

Though the Technical Colleges are doing excellent work in their particular department, the courses neither aim at nor provide the liberal education and possibilities for all-round development to which the winning of a proficiency certificate should entitle the holder. The net result is that a girl's true interests are sacrificed to the demands of utility.

Passing from these defects in the ordinary curriculum, I come to two other defects which are of special gravity because of their injurious effects upon adolescent girlhood: the necessity for train travelling and the lack of school hostels. Here, again, we find the economic factor—or, as may be more truly said in this case, the factor of false economy. With regard to train travelling, I do not know whether a similar state of affairs exists in any other districts, but in Southland the length and the duration of some daily journeys are decidedly startling. Some girls leave their nearest railway station at 7.10 a.m., reaching Invercargill at 9.57, and, catching the afternoon train home at 4.10, arriving at their journey's end at 7 o'clock. The distance in this case is 45 miles, and the time spent in travelling is six hours a day, the rate being about 16 miles per hour. Often this journey is preceded by a walk of some distance to the station: a walk during the winter months often in darkness and biting cold, or in driving rain. Other girls engage in farm duties, such as milking cows before attending school, rising at 5.30. Some of these girls do surprisingly well, but it can only be at a great cost in the expenditure of nervous, physical, and mental energy. I know of some cases of nerve trouble and sleeplessness which have been the consequence of the constant strain of such journeys. One wonders whether Education—so-called—is not too dearly bought at such a price. Such travelling is mentally and physically exhausting: sitting so long in more or less uncomfortable seats, very often in necessarily cramped positions, can not but seriously counteract the benefit of Calisthenics and the other physical exercises practised at school, and in winter the possibility of chills, etc., is somewhat alarming. When I think of the conditions under which some of these country girls come to school I

cannot but regard them as heroines, if not martyrs, in the cause of Education, and we must see to it that they do not receive a stone when they ask for bread.

Side by side with this defect, and to some extent responsible for it is the lack of school hostels for country pupils. Why parents have endured the present state of affairs so long is to me inexplicable, save that perhaps by long acquiescence they have become dulled and deadened to all it connotes and signifies. That children of 12 years upwards should be left under the control (even were any control exercised) of some well-meaning but often unqualified and inefficient person, having little interest in the child save as the source of a small addition to the weekly income, is little less than criminal neglect of the requirements of the adolescent girl. There could be no greater blot, in my opinion, on our educational system than the omission to provide in the necessary districts proper accommodation for country pupils. The provision of an adequate hostel under the supervision and direction of those connected with the school, preferably the Principal, should be compulsory wherever a High or a Technical School has been established. Again I admit the economic factor—or again more truly the factor of false economy—for it is waste, appalling waste, of the most valuable material in the world—the younger generation. How can we expect these girls to grow into the women and the mothers we desire, when, at the age necessitating special care, supervision, guidance, and help, they are left during these critical years without discipline, without control, without the atmosphere of refinement and happy comradeship that will help them to realise what home life means. I have heard many protests against the establishment of church schools in New Zealand. Till the High Schools can offer the same accommodation to country girls, surround them with the same atmosphere of home life, and the same refining influences, afford the same possibilities of all-round development, and last, but not least, the same religious and moral instruction as the best church schools do elsewhere, and will do here, we have no right to protest. I have a wide experience of boarding schools, and consider that the influ-

ence of a school hostel conducted on the proper lines is not only a necessity, but an asset of inestimable value in the education of girls. The Government, having taken upon itself the responsibility of secondary education, is, I consider, in duty bound to provide such hostels if the endowments of a school are insufficient for the purpose, or should make the establishment of hostels compulsory for schools of adequate income. If all other means fail, I would even advise that the incomes from all endowments be pooled and distributed according to the necessities of every school. In this connection, too, I would say that special Government grants should not be made to schools in the present ill-proportioned and somewhat unfair manner: no school should be starved while others are blessed with plenty, if not excess. I state once again that a hostel is an absolute necessity in connection with every Girls' High School, and the failure to provide one is little less than criminal neglect and appalling waste.

In the first place, the dominating aim of any system for the education of girls should be and must be health—health of body and health of mind, and everything in connection with the school should conduce to health. The situation should be high, bracing, commanding a fair prospect: the grounds should be spacious and beautiful, affording ample scope not only for physical enjoyment and development in games and all kinds of exercise suitable to girls, but for restful pleasures also.

In addition to suitable games, among which tennis holds first place, physical culture should, of course, be included in a girl's training. Ideal physical culture should include dancing of the kind to give grace and poise, such as the Morris and other old English country dances, and therewith, as one authority suggests, should be given the history of the dance—so often in the past a mode of worship, and lying at the root of what is best in drama—so that dancing may be rightly regarded and becomingly practised. Every girl must be taught to hold herself straight, to walk well and stand properly: and physical culture alone will not achieve this if little or no attention is paid to her mode of sitting or standing in a class or her attitude when writing. With regard