

PROGRESS

With which is Incorporated
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WITH THE . . .
SEASON'S GREETINGS
TO OUR READERS IN NEW
ZEALAND AND OVER SEAS.

Training of the People.

It is the leading, if unwritten, axiom of all the nations engaged in the industrial war of this era of unregulated production, that nations without education degenerate into unorganised bands of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Now, the hewers and the drawers are the serfs of the world. In nothing do they prevail. Manufacturing supremacy, and its logical follower, trade advantage, are to them whose brains, eyes, and hands are trained, whose minds are filled with the most useful of things knowable. At the same time it is evident that there must be the healthy body as well as the healthy mind, otherwise in the day of enterprise there will be no effort, and in the hour of defence neither courage nor endurance. The nation that holds its own must have not only a full head and a skilled hand, but also, and indispensably, a strong constitution.

Education that aims at that trinity of development is supplied in this country in full measure. The primary school, the secondary school, and the university college form the education pyramid, with a cohesion and a homogeneity which may leave some room for improvement, but are essentially improving. In addition, there is a system of technical instruction which was but yesterday in its infancy, and to-day is vigorously at work on a wide scale, and is clamorously

demanding increase all along the line. Its practical benefits are many: it offers a great help to the existing apprentice system, and it bids fair to advance the status of the expert in every department of skill from day to day in a surprising manner. It is now, in fact, an integral and increasing part of the State system of education. The State, recognising the value of its system, has made primary education compulsory and requires education tests for entrance of young people into the Civil Service of the country and, of course, the learned professions; and the private employer often co-operates by insisting on a Fourth Standard certificate before the admission of a candidate to ship or counting-house.

The great question, of course, under these circumstances is whether young New Zealand appreciates these advantages of provision and compulsion. Many people believe that the young horse, when brought after all this trouble to the wholesome water of learning and practical advancement, refuses to drink, preferring the poisonous flow of gambling and the stagnant pool of over-athleticism. They prophesy a race of "flannelled fools and muddled oafs." It is comfortable to know that these prophets of evil are wrong in the extreme. Young New Zealand does, it is true, indulge in sports of all kinds; but there are two things to be noted about this indulgence. In the first place he is an accurate observer and organiser beyond comparison, a student of perfection in every detail of his sport. Secondly, he subordinates it in nearly every instance to the more serious work of life before him. The great thing to know for those who are anxious watchers over his welfare is the way in which young New Zealand co-operates with the State in the things provided by the State for his advantage and the advantage of the race. The gauge is to be seen in the matriculation lists of the University and in the examination lists of the Education Department which has the supervising of all the examination outside of the university series. These latter comprise the Civil Service examinations, the various scholarship examinations, and the examinations that count for the admission to the free places which constitute so large a proportion of the secondary education of the colonial youth. To take the latter first, the numbers of applications for all the examinations this year reach the handsome figure of 2243. It would be interesting to have a series of the numbers of annual applications before one for the purpose of comparison and the ascertainment of the rate of progress. But there are so many new things in the education

world in the way of technical examinations, examinations for free places and the rest, less than two years old, that the compilation of such a series would at the present be quite useless. It is a great thing, however, that the numbers have reached so soon up to 2243. The figures for the matriculation examinations are more clear so far as they relate to a number of years. The table for the last five years is as under:—

| | Examined | Increase |
|------|----------|----------|
| 1902 | 732 | |
| 1903 | 870 | 132 |
| 1904 | 830* | |
| 1905 | 940 | 110 |
| 1906 | 1180 | 240 |

The satisfactory and suggestive feature of these figures is that the last increase (1906) is vastly greater than any of the previous increases. It is of 240 against the previous largest increase of 132. Moreover, the increases of the previous years evidently were not at all regular, the series in fact being remarkable for a break. The details are not too full, but there is the certainty that the application of young New Zealand for the privilege of matriculation at the hand of the University is increasing at a greatly augmenting rate of progress. Therefore it is safe to regard the combination of all the examinations of the present year as most satisfactory. With 1180 matriculation students and 2343 going up for all the other examinations which distinguish this part of the year from the rest, we have a total of 3423 young people co-operating with all their might in the educational advantages offered them by the State. All of these may not be bent on immediate profit. But the fact cannot be gainsaid that in the education department of the national life the activity is such as to convince the most sceptical that the efforts of the State to find good education for all are not likely to be wasted for want of the co-operation of the intended beneficiaries. The conclusion is fortified by a glance at the achievements of students of the past. The name of Rutherford, the great scientist of Canada, of Reeves, the High Commissioner of New Zealand, who obtained the whole of his education in his native country—of whom it was said that he paid for his own education by the number of scholarships that he won—and of Robertson, the latest of the Rhodes Scholars from this country, are a sort of guarantee that New Zealand will not throw away her opportunities. Who doubts let him cast his eye

* An apparent reduction only: the difference being due to technical rearrangement.