

is undoubtedly the safer course, and in the interests of general education it meets with our approval; but there are others, perhaps a select few, who are well acquainted with the principles of experimentation and mental science, whom we encourage to experiment. In the realm of education, however, so much is always dependent on the personal factor that we consider it necessary to safeguard the interests of the pupils by exercising discrimination as to the teacher to whom the work of experiment can safely be entrusted. In all cases we recommend the adoption of a new method when we find that the methods employed have become so stereotyped and are so mechanical in their operation as to cease providing both teachers and child with that educational stimulus and desirable variety that would accrue from less hackneyed methods.”—(*Otago*.)

The above quotations are reassuring, and may be taken as indicating that the Inspectors, within reasonable limits, encourage original methods and do not discourage teachers from leaving the beaten track. One of the results of employing only efficient teachers as Inspectors is the tendency of the latter to prescribe methods of school organization, government, and teaching. It is the duty of the Inspector to take a broader view of his functions than this. If the teacher is not succeeding, the wise Inspector, remembering that the method must fit the man, will suggest to the teacher ways in which his method may be modified so that the special difficulties he is meeting with may be overcome. The teacher must be left free to adopt or to discard whatever appears to him good or bad in the suggestions offered him. It is only to the incompetent and to the inexperienced teacher that rules should be given. Every encouragement should be given to the teacher to form his own conclusions and to formulate his own method, and the Inspector in estimating the teacher's worth would do well to bear in mind that a tool that remains sharp and effective in one man's hand may become blunt and useless in the hands of another. And what is true of the relation of Inspector to teacher is just as true of the relation of headmaster to assistant. There can be nothing more calculated to stifle the enthusiasm of a young teacher than to be forced by his headmaster to adopt methods he either does not understand or knows have long ago been discredited and abandoned. Not the least value in requiring every teacher to draw up his own programme of work lies in the fact that he cannot do this effectively without reviewing his methods of teaching. It is quite true, as some teachers frequently remind us, that a teacher may draw up excellent schemes of work and be a very bad teacher; but it is true in a much wider sense that many a teacher develops in power and originality in consequence of the amount of thought he has given to the preparation of his work. There are, however, still to be heard in various parts of the Dominion teachers who designate the drawing-up of schemes of work and of daily or weekly plans a clerical incubus. If such teachers would give but one half-hour daily to the thoughtful preparation of their work and to the writing-out of their plans, how greatly the schools would benefit, for it is during those quiet periods of preparation following or accompanying careful reading that originality in method emerges. From this point of view, therefore, I regard the preparation by the headmaster or the Inspector of detailed schemes of work for every teacher in the school a source of weakness rather than of strength. Such a practice is calculated to stifle originality on the part of the assistant teachers, and to render it unnecessary for them to undertake the course of reading without which the production of effective schemes of work is impossible. The headmaster should supply the outline providing for co-ordination between class and class, but should leave the detailed schemes to his assistants. It is, of course, his duty to give guidance and assistance, and every assistant's programme of work should give evidence of the headmaster's knowledge and interest.

Referring to the schemes of work the Auckland staff says:—

“We would again point out, however, how desirable—indeed, how necessary—it is that the aims of a series of lessons in the different subjects of instruction should be clearly indicated. In too many schools the schemes are by no means satisfactory. More often than not they are exceedingly scrappy, give no indication as to the amount of work which is to be covered, and no idea as to the methods or aims of the lessons, and in general are of little use to the teacher and of less value to the Inspector. It would be well if the teachers of such schools would seriously consider the importance of a good scheme of work, and would take full advantage of the helpful assistance given by the *Education Gazette* in the matter of suggestions in this direction.”

The Canterbury Inspectors say:—

“There are still too many cases of indifferent planning and feeble preparation. Incompleteness is the ground for most complaint, for occasionally not only are aim and method wanting, but some subjects are omitted altogether. Further, it should not be necessary to direct the attention of the teachers to the omission of portions of the full course in history or geography. It is expected that no important geographical region will be omitted, and that in the last two years the history scheme will show connected treatment of the whole of the modern period. In larger schools the responsibility for drawing up a general scheme naturally rests with the head teacher. The details, however, might well be worked out by the assistant, who should be encouraged to co-operate and assist in the natural unfolding of the various branches of instruction. Schemes make not only for economy of time and smooth working, but also should prove of great assistance to the teacher in the discharge of his various and arduous duties.”

Attention has frequently been drawn during recent years to the importance of enlisting the co-operation of the pupils in their own education. It is evident from the reports of Inspectors that in some districts little has been done in this direction. It is to be feared, indeed, that few teachers have studied the very interesting books written by Madame Montessori, Professor Armstrong, and others. In the Wanganui district the Board, at the instance of the Inspectors, published a pamphlet dealing with Miss Parkhurst's Dalton Laboratory plan of education. The experiments of both