

6. *Agriculture*.—Better provision for agricultural education is another problem that demands early solution and further consideration, and it can be regarded as postponed only until financial conditions enable it to be dealt with with some degree of effectiveness. With closer settlement, and the need of increased production, improved methods and specialized knowledge in many directions become necessary, and towards the desired result the preliminary training provided by schools and similar institutions must contribute their share. In any and every circumstance the basic nature-study of the primary school, together with the work of the school-garden under the supervision of special instructors, must be maintained and developed. At a later stage there is some danger of a false step, and the whole question is of sufficient importance to await mature deliberation.

7. *General Industrial Education*.—The needs of industrial education generally are being met more or less efficiently by the technical schools—to what extent the statistics given show in much detail. The organization under which the means are provided for the necessary expenditure under this head is not ideal, but it is the best that can under present circumstances be applied. This special form of education is necessarily from its very nature expensive; it might even be said that the better it is the more expensive it is; but the expense and the need of progressively greater expense must be faced. With the decay of apprenticeship and the expansion of factory production on a large scale the education of the worker in institutions specially adapted to his needs becomes more and more insistent, and for the captain of industry only the very highest and best technical education will suffice.

One of the most urgent needs in connection with post primary education concerns the position of boys and girls who leave the primary school and fail to continue their education elsewhere. Attendance at continuation or technical classes between the ages of fourteen and seventeen is still to a large extent merely voluntary, and the difficulties facing any generally compulsory provisions are considerable. The existing powers given under section 124 of the Act have been made use of to a very limited extent only. Regulations under these powers have been adopted for certain school districts by four of the Education Boards; the others have shown no inclination to take advantage of the provisions. In European countries the compulsory principle for adolescents has long been recognized, and there is now a very general consensus of opinion that more must be done to supplement our system in this way. If the necessary time off could be granted by the employers to enable a few hours of instruction weekly to be given in the daytime the problem would be much simplified.

8. *Expenditure on School Buildings*.—Capital expenditure on public-school buildings—that is, on buildings required to provide for new settlement, or increase of population, or new services, or expansion of existing services—has during the past ten years practically doubled, rising from about £65,000 to about £125,000 per annum. The bulk of this increase is, of course, due to natural progress, but no small part is the result of the great increase in the cost of building that has taken place in recent years. The demands for these buildings are for the most part such as must be met, and in spite of the large expenditure much remains to be done.

In view of the requirements in this direction it is to be regretted that, as the result of financial conditions that have arisen, restriction in public expenditure in various directions has become imperative, and only urgent demands can in the immediate future be considered. In some cases accommodation that would in ordinary circumstances be regarded as insufficient will have to serve the purpose for a further period. At the same time indications, it must be admitted, are not wanting that the State is not always getting the best value for this expenditure. Each of the local Boards whose business it is to attend to the erection of the buildings has its own ideas on the subject of school architecture, and some of these do not always conform to the best principles. It is probable that good would result from a systematic investigation of the subject.

For the maintenance of the school buildings vested in the Education Boards for public-school purposes, including in the term “maintenance” the replacement