

schools, drop into the ranks of clerks, shopmen and other callings that do not require even average talents. I have been told by teachers who have had experience of scholarship holders in Secondary Schools that many who come out high in the scholarship examination prove utter failures, and that only a small minority of them profit in the manner anticipated by the higher education afforded them.

Of all the scholarship regulations in the colony, perhaps those prescribed for the Queen's Scholarship, tenable at the Victoria University College, are the most ridiculous. They are framed with the object of providing secondary and University education for the successful competitors. Now all who have had any experience of scholarship holders, know that the large majority of those who gain scholarships from the primary schools prove utter failures at secondary schools, and though they may succeed in passing the Matriculation Examination—by no means a severe test—they have not the ability requisite for a successful University career. Thus the Victoria University will have to educate at the public expense many whose secondary school careers fail to justify such expenditure.

If our system is to be national, it is only right and just that there should be a colonial scale of salaries; that is, teachers throughout the colony should be paid according to their attainments, efficiency, and the responsibility attached to their work. At present the inequalities in the different districts are so great that a teacher with a B1 certificate in Auckland is receiving £190 per annum for doing work for which a teacher in Napier with a C2 certificate (three grades lower) receives £300 per annum. The salaries at present depend upon the nature of the districts: the Department grants a capitation of £3 15s. per annum for each unit of the average daily attendance of pupils. Out of this grant the Boards have to pay the teachers, maintain schools and supplement the grant for building and inspection. In a thinly peopled and scattered district like Taranaki, a number of small schools, with an average attendance of less than 20, have

to be maintained, and consequently, as the expense is increased in proportion to the number of small schools, the salaries paid in the district are extremely small. The same applies to Nelson, Marlborough, Westland, and to some extent to Auckland. The late Inspector-General, the Rev. W. J. Habens, B.A., drafted a colonial scheme of salaries, and while it is admitted to improve the position of the assistants in town schools, it is condemned as being unjust to many of the country teachers; it is, however, an acknowledgment of the present inequalities that exist, and will doubtless prove the basis of the much needed reform.

If the administration of our system is to be healthy and vigorous, it is essential that local interest in it should be maintained. And, while I maintain that several functions now administered by the local Boards should be transferred to the Central Department, I admit that many of their powers should still be retained. They should control the Training Colleges—but the Central Department should prescribe the course of study to be pursued, and conduct the examination of students; they should have the sole power of appointing teachers unfettered by the recommendations of committees; but there should be a proviso in the regulations to the effect that the Chief Inspector of each district should be consulted by the Board in the case of every appointment made. Too frequently under the present system are the claims of an efficient teacher overlooked, because the Committee insist upon the appointment of one who has brought personal influence to bear. Even in large country schools the influential committeemen are illiterate and ignorant, and quite incapable of judging the merits of a teacher. The following testimonial obtained from the Chairman of the Committee of a school with 100 average attendance will serve to emphasise their incapacity in this respect:

"The — district school Committee Certify that Mr A.B. passed through is four years pupilship with general satisfaction, and is recommended for admission to the normal School passing each