

THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE
OF THE
CANTERBURY INSPECTORATE, 1877-1916.

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Pamela J. Wood

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ABSTRACT

School inspectors were key figures in the development of education in New Zealand. This thesis is a study of the North and South Canterbury inspectorate from the establishment of a national system of primary education in 1877 to the transfer of the inspectorate from Board to Department control in 1916. It focusses on the inspectors' professional role rather than attempting a group biography.

This thesis argues that the four decades of the inspectorate's history fell into three distinct periods, characterised by turmoil in the first, stability in the second and rapid change in the third. The kinds of men considered suitable for holding inspectorships changed in each period.

Inspectors were uniquely placed to influence educational policy and their two annual visits to each school, for inspection and examination, enabled them to see it implemented in the classroom. Despite the intention that Board inspectors would carry out the wishes of the central Department, a legislative anomaly allowed them to interpret Departmental regulations as they saw fit.

Foucault's ideas of disciplinary power through hierarchical observation and normalising judgement provide a framework for locating inspectors within the education system. In their role as annual examiners

they were unwilling agents of disciplinary power, resisting the Department's measurement of educational success solely through examination statistics. Yet their annual unannounced visit to each school, their close inspection of the teacher's records and of the school's tone, discipline and cleanliness, brought both children and teachers firmly within an extensive and permanent field of surveillance.

This thesis examines these two aspects of the inspectors' role in detail. It describes their ideas of reasonable efficiency in teaching and the preparation and continuing education of teachers. It explores their role in creating a safe and healthy educational environment for training intelligent and loyal citizens. And it analyses their success in guiding the educational development of their districts.

CHAPTER 1

THE ELITE CORPS: THE SCHOOL INSPECTORS

In 1915 all inspectors throughout New Zealand came under the centralised control of the Education Department. In commenting on the effects of this move, Webb states that for at least the previous twenty years:

... the inspectorate had constituted the most important body of education officials in the country. Mere weight of knowledge, both of teaching and of the minutiae of administration, placed them in a position of commanding influence.¹

Webb is correct. Inspectors were indeed the most important education officials in the country. They were uniquely placed within the system not only to influence national policy but to see it put into practice. The vital link between the central Department and the school, they were expected to carry out the wishes of the Department and did so, when it suited. A legislative anomaly made them accountable not to the Department but to the Boards. Confident that this would shield them from Habens' glare, they interpreted the regulations in the way which they believed would best achieve the true goals of a free, secular and compulsory education.

Inspectors had exercised their "commanding influence" for even longer than the twenty years Webb suggests. For decades they shaped and directed

education in their Board districts. Whether in a country classroom or in public debate, they knew precisely when to step forward with pertinent comment, when to berate, and when to support from the quiet corner.

As a national group they were seldom a unified body. Their annual reports show that they held diverse views on educational matters, yet in this diversity was their strength. They offered the critical gaze essential for a country eager to build an effective education system. With centralisation, this freedom to point out unwise and unworkable policies was largely lost.

Webb is also correct in saying that many were men of great ability and influence, and that after centralisation they constituted the Department's "corps d'elite", from whose ranks almost all of the higher officials of the following twenty years were chosen.² It is significant that several officials in the Department, both before and after centralisation, had been inspectors in Canterbury. George Hogben, Inspector-General from 1899, and William Anderson, his successor in 1915, were both North Canterbury Inspectors. Alexander Bell, Departmental Secretary from 1918 and Assistant Director from 1927, had been both Secretary and Inspector for the South Canterbury Education Board. In addition, J. Caughley and T.B. Strong, who both held the position of Director of

Education, were Canterbury teachers. And the Reverend William Habens, the man charged with putting Bowen's national education system into practice, had also been instrumental in shaping Canterbury's provincial system of education. It would seem that something in the educational water of Canterbury nourished future leaders.

Given that inspectors were the key figures in the development of education in New Zealand, a closer investigation of their role is clearly warranted. And in what better context than Canterbury? For the four decades that the two Boards existed, the inspectors pushed and pulled the districts into reasonable educational shape. Some worked more effectively than others. Some were admired by their employing Boards, by school committees and teachers; others lost the respect necessary for success in coaxing the best work from the schools of the districts.

While no one board can be said to be typical of that time, North and South Canterbury provide an example of a large and a small board. Educationally they achieved well but not brilliantly. Theirs was an ordinary success. The work of the Canterbury inspectorates overall, however, serves to illustrate the nature of the inspector's role in those decades. It is not intended here to compare in any intensive way their actions and views with those of all other New Zealand inspectors. Rather, this thesis is a study of one group

of inspectors from the establishment of a national system of primary education in 1877 to the transfer of the inspectorate from Board to Department control in 1916. It focusses on their professional role rather than attempting a group biography. This chapter provides an introduction to and overview of the role of the inspectorate: particular aspects of that role are explored in detail in succeeding chapters and the final chapter provides a summary analysis and assessment of the place of the inspectorate in educational development during this period.

THE INSPECTORS

Historians of New Zealand education have already provided full accounts or occasional glimpses of the work of some inspectors. Robert Lee, Inspector for Wellington, was the subject of an early work by Bade,³ and Arnold draws on his description of the Wellington Board as it grappled with "educational backwardness and advancing settlement".⁴ In his final report for the Board, Lee recalled travelling everywhere on horseback when he first took up the inspectorship in 1874. The bad roads, unbridged rivers, and bush or scrub tracks of his journeys symbolised, Arnold says, the almost primitive state of education in the district at that time. Lee's clear, confident vision of how it could be, spurred the advance of Wellington's education system as

it spread its new schools through the recently settled district. When the time came to write that final report in 1901, Lee was able to point out the remarkable contrast between the past and present educational states. Although retiring from the inspectorship because of conflict with several Board members, Lee's support from the people of the area won him his own place on the Board the following year, with a chairmanship to follow.⁵

The work of another North Island inspector is recounted by Matthews in her case study of Henry Hill, Inspector for Hawkes Bay between 1878 and 1914.⁶ Like Lee, Hill spent weary hours on horseback, taking advantage of the summer months to visit the outlying schools of his large district and saving the city and inner district schools for the short winter days. Matthews notes that for a man with a young family, the long trips away must have been emotionally and physically draining, yet the brief periods back at the Board offices were just as filled, this time with the administrative tasks of the inspectorate and his duties as Board Secretary. Like Lee, he too could point to the advances since he took over the inspection of Hawkes Bay education, which in 1878 he considered to be of only a "preliminary character". And again like Lee, he held public office after retirement, becoming Mayor of Napier until 1918.

A third North Island inspector's work is

described by Bray in his account of the approach taken by W.H. Vereker-Bindon in inspecting and examining the Wanganui schools in the 1880s.⁷ Comments in the annual reports of all these inspectors demonstrate their similar concerns for the educational welfare of the children in their districts. They advised their Boards on the need for new schools, inspected the fabric of existing school buildings, considered thoughtfully the teaching that occurred within them, and examined the children each year to determine how effective that teaching had been.

While North Island inspectors feature prominently in these and similar works, their South Island counterparts are somewhat shyer. True, the career of George Hogben is well documented in articles and in Roth's biography,⁸ and true, some inspectors themselves wrote brief snippets of their experiences as they reflected on the years that had passed since the establishment of a national education system.⁹ And while all inspectors may be glimpsed in the more general education histories, the work of South Island inspectors has never been fully reported by historians.

An account of the work of the Canterbury inspectors is therefore appropriate. Unlike the descriptions of Lee and Hill, however, no cache of logs or diaries exists to draw on for a rich picture. Reliance is therefore placed on official documents, luckily abundant enough to provide a sufficient source

for the examination of the inspectors' role.

Inspectors' annual reports to their Boards were sent on to the Department, to be published in the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives [AJHR]. Before releasing them the Boards would study the reports with great care and equal amounts of hope and anxiety, eagerly searching for comments they could point to in their own reports which would demonstrate the educational progress of their districts. And progress was the watchword. Advances in pass rate percentages and attendance figures were leapt upon as evidence of their success as Boards and managers of the Departmental grants. Any falling-off in attendance rates, or slips in percentages, were faced with disappointment but a square-chinned determination to show that they were on the track with appropriate remedies.

In these reports then, inspectors wielded considerable power. Their summing up of the past year was the definitive word on the district's achievement. Although Boards might at times request inspectors to change their comments here and there, the reports generally went forward unaltered. Nor did they suffer the "mutilation" by the Department which Mason describes for HMI¹⁰ in Britain. There the inspectors were curbed by Kay-Shuttleworth's requirement for conciseness. It was no wonder that he had set some boundaries, as in 1846 one HMI had submitted 100 pages as well as an

immense statistical appendix. In 1851 they were also sharply reminded that their reports should not be considered convenient media for circulating schemes of general education. It was data, not speculation and inference, which were wanted. A maximum of twenty pages was set.¹¹

Unlike their British counterparts, New Zealand inspectors did not usually run to more than a few pages in their reports but did, on the other hand, reflect on the state of education in general and teaching methods in particular. These comments they regarded as far more important than mere percentages. And it is their reports which highlight, or hide, the true nature of schooling in their districts. Not all inspectors were scrupulously honest in their summing up, especially if it reflected on their efficiency. The North Canterbury reports in the mid-1880s demonstrate William Edge's attempts at covering up the poor state of education in the district, and his efforts to diminish the severity of the situation, once found out.¹²

Any teacher who had proven ability in teaching and school management, and who had achieved a decent academic qualification, could aspire to becoming an inspector. So long as he was a man. Dr Russell, member of the North Canterbury Board, did try to open the inspectorate's doors for women but had them firmly shut again by his fellow Board members. Women had already demonstrated their aptitude for similar roles, in

inspecting factories and hospitals, but somehow the inspection of schools required a man's perspective. In Britain too, as Gordon has pointed out, there was a growth of women inspectors in various government departments in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. At least there, Miss R.A. Munday and Miss S.J. Willis managed to gain appointments in the Education Department in 1896, albeit as sub-inspectors. A third, Katharine Bathurst, joined the following year and spun the Department on its heels with her outspoken observations and her crusading zeal.¹³

Meanwhile, in New Zealand, men could apply. Good, well qualified teachers with administrative skills were required for the positions. This was a further contrast with Britain. In her study of country teachers in Victorian England, Horn claims that it was on the grounds not just of academic but of social inferiority, that elementary teachers were excluded from entering the inspectorate until the last decade of the nineteenth century, although they were permitted to carry out the less prestigious, routine chores of inspectors' assistants. The Newcastle Commission had decreed that it was absolutely necessary for inspectors to be "fitted, by previous training and social position", for associating with school managers and clergy on an equal social footing. As schoolmasters were not treated in this manner by their managers and clergy, it stood to reason that they were precluded from becoming

inspectors.¹⁴

The eighteen men who filled the inspectorships of the two Canterbury Boards faced no such social barrier. All were well educated men and experienced teachers. Not surprisingly, most were born in England, Scotland or Ireland and many were educated there. Their views of education, naturally, were shaped by their British background and by the general tendency of all colonial administrators to glance continually over their shoulders to check on changing policies and ideas in their home countries. But it would be a mistake to assume that these inspectors drew entirely on overseas trends. They were keen to adapt arrangements to colonial circumstances and to base the children's learning on what the country needed in its future citizens.

THE INSPECTED

Through nearly four decades these men inspected and examined a growing number of schools with steadily increasing rolls. In 1880 North Canterbury had 122 schools with 16,437 pupils, visited twice yearly by two inspectors. Pupil numbers peaked at 21,368 in 1895, then slid to 19,282 in 1907 before beginning a steady climb back to 23,089 in 1915. This movement was not matched by the number of schools, which continued to grow throughout the period, reaching 226 in 1915.

South Canterbury had 29 schools and 3,506 pupils in 1880, and one inspector. Its roll peaked at 5,322 in 1896, still with one inspector but the occasional help of an assistant to complete the examinations. It was when the roll was in decline that the Board appointed its second inspector. A low of 4,995 was reached in 1903, but the roll had climbed to 6255 by the end of the period. As with North Canterbury, its number of schools continued to increase, reaching 86 in 1915. By the time the two Boards had been dismantled, the combined Canterbury districts had 32,939 pupils attending 381 schools, where they were taught by a staff of 952.

Through these decades inspectors were also responsible for directing the work of the gradually increasing number of teachers and pupil teachers. In 1880 there were 391 staff in North Canterbury. Numbers peaked at 567 in 1893, dropping to 493 in 1900 but rising again to 632 in 1915. South Canterbury followed a similar pattern, beginning with 78 staff in 1880, rising to 154 in 1895, and falling off to 139 in 1900. A slow increase brought the figure to 187 in 1915.¹⁵

The slide in the number of pupils and staff did not, therefore, produce a corresponding drop in the number of inspectors, although the recovery in the first decade of the 1900s did coincide with an increase in the northern inspectorate. What determined the number of inspectors was the financial status of the Boards. Economic restraints in the 1880s forced retrenchment, at

least in North Canterbury. Hogben left his position in 1889 when it became clear that key Board members favoured a reduction in the number of inspectors. There were only eighteen more schools and 520 more pupils when the Board again appointed a third inspector in 1893.

THE INSPECTORATE

Changes in the inspectorate mark three distinct periods in these years. The first period began under the control of the incumbent Provincial inspectors, John Restell and Henry Hammond, and ended in turmoil under Edge and the Reverend James Cumming in the mid-1880s when the state of education in North Canterbury warranted an official Inquiry. The leadership provided by the inspectors in both Boards throughout this decade must be questioned. Restell spluttered and fumed at the insubordination of teachers and left in a huff. The Reverend James Cumming, and probably William Edge, had a problem with drink and both Hammond and Edge were fired.

This period of turmoil struggled into one of stability. It began when two new inspectors, Lawrence Wood and Dr William Anderson, sorted out the educational problems in North Canterbury. With the inspectorate team at times increased to three, first with Hogben and later with Thomas Ritchie, they led the district in its educational efforts for twenty years. South Canterbury enjoyed a similar period of stability under the steady

guidance of James Gow.

The final period was one of considerable and often rapid change, especially in North Canterbury. From 1904, seven men took up appointments as inspectors in a span of eight years. In fact, four of them joined in just two years. South Canterbury fared better. Although it too had a change in its second inspectorship, Gow's strong and stable leadership carried the district through until the period ended with centralisation.

Strong leadership was essential for the educational success of the districts. As with Restell in North Canterbury, the Wanganui Board struck problems with its earliest inspector, Richard Foulis. Arnold rightly claims that when a child's progress through school and a teacher's reputation and career are dependent on one man's judgement, that judgement should command wide acceptance and respect. Foulis failed to win adequate confidence from either teachers or school committees.¹⁶ Restell failed to maintain it.

The respect of teachers was essential yet an editorial in the Press in 1896 asserted that a schoolmaster "looks on a school inspector as a natural enemy".¹⁷ And for some, this may have been right. He was the one who strode into the school once a year to examine the books, and once a year to examine the children. School centennial histories frequently refer to the examination ordeal and to these children at

least, the inspector was a fearsome foe. Habens exhorted the inspectors from his Departmental pulpit to remember that pupils:

... should be made to feel and understand that the Inspector is not a severe and frowning critic bent on probing their ignorance and finding opportunity to put them to shame, but that he comes as a courteous and gentle friend, who will use his best skill to put them at their ease, and will invite them to give him proof of their diligence and let him see what progress they are making ...¹⁸

Children remained largely unconvinced.

Nor, perhaps, were teachers entirely reconciled to the inspector's presence. Although the North Canterbury inspectors remarked that in many schools their visits were "hailed with acceptance" by teachers wanting to discuss teaching methods, aspects of organisation, or examination requirements, others frequently found it "convenient either to revise lessons previously given or to keep their classes employed at silent work". They reminded teachers that:

... an aspirant for promotion could not easily find a means more effective than this in barring claims to advancement, as it ought to be obvious that marks for skill in teaching cannot well be assigned on the strength of such performances.¹⁹

That teachers could jeopardise a chance for promotion in this way, indicates the nerve-wracking nature of the annual visits for some. Inspectors must have lessened this to a certain degree. Gow cannot have been entirely out of touch with reality when he said that he would:

... enter into friendly talk with them about their methods and their work, and any criticism or

suggestion of mine had generally been well received. ... and I am sure that the sympathy which is engendered as we get to know each other better in this way is not an unimportant factor in promoting²⁰ the educational welfare of the district.

Besides, they even sought him out in his Timaru office. It was clear that Gow relished the chances for chats on these occasions. Better insight could be gained on visits of inspection compared with the pressured examination days. When dozens of anxious children waited to be tested, an inspector's:

... ingenuity and strength are taxed to the full to bring within a reasonable school-day the work of examining the scholars in all the subjects of our extensive syllabus.²¹

Unfortunately, many teachers took the annual examination as the focus for their work. All else was subordinated to it and in the "race for percentages", the true purpose of schooling was forgotten. When John Gammell resigned as Inspector for Southland, he told the Education Committee of 1887 that:

The teacher naturally works for the examination, the children throughout the year are thinking of, and dreading, the examination; both parties are working under pressure, both parties are thinking of something else than the diffusion or acquisition of knowledge. The love of learning for its own sake is not awakened among the scholars; what is learnt is not mentally digested, but simply exists as lumps of facts in the mental stomach of²² the scholar, unappropriated by the system ...

The Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Educational Institute [NZEI] was still grumbling about the same issue four years later.

There is no doubt that an immense amount of time is spent in compelling children to learn

minute matters, which they need never learn at all but for the dreadful examinations. There are thousands of questions which an inspector may ask, and some of which they all ask, which no child ought to be expected to answer correctly.

What was needed, they said, was a more uniform interpretation of the Standards which would be best achieved through the Department issuing "very full instructions to Inspectors".²³

Their questioning of the usefulness of knowledge echoed earlier comments by citizens interested in education. A letter to the Press in 1889 considered that "severe stress" was placed upon pupils "by the multiplicity of subjects which they are required to study". Further, these subjects failed to be of any service when the former pupil sought a position in the world.

Our children would find it healthier at any rate to spend their time on the sea beaches picking up shells.

Nor could the writer understand the rationale for extra activities undertaken in the schools. Sourly, he added:

To judge in a general way from the school entertainments and distributions of prizes going forward at this season, the pupils of the schools are being trained for the stage.²⁴

What was taught in the public schools of the country was determined by the central Department, but was subject in later years to the professional opinion of teachers and inspectors. The first national curriculum, introduced with the Education Act 1877, was one which Ewing describes as likely to satisfy "a rising

rising colony wanting to put its pioneering days behind it". Whereas the English Revised Code of 1862 had been characterised by the state's grudging provision of a rudimentary education for its poorer classes, no-one could say the same about the new national curriculum for New Zealand. It was designed, Ewing says, to produce an educated community.²⁵ Children would be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar and composition, history and geography. In addition to these "pass" subjects, "class" subjects of elementary science, object lessons, recitation and singing would also be studied. As well, boys would have military drill and girls needlework and domestic economy.

Achievement in each subject could be judged against the prescribed standards. This was not a new idea as several provinces had already formulated their own schooling systems according to "Standards". Dennis has shown that it was the standard regulations of Canterbury which were of particular significance in the genesis of New Zealand's national system, because Habens was directly involved in the construction of both sets. But unlike Ewing, Dennis claims that Canterbury's regulations were not more demanding than those of the English Code, and Habens kept to this policy in the national system. Nevertheless, despite the large amount of thought, effort and good intention which went into compiling the regulations, Dennis points out that they were a source of considerable disagreement between all

parties. They were too ambitious and too inflexible, and limited by the underlying acceptance of faculty psychology and an over-emphasis on educational efficiency and measurable results.²⁶

Measurable results came from the examination process. But New Zealand did not follow the example of Britain's 1862 Revised Code, by instituting a "payment by results" scheme. Fletcher contends that Western Australia saw the system as a desirable pattern to follow, probably because one of its aims, (that of guaranteeing basic standards in the teaching of fundamental skills by low calibre teachers), was a significant objective in a region where there were only two trained teachers at the time.²⁷ Over all, at a time when it was considered proper, or inevitable, for teachers to be paid less than the least skilled labourer, Fletcher argues, the scheme proved a sensible incentive for teachers of limited capacity.²⁸ Although the Canterbury Boards fared better with the calibre of their teachers, at least one inspector favoured a payment by results system. Anderson told the Education Committee of 1887 that he believed a portion of the teacher's income should be made "dependent on the general class efficiency reaching a fair estimate". He knew that this suggestion would not be a popular one with teachers, but it would "provide a very convenient self-adjusting balance of labour and recompense".²⁹

Examinations served another purpose as well.

Shuker observes that while it has been well argued that particular forms of knowledge are legitimated through their inclusion in the curriculum, it is not simply inclusion which is significant. The relative status of various subjects is linked to whether they form part of the examination programme.³⁰ From time to time inspectors had to remind teachers that attention to "class" subjects should not be thwarted by an over anxious concentration on "pass" subjects.

Not only are inclusion and status important, but the way in which the subjects were taught in the classroom is of equal concern. As Gordon suggests:

There is an implied danger in assessing a seemingly enlightened curriculum without careful scrutiny of the actual practical content of lessons.³¹

He cites the example of domestic economy, a subject in the English school syllabus. One HMI called for the deletion of this so-called scientific subject for girls, saying that they learnt recipes by heart and would not know the materials if they saw them.

Inspectors in New Zealand also noticed a gradual veering away from the original intentions of curriculum subjects. Object lessons were a case in point. Based on Pestalozzi's approach to education, they were initially designed to encourage children to learn through their sense impressions of an actual object. The teacher's role was to elicit information from pupils, according to what they observed of the object before them. As Ewing describes, approved techniques

for object lessons were evolved and teachers were supplied with handbooks containing model lessons. As time went on, these object lessons became debased into lessons from books, without objects.³²

Object lessons were an attempt to make teaching systematic. This was, after all, the "season of the instructor"³³ and the successful instructor drew on two educational approaches. Herbart, a German philosopher, entered the New Zealand classroom through his "five step method". In lesson planning and delivery, teachers could follow his five steps of preparation, presentation, association, generalisation and application, which were designed to stimulate interest and help pupils relate new ideas to existing knowledge. But children had to wait to have new ideas presented to them. As with any theory, its practitioners diverted it away from its original intent, eventually becoming entrenched in a rigid interpretation of the method. As Selleck has pointed out, "Herbart would have been a hesitant Herbartian".³⁴ Nevertheless, his ideas wielded a strong influence in the classroom and directed education towards the ultimate Herbartian goal of character-building.

This approach had largely replaced the "faculty psychology" view, which stated that all aspects of children's intelligence (memory, reasoning, judgement, and so on) were developed and trained through particular subjects and the way in which they were taught.

Faculties, like muscles, had to be continually exercised or they would, in time, become unusable. Moreover, minds developed and trained in this way could accomplish tasks never attempted in the school.³⁵ This approach was slow to fade, however, and made occasional appearances in inspectors' reports. A final attack by Hanan in 1916 was supposed to end its influence. In a memorandum on "Educational Progress", he declared:

The claim for such formal, abstract, unapplied study - that it provided good mental discipline and culture transferable to other activities - is now fighting in the last ditch all over the world. Such production of chaff for a grain of wheat has as much justification as would the pounding of the earth with one's fist for several hours a day to develop muscle, when that purpose, and a much greater one, could be secured by getting a blacksmith's hammer and doing something. Surely if the proper methods of teaching are used and powers of thought developed, an even greater mental discipline and culture can be secured by studying real things in a practical manner.³⁶

Meanwhile, approved teaching methods were detailed in manuals and handbooks. Gladman's School Method, widely used in Australia and New Zealand, focussed on the control and instruction of the class as a whole, rather than on the progress of individual pupils.³⁷ Successful teaching depended on effective discipline, and teachers insisted on neat, controlled and silent work, as well as on neat, controlled and silent movement. Through a series of drills, which McGeorge³⁸ has called "the pedagogical equivalent of 'square-bashing'", children practised the prescribed movements for filing in and out of class, or for putting

slates away, forms under desks, or hats on pegs.

Inspectors accepted little leeway in classroom discipline but allowed a good deal of flexibility when it came to teaching method. The North Canterbury inspectors reassured teachers that the inspectorate's suggestions on teaching methods were not "authoritative directions" and if teachers produced good results in their own way, inspectors would appreciate their efforts.³⁹ In South Canterbury Gow complimented the teachers whose view of education was:

... not cabined and confined by the bare requirements of the syllabus and the exigencies of examinations; they recognise these as necessary - the former to show what they are to teach, and the latter to test, however imperfectly, how much is taught; but they regard the question of how to teach as equal in importance to the question of what, or how much, is taught.⁴⁰

Attention to "what to teach", nevertheless continued to be debated. The major change came in 1904, under the direction of Hogben. Well regarded by teachers, and welcomed by inspectors who saw in him someone who had first-hand knowledge of the inspector's role, Hogben was a popular choice as Habens' successor as Inspector-General in 1899. Of all the problems Hogben faced on his appointment, Ewing says that a revision of the curriculum was the most pressing.⁴¹

Unlike Habens who feared the combined power of the inspectors and fended off most requests for national conferences, Hogben consulted fully. On the one occasion when the inspectors had managed to sidestep

Habens' reluctance to allow a conference, they had pressed for the abolition of examinations in Standards I and II, with a transfer of assessment to the teachers. Now, in conjunction with the Board members and teachers who met at Wanganui's invitation in 1899, they voted for a completion of this transfer. Anderson, representing North Canterbury, argued strongly against the proposal and just managed, on the following day, to restrict the teacher's discretion to a certain extent.⁴² Other matters then came under their attention and Hogben eventually left with sufficient recommendations to guide his revision of the regulations. When the new regulations emerged at the end of 1899 they gave head teachers the right to examine pupils up to Standard V and to classify individual students into different classes for different subjects, on the basis of their ability. But they retained the inspectors' over all right to examine any number of pupils and reclassify them.⁴³ It was still their task to examine Standard VI and now award them Certificates of Proficiency.

As Ewing notes, because inspectors retained extensive power, the gains made by teachers were largely illusory. The effectiveness of the regulations now depended on the attitudes and actions of inspectors.⁴⁴ Wood, Anderson and Ritchie in North Canterbury cautioned that a system borrowed from Home would not necessarily transplant to a country where the power of the purse was not as stringent. Whatever their duties ultimately

became, "inspection pure and simple" could never prove sufficient. On the other hand, assessing the proficiency of every pupil was an undertaking which belonged properly to head teachers. But inspectors still had their part to play.

The Inspector, especially when he takes the form of an examiner, we all know is a nuisance, and we can hardly suppose that any place will be found for him in the general scheme of things in the happy millennial days, but in the meantime he is necessary ...⁴⁵

He was necessary, too, for Hogben. In 1901 and 1904 he called them together in national conferences and gained their support for his new curriculum. There were still criticisms. Many teachers attacked it for being too ambitious and inspectors either praised or criticised its flexibility. In North Canterbury, Wood, Anderson and Ritchie summed up their judgement by saying that the new syllabus made greater demands on teachers than ever and rendered better training imperative. Their main criticism focussed on the requirements for elementary science, especially the inadequate preparation of teachers and the paucity of equipment. But over all, they liked it.

The keynote, they said, was realism. This would demand a complete change in attitude from teachers and pupils.

All learning must be from the things themselves, not about things. The teaching must as far as possible engage the self-activities of the pupil and bear directly on his surroundings. ...

But, they added, "the educator like other workmen must

have his tools" and:

... sets of weights and measures, pictures and diagrams, physical maps and models, museum specimens with cases to contain them, balances and magnetic compasses are among those to be included in the list.

Not only that, but the size, shape, lighting and seating accommodation of schoolrooms would require consideration. Existing arrangements would not be satisfactory for carrying out the new activities.⁴⁶

Gow and Bell allowed a little time before making their judgement. South Canterbury teachers, they said in 1906, were grappling with the new syllabus, "some upborne by eager enthusiasm and confidence, others weighed down by sad doubts and misgivings".⁴⁷

In 1909 Inspectors Thomas Ritchie, Thomas Foster, Edward Mulgan and William Brock took the long view of the curriculum changes, comparing the latest form with that of 1878. The old syllabus was, "of its kind, an excellent one" but "bookish in its tendencies".

... however deep our gratitude for much that was accomplished in the earlier stages of our national system, we are constrained to note with warm admiration the high courage, the enlightened aims, and the genuine sympathy which of late years have inspired the educational policy of the Dominion, and which justify our belief that "forty years onward" the record of such services as have recently been rendered will fill some of the brightest pages of its story.⁴⁸

"A CONTROLLING POWER"

When Bowen introduced his national system of education, he intended the Inspector-General to have a

centralised inspectorate to implement the new syllabus. Provincial interests in the House of Representatives thought otherwise. Control of the inspectors was retained by the education boards and thirteen separate inspectorates interpreted the syllabus and regulations as they saw fit. As Ewing relates, Habens:

... was like a general about to begin a campaign with officers whom he did not command, who knew more about battle tactics than he did,⁴⁹ and who might easily take over the leadership.

Habens complained that as the inspectors were not responsible to the Department they were "at liberty to ignore any expression of its wishes that has no legal force".⁵⁰ And ignore them they did. They disregarded any regulations which, in their opinion, did not allow the fulfilment of true educational aims. Habens became more entrenched. With a kind of siege mentality, he refused the inspectors their wish for conferences, telling the Minister that although such conferences would no doubt do some good, he:

... should certainly not like a council of inspectors who are not officers of the government to rise into⁵¹ a power controlling the instruction of the country.

Inspectors were uniquely placed to do just that. They were the ones who observed at first hand the teaching in the classroom and reported to their boards whether or not it was effective. It was their reports which the Department relied on to gauge the efficiency of the education system. Without inspectors, the Department was blind.

But inspectors did not have unlimited powers. They too were constrained and it was the boards which held them in check. For the North Canterbury inspectorate it was Alfred Saunders who eagerly took up the role of curbing their power. The Inquiry of 1886 gave him the platform he needed, and from then on he watched over their shoulders, always ready to suggest a further curtailment of their freedom.

Yet the schoolroom was the inspector's educational territory and there he was free to interpret the Department's regulations and shape the education of the district. But it would be a mistake to assume that inspectors exercised an unthinking power, or were always unwilling agents of the Department's wishes. They firmly believed in the right of children to a sound education in the Board's schools, and the obligation of parents to send them there. They scrupulously inspected teachers' timetables, schemes of work, and registers, all the paraphernalia of a bureaucratic system. They reported, as directed, on the condition of school buildings and the state of the grounds. Where they did use their discretion was in the assessment of children's learning. In their role as examiner their focus was the educational welfare of the child; as inspector, it was the bureaucratic needs of the Department.

The most useful framework for demonstrating these two distinct roles comes from the work of Foucault. It is possible to translate his ideas to the New Zealand

setting, and to use this description to mark the place of inspectors within the country's education system.⁵² Foucault proposes that the school was one institution where disciplinary techniques of power emerged. Discipline begins, he says, with the spatial distribution and arrangement of bodies in purpose-built accommodation and then extends to their taxonomic classification. Next, time is divided into distinct periods, each with its prescribed activity. How each activity is to be done is detailed exhaustively, and a linear progression of activities develops.

This is certainly true of the nineteenth century New Zealand school. Throughout the country education boards built standardised school buildings, each with its regulated allowance of space per child. Within the school, a prescribed desk arrangement was rigidly imposed. In small schools this allowed the teacher to make visual sense of the taxonomic classification of children into their respective Standards. School timetables dictated the subject of study for each hour of the school day and instructions to teachers on how they should be taught provided the vehicle by which activities could be exhaustively prescribed. The teacher's "schemes of work", which planned the progression in the level of difficulty in any subject, according to the Standard attempting it, point to the linear and evolutionary sense of time which Foucault mentions.

In this context, Foucault adds, disciplinary power operates through two techniques, "hierarchical observation" and "normalising judgement". In the first, the children, as objects of discipline, are brought into a permanent and continuous field of surveillance, where the gaze is all that is needed to maintain order. All those feeling its weight, internalise it to the point of watching themselves, and each other. Architectural alterations may even be necessary to enlarge the field of vision. In New Zealand the English system of galleries was adopted, which organised pupils into rows of desks on graduated steps, so that each small head was more easily visible to the teacher.

The second technique of "normalising judgement" occurs when behavioural boundaries or norms are set and individuals are expected to remain within them. This encompassed the teacher's behaviour through prescribed methods of teaching, the children's behaviour through set standards of learning, and even knowledge itself, with a uniform, national curriculum.

The examination, Foucault says, captures both techniques. Power and knowledge intersect in the examination, creating a "normalising surveillance". This in turn allows both classification and punishment. Dossiers can be compiled on each individual, data can be collated and further norms constructed.

