers that the grading system as a basis of promotion is infinitely preferable to the unsystematic and unsatisfactory methods of selection followed in the past.

During the year the salaries of teachers and of entrants to the profession were raised, and the effect was seen in the large number of young people desiring to enter the service. The raising of the allowances to students attending the training colleges has resulted in a greater desire on the part of pupil-teachers and probationers to enter upon a systematic course of training, and the time should therefore not be far distant when a large proportion of the uncertificated and inexperienced teachers in country schools will be supplanted by trained teachers. In the North Island the supply of such teachers has for many years failed to keep pace with the advance in settlement. In the two University districts in the South Island the proportion of trained certificated teachers is high, and the young teachers there apparently prefer to accept lower positions in the districts in which they were trained rather than seek promotion far from home. The training of the inexperienced teacher has been a matter of concern to both Boards and Department for many years. At the present time large sums of money are expended for the purpose, and it is doubtful whether any other part of the Empire does so much in this direction. In addition to the Inspectors, much of whose time is occupied in remedying the deficiencies of the unskilled teacher, twenty-five organizing teachers are employed in different parts of the Dominion to raise the efficiency of the weakest schools. In addition, free tuition for untrained teachers other than pupil-teachers and probationers is provided by means of Saturday classes, holiday schools of instruction, and correspondence courses. Model country schools under first-class teachers have been established to enable the unskilled teacher to receive short and intensive courses of training. Notwithstanding all this, however, there are many teachers, unfortunately, who give the country little return for the heavy expenditure, since they either adopt the profession merely as a stop-gap or, proving unsuitable, drift away to other occupations. The organizing teachers, whose duty it is to aid inexperienced teachers in remote country schools, have already by their sympathy and help done a great deal to lessen the number of deserters. The young teacher who previously despaired of success is now encouraged to remain and prove his worth. Every district, in fact, reports the great success that is attending the efforts of the organizing teachers to raise the efficiency of the schools under their control.

The services of the two lady supervisors of the instruction of girls and infants have been distributed as effectively as possible over both the North and the South Island districts. After their preliminary survey of the field these officers began more intensive work in the several education districts. In general they found it impossible to visit any but the larger schools, but they took every opportunity to address meetings of teachers, particularly on the newer methods of infant-class teaching. There appears to be considerable room for improvement in this direction in several districts; but, judging from the enthusiasm of the teachers, the outlook is distinctly hopeful.

The instruction and training of pupil-teachers and probationers is receiving close attention from the Inspectors, and as a result most districts have been able to report a distinct improvement in the work of these young people. Many of them, unfortunately, while showing considerable aptitude for teaching, appear to have little inclination for independent study. This is scarcely to be wondered at when it is remembered that they have in most cases been for years previously spoon-fed at school. Until the schools realize the importance of the principle which lies at the foundation of Madame