

remodelled, and children of the next generation may benefit thereby, but to whatever extent the defects of the present or the previous system marred or stunted the life and development of the children brought under its influence, to that extent must some of the children for whom we are responsible suffer perhaps for the remainder of their lives. Children may be plastic, but they cannot, like potter's clay that is marred, be reshaped. They pass once only through our hands, and once only through the successive formative experiences of youth.

MORAL INSTRUCTION.

Of all the forms of influence possessed by our teachers there is none more worthy of praise than their moral influence on the children in our public schools, and of all the results of our system of education, of which we may be proud, there is none which should give us cause for higher gratification than does the moral tone of our schools as compared with that of the schools of any other system in the world. No finer tribute has been paid to New Zealand than the general admiration expressed abroad of the fine personal qualities and good behaviour on and off the field of our soldier lads. In this as in other respects the schools should have the support and assistance of the home and of other agencies concerned with the moral and spiritual welfare of our children. It is folly to act as if the whole responsibility for the moral training of children rested on the teacher who controls the child for twenty-five hours out of the one hundred and sixty-eight hours of each week. The school will continue to do its part, but it is hoped that the home and other agencies will realize and meet their responsibilities in the matter of the moral training of the children of the Dominion.

PATRIOTISM.

It has been a great source of satisfaction and pride to note during the present war the splendid spirit of earnest patriotism and of sacrifice practically demonstrated by the school-children and the teachers of this Dominion by what they have done in contributing to patriotic funds, in providing material and making things for our soldiers, and in the assistance they have rendered in other directions to the Empire. The patriotism and pride of race, the love of country and of Empire which they have displayed reflect a great credit not only on the children, but on the instruction given by their teachers. The war has had its effect on the school on the intellectual side. The study of history and geography has taken on a new significance for both teachers and children. Again, special attention has been given to the study of the origin of the war, the justice of the Allies' cause, and the issues at stake. Striking deeds of heroism and examples of self-sacrifice and devotion to duty in ancient and modern times have been recounted to stimulate the imagination and rouse in the minds of the children noble emotions and a sense of patriotic duty. At no time in the history of this country have lessons on the privileges and duties of citizenship, of Empire and State, received more attention at the hands of our teachers, who have shown an excellent spirit of service and leadership. Long before the war broke out the *School Journal*, which was supplied to all State schools and went into most homes, regularly contained articles bearing directly on patriotism, and in some issues patriotism and Imperial topics had been a special feature. The vast majority of New Zealand's men who left to fight on land and sea were educated in this Dominion. The unrivalled gallantry and fortitude that they have shown bears testimony both to the noble examples set by their teachers during many years and to the efficiency of their instruction in the virtues of courage, patriotism, and loyalty.

COURSES OF INSTRUCTION.

Most of the difficulty surrounding the question of curricula, syllabuses, or courses of instruction would be found to be much easier of solution if the human side of things were kept more clearly in view. It has just been emphasized that in the schools we are working on human material. Just as necessary is it to remember that in their turn the children in the schools should be kept closely in touch with human interests. All true education is the play of life upon life; of the activities