

In New Zealand the cost is approximately 2s. 9d. per head of population; in Victoria it is 1s. 10d.; in Tasmania, 1s. 7d.; and in New South Wales, 1s. 2d. It is doubtful whether any State gives more assistance to University work than is given in New Zealand at the present time. No less than 40 per cent. of the male students and 50 per cent. of the women students have their University fees paid by the State. Free University education by means of scholarships and bursaries is therefore on a very liberal basis.

In a country that depends as much as New Zealand does on its primary industries it is but to be expected that the State will favour the establishment of University schools or colleges dealing with agricultural science. A school of this character has for many years been in existence in the South Island, and a similar one is about to be provided to meet North Island needs. These colleges will not only be the means of producing a staff of experts who will be of the utmost service to people engaged in the primary industries, but will carry out research work that should do a great deal to increase the prosperity of the country.

The primary-education system in New Zealand is sensitive to the movements in England and America to shorten the primary and extend the secondary school courses. The proposed reorganization which has for its object the establishment of what is known as the "junior-high-school system" has been received with a certain amount of caution, if not reserve, mainly because of the uncertainty of its effects upon both primary and secondary schools, and the lack of sufficiently definite information regarding the cost. The Department has, however, not been indifferent to the trend of public opinion abroad, and has established eight experimental schools to "try out" the new system, and the results will be watched with interest. Further, a committee of experts and others interested in education has been set up to report on the proposal to alter the primary-school syllabus of instruction in such a way as to provide a primary course suitable for pupils up to about the age of twelve years, and a post-primary course of two or three years in an intermediate school, followed by a further period in a senior high school. Such an alteration in the syllabus of instruction would be comparatively easy to arrange in city school systems, but may prove difficult to carry out effectively in scattered country districts. The general opinion throughout the Dominion is that it would be unwise to abandon the present undoubtedly efficient primary-school system before being assured of the suitability and worth of its rival.

Another noteworthy feature in connection with both primary and post-primary education in this country is the gradual abandonment of the traditional method of measuring school efficiency by means of external examinations. More and more attention is being given to education in its wider aspects. Both teachers and Inspectors are coming to realize that it is not of so much importance to the child that he shall carry away from school a mass of information on all kinds of subjects as that his character shall be developed in the fullest possible manner. It has at the same time become clear to all associated with education that the adoption of a definite aim of this kind does not imply an indifference to learning or a lowering of the standard of academic attainment. A further important development in the schools is in the increased attention that is being given to the needs of the individual child. There is evidence of greater sympathy between teachers and pupils, and nowadays it is rare to find a child who does not love his school. A further evidence of the interest in the welfare of the individual is to be found in the establishment of special classes for the education of children of somewhat low mental equipment. Such children can make little or no progress under ordinary methods of instruction, and it is quite evident that it is of the highest social importance that such children should not be allowed to grow up to be a burden to themselves and a menace to the welfare of the community. At the present time some twenty classes have been established in different parts of the Dominion to provide special courses suited to the capacity of such pupils.

The Child Welfare Act of 1925 enabled the Department to extend its activities in caring for neglected or delinquent children, and hence to increase the value of its social work. Children's Courts have been established in all the main centres, and are working admirably. The substitution of the boarding-out system for the institution system of dealing with the wards of the State has been in operation for