Although Foucault does not focus on the role of the school inspector, it is evident from the New Zealand

historical data that inspectors occupied a dual place in Foucault's disciplinary scheme. It was they who brought an inspecting gaze into the classroom, encompassing both pupils and teacher in a continuous field of surveillance. In assiduously checking timetables, schemes of work, and registers, they acted as willing agents of the Department's disciplinary power. They carried this out into the playground where organisation and good order extended both to children's play and to the environment itself. Grounds, trees, fences, gardens, all had to demonstrate the teacher's effective control. Even children's leisure time outside of school was included in the disciplinary power, through the organised activity of homework.

It was as examiners, however, that their willingness to act as disciplinary agents waned. Although their involvement in the examination contributed to its function of "normalising judgement", they fought the growing reliance on statistical data for establishing norms and measuring efficiency. And it was in this role that they subverted the disciplinary power of the Department by interpreting regulations in the way best suited to true educational development.

This waywardness did not go unnoticed. The answer, Habens kept repeating, was to centralise the inspectorate. That some inspectors also favoured this move, suggests either that they were not the ones exercising independent power at the local level, or that

they saw no impediment to their autonomy through the imposed centralised control. Hogben was always a strong advocate of a Departmental inspectorate. When the 1887 Education Committee asked inspectors for their opinion on centralisation, Hogben replied that logically they ought to be officers of the Department. If they were, then they could serve as a check upon the demands of local bodies.⁵³ Wood was also supportive. Having just one series of examination papers would be labour-saving, and having a graded inspectorate with assistant inspectors would be cost-saving.⁵⁴ He, too, wanted the boards abolished and was joined in this sentiment by Anderson who extended it to school committees as well.⁵⁵ It would seem that Hogben, Wood and Anderson saw the centralising of the inspectorate more as a way of curbing the power which local bodies were exercising over them, than as a change which would force them to relinquish the power they had.

Teachers, too, lobbied for centralisation of the inspectorate, through their NZEI branches, seeing it as a means for achieving a unified interpretation of the syllabus and a national system for the grading and appointment of teachers. It had been the provincial interests of Members of the House, many of them members of education boards as well, which had blocked centralisation. Finally, with the 1914 Education Act inspectors became officers of the Department and the power of the boards was curtailed. A year later the

boards were reorganised and the two Canterbury districts merged.

Centralisation, however, did not mean an end to inspectors' power or persuasion. To return to Webb:

We have said that the act ... transferred the inspectorate to the control of the Education Department; taking the longer view, it would be true to say that the act transferred the Education Department to the control of the inspectorate. For henceforth the inspectors constituted the department's corps d'elite, from the ranks of which, during the next twenty years, almost all the higher officials were chosen.⁵⁶

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. Webb, The Control of Education in New Zealand, p. 97.
2. ibid.
3. Bade, The foundation of school inspection in the Wellington province - a study of the work of Robert Lee.
4. Arnold, The Wellington Education Board, 1878 - 1901: Grappling with educational backwardness and advancing settlement.
5. ibid, p. 43 and p. 53; see also Arnold, North Island education, 1878 - 1882: 'Filling the gaps'.
6. Matthews, Henry Hill - frontier inspector; Matthews, The long and winding road.
7. Bray, Inspecting in schoolrooms of the 1880s.
8. See for example McGeorge, Habens and Hogben; Roth, George Hogben: A Biography; Watts, George Hogben.
9. Davey, Fifty Years of National Education in New Zealand; see also Valentine, More from the journal of James A. Valentine, and Further reminiscences of James A. Valentine.
10. Within the time span of this thesis, HMI was the abbreviation for Her, later His, Majesty's Inspectors.
11. Mason, Inspectors' reports and the Select Committee of 1864.
12. See Edge's reports in AJHR 1885 and 1886.
13. Gordon, Katharine Bathurst: A controversial woman inspector.
14. Horn, The recruitment, role and status of the Victorian country teacher, p. 138
15. Figures from reports in AJHR.
16. Arnold, North Island education, 1878 - 1882: 'Filling the gaps', pp. 175-6.
17. Press, 13 April 1896, p. 4
18. New Zealand Gazette, 1891, p. 1121.

19. AJHR, 1895, E-1B pp. 32-3.
20. AJHR, 1892, E-1B p. 39.
21. AJHR, 1898, E-1B p. 42.
22. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 36.
23. Press, 21 May 1891, p. 6.
24. Press, 17 December 1889, p. 3.
25. Ewing, The Development of the New Zealand Primary School Curriculum 1877-1970, p. 1.
26. Dennis, Curriculum copying: New light on the development of 'Standards' in New Zealand during the 1870s, p. 4.
27. Fletcher, Payment for results in Western Australia: Spur to improvement or pernicious system?, p. 25
28. ibid, p. 35.
29. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 33.
30. Shuker, The One Best System, pp. 151-2.
31. Gordon, Commitments and developments in the elementary school curriculum 1870 - 1907, p. 45.
32. Ewing, pp. 81-2.
33. This term was coined by Ewing and heads a section in The Development of the New Zealand Primary School Curriculum 1877-1970.
34. Selleck, The New Education, p. 227.
35. ibid, p. 47.
36. AJHR, 1916, E-1A p. 2.
37. Ewing, p. 48.
38. McGeorge, Schools and socialisation in New Zealand 1890-1914, p. 184.
39. AJHR, 1887, E-1B p. 43.
40. AJHR, 1900, E-1B p. 35.
41. Ewing, p. 93.

42. ibid, p. 95.
43. NZG, 1899, p.2299.
44. Ewing, pp. 96-7.
45. AJHR, 1900, E-1B p. 33.
46. AJHR, 1904, E-1B pp. 35-6.
47. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 52.
48. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 126.
49. Ewing, p. 4.
50. AJHR, 1885, E-1C p. 27.
51. ibid.
52. This description of Foucault's work, Discipline and Punish, is drawn from Ball, Foucault and Education; Cousins and Hussain, Michel Foucault; Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault, and O'Farrell, Foucault.
53. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 27.
54. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 30.
55. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 32.
56. Webb, p. 97.

CHAPTER 2

COMINGS AND GOINGS: CHANGES IN THE INSPECTORATE,
1877 - 1916

For nearly forty years the Education Boards of North and South Canterbury relied on their school inspectors to oversee and develop the educational work of their districts. Eighteen men filled these positions in a permanent capacity. They were generally well educated, skilled teachers and administrators, who advised their Boards on educational matters and monitored and guided the teaching taking place in the Board schools.

These four decades of school inspection fall into three distinct periods, characterised by turmoil in the first, stability in the second, and rapid change in the third. In addition, other changes can be traced through these decades. The kinds of men selected to be inspectors changed, although the manner of choosing them remained generally the same. Not surprisingly, men appointed in the two initial periods were born, educated and trained in England, Scotland and Ireland. Only in the third period were New Zealand born and New Zealand trained men available for selection. Academic qualifications trailed off in the third period but the men taking up inspectorships were regarded as exceptional in their teaching and administrative

abilities. The number in the inspectorate also altered, diminishing in response to economic constraints and rising in response to workload. And the relationship between the inspectors and their employers differed both between Boards and within each of the periods. Each Board had reason to be disgruntled with its inspectorate in the first period. Even in the stable second period relations in North Canterbury were at times tense, due both to the economic uncertainties of this period and to the suspicion remaining from the educational turmoil of the first. This chapter traces the changes which occurred in the inspectorate in each of these three periods and portrays the kinds of men considered worthy of becoming the Boards' inspectors.

PERIOD OF TURMOIL

When North Canterbury became a new Board under the Education Act 1877, John Pain Restell was the incumbent school inspector. He had taken up his inspectorship in 1859, a few months after arriving in New Zealand with his wife and family, so already had around eighteen years' experience as inspector when the new Board was created. He received a "mixed press" during his time as inspector. His highly critical report of the teaching at Christ's College, in 1861, had earned him what MacDonald describes as a "terrible towelling" in the Lyttelton Times. Restell also made

the mistake of using faulty Latin in his report which laid him open to attack by Christ College supporters, an attack which had, as MacDonald says, "all the snobbery of a classical education".¹ A considerable correspondence ensued but Restell survived. It is surprising that he survived so long. His actual ability to teach is questionable as later reports describe him as "an ordinary schoolmaster of anything but large qualifications in that capacity".² Nevertheless, his tenacity in holding the position through 33 years is some evidence of his standing as an inspector.

The other inspector in Provincial times, from 1873, was Henry William Hammond. He was headmaster at a school in Lincolnshire, England, when he was specially chosen by an agent there to work for the expanding Canterbury education service. When he arrived in New Zealand, however, the new schools were not ready and he was made an inspector to assist Restell. In June 1878, two months after the new Boards were created, Hammond resigned to take up the South Canterbury inspectorship. This was a sensible move as it meant that both new Boards now had men experienced in the inspector's role, who were familiar with all schools in the Board districts.

Hammond's North Canterbury position was now taken by William Lawrence Edge, an Irishman, who had arrived in New Zealand in 1870. Unlike Restell and Hammond, Edge had taught in New Zealand, both at the Timaru Main

School and as headmaster at Lyttelton. Edge was also well educated, having graduated with an M.A. from Trinity College, Dublin. Restell had only a B.A.

Together, Restell and Edge carried the school inspection system into its first four years under the new North Canterbury Education Board. Edge continued on beyond Restell's resignation for a further four and a half years, joined in this time by Restell's successive replacements, John Curnow and the Reverend James Cumming. In the smaller Board area to the south, Hammond worked as sole inspector for six years, with part of this time in the additional role of Secretary to the Board.

Each inspector's term of office ended in turmoil. Inspectors' deteriorating relations with Boards and teaching staff, ill health, drunkenness and financial difficulties all contributed to the tension evident throughout the period. By the mid-1880s the professional inadequacies of the inspectors could no longer be ignored. In North Canterbury at least, the slide in educational standards forced a major Inquiry, bringing to a head the turmoil of this period.

In the year prior to Restell's resignation, his relations with teaching staff deteriorated. In February 1881 he wrote to the Board complaining of statements which Edward Morgan, headmaster of Papanui School, had made about him to the School Committee. The Board investigated. From its formal enquiry the Board

considered Morgan had behaved very improperly, had entirely failed to substantiate his statements, and should apologise. In March, the Papanui School Committee wrote saying Morgan could not apologise and that further enquiry was necessary. The Board responded by telling the School Committee to give Morgan three months' notice. Morgan apologised. The Board further asserted its authority with the admonition that great improvement in work would be expected at the next examination.³

But Restell would not let the matter drop. He wrote twice more to the Board on the matter. He even included a passage about it in his annual report but the Board called his attention to the section of the Act under which a Board might dismiss a teacher, and asked whether he was prepared to prove immoral conduct or gross misbehaviour, within the meaning of the Act, on Morgan's part. The content of Restell's reply is unknown but the Board resolved not to proceed. Initially supportive of Restell, the Board was now probably irked by the way he continued to aggravate the situation. Either with a view to smoothing relations, or mistrusting Restell's ability to remain objective in assessment, the Board told Edge to take over Papanui School in his workload from now on, and to inspect it forthwith.⁴

Perhaps the stress of the situation took its toll, as at the March meeting Restell applied for, and

was granted, three months' leave from 1 May. The reason for the leave was not specified, but the Board, possibly still irritated by Restell, was not prepared to accommodate him further and "declined to recommend the Education Department to make him an allowance for the purposes suggested".⁵

In October the same year, shortly after Restell's return from leave, he again wrote to the Board, this time complaining of insulting behaviour by George Everiss, master at Amberley School. In assessing the complaint, the Board also considered its solicitor's advice, finally deciding to pass Restell's memorandum to the Amberley School Committee, so that it could call on Everiss to explain. After hearing from the Committee at its next meeting in November, the Board resolved that Everiss should make "ample apology" to Restell via the School Committee within the fortnight. Everiss declined. The Board referred the whole matter to its solicitor. In December Everiss was given three months' notice under section 47 of the Act.⁶

That two teachers were prepared to go so far in their stands against Restell, suggests that teachers' respect for him was diminishing. It appears that the Board was, in its actions, largely supportive of Restell, or perhaps more accurately of the inspectorial position, but might still have been relieved to receive Restell's resignation two months later, at its meeting in February 1882. Restell gave "monetary difficulties"

as his reason.⁷ He went to Thames, becoming headmaster at Parawai School, but died of a chloral overdose within three and half years.⁸

The other inspectorships in this period also ended in turmoil. Curnow and Cumming, Restell's replacements, died in office. And Hammond and Edge were effectively dismissed.

In the smaller Board area in the south, Hammond spent six years as Inspector and Secretary. In June 1883 the Board decided to divide these offices and it offered Hammond the position of Inspector, at a reduced salary. Hammond was affronted and wrote saying it would mean he received a considerably lower salary than the teachers over whom he exercised authority. Reluctantly, he felt compelled to resign. Some members wanted his resignation to be simply "accepted with regret" and for the Board immediately to fill the vacancy. Perhaps this is indicative of some Board members' feelings about Hammond at this time. But one member, E. Wakefield, pushed for an increase to Hammond's salary. The Board waited until the next meeting to agree and Hammond continued in the post.⁹

By September Hammond was very ill with rheumatism. The Board found a temporary replacement in John Gurr, a former headmaster in Southland. In November, still ill, Hammond requested further leave. This was granted until the beginning of 1884 but Hammond was requested to attend the December meeting of the Board. At this

meeting the reason for the request became clear when the Board discussed complaints made against the way Hammond had conducted a pupil teacher examination at Waimate and the method he had used to record results. Hammond was called upon at once to explain, to complete the results according to the rules and to present them at the next meeting. There was sufficient feeling against him for one member, S.W. Goldsmith, to propose that the Board should give Hammond six months' notice.¹⁰

In January 1884, Hammond submitted the corrected examination results but reported that he had found no reason to alter his report on the pupil teacher in question. He was given six months' notice. Hammond requested withdrawal of that motion so he could resign instead, within the specified period. His motive was to avoid publicity as a dismissal would "injuriously affect his chances of future employment". This was allowed.¹¹ Hammond resigned three months later, in April 1884. His attempt to save his reputation might have been successful as at least one school history notes that Inspector Hammond resigned through ill health.¹²

The Board had the grace to record its recognition of Hammond's services over the previous six years, in the positions of both Secretary and Inspector. It was a simple statement, without elaboration. The Lyttelton Times Timaru correspondent, however, was not going to leave it at that. He said:

I don't think he ought to retire from the position

he has so long and ably filled without it being known that he has served the Board for the six years past ...; that his discretion and skill and counsel have prevented the educational system an ignominious collapse more than once; that throughout the district there is but one opinion among the teachers - that he will never be replaced for impartiality,¹³ practical ability, knowledge and considerateness.

If true, then it was only at the end that relations between Hammond and teaching staff deteriorated. Indeed, the pupil teacher episode might have been an isolated incident. It could be that the Board itself was disenchanted with Hammond and used the splitting of the dual Secretary/Inspector role, and the later pupil teacher episode, as efforts to remove him. Certainly, Hammond's long illness had not won him favour with the Board.

Despite removing Hammond from the inspectorship the Board continued to employ him as a locum tenens teacher. Either the Board was exhibiting hard-nosed expediency or it actually saw in Hammond a teacher worth employing, regardless of his mistakes as inspector. Nevertheless, it could not have been easy for Hammond. Wisely, he changed Boards, becoming the first headmaster of Sefton School in North Canterbury, at the end of 1884. Here he was highly regarded by the community, not only for his teaching but also for his musical ability.

Two years after South Canterbury removed Hammond from the inspectorate position, North Canterbury removed Edge. In March 1886 the Board heard that Edge had been absent from duty. It decided he should be seen by three

Board members, who reported that Dr Nedwill, the Canterbury Officer of Health, had submitted a letter proposing a set of conditions under which Edge might be retained. One member, W. Chrystall, wanted the Board to agree to this proposal but the Board was divided. Saunders, always a hard-line member, wanted Edge dismissed. A decision was deferred until the April meeting, when only the casting vote of the Chairman saved Edge from dismissal. He was retained on Nedwill's conditions.¹⁴ Although the reason was never made explicit, Nedwill's involvement indicates that Edge had a health problem which could be controlled by stringent behavioural measures, a health problem possibly involving drink. This would not be surprising. The depths to which the educational standard in the district had sunk points to the ineffective direction given by the inspectorate. If Edge were drinking, this must have been a contributing factor. In turn, he must have realised that the poor educational results would be laid at his door, a realisation which could easily have prompted further recourse to the bottle.

Edge was unable to keep to the agreement. Three months later he submitted his resignation. Booth was authorised to make enquiries and, if he found reason for doing so, to accept Edge's resignation. At a special meeting on 22 July 1886, he reported that it had indeed been necessary, and Edge was given a month's salary in lieu of notice.¹⁵ Although Roth contends that Edge

resigned as a direct result of the damning report of the educational Inquiry, careful examination of the Education Board minutes reveals that Edge was dismissed for failing to keep to this agreement.¹⁶

Being removed from the position of inspector did not mean the end of a career in education. Like Hammond, Edge swapped Boards. But unlike Hammond, his career did not run smoothly. He became headmaster of a small 35-pupil school at Waituna Creek in South Canterbury, with one pupil teacher and a woman to teach sewing. This drop in status was reflected in a significant reduction in salary, from £500 to £138. This was now dependent on the average number of students attending his school, so fluctuated over his five years there. His last permanent post was at Cave where he spent 1891 teaching 36 pupils, this time with the help only of a sewing teacher.

The next year, as acting headmaster of Temuka District High School, he again ran into trouble with his employers. The Chairman of the South Canterbury Board reported at the August meeting in 1892 that he had been surprised to receive a telegram from the School Committee informing him that Edge was absent without leave. The Board was in no mood to condone the fact that Edge had "abruptly absented himself" and decided to fill the position on the following Monday if Edge had not resumed duties and given a satisfactory reason for his absence.¹⁷

Four years before Edge's dismissal from North Canterbury, the Board had run into difficulties with its replacement for Restell. The first appointment was very shortlived. When Restell resigned in February 1882, the Board offered the position to John Curnow of Christchurch East, and received his acceptance at the beginning of March. But within four weeks he was dead. The Board sent a letter of sympathy and condolence to his widow, but declined the East Christchurch School Committee's later application for an allowance for her.

At the next month's meeting the Board reviewed applications for the inspectorship but was evidently not satisfied with them and resolved to advertise more widely. But at its May meeting it appointed the Rev. James Cumming, an original applicant. He and Edge wasted no time in getting down to business. By 1 June they had worked out how they would organise the work between them and submitted a proposal to the Board.¹⁸

While Edge was Irish, Cumming was from Scotland, having studied and taught in Aberdeen. Like Edge, he had taught in New Zealand. And like Edge, Cumming had a health problem.

They worked together as inspectors for three years. Hints of disenchantment with Cumming's performance became noticeable in 1884, only two years after his appointment. In September, following complaints from school committees about delays in receiving reports, the Board asked Cumming to be more

prompt in sending these out. A reason for these delays might be found in the agenda at the next meeting, when he was interviewed about his "intemperate habits" and advised that any further irregularity in his conduct would result in the termination of his engagement, forthwith. While his day-to-day conduct apparently improved, his health did not. Six months after his warning, he died in Dunedin, having travelled there "on Departmental business".¹⁹

It would be useful to know more about the health problems encountered by Edge and Cumming and whether their drinking (certain in the case of Cumming, and suggested in the case of Edge) was a result of any stress inherent in the position of inspector. It must certainly have affected their standing in the eyes of the teachers whom they were supposedly guiding, although some of them, too, were dismissed for drunkenness.

Lack of decisive control by these two inspectors set the scene for a marked falling off in educational standards in the district. But it was not only at this time that inspectors' professional inadequacies became apparent. Throughout the whole period, complaints levelled against Restell, Hammond, Cumming and Edge, by both Boards and teachers, show that their effectiveness was waning. The tension arising from this dissatisfaction created the turmoil characteristic of this period.

PERIOD OF STABILITY

Cumming was replaced by another Scot, Lawrence Berry Wood. Educated at Edinburgh University, Wood taught at various schools in Scotland. When his health broke down, his doctor advised a change of environment and Wood came out to New Zealand, arriving at Port Chalmers in 1881. There he stayed as Rector of the District High School for nearly four years, until his appointment as inspector for the North Canterbury Board. Initially the Board had offered the post to Thomas Foster, headmaster of Christchurch West, who declined. (It was not until the end of Wood's term 19 years later, that Foster became inspector.) The Board advertised "in the chief towns of New Zealand", and in Melbourne and Sydney. From the 59 applications received, the Board chose Wood.²⁰

A year later, with Edge's forced resignation, Wood was joined by Dr William Anderson, the beginning of the most stable period in the North Canterbury Board's inspectorate.

Anderson had already been inspector for the South Canterbury, taking up the position in July 1884 on Hammond's dismissal. He was from Belfast, with a remarkable career as a student at Queen's College, gaining his fourth degree, an LL.D., in 1882. After teaching in Ireland, he emigrated to Queensland in 1881 and taught at the Rockhampton Grammar School.

A few months after his appointment to South Canterbury, Anderson was granted leave to visit Australia, probably to marry his Australian bride. His wife's sudden death a year later, in January 1886, might have prompted his applying for the North Canterbury position in the July of that year, only two years after his appointment to the southern Board.

From that point on, Wood and Anderson worked together for eighteen years. De la Mare, as a former pupil of Sydenham School looking back on these two inspectors, remembers Anderson as a "very dignified personage", a man "of great kindness and considerable ability". Although Anderson later became Inspector-General, de la Mare thought he must have been very unhappy in the position, dealing with politicians, as "his dignity was flanked with uncompromising integrity". De la Mare understood Wood more readily. In university days prior to his ill health, Wood was a keen athlete, playing cricket and golf and representing the university at rugby. On one visit to Sydenham, Wood discovered de la Mare played rugby and told the boy of his own experiences at Edinburgh. De la Mare recalls that his respect for him took a new turn. At the time of the Sydenham Jubilee, in 1933, de la Mare observed, "Still through a golden mist I see him." He added that by then Wood must be an old man, but, he guessed, "a fighter".²¹

A few months after Anderson's arrival the team increased with the employment of a third inspector. In

December 1886 Wood wrote to the Board saying that two inspectors were insufficient to carry out the work in the district. The Board decided there and then to offer the post to George Hogben. The Chairman was instructed to see Hogben, and if "finding him inclined to accept the appointment", to arrange an interview. Hogben had already been considering a career change. That year he had studied for, and passed, several law examinations with the intention of switching from education to the legal profession. The offer of the inspectorship must have been a more attractive prospect. He accepted immediately. Hogben met the Board a fortnight later and his appointment was confirmed from January 1887.²²

Hogben was born in London. He did well academically and while teaching in Hertfordshire was appointed by an agent to be second master at the new Boys High School in Christchurch. Hogben travelled out with the similarly appointed headmaster (Thomas Miller), arriving in New Zealand in March 1881. Both Hogben and Miller were strong opponents of corporal punishment and advocates of an educational system which allowed pupils to advance beyond their class peers in subjects in which they excelled. Hogben's teaching of mathematics, science, English and French was strict and exacting but he was a popular master.

Miller's resignation after three years, precipitated by his refusal to administer corporal punishment, left the headmastership vacant but Hogben

was unsuccessful in his bid for the position. Although the committee formed to recommend an appointment voted in his favour, the school's Board did not. Hogben believed that the Bishop had swayed the Board against him, disliking his religious views, but Roth considers that Hogben's explosive temper was likely to be a contributing factor.²³ His habit of flaring up at opposition would have to have been curbed on his appointment as inspector, as in this capacity he worked with one of the committee members who had opposed his application for the headmastership - J.V. Colbourne Veel, Secretary of the Education Board.

Hogben's interest in educational matters ranged wide and included the proper inspection and examination of schools. Although Hogben could not attend the 1886 annual meeting of the New Zealand Educational Institute in Dunedin, he initiated a resolution for an examining syndicate for the inspection and examination of secondary schools throughout the colony. Another member spoke on his behalf, calling Hogben a "very active and useful member" of the new NZEI.²⁴

With a vigorous approach to all he undertook, Hogben was also extremely conscientious over small details. MacDonald notes a description of Hogben as being "often wordy to the point of boredom", also citing the Reverend W. Saunders who said:

He strove after an almost impossible accuracy of statement ... he guarded every statement, even the unimportant, by parenthesis after parenthesis.²⁵

Such vigilance can be seen in the letter he wrote to the Schoolmaster in 1886, pointing out an error in an answer to a question for pupil teachers reprinted from the American Teacher. The question related to the number of revolutions the earth makes in a leap year. Hogben pointed out that it was a catch question involving two or three distinct astronomical ideas. (His keen interest in science, including seismology, is evident from Roth's bibliography of Hogben's writings.)²⁶ Hogben's painstaking attention to detail did not obscure his leadership qualities. His energy was felt by those working with him in any arena. As Secretary and Deacon of the Congregational Church in Timaru, he "brought it back into a state of vigour".²⁷ And even later, as Inspector-General, MacDonald says that he "let those under him know what he was doing and he was almost worshipped by the younger men".²⁸

As inspector, however, Hogben's position was shaky, not because of his suitability for the job but because of the Board's financial position. In the year that Hogben was appointed, the education system took a major onslaught with the new Atkinson government's policy of expenditure reductions. In November 1887 Atkinson proposed savings of £60,000 in education to be achieved by raising the compulsory schooling age to six, and by keeping rigidly to the capitation grant of £3 15s. As Roth notes, since the government had already

declared its intentions, the appointment of a special Education Committee to consider the matter was somewhat superfluous. Nevertheless, it was appointed and invited comment from Boards, inspectors, and the Educational Institute. Hogben responded dramatically, advocating the abolition of education boards, the centralising of the inspectorate, and a reduction in the power of the school committees. Roth describes these as emergency measures. Retrenchment was inevitable and Hogben's recommendations were, Roth says, limited to those which in his view would be least harmful to primary education.²⁹

Hogben's strongest recommendation was for the abolition of education boards. He believed they had "no particular interest in a policy of retrenchment" and their administration was extravagant. Centralising the inspectorate would serve as a check on their expenditure.

At present, the opinions of Inspectors are of little or no weight - in this district of no weight at all - in determining expenditure.³⁰

The inspectorate's lack of power in this regard was clearly irksome to Hogben. But he was wrong about the Board's willingness to act.

Their readiness to address the need for retrenchment became very evident at the end of the year when in December all officials, teachers, and others in the Board's employ, were given three months' notice, to enable the Board to restructure. Two months later, the

Board called a special meeting to consider the recommendations of its Retrenchment Committee. Its proposals included the closure of the training college, a reduction in teachers' salaries, and the termination of Hogben's appointment in six months' time, when an assistant inspector would be taken on, if necessary, and at the much reduced salary of £250.

Roth, in recounting this episode in Hogben's career, states merely that at this meeting the Board adopted the Retrenchment Committee's report.³¹ This obscures the full picture. At that special meeting on 9 February 1888 the Board was divided over the question of the inspectorate change. Four voted against the motion, with five in favour. While Saunders' position for the motion was expected, H.W. Peryman's vote in favour of it was not. He had made a mistake. Aghast, he immediately explained what had happened but the results of the vote stood. In the next week several members lobbied the Chairman, W. Chrystall, on Peryman's behalf, all saying that he had voted "under a misapprehension". Chrystall withheld publication of the Retrenchment Committee's report but those who supported a change to the inspectorate reacted strongly against the prospect of their success disappearing and at the ordinary meeting on 16 February put pressure on the Chairman to print the report as adopted. Peryman gave notice that at the next meeting he would move that the clause relating to the inspectorate be rescinded.

If numbers stayed the same, he knew he would just succeed. At that meeting the offending clause was removed, but only just. C. Bowen, who could have been counted on to support Peryman's motion, was absent but one member agreed to "pair" with him. Interestingly, it was Saunders who agreed not to vote.³²

Roth speculates that Hogben was retained because his sudden dismissal, after only a year in office, would have been considered a breach of faith. After all, he had accepted the inspectorship at the express invitation of the Board. Certainly, as Roth says, there was a "strong party" on the Board, unwilling to part with him. Roth also reports that in the discussion one Board member stated that he had been told by Wood that neither Wood nor Anderson had been consulted when Hogben was appointed, and that they saw no need for a third inspector.³³ This was untrue. It was, in fact, at Wood's very request that the third inspectorship had been created.

The three inspectors were retained but were given the task of drawing up the new structure for organising the Board's teaching staff, including setting a new salary scale for teachers. The specially appointed Salaries Committee recommended the inspectors' revisions to the Board in April 1888, feeling sure that "the substantial economy implied in the revised organisation" would not "interfere with the efficiency of the work of teaching in general throughout the district". Despite

all their hard work in creating the new structure the inspectors did not escape unscathed. At the same meeting, after some argument about the exact amount, the Board cut the inspectors' salaries from £500 to £400. There was even an attempt, initiated by E.G. Wright and supported by Saunders and others, to reduce the inspectorate to two.

The inspectors did not receive the news of their reduced salaries without comment. They were supported in this by the NZEI who also wrote, disapproving of the reductions. It was four months before the salaries were again raised, this time to £450. Hogben's position was no more secure, however, as again at this August meeting there was a move to have only two inspectors, with an assistant when necessary. This time it was at the suggestion of Peryman, the member who had been so active in retaining Hogben a few months previously.³⁴

Hogben was aware that his position as third inspector was always going to be insecure and he looked about for a suitable alternative. Early in 1889 the headmastership of Timaru High School became available. Roth describes how Hogben was initially reluctant to apply. Battles between the headmaster and the High School Board had created "a hornet's nest".³⁵ What pushed Hogben towards the position was the latest shove by Saunders.

At the 28 March meeting, Saunders claimed that the annual expenditure of over £1,800 to examine fewer than

160 schools was an "undue and excessive outlay for that purpose, and altogether out of proportion to the small sum of £51,000" spent on 516 teachers. He wanted the expenditure reduced to £1000 by employing only two inspectors, with their £500 salary to include all their travel expenses as well. This was enough for Hogben. He sent in a late application for the Timaru position and was selected from eighteen candidates. As soon as Hogben resigned from the Board's employ in April 1889, Saunders leapt at the chance to remove the third inspector's position. He considered it a "possible and entirely harmless reduction", and far preferable to the "injurious reduction" of teachers' salaries which would be necessary to bring the Board's expenditure in line with its reduced annual income. Apparently it was important to be seen to be making such savings as Saunders said that if the reduction were not made, the "friends of education" in the House of Representatives might be called upon to justify "every item of expenditure incurred by the Board".³⁶

Wright, who had supported the reduction previously, now felt that if there were to be only two inspectors, their salaries should be increased from £450 to £500 in recognition of the extra work involved. This was agreed to at the next meeting.

The inspectorate remained at two for the next four years. By June 1893, however, two inspectors were again felt to be insufficient for the work of the Board.

This time applications were sought only from within the Board district, and Thomas Ritchie, headmaster of Opawa School, was appointed. Ritchie had been educated both in schools and through private tuition in Ireland. He taught in Ireland and was later selected for the education service in Queensland where he was headmaster of several schools. In 1876 he settled in Canterbury, first as master of West Oxford School, later transferring to Opawa. During his twelve years at Opawa he studied at Canterbury College, graduating in 1887 at the age of 43. It was perhaps with an inspectorship in mind that he furthered his formal education in this way. From his appointment in 1893 he served as inspector for seventeen years. This length of service was matched by Anderson and, together with Wood, their leadership created a period of educational stability through two decades, despite the economic batterings of the times.

The South Canterbury Board shared this period of stability. When Anderson resigned in 1886 to go to North Canterbury the Board advertised in New Zealand papers for a new inspector. From the fifteen who applied, three were shortlisted and after interviews, the Board offered the post to James Gibson Gow. Born and educated in Scotland, Gow trained as a pupil teacher in Crieff and later at the Normal Training College of the Church of Scotland. Gow also was an educated man, having gained an M.A. from Edinburgh University. After teaching for eight years in Scotland he travelled out to

New Zealand in 1885. Within a few weeks he was appointed headmaster of Waiareka School, near Oamaru. By the end of his first two years in New Zealand Gow was well established as inspector for South Canterbury.

There he remained for the rest of the Board's separate existence and he worked for a further period for the new Board created when North and South Canterbury merged in 1916. He was the only South Canterbury inspector for thirteen years but the task became more difficult and in December 1895 Gow requested an assistant to help complete the year's work. The Board had just recently received a letter from one of its teachers, Alexander Bell, writing to say he had returned from Canterbury College and was willing to act in any locum tenens position. The Board recognised the opportunity of using this unplaced but experienced teacher and temporarily appointed him to assist with the inspection of the smaller schools.

