

ference of teachers and Inspectors. Alterations of a more or less technical character were recommended, and the necessity for lightening the work in small schools was emphasized. Even if all the recommendations are given effect to, in its great essentials and on its broad lines the syllabus will remain practically the same as when it left the printer's hands. The principles enunciated are not new. They are familiar to every teacher and pupil-teacher. That instruction must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract, from the easy to the difficult, and so on, is as well known to the teachers as are the laws of gravitation to the physicist. Even a cursory glance will convince the most casual reader that the syllabus is framed in accordance with these principles. The syllabus has been spoken of as a new syllabus, the implication being that teachers must abandon their former methods and adopt others entirely new. This fallacy should be easily detected. Methods do not follow a syllabus, but a syllabus follows methods; and as methods are more and more rationalised so will curricula be from time to time altered. In fact, methods are the advance-guard, and a syllabus is the rear-guard in the march of education. The changes going on at present are not in principles, but in the adaptation and application of principles to changing conditions. The vast growth of scientific knowledge, the increased knowledge of human physiology, and a consequent clearer apprehension of child-nature and child-need have rendered it necessary that old principles must be adapted to the new conditions, and it is only in this sense that methods can be called new. Physical phenomena, plant-life, animal-life, and generally the world around us are assuming, as a means of mental training, an importance formerly not attached to them. The hand and the eye, as means of developing brain-power, are more and more recognised. The child is led to handle and to observe, to think about his observations, to reason from them, to draw correct conclusions, and within his capacity to formulate easy inductions, and thus to arrive at correct notions of simple natural laws. In fact, the world becomes a living world, and is not something altogether apart from himself.

With regard to the matter of the syllabus two questions arise: Is it right in kind? Is it reasonable in quantity? The answer to the former must be that in kind it has certainly been altered for the better, and is more in keeping with present conditions than were its predecessors. The geography prescribed is such as can be taught rationally as a series of object lessons, and in a way that appeals to the child's mind. Grammar as an analytical study of language has disappeared, and is to be taught only in so far as it is an aid to composition. In the past too much time was devoted to the subtleties of classification, parsing, and so on, such as can be understood only after a good knowledge of the language has been acquired. This is now swept away to make room for a closer study and a more intelligent grasp of the principles governing the synthesis of sentences. In this subject methods have been strikingly ahead of the syllabus, and though composition is now prescribed for Standard II., our present preparatory pupils could pass the test with the greatest ease. The courses in arithmetic, spelling, and so on, have been modified to make them better in kind, so that a pupil may be trained and not strained. With regard to the quantity to be taught, there has been much misconception, owing to courses from which teachers were to select matter being taken as though all the matter had to be taught, and one or two obscurities of wording encouraged this idea. The schemes of work which were subjected to the most adverse criticism are arranged to suit schools from the North Cape to the Bluff, but great latitude is allowed the teacher in selecting what may best suit the geographical position of the school, the environment of the pupils, the size of the school, and the teacher's qualifications and bent. In drawing up his programme of work he will consider these points, and select matter with which he is familiar, and in which he is most interested. He will thus be better able to arouse the interest and stimulate the intelligence of his pupils. People outside of New Zealand can form an opinion of our education system only by perusing official publications; and, as we said to the teachers of the district, after the Wellington Conference—"We are convinced that, from the new regulations, the opinion formed will be much higher than from previous regulations." A very long and laudatory notice of our regulations has since appeared in one of the Sydney papers, and we are satisfied that wherever they are read they will create a good impression. But in reality to find out what our education system is we must go deeper. The workers know that the education system is not the syllabus, but the quiet, steady, and unostentatious school-work based upon the ideals of teachers and Inspectors—not what is taught, but what the children take away with them. Nor can success be gauged by the percentage of brilliant scholars turned out, but by the extent to which the intelligence of the mass of the pupils has been trained. If our pupils leave school equipped to take no ignoble part in life; if they admire that which is admirable, despise that which is despicable, and develop manly and womanly characteristics; if they acquire some taste or develop some tendency that will impel them to pursue some study, or, shall we say, hobby "for the love of the working," and thus prevent their seeking amusement and recreation in larrikinism; if, in a word, they enter school with one talent and leave it with two, five, or ten, our education system approaches an ideal.

An important matter submitted to the Conference of Inspectors was the establishment of training colleges. The Conference unanimously expressed the opinion that one strongly equipped central college would produce better results than would three or four separate colleges established in the larger centres. The importance of the training of teachers cannot be overestimated, and it is to be hoped that in a short time ex-pupil-teachers will be able to receive all the advantages to be derived from such institutions. In the past the training of our pupil-teachers has been by no means neglected. Courses of practical lessons have been drawn up, and the pupil-teachers have been collected in certain centres for criticism lessons, discussion of methods, and instruction in the principles and art of teaching. The scheme has worked very well, and produced good results. Indeed, great emphasis has been laid upon the need for training the pupil-teachers in the actual work of their profession, and literary success has been subordinated to skill in teaching. At the