

displayed even by those who are selected by branches of the New Zealand Education Institute to place before the authorities their criticisms of the system. In a similar way there is much misguided criticism due to the selection by teachers of a few cases out of over four thousand, on which slender basis sweeping assertions are confidently made.

One exception above referred to was the lack of uniformity in the grading of one education district. In all of the other eight districts a reasonable degree of uniformity was secured without difficulty two years ago, and no valid criticism of uniformity has ever been made regarding those districts. The standard of grading in the district referred to was, in accordance with regulations, on the judgment of a conference of all senior Inspectors, brought into more reasonable conformity with that of the other eight districts, and though it is claimed that the standard of grading is still slightly higher in that district than elsewhere, the difference is so slight as to be fairly free from criticism.

It may now be asserted that the standard of grading throughout the Dominion is reasonably uniform. Further, the Inspectors in the various districts state that under the system now in operation, and made effective in the present graded list, the teachers are really placed in order of merit as far as their general efficiency as teachers is concerned. It should always be remembered that there must of necessity be distinct limitations to the operation of a Dominion scheme for the grading of teachers. When all the operative factors are considered, as well as the variety of conditions and the number of officers who have some share in the carrying-out of the system, it will be recognized that a degree of success considerably short of perfection must be regarded as satisfactory. The only alternative is the form of selection and appraisal of the efficiency of teachers which obtained before the introduction of the grading system. A careful analysis of the results of this method reveals a condition of affairs that can be described only as chaotic. Teachers with approximately the same salaries and holding similar positions are shown to differ in efficiency to such an extent that they are separated from each other by nearly two-thirds of the length of the graded list. Scores of teachers of very high efficiency are holding minor and comparatively poorly paid positions while many others, much less efficient, are holding far higher and better-paid positions. An earlier application of the present grading scheme would, in spite of the scheme's necessary limitations, have made it impossible for the present condition of things to arise where in a great number of cases comparative inefficiency triumphs over efficiency.

As it is useless to grade teachers except with the object of securing a basis for appointment and promotion, it is clear that, provided a classification is secured that places teachers as nearly as possible in order of merit, the sooner such a classification is made operative the sooner will there be some guarantee that merit in a teacher will meet its due reward. It is claimed that the present graded list provides such a classification. All theoretical criticism and generalizations on imperfect data may be ignored. The only effective criticism would be such as would show that the teachers are not placed in reasonable order of merit, or that better results could be secured by some alternative method. A test of this kind would be accepted by the Department with confidence. On the other hand, if the present system has succeeded in placing the teachers in order of merit, it may be asked whether anything further is required of it.

FINANCES OF EDUCATION BOARDS.

(See Tables F1-F3.)

The following figures show the receipts and payments of Education Boards for the year 1919 under the various headings :—

	Receipts. £	Payments. £
General fund expended on administration	47,863	38,003
Teachers' salaries and allowances (including relieving teachers) ..	1,278,842	1,281,942
School and class libraries—Capitation and subsidies	3,633	1,494
Conveyance and board of school-children	11,972	16,715
Incidental expenses of schools	83,301	83,360
Training of teachers	79,801	79,703
Manual instruction	51,884	63,095
Technical instruction	97,427	100,823
New public-school buildings and sites	91,053	106,296
Rebuilding, rent, and maintenance of school buildings ..	139,106	124,448
Subsidies and voluntary contributions, scholarships, refunds, &c.	17,386	33,678
Receipts from local sources	46,988	..
Totals	<u>£1,949,256</u>	<u>£1,929,557</u>