The work was finished by January. Gow and Bell now approached the Board regarding Bell's remuneration, with £25 as the suggested amount. The Board agreed. Bell returned to Canterbury College in March, and on completion of the 1896 academic year, now with an M.A., he again came to Gow's aid. This time the Board cautiously decided the fee in advance, granting Gow the assistance for one month only, with £20 as the outside cost. Bell was then appointed to Fairlie as headmaster and later to Timaru South.³⁷

By May 1899 the Board had decided to employ a second inspector who could also assist the Board Secretary at a total salary of £300. The fifteen applicants were whittled down by successive ballots and finally Bell was chosen. Although the names of Bell's competitors are unknown, the quality of their applications must have been high as, despite Bell's experience as temporary inspector, it took the casting vote of the Chairman to secure him in the permanent position.³⁸ Unlike their colleagues in the northern district who told their Board that they were each "on a level with one another in point of status", Bell was always Gow's assistant.

Despite the spectre of retrenchment in these times and the tension this created between inspectors and Boards, this was a period of stability in the inspectorate's history and is marked by the long and effective service of the central characters. Wood, Anderson, Ritchie and Gow supervised and encouraged the educational development of their districts for two decades. Bell joined towards the end of this period, Hogben at the beginning. The brevity of Hogben's appearance as inspector is not to his discredit. His position was never secure and the actions of Board members suggest he was right in looking for a more permanent position. His suitability for such a post is borne out by his success as Inspector-General and his achievements in educational reform.

PERIOD OF RAPID CHANGE

At the end of the second period Bell's role altered when, in 1903, Major J.H. Bamfield asked to be relieved of the chief responsibilities of Secretary, and in the following year, "owing to disabilities of age", relinquished the position entirely. Bell now had full control of the secretarial department. He continued in both positions until resigning in April 1913.

The final inspector to join the South Canterbury Board now took Bell's place. James Archibald Valentine had been a pupil teacher in his home township of Waikouaiti and had taught at schools throughout Otago, eventually following Bell as headmaster of Timaru South School when Bell transferred to the inspectorate. Valentine was known to the Board, not only as a teacher but also as an active member of NZEI. In 1909 he acted on behalf of the headmasters in the Timaru schools, negotiating with the Board to arrange a lecture by E.B. Mannering on glaciers, and he was part of a deputation to the Board in 1912, urging the adoption of a scheme for the promotion of teachers.

Valentine carried the same dual roles of inspector and Secretary until January 1915 when the Department pointed out that under the new Education Act he could no longer do so. He would be serving two masters. In July of the following year, just before the

demise of the Board, he left to become inspector for the Grey and Westland districts.

While the smaller Board found two inspectors more than sufficient for the work, North Canterbury required first three, then four. Wood, Anderson and Ritchie worked together until Wood's resignation in March 1904. He had originally come to New Zealand in the hope of improving his health and while the change was beneficial, Wood's health was never robust. He had six months' leave in 1899 to obtain a long rest and another complete change by travelling back to England on medical advice. This was considered the best remedy for the ill-effects of repeated attacks of influenza. Five years later Wood resigned, "the arduous duties of the office being at times too much for his health to withstand".³⁹

Thomas Scholfield Foster was chosen to replace him. His appointment marks the beginning of the third period of the inspectorate's history. Although born in London, Foster came to New Zealand as a small child, living in Rangiora where his father ran a hotel. He won a scholarship to Christs College and eventually became an assistant teacher at an Addington church school, switching to Christchurch West when its Committee took over the church school. Foster went on to university, graduating with a B.A. in 1881 and an M.A. the following year. It is somewhat surprising that Sir James Hight remembered him as "not quite a scholar"⁴⁰ as Foster won

first prize in mathematics when graduating with his B.A., gaining his M.A. with first class honours in Greek and Latin. He was also Secretary of the Dialectical Association and in 1884 became the first teacher to be awarded "A1" ranking.

He returned to West Christchurch School as headmaster, aged 28, and married another teacher at the school, Emily Brittan, who later became headmistress of the Girls' High School. When an inspectorship became vacant three years later, on the death of Cumming, Foster was offered the position but declined. It was on Wood's resignation in 1904 that Foster was chosen by three successive ballots from 25 applicants. A speaker at Foster's send-off from West Christchurch noted the outstanding secondary education provided at the school. Boys from country areas boarded in Christchurch to take advantage of it.⁴¹ Perhaps Foster's skills as headmaster were more evident than as teacher. Although Sir James Hight described him as "a good teacher and organiser", one who had been taught by him, W.H. Montgomery, remembered him as "a good natured, jolly sort of man" though "brusque", a "reasonably good master but not first class".⁴²

Eighteen months after Foster's appointment, Anderson left to become Assistant Inspector-General. He resigned in December 1905 and the Board did its best to make his transition period to this important position as easy as possible, arranging for him to "have the benefit

of any spare time previous to taking up his new duties". They even agreed to Anderson's suggestion that it would be "a reasonable and gracious concession on the part of the Board" to make his notice expire at the end of the February, justifying it by noting that he could "fairly claim to have earned the usual February holiday".⁴³

The Board had now to decide on his replacement. Applications were considered in January 1906. After a series of ballots, and some wrangling, it eventually required the Chairman's vote to tip the balance in favour of Mulgan.⁴⁴

Mulgan was already an inspector in Auckland. Born in Ireland, he entered the teaching profession somewhat late, as a probationer at the Wellesley St School in 1886. He had already had a varied career, trying farming, storekeeping, and working as editor of the Bay of Plenty Times. An inspectorship became possible in 1898 as successor to D. Petrie who described Mulgan as a man who:

... cherishes high and enlightened aims in Education. He has shown a keen interest in all the more modern developments of Education, welcoming their merits while alive to their sometimes too sanguine expectations.⁴⁵

Good qualifications indeed for an inspector.

The North Canterbury inspectorate remained at three for just over a year after Mulgan's appointment. Then in May 1908 Ritchie, Foster and Mulgan submitted a report to the Board saying that without assistance they would be unable to carry out the examination of Standard

VI children at the end of the year. Ritchie went personally to the Board's Appointments Committee, referring in detail to the difficulties he and his colleagues had in carrying out the ordinary work of inspection and examination and pointing out that the number of examination centres could not be reduced below 45. After carefully considering these representations, the Board decided to appoint an additional inspector. Their choice was William Brock, headmaster of Richmond School.⁴⁶

Brock had also taught at Sydenham where he was remembered as a strict teacher. As de la Mare recalled, he ruled the class, but ruled justly. His rule may have been ensured by wielding the strap, with which he was an expert, "especially on cold mornings". It is no wonder that de la Mare says, "Mr Brock! Let the psychologists decide why he is 'Mr'!"⁴⁷

If Brock's ability as a teacher relied on strict discipline, it was perhaps this quality which marked him as an effective administrator. On inspecting Hampstead School in 1894 and 1895, Ritchie reported that Brock was conducting the school "with marked ability". Within his well organised institution Brock had "established his influence in all departments", every one of which bore "all the indications of capable management".⁴⁸

It is puzzling that in 1900 his record was somewhat marred. Both Ritchie and Anderson visited the school, this time to conduct the annual examinations.

Standard VI achieved poor results and Brock was the teacher. The inspectors reported unfavourably on the results of his instruction but the Board suggested to them that they should make reference in their report to the causes contributing to the poor pass rate, namely that for the previous three years the children had been taught by an assistant master whose work had been so unsatisfactory that the Board had terminated his engagement. If no mention were made of this, then:

... the professional reputation of a headmaster who had proved himself in the past a painstaking and efficient teacher might be undeservedly injured in the eyes of the school committee.⁴⁹

It is surprising that Anderson and Ritchie themselves had not drawn the Board's attention to the prior situation, as inspectors usually did when extenuating circumstances existed. What is even more surprising is their response to the Board's suggestion. They were "not prepared to defend Mr Brock's position". The Board overrode them, agreeing that the School Committee should be reminded of the previous teacher's unsatisfactory work. The Committee replied, concurring with the Board's view.⁵⁰ The following year Brock again received his usual excellent report, this time from Wood, who remarked that there was "a pleasing impression of efficiency" in the school, an "unmistakable air of healthy, vigorous industry in every class".⁵¹

From the time of Brock's appointment, the Board contended with considerable change. In June 1910, both

Ritchie and Mulgan resigned. Ritchie's health had been deteriorating for some time. He had taken extended leave during 1909 for at least five months between May and November. By June of the following year his health was still sufficiently poor for him to decide to resign. The Board resolved to pay his full salary until the end of August, when his resignation was deemed to take effect. It regretted his resignation and expressed its appreciation of "the valuable services rendered" by him "in the cause of Education", sympathising with him in his illness, and trusting that he would shortly be well again and "long spared to enjoy the benefits of superannuation".⁵² This was not to be. Ritchie died the next month.

Mulgan gave the Board fair warning that he was considering other opportunities. In April that year he wrote, telling the Board that although he had no wish to leave the district, he had a duty to himself and his dependants to apply for the Chief Inspector's position with the Auckland Education Board, which had become vacant, as it was one of the highest in the Dominion. The Board apparently supported him in this endeavour as they agreed to give him a testimonial expressing their appreciation of his services. Mulgan was successful. He resigned in June 1910.⁵³

The Board now had two positions to fill. When considering how they could go about this, the Chairman mentioned that Thomas Hughes, headmaster of Opawa, had

decided to retire at the end of the next year and was anxious to serve as an inspector before ending his professional career. Hughes had applied twice previously and the Chairman reminded the Board members that he had been favourably regarded. In fact, Mulgan had only just beaten Hughes to the position four years earlier. Hughes had also been Acting Inspector for six months in 1903 when Anderson had been granted leave. With all this in mind, the Board offered Hughes the appointment for eighteen months, until December 1911, on the understanding that the engagement would then terminate.

This left just Mulgan's replacement. At the July meeting the Board heard a synopsis of the several applicants' qualifications and, through a ballot system, chose C.D. Hardie. Although born in England, Hardie had arrived in New Zealand, by his own description, as a "timid, unsophisticated lad", and had become a pupil teacher at Sydenham School. At its Jubilee in 1933 Hardie recalled his first visit there as inspector, back in the same rooms where he had "tried his prentice hand on a class of Std II boys", gaining his own experience, as he said, very often at the expense of pupils.⁵⁴

It is unlikely that pupils ever actually suffered in any way from Hardie's practising as he was another teacher who received glowing reports from inspectors. Even as a student at the Normal School his work was considered excellent. As headmaster of Papanui School,

his administrative abilities stood out. In 1894 Wood reported that he displayed "abilities of a very high order in supervising and co-ordinating the work of the various members of the staff".⁵⁵ The next year Anderson commented that "good order and discipline and excellent methods of teaching continue to be characteristic of Mr Hardie's work as HM".⁵⁶ Hardie clearly had an educational vision, and the ability to achieve it. As headmaster of Ashburton Main School, he was seen by Wood as eminently qualified for the position. "He is a teacher of high ideals, and his great technical skill, power of work and personal worth enable him in a large measure to realise his aims."⁵⁷ These were ideal qualities to bring to an inspectorship.

The four inspectors - Foster, Brock, Hughes and Hardie - worked together for only a few months. In May 1911 Hughes was advised by his doctor that he could no longer carry on without considerable risk to his health. This must have been a disappointment to him as he had been so eager to serve as an inspector. His brief year in the inspectorate had clearly been appreciated by the Board, however, as on his early resignation it gave him a month's extra pay in recognition of the valuable work he had done, and Foster made sure that he had placed on the official record his high opinion of the retiring inspector.

The Board now saw an opportunity to review its inspectorate. The Chairman raised the question of

appointing a Chief Inspector, reminding the Board that a reduction of £25 in the fourth inspector's salary had been made with this in view. The Board agreed to create the position. Foster was appointed and his salary increased accordingly.

Soon after, however, the Board was faced with Hardie's application for an increase in pay, having completed his first year in office. He drew on the precedent that the salaries of Mulgan and Brock had been increased at a similar time in their careers. The Board admitted, perhaps reluctantly, that Hardie might reasonably have inferred that he had been appointed under the same agreement, and increased his salary by £25. The money set aside for the Chief Inspector's position thus disappeared. Now looking at Hughes' replacement, the Board came to the firm decision that it would offer the vacancy at the lower amount of £425, and without promise or understanding of an automatic increase.

Meanwhile, someone had been needed quickly to replace Hughes' temporary position. H.G. Denham was appointed from May for three months, on the understanding that he would not be an applicant for the permanent position. When the Board did consider candidates for this, the results of the first ballot were so favourable to Sidney Charles Owen that he was chosen immediately. Owen had already spent one year as a pupil teacher in England before arriving in New

Zealand in 1878 at the age of thirteen. On the strength of this, the Board agreed to appoint him to the rank of a second year pupil teacher, providing he could produce a supporting certificate from England. After three years as a pupil teacher at West Christchurch School, he gained a scholarship of £100 for two years' training at the Normal School. By the time of his appointment to an inspectorship in July 1911, Owen had more than thirty years' teaching experience in the Board's schools.

The remaining change to the inspectorate in this period occurred when Foster shifted to the Training College as Principal. The move was a hurried one. At the 1 May meeting in 1912, the Chairman reported that under the authority given by the Normal School Committee he had arranged for Foster to act in this position, while still Chief Inspector and that he had temporarily placed J.B. Mayne, headmaster of Sydenham, in the resulting vacancy. Board members approved his actions. In August, when his post as Principal was confirmed, Foster resigned his position as Chief Inspector and it passed to Brock. At the same meeting the Board considered applications for the fourth inspector's position and settled for Mayne, the incumbent.

James Boxer Mayne was another to receive excellent reports as a headmaster. Wood considered him "thoroughly efficient" in that position at Hampstead. He remarked particularly on his "careful training" of pupil teachers, who had "weekly criticism lessons" which

Wood considered "the very best means of acquiring practical skill in teaching".⁵⁸ Mayne's training of pupil teachers was one of his strengths as it drew comment throughout his career as headmaster. On inspecting Ashburton, Anderson reported that everything indicated that the school was "working excellently - a result due alike to the personal influence of the headmaster and the able support of members of his staff".⁵⁹ Even Ritchie was impressed. In 1894 he reported that Mayne conducted his work with "good technical skill and unflagging industry".⁶⁰

Unfortunately this vigour could not always be sustained. Mayne suffered poor health while headmaster of Sydenham, requiring extensive leave. It seems likely that he had a chronic respiratory disease, as in 1909 he was forced to leave his headmaster's residence beside the school to live in the more elevated area of Cashmere Hills. He had requested permission to let the school house for a year, to which the Board cautiously agreed. The following year he wanted to make a more definite arrangement so that he could take up permanent residence on the hill, on the advice of his doctor. Despite this illness he was able to continue to hold a responsible position, culminating in his inspectorship in 1912.

Mayne was the last person to join the North Canterbury inspectorate. Including Denham's brief time as Acting Inspector, Mayne's was the eighth appointment in as many years. In fact, four of the permanent

appointments had been made within the two year period 1910-1912. At no other time in the nearly forty year lifespan of the Board was there so much rapid change in the inspectorate.

THE RIGHT MEN

In both districts, there was a change in inspectors' qualifications and experience from period to period. Predictably, inspectors during the first two periods were born and educated in England, Scotland or Ireland. Of the graduates during the first two periods, only Ritchie - a late starter - gained his degree in New Zealand. Neither Restell nor Hammond, the incumbents on the inauguration of the national system in 1878, had taught in New Zealand. Anderson, the most highly qualified of all, had only taught in Britain and Edge only in New Zealand. All other inspectors during the first two periods had taught both in the Mother Country and the new colony which must have enhanced their claim to expertise in the eyes of the teachers they were required to guide and assess.

It was not until the third period that men educated and trained in New Zealand were appointed, and then only a few. Bell and Valentine, South Canterbury inspectors, were the only New Zealand born appointees, but Mulgan, Hardie and Mayne, in North Canterbury, were trained as pupil teachers or probationers in New Zealand

schools.

Recognising the importance of the inspector's position for the effectiveness of education in their areas, Boards advertised widely. They were not disappointed in the quality of applicants, and rarely in the number. Although the six applications received when Cumming applied in 1882 were considered insufficient and the Board readvertised, Boards were more likely to receive fifteen. Wood was one of 59. Only on four occasions did they appoint without advertising, and then usually in response to an urgent need. Hogben was appointed as additional inspector to cope with increasing work, Hughes quickly volunteered when Ritchie became too ill to continue, and Mayne initially stepped in as Acting Inspector when Foster was moved suddenly to the Training College. The exception was Curnow who made a brief appearance in the first period. His appointment was not in response to any urgency, but was made at the same meeting when Restell's resignation was received.

Boards looked for academic qualifications. In Provincial times such credentials might not have been a major concern. Although Restell had a degree, Hammond did not. But Edge, appointed at the beginning of the first period, had graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, and Cumming had studied at Aberdeen University. Inspectors appointed in the second period were well qualified. Anderson gained his third degree, an LLB, in 1880 and had an LLD conferred in 1882 without further

examination. Wood, Gow, Bell and Hogben each had an M.A.. Ritchie, the late starter in academic pursuits, was the only one in this period with a B.A.. He is, however, atypical in his academic career, taking up university study somewhat later than usual and graduating with his degree at the age of 43. A considerable falling off is noticeable in the third period when only two of the eight inspectors appointed, Foster and Mulgan, had M.A.s.

The Boards were satisfied. They glowed with pleasure when surveying the quality of their applicants. On Hammond's dismissal in 1884, the South Canterbury Board considered the 21 applicants "a lot of excellent men". Two years later, when Dr Anderson shifted to the North Canterbury Board, eight of the fifteen who applied for his South Canterbury position had M.A.s, two of them gained in New Zealand. On Wood's resignation in 1904, the North Canterbury Board recorded its satisfaction at receiving applications from "so many gentlemen highly qualified and holding important positions in educational matters in New Zealand".⁶¹

Teaching experience was also taken into account. While Boards were influenced by the academic qualifications of their applicants, teachers might have been more impressed by an inspector's knowledge of what went on in a classroom. A poor teaching record or lack of teaching experience in New Zealand would not have recommended an inspector to teachers, daily facing the

challenges of schoolrooms. In the third period, with its rapid turnover of inspectors, the lesser academic qualifications of inspectors like Brock, Hardie and Mayne would have been ameliorated by their obvious teaching and administrative ability. Throughout their careers as teachers these men received inspection reports which stood out from the mundane run. They were clearly exceptional in their abilities.

Length of teaching service of course influenced the age at which men were appointed to inspectorships. But greater age and experience did not guarantee a more effective inspectorate. In the stable second period, Boards appointed men in their thirties, with Ritchie as the exception, appointed at the age of 49. In the rapidly changing third period, however, they often chose older men, many in their fifties. Their greater age was not the reason for the rapid change in this period, however. Only Hughes retired early through ill health. Foster and Mulgan went on to higher posts. The other five were still serving as inspectors at the end of the period.

The selection process remained the same throughout the decades. Candidates needed to ensure their qualifications and teaching experience were clearly set out in their written applications. These carried weight as Boards sometimes made their choice without interviewing. They followed a ballot system when making their decisions, at times using successive

ballots to reduce the number shortlisted. With the high quality of applicants, the choice was always made from a list of capable candidates who were well placed to fill the position.

The number of inspectors employed at one time gradually increased over the forty years, with a maximum of two in South Canterbury and four in the larger Board, in response to rising numbers of pupils and schools. On only one occasion did the reverse occur, when economic hardship forced retrenchment. When Hogben recognised the insecurity of his position and chose to return to teaching, the Board saw their opportunity to retrench and did not replace him. Economic constraints reduced inspectors' salaries at various times throughout the decades. When the South Canterbury Board replaced Hammond in 1884, both Allardice (the Board's first choice) and Anderson refused the position when offered £400. Anderson accepted when the salary was raised to £450. However, four years later, while inspector for North Canterbury, his salary was reduced to this lesser amount with the economic cut-backs of 1888. These amounts contrast markedly with salaries paid at the inception of the Boards. In 1878 Edge began with £500.

All inspectors were men. Saunders did suggest to the North Canterbury Board in 1889 that he considered "the appointment of an Inspectress advisable for the proper inspection of the infant classes, which he contended no man could do thoroughly",⁶² but perhaps he

anticipated that women inspectors would be paid less, as his remarks were made during a discussion on retrenchment.

His colleague on the Board, Dr Russell, made a far more valiant attempt in 1910 to persuade the Board to appoint a woman inspector. Earlier that year a Mr W. S.L. Smith had written to the Board objecting to its rule requiring women teachers to serve two years in a country school, implying that in some cases they lived in very uncomfortable circumstances. He suggested that the Board should appoint a woman inspector to make enquiries into the homes of young women teachers. This did not persuade the Board. Mr Smith was informed that the Board itself would remedy any situation where it found a teacher uncomfortable in her surroundings.⁶³

But at least one Board member did not let Smith's idea of a woman inspector disappear. Dr Russell took the matter further in August, telling the Board that as such a large number of both its pupils and teachers were female, and as the Education Department would have to depend on female teachers more than in the past, he felt the time had arrived when the Board should consider the advisability of appointing one Female Inspector to each district. It is not clear from the Board minutes what was meant by "each district", nor how many "female inspectors" Russell contemplated. At the September meeting, when the motion was to be decided, the Board gained time by referring the matter to its Appointments

Committee. Russell was backed up by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, however, who wrote to the Board endorsing the idea of one of the Board's inspectors being a woman. By the following month the Committee had moved at least halfway towards Russell's idea, recommending that the Board take the suggestion of a female inspector into consideration when the next vacancy occurred. Dr Russell had at least partially succeeded. The Board had accepted a woman inspector at least as a possibility.⁶⁴

Sadly, when the next vacancy did occur, on Hughes' early retirement, Dr Russell's motion that applications be received from male and female candidates was lost. Dr Russell tried twice more, with Foster's transfer to the Training College in 1912, and with a final attempt the following year. No woman inspector was appointed.⁶⁵

Exactly what their role would have been is unclear. Saunder's early suggestion appeared to limit it to inspecting the work of infant classes, Smith imagined them as matrons safeguarding the comfort of young women in rural schools and even Russell's first proposal seemed to imply that they would deal with women teachers and not men. When vacancies did arise in the inspectorate, however, Russell's proposal that applications be sought from women as well as men suggests that if a woman were appointed she would carry out the full work of the Board inspector she replaced.

When women were eventually appointed to inspectorships in New Zealand, they were officers of the Department, not a Board. And the role of one at least, was confined to inspecting secondary school domestic science, a female realm.

The relationship between Board and inspectors also changed through the decades. In the first period, the Boards seemed sorely tried by their inspectors. Restell's demands for apologies from teachers forced the Board to act publicly in his support, probably to endorse the position of the inspector rather than to favour the man. His retirement must have brought some relief. Hammond did not fare so well in South Canterbury. Complaints against him were substantiated and the Board's attitude towards him was not sweetened by his absences through illness. The North Canterbury Board continued to have trouble, as it was forced to act firmly when the work of its two other inspectors fell below standard.

In the stable second period, a difference can be seen between the Boards in their relationships with their inspectors. In South Canterbury the Board clearly respected Gow and frequently sought his opinion on educational matters. In North Canterbury, although the Board referred several matters to the inspectors for consideration, relations could be more strained. Inspectors requested that all applications for teaching positions, and all correspondence about examinations be

referred to them for consideration. The Board refused. As well, Hogben's frustrated comments to the government's 1887 Education Committee, that the opinions of the inspectors carried no weight at all in influencing the Board's expenditure, make explicit the tension that existed at times between inspectors and Board. Inspectors did not enjoy having their ideas and plans thwarted.

Saunders, the hard-line Board member, took every opportunity to curtail spending on the inspectorate, often taking the initiative in recommending reductions in their salaries and expenses in tough economic times. The rest of the Board did not always agree. Saunders' actions may be seen as those of a realistic Board member who understood the need for decisive action, even though unpopular. Or they may be viewed as those of a man set to constrain the work of the inspectorate.

In 1889 the inspectors wrote to the Board objecting to remarks Saunders had made and which had been reported in the Lyttelton Times. On his re-election to the Board's Appointments Committee Saunders had talked at length about the difficulties the Committee encountered, due partly "to the fact that the Inspectors' reports were not so thorough as they might be". He said there were instances where the Committee:

... knew full well of the faults of some teachers, yet they waited long and patiently for the Inspectors to report on their inefficiency. He hoped the Inspectors would speak out boldly in such cases. What they ought to do was at once report

these inefficient teachers, and not give them so much grace as they were in the habit of doing.⁶⁶

The inspectors decided to "speak out boldly" against Saunders. Although the matter was satisfactorily resolved, it is unlikely that Saunders, as an astute politician, would have allowed remarks to be taken up by a reporter if they were unintentional. He was not, however, known for verbal restraint, having been gaoled for contempt of court in 1860. And McLintock notes that "in the cut and thrust of parliamentary debate Saunders preferred the mace to the rapier".⁶⁷

Saunders' approach to financial matters and his attitude toward the inspectorate became very familiar to the Board. When he resigned in 1899 to go to England, the Chairman remarked on his "economy in the expenditure of the Parliamentary grant, wise departmental administration" and "close but just control over the inspectorial and teaching staff".⁶⁸ Inspectors might not have agreed that it was "just" but would certainly have felt it as "close". In fairness to Saunders, his suspicious and cautious attitude to the inspectorate probably arose from the turmoil at the end of the first period. It was Saunders who headed the major educational Inquiry and it was the implementation of his suggestions which pulled the educational work of North Canterbury back to a respectable standard.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
2. *ibid.*
3. North Canterbury Education Board [NCEB] Minutes, 3 February 1881, 17 February 1881, 3 March 1881, 17 March 1881.
4. NCEB Minutes, 7 April 1881, 16 June 1881, 21 July 1881.
5. NCEB Minutes, 3 March 1881.
6. NCEB Minutes, 20 October 1881, 3 November 1881, 17 November 1881, 1 December 1881.
7. NCEB Minutes, 16 February 1882.
8. Restell died in October 1885, aged 61. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
9. South Canterbury Education Board [SCEB] Minutes, 7 June 1883, 5 July 1883.
10. SCEB Minutes, 6 September 1883, 4 October 1883, 1 November 1883, 6 December 1883.
11. SCEB Minutes, 3 January 1884.
12. Hardcastle, Timaru Main School Jubilee 1874-1924, p. 37.
13. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
14. NCEB Minutes, 4 March 1886, 18 March 1886, 1 April 1886.
15. NCEB Minutes, 15 July 1886, 22 July 1886.
16. Roth, George Hogben: A Biography, p. 43.
17. It is not clear whether Edge was summarily dismissed, but he does not appear at all in the 1893 AJHR school staff lists.
18. NCEB Minutes, 20 April 1882, 18 May 1882, 1 June 1882.
19. NCEB Minutes, 16 October 1884, 2 April 1885.
20. NCEB Minutes, 2 April 1885, 16 April 1885, 18 June 1885, 2 July 1885.

21. Williams, History of the Sydenham School 1873-1933, p. 20.
22. NCEB Minutes, 2 December 1886, 15 December 1886.
23. Roth, p. 31.
24. New Zealand Schoolmaster, 1886, pp. 84-5.
25. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
26. Roth, see Appendix.
27. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
28. *ibid.*
29. Roth, p. 45.
30. AJHR, 1887, I-8 pp. 27-8.
31. Roth, p. 47.
32. NCEB Minutes, 9 February 1888, 16 February 1888, 1 March 1888.
33. Roth, p. 48.
34. NCEB Minutes, 5 April 1888, 19 April 1888, 3 May 1888.
35. Roth, p. 51.
36. NCEB Minutes, 28 March 1889, 18 April 1889.
37. SCEB Minutes, 5 December 1895, 16 January 1896, 11 November 1896.
38. SCEB Minutes, 14 June 1899.
39. NCEB Minutes, 23 March 1904.
40. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
41. *ibid.*
42. *ibid.*
43. NCEB Minutes, 20 December 1905, 10 January 1906.
44. NCEB Minutes, 31 January 1906.
45. Cumming, Glorious Enterprise, p. 353.
46. NCEB Minutes, 13 May 1908, 10 June 1908.

47. Williams, p. 20.
48. NCEB Inspectors' Report Book [IRB], 23 May 1894, 10 April 1895.
49. NCEB Minutes, 22 August 1900.
50. NCEB Minutes, 12 September 1900, 24 October 1900.
51. NCEB IRB, 25 April 1901.
52. NCEB Minutes, 26 May 1909, 8 June 1910.
53. NCEB Minutes, 27 April 1910, 29 June 1910.
54. Williams, p. 17.
55. NCEB IRB, 27 March 1894.
56. NCEB IRB, 22 March 1895.
57. NCEB IRB, 22 and 24 April 1901.
58. NCEB IRB, 29 May 1889.
59. NCEB IRB, 4 June 1890.
60. NCEB IRB, 21-22 May 1894.
61. NCEB Minutes, 4 May 1904.
62. Lyttelton Times, 20 April 1889, p. 5.
63. NCEB Minutes, 12 January 1910.
64. NCEB Minutes, 31 August 1910, 21 September 1910, 13 October 1910.
65. NCEB Minutes, 17 May 1911, 12 June 1912, 19 February 1913.
66. Lyttelton Times, 31 May 1899, p. 5
67. McLintock, An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand.
68. Press, 1 June 1899, p. 6

CHAPTER 3

SETTING THE BOUNDARIES: ORGANISING INSPECTION

When Wood and Anderson applied to the North Canterbury Board in 1893 for a third inspector, they might have anticipated Saunders' attack. Always the hard-line member of the Board, Saunders took every opportunity to curb and control the functioning of the inspectorate. He rounded on Wood and Anderson, saying that the increasing number of inspection visits was unjustified and could not be sanctioned by the Board. Nor could they point to inspectorates of other districts to support their argument. The employment of what he saw as "an excessive number of officers" by other Boards offered no justification to North Canterbury for "indulging in any similar waste of public money". Anyway, the circumstances were quite different. The smallest Board could not employ less than one inspector and the larger Boards mentioned had to provide for "a far more scattered and less roaded district than that of North Canterbury". The examination and inspection of 175 schools, of which only fourteen had more than 300 children, certainly did not demand from each inspector, Saunders said, more than four days work a week, at five to seven hours a day. This left two whole days a week, or one third of the year, for holidays, scholarship examinations and the preparation of one formal report.

He went on. The "usual month's holiday" was consented to by the Board at the inspectors' request, "without any idea that it should either induce them to neglect any part of their year's work or to expect another Inspector to be paid to do it". The Board did not expect its officers to leave their allotted work undone. Nor would it be dictated to by them and submit to the appointment of what the inspectors were pleased to call "an adequate inspecting staff".¹

The Chairman managed to keep Saunders' opinions out of the newspapers on this occasion. The remaining Board members were more favourably inclined to the needs of their inspectors and soon after appointed the third. Nevertheless Saunders continued his role of over-zealous watchdog and barked at all sudden movements by the inspectors. As his comments clearly demonstrate, he had no real grasp of the true nature of the inspectorate's work.

Wood and Anderson had tried to give a feeling for the scope of their duties in their annual reports. In the one submitted in March 1891 they described how in the previous April, May and June they had been occupied in compiling statistics, preparing tests for the standard examinations, examining scholarship candidates and inspecting seventy schools. Time had not permitted inspecting a larger number. In the remaining nine months they had examined all the schools in the district, conducted examinations for teachers, pupil

teachers and the remaining scholarship candidates, and had made periodic visits to the Normal School.

The issue of their annual holidays had arisen then as well. The inspectors noted that:

These duties were pursued with a near approach to continuity, generally requiring both day and evening work, often filling up public holidays, and not admitting of any substantial vacation, such as persons engaged in occupations of a similar laborious nature usually enjoy. The intervals of leisure included may, however, be set down as amounting in all to about one fortnight.²

Inspectors certainly did have a valid argument for adequate holidays. The demanding nature of their work, involving extensive travel under difficult conditions, even in what Saunders considered the less scattered and more roaded district of Canterbury, exacted a gruelling toll. There were many occasions when inspectors became ill, requiring extended periods of rest. Boards were quite often faced with employing relieving inspectors while still paying the incumbent at least half his salary. Generally they were reasonable in granting the necessary leave and the tetchy attitude of South Canterbury towards Hammond's period of absence was unusual. Inspectors did not take advantage of their Boards. They fulfilled their duties conscientiously and rose to the demands of the job. Underlying their approach was a firm commitment to the best education of the children in their districts. This chapter describes how they organised the work of inspecting and examining the Board schools and identifies some of the

difficulties inspectors encountered in carrying out their duties. It also traces the clashes between Board and inspectors over the boundaries of the inspectorate's role and describes the expansion of this role as inspectors became responsible for examining non-Board schools.

