

it by the force of circumstances. With the funds at our disposal it is hopeless to try and outbid other callings so as to enlist, on pecuniary grounds, the sympathies of the *élite* of our youth, and we cannot, I fear, look to the pupil-teacher system for the supply of male students. Our policy would seem to be—to hold out every inducement to the male pupil-teachers we have to enter the school, and even to bring pressure to bear, if necessary, to secure their thorough equipment for their work. Other Boards do so. The North Canterbury Board requires its pupil-teachers to pass through the training school, and the Auckland Board requires specific reasons of a very satisfactory character for declining to do so. Besides this, we should place every facility in the way of imperfectly qualified teachers obtaining some amount of training. The appointment of permanent relieving and organizing masters would be a great help in this. The Normal School terms, too, should be so arranged as to bring the advantages of the school more within the reach of teachers, and especially of those who might wish to devote part of their holidays to professional improvement.

This reopens the question of vacations, which I am sorry to say must be reconsidered if the school is to do all it might either for regular students or for outside teachers. This is our case. superior authority has fixed the last week in January as the date of the annual examination, and we must suppose—whatever our personal feeling in the matter may be—that a just consideration of the exigencies of the public service and of the general convenience has prompted the fixture. Surely, then, it is our wisdom to try and make our own working arrangements dovetail in with it, at any rate until we are able to get it altered. If the Inspector fixed on an awkward time for the examination of a particular school, and it was found impossible from any cause to change the date, would not the Board expect the Committee and the teachers to subordinate their personal considerations to the public interest, and to make the best working arrangements they could under the circumstances? Would the Board think the Committee showed a proper interest in the matter if they closed the school for the long vacation immediately before the Inspector's visit? The cases seem to me very similar ones, and I do think we ought to accept what is temporarily inevitable, and make the best arrangements we can accordingly. I know there are some who say a thorough rest from all study is the best preparation for examination. Theoretically much can be said in favour of this, but I greatly doubt if the advocates of the course would practice it if they had themselves to undergo an examination fraught with important consequences. In twenty years' experience I have never known the plan adopted. Work up to the examination date is the rule in all the Home training colleges, the work consisting of private study under constant direction and supervision. There is a good deal of individual work to be done at such times, and there are different classes of students to be considered. Some need active assistance, some direction, some restraint. In the interests of all, the holidays should be postponed till after the examination. The vacation before would do no real good—the anxiety of the time would effectually prevent this, and it would mean failure to many in the prospective examination. But after the ordeal the vacation will be as beneficial as it will be welcome alike to students and to their teachers.

Our students work on an average nine hours a day—not less. This is quite hard enough work between the ages of seventeen and twenty, and holidays should be given liberally if the sound body is to be secured for the sound mind to work in. As it is now the strain on all is too severe. I wish the Board would sanction the month of February, the last two weeks in June, the first two weeks in October, in addition to the absolutely necessary short breaks at Christmas and Easter, as the normal school vacations.

Concerning the French mastership: As M. Lecoy's leave has long since expired, it is desirable that the post he held should be declared vacant, and that a permanent teacher should be appointed. M. de Launay has filled the place temporarily, and has been very attentive to his duties. But as a matter of principle all such appointments should be made on their merits. *Ad interim* arrangements are always more or less unsatisfactory—the office-holders are not free agents, but bound by the traditions of their predecessors, and they have little incentive to enthusiastic work. I think, too, it is only fair to M. de Launay that his present suspense should be removed, and that, if thought deserving, he should receive formal permanent appointment; while in the interests of the school the Board should endeavour to secure the most capable teachers in its power. I regard French as a very important subject, viewed in its relation to the D certificate.

The science mastership still remains in abeyance, but I know it is through no fault of the Board. The difficulty seems to be in obtaining a suitable teacher. I would suggest, however, that the proposal for an itinerating science teacher would in my opinion prove unworkable. I would suggest that he should instead make the normal school his headquarters, and influence other schools through their teachers, who should attend his classes at the normal school and witness model lessons given by him there from time to time.

In conclusion I am glad to state that the professional students continue to exhibit the praiseworthy diligence and earnestness that has always characterized them. Some of them will be eligible for appointment almost immediately, and the Board may safely employ them. They will, when their studies have been perfected by experience, do us credit.

My coadjutors have given me every satisfaction. Mrs. Griffin's painstaking work and thorough co-operation deserve my hearty recognition, and Mr. Parker and Mr. R. Holmes have succeeded in arousing a decided interest in the subjects in which they are themselves such