

gent teaching of the subject, and to convert the children into mere automata for reproducing the teacher's words and sentences. The same Inspector has of recent years, as I have already pointed out, issued a regulation permitting children who have *failed in one of the pass subjects prescribed by the Department* to be promoted to a higher standard. The consequence is that poor results in arithmetic have been obtained in the higher standards; the Inspector has frequently complained in his reports of the poor quality of the arithmetic in Standards V. and VI., but has failed to see that it is due to his own foolish innovation. I give these instances to show that, while a certain syllabus is prescribed by the Central Department, the Inspectors have so much licence to depart from it, that the quality of the teaching and the consequent efficiency of the pupils vary in the various educational districts.

If the Inspectors were brought under the control of the Central Department, and if the Inspector-General were relieved of the mass of routine work, which at present leaves him little leisure to plan reforms, much less to test the quality of the work done in the colony, I feel confident that the much needed educational reform would be successfully consummated.

If the Inspector-General is to be anything more than a name, he should generally direct the work of the Inspectors, and he can learn the nature of the work done in the different districts only by making personal visitations. He should allot Inspectors periodically to the different districts, and they should meet at least once a year to prepare an annual report, and discuss any changes that the advances in educational thought and method demand.

At present the examination of teachers for certificates is under the Central Department; but the appointment and examination of pupil teachers is left to the local Boards, with the result that different methods of appointment and different standards of efficiency prevail in the various districts. In Auckland an examination of candidates for employment has been held for many years, and such an examination has recently been

established in Wellington; those who pass successfully are permitted to teach on probation for a month or three months at the caprice of the Board, and if there are vacancies in the service, some few of these, who show the greatest promise, are apprenticed. The rest, after vainly waiting for employment, finally realise their disappointment, and seek other fields of employment. In Taranaki, Wanganni, North Canterbury and other districts, pupil teachers are appointed to schools, as vacancies occur, generally on the recommendation of the head master. This system works well: it is to the head master's own interest to recommend for employment only those who are likely to do him credit: no personal influence or parental friendship is likely to induce him to recommend a dolt for employment, and thereby impair the efficiency of his school. If this system were generally adopted, the best selections would be made, and the expense of local examinations saved.

But the pupil teacher system should be national and not provincial: pupil teacher regulations should be drafted by the Inspector-General, assisted by the Inspector: they, too, should prescribe the course of study to be pursued, and conduct the examination of pupil teachers in the various grades.

The scholarships, too, should be national: the papers should be set by the Central Department, and should be of such a nature that they will test the original rather than the receptive powers of the candidates; for when one considers the number of scholarship holders who fail to give a remunerative return for the expenditure incurred by the State on their behalf, one is forced to the conclusion that while the examination undoubtedly picks out some few of the brightest pupils attending our schools who are likely to profit by the higher education provided, and justify the State expenditure by their subsequent successful career, it also provides a nominal higher education for boys and girls who are mechanically crammed with a lot of knowledge they cannot assimilate, and who, after unsuccessful careers at public