Each year inspectors made two visits to every school, one for inspection, the other for examination. The first was a "surprise visit" when the inspector arrived unannounced. The term "surprise visit" was one used by inspectors rather than the regulations, although Gow for one did not approve of its general adoption. He found it "scarcely applicable" as it implied suspicion, which he considered unwarranted in his district.³ Nevertheless, teachers were not given notice of this first visit which allowed the inspector to judge the everyday working of the school, make an assessment of the teaching, tone and discipline, and inspect the fabric and cleanliness of the buildings. The examination day was more formally arranged. Pupils and teacher spent anxious weeks preparing for the ordeal. Until the change in regulations allowed teachers to decide on pupils' promotion to the next class, inspectors were faced with examining all children in their area in every major subject. The examination circuit was the most exacting and time consuming portion of the inspectorate's work.

It was the surprise visit of inspection, however,

that inspectors relied on in making a judgement about the usual running of the school. Timetables, registers and schemes of work were all brought out for inspection. Inspectors observed and commented about the standard of teaching, tone and discipline in the various classes. Through this "hierarchical observation", both children and teachers were brought into a "continuous field of surveillance".

For these aspects inspectors drew on their own considerable skill as teachers and administrators but for their other responsibilities on this visit no real knowledge of educational matters was required. Inspecting the state of repair and cleanliness of buildings and grounds needed no formal training or experience in teaching. This was the "factory inspector" aspect of the inspectors' work. In fact, Boards at times debated whether this would come better within the role of the Board architect. Nevertheless, the scope of inspectors' work in both inspection and examination was governed by regulation. It merely remained for them to organise this workload in a way which guaranteed its most effective execution.

SETTING THE BOUNDARIES

Managing two visits to each school required skilled organisation. Where two or more inspectors were involved, as in North Canterbury, they could largely

decide for themselves what the division of responsibilities would be. The travelling necessary to cover the extensive area of the North Canterbury district was fairly distributed. In May of 1889, for example, Anderson took the longer route, inspecting 27 schools in the areas surrounding Rangiora and Oxford, and travelling up the valley as far as Waiau. Meanwhile Wood headed south, visiting six schools in the rural surrounds of Ashburton in the first three days. The bulk of his month's work, however, was spent inspecting the main Christchurch city schools, before travelling south again to see the schools closer to Ashburton itself. The smaller number of nineteen schools inspected by Wood that month did not mean a lighter workload. The city schools were large and entailed more intensive inspection. In May the following year the two inspectors exchanged responsibilities, with Anderson concentrating mostly on the Christchurch schools and with Wood taking the more extensive route. This was a flexible arrangement without any strict matching of itineraries or work schedules.⁴

Having completed the inspections in June of 1889 and the examination of city schools in July and August, Wood and Anderson spent the next seven months again on a rural circuit, conducting examinations in the smaller country schools. When this work finished on 3rd April 1890, they had a respite from travel for the ensuing three weeks before beginning the round of inspection

again in the city schools. Whereas it was at times possible to inspect two of the smaller schools in one day, examinations were far more time consuming. The monotony of repeating the same questions to endless classes, frequently at the end of a tiring journey, made the task a gruelling one.

While inspection visits required the element of surprise, at least on the examination round inspectors were able to follow a logical sequence in their itinerary. In March 1890 both Wood and Anderson tackled the strenuous Peninsula route. In two weeks they examined seventeen schools. Anderson began with the eastern bays before crossing to French Farm and finally over the hills again to Pigeon Bay in the north. Meanwhile Wood concentrated on the schools within the Akaroa Harbour before following the main route back to Little River. Three years earlier Hogben had covered this circuit. From the end of January to the beginning of February he travelled as far as Waikari in the north, Hinds and Longbeach in the south, as well as examining the schools at Sumner, Governor's Bay and the whole Peninsula. His reimbursement of £17-11-6 for the use of public transport, the hire of horse, buggy or cab, the cost of forage and his hotel expenses, in no way measures the personal cost in time and energy.⁵

Although the inspectors were quite able to decide on a fair division of labour themselves, the Board felt the need to watch closely their organisation of work.

This was not to protect the workload of individual inspectors but to maintain what it deemed to be an effective standard of inspection. Seemingly the Board felt that if the same inspector continually assessed the work of any one school, this standard of inspection could not be attained. Some degree of cross-checking was necessary. Yet in 1894, when the Taradale School Committee in Hawkes Bay wrote asking the North Canterbury Board to join them in advising the Minister that no school should be examined by the same inspector over two years, the Board declined.⁶ Perhaps it felt it was an internal matter not requiring the Minister's involvement. Certainly, having the same inspector visit a school on five consecutive occasions was considered beyond a reasonable limit. When this had occurred with the Greendale School by 1897, the inspectors' attention was drawn to the undesirability of this protocol.⁷

The Board's preference for having different inspectors visit a school in different years perhaps points to a lack of trust in the integrity of their inspectors. This was always evident in the heavy-handedness of Saunders, who took every chance to control the work of the inspectorate. It is also there in the Board's requests for the inspectors to submit full itineraries for their proposed work, in its checking of the number of inspections made in the one day, and in its close questioning of uniformity in evaluation procedures.⁸

The most vigorous effort by the Board to control the organisation of inspectors' work was in 1888. In the preceding December, T.H. Anson gave notice of a proposal that the district should be divided into three areas and that each inspector should inspect and examine each division in rotation. By the next meeting, in January 1888, he had modified his stand to the point that the inspectors should be asked to report on the necessity of such a scheme, and if it were found advisable, to make recommendations as to the divisions to be made.⁹ After some delay the request was sent to the inspectorate and in July Hogben, on behalf of the inspectorate, replied. In deference to what they believed to be the feeling of the Board, he said, the inspectors had that year followed the arrangement suggested, changing the entire district allotted to each inspector. The major fault with such a system, they felt, was that too rapid an interchange of districts meant there was no time for an inspector to follow through on his suggestions for improvement, to see that certain points had received attention, or to report adequately to the Board on progress.

Hogben suggested a modified approach with nine subdivisions. Each inspector would have responsibility for three. Every year each would give up one of his subdivisions and take on a new one, so that over a three year period his whole district would change. This was, in practical terms, more or less the system they had

used the previous year. The advantage of this plan, as the inspectors saw it, was that in any one year two thirds of the schools would be inspected and examined by inspectors who knew the standard of work in the previous year.¹⁰

This was a key difference between Board and inspectorate. While the inspectors were willing to have some degree of interchange, they believed in the value of continuity. Their reasoning was sound. The Board, on the other hand, wanted continual change. This might have been to ensure fairness in evaluating the work of a school, but annually rotating each inspector's district was also one way of achieving control over the inspectorate. Or perhaps the Board simply wanted to demonstrate that it, too, could have bright ideas regarding the organisation of inspection.

Hogben's plan also allowed for the more intensive work in examining the city area. The four major town schools, with their side schools, would form one of the nine subdivisions, and the inspector with responsibility for them would be assisted by his colleagues. In return, he would help with the largest schools in their areas, such as Lyttelton, Kaiapoi, St Albans, and Ashburton. This kind of flexibility, Hogben reported, and the ability to make slight modifications as necessity demanded, was essential in a district with such a "scattered character", and one with a continual increase in the number of schools.¹¹

Despite its request for the inspectors' comments, the Board did not immediately act on their report. Although it received the suggestions in July, consideration was deferred and at the end of August it decided to take no action.¹² This may well have been because the Board, by now, was considering reducing the inspectorate to two, making any division of the area into three districts somewhat superfluous. Hogben's recommendation for flexibility in any adopted plan had certainly been correct.

Whatever system of organisation was implemented, the work of the inspectorate remained demanding. Long, tiring journeys by train, tram, coach and steamer, or more arduous ones on horseback, were costly in reimbursements, time and health. Throughout the four decades the Boards kept changing their minds as to whether travel expenses should be treated separately or included in the salary paid to the inspector. The North Canterbury Board took whatever view was most expedient and allowed it the most savings. In South Canterbury, the Board made whatever decision most benefitted its inspectors. Apart from increasing Gow's travel allowance as new schools were created, the Board also listened to its inspectors' representations regarding the way salary and expenses were calculated. In 1910 it agreed to Bell's request that his salary and travelling allowance be fixed separately.¹³ This was different from the process for Gow who apparently had

his expenses included in the one sum. When the Superannuation Board wrote in 1911 asking the Board to state Gow's salary and expense amounts separately, it replied that the £600 paid to Gow was all salary and that he received no travel allowance. This was a somewhat naive response. Not surprisingly, the Superannuation Board was not satisfied and requested more information. The Education Board decided to supply a list of schools visited by Gow during the previous year. The outcome of the Board's attempt to work the system for the benefit of its inspector is not recorded.¹⁴

The North Canterbury Board took a more stringent approach to repayment of expenses. During the financial difficulties of 1895, it decided it would require evidence of all expenses incurred through travel. After Anderson wrote asking members to reconsider this rule, the Board agreed that inspectors could send in quarterly statements, with vouchers only needed for sums exceeding ten shillings.¹⁵ In the previous time of straitened finances, when Hogben resigned in 1889, Saunders' attack on the inspectorate included the cost of their travel. He compared this unfavourably with the travelling expenses of Board members, a comparison which the chairman pointed out was unfair. Unlike Board members, the inspectors had to hire horses wherever they went, and even then, their expenses were less than those of Otago inspectors.¹⁶

Such close scrutiny of expenses was yet another way for the Board to set boundaries on the inspectorate. This attitude did not extend to others in its employ. When motor vehicles were coming into more common use, inspectors were still required to hire horses and buggies yet the Boards felt financially able to provide their other officers with motor vehicles, purchasing motorbikes or small motorcars for their foremen, architects, or agricultural instructors.

The one concession the North Canterbury Board was pleased to make was to agree to Ritchie's request in 1900, to pay him two shillings and sixpence a day as reimbursement for the use of his bicycle on days when he would otherwise have had to hire a horse and buggy.¹⁷ Ritchie was a keen cyclist and a member of the Pioneer Bicycling Club. The Board did not record, however, whether Ritchie was on his bicycle or another form of transport when he had his accident in 1908, but it noted that he had escaped serious injury and could include in his next travelling expenses the cost of repairing his watch and replacing his macintosh.¹⁸

Gow was not so lucky. His bicycle accident was recorded as serious, confining him to the house for a week.¹⁹ Considering the amount of travelling all inspectors did in the course of their Board work, it is surprising that more accidents did not occur. Gow experienced a near miss when he visited Hakataramea Valley School. As one ex-pupil, recalls, the teacher

borrowed a horse and gig so she could invite the inspector for lunch at the home where she boarded. Sue, the horse, wanted to take her usual route in another direction and "that's where the trouble started". Gow, "being a school teacher, produced the cane and tried to show his authority by whacking Sue on the rump". The horse kicked out, smashing the floorboards and front of the gig.²⁰

Having spent time and effort in reaching the schools, inspectors were often frustrated by finding many of the children absent, or even at times, the school closed. Unlike the examination day, when teachers could present their schools in their best educational attire, the unannounced "surprise visit" enabled inspectors to view the school in its everyday garb. When this was foiled by wet weather, closures, or the timetabling of special lessons, the inspectors' frustration was evident. In their annual report for 1891 Wood and Anderson bemoaned the fact that they had "seen too little of the schools in their ordinary work-a-day dress."²¹

Of course this might have been because teachers had an effective warning system set up, where one teacher alerted another of the impending "surprise". Boswell describes this in her account of her early schooldays.

... Inspectors paid surprise visits to schools at unspecified times during the year. Unheralded - at least by official notification - they would

suddenly pounce, and no one could have convinced either children, teachers or committee-men that they were not sent in the hope that they would 'catch out' some hapless teacher in some dereliction of duty. However, though one or two isolated schools might be surprised, the solidarity of the profession and the loyalty of the people saw to it that as many schools as possible received as much warning as possible. Sometimes it was accomplished by the old 'bush telegraph', sometimes by the regular channel of the post office. On the occasion of which I write, the post-master in the Bluff office walked the three miles to the Katui school with a telegram for the teacher. The teacher merely told us with a casual air that the Inspector would be at the school the following day - a gentle hint to spruce ourselves up a bit; later on we learned that it read: 'Enemy on the warpath. Good luck.' No wonder²² that the postmaster was thanked so fervently!

Sewing afternoons also denied the inspector the opportunity to see the ordinary work of the school in action. Wood, visiting Newland School one afternoon in May 1889, encountered a sewing class but, determined to make the most of what opportunity was still left to him, examined the tangible evidence of pupils' efforts in copybooks and written exercises.²³ Poor weather at times diminished the number of children attending. That same month, Anderson found only nine children present in the lower department of Ashley School. He was therefore "not prepared to express any opinion on the work of the Mistress further than that she gave satisfactory attention to those present".²⁴

Nor did they accept wet weather as an excuse for absent pupils. One inspector was surprised to find a school the size of Oxford West closed, "when, though the weather was stormy, all the smaller schools in the

neighbourhood were open".²⁵ In April 1913 the Appointments Committee of the North Canterbury Board, which deliberated on all inspectors' reports, was moved to ask the inspectors whether, owing to the very poor attendance due to inclement weather, they "had considered the inadvisability of inspecting a country school on a very wet day". Brock replied that every endeavour was made to avoid inspecting schools on such days, although inspectors were sometimes compelled to do so "to avoid dislocation of general arrangements". He pointed out that of 200 visits made that year, only a little over 3% had been affected by weather conditions and that the inspector's "principal work on such occasions was to analyse timetables, discuss schemes of work with the teacher, and inspect registers and records". The Board was satisfied.²⁶

While the inspector could keep one eye on the weather and perhaps alter his programme for the day accordingly, he had no chance of planning his work around unexpected holidays. Despite the increasingly stringent requirements for attendance set out in successive legislation, schools often concurred with parents' wishes to have their children at home. This was especially so in rural areas where schools would declare a "harvest holiday". They had little sympathy for the plight of inspectors who should know better than to be caught out, arriving for a surprise visit during harvest time. The Little River School Committee

expressed its impatience at the shortsightedness of the inspector, huffily pointing out to the Board in 1904 that after all, the grass-seed harvest usually did continue till March and that "the Inspector's arduous and difficult travelling over the Peninsula need not be mentioned".²⁷

From time to time the inspectors complained to the Appointments Committee about the amount of time lost through finding schools closed because of harvest holidays. The Committee seemed at a loss to know what to do, asking the inspectors for their suggestions, or pointing out that "the inconvenience referred to occurred at Easter time only". Nevertheless they felt that a circular to head teachers requesting information about intended school closures around that season of the year "would meet the difficulty". The inspectors were not convinced and urged the Committee to require notice of school closures on all occasions. The Committee agreed and arranged for forms to go to all headteachers.²⁸

Even so, the problem remained. In 1914 Brock again found it necessary to complain about school closures. Both The Peaks and Courtenay Schools had been closed on his inspection visit and while in the case of Courtenay the circumstances were "exceptional", owing to the illness of the teacher, there was no apparent excuse for The Peaks. The Appointments Committee agreed to reissue their circular requiring teachers to give notice

of intended closures.²⁹

The matter was never entirely resolved. Teachers continued to call unexpected holidays. In 1911, after a long journey, Hardie found the Mount Grey Downs School closed for the Annual Sunday School Picnic. Not to be outdone, he pursued Miss C. Armstrong, the teacher, to her home and subsequently reported, with a deal of satisfaction, that he was able "to look through the Registers, Workbooks, etc and inspect the buildings".³⁰ Tracking down the teacher was a skill well developed by the inspectors. Two months later Foster reported that the object of his May visit to Dromore School was "to see the school in working order" as the previous year Brock had found it closed. Despite this setback, Brock had "spent the greater part of a morning discussing educational matters with the teacher".³¹ Twelve days after visiting Dromore, Foster himself encountered Clarkville School closed, yet followed the same strategy and reported that "the greater part of the morning was occupied in discussing school matters with the master".³² Clearly, school closure did not necessarily create a day off for the teacher.

Inspectors rarely found schools closed on the annual examination day. This visit was planned well in advance and all knew its importance. Inspectors wrote out their intended schedule for the Board Secretary who then notified the school committees. Occasionally plans went awry. Mulgan came across a school where the

teacher had not received the notice of the examination sent to the committee chairman'. He suggested that in future all papers should be sent direct to the head teacher, with committees notified of the date.³³ It is unclear what happened in the case of Barry's Bay School in 1887. On his long journey round the Peninsula area that year, Hogben found the Barry's Bay School closed on the appointed day. On enquiry he discovered that the school had not even been opened since the arrival of the new teacher.³⁴ Occasionally schools were closed on examination day through sickness. As this was rare, Boards made allowances. The South Canterbury Board made special arrangements for Gow to return to Hakataramea Valley School in 1898 when it was temporarily closed for this reason, allowing him an extra £2 for the purpose.³⁵

Sometimes schools requested a postponement of the examination. If inspectors were able, they accommodated such requests but made it clear to all that there were limits. When Hogben agreed to a delay in examining Kaiapoi School in 1887, he told the Board Secretary that this was the latest date possible "without entirely upsetting the Inspector's arrangements".³⁶ Probably inspectors were swayed by requests based on reasonable grounds. One that was more questionable was that of the Kaikoura Town School. The Board Secretary wrote to Ritchie in March 1897 saying that Mr Borthwick wanted the inspector's visit postponed for one week. Mr Borthwick had said that as the examination day was the

day fixed for the Licensing Elections, as well as the day for the annual cricket match between Kaikoura and Waiau, it was considered a public holiday. Apparently he hoped for a prompt decision as the Secretary added that Mr Borthwick was returning to Kaikoura by steamer that night.³⁷

Occasionally it would be an inspector who upset examination plans. Restell seems to have taken a more casual approach to arrangements at times. Colbourne-Veel, Secretary to the North Canterbury Board in 1879, had to make excuses to various schools when Restell did not arrive on the appointed day. The Secretary found himself writing to three schools in one month. To Loburn School he said that he had not heard from Restell why the visit had not taken place, but "probably he was detained elsewhere". He added hopefully that Restell had perhaps already written to the school to fix another day for the visit. The same format was used in reply to Ashley Bank School. The Pigeon Bay Committee, however, was not to be fobbed off. When Colbourne-Veel told them that Restell had not yet sent in his report, the Committee wrote back claiming that the Pigeon Bay district was "treated exceptionally". The Board Secretary retorted that he did not know what they meant. So far as he was aware both the main and side schools were visited "in the regular course" and the inspector's reports would be forwarded to the Committee when they had been before the Board.³⁸

Ideally all schools would be inspected sometime during the course of the year and examined at the end. This was not always the case. Often schools had to be examined in the early months of the following year and pupils waited until then to be put up into the next class. Inspectors wanted to improve this situation. The main target for adjustment was the difficult Peninsula route. In 1906 the North Canterbury inspectors told the Board that their routine for the year had been arranged with a view to bringing the Peninsula schools gradually into line with those examined towards the end of the year.³⁹ Even then, some schools in other parts of Canterbury were out of step. The inspectors reported that their 1908 programme of visits would be arranged so that at least November and part of December would be available for conducting the Standard VI examinations, but the schools north of Waikari would still have to be examined before Easter that year, as was customary. All other schools would be dealt with in groups. The Board agreed, recommending that the examination centres should be made as numerous as circumstances permitted.⁴⁰

It was easier to organise examination centres when only Standard VI pupils had to be examined. Before the turn of the century, inspectors were required by regulation to examine all pupils in certain subjects. This workload was more difficult to arrange. Inspectors were delighted, therefore, when smaller schools co-

operated in combining examination days. Wood reported to the Board in March 1890 that:

... by the kind consideration of parents the children of the Ruapuna district were sent to the Mayfield School, where the pupils of both schools were examined together. One family only failed to appear.⁴¹

Another problem emerged. Pupils who had gained their Proficiency Certificate saw no reason to remain at school until the end of the year. A concerned North Canterbury Board asked its inspectors whether it would be practicable to examine Standard VI students in the city schools later in the year. The inspectors agreed. They too had noticed the problem. In future, the examination for these certificates would be held as late as possible in the year.⁴²

But plans for late examinations could be upset by other factors. In 1915 the Board noted that some schools were being examined earlier that year. Brock patiently explained that having been requested by the Department to mark some 4000 papers for the Junior National Scholarships and Junior Free Places, the inspectors were obliged to save the last two to three weeks of the year for this purpose. In fairness to the schools, the Board asked the inspectors to remember that the period of preparation for the examinations would consequently be shortened.⁴³

A similar reminder was given to Gow in 1900 when the South Canterbury Board asked why the examinations of schools in the Fairlie district had been fixed one week

earlier that year than had been promised. Gow replied that all the examinations had been taken earlier in order to get them over before Christmas. No schools had been passed over, he reasoned, to get to Fairlie earlier. Besides, he thought that a week was neither here nor there in a year's work.⁴⁴

The Boards were also concerned that fairness was maintained when inspectors examined private schools and questioned whether they applied the same standards of efficiency to their work. The inspectors reassured the Board members that the same standards applied, although initially they made some allowance in certain subjects.⁴⁵

EXTENDING THE BOUNDARIES

Those who controlled private and denominational schools assumed that they could have the services of education boards' inspectors if they requested them. It was not always this clear cut. The need for such examination was often discussed. As early as 1879 a correspondent to the Press remarked that it was imperative that:

... every child in New Zealand should be compelled to pass an examination ... before he or she should be permitted to leave school, and that those in private schools should not be exempt.⁴⁶

Certainly the Boards debated whether it was their role to conduct examinations and inspections in these schools. Their outlook changed through the decades,

perhaps influenced at times by an anti-Catholic sentiment, although requests from non-Catholic schools were dealt with in a similar fashion. Butchers' account of this debate in Canterbury gives the impression that the question was first raised in 1895.⁴⁷ This is inaccurate. In the early years after their establishment as Boards, both North and South Canterbury considered the question. The northern Board agreed to allow its inspectors to examine Roman Catholic schools at Shands Track, on the request of the Rev. J.C. Chervier, and at Ashburton, at the Rev. E. Coffey's request.⁴⁸ Dr Anderson, in his capacity as inspector for South Canterbury, visited a little school at Waihao Forks "established by private enterprise", and recommended to the Board that instead of giving the school the maps it requested, the Board should sell them at a nominal cost.⁴⁹ This was not the only expense to the Board in their involvement with private and denominational schools. As the number of applications for examination increased so did the time inspectors needed for making necessary arrangements, and so did the cost to the Board.

By 1889 the North Canterbury Board had resolved to discontinue this service to these schools.⁵⁰ The two arguments which weighed in favour of continuing to examine pupils in private or denominational schools, however, were that it would help to maintain standards of education throughout the country and that some

measure was required to enable private pupils to gain recognised qualifications. This latter view swayed the North Canterbury Board again in 1892 when it resolved that pupils at private schools, who were candidates for appointments in the Public Service could attend a public school on examination day so they could obtain the required certificates.⁵¹ For some reason this offer was not enthusiastically taken up by the managers of the private schools.⁵²

Although it was prepared to help private pupils acquire recognised qualifications, the North Canterbury Board was not prepared to deploy its resources in the wholesale inspection of private schools. In 1895 it made it clear to the Minister that:

... in its opinion it was not desirable that any portion of the funds voted by Parliament for the support of our national schools should be diverted to the inspection of any denominational schools.⁵³

Evidently its discussions on this matter had alarmed certain sections of the public. The Rangiora School Committee was even moved to forward to the Board a copy of the resolution passed by them, "strongly disapproving of the State School Inspectors examining private schools".⁵⁴

The South Canterbury Board took a more cautious approach before making up its mind. On receiving a similar request at the beginning of 1895 it first asked for information on the number of schools and their average attendance. The Roman Catholic authorities

replied that five schools in the Board's area, with about 585 pupils, would need to be examined. The Board agreed.⁵⁵ In April a committee was formed to discuss the matter more fully with the inspector. Gow's personal opinion is unknown but on considering the committee's recommendations the Board decided that Gow was to treat the Roman Catholic schools as the Board's own, encompassing them within his usual duties and salary. He would, however, be given an increase of £10 towards his travelling allowance. Gow discharged this duty and in June reported on the five schools, in Timaru, Waimate, Temuka and Kerrytown.⁵⁶

A further application was made in 1897 when the Reverend Father Lewis asked that the girls who were preparing for qualification as teachers under Madame Dempsey at the convent school be examined in a year's time. The Board consulted the Department. The Minister saw no objection but the Board still decided on caution. It asked the church authorities whether they were willing to contribute to the expense of these examinations, and when the church suggested a contribution of a guinea a head, the Board agreed to examine them, so long as the number of pupil teachers involved did not exceed what they would have been entitled to, had they been Board schools.⁵⁷

In 1898 the North Canterbury Board was again stirred by the argument, initiated this time by a further request from the Very Reverend Father Cummings,

Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Church in New Zealand.⁵⁸ Although its annual report to the Minister that year gives the impression that the Board was fairly uniform in its thinking, this was not so. Discussions became complicated, with members pointing to previous resolutions carried in meetings years before. Some Board members wanted a subcommittee to consider the whole question, especially whether it would mean more requests by other schools, whether State education would be affected, and whether the present inspectorate would be expected to undertake the work. Others had had enough. Saunders, typically, wanted the Very Reverend Father Cummings to be respectfully informed that:

... it would be a violation of the first principles of the Constitution Act of New Zealand, as well as the spirit of the New Zealand Education Act, if the North Canterbury Board of Education were to sanction the diversion, to any sectarian or denominational purpose, of any portion, however small, of the large sums of public money ... entrusted to them for the promotion of the free, secular and unsectarian instruction of the whole of the children of New Zealand.⁵⁹

His motion was eventually carried.

Saunders appealed to a broad principle but there was also the practical question of who inspectors would report to if they examined private schools. In its annual report the Board described the anomalous situation:

... that inspectors appointed and paid by the Board should be employed to either examine or inspect denominational schools, and to report either to the denominational authorities, who are not their employers, or to their employers, who have no voice or interest whatever in the management or control

of such institutions.⁶⁰

But this anomaly aside, the questions surrounding the requirement for qualifications and the need for educational standards remained.

The first question was the one which brought Saunders to a less entrenched position. At the March meeting he suggested that inspectors should give at least seven days' notice of the date when they would examine any state school near a private one, so that the Board Secretary could then inform the person in charge of the private school. Candidates for examination in the higher Standards could then attend, bearing a written request from their principal teacher. Inspectors would be authorised to send on to that teacher the appropriate certificate for any successful candidate, "such as may be required by the provisions of the Factory Act or for admission to the Civil Service".⁶¹

Three months later the Board was again discussing the issue. This time they had returned to the other central question, namely the need for a standard form of education for all children in the colony. Finally, after a division, the Board resolved by one vote to send to the Minister the message that:

... all private schools should be subject to annual inspection and examination by the State, as a guarantee that every child in the Education District is receiving⁸² a sound education, as required by the Act.

Saunders' position against this resolution came as no

surprise. The key element for the Board must have been that the Department should shoulder this responsibility fully. The State had to make adequate provision for the appointment of such inspectors.

Meanwhile the Catholic schools kept asking. The Board responded by sending them copies of its resolutions. In this way it could be seen to be willing to co-operate, while doing nothing. The issue grumbled on. In 1904 new regulations required the Board to undertake the examination of all pupils, public or private, who were candidates for the Competency Certificate. Accordingly it instructed its inspectors that when private schools made application, they were to do this work, "so far as practicable".⁶³ Indeed, inspectors were at times unable to fulfil the task, through pressure of their own work. That same year they told the Board that in order to do justice to the Board's own schools, they could examine no other private schools for the current year. A Board member's proposal to appoint one of the headmasters to do the work on Saturdays fell flat.⁶⁴

Finally, in 1908, the Education Department notified the Board that a grant in aid would be paid to offset the cost of inspecting private schools. As the centralisation of the inspectorate became imminent, the Department took stock of the extent of its role in this domain. It decided on a Doomsday approach, writing to Boards for a list of private schools in each district.

Boards were advised to place advertisements and to ask all head teachers to let their Board know of any private schools in their area.⁶⁵

The Boards complied, submitting their full lists around July, but by now they were more concerned about the question of centralisation. In particular, the North Canterbury Board objected to the inspectorate being placed directly under the Department. Central to its concern was the same kind of anomaly it had pointed out when declining requests to examine denominational schools. Then the issue was that employees of one body would be doing the work of another, and inspectors would be reporting to Boards which had no immediate interest in the functioning of the school. Now the issue was that inspectors would be doing work of direct importance to the Boards, but reporting presumably to their employers, the Department. If inspectors were to be responsible directly to the Department, who would take action on "indifferent reports"?

In posing this question the Board was either highlighting the importance it placed on the inspectorate's work, or masking its fear of a stronger centralised control, or both. Boards would not willingly give up their power over the inspectorate. For nearly four decades they had been the ones to set the boundaries on inspectorate work. But Boards did genuinely value the monitoring role of their inspectors and relied on them to assess and maintain the

educational standard of schools in their districts. The exacting work carried out by inspectors, their willingness to undertake tiring travel to all schools twice each year, and their support and guidance of the work of teachers, were essential to the effective functioning of the Education Boards.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. NCEB Minutes, 20 April 1893.
2. AJHR, 1891, E-1B p. 27.
3. AJHR, 1881, E-1B p. 25.
4. NCEB Inspectors' Report Books for 1889 and 1890.
5. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 8 March 1887.
6. NCEB Minutes, 9 August 1894.
7. NCEB Minutes, 19 May 1897.
8. See for example NCEB Minutes, 18 July 1906, 10 April 1907, 8 May 1907, 22 December 1909, 2 November 1910.
9. NCEB Minutes, 1 December 1887, 5 January 1888.
10. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 3 July 1888.
11. *ibid.*
12. NCEB Minutes, 30 August 1888.
13. SCEB Minutes, 27 September 1910.
14. SCEB Minutes, 12 March 1912, 14 May 1912.
15. NCEB Minutes, 19 June 1895, 3 July 1895.
16. NCEB Minutes, 16 July 1900.
17. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 16 July 1900.
18. NCEB Minutes, 13 May 1908.
19. SCEB Minutes, 14 March 1900.
20. Ellis, Echoes from the Past, pp. 22-3. Similar trials are described in Davey, Fifty Years of National Education in New Zealand.
21. AJHR, 1891, E-1B p. 28.
22. Boswell, Ernie and the Rest of Us, pp. 98-9.
23. NCEB IRB, 3 May 1889.

24. NCEB IRB, 9 May 1889.
25. NCEB IRB, 25 April 1912.
26. NCEB Minutes, 23 April 1913, 21 May 1913.
27. NCEB Minutes, 23 March 1904.
28. NCEB Minutes, 13 May 1908, 10 June 1908, 5 August 1908.
29. NCEB Minutes, 20 May 1914.
30. NCEB IRB, 30 March 1911.
31. NCEB IRB, 3 May 1911.
32. NCEB IRB, 15 May 1911.
33. NCEB Minutes, 6 June 1906.
34. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 9 March 1887.
35. SCEB Minutes, 30 November 1898.
36. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 13 August 1887.
37. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 15 March 1897.
38. West Christchurch Householders' Letterbook, 6 October 1879, 9 October 1879, 10 October 1879, 15 October 1879.
39. NCEB Minutes, 6 June 1906.
40. NCEB Minutes, 11 March 1908.
41. NCEB IRB, 28 March 1890.
42. NCEB Minutes, 9 December 1908, 30 December 1908.
43. NCEB Minutes, 10 November 1915.
44. SCEB Minutes, 10 October 1900.
45. NCEB Minutes, 7 August 1913, 3 September 1913.
46. Press, 10 May 1879, p. 2.
47. Butchers, A Centennial History of Education in Canterbury, p. 78.

48. See for example NCEB Minutes, 7 September 1882, 6 September 1883.
49. SCEB Minutes, 4 March 1886.
50. NCEB Minutes, 9 May 1889.
51. Cited in NCEB Minutes, 9 March 1898.
52. Cited in NCEB Minutes, 11 May 1898.
53. Cited in Butchers, p. 79.
54. NCEB Minutes, 11 September 1895.
55. SCEB Minutes, 17 January 1895, 7 February 1895.
56. SCEB Minutes, 5 April 1895, 6 May 1895, 6 June 1895.
57. SCEB Minutes, 11 August 1897, 8 September 1897, 13 October 1897.
58. NCEB Minutes, 16 February 1898.
59. NCEB Minutes, 9 March 1898.
60. Cited in Butchers, p. 78.
61. NCEB Minutes, 30 March 1898.
62. NCEB Minutes, 11 May 1898, 22 June 1898.
63. AJHR, 1904, E-1 p. 93. My emphasis.
64. NCEB Minutes, 17 August 1904, 7 September 1904.
65. NCEB Minutes, 26 May 1915, 7 July 1915.

