

## PUPIL-TEACHERS.

So much depends upon the early training of the young teacher that we would urge headmasters to give much greater attention to the matter. Regular lessons, both observational and practical, must be given, and the trainee directed how to prepare his lessons in the best ways. The responsibility for improvement in teaching skill—indeed, for the whole attitude of the young teacher to his work—lies upon the headmaster, and the best instruction is that given by him in his own school. It is essential also that the trainee shall get some experience in all divisions of the school during his apprenticeship. His course of special lessons should be arranged to this end. In some schools too much strain has been placed on the pupil-teacher, who has been made, to a large extent, responsible for a division or class. Organization of this kind cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Further, in the city schools we are of opinion that the efforts of the trainees have been concentrated too largely on their University course at a period when the ordinary duties of their apprenticeship make sufficiently heavy demands upon their bodily and mental powers. The purpose of the apprenticeship is to give some practical insight into the work of teaching, and to prepare as far as possible the trainees to deal with the subjects of the elementary school curriculum. It is recognized that the preliminary instruction of young teachers in such subjects as science and drawing is essential before they enter the training college, where the elementary training is amplified.

## CONDITION OF BUILDINGS.

The school-buildings are maintained in good order and condition, and the country schools particularly have a pleasant appearance. In the Marlborough district there are several old schools whose design, especially as regards the lighting, violates all the principles of school architecture. We are of opinion that something should be done to remedy this condition as soon as possible.

With a few notable exceptions the school-grounds are not generally made as attractive as they might be, and we would urge that greater efforts be made to beautify them. It is surely the duty of all teachers to cultivate the æsthetic side of their pupils, and no school, particularly in the country, where ground is available, should be without its flowers and shrubs.

## STAFF CHANGES.

Mr. T. F. Warren, who was located in the Marlborough area for three years, was transferred to Auckland in the middle of the year, and his place was taken by Mr. N. R. McKenzie, with headquarters in Wellington. By this change the Marlborough section has been brought into much closer touch with the main part of the district. Mr. J. Wyn Irwin was associated with the staff for a short time during the latter half of the year.

Under the Department's scheme for the exchange of Inspectorships, Mr. W. Brock, Senior Inspector of Canterbury, had temporary charge of this district for the second quarter of the year, when Mr. W. W. Bird, Senior Inspector of Hawke's Bay, was transferred to the permanent charge.

Mr. F. H. Bakewell, Senior Inspector, retired from the service in July with a record of forty years' work as teacher and Inspector. The high estimation in which he was held by all his co-workers was shown by the unanimous expressions of regret at his departure.

## NELSON.

## EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOLS.

We are pleased to state that the general efficiency of the schools continues to show steady improvement. There are now only some ten schools which cannot be regarded as satisfactory. The others range from very fair to very good. The influx of better teachers, mentioned in last year's report, is being fully maintained. This, combined with an awakening of the older ones to the demands of the newer education, is having a very satisfactory effect. The demand that has recently arisen for the books on modern education contained in the teachers' library is most gratifying evidence of the change which is steadily taking place.

Throughout the year we have continued to gather the teachers together in the various centres for the purpose of explaining and discussing the more modern methods of work, and the keenness with which they have availed themselves of the opportunities thus given, and the zeal with which they have put the ideas into practice, have been most encouraging to us. During the present year we hope, with the assistance of the newly-appointed part-time Inspector, to extend this valuable work; and, in conjunction with reading circles which are to be established, to arouse in our teachers a firm desire to be abreast of the times in all things educational. In connection with this matter we would suggest that the Department issue, for use in the upper classes of the primary schools, some approved group intelligence test, preferably one suited to New Zealand conditions.

## ORGANIZING TEACHERS.

The organizing teachers still continue to do excellent work in our backblocks schools. To the young trainee, whose previous experience has for the most part been limited to that of single classes in large schools, the assistance given by these officers is proving most valuable.