

conscientious teacher, and leave him free to *teach*, in the highest sense of that word.

(2.) In deference to the feeling of the majority of the delegates present at the Education Conference, the individual standard pass, in a modified form, has been retained; the examination on which passes in standards are based and standard certificates are granted is to be held once a year—in general, for classes Standard I. to Standard V. by the head-teacher, and for Standard VI. by the Inspector. It may emphasize what has been said above to point out definitely that this annual examination is not an examination for the purpose of classification, but for that of assigning certificates; the classification will not depend solely upon the examination, although the knowledge gained thereby will be, of course, one of the chief elements to guide the teacher in classifying his pupils.

The head-teacher's examination has probably existed in most schools as a kind of preliminary practice for the Inspector's annual examination; the only difference will be that it will in some cases be now somewhat more precise in character than it was before.

The Inspector's annual examination will not in general be a detailed examination of all the pupils (except those of Standard VI., or of candidates for exemption certificates), but will be such as will suffice to enable him to take a broad view of the general efficiency of the instruction given in the school.

(3.) At the same time, to guard against the occasional danger of marked inefficiency in the teaching of a school or of a class, Regulation 6 gives the Inspector power to examine all the pupils, and to direct that his results shall be those on which standard certificates are to be granted. There is nothing to prevent an Inspector who so desires it from making the exception the rule, and examining all schools in detail accordingly; but such is by no means the intention of the regulation, and it is sincerely to be hoped that those who are not already converted by the example of Great Britain, referred to above, may yet come to see that the atmosphere of liberty is the only one in which true teaching can thrive, and may give the new system a fair trial. One of the greatest of its advantages will certainly be that Inspectors will be more free to devote their attention as experts to the wider issues of school work and organization, that they will have time to visit more frequently schools that need their help, and to assist teachers in the improvement of the methods of instruction and of the management of their schools. The work of the Inspector, in short, will be *qualitative* rather than *quantitative*; he will influence the character of the teaching instead of attempting to measure the amount of knowledge possessed by each individual child.

The remaining features of the new regulations may be summed up briefly: The standard of exemption, by the unanimous consent of all concerned, has been raised to the Fifth Standard; handwork, which under the Manual and Technical Elementary Instruction Act of 1895 might be introduced into any public school, may now be substituted for certain other subjects, and therefore may be introduced into a school without increasing the burden laid upon the children and their teachers.

Except in respect of this change and of the transference of some of the subjects from the pass-group to the class-group, no change has been made in the requirements of the syllabus, as it was considered that time should be allowed to gauge the effect of the degree of freedom afforded by the new regulations. Undoubtedly, however, especially in smaller schools, the number of compulsory subjects is such as to affect prejudicially the quality of the instruction, and relief might be with advantage granted to both teachers and taught. The syllabus of some of the subjects, moreover, requires revision in the light of recent experience and of current ideas.

It has been thought well to postpone consideration of the syllabus until after the conference of Inspectors which it is proposed to hold in Wellington about the end of January, 1901.