CHAPTER 4

"SOUND MINDS IN SOUND BODIES":
INSPECTING THE HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENT

Besides considering the nature and quality of teaching, and the general tone and discipline of the classes, on the surprise visit inspectors also judged the physical environment of the school. This role could just as well have been undertaken by any local official, an inspector of factories rather than schools, for example, as it did not require specialised knowledge of education. In the social and industrial context of the period, expertise in inspection was easily transferred from one situation to another. It was a time when Grace Neill was able smoothly to change from inspecting conditions in factories to conditions in hospitals and asylums.

What did justify making this the responsibility of a school inspector was the belief that an education system which strove to develop healthy minds and bodies needed to address the physical environment of the schools.

'A sound mind in a sound body' is an educational principle which is being more fully insisted upon every day. It is impossible that normal mental development can take place if the physical condition of the scholar is unsatisfactory...¹

Educators realised that it was pointless teaching children the principles of health in a hazardous

environment. Health education could only take place in healthy surroundings.

Rather than being places in which children could safely receive an education, however, schools put children at risk. Overcrowded, dark and dirty, with furniture not designed with the comfort of children in mind, schools created hazardous environments. Playgrounds, if the exterior space warranted the name, provided traps for unwary children with unsafe apparatus, poor drainage and potholes. Sanitation became an issue. Successive epidemics of disease swept through the country, affecting hundreds of children at a time. Schools responded with disinfection, fumigation or closures.

Throughout these four decades education authorities gradually took up the cause of providing safe surroundings for children's schooling. The initial rush to provide school accommodation for the expanding education districts had slowed by the 1890s and boards were then able to improve conditions in the older schools. Repairs to buildings, development of playgrounds and attention to school sanitation claimed their attention. Continually active in this movement for better school conditions were the inspectors. Through their inspection reports they admonished and encouraged boards and school committees to improve the standard and cleanliness of schools. Only then could schools develop healthy, knowledgeable citizens for the

country's future. This chapter examines the inspectors' role in ensuring a safe and healthy school environment and briefly describes the impact of schooling on children's health.

THE STATE OF CANTERBURY SCHOOLS

Inspectors kept a vigilant eye on the state of schools in their Board districts. Canterbury schools were often far from satisfactory. While Boards hurried to provide sufficient schools for their areas, they could hardly keep up with the maintenance necessary on existing buildings. Inspectors' reports, especially in the earlier years, repeatedly described the appalling state of schools all over Canterbury. Disrepair was the norm rather than the exception. Examples from three different years illustrate the common problem in the 1890s. In 1890 Anderson reported on Flemington School.

The general state of uncleanness in the school and outside offices, the wretched state of repair of the latter, neglected fences, the broken remains of gymnastic apparatus and of a school pump give an impression of local management the reverse of favourable.²

Five years later Ritchie reported on Mount Grey Downs.

The rooms are not well lighted, nor is the ventilation quite satisfactory. The chimneys are badly placed, and in one of them the draught is defective, more especially when the wind blows from south west. The filthy condition of the closet in one side of the ground is very objectionable, and some parts of another closet₃ are falling off through decay of the timber.

In 1899 Howard, an Acting Inspector, visited Kyle.

The chimney at the back of the fireplace is almost in a state of collapse, several bricks falling into the fire on the morning of the inspection. Portions of the ceiling above the fireplace are hanging in a most threatening manner.

Somewhat casually he added that "with the above exceptions nothing about the buildings calls for special mention".⁴

While each of these reports spells out quite a number of problems, the remarks were not exceptional. In these decades inspectors consistently mentioned disrepair or unsanitary conditions. It was not until the early twentieth century that matters improved. Boards were not helped in maintaining schools in a good state of repair when buildings were also used for other purposes. Scattered through the minutes of Board meetings are concerns about damage to premises through careless use. Inspectors raised the issue in 1883, for example, when New Brighton School suffered "on the occasion of an entertainment". The School Committee was requested "to put things straight".⁵

Inspectors did not let such situations go by without a mention in their annual reports. The year before, Hammond had said that much of the damage to school furniture and equipment occurred when schools were used for "public meetings and entertainments". He gave an example.

In one case that came under my own notice ... an entertainment, followed by a dance, was held in the schoolroom. The blackboards were taken out of their frames and placed upon desks for a platform, and were seriously indented and damaged; the maps

and diagrams were taken down and packed away without care; the room was so crowded that many of those present were standing on the desks and forms; and after the entertainment the whole of the furniture was unceremoniously put outside in the rain to make room for the dance.⁶

And a good time was had by all.

Such entertainments usually did involve dancing. In 1887 it was the turn of the Killinchy School Committee to complain, when the Library Committee allowed dancing in the library room. The Board instructed the Library Committee to remove the building from the school grounds forthwith.⁷ It is unclear whether the Board was more concerned about potential damage to adjacent school buildings or the fact that such frivolity had taken place at all. The local branch of the NZEI even entered the fray when it wrote to the Board in 1896 warning of the costs of injury to furniture when dancing was allowed in schools.⁸ At any rate, Boards refused to take out insurance against damage. General mess created by outsiders' use was easier to deal with, as at Addington in 1902, when Wood noticed untidiness "in one of the rooms which had been used on the previous Saturday by a swimming club".⁹

Despite the alarming physical conditions in schools, teachers struggled on and inspectors admired them. Ritchie was moved to note, in 1894, that the master at Porter's Pass was:

... doing his best to perform his duties efficiently in premises and surroundings which might well damp the ardour of any teacher, and which can hardly fail to react upon the minds, if

not the bodies, of his pupils. ... With regard to utter unfitness for its present purpose the building leaves nothing further to be desired. In its material, in all its dimensions, in lighting, warming, ventilation and furnishing the school room is quite unsuitable for human occupation.¹⁰

Floors were rotten, roofs sagged or gaped, windows stuck and often admitted little light. Visiting Spreydon in 1899 Howard, the Acting Inspector, noted that the flooring in the schoolroom was in very bad condition.

In many places the boards are broken, and in one place among the desks there is a hole big enough for a child's foot to pass through.

It is hardly surprising that he added that ventilation was satisfactory, "except for the fierce draughts caused by the broken floor".¹¹

Spotswood School had a similar problem of unwanted ventilation. There the lining of the room had shrunk and the master complained to the visiting inspector that when there was a strong wind the room was unbearable.¹² While the Spreydon flooring had gaping holes, so too did the Eyreton West roof. Ritchie remarked that on the day of his visit in March 1894, "too much blue sky was visible through the lining and shingles".¹³ A similar problem existed at Coalgate, where "during the inspection visit rain was falling through the roof of the Infant room".¹⁴

Keeping children warm in such conditions was difficult. An open fireplace was often ineffective in the draughty buildings and was frequently too small, in

disrepair or so far from most pupils that its warmth dissipated within a few feet. At Mount Grey Downs School Ritchie noted that in the master's room "the chimney is so defective that it is seldom practicable to light a fire".¹⁵ At Lauriston the fender was "almost a wreck" and the brickwork behind the grate "scarcely in safe condition".¹⁶ Schoolrooms were often reported by inspectors as "intensely cold". The worst case was Eiffelton. When Ritchie visited it in July of 1895, he found the interior of the brick walls very damp. The subsequent cold temperature in the room was not helped by the lack of a fire. As Ritchie reported:

... the arrangements for warming the school are distinctly unsatisfactory. On inspection day a fire had been laid in the grate, but not lighted. The condition of the ground on the shady side of the building showed that there, at any rate, the temperature had not risen above freezing point, and within the school-room this cold was intensified by the damp condition of the walls. It seems very desirable indeed that greater attention should be shown to the health and comfort of the pupils in attendance.¹⁷

Nothing had been done by Anderson's visit the next year. He recommended that the exterior of the building be given a coating of oil, as at Waltham School.¹⁸

To make matters worse, children often sat for hours in wet clothing. The long trek to school each morning, usually by foot or horse, was undertaken in all weathers and it was common for inspectors to find "drenched children" on inspection mornings. People were aware of the dangers to children from sitting in wet clothing. Their major concern became tuberculosis, or

consumption, and a worried "Onlooker" wrote to the Press.

One of the most fruitful causes of consumption is the sitting in wet shoes and stockings, and even worse the drying them on the feet. ... I have seen children in tennis shoes and old stockings, both wringing, not in an occasional shower, but in real bad settled pouring rain.¹⁹

At the other extreme, children were in danger from the open fires themselves. In 1910 the Department sent a circular to all boards warning that a girl had died when her clothes caught fire. The jury investigating the case recommended that boards install screens round all fireplaces.²⁰

A more chronic difficulty came from fires which smoked badly. Ventilation in winter, as in summer, became a problem. Windows were small, high and often jammed shut. As Ritchie noted on his inspection visit in April 1894, the Mount Grey Downs school building was "mainly ventilated through chinks in the walls, as in the ordinary weather the windows cannot be opened".²¹ In rooms without such natural ventilation, the atmosphere could become very close. It was not helped by tobacco smoke.

In a long list of complaints against the Marshland School in 1904, the Board was told that the schoolroom air was "reeking with tobacco smoke" and therefore "unfit for inhalation by the children".²² Teachers were, of course, not supposed to smoke in classrooms although the occasional pipe of a male

teacher was tolerated if smoked discreetly. When Valentine became inspector for the West Coast he noted that the fireplace of the Bruce Bay School showed that Mr Bannister, the teacher, smoked throughout most of the day. Occasionally, while the inspector was there, Bannister "took out his old pipe and prepared for action" but, remembering Valentine's presence, "hastily put it away".²³ It was a different matter for women teachers. Miss Loughlin, a relieving teacher at Courtenay in 1912, denied that she smoked cigarettes in view of the school children but admitted that she did occasionally smoke for the benefit of her throat as she suffered from asthma.²⁴

City schools were just as poorly ventilated. In 1906 a Mr W.C. Aitken, member of the East Christchurch School Committee, wrote to the newspaper stating that in the school's infant department, which had a regular attendance of 150 children aged between six and ten years, there was no ventilation except by the entrance doors. "The atmosphere was so vitiated by poisonous germs that it was not possible to remain in the room more than a few minutes."²⁵ Enquiries were made. The reporter discovered that one room had no window at all, but only skylights which could not open.

... the only passage for fresh air is through the cracks round the doors, and though these will no doubt provide a variety of keen-edged draughts the ventilation they afford must be quite inadequate.²⁶

The headmaster was unperturbed. "They get," he said,

"plenty of play-time in the open air, and they are exercised three times daily in lung expansion."²⁷

The newspaper, knowing it was on to a good story, sought medical opinion. The doctors interviewed stressed the need for good ventilation through open windows. "There is nothing like windows for ventilation," said one. "I am not a great believer in air vents in walls and ceilings."²⁸

To round off the story the newspaper editorial said cynically that:

The worst of it is that prevention is too simple to be popular. If it required medical attention ... or, even worse, extensive purchase of quack medicines, few people would suffer from the lack of fresh air. But as, in most cases, it only requires the admission of air through open windows, regulated by the simplest scientific methods, a great many²⁹ appear to think it not worth their attention.

Although the reporter shrugged that "yesterday the cause was school furniture; to-day it is defective ventilation",³⁰ the situation was not an isolated incident. In both earlier and later years discussion focussed on the issue of ventilation but people did not always agree. In 1889 the Sydenham School Committee drew Wood's attention to the ventilation problem in two infant classrooms and in one of the main rooms in the Boys' Department. He was not unduly concerned. "The means employed to ventilate these rooms seem to me to be effective enough," he said, but added, "It would not however cost much to provide a further supply of fresh air in all three cases."³¹ In South Canterbury the

Timaru South School Committee was considerably affronted in 1914 by comments on overcrowding made by the medical inspector from the new school medical service.

Nevertheless it did ask the Board to improve the ventilation in the Standard II classroom by putting in a door "to provide a cross current and a direct opening into the playground". Aggrieved that the medical inspector had drawn such unfavourable attention to its buildings, the Committee added sourly that in its opinion "the present system of medical inspection is likely to prove of little value".³² The school medical service had only been established two years but had already identified many problems in children's health. Poor posture and chest deformities highlighted the need for exercises in lung expansion and for proper classroom ventilation.

Whether windows provided adequate ventilation or not, they rarely gave adequate light. Many were poorly placed. The light that was admitted came in the form of a glare, hard on the eyes. As Ritchie reported in 1895, the lighting in the master's room at Tinwald was not only defective, but was "at times affected by a peculiar glare which is injurious to the eyes".³³ At Spotswood, too, he noted that "at certain periods a glare in the room is very trying to the eyes of one who works, as the Master must, facing the windows". He felt that "stippling the lower panes would give some relief in this direction".³⁴

More frequently, it was children who struggled to see in inadequate lighting. A damning report by Ritchie in 1899 suggests a degree of incompetence by the designers of Riccarton School.

In the construction of the two older rooms the exclusion of light seems to have been the main study, and the attainment₃₅ of that end has been unfortunately successful.

Ritchie had already remarked on the results of this exclusion of light when he inspected the school in 1896. "Some of the rooms are so badly lighted," he said, "that at the distance of a few feet a child may become practically invisible."³⁶ Similar gloom was evident at Dorie. Howard remarked in 1899 that during the winter, even on bright days, it was necessary to light a lamp for some lessons.³⁷

Lighting was officially considered adequate if, on an overcast or rainy day, it measured "fifty candle metres", the equivalent of light given by fifty candles placed one metre from a child. Less than this subjected pupils' eyes to undue strain.³⁸ In Hawkes Bay in 1893, a Mr Alfred Levi, oculist, tested the sight of 475 Napier children. Only a third had normal sight.³⁹ It would be surprising if Canterbury children were not similarly affected.

Inspectors noted that the dark staining of the interior lining of schoolrooms frequently added to the gloom. Walls were dirty and smoke-stained and must have absorbed a good deal of light. Fresh paint, or at the

very least a good sweeping down with a stiff broom to remove cobwebs and dust, were often recommended.

Ritchie's report on Woodend in 1895 is typical.

The aspect of the rooms internally is anything but cheerful. Fresh paint has long been needed, but failing its application, considerable improvement could be effected through the agency of soap, water and scrubbing-brush.⁴⁰

As time went by, inspectors noted an improvement in school interiors. Rather than being "dark and dungeonlike" or "dismal and depressing", by the second two decades they were being described as "clean, tidy and attractive". Pictures, photographs and even "window-gardens" drew favourable comment but children's art work was rarely if ever displayed. In 1902 Anderson was pleased to report that at Greenpark the master's room was:

... what every schoolroom should be, tastefully and educatively hung with pictures, photographs and coloured illustrations of natural objects, which cannot fail to have a beneficial effect, in their refining influence, on the minds of the children.⁴¹

The importance of not letting enthusiasm run ahead of good taste, however, was highlighted in the inspectors' report for 1914. While congratulating many of the teachers on their efforts, they emphasised "the necessity for careful selection and for careful hanging".⁴² Their colleague in Taranaki agreed, commenting that some teachers "err in displaying a superabundance of pictures on the walls instead of making a selection of a few good ones".⁴³ Unbridled enthusiasm was evidently not rewarded.

While the interior appearance of schoolrooms improved, the accommodation they afforded did not. Overcrowding was common. As the number of children attending school increased, Boards were hard pressed to provide sufficient buildings. Children were crammed into large rooms, sitting squashed together on bench forms. Gow was worried about overcrowding at Fairlie where there was no floor space left at all, "the whole floor being covered with desks".⁴⁴ Even at the end of the period the problem remained. In 1915 he invited the Minister to visit Geraldine School to see for himself their need for new accommodation.⁴⁵

In North Canterbury the problem was no better. Schools built for forty were accommodating sixty. Bushside was one example. Here at least, according to Wood, they had the advantage of a spacious lobby which in good weather made "a fairly suitable classroom".⁴⁶ Others made do with whatever room was available. Unfortunately for the Christchurch East School, in Gloucester St, there was "an undue preponderance of small classrooms" which, "with due consideration for the health of children and teachers", the inspector felt "should only be occupied for short intervals".⁴⁷

Unlike the Bushside School, some were unable to use their alternate spaces. At Duvauchelle's Bay in 1893 Ritchie found one of the porches filled with "an accumulation of straw and other rubbish" which he did not consider "likely to diminish the fire-risk".⁴⁸

Aylesbury had its porch used as a hen-roost. Wood was unimpressed. In his 1890 report he sniffed that "such a practice is not consistent with even primitive notions of cleanliness".⁴⁹ Other forms of livestock were not uncommon though perhaps uninvited. Both Lakeside and Pigeon Bay Side School were affected by bees. At the former, Ritchie felt that "the presence of a swarm of bees in the school building tends, at times, to fix the attention of the pupils on other matters than those laid down in the syllabus".⁵⁰

Eventually the standard considered acceptable for accommodation was set in regulations. First ten, and later twelve, square feet per child was the minimum space allowed. Even then it was not always achieved. One of the difficulties was that children of different ages did not disperse themselves evenly over the classes, so often one class was far bigger than another but had to make do with the existing room. In 1915 large numbers were still common. A return submitted by the inspectors showed that there were over fifty cases in the district where teachers had charge, without assistance, of over fifty children. When assistance was available, classes could be even larger. The North Canterbury Board Chairman had reported visiting Woolston School the previous year, where Miss Ethel Choat, with the help only of a senior pupil teacher, had a class of about 100.⁵¹

Overcrowding became more visible after the turn

of the century as long bench forms were replaced by the new dual, and later single, desks. Boards gave due consideration to the apparent benefits of the new designs, seeking the inspectors' opinions on the matter. Educators may well have also consulted handy texts on the subject, such as Bray's School Organisation. In this British guide for teachers, Bray summarised the Board of Education's rules regarding the size and placement of desks.⁵² Desks were to fit the child. Each should allow reasonable freedom of movement and occasional standing. For writing purposes they should have a "zero distance", achieved when a vertical line from the inner edge of the desk exactly met the inner edge of the seat. Moreover, the nearer edge of the desk should be opposite the child's navel. Correct positioning was all important.

The fitting of the desk to the child includes also facilities for securing the upright posture and balance of the body. This balance can only be obtained when the thighs are approximately horizontal, the tibia vertical, and the feet firmly resting on the floor. Further, steadiness is given to the body if the left forearm rests on or near the edge of the desk and almost in a line with it. By these means the chest is free for expansion, the abdominal viscera are not cramped, there is an absence of physical conditions calculated to impede circulation, and thus energy is economised and mental activity promoted.⁵³

If the correct measurements were not observed, and children were compelled to sit for hours a day in desks "unsuited to their physical proportions", then "spinal deformity, cramped chests, short-sightedness, eye strain, and stooping habits" were among the evils

which could be expected. General use of the single desk, according to Bray, would solve most if not all desking problems.⁵⁴

Gradually Boards installed the new furniture but often, because of cost, only in new schools or additional classrooms. Space was another consideration. By 1914 the North Canterbury Board wanted the Department to increase the standard allowance of floor space to fourteen square feet per pupil to allow for the installation of single desks, "without which schools cannot be regarded as equipped on modern lines".⁵⁵

As it took more room to seat children at dual or single desks, classroom clutter became more evident. In some, children were still crammed together in the new desks. Canterbury schoolrooms could well have suffered the same fate as those in the Wellington district where:

Three children in a dual desk seemed the usual thing, while in several instances four were jammed in. The teacher's table was pushed into the fireplace, and the board and easel rested against it to make room for the desks.⁵⁶

At least that teacher had furniture. Howard, inspecting West Melton in 1899, remarked that "a broken-backed three legged chair is the only one provided for the Mistress".⁵⁷ Inspectors frequently had to requisition sufficient blackboards, easels, cupboards, even hatpegs.

Arranging schoolrooms so teachers could effectively manage large numbers of children was a considerable skill and too important a task to leave to

teachers. Inspectors frequently advised schools on better classroom arrangements and in cases of disagreement were backed up their Boards. A well organised classroom aided discipline and as Ritchie commented in the case of Hinds School in 1894:

... order and attention on the part of the pupils could be more easily secured. Grading the floor and screwing down the desks⁵⁸ would also materially assist in this direction.

Schools used galleries to good effect, especially for infant classes. Children were seated at desks on stepped or graduated platforms so the teacher could observe the increasingly higher rows of small heads at a glance, effectively bringing them into a "permanent field of surveillance". These too were dismantled as space became paramount.

While outdated furniture was being phased out in Board schools around 1905, it was still in use in denominational schools. At both St Joseph's Roman Catholic School and St Matthew's Church Day School, children struggled to sit upright on benches. Foster, visiting these schools in 1911 and 1912, noted that the obsolete desks and forms used by the youngest pupils were "very uncomfortable and badly adapted to the requirements of children of tender years". He recommended the attachment of backrests.⁵⁹

The poorest conditions he found that year were at St Mary's School where fifty children were taught on a platform measuring 26 by 14 feet, while in the same

room, below the platform, the senior pupils were working. "The noise inseparable from the present conditions", Foster felt, was "not conducive to good order and discipline".⁶⁰

Although the denominational schools tended to lag behind in improvements, the condition of furniture in public primary schools was certainly not always up to standard. Brock remarked that "veteran desks and forms" were still being used at Templeton in 1912 and "must affect the work of the pupils".⁶¹ That same year Owen noted an even worse state at Summerhill, where the desks needed new feet, "some being propped up by stones".⁶² But these were the exceptions.

In the later years, when reports on unsatisfactory buildings became fewer, the inspectors' attention turned to the grounds. They had previously encouraged schools in their attempts to improve their external environment, with efforts such as Arbor Day and the planting of gardens with shrubs and flowers. Both teachers and inspectors were disappointed when carefully tended gardens "suffered from inroads of neighbour's fowls", as at Waikuku.⁶³ Different varieties of trees were gradually planted to alleviate the monotony of the "funereal pine" which had early established itself as the preferred species. In later years inspectors remarked that belts of pine were now shading the grounds too much and the trees needed to be topped. Gorse and broom had also to be kept in check.

Playgrounds were often too wet and too small. The Cohen Commission of 1912 was deeply disturbed by the inadequate playgrounds and recommended that no grant should be given for a new school unless four acres of land were available.⁶⁴ The size of the playground was not the only concern. The equipment it contained also proved hazardous to health. Anderson's comment in 1889, that the gymnastic apparatus at Loburn School needed many repairs, was not isolated.⁶⁵ Parallel and horizontal bars, rings and high ladders, as at Sydenham School, had "a nice asphalt or gravel surface waiting to receive those who dared too much". Accidents occurred with these unsupervised gymnastics as "without proper supervision there is little that is more dangerous for inexperienced boys".⁶⁶ Two swings were the terror of one teacher's life at Yaldhurst School and "led to more accidents than anything else".

On one occasion I saw the whole swing part company with the uprights and send a small boy flying through the air and land quite a distance away, but the only damage was a broken leg. I shall never forget that sickening thud - and, I still marvel that there was not more damage.⁶⁷

In 1886 the German Bay School Committee rendered an account for £5-19-6 to the North Canterbury Board for the cost of medical attendance required when a boy fractured his arm in a fall from gymnastic apparatus. The Board was in no haste to comply. It asked the Drill Instructor to report on the condition of the apparatus at the time of the accident. On hearing from him that

the School Committee had been negligent in its care, the Board refused payment.⁶⁸

From time to time inspectors noted playgrounds strewn with luncheon papers, and suggested "an old tank or a cask" should be provided for litter. This was a problem for Mr William Bean, headmaster of Sydenham School. He declared that:

One of the great troubles of a schoolmaster is to prevent the children from throwing their food about the playground. If they are not watched they will stuff up the ventilators with pieces of bread - anything to get rid of the surplus lunch.⁶⁹

As time went on, however, unsatisfactory comments about grounds became uncommon. Brock's remarks about broken bottles and empty tins detracting from the appearance of the grounds at Dromore in 1911 were unusual.⁷⁰ By now, the field of surveillance had followed the children efficiently into the playground.

Inspectors reserved their gravest disapproval for instances of graffiti, or "objectionable scribbling". George Braik, the Wanganui inspector, considered this "the best index of a low moral tone" in a school. It correlated with other behaviour and gave an inspector a clear index of discipline.

If one sees boys leaning against the walls of the school with their hands in their pockets, and the girls wandering aimlessly about, one knows perfectly well what to expect on the walls of the out-offices.⁷¹

The turn of the century seemed to be the peak of the scribblers' activity. Most of it occurred, as Braik

suggested, on the walls of the boys' "out-offices" or "closets", but the occasional scribble was found in sunporches as well. Wherever it was found, the "offensive practice" earned stern rebuke and was a clear indication of the need for closer supervision in the playground and stricter adherence to the "Manners Chart".⁷²

At times the inspectors admitted that it might not be the pupils who were at fault. At Highbank Anderson allowed that the objectionable writings on one of the outbuildings did not appear to have been the work of any of the pupils, nor did the scribbling disfiguring the newly erected closets at Southbrook. Here the grounds were understood to be used by older boys of the township after school hours, "to the disadvantage of the premises".⁷³ This was also true for the vandalism reported by Hardie much later, in 1911. The outer walls of Harewood Rd School had been disfigured by daubs of paint, "the result of an act of vandalism by larrikins last New Years Eve".⁷⁴

No such convenient scapegoat was available, however, to explain the "crude pencil markings of indecent suggestion" disfiguring several of the Natural History plates in the infant room at Yaldhurst School in 1900. The frosting on the windows was similarly defaced. A concerned Anderson reported that as the offence had even been repeated "after erasure by the Master", inquiry and an effective remedy were urgently

demanded.⁷⁵ Perhaps the culprit was transferred to Carleton School, as two years later the same offence was reported there. About a dozen of the Natural History cards, hanging in the unoccupied schoolroom, were defaced "in a way that leaves no doubt about the noxious impurity of mind of some miscreant who has had admission to the room".⁷⁶

While inspectors cautioned of the dangers of such scribbling to the mental health of pupils, they were also concerned with the danger to their physical health from poor sanitation. Inspectors frequently grumbled about unclean classrooms which "might with advantage receive attention from the caretaker's touch".⁷⁷ Good and frequent scrubbing was recommended, certainly a more vigorous attack than the cleaner at Hinds usually gave, where Ritchie was unimpressed by "the practice of conveying the sweepings of the schoolroom only as far as the doorstep".⁷⁸

Uncleaned classrooms were associated with disease. When epidemics threatened a district, school committees placed great faith in the power of disinfection and fumigation. Local health officers complied. The efficacy of these measures in curtailing an epidemic is questionable but the schoolrooms certainly benefitted from a thorough cleaning.⁷⁹

The greatest danger to children's health, however, came from unclean toilets. Poorly ventilated and inadequate in number, these "closets" were

frequently situated over open cesspits which were huge and rarely cleaned out. In wet weather they were apt to flood and overflow. "It would be hard to contrive a more effective method of producing evil smells and hatching out noxious germs than that of saturating the surface soil with this foul liquid," warned Ritchie.⁸⁰ Asphalt or concrete flooring, recommended for inside the closets, did not solve the problem of poor drainage. Leakage was common and at Coalgate in 1896 Ritchie, ever the inspector with an eye on the condition of closets, reported that the ground appeared to be saturated with excreta. On a warm day the smell arising from it was "quite sickening".⁸¹ He had already commented that these open shallow cesspits were "not in accord with modern ideas on sanitation and decency".⁸² Anderson advocated the "closed pan system" or else "more frequent visits of the night-soil contractor".⁸³

Whatever the system used, the problem of smell remained. In March 1900 Ritchie remarked that disinfectant was needed in the Phillipstown School closets which looked clean but had an objectionable smell in hot weather.⁸⁴ In June he struck the same problem at Spreydon. During easterly winds, he observed, it was practically impossible to prevent a serious nuisance to neighbours living close to leeward.⁸⁵ Smell was not only an olfactory offence, it was seen as a risk to health. The following year he warned Saltwater Creek School to provide "for more

frequent removal of excreta", "the gases given off during fermentation being not only offensive, but a source of grave danger to health".⁸⁶

"Closed pans" were certainly a step up in the sanitary hierarchy but school committees found it difficult to get reliable people to attend to their regular removal. Pupils were sometimes allotted the task. But where to bury the contents became the persistent question. At Wakanui Ritchie claimed it would be advisable to do this "at a greater distance from the school". In fact, the positioning of the closets themselves so close to the school building emphasised the need "for careful attention to sanitary laws".⁸⁷

Septic tanks were considered a much superior system of disposal and in 1910 the South Canterbury Board reported that it had installed "automatic syphonic latrines", surely the ultimate in sanitation technology.⁸⁸ Despite improvements in sanitary equipment, closets were dirty and in disrepair. With seats too filthy for use, with "want of flushing at the urinal painfully perceptible", and with urinals blocked by pieces of turf or rubbish, closets were rightly considered a menace to health.⁸⁹

Some closets were placed dangerously close to wells. Ritchie remarked at Spreydon in 1894 that he was "by no means convinced that the presence of cesspits in close proximity to wells is free from objection".⁹⁰ He

repeated the comment in 1900. The boys' closet was too near the master's house and dangerously close to the pump, especially when the loose shingly nature of the subsoil was taken into account.⁹¹

Another danger to health lurked in the water tank. Water was difficult to keep clean and besides, children drank it from a communal tin cup tied to the tap. Because of the diphtheria risk, Dr Valintine, the Wellington Health Officer, recommended the abolition of these cups and the supply of a Pasteur-Chamberlain filter for each tank.⁹² Not all schools used tank water. Port Levy only gained one in 1909 when the School Committee no longer considered it safe for children to get water from the creek.⁹³ Even when a tank was present, it was not always in good repair. At Carleton, for example, Owen noted that if the tank were repaired, it would save the scholars from going to the master's house for a drink.⁹⁴ They were luckier than the children at Broadfield who, in 1894, had to carry their drinking water to school or, rather like the Port Levy pupils, "quench their thirst at the open water race".⁹⁵

Dirty drinking water and unsanitary toilet facilities put children directly at risk of disease. Inadequate playgrounds with unsafe equipment exposed them to injury. Inside the school, overcrowded, poorly ventilated, dirty and ill-lit classrooms increased the likelihood of ill health. Schools were certainly

hazardous environments but children were probably unaware. Yet in a country becoming increasingly concerned with public health, the situation was unacceptable. One dissatisfied inspector denounced the situation, saying:

... nothing has been done to place the children under fair and healthy working conditions. It is surprising to me how children and teachers are allowed to meet for so many hours daily in insanitary buildings, without a playground, a water-supply, or proper out-offices, when at the same time we read of the enforcement of the Public Health Act everywhere except, unfortunately, in places like a public school, where the enforcement of proper hygienic conditions is a public necessity.⁹⁶

CHILDREN'S HEALTH IN CONTEXT

"Fair and healthy working conditions" were at the centre of legislative debates. While inspectors pushed for children's rights to a healthy environment, they also expressed concern about children's working conditions outside school. Many worked long hours. Children in rural areas were hardest hit and the Hawkes Bay inspector calculated that they were working twelve and fourteen hours a day, while the Factories Act would not have allowed this. He regarded the overwork of children as "a species of modern slavery", a term echoed in later debates in the House over whether Taranaki children were, in fact, being treated as "white slaves".⁹⁷

The greatest burden seemed to be shouldered by

children in dairying districts. To make farming viable, their labour was crucial and many milked several cows before even setting off for school. Mary McInnes of the Kaikoura Suburban School was awarded a certificate in 1912 for her excellent school attendance. She had not missed a single half-day in six years in spite of the fact that she walked four miles to school and milked five cows morning and night.⁹⁸

Children were burdened by parents' expectations outside school and by educators' within. Both insisted on maximum disciplined effort. It is not surprising that hard physical work before and after school, the long and often difficult trek to school, and the effort required for school lessons, took their toll on children's health. Mary McInnes was the exception. With stamina reduced, children were susceptible to any disease prevailing in the district.

Sickness came in epidemic form. Boards recorded epidemics in their annual reports and in some years noted that they had occurred repeatedly. 1903 was a year to remember. In North Canterbury the inspectors remarked that:

A year rarely passes without the appearance in some part of the district of some one form of illness, but in the year just passed our schools have had to encounter quite a series of troubles of the kind, exceptional in variety and duration, beginning⁹⁹ with measles and scarlatina and ending with mumps.

1893 was another year to contend with, expressed in the heartfelt comment of the inspectors that the year

"would long be memorable for its measles, mumps and mud".¹⁰⁰ It was certainly the year for measles.

Inspectors throughout the colony noted its effect on children and schoolwork. Even the Minister of Education commented on it, attributing to it the significant drop in school attendance.¹⁰¹ In Hawkes Bay, 75% of schoolchildren were afflicted. Even so, many still attended school on the all important examination day. The North Canterbury inspectors admired the endurance of these children under examination.

