

classes arranged in groups within the standard—say, three or four groups, and each group containing children of about equal capacity. This, of course, can only be worked in the larger schools where there is a liberal staff. Now, I wish to emphasize once again the danger of confusing manual training and technical education. The complaints we hear made against the primary school more often than not arise from the fact that the public expect us to turn out tradesmen, clerks, and such-like. I find it also in connection with the cookery classes. A mother finds that her daughter has been attending a cookery class for a year or two, and still the mother can make a cake better than her daughter, or wash a floor better, or something else about the home, and then she at once condemns the system of instruction; so in introducing these subjects in the syllabus care must be taken to make it perfectly clear that no technical education is to intrude itself into the primary school. The Institute passed a resolution last January asking the Department to supply lantern-slides to schools having lanterns. It was suggested that these slides could be issued instead of the pictures now being issued by the Department—that is, to save expense. We have no objection to receiving pictures, but if we cannot have both slides and pictures we find the lantern-slides more useful where a lantern is procurable. I wish to submit to the Commission a letter which was sent by the Headmasters' Association to the Education Board through the Institute, and approved by each of those bodies and forwarded to the Department. It is as follows: "Auckland Headmasters' Association, Kohimarama, 2nd December, 1911. Sir,—I am directed to submit for the consideration of your Board the following statement *re* the scale of staffs for schools. During the past year my association has specially considered the various points of difficulty as they have been experienced by its members in the schools of the Auckland Province. As any weakness in staffing must be detrimental to the welfare of some of the pupils concerned, your Board is directly interested in this important matter, and is therefore urged to use its influence with the Minister of Education to obtain the necessary amendments. Notwithstanding the improvements in staffing which have been introduced in recent years, it is still possible under the present regulations for some schools to be so understaffed that the pupils are debarred from a proper education, and teachers are subjected to overstrain. The Minister's declared intention of replacing pupil-teachers by assistants encourages us to hope that the present difficulties will be partly removed in this way. It is very desirable that this plan should be given effect to at the earliest opportunity. The present regulations press unduly heavily on growing schools. In our district, where very many schools are steadily increasing their numbers, much hardship follows from the delay in increasing the staffing, this delay sometimes extending for more than a year. The trouble would be largely removed by the amendment of Table B under the Regulations for Staffs and Salaries in such a way that columns 3 and 4 should be deleted, and the numbers now given in column 2 should be retained under the heading 'Average Attendance Rises for One Quarter.' We regard the penalty of the increased numbers (36 to 40, 80 to 85, &c.) as quite sufficient. If such increase be maintained for one quarter, and the Inspector certifies to the probability of the increase being permanent, then it is absolutely desirable that the staff should be increased without delay. In comparing the treatment of schools of various grades my association notes the comparatively satisfactory treatment of the larger schools (Grade 10A upwards). Where structural difficulties in the buildings of these schools do not prevent suitable classification the children here are comparatively well provided for. In connection with the architectural difficulty, which so often is a bar to suitable division of classes, we suggest for the future a more extended use of 'McCabe hangers' instead of fixed partitions. Except as noted above in the case of growing schools, the staffing of small schools up to Grade 5 is fairly satisfactory, and the Minister's promise to replace the pupil-teacher of Grade 5 by an assistant will lead to a decided strengthening of staffs. In schools of intermediate grades (6, 7, 8, and 9) the staffing is much less satisfactory. Where, as frequently occurs in our province, these happen to be growing schools, the difficulties of organization are very real, and children and teachers suffer in consequence. My association considers that the substitution of assistants for some of the pupil-teachers in these grades is urgent. In Grades 9A and 9B a strange anomaly occurs. While Grade 9A receives the same staff as 8c, 9B gains both an assistant and a pupil-teacher. A better adjustment here seems easily possible. A somewhat similar adjustment between 9c and 10A also seems desirable. It should be noted that when epidemics occur the staffing is somewhat seriously affected, and as the reduction of staff takes effect not during the epidemic, but subsequently, when the attendance is again normal, the staffing is then insufficient for the work. Although regulations have been gazetted to minimize this difficulty, they do not sufficiently meet the case of the growing school. The substitution of a quarter of the preceding year for the quarter affected by the epidemic, while satisfactory in the case of a school with an approximately stable roll-number, is unsatisfactory in the fast-growing school. We suggest that clauses (a) and (b) of the regulations be amended so that the quarter affected may be entirely omitted from the calculation of the yearly average—*i.e.*, the averages of the three quarters unaffected by epidemic should be totalled, and this sum divided by three. In recommending your Board to urge the Minister to take these matters into serious consideration, my association cannot emphasize too strongly the special difficulty under the present regulations in the case of all growing schools. As these constitute a very considerable number in our district, the Auckland District is specially interested in an amendment to this regulation. It seems to be quite a common thing for a school to be working in a grade above that for which it is staffed.—I have, &c., D. CHADWICK BROWN, Hon. Sec. The Secretaries, Education Board, Auckland." The following is a report on memorandum from the Headmasters' Association *re* staffing of public schools: "Several matters of the first importance are referred to in this report, the following being a brief summary of those most in need of attention: (1.) Additions to or withdrawals from staff—The delay in increasing the staff in certain cases militates greatly against efficient work, and it would be a step in the right direction to hasten both the additions to and the withdrawals from the staff on the recommendation of an Inspector. If, in the Inspector's opinion, the increase in attendance is such as permanently to bring a school into a higher grade, or the decrease in attendance such as permanently to lower the grade in which