I had many opportunities of noting the fine spirit displayed by both boys and girls in braving the ordeal of the examination, some of them scarcely at the convalescent stage, and others with the spots of the disease all but showing.¹⁰²

Besides these diseases, schools also contended with epidemics of whooping-cough, scarlet fever, influenza and diphtheria. The most significant outbreak of whooping-cough was in 1907 when 307 died, all children under the age of five.¹⁰³ Sometimes diseases evaded early diagnosis. In 1913 the headmaster of Yaldhurst School, explaining why his school was closed, said that the outbreak of whooping-cough was detected somewhat late because it was going around that year "without the whoop".¹⁰⁴ Scarlet fever could also be missed and children attended school while in "the peeling stage". Health inspectors even discovered children at school with the white membrane of diphtheria in their throats. The spread of diphtheria, considered another "dirt disease", was blamed on the communal

drinking tap attached to the school water tank.

Whatever the disease, schools contended with epidemics by disinfection, fumigation and closure. While closing the school might not have prevented the spread of infection, as children simply congregated elsewhere, it did protect the revenue of the Boards and the income of teachers. The capitation grant was determined by average attendance and an official day of closure did not enter its calculation.¹⁰⁵

When not dealing with epidemics, schools were able to improve children's resistance by attending to their physical training. Inspectors watched with interest as teachers trooped the children out to the playground for these sessions. Over the years physical education became increasingly regulated, with special attention being paid by inspectors to the detail of exercises. Many were designed specifically to encourage deep breathing and the development of chests. At the back of this was public concern about consumption. Although children were seldom affected by this pulmonary form of tuberculosis, they were seen as the citizens of the future who needed to be protected from a disease which wasted both body and society.

Such concern was closely related to the idea of "social efficiency". Each individual had to contribute effectively to the functioning of society as a whole. In particular each person needed the skills necessary for work and the stamina to perform it. The health and

efficiency of the individual were paramount and, to contemporary minds, it was fitting that schools took some of the responsibility for both. By providing a safe and healthy environment, and by attending to the physical and mental development of children, educators strove to fulfil this. Underlying this was a growing confidence in the place of state intervention. To many, therefore, it seemed natural that the new health bureaucracy should join with the education system in developing a school medical service, and by 1912 the scheme was in place.

In discussing earlier plans in 1906, the editor of the Press raised the old concerns, voiced frequently through the decades, about the strains which schools themselves imposed on children's health.

At present there is no doubt that, so far from the education system benefitting the health of children, our schools are directly responsible for creating eye-strain, for increasing constitutional tendencies to weakness, and for helping infectious diseases to spread. On the other hand, medical inspection might be the means of inducing the educational authorities to adopt such reforms as adjustable desks, and better ventilation and to give more attention to the physical development of the children.¹⁰⁶

This was a somewhat unfair attack on educational authorities. They were, in fact, already attending to these matters. While the school medical service brought the health problems of school children into sharper focus and provided some remedy, inspectors had consistently drawn the Boards' and Ministers' attention to these issues over many years. Through their vigilant

monitoring of physical conditions, and their promotion of health and physical education, they were at all times concerned for the safety and well-being of the children in their districts.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

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4. NCEB IRB, 17 May 1899.
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7. NCEB Minutes, 1 December 1887.
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9. NCEB IRB, 3-5 March 1902.
10. NCEB IRB, 25 July 1894.
11. NCEB IRB, 21 April 1899.
12. NCEB IRB, 30 May 1899.
13. NCEB IRB, 14 March 1894.
14. NCEB IRB, 13 April 1899.
15. NCEB IRB, 26 April 1894.
16. NCEB IRB, 11 June 1894.
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20. NCEB Minutes, 11 August 1910 and SCEB Minutes, 10 July 1910.
21. NCEB IRB, 26 April 1894.
22. NCEB Minutes, 6 July 1904.
23. Valentine, Further reminiscences of James A. Valentine, p. 7
24. NCEB Minutes, 24 August 1912.
25. Press, 20 March 1906, p. 5.

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29. ibid, p. 6.
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35. NCEB IRB, 18 May 1899.
36. NCEB IRB, 27 March 1896.
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40. NCEB IRB, 2 April 1895.
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49. NCEB IRB, 29 May 1890.
50. NCEB IRB, 29 March 1894, 10 May 1912.
51. NCEB Minutes, 8 April 1914.
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53. ibid, pp. 54-5.

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58. NCEB IRB, 5 June 1894.
59. NCEB IRB, 24 April 1911, 26 March 1912.
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61. NCEB IRB, 22 March 1912.
62. NCEB IRB, 20 March 1912.
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78. NCEB IRB, 31 May 1900.
79. For a description of the impact of this miasmatic

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81. NCEB IRB, 29 May 1896.
82. NCEB IRB, 22 May 1895.
83. NCEB IRB, 18-19 March 1901.
84. NCEB IRB, 8 March 1900.
85. NCEB IRB, 6 June 1900.
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93. Port Levy School 1877-1977 Centennial Reunion, p. 7.
94. NCEB IRB, 21 March 1912.
95. NCEB IRB, 3 April 1894.
96. AJHR, 1903, E-1B p. 21.
97. AJHR, 1899, E-1B p. 24; New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, 1907, vol. 141, pp. 22-7.
98. NCEB Minutes, 7 December 1912.
99. AJHR, 1904, E-1B p. 34.
100. AJHR, 1894, E-1B p. 25.
101. AJHR, 1894, E-1 p. ii.
102. AJHR, 1894, E-1B p. 23.
103. Maclean, Challenge for Health, p. 418.

104. Yaldhurst Primary School Centennial Celbrations
1876-1976, p. 28.
105. For the different impact on the British school
system see Hirst.
106. Press, 14 July 1906, p. 8.

CHAPTER 5

"REASONABLE EFFICIENCY": EXAMINING FOR SUCCESS
OR SURVEILLANCE

Once the surprise visit was over, schools could relax until it was time to prepare for the inspector's next visit on examination day. On both occasions the inspector looked for evidence of "reasonable efficiency" in teaching. The surprise visit of inspection allowed him to view the school in its workaday dress, to observe the ordinary teaching taking place inside the schoolroom. The second visit enabled him to make a judgement about its effectiveness. As well, both occasions let him bring both teacher and taught within Foucault's "extensive field of surveillance". How willingly he entered into the spirit of the "disciplinary technique" differed according to whether his role was one of inspection or examination. While teachers and pupils spruced up for the examination day, polishing both boots and minds, it was the day of inspection which captured them more securely in the disciplinary power of the school system. This chapter describes the inspector's examining role and the methods used to judge "reasonable efficiency" in teaching on both the examination and inspection visits and attempts to locate the inspector in the Department's scheme of disciplinary power.

"CLEAN PINNIES AND SHINING BOOTS"

The annual examination was anticipated with fear and hope. Much depended on it. The progress of children through the Standards, the reputation of the teacher, and the temper of parents and committees could be determined by the results of that day. And the figure looming largest was that of the Inspector, arriving in sombre suit and importance for the ordeal of the school.

As Jean Boswell recalls:

It was a day of frazzled nerves for both teacher and pupils, for in those days all power was with the Inspector, and often the fate of the school hung on the liver of the examiner. ... We watched him ride into the school grounds, we girls all smiles and clean pinnies and shining boots, anything likely to propitiate the monster...¹

Unfortunately her brother Ernie had a gang of boys hidden behind stumps scattered through the school grounds and, at a given signal, the boys let loose a "raucous crowing of roosters".

... we girls stood shaking in our shoes as we saw the Inspector's face bulge with rage and the teacher's rival any rooster's comb for colour!

All day long the Inspector:

... barked and slashed and thundered, till even those of us who were innocent were jelly-bags of nerves, and there was no sympathy from the teacher, for he knew that this fiasco would recoil on him, in lower grading-marks for 'lack of discipline'. Oral work especially was torture, for we seemed to be tongue-tied, and there was no pleasure in morning recess nor lunch-hour, which today seemed to be only waiting-periods for more misery.

Finally, in the late afternoon, Ernie unwittingly saved the day with a "howler". The Inspector:

... put his head down on his arms on the table and his huge body shook with helpless mirth, guffaw after guffaw, till he was actually wiping his watery eyes.

That ended the lesson - and the tension! We were dismissed and told to go home, but from the porch as we gathered our hats and bags we could hear fresh outbursts from both teacher and Inspector, and a little later, as they both passed us on the road, trotting along on their old nags, the Inspector gave us a genial wave of his hand and even flicked Ernie playfully with his whip.²

The annual examination visit inevitably created lines of tension between pupils, teacher and inspector. Gow and Valentine were struck by the difference between schools in the "attitude of the scholars towards the Inspector".

In one school the children seem frankly pleased to see him; they speak up clearly and confidently during oral examination, and Inspector, teacher, and children after some hours of solid work part very good friends at the end of the day. In another school the Inspector, try as he may to be sympathetic and encouraging, feels himself up against a dead wall of reserve; his questioning brings little or no response, and the teacher's efforts in this direction meet with no better success; and everybody has a wretched time. Excuses are forthcoming: the children are shy and timid because they so seldom see any one in the school except their teacher. Yet in the former school the conditions in that respect were not more advantageous; but there was a different kind of teacher - and therein lies the explanation.³

The fear of examination day could be lessened, Edge believed, by more frequent testing by the head teacher. This would familiarise pupils with the examination mode and they would be "less nervous and more self-possessed" when the year's examination took

place.⁴ But however much the inspector tried to be "sympathetic and encouraging", he was still an awesome figure.

This august personage, always a male, was looked up to with awe by the whole school but this feeling could change to one of delight if someone was commended for good spelling, perhaps, or had the honour of having a sample of hand-writing taken away to show pupils at other schools.⁵

From time to time the inspectors took these exhibits to their Boards. In 1902 Gow and Bell displayed "a bundle of freehand drawing" and another of "examination writing exercises", as an answer to complaints made in the House that pupils did not write legibly. Members expressed much satisfaction with both samples.⁶

Inspectors were free to decide whether to use oral or written examinations. Usually both forms were used. Upper Standards might be set written tests, lower ones examined orally. Where classes were large, written questions saved time and ensured "greater accuracy in the results".⁷ Inspectors also used discretion regarding leniency, especially in smaller schools. This approach was not always successful. As Restell warned:

... the leniency of one year insures the failure of the next; also, that certain subjects are badly taught in certain schools, and that, if leniency is shown, attention to these subjects is not enforced. It seems to me that the plain duty of the Inspector is not to pass any scholar who cannot fulfil the requirements of his standard so far as having a good general knowledge of each subject. Casual and trivial errors may be overlooked; but a scholar cannot pass the standard if he shows gross ignorance of any one subject. ... Something like two-thirds of full marks all round insure a pass;

if less be required,⁸ most of the scholars fail at the next inspection.

In preparing for the examination round, inspectors created sets of test cards for various subjects, a task which on Hogben's calculation took one twelfth of each inspector's time.⁹ Test cards became the focus of attention, too, for teachers, boards and, of course, for pupils. In 1897 a copy of the cards for the grammar and composition examinations was found in the possession of an enterprising Sydenham boy. Quick to set the blame, the North Canterbury Board immediately demanded a written explanation from the printers. The detail of the firm's reply is not recorded but the Board felt moved to inform them that it "was entitled to more care on the part of its printers". The fate of the boy is unknown.¹⁰

It was not only pupils who were anxious to know the content of the cards. Teachers tried to anticipate what the inspectors would ask. To help them prepare for the next examination, they requested copies of cards from the last. Inspectors were reluctant. The North Canterbury Board vacillated on the issue and although in 1893 it resolved to send copies of the previous year's questions to every head teacher in its area, the following year it declined the Educational Institute's formal request for the cards. Access became easier when the Department took over responsibility for setting the test card questions.¹¹

The Department's involvement was driven by a wish for uniformity and in this it had support. If there was to be one system of education throughout the colony, a North Canterbury Board member proclaimed, "there should be one uniform system of examination", with cards prepared by the Department. This, he felt, would be more satisfactory to the teaching profession, and "less liable to produce friction between the Inspectors and the teachers in the employ of the different Boards".¹²

Even so, complaints were heard. Teachers still found test cards an excuse for poor results. The South Malvern master explained to the Board, in 1897, that the "breakdown in the arithmetic of Standard V" was attributable to the "limited number of questions given to the children to select from, and to the fact that the cards used often varied considerably in difficulty".¹³

While not condoning the search for excuses, inspectors were inclined to agree. Having one source of questions did not guarantee uniformity in examination. Gow admitted that "complaints, which were not groundless, were rife as to the unevenness in the test in Standards V and VI". And he warned:

To import the element of chance into what should be as nearly as possible a uniform trial of the skill of the teachers and the attainments of the scholars must have pernicious effects. It may happen that the most competent teachers find their year's labour apparently of little value when one of the stiffest cards of the series falls to the lot of their children; and, whatever sort of card the less skilful teacher's class has to negotiate, if success does not come he has an excuse ready to hand in the alleged unevenness of the test.¹⁴

He felt that the requirements demanded by the questions were "in excess of what fairly could be expected" and added:

If the test is generally regarded as too high, a feeling of hopelessness will be engendered which will dull the edge of industry, and damp the ardour of those whose best efforts during the year appear to end in failure.¹⁵

When failure was a more predictable outcome, teachers were tempted to avert disaster. Inspectors Edge and Cumming took some trouble to find out why so many children had been absent on the examination days in 1882 and voiced to the Board their fear that "backward children" were, "in some cases, actually forbidden to be present".¹⁶ The problem persisted. Although the proportion of children present at examinations in 1884 had risen to 87%, (compared with 82% in 1882), wet and stormy conditions accounted for only a few instances of small attendance. Some children were absent, Edge said, because their teachers had told them they had no chance of passing.¹⁷ But by 1897 Gow reassured his Board that satisfactory reasons for absences were generally forthcoming. Teachers often showed him explanatory letters from parents, to ensure that "no suspicion of conniving at the absence of dull scholars should rest upon them", the teachers.¹⁸

"EXAMINING DRUDGES"

While good attendance on examination day could

reflect well on the achievements of teachers and the state of education in the district, it also added to the inspectors' work. Arriving at a school in the early morning, they saw beyond the "clean pinnies and shining boots" to what they represented, an arduous day dragging Standard after Standard of reluctant children through the required displays of achievement.

When the examination of individual pupils was abandoned, the North Canterbury Inspectors "bid it good-bye with considerable relief". But they added:

... our respect goes with it into the oblivion of things that have been. It has proved a hard taskmaster to teachers ..., to pupils, and ... to Inspectors alike. It has ... failed to encourage the best teachers in the use of the best methods and has cramped their individuality ... It has made of Inspectors mere examining drudges, when their best energies should have been directed to their own proper functions of general supervision, counsel, assistance, and general concerns of efficiency.¹⁹

On the other hand, the examination system had proved a potent stimulus, they believed. It had "made many a teacher what he is", through shaping efforts which might otherwise have been uselessly wasted, "striving amid a hopeless muddle of vague aspirations". And above all, it had formed character.²⁰

Given the chance, pupils might happily have foregone this test of character. From the turn of the century the only major ordeal remaining was the Standard VI examination, now held at a centralised venue. But the anxiety still surged. Inspectors believed this was exacerbated by the jitteriness of teachers and was the

"outcome of fussy warnings or silly threats". A "reasonable exercise of patient sympathy on the part of the examiners" they hoped would dispel "alleged childish terrors ... mainly existing in imagination".²¹ Gow and Bell claimed that pupils, although "not asked for their opinion", seemed pleased with the centralised system and that their nervousness, "not infrequently intensified by the hovering anxiety of a highly-strung teacher", would give place to "the pleasurable excitement of the outing".²² They even ventured that many pupils looked forward to the central examination "with the keenest interest" and arrived with a "holiday air about them", showing "the elation of mind and joyous determination to excel that one associates with a gathering of pupils for a competition in school sports".²³ Students of character indeed.

Individual examination by inspectors was replaced with classification by teachers, who now decided whether students would be put up into the next Standard. The inspector's role was one of "quality control". Through "sampling" the children's work he would form an opinion of their achievement which could then be compared with the estimation of the teacher. In schools where inspectors were confident of the teachers' ability, they felt easier accepting their judgement about pupil promotion. In a number of smaller schools, however, they still felt that the "best safeguard of reasonable efficiency lies ... in the maintenance of formal and

searching examinations".²⁴

And it was the measurement of "reasonable efficiency" which was at the heart of the examination system. In 1912 Brock told the Cohen Commission that without examination it was "impossible to test the success of a teacher's methods and discover whether the lesson 'has been received as well as given'".²⁵ The irony was that the true purpose of teaching became lost in the struggle for examination success. Hogben had attacked this exaggerated focus on examinations in a presidential address to the NZEI in 1887.

Books are written for examinations, children are prepared for examinations; everyone speaks of the examinations, the subjects of the examinations, the results of the examinations. Where is Education? In danger of being swallowed up in the examination gulf. And where is her divine sister, Wisdom? 'Oh, no! we never mention her; her name is never heard' - she failed in her last examination.²⁶

Although New Zealand had not adopted the English system of "payment by results", Boards still looked for accessible measures of efficiency. Passes in the annual examination, the average age of each Standard, and the proportion of children remaining below Standard I, seemed reasonable measures. The difficulty lay in standardising their calculation.

At first the inspectors determined the district's "passes" as a percentage of those children presented for examination. Thus in 1881 the North Canterbury rate was 70%, in 1882 74%. By the mid-1880s, however, regulations required passes to be expressed as a

percentage of all children on the school roll, regardless of whether they had sat the examination.²⁷ This meant the figures dropped considerably. In 1888, for example, while the original calculation would have given a pass rate of 72.5%, the new official form of estimation placed it at 47.1%.

At the same time that the basis for calculating the percentage of passes was changed, an additional statistic was introduced. The "percentage of failures" gave a more realistic view of the number of children actually achieving in the examination, as the failures were calculated as a proportion of those who had been examined, first deducting the number of children eligible for "exemption". In that same year of 1888, while the pass rate was 47.1%, the failure rate was 21.2%. For South Canterbury that year, the official pass rate was 48%, the failure rate 19%.²⁸

Methods of calculating efficiency perplexed rather than enlightened. The South Canterbury Board requested, for the sake of its school committees it said, a short report showing the interpretation of figures "in unmistakeable terms".²⁹ Clearly the Board, too, needed assistance in understanding the new statistics, as Gow was careful to point out in 1893 that although the pass rate was 51.9%, the highest possible percentage of passes could never be 100.

Had no child been absent from the examination, nor any one failed in his standard, the highest possible percentage of passes would then have been

achieved, and in this district it would have been 66.4, which is the proportion that the number presented in standards I to VI bears to the total school roll.³⁰

Inspectors also warned that it would be unfair to use the percentage of passes as the only measure of a teacher's efficiency. Irregular attendance, whether deliberate or through sickness, they identified as the greatest factor precluding success. Moreover, recently appointed teachers should not be blamed for pupils' poor achievement in examination.

"DISCIPLINARY POWER"

But reliance on statistical measures remained, still locked into the examination process. In his discussion of the development of "the examination", Hoskin places it squarely in its context of a "rational" and bureaucratic system of modern mass schooling, drawing on Foucault's work to illuminate its purpose.³¹ Foucault claims that at the birth of the modern world the school became a "means of correct training" based on "disciplinary power". As Hoskin paraphrases:

Disciplinary power is derived from simple techniques which taken separately can easily be seen merely as extensions of existing practices: a more systematic organisation of time and space, and an extended use of surveillance. But taken together these simple techniques add up to a qualitatively new form of control.³²

Old forms of "top down" control, with visible forms of punishment, began to give way to new invisible systems. Children were now controlled through the

thorough organisation of their time, the architecture of the school which left them "few zones of shade in which to hide", and the surveillance of teachers and peers. This new invisible disciplinary power was implemented through "hierarchical observation" and a "normalising judgement". The examination combined both aspects.

As the school became an apparatus of uninterrupted examination, the student was placed in a whole and permanent field of surveillance. And the examination itself contributed a normalising influence, with a "meticulous archive constituted in terms of bodies and days". These written records amassed data which provided norms for the whole population. The "small, everyday technique" of establishing how effective a student's learning had been, became an instrument of disciplinary power.

The position of the school inspector in his role of "examining drudge" needs to be located within this hierarchy of disciplinary power. He could be deliberately colluding with the formal authority of the Minister and Department in using the examination to bring students, and teachers, into a "permanent and continuous field" of surveillance, and to establish norms of success for the whole country through his "meticulous archive". Or he could be an unwitting agent, caught up in the process whereby the small, everyday technique becomes appropriated in the invisible web of disciplinary power.

It was, in fact, the inspectors who initiated the statistical measures. Restell took pains to explain to the North Canterbury Board in 1878 that no one test of efficiency taken alone was decisive, but "the school must be a bad one in which ... every one of these tests is unfavourable". He enumerated four: the average age in each Standard, the range in the Standards, the proportion remaining in or below Standard I, and the percentage of passes. The average age in each Standard was a "criterion of careful teaching, fairly distributed among the several classes". Having no student higher than Standard III was a very unfavourable indication, unless it occurred in a new school. Certainly, having half of the scholars in or below Standard I generally indicated "a new or backward school, and either inadequate teaching-power or gross efficiency, or both". The percentage of passes "indicated efficiency and tact, careful and successful teaching, and judicious rather than ambitious classification".³³

Inspectors appended summaries of these statistics to their annual reports, making it gradually possible for the central Department to collate figures from all districts. As the Minister's report of 1885 makes clear, however, the "percentage of passes" was a "formula not contemplated by the regulations" but introduced by inspectors reporting on the successes in their districts. New regulations embodied in a forthcoming Order in Council would formally recognise

the expression, he said, but would change its method of calculation.³⁴ In this way the initiative of the colony's inspectors was taken over by the formal machinery of government. By standardising the formulation of statistics throughout the country, a new mass of data became established.

Nevertheless, inspectors continued to warn against too great a reliance on these statistics as reasons for congratulation or despondency. Anderson, reporting to the South Canterbury Board in 1885, said that while it was usual to compare results with those of the previous year, he did not regard it as of any great value, "for a bad year in any standard ... naturally implies favourable conditions for next year's examination".³⁵ In this he echoed Restell's sentiment in 1880 when he admonished the North Canterbury Board that "high percentages accepted by casual observers ... often cover the failure of the former year" and that he could not "too strongly reprobate the attempt to make capital out of so ordinary a success, by teachers who do, and committees who do not, fully understand its nothingness".³⁶

They also grumbled about the newly imposed methods of calculating results, which stretched the validity of yearly comparisons even more. In 1887 the North Canterbury Inspectors, applying the new meaning of the term "presented", said that it was impossible to base on their figures any accurate conclusions as to

whether the education of the district had "advanced or retrograded" in the preceding year. They could only say that "much good work is done" and that the less successful teachers had "erred more through misdirected effort than through neglect".³⁷

Had the inspectors been active proponents of the disciplinary power of the individual examination, they would have stuck rigidly to the regulations governing it and would have fought its demise. This was not the case. Wood, Anderson and Hogben devoted a whole section of their 1888 report to the question of interpreting the regulations, making it clear that they took the matter into their own hands. The regulations allowed some leeway and the inspectors took maximum advantage of it. They boldly declared:

We may as well confess at once that we have practically turned the exceptional cases into the rule, and taken shelter under the fiction that in every case 'failure in one subject (unless very serious)' 'is due to some individual peculiarity, and is not the result of the pupil's negligence or of ineffective teaching'. We have, further, given an extraordinarily lenient interpretation to 'serious failure' in all but the two most important subjects.

They added:

It is not a pleasant thing to feel compelled to evade the spirit of a regulation which we are under some obligation to obey, and we hope that this plain statement of the action we have taken will direct attention to the matter and lead to a revisal.³⁸

As these examinations gave way to classification and promotion of Standard I and II children by teachers, inspectors welcomed the change. Even the Minister

acknowledged that this "new experiment" was on the recommendation of inspectors.³⁹ Those in North Canterbury favoured the new system, declaring:

We cannot see that any officially-recognised pass examination of individual children in these standards is at all necessary, and we should prefer to leave the matter entirely to the master, who would promote his children at his discretion (of course, subject to criticism) on the experience derived from a year's intercourse, and not as the result of any one formal examination.⁴⁰

As the regulations gradually increased the autonomy of the teacher, inspectors supported the changes, noting that the expression "freedom of classification" was "a fine mouth-filling phrase with a pleasant suggestion of tyranny subverted".⁴¹ Although it relieved them, too, from the tyranny of examining dozens of pupils by day and marking dozens of papers by night, they believed that the new regulations moved education in the right direction.

Some initially doubted the ability of all teachers to carry out their new responsibility. In 1898, while he was in the main satisfied with the way teachers had promoted children, Gow noted six head teachers who had "sadly blundered".

Better that the children should have had one good cry over the disappointment of failing than that they should be harrassed and worried for a year or two to come, trying to do the work of a class for which they are not sufficiently prepared.⁴²

Inspectors noted that some teachers still looked to them to make the decisions. Gow and Bell advised teachers that they would consider it a sign of weakness

if teachers shifted the responsibility back to inspectorial shoulders. "Better boldly risk a few mistakes than timidly let out of their grasp the right they had just won."⁴³ Such stirring sentiment does not sit easily with the notion of inspectors as agents of invisible disciplinary power.

Where they can be located more readily in this disciplinary scheme was in their role of surveillance. Teachers were brought into a "permanent and continuous field of observation" through a close scrutiny of their written records. Registers, schemes of work and timetables were all officially required. The clock governed the day, marking its beginning, its end and its interruptions for recess. Inspector Hardie noted with disapproval that the bell for afternoon school at Tuahiwi had been rung a quarter of an hour late on the occasion of his visit in 1912.⁴⁴ Strict punctuality was expected from both scholars and teachers, although Miss Fanny Sheard of Te Ngawai was recommended to discontinue the practice of locking the door on latecomers.⁴⁵ Firmness and tact, rather than keys, would ensure punctuality.

The clock also designated the correct time to mark the register and divided the day into its study components. A further example of a small, everyday technique being brought into the purpose of disciplinary power is the way in which the method of marking the register became increasingly prescribed. Anderson

detailed in his 1889 report teachers' failings in this regard, noting that the relevant instructions were printed on the back of the register furnished by the Department. But he added:

What authority these instructions have I know not - whether, for instance, the instruction that the register must be marked not less than one hour and a half after the opening of the school must necessarily be taken as a definition of the gazetted regulation that the attendance shall be registered at a convenient time within the school hours.⁴⁶

Teachers found difficulty at times in keeping to regulation. At Waikari they contended with a large number of children from Waipara who arrived by train after 11 o'clock. They presented a problem both for registering attendance and for instruction. Although the inspector praised the teachers' efforts "to save these children from loss" by giving them extra lessons after 3 o'clock, he noted that the pupils were "still a disturbing element in the school routine".⁴⁷

Other irregularities did not meet with the same approval. Registers were closely watched and inspectors expected them to be filled in with "scrupulous fidelity". While most teachers complied, Edge complained that some seemed to think the correct keeping of registers "but a trifling matter" and pointed out that the Department did not think so, judging by the number of circulars he had received.⁴⁸ The teacher at the Leamington School in 1900 could not produce the registers for official perusal at all. The inspector

clearly did not believe her excuse when she said that she had taken them home on the previous evening and had forgotten to bring them back. "The time occupied in attending to Registers in a school of this size," he said, "is so short that the necessity for any special effort is not obvious."⁴⁹

She was also in disfavour for not showing more familiarity with the arrangements of the timetable. In this she was not alone. Anderson was not amused with the laxity exhibited at Charing Cross School in 1902, when arithmetic "usurped the place reserved for Composition",⁵⁰ and at Lismore ten years later the master was reprimanded for allowing his pupils to spend the bulk of their morning in the playground.

In explanation the master stated that this being the first day after the harvest holidays, a number of details required attention, but in every well-ordered school [the inspector said], such details are attended to before school re-assembles.⁵¹

Generally timetables were adhered to, and it was only in a few instances that inspectors commented that they were displayed "more for ornament than use"⁵² or had been "provided more for the gratification of the Inspector in his periodical visits than for the guidance of school-work".⁵³

Teachers were also expected to draw up "schemes of work" at the beginning of the year which showed the planned progression of teaching through the Standards. The South Canterbury Inspectors explained that doing this well:

... requires time and forethought, and the suitability of his programme will be taken as one of the best tests of the teacher's skill in managing his school. There are a fairly large number of teachers who must feel that they have not given us much chance of praising their skill at any high value when this standard of measurement is applied.⁵⁴

The school year, day and hour became ever more organised. Time was governed by the clock and school bell, and made visible in timetables and schemes of work. Registers added to the number of forms requiring the teacher's attention, all cogs in the machinery of bureaucracy. And all these, while necessary for the smooth running of the school and for ensuring the correct revenue through the capitation grant, became vehicles for the increasing surveillance of teachers and their work. In this process the inspectors were indeed agents, though not instigators, of the disciplinary power of the education system.

Foucault argues that as control through disciplinary power increased, visible forms of punishment gave way to invisible. The thorough organisation of time and an integrated system of observation took over from corporal punishment. Hoskin modifies this with the observation that in Britain at least, the two forms co-existed.⁵⁵ This was certainly so in Canterbury where corporal punishment remained a legitimate form of control. It did, however, become increasingly curtailed by regulation. In 1878 the North Canterbury Board resolved that no child was to be

"struck about the head or face".⁵⁶ This rule was not, it seems, always observed. Miss Kate Doherty of Ashburton Forks School denied that she had struck a child on the head with a slate. The injury to his face, she said, had been caused "by the boy jerking away when being punished and ... coming into collision with his sister". This explanation was accepted.⁵⁷

Although Edge claimed in 1885 that it was "an unusual occurrence to hear of undue harshness on the part of teachers",⁵⁸ instances were reported to the Board over the years. He did not approve of undue interference in the punishment process as in 1891 he stated that discipline in the schools was being weakened by:

... the growing tendency of parents to resent the exercise of corporal punishment, and a certain amount of apprehension among teachers that frivolous complaints may be seriously entertained by School Committees not fully⁵⁹ alive to the necessities of school control.

Not all teachers were allowed to deal out corporal punishment. Apart from head teachers, the names of others authorised to do so were listed only after approval by the Board. Canes and sticks were outlawed in 1894, the only implement permitted being a leather strap. Even this was governed by careful regulation to ensure it measured no less than an inch and a half in width, no more than 25 inches in length, a quarter of an inch in thickness, and four and three-quarter ounces in weight.⁶⁰

But corporal punishment did give way to more subtle forms of control and this was encouraged by inspectors. Most cases of disorder, according to Edge, were traceable to "bad organisation, inefficient teaching, or to want of experience ... in detecting and correcting faults".⁶¹ The teacher's influence was paramount, as inspectors' reports for individual schools in 1889 show. While Anderson was reminding the Loburn master that "an easy nonchalance is not likely to inspire a hearty spirit of work",⁶² Wood was waxing lyrical over the Willowby teachers. Because of their "unremitting zeal and industry" and "cheerful and kindly manner", he was pleased to say that "a remarkably happy spirit pervades and invigorates the life of the whole school".⁶³ A kindly manner did not always ensure good results. Wood also reported that although Miss Martha Bishop of Tinwald was a "painstaking and enthusiastic teacher", she had difficulty in maintaining good order and discipline. "The children," he said, "taking advantage of her kindly manner, are disposed to be troublesome with impunity."⁶⁴

A pervading quiet was the mark of good order and could be observed firsthand on the day of inspection or examination. "Desk exercises" were to be done in silence and were "not to be regarded as affording an opportunity for unlimited talk".⁶⁵ This was apparently lost on the teachers of Woodend School where, that same year, the inspector reported that the infant department

was "conducted in a babel of sound". The "discordant yelling tolerated was painful to listen to" and the teacher was reminded that "a constant fire of sharp admonitions is ineffective to obtain a fair degree of order".⁶⁶ The ultimate test occurred when a teacher could leave a class unattended "for at least one teaching period with perfect confidence". At Rangiora, however, Anderson felt that such confidence would be misplaced.⁶⁷

Examinations, of course, gave an opportunity for another test of discipline. In 1885 Edge reported seven cases of copying during his examinations.⁶⁸ Gow reported only one or two "attempts at dishonest practices" in 1890 and regarded them "as results of sudden impulse rather than the outcome of evil habit".⁶⁹ Single desks helped remove temptation. McGeorge has described how the advocates of the new style of desk:

... argued for them, in part, by stressing their moral and disciplinary value: they would make copying, passing notes, and surreptitious talking and nudging more difficult and children could move in and out of them more decorously.⁷⁰

As with other forms of disciplinary power, however, good order came to be sought in newer, more subtle ways. A neat and tidy appearance of the children, especially on the "surprise visit", counted. The handwriting in exercise books was a sure sign, as "where shirking and carelessness are admitted ... the moral fibre must become weakened".⁷¹ But the search extended beyond the schoolroom. Along with "a tendency

to shuffling of the feet, dilatoriness of movement" and "inclination to chattering", Brock listed "a fondness for rough play in the grounds" as a further reason for a "tightening of discipline".⁷² The playground came under more scrupulous surveillance as inspectors stepped up the requirements for teachers' supervision. The "continuous field of observation" children found themselves in now included even their leisure time. Free play diminished as games became organised.

Play is a necessity for the moral and physical well-being of the pupils, encouraging a desirable feeling of good fellowship, and having an important bearing on character-training. Where the teacher associates with his pupils in the playground he obtains a close insight into their dispositions, and establishes a strong claim upon their affections. More things are required in the battle of life than mere book-knowledge, and those teachers who mix freely with their pupils in the playground have opportunities for promoting not only the physical but also the mental, moral, and social development of those under their charge. ... There is no more pathetic sight than to see a child wandering aimlessly about the precincts of the school, unwilling or unable to take an active part in the sports of childhood.⁷³

Few "zones of shade in which to hide" here. Evidently the North Canterbury inspectors shared Braik's horror of "aimless wandering".

Even the grounds themselves came under the organising scrutiny of inspectors.

We hope the time is not far distant when the school and grounds will be models of neatness; for nothing is more pleasing to see than hedges neatly trimmed, garden-plots carefully kept, and grounds laid out on some definite plan. The effect of such surroundings must have a great influence on the lives of the pupils and no little effect on the creation of artistic tastes.⁷⁴

The attempt to control tendencies to wildness in the playground, on the part of both the children and the environment, symbolised the extension of surveillance and the stricter organisation of time and space, characteristics of Foucault's invisible disciplinary power. Inspectors engaged actively in this pursuit. Meanwhile, in the schoolroom, children were located in a "permanent and continuous field of observation" where their demeanour at all times was scrutinised for signs of embryonic citizenship. The combined report of Ritchie, Foster, Mulgan and Brock in 1910 captures the essence of inspectors' involvement in this process of disciplinary power. Noting that teachers' efforts in training habits of "cleanliness, punctuality, truthfulness, and self-control must have a strong influence on the characters of our future citizens", they implicitly pinpointed the crucial fact that this training must be transferable to the wider context of society. The cross-over between the confined environment of the schoolroom, and the uncontrolled, and potentially uncontrollable, wider setting was noted when they commented:

In nearly every school natural attitudes and readiness of obedience are found, while at public⁷⁵ functions the children display exemplary conduct.

To cap it all, they identified three "healthy influences" on the formation of good character. While one was straightforward, (direct instruction in the duties of citizenship), the other two related closely to

Foucault's invisible techniques of disciplinary power. The first was "the growing practice of training the pupils in self-government, through the medium of monitors elected by their school-fellows".⁷⁶ This is part of Foucault's "reciprocal hierarchical observation", an extended network of surveillance which was "from top to bottom, but also to a certain extent from bottom to top and laterally".⁷⁷ The second was "the more rational conception of the value and scope of thorough inspection", surely an example of the normalising of surveillance.

The role of inspectors as active agents of disciplinary power is thus clearly seen in their role of inspection. It is in relation to examinations, however, that they are harder to locate in the disciplinary structure. Inspectors warned against over-reliance on statistics generated from examination results, they welcomed the increasing autonomy of teachers and did not mourn the passing of the individual examination. They liberally interpreted Departmental regulations, when it suited. In these ways they were antagonists of the new forms of disciplinary control. Inspectors do not fit neatly into Foucault's model, nor should they. They occupy a unique role in education. Refusing to be shackled by unwanted regulation, yet determined to impose order, they held fast to their ideal of the best possible system of education for the children of their districts.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. Boswell, Ernie and the Rest of Us, p. 95.
2. ibid, pp. 97-8.
3. AJHR, 1915, E-2 p. xxxii.
4. AJHR, 1886, E-1B p. 31.
5. Roberts, A history of the Belfast Schools 1859-1979, pp. 103-4.
6. SCEB Minutes, 9 October 1902.
7. AJHR, 1878, H-1 p. 79.
8. AJHR, 1878, H-1 p. 77.
9. AJHR, 1887, I-8 p. 28.
10. NCEB Minutes, 9 June 1897, 30 June 1897.
11. See for example NCEB Minutes throughout March-April 1893, April-May 1894 and January 1897.
12. Press, 30 May 1890, p. 6.
13. NCEB Minutes, 13 January 1897.
14. AJHR, 1897, E-1B p. 40.
15. AJHR, 1897, E-1B p. 40.
16. AJHR, 1883, E-1B p. 22.
17. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 29.
18. AJHR, 1897, E-1B p. 39.
19. AJHR, 1904, E-1B p. 34.
20. ibid.
21. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 125.
22. AJHR, 1911, E-2 Appendix C p. xlvi.
23. AJHR, 1910, E-2 p. 142.
24. AJHR, 1907, E-1B p. 35.
25. AJHR, 1912, E-12 p. 360.

26. Cited in Cumming, Glorious Enterprise, p. 259.
27. AJHR, 1885, E-1 pp. xvi-xvii.
28. Figures from AJHR reports.
29. SCEB Minutes, 6 October 1887.
30. AJHR, 1893, E-1B p. 30.
31. Hoskin, The examination, disciplinary power and rational schooling, p. 79.
32. ibid, p. 135.
33. AJHR, 1878, H-1 p. 77.
34. AJHR, 1885, E-1 pp. xvi-xvii.
35. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 34.
36. AJHR, 1880, H-1I p. 30.
37. AJHR, 1887, E-1B p. 42.
38. AJHR, 1888, E-1B p. 36.
39. AJHR, 1894, E-1 p. vi.
40. AJHR, 1895, E-1B p. 30.
41. AJHR, 1900, E-1B p. 33.
42. AJHR, 1898, E-1B p. 43.
43. AJHR, 1901, E-1B p. 34.
44. NCEB IRB, 6 March 1912.
45. SCEB Minutes, 7 December 1914.
46. AJHR, 1889, E-1B p. 42.
47. NCEB IRB, 5 June 1899.
48. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 29.
49. NCEB IRB, 16 May 1900.
50. NCEB IRB, 26 March 1902.
51. NCEB IRB, 11 March 1912.
52. See for example AJHR, 1880, H-1I p. 33; AJHR, 1886, E-1B p. 30.

53. AJHR, 1889, E-1B p. 40.
54. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 46.
55. Hoskin, p. 136.
56. NCEB Minutes, 22 May 1878.
57. NCEB Minutes, 6 September 1905.
58. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 30.
59. AJHR, 1891, E-1B p. 29.
60. Cited in Butchers, A Centennial History of Education in Canterbury, p. 69.
61. AJHR, 1886, E-1B p. 30.
62. NCEB IRB, 2 May 1889.
63. NCEB IRB, 1 May 1889.
64. NCEB IRB, 28 May 1889.
65. NCEB IRB, 1 May 1889.
66. NCEB IRB, 10 May 1889.
67. NCEB IRB, 8-9 May 1889.
68. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 30.
69. AJHR, 1890, E-1B p. 35.
70. McGeorge, Schools and socialisation in New Zealand 1890-1914, p. 184.
71. AJHR, 1911, E-2 p. xli.
72. NCEB IRB, 19 May 1911.
73. AJHR, 1915, E-2 Appendix C p. xxviii.
74. ibid.
75. AJHR, 1910, E-2 p. 140.
76. ibid.
77. Cited in Hoskin, p. 136.

CHAPTER 6

"MUCH GOOD WORK IS DONE": SUCCESSFUL TEACHING

Inspectors judged the success of teaching through examination and inspection. While examination results generated statistics which could be used to demonstrate the educational progress of a district, observation of teaching practice on the day of inspection was just as important in determining teaching success. This chapter explores some of the methods inspectors used to report the outcome of the year's work in the schools, describes the inspectors' advice on appropriate teaching methods for various subjects, and examines their opinion of the teaching practice they observed.

Frustrated with the change in the method of calculating passes which precluded comparisons with previous years, Wood, Anderson and Hogben could only tell the North Canterbury Board in 1887 that "much good work is done".¹ This was certainly not the case the previous year. The inspectors' reports of March 1886 set off alarm bells and hurried the Board members towards an investigation of the state of education in their district. This was the end of the period of turmoil in the inspectorate's history. In the periods of stability, then rapid change, which followed, "much good work" certainly was done, although the index chosen for its measurement might be questioned. In their

report to the Board in 1916, the inspectors summed up the achievements of the district's education system by saying:

Indeed, the present war has given an opportunity of discovering the kind of men and women who have come through our schools, and hence the nature of the training received and its bearing upon the national character. ... and our lads as they clung to the crags at Gallipoli have borne witness to virtues which are the outcome of the training in our schools.

"THE EDUCATION SCARE"

The lads referred to would have been through the Canterbury schools at least a decade after the Inquiry which marked the end of the period of turmoil. In the Schoolmaster of June 1886, J.G.L. Scott wrote:

The inhabitants of North Canterbury have recently been alarmed by what has been well termed an "Education Scare". Fondly imagining that they were living in a provincial district second in educational advantages to none in New Zealand, and perhaps in the Southern Hemisphere, they were rudely awakened one morning to read that the essentials of primary education - the three R's - were being neglected ...

Clearly he was unimpressed by the fuss, one which he saw as being raised unnecessarily by the inspectors.

There are other difficulties from which all districts of New Zealand suffer, and from which they will continue to suffer until Inspectors are themselves inspected, and until teachers are allowed an appeal against arbitrary requirements, and arbitrary interpretations of the syllabus. Anyone who will take the trouble to read the Inspectors' reports year after year, will notice that the object of each Inspector appears to be to show to his employers that he has effected a great improvement in the education of his district since his appointment; in fact, that had he not been appointed in the very nick of time, the district

would have been totally ruined educationally, and that the percentage of passes is higher than that obtained in the neighbouring Provinces, although his own examination tests are certainly as difficult. The only variation of this monotonous chant occurs when a new inspector is appointed; then, alas! percentages fall - education has been neglected; previous inspectors have permitted cram; and reform, inaugurated by drastic measures, is the order of the day. There is then a great stir; the new broom raises a great deal of dust, and is said to be sweeping clean.³

In this case, the new broom raising the dust was Wood. In the five months following his appointment as inspector in August 1885, he conducted examinations in 55 schools as well as working with Edge in examining ten of the larger schools. "All along the line there has been a falling-off in the passes," he said. Over all the rate had dropped to 73.9%, from 81% the previous year. Most significant was the drop of 15.4% in the pass rate for Standard III.

It was not the case that the tests had been too severe, Wood claimed. While he was "not prepared to assign this decline in the results to any particular cause", he identified poor teaching as a major concern.

So many defects in teaching were disclosed by the examinations that, had not the tests been relaxed in several instances, the percentage of passes would undoubtedly have fallen considerably below 74%.⁴

Edge was unperturbed. In commenting on the 7% drop from the previous year he said, "This at first sight seems a sad falling-off; but I do not see that there is any very serious cause for alarm." In explanation he noted that the large schools were

examined some weeks earlier than the previous year and conditions for passing were a little different.⁵

The Board was not to be fobbed off. It resolved to set up a Committee to "enquire into the causes that have produced such an unsatisfactory educational condition" in the children attending its schools, and "to suggest such reforms as may appear to the committee likely to produce better results from the large annual expenditure of the Board on primary education". The Committee was empowered to take evidence from Board officers and to call for documents, and was expected to report in three weeks. Not surprisingly it was Saunders who moved this resolution and claimed for himself a place on the Committee, being joined by Cunningham and Weston.⁶

The Committee did report in the allocated time but only in an interim fashion, requesting both an extension of time and the authority to report the evidence verbatim. The final report was presented at the beginning of June and, in all, 600 copies were made available for public perusal. A lively debate ensued.

The Committee recommended that the Board take a more active, "executive" role in educational affairs, dividing its functions among new committees. One would oversee the appointment of teachers, a move crucial to reforming education in the district. The number of pupil teachers should be reduced, a special investigation should be made into the Normal School, and

Board members should begin visiting the schools. Members reacted strongly against this last suggestion, ostensibly because it could seem that they were wanting to "revise the work of the Inspectors".

Such protestations did not square, however, with the comments reserved for the inspectorate. Weston declared that:

No one who read the report could come to any other conclusion than that the faulty condition of the schools was attributable to bad inspection. For years the schools had been reported on favourably, but at the death of one Inspector, and the appointment of another, a change had taken place and things were altered, suggesting that such a state must have been in existence in the past.

Although this situation may also be interpreted as Scott's new broom raising a great deal of dust, it does seem likely that previous inspectors, like Cumming, or Edge himself, had been ineffective educational housekeepers for some time. Both would have had a somewhat cursory view of their duties when overtaken by their shared health problem.

Clearly the inspectors' reports were seen as a crucial link between Board and schools. As well, they represented the relationship between the inspector, the teacher and the taught. The Board Chairman remarked that:

... the whole question of the success of the schools hinged upon these reports, and the manner in which the Inspectors not only inspected the schools, but also in the way they dealt with the teachers. He thought it was very important that the Inspectors should more than merely report on the conduct of the schools; they should gain the confidence of the teachers and get their

assistance, otherwise the mere dry reports would be of very little good.⁸

Over all, however, the Chairman felt that the Committee had taken "too gloomy a view", had even in some instances "unintentionally drawn inferences from the evidence" which were "overstrained", and had "condemned too sweepingly the valuable work" which had been done in the district. Nevertheless, the Committee's recommendations were largely adopted.⁹ And Edge resigned.

"TIME, TYPE, INK AND PAPER"

Although inspectors repeatedly decried over-reliance on statistical information in forming a judgement of the state of education in their districts, a picture does emerge over the years of fairly steady progress.¹⁰ Prior to the sudden 7% drop which led to the Inquiry, the North Canterbury pass rate had risen from 70% for 1881 to 81% for 1884, achieving a considerably higher rate than the average for the colony. While believing that "much good work was done" after the Inquiry, immediate comparison was difficult because of the new statistics required by the Department. The district began with the newly calculated pass rate of 38.6%, and improved it until it reached a peak at 58.3% in 1895, again achieving a higher percentage than the colonial average. At the same time, the percentage of failures fell from 29.2% in

1886 to 13.7% in 1894. Beginning with a higher rate of failures than that of the colony as a whole, it gradually improved its position.

Meanwhile in South Canterbury the pass rate, based on the original form of calculation, had remained fairly steady. Apart from a rise to 75.2% in 1882, it hovered around 73% between 1881 and 1885. There is a discrepancy between the figure for 1885 given by the inspector (73%) and that recorded in the Minister's annual report (66.32%). As Anderson made it clear that 73% of the number actually presented for examination passed, whereas the 66.32% referred to the proportion passing of those enrolled in the Standards, it is the former figure which should be taken as the rate for that year. This was lower than North Canterbury's pass rate at the time of the Inquiry, although it would appear that it was the suddenness of the drop which alarmed that Board. With the new form of calculation, South Canterbury began with a pass rate of 41.6% in 1886, somewhat above that of North Canterbury. The most striking result occurred in 1891, when South Canterbury (46.7%) was below the national average of 50.25%, while North Canterbury (54.0%) was above it. But it is the percentage of failures which gives a more complete picture for South Canterbury. These fell from 25.5% in 1886 to around 19% in 1888 and 1889, rising slightly in the next two years, and falling again to 15% in 1892 and 1893.

Gow instituted another form of assessing efficiency. Using a scale ranging from "very good" to "inferior", he showed the annual grading of the South Canterbury schools as a whole. The cut-off point which marked efficiency was a grade of "satisfactory", while those receiving an estimation of "fair", "moderate" or "inferior" were considered inefficient in their teaching. When his figures are converted to percentages it can be seen that the proportion of South Canterbury schools above the educational plimsoll line grew from 71.1% in 1906 to 87.1% in 1913, finishing at 83.5% in 1915. The proportion of children, throughout South Canterbury, taught in those schools also increased, from 89.0% in 1906 to 95.4% in 1913, dropping slightly to 94.0% in 1915.

While the over all pattern in both districts was generally one of improving efficiency in teaching, the inspectors' comments give a richer picture of the state of Canterbury education. It became common practice at the end of the examination round for inspectors, pipe in hand, to reflect on the nature of the teaching they had observed during the year, and to record their musings for the benefit of those both inside and outside the teaching profession. Admittedly some grew impatient of the exercise as they noticed no improvement from year to year. In 1879 Restell grizzled:

Comments in detail upon the reading, writing, and other subjects and points examined are but a waste of time, type, ink, and paper by paraphrasing the

remarks and complaints made ever since school-inspection began.¹¹

Most, however, included comments relating to the teaching of specific subjects or to the purpose of education in general. As Anderson wrote in 1887, those teachers who had "less opportunity of learning the prevailing views may find a few hints of some value to them".¹²

Where poor teaching existed, inspectors looked hard for extenuating circumstances, and often found them. They realised that some teachers found the process of inspection an ordeal. Wood, for one, acknowledged that teachers were "too nervous" or "had not yet acquired confidence enough" to do themselves "justice in the presence of an Inspector".¹³ They also recognised the difficulties faced by teachers in sole charge of the smaller schools, practical difficulties of timetables and schedules of work which they were quick to help with so that problems could be minimised. But the steady turnover of teachers in these schools and pupils' irregular attendance made continuity of teaching almost meaningless and continuity of learning a distant educational dream.

Although the Education Act 1877 had made attendance, with some exceptions, compulsory for children aged seven to thirteen years, it was largely ineffective. The increasingly stringent requirements of successive Acts reflected the views and wishes of

educational authorities. Boards' income from capitation grants was calculated on average attendance; good progress in school demanded regular attendance; and some saw truancy as a precursor of a life of crime. All in all, irregular attendance was an "unmitigated evil". Restell expressed his horror of the idleness of truants, pointing out that they were:

... revelling in the dirt of the creek or the gutter for the greater part of the day ... thus becoming habituated to idleness - the parent of vice, the foster-parent of evil instincts.¹⁴

By the time of the School Attendance Act 1901, the belief that truancy and crime were linked was widely accepted and it was clearly expressed in the Minister of Education's 1902 report.

... the leading authorities on juvenile depravity and crime are agreed that these social faults have for the most part their origin in truancy and in the acquirement of the nomadic habit; and accordingly the margin between a low rate and a high rate of school attendance ... represents to a large extent those children who will, if still neglected, go to swell our industrial schools and reformatories, and, at a later age, our prisons, refuges, and lunatic asylums.¹⁵

McGeorge points out that concerns about the "nomadic habit" were based on the "recapitulationist argument" that nomadism belonged to an earlier stage of civilisation. If children demonstrated the nomadic habit they were therefore indicating a kind of reversion to this earlier time.¹⁶ For a colony which had pulled itself up from a pioneering "frontier" stage, such evidence of nomadism in its children was a worry.

Absenteeism because of illness was forgiven.

Epidemics caused havoc with the attendance rate and with the number of children presenting for examination. An outbreak of measles at Geraldine in 1906 more than halved the attendance on examination day.¹⁷ Some children returned from illness too early. Gow and Bell remarked that at their examinations in 1903, many children "were not in a fit state of health to do justice to themselves or their teachers".¹⁸

Inspectors felt parents should realise that regular attendance at school was necessary for sound learning. Parents, however, had other ideas. Just as Larson has argued for Victoria,¹⁹ in New Zealand two concepts of a child's school career clashed. While the authorities wanted all children to attend school on a continuous basis until they had achieved a certain level of education, parents viewed the path to this attainment as necessarily more sporadic and perhaps spread over more years. It was to be achieved in tandem with children's other commitments to work.

Although Liberal industrial legislation had curtailed the worst excesses of child employment in factories and workrooms by the turn of the century, as Graham points out the impact of this legislation on most child workers was negligible. In 1901 the Census listed 8477 (European) breadwinners under the age of 15. Changes to the law had not encompassed the 3988 young breadwinners in agricultural and pastoral areas, nor the 1100 in domestic service. A further 4324 performed

domestic duties for their families.²⁰ Many urban children had part-time jobs as well, the most common being selling papers, delivering milk or parcels, cleaning, or working in shops and theatres.²¹ While these jobs were undertaken outside school hours, children's contributions to the family created frequent absences from school. For rural children this was especially so at harvest time. As Davey has described for Ontario, so in New Zealand the patterns of absenteeism show the "close relationship between the rhythm of work and the rhythm of school attendance".²² Parents' ability to circumvent the provisions of various school attendance regulations suggests that they were winning what McKenzie aptly describes as the "competition for child time".²³

But inspectors were not willing to put the entire blame at the feet of the parents. In his 1889 report Gow addressed the question.

In past years the district as a whole has kept about the average of the colony; but it may well be asked why we have been so far behind the neighbouring district of Otago. Will the people of South Canterbury plead that they experience worse weather than they have across the Waitaki? Or will they assert that the children there are of less value than they are here in helping their mothers on washing days, in picking potatoes, in minding the baby, or in keeping the birds from the strawberries? Are we to be forced to the conclusion that the parents in this district do not so keenly realise to what extent their children suffer in their progress and their education in its widest sense from the unsteadiness of their attendance? No doubt a great deal of blame attaches to the parents for their apathy in this respect; but many of the teachers who find in this an excuse for their bad results had better consider

how much of this irregularity is due to themselves. Assuredly I do not attach the extreme importance to this excuse which some teachers would seem, from the bitterness of their complaining, to expect me to do. I would have them bear in mind that it is a matter of experience that good teaching secures a good attendance, and that it is a common way of complimenting the teacher on his management of the school for parents to declare that they can scarcely keep their children at home when they really want them.²⁴

Regardless of where the responsibility lay, educational authorities kept a close eye on the attendance figures. In 1880, both Boards had similar rates, around 72%, below the national average of 76.6%. By 1890 it had increased to 80.5% for North Canterbury and 79.2% for South Canterbury, both hovering round the national average of 79.9%. In 1900 South Canterbury was in the lead, with a rate of 85.1%, above both the national (82.9%) and northern Board (81.8%) rates. It still retained its lead ten years later, this time at 88.2%, with 86.9% for North Canterbury and 87.7% for the country as a whole. When the two Boards combined in 1916 the attendance rate for the year was 88.8%, very close to the national average of 88.6%. A fairly steady increase was therefore demonstrated by both Boards, in line with the national trend. What the yearly averages do not show, however, was the irregular attendance of individual children and the effect it had upon their learning.

Despite this effect, inspectors looked to teachers for "reasonable efficiency" in teaching. They noted faults such as focussing too much on the higher

classes to the neglect of the lower, "injudicious classification" of pupils, (especially under pressure from parents), and in "defective instruction" and "want of thoroughness". At Mandeville Plains in 1889, Anderson considered the "actual amount of real teaching done" to be very small, and could not say that the children had "received any benefit whatever from their attendance beyond what mere practice could give them".²⁵ Inspectors identified "desultoriness", "languid or spasmodic effort" or even "dogged application" in the children as signs of limited teaching skill. What was needed was "skilful, alert, bright oral teaching and thoughtful questioning" to make the "educational training effective".²⁶

The technique of "thoughtful questioning" brought frequent comment in inspectors' reports. Anderson was at pains in 1889 to make clear what he saw as effective questioning.

... the success of the teacher depends not only on the skill shown in the nature and direction of the questions, but on the selection of the answerer, and on the readiness with which the sequence is adapted to the exact form which the answer assumes. Yet to some teachers, despite repeated criticisms, simultaneous answering, in which it is impossible to recognise either the exact form of the answer or the distribution of the capacity to answer at all, still presents irresistible attractions. ...²⁷ Simultaneous answering utterly spoils a lesson.

Hogben agreed. "Imperfect questioning, simultaneous and indiscriminate answering, are ... the indirect sources of a large amount of the slovenly answering that exists."²⁸

"MECHANICAL PEDAGOGUES"

For many, the focus of teaching was the annual examination. As Edge noted in 1885, many teachers thought "far too much about percentages and far too little about the real training and education of the children committed to their care" and identified "energetic and thorough teaching, occasional testing of the work done, and greater earnestness on the part of the pupils" as being required to bring about improvement.²⁹

Nevertheless, as long as passes in the annual examination were viewed by so many as the measurement of successful teaching, teachers would retain it as the goal of their efforts. An editorial in the Press in April 1896 set out the problem in detail.

It is certain at least that the exacting nature of the "Standard" system has produced a distinct evil in the machine-like method of teaching pursued by some schoolmasters. The urgent necessity of producing results for the inspector has driven many intelligent teachers into becoming a sort of mechanical gerund-grinder.

Arithmetic came in for special mention.

Pass any school during the day and you hear a dreary, lifeless sing-song... - "saying tables" it is called. The voices are toneless, the children obviously apathetic, their thoughts far away from the words they are uttering. Can this sort of thing possibly stimulate intelligence or convey information? It may be necessary for "results"; but it is the most dreary, colourless and mechanical device of teaching that could be conceived.³⁰

Such "mechanical methods of teaching" were resorted to

by teachers, the writer believed, because of the "inflexibility of standard requirements, and the wooden rigour of some school inspectors".

It was unfair to single out the inspectors as a major cause of this kind of teaching. Far from endorsing it they actively discouraged it. Inspectors looked for the individual strengths of the teacher, both in subject specialty and teaching method. Specialisation was encouraged as long as it did not mean avoidance of other subjects. Variety in teaching method, too, was regarded positively.

Provided that the education of a child is based on sound principles, the success of the teacher to a large extent depends on the adoption of suitable methods. With this proviso your Inspectors have intentionally allowed a wide latitude to teachers in their selection of the methods adopted. A cast-iron uniformity is the last thing we would desire, and every encouragement is given to original thought in dealing with the problems of the class-room. For method after all is greatly a matter of the individual, just as the skilled artisan can work best with his own tools.³¹

If teachers needed an already assembled toolkit, however, inspectors recommended helpful guides. Charles R. Long, an Inspector in Victoria, had written The Aim and Method of the Reading Lesson, which Gow and Bell considered "an excellent shilling's worth".³² They also maintained that:

Teachers who have been imbued with the spirit of Herbert Spencer's 'Education', and who have not laid aside Currie's 'Common School Education' as³³ obsolete, need have no fear of the new syllabus.

An adjunct of the "mechanical pedagogy" was the practice of cram. Addressing the Cohen Commission in

1912, Ernest Andrews from the North Canterbury School Committees' Association said that "so long as the red rag of examination is dangled before the eyes of the teachers, so long will the system of cram continue".³⁴ Chief Inspector Foster, however, had a different view. He was clear that there was "very little scope for it" and besides, the word was incorrectly used.

When an effort is to be made by a child it is stigmatized as cram, whereas cram means causing the children mental exhaustion. That used to be the case when the memory was overtaxed.

Now, he said, questions in examinations were generally set "with the special object of avoiding cram and requiring thought".³⁵

Cram had certainly been at the forefront of public debate in earlier years and had even been included as a question topic in teacher examinations. In 1896 teachers were asked:

In what ways may overstudy injuriously affect the health of children? Mention any conditions you know of that may be regarded as being possibly symptoms of mischief due to this cause.³⁶

This was an issue which medical men felt well qualified to address. Chief among them was Frederick Truby King who forcefully spelled out to the Cohen Commission the evil effects of cram, particularly on girls. While he saw one remedy against the temptation for cram as being the removal scholarships, he also explained how younger children could be affected. The evil often began in primary school, he said, and had "infants talking lessons in their sleep as a result of

the excitement and anxiety of pending examinations".³⁷

MOULDING YOUNG MINDS

While it is true that preparation for the annual examination occupied a good deal of some teachers' time, it was certainly not seen as the goal of education, especially by inspectors. In their annual report for 1906, Anderson, Ritchie and Foster gave some thought to the ways in which education had developed over the years. Referring to the notorious English Revised Code 1862 they noted that:

Education was treated as something capable of being measured, weighed, and evaluated in terms of the decimal notation; its main aim was to make the child an automaton intended only to learn, to remember, and to earn "results". We have not yet seen the last of its effects. Teachers trained under such baneful influence do not always welcome their release from its thralldom, from the vitiating tendencies of its narrow aims, and they still remain either actively hostile³⁸ or passively obstructive to modern developments.

Later codes freely recognised the State's responsibility "for the character of its future rulers", however, and subjects such as civics, history, science, geography and nature-study provided "fine material to mould and influence the youthful mind and to bring the child into that close harmony with environment which is the aim of true education".³⁹

These were the new subjects introduced through various syllabus changes. The core subjects of reading, writing, grammar, composition and arithmetic remained

fairly constant throughout the years. All should be taught, the inspectors continually reminded teachers, in ways which developed the intelligence of the child.

Reading was considered the mainstay of the education system but was not always successful. In 1896 Wood, Anderson and Ritchie remarked:

... it is more than doubtful whether the power acquired is sufficient to enable a boy after leaving school at this stage [Standard IV] to do more than make out with difficulty some passages from a newspaper, and it certainly falls far short of the ease and unconscious ability which leave the mind free to appreciate the mental attitude of the writer.⁴⁰

Not only were the irregularities of the language itself to blame, but the pupils' home surroundings and range of personal experience limited their ability to go "beyond the narrow horizon of their daily life".⁴¹

By 1908, however, the inspectorate was able to report that in a "goodly number" of schools reading had "strong claims to unqualified commendation". The availability of books was hailed as a reason for this success, though the inspectors warned against "a tendency to scamper through volume after volume in a frantic and vain attempt to swell the list of books allegedly 'read'".⁴²

Gow and Bell did not find the same degree of success in South Canterbury. That same year they reported that pupils read "in a most laboured fashion, without enjoyment to themselves and with positive pain to the listeners".⁴³ What frequently drew the inspectors' criticism was the tendency to "pattern

reading", where students followed the example of the teacher, copying their intonation exactly. This was carried, they said, to the absurd extent that in some cases children could read the set texts with "the greatest fluency and exaggerated emphasis and modulation" but were "helpless when brought face to face with a new lesson". The glib reading was more accurately "repeating", as "with books shut they would proceed as readily as with them open".⁴⁴ Pattern reading did not fool the inspectors. It was "a thin veneer that, under the fire of a brief oral test in comprehension, blisters and cracks, exposing the plain deal beneath".⁴⁵ Still faced with it in 1909 they wailed, "Are we never to have done with the discredited and deadening routine? ... Happily there is less of this now; the sooner it goes altogether the better."⁴⁶

The Press editorial in 1896, in which the writer bemoaned mechanical pedagogy, gave as a further example the "most pernicious" method of teaching writing. At the top of the page would be a sentence, such as "A stitch in time saves nine" and, far from being allowed to write the sentence line by line until reaching the bottom of the page, pupils had to do it word by word. Columns of "stitch", "time", "saves", and so on, would separately fill the page.

The purpose of this is not that the children may learn to write, but that the copy-books, when 'inspected', may present a neat and regular appearance. No child could possibly learn to write a 'running hand' by such a method, but that seems

to count for little, provided the Inspectors be satisfied.⁴⁷

How widespread this practice was is unknown. It was certainly not advocated by inspectors. In fact Gow, in 1899, was driven to the point of saying that he thought it necessary, "however absurd it may seem, to warn some teachers that copybooks do not teach writing". Whatever style of writing was chosen, (and there was debate about whether this should be "upright" or "sloping"), the teacher was to:

... drill his scholars in the proper position of the body and in the right way of holding the pen, and he must make constant use of the blackboard in showing the slope, heights, turns, and joinings of the letters.⁴⁸

Achieving some degree of uniformity of writing style throughout a classroom was considered "a sure guarantee of good teaching". Individuality would "come soon enough when school-days are over".

Gow was surprised by the difference the new "upright" style made to the success of handwriting in one of his schools, where it had been introduced seven months prior to the examinations in 1895. The school "was classed at once among the best in writing, though this subject had not previously been one of its strong points".⁴⁹ A healthy rivalry grew between schools favouring the different styles, much to the delight of the inspectors who noticed rapid improvement in this area in all schools. Gow had little sympathy for the complaints made by outsiders against the standard of

handwriting in his schools.

As to the complaints of businessmen that boys do not write so well as they used to do, it is some comfort to reflect that their predecessors had the same thing to say when the complainants of⁵⁰ to-day were the schoolboys of that earlier time.

Spelling, however, was a different story. In 1893 Gow reported that:

Teachers and examiners get used to seeing the commonest words tortured almost beyond recognition; and one must groan or smile, according to his humour, as he scores his pencil through the blunders in the body of a pupil's letter; but there is clear proof of negligent supervision when one letter after another has the familiar 'Yours truly' written 'your's Truly,' or 'Your's truely.' The letters which closed with 'your's struley,' 'You's Trury,' and 'Your truthly love' were beyond criticism.⁵¹

Bad spelling in formal dictation exercises was taken as a sign of "indifference or laziness on the part of the teachers". Inspectors advised them to list commonly occurring mistakes in a notebook and use this for special spelling lessons. They also offered memory aids such as:

The form with double e should go
Together with suc, ex, and pro;⁵²
But do not spell procedure so.

While efficiency in written composition was expected from the higher Standards, effective oral expression was the goal in lower classes. Teachers should encourage children to expand on ideas and it was the "bright and resourceful teacher" who could make the simplest lessons real and interesting.

One teacher makes 'The cat sat on the mat' just so many words to be monotonously repeated over and over again, while another has every face eager with

delight as each little one tells of his own cat,
and of the mat at the door, and of the mat in front
of the fire at home where pussy dozes.⁵³

For clear enunciation, good posture was crucial.

Gow grumbled that he wished:

... teachers would always remember how great an aid
to good reading it is for the pupil to stand well,
with his feet firmly placed, and his body well
braced for effort. One does not expect crispness
of utterance from a reader standing with bent knees
and head drooping low over his book. A slovenly
attitude and a nerveless style go together.⁵⁴

Once good posture was achieved, attention to
correct pronunciation was possible. "Purity of
utterance of the vowel sounds" was all important and, as
McGeorge has shown, exercised the minds of inspectors
for some years.⁵⁵ One Samuel McBurney, a visitor from
Victoria who was promoting the tonic sol-fa method of
teaching singing, listened carefully to the speech
patterns of New Zealand children in 1887 and made
phonetic records of what he heard. In both New Zealand
and Australia he had noticed a general tendency to
Cockney pronunciation but certain of its "leading
features" were less common in New Zealand.⁵⁶ Eight
years later, however, Gow was vexed by the way children
were imitating the accent of "popular 'coster' songs".⁵⁷
But by 1914 the North Canterbury inspectors were
gratified by the increased emphasis on clear and
distinct enunciation, though there was still some
watchfulness needed by teachers to overcome the evil of
incorrect speech. Their own behaviour was of prime
influence.

No success can be hoped for if the teacher on his or her part does not avoid slang, colloquialisms, indistinctness of utterance, and nasality.⁵⁸

Where teachers felt themselves to be lacking in the niceties of speech, or in ideas for promoting it amongst children, Gow and Valentine advised them to study carefully Hulbert's Voice Training or Rice's Voice Production, and peruse the educational journals for relevant articles. They could not resist adding:

Another matter that calls for attention is the harsh and strident tones that mark and mar the children's speech while they are engaged in games or romping in the playground. While we do not wish to restrict the natural exuberance of youngsters let loose from school, we think that some kindly and judicious restraint might be exercised by the teachers to prevent this thoughtless abuse of the divine gift of speech.⁵⁹

This was a further technique of disciplinary power following the children into the playground.

Attention to arithmetic occupied regular space in inspectors' reports. Neatness, correctness and rapid working went together. The "untidy worker" who "scribbled his computations" would find himself in difficulties in the examination. He:

... frequently gets into a fog before he is done, and, groping about to find out his position, he finds his time has slipped away, for time never flies faster than when you are working against it on an examination-paper.⁶⁰

As far as teaching method was concerned, Gow suggested a weekly contest in rapid calculation, as in Scotland, where pupil teachers were brought into the competition and so "put on their mettle to hold their

own against the brightest scholars".⁶¹ Wood, Anderson and Ritchie, while not wishing teachers to reduce the amount of time spent on arithmetic to anything less than the usual one and a half hours a day, feared that it occupied "too large a space in the teacher's mental horizon", probably because their reputation for successful work depended on the results in this subject. They pleaded for a fuller recognition of the fact that:

... the master's best mental work in a school is to be found in the evidence of his influence on the general intelligence of the children - in other words, in the degree of culture he produces. The influence may not be easily expressed in terms of "passes", or by way of numerical estimates of the value of subjects taught; but it is very real all the same, is readily recognised by the Inspector, and, whether referred to in his report or not, forms one of the chief factors of the estimation in which he holds the teacher.⁶²

The development of intelligence was at the heart of all good teaching. This was also the declared purpose of newer subjects. Geography was given increasing attention with syllabus changes. The North Canterbury Inspectors in 1914 demonstrated the link between the study of geography and true educational development. It would enable pupils to:

... form a right conception of the unity of the world and the world's workers, to expand their sympathies and interest, to embrace an ever-widening circle, and to develop into men and women of broader knowledge and sounder views of citizenship and life.⁶³

Although inspectors worked with teachers towards a common understanding of the requirements of the syllabus, they made it clear that they were "by no means

wedded to a stereotyped uniformity".⁶⁴ They certainly did not want teachers to rely overly on texts, which "gave the children only words and bewilderment".⁶⁵ Instead, they encouraged them to use resources like guide-books, postcards, even the shipping columns of newspapers, which Gow expected would astonish the teacher "at the demand made upon his geographical knowledge before he gets to the foot of the column".⁶⁶ More than anything, they chased them into the playground to conduct vivid observation-lessons on mountain ranges, hills and valleys, rivers and plains.⁶⁷ "Like charity, geography should begin at home, but not end there."⁶⁸

History was never a really successful subject in Canterbury schools. Inspectors acknowledged that it was "not an easy subject to handle well", calling for special qualifications and considerable effort and thought by the teacher. It was best when made "most biographical".⁶⁹ Work remained "scrappy and disconnected", possibly because many teachers faced it as a new subject themselves, since their own teachers had also relegated it to a low position in the subject hierarchy.⁷⁰ The true educational purpose of history could be realised through its connection with civics. It was a means of "purifying the sympathies and stirring a wholesome patriotism and a true sense of civic duty".⁷¹

The chief aim of nature-study was "not utilitarian but educational". It was studied "to train

the mind, to stimulate a spirit of inquiry, and to arouse an intelligent interest in the world around us".⁷² Children should be induced to talk, examine and experiment, thus acquiring "permanent intellectual habits".⁷³ Moreover, it had an ethical purpose, no less important. The child would develop the capacity to love whatever was beautiful, and cultivate tastes and habits which would prove a "bulwark against temptation", yielding "solace in the trials that await him in future years".⁷⁴

A close companion to nature-study was agriculture but Anderson, Ritchie and Foster at least, considered that "any technical agricultural instruction worthy of the name" would be a waste of effort and time in a primary school. Presenting the unity of nature as a "series of thought-tight compartments" was unsatisfactory. "The immature mind will become a modified lumber-room for technicalities". The function of the primary school was to "bestow a general training and to cultivate such mental alertness" as would prepare children well for future studies. Rather than through agriculture, this would be achieved through nature-study and cottage-gardening.⁷⁵ Even then, the aim of garden-work was not to turn out skilled gardeners, but to teach the underlying principles in such a way as to make pupils self-reliant and resourceful workers. Teachers should guard against giving too much assistance which would deprive pupils of "rightful opportunities of

independent effort", an effort which was important in the making of intellectual strength.⁷⁶ More could be made, too, of the reasons for simple horticultural processes.

Why, for instance, is it practically useless to supply a fertilising agent in dry weather? Why should the spade be driven into the ground vertically when turning the soil over? Why should some seeds be planted more deeply than others? Why does the removal of maturing blooms lengthen the flowering-time of certain plants?

Together, these subjects should aim at fostering "the power of exact seeing, clear thinking, connecting cause and effect", and "reaching discovery by careful experiment".⁷⁸

Just as agriculture and gardening did not aim at turning out "fully-fledged farmers", the purpose of drawing was not to "produce a crop of artists". What was expected, was "the cultivation of an artistic feeling".⁷⁹ Although children drew their impressions of everyday objects, they were also required to develop skill in more technical drawing. Unfortunately teachers were not thrilled by this requirement and found ways to circumvent its true purpose. In 1891 Gow grumbled that "owing chiefly to the laxity of supervision", and partly to "intentional neglect" by teachers of the clearly printed rules, pupils had been making "very free use of mechanical aids in producing their freehand figures".

In this as in other things:

... honesty will be found the best policy. Whether the drawing be good or bad let it be what it purports to be; crooked lines are to be preferred

to crooked morality.⁸⁰

Another subject where deftness of hand was expected was needlework. This was not always the province solely of girls. Gow and Bell noted in 1906 that in one country school "boys also are initiated into the mysteries of patching tweeds, sewing on buttons, and darning stockings, some kindly folk in the neighbourhood, with an utilitarian bent, giving annual prizes to the boys that show themselves most expert in such work".⁸¹ The Great War also found boys, as well as girls, making articles to comfort the men on active service. "Never before has so much knitting been carried on," exclaimed the inspectors.⁸²

Although the Press editorial concerned with mechanical pedagogy had condemned an unnamed inspector for insisting that children use red cotton for hemming handkerchiefs, so that he could detect more easily any irregularities, and for advocating a "needle drill" in which children threaded by numbers, one hopes this did not refer to any inspector in Canterbury.⁸³ Edge and Cumming thought it was unsatisfactory for inspectors to examine this work. They wanted school committees to appoint "ladies in the districts to examine the work done". Anyway, parents "often took the work to be done into their own hands, regardless of the requirements of the standards".⁸⁴

In 1897 Wood, Anderson and Ritchie discussed at length the operation of the Manual and Technical

Elementary Instruction Act 1895. While they were against any technical instruction in primary schools, they did favour mental training through manual instruction. One subject eminently suited to elementary education which, while both technical and manual, had "direct practical utility" was cooking. The ability "to cook a dinner fairly" was much more important for girls, they believed, than "the skilful manipulation of vulgar and decimal fractions". Equipment need not be substantial. They regarded "the gridiron and the saucepan as necessary parts of school furniture" and expected "them to be made use of over the school-room fire as instruments of practical instruction".⁸⁵

While many town schools had access to a special centre for instruction in cooking, they were not necessarily better off. Brock reported in 1911 that the premises for teaching cooking in Ashburton had originally been used for other purposes and the old wooden building was "now infested with an insect which causes considerable annoyance in the cooking class". Throughout the building "the use of a little sheep dip occasionally would be found a good aid to sanitary conditions", he advised.⁸⁶ Such a drastic remedy conjures up a tantalising image of the size of the annoying insect.

Once teachers became more familiar with the newer subjects, inspectors began to point out how educational goals could be better served by integrating the various

components of the syllabus. Connections between lessons, and between subjects, were now the focus of good teaching. Inspectors noted instances where:

... the intelligent treatment of geography lends interest to lessons on history, where the story of advancing civilisation and the growth of political freedom, dissociated from the tramp of armed hosts and the casualties of the battlefield, is shown to be linked no less closely with the study of climate and of geological formations. This faculty for judicious selection, the power to recombine the facts thus gathered, and the comprehensive outlook which enables variety of material to be brought either into vivid contrast or into one harmonious blending, are elements of special value in the equipment of a teacher, and indispensable to the man who aspires to mastership in his craft.⁸⁷

Paper-folding and cardboard-work could be "dove-tailed" with arithmetic and geometry, arithmetic with agriculture, and agriculture with geography, nature-study, elementary science and, indirectly, English.⁸⁸

If teachers grasped the unity of syllabus subjects, they earned the approbation of inspectors. Successful teaching always drew admiring comment.

Good teaching presupposes intellectual fitness, character, sympathy, and tact in the teacher; and good teaching implies good learning on the part of the pupils.

In outlining these virtues, Gow illustrates the prevailing view regarding the characteristics of a good teacher.

The teachers, with few exceptions, apply themselves with zeal and energy to the carrying out of their duties; they show themselves ready and willing to improve their methods; and they are quick to take advantage of helpful criticism.⁹⁰

The "helpful criticism" was meted out on the

inspection visit when the teacher's everyday ability came under scrutiny. Although the Press editorial in 1896 blamed the mechanical teaching in schools on the "'woodenness' and unsympathetic character of some of the Inspectors",⁹² this is not borne out by their inspection reports which show that while inspectors were sharp-eyed observers of teaching practice they were not harsh critics in print and praised what they approved of. Their remarks warrant analysis.

"Content analysis" is a useful method for quantifying the kinds of comments made in inspection reports. From the available reports for five inspection rounds, by ten different inspectors, each descriptive word or phrase was isolated and its positive or negative character determined. A description of a teacher's "unremitting zeal and industry" counted as two positive comments while "a nice manner of dealing with young children" counted as one. A report on a "painstaking and energetic" teacher whose class was "rather weak in discipline", generated one negative and two positive comments. From this analysis the inspectors' positive opinion of the teaching they observed becomes evident.

In the 1890 inspection reports Anderson and Wood recorded their impressions of 61 schools. Of their 114 comments which described the teaching they observed, 95 were positive. Five years later, together with Ritchie, they inspected 173 schools; 309 of the 391 comments were positive. In the inspection rounds covering one year

from April 1899 until March 1900, Anderson, Wood and Ritchie, assisted by Howard as Acting Inspector, observed the teaching in 149 schools. Altogether 302 descriptive comments were recorded; of these, 275 were positive. Unfortunately the records do not allow another five-year interval, but analysis of comments from the 1911 and 1912 reports shows a consistently positive approach. In 1911 Foster, Brock, Hughes and Hardie recorded their comments. From the 227 schools visited, 290 of the 300 comments were positive. Similarly in 1912, Foster, Brock, Hardie, Owen and Mayne inspected 227 schools, recording 232 comments about teaching; 205 were positive.

The pattern is clear. At no time did the proportion of positive comments fall below 75% for any one inspector. The lowest score (75.8%) was from Mayne, as Acting Inspector in 1912. Ritchie was the only other to rate teaching as cautiously, when 76.6% of his 299 comments in 1895 were positive. For Foster and Brock in 1911, all comments were positive, but they only recorded 43 and 31 respectively. Setting aside the two lower scores of Ritchie and Mayne, there is a general increase in the proportion of positive comments over the period. This could be attributed to an improvement in teaching, a change of inspectors, or even a change in the literary style of the inspector himself. Nevertheless the total number of comments is large enough to warrant a claim for an improvement in teaching, and the increase in the

percentages of individual inspectors through time would support this.

The words and phrases used create a picture of the teacher most likely to find favour. Teaching over all was usually described as meriting approval and commendation. Inspectors sometimes commented on teaching in terms of its likely result and good teaching "promised success", was "calculated to cultivate intelligence", and gave a "hopeful outlook for the educational advancement of pupils". When focussing on teachers themselves, inspectors remarked that good teachers were capable, skilful and efficient. They were resourceful and conscientious, they spared no effort, and had a "satisfactory knowledge of the schoolmaster's business".

Good teachers used sound teaching methods based on a good grasp of educational principles. Their style of teaching was vigorous, energetic and enthusiastic; it was conducted with zeal and animation. Industrious teachers were also thorough and painstaking, faithfully discharging their duties in an earnest and intelligent manner. Their lessons were delivered with clarity and a "commendable degree of care", had a definite aim and showed attention to detail. All in all, good teachers developed a "good spirit of activity", a "healthy spirit of industry", and kept the children well occupied. Those showing a pleasant manner in dealing with pupils and an honest and intelligent interest in their

progress, were also likely to win pupils' "hearty co-operation", a sure sign of success.

These remarks in their inspection reports for individual schools, show the inspectors' image of the good teacher achieving a "reasonable efficiency".

Looking back on the work done in North Canterbury schools in 1912, the inspectors confidently claimed:

The men and women employed in our schools are ... fully conscious of their great responsibilities, and give of their best freely and ungrudgingly in their efforts to promote the well-being and mould aright the future lives of their charges.⁹²

Much good work was done.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. AJHR, 1887, E-1B p. 42.
2. AJHR, 1916, E-2 Appendix B p. xxix,
3. New Zealand Schoolmaster, July 1886, pp. 178-9.
4. AJHR, 1886, E-1B p. 34.
5. AJHR, 1886, E-1B pp. 31-2.
6. NCEB Minutes, 15 April 1886.
7. Press, 2 July 1886, p. 3.
8. ibid.
9. NCEB Minutes, 15 July 1886.
10. Figures from AJHR reports.
11. AJHR, 1879, H-2 p. 89.
12. AJHR, 1887, E-1B p. 43.
13. See for example NCEB IRB 27 May 1890, 2 April 1895.
14. AJHR, 1880, H-1I p. 30.
15. AJHR, 1902, E-1 p. iii.
16. McGeorge, Schools and socialisation in New Zealand 1890-1914, p. 55.
17. AJHR, 1907, E-1B p. 40.
18. AJHR, 1904, E-1B p. 38.
19. Larson, Who wants to go to school?, p. 86.
20. Graham, Child employment in New Zealand, p. 68-9.
21. McGeorge, p. 70.
22. Davey, On school attendance, p. 9.
23. McKenzie, Education and Social Structure, Part I, Reluctantly to school, p. 35.
24. AJHR, 1889, E-1B p. 48.
25. NCEB IRB, 13 May 1889.

26. See for example NCEB IRB, 22 and 24 March 1911.
27. AJHR, 1889, E-1B p. 40.
28. AJHR, 1889, E-1B p. 45.
29. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 31.
30. Press, 13 April 1896, p. 4.
31. AJHR, 1912, E-2 Appendix C p. xlv.
32. AJHR 1904, E-1B p. 39.
33. ibid.
34. AJHR, 1912, E-12 p. 394.
35. AJHR, 1912, E-12 p. 353.
36. AJHR, 1896, E-1A p. 8.
37. AJHR, 1912, E-12 p. 656.
38. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 48.
39. ibid.
40. AJHR, 1896, E-1B p. 39.
41. ibid.
42. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 41.
43. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 44.
44. AJHR, 1902, E-1B p. 40.
45. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 52.
46. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 130.
47. Press, 13 April 1896, p. 4.
48. AJHR, 1899, E-1B p. 42.
49. AJHR, 1896, E-1B p. 41.
50. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 45.
51. AJHR, 1893, E-1B pp. 30-1.
52. AJHR, 1902, E-1B p. 40.
53. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 130.

54. AJHR, 1899, E-1B p. 42.
55. McGeorge, Hear our voices we entreat.
56. ibid, pp. 5-6.
57. AJHR, 1895, E-1B p. 34.
58. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxii.
59. AJHR, 1915, E-2 Appendix C, p. xxxii.
60. AJHR, 1893, E-1B p. 31.
61. AJHR, 1913, E-2 Appendix C p. xlvii.
62. AJHR, 1896, E-1B p. 40.
63. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxiii.
64. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 48.
65. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 45.
66. AJHR, 1890, E-1B p. 35.
67. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 131.
68. AJHR, 1884, E-1B p. 24.
69. AJHR, 1913, E-2 Appendix C, p. xliii.
70. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxiii; AJHR, 1915, E-2 Appendix C, p. xxxiii.
71. AJHR, 1913, E-2 Appendix C p. xliii.
72. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxiii.
73. AJHR, 1913, E-2 Appendix C, p. xliii.
74. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 49.
75. ibid.
76. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxiii.
77. AJHR, 1910, E-2 pp. 139-140.
78. ibid, p. 139.
79. AJHR, 1910, E-2 p. 139.
80. AJHR, 1891, E-1B p. 31.

81. AJHR, 1906, E-1B p. 53.
82. AJHR, 1916, E-2 Appendix B p. xxxi.
83. Press, 13 April 1896, p. 4.
84. AJHR, 1884, E-1B p. 21.
85. AJHR, 1897, E-1B pp. 36-8.
86. NCEB IRB, 28-9 March 1911.
87. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 128.
88. See for example AJHR, 1916, E-2 Appendix B p. xxvii.
89. AJHR, 1900, E-1B p. 35.
90. ibid.
91. Press, 13 April 1896, p. 4.
92. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xliv.

CHAPTER 7

"MANNERS, MORALS AND METHODS": THE TEACHERS

Having frequently considered the qualities of the good teacher, Brock, Hardie, Owen and Mayne felt moved in their 1915 annual report to quote from the "inspiring little book" by Donald E. Fraser called Thoughts for Teachers.

Teachers should be so impressed with the truly tremendous power for weal or woe which lies in their manners, morals, and methods that they will ever strive to improve themselves morally, socially, intellectually, and physically; that so long as they teach they shall be keen students. The teacher should be in all respects a model for his pupils: not a perfect paragon, but a good workaday model, with a few lovable failings to keep him in touch with the children.¹

Constant striving for improvement was certainly needed in the early years of the two Boards. It was most noticeable in the northern Board where the educational Inquiry of 1886 highlighted the need for a revamping of the training and appointment of teachers. In this period of turmoil several teachers were prone to more than a "few lovable failings", in particular an excessive liking for drink, yet were not without example in their inspectors. Boards dealt with a number of complaints against teachers through the years but were chiefly interested in the teaching efficiency of their staff. Uncertificated teachers were told to smarten up their qualifications, increasing attention was paid to

the preparation of pupil teachers, and in later years more active guidance was given by the Boards' inspectorate. This chapter describes the kinds of complaints made against teachers and outlines the inspectors' role in initiating or investigating complaints. It also describes inspectors' views on pupil teachers and women teachers, their involvement in teachers' continuing education, and the process of teacher appointment and promotion.

NOT "PERFECT PARAGONS"

At Saunders' retirement from the North Canterbury Education Board in 1899, a formal address was given, enumerating his virtues. Although prefaced by the statement that "no public man was free from mistakes, and no doubt Mr Saunders had made some in his time", the speech noted the great service he had rendered on the Reform Committee of 1886. The ensuing report had "resulted in the gradual removal of unworthy and unqualified teachers, and in the introduction of the existing committee system", and was perhaps his best contribution to the Board. In reference to the Appointments Committee, whose task it was to filter all applications for teaching positions and consider inspectors' reports, the address concluded:

Its watchfulness has resulted in the selection of those who, by training and rectitude of conduct, have proved themselves pre-eminently qualified to direct and educate the youthful mind, and has also

helped materially to raise the status of a class engaged in one of life's most sacred vocations. We are sure that the present satisfactory condition of our schools, and the excellence of our inspectorial and teaching staff, will be to you sufficient compensation for the unflagging interest you have ever evinced in the rising generation of this colony.

In reply Saunders said that:

He was sure they all knew how very unpleasant was the task of removing undesirable teachers, and how much determination was required to carry it out. (Hear, hear.) He did not consult his own feelings on the matter, and was not moved by sympathy or antipathy to the teachers, but was moved by a consideration for the welfare of the children. (Applause.)²

And undesirable teachers there were. Three years after the Inquiry a number still remained. Edge declared:

There are in the Board's service some teachers - few in number, I am glad to say, but occupying by no means insignificant positions - who year after year, in the performance of their duties, sail so perilously near the lowest water mark of meritorious effort that some day they must surely find themselves stranded high and dry without any chance of their being retained in office.³

The most vociferous attack had come from Restell.

In his 1881 report he shouted:

No greater injury can be done to a school or a district than the continuance in office of an incompetent teacher, or one of low moral instincts. It is not only detrimental to the school, but incalculable evil is done to the scholars, and eventually to society, by their constant contact with an unprincipled person, defiant of local and central authority, and wasteful of the school time in abuse or ridicule of those set over him. The scholars not only fail to acquire useful knowledge, but they pick up unruly and untruthful ideas, demoralizing to themselves and to society for the rest of their lives.⁴

This may say more about Restell's disgruntlement with various teachers at the time, defiant of (his)

"local authority", and from whom he had received his share of "ridicule and abuse". His effectiveness was waning and he resigned within the year. Nevertheless it was certainly true that some teachers warranted complaints. School committees often wrote to the Boards, requesting the removal of the teacher. By tracing complaints as they were considered by Board and inspectorate, it is possible to build up from Board records the various patterns of response.

After taking advice from the inspectorate, the Board might disagree with the school committee, rebuking it for not supporting its teacher. On the other hand, even if it did disagree with the committee, the Board might decide to transfer the teacher anyway as goodwill had been lost. If the Board agreed with the committee, it would this time rebuke the teacher and make it clear it expected better performance in the future. The alternate course was to recommend three months' notice.

If the complaint were a serious one against the personal behaviour of the teacher, the Board set up an inquiry, usually conducted by two Board members. When the Board had received their report at a special meeting, the teacher could be summarily dismissed, (which was rare), be given three months' notice or, if the complaint were not substantiated, could either continue in the position or be transferred anyway because of the loss of goodwill. These serious complaints not surprisingly caused the greatest stir.

Whether or not inspectors played a part recorded in the material now available, they or their reports were probably always consulted.

Often the complaints were directed against "intemperate habits" and in these cases the Board did not wait for a formal inquiry. In 1879 the North Canterbury Board Chairman reported that as the Kowai Pass School had been closed on several occasions "in consequence of the master's being incapacitated through drinking", he had ordered his summary dismissal.⁵ The same action was taken by the Chairman in 1880 when, on the urgent representations of the Selwyn School Committee, the teacher was summarily dismissed for "unfitness for duty through drinking".⁶ Again, in 1884, the Governors Bay School Committee reported that they had suspended the master of the side school, "who had been incapable of teaching for a week past through the effects of drink". They forwarded a medical certificate in support of their complaint and summary dismissal followed.⁷ These three examples show the swiftness of action by the Board in dealing with this problem, a speed not shown in their handling of the same behaviour when demonstrated by their inspectors.

Complaints of drunken teachers were not uncommon in the early years. Arnold points out that during that time "many very unsatisfactory men had to be accepted [as teachers], including numbers of remittance men with alcohol and other problems".⁸ By the turn of the

century the problem had almost disappeared. Although it was unusual for teachers in the later years, and for women teachers ever, to be confronted with complaints of their "intemperate habits", the case of Miss M. Gibbett in 1913 is the exception to both rules. The chairman of the Waiau School Committee, and the headmaster, claimed that she had acted contrary to the headmaster's orders, had reprimanded him in front of his pupils, and on one occasion had burst into his room "in an excited state", with her eyes not clear, her face flushed, and her breath strong. The children called out, "She is drunk. She is drunk." Her manner was such, the headmaster said, "as might be expected from one who had been indulging in strong drink". The chairman of the committee added his weight to the argument by asserting that Miss Gibbett went to the hotel twice a week and could only be there for drink. Miss Gibbett protested that she only went as a visitor to the family. The Board representatives concluded that Miss Gibbett's influence "was not for the welfare of the school" but hesitated to recommend her dismissal. She was given the opportunity to transfer to a vacant position at Horsley Downs where she would be many miles from a hotel and under the beneficial influence of the schoolmistress. Unfortunately things did not work out as planned. Miss Gibbett failed to take up the opportunity with any degree of enthusiasm and the Board declined to find her another position.⁹

Another complaint in the later years where drink played a part, though a comparatively minor one, was in the case of Mr James Sheldon at Mount Somers School in 1912. His case demonstrates the kind of hierarchy of misdemeanours evidently held in the minds of Board members. The School Committee wrote to the Board complaining that Mr Sheldon was "addicted to drink and had misconducted himself with some of the girls". Two Board members, M. Dalziel and C. Opie, investigated. In their initial report they stated that Sheldon had indeed been prone both to drink and to fighting, had shown "culpable carelessness by coming into school with his trousers unfastened at the front", and had put his hand up under the clothes of some of the girls. They summed up:

The master has not succeeded in maintaining that model of high character which is expected from a teacher in his position and which is especially necessary in a district where the children do not appear to receive from the manhood of the district the good example they have a right to expect if they are to become good citizens of the Dominion.¹⁰

Reluctantly, they felt the Board would be justified in terminating his engagement. But at the special meeting of the Board the next month, when Dalziel and Opie put in their final report, they amended their views. Still claiming that Sheldon's demeanour towards the older girls had been too free and objectionable, and that his carelessness of dress was of concern, they added that with regard to the more serious charge (nowhere made specific in the Board's records),

they doubted the reliability of an important witness. This was sufficient, they felt, for stopping the Board "dealing summarily with the master".

It tells something of the attitudes regarding sexual abuse at the time, that Sheldon was not summarily dismissed. Instead, he was severely reprimanded and told to "see the necessity of being extremely careful in his behaviour towards the girls and amend his personal habits so as to leave no room for reproach or even criticism".¹¹ He was advised to apply for another school as his usefulness was impaired in the district. When Sheldon wrote asking what "this district" meant, the Board replied it had initially meant "Mount Somers" but on further consideration had widened it to North Canterbury. Then again, it felt he would really be considering his own interests if he sought engagement in some other occupation altogether.¹² Evidently he did not take the Board's advice as he was still master at Mount Somers School in 1916.

Shifting teachers to other schools was often seen as the appropriate panacea. Young David Adamson of Woolston School found himself in financial difficulties, facing immediate payment of £15.9.6 or fourteen days' imprisonment. He had also bunked school, probably to avoid the money-lenders who "periodically called upon him" there. He must have been relieved when his father bailed him out and the Board decided to transfer him "to some remote school".¹³

Complaints could also be laid for excessive punishment but it was unusual for these to be upheld. In his account of the history of Kaikoura School, Spence tells how Mr James Borthwick, the headmaster, was accused by a parent of "thrashing children unnecessarily for erroneous arithmetic" and because their parents had failed to send payment for books and materials. Although Borthwick admitted:

... strapping pupils who were lazy, careless and inattentive, he denied punishing them for not bringing book payments - in these cases he used threats.

Borthwick "rode out the storm, and continued to teach zealously and successfully, if somewhat tempestuously at times".¹⁴

In South Canterbury Gow was asked to look into a complaint against the Kapua mistress for excessive use of corporal punishment. He brought back to the Board the strap she had used, demonstrating that as it was narrow it would be likely to leave more marks than a broad one, more severely used. Gow pointed out that while the Board regulations required that punishment should not be excessive, a teacher standing in loco parentis was not more liable under the law for excessive punishment than a parent. The teacher was inexperienced, he added, and had no doubt learned something from what had occurred. He observed that she had obtained a broader strap.¹⁵ The Board decided to take no action but the Kapua School Committee did. It

resigned en masse in protest. Perhaps someone else in the community also had something to say on the matter, as the school burned down two months later.¹⁶

These complaints show how teachers were brought into an "extensive field of observation" through the surveillance of school committee members, both inside and outside the school. But just as frequently it was the inspectorate which made recommendations about teachers, rather than the school committee. While inspectors' comments could relate to the tone of the school, and by implication the character of the teacher, they usually referred to the effectiveness of their teaching.

The reports of their visits of inspection and examination were the Boards' official links with their schools. They were carefully perused at each meeting before being sent on to the school committees concerned, which in turn reported to the householders of the district. Occasionally the Board would send an accompanying message of congratulation to the committee, but more often, any remarks made were ones of disapproval. Boards requested explanations for unsatisfactory performance, and recommended changes or the dismissal of the teacher with three months' notice.

Sometimes teachers resigned anyway, or laid their own complaint about the inspector's comments. The Mandeville Plains teacher in 1882 was not pleased with Cumming's comments and requested the Board to return the

report to the Inspector for amendment. The Board "declined to interfere with the Inspector in the discharge of his duties".¹⁷ Nor was Mr George Kay of Sumner School prepared, in 1882, to accept the comments made in his inspector's report. The matter still rankled two years later and he requested an investigation. Not pleased with the Board's subsequent refusal, he again protested. The Board objected to the tone of his letter and declined further correspondence.¹⁸

From time to time a committee would disagree with the Board's suggestion and would try to hold fast, rousing the support of parents and householders in the area. The issue could drag on for months. Irritated by the Sydenham School Committee's complaint against the criticism in his report, Brock grumbled that if these objections were allowed, it would make an inspector's work almost impossible, as every teacher who resented criticism of his work would only have to ask his school committee to object and inspectors would be engaged in constant correspondence to vindicate the justice of their criticism.¹⁹

The Boards, too, were wary of giving way to these complaints and usually supported the inspectors' views. The North Canterbury Board noted in 1887 that in almost every case where it had yielded to the request of a committee to give an unsatisfactory teacher another trial, the result had been "a great injustice to the

children affected by the retention". It cited a number of instances. At Christchurch East School, for example, the infant mistress's attitude toward the headmaster had for years "been fatal to anything like good results" and the number of children that had been "injuriously affected" was very large. The "voluminous correspondence" forwarded by the school committee showed that the case had been a hopeless one that would have been better "treated with more firmness at an earlier stage" by the headmaster, although the Committee and Board "were not without a share of the blame for the delay" that had occurred. The "lamentable want of progress in all directions" at Loburn North, the continuing "lack of robustness" in the young Fernside master's discipline, and the unsatisfactory work at Flaxton, Prebbleton and Spreydon, all furnished support for the Board's argument.²⁰

In 1889 the West Melton School Committee requested a re-examination of the pupils in three months' time. The Board resolved that as all its inspectors in the past three years had more or less agreed in condemning the master's work, there could be no reasonable ground for further delaying his removal, a removal "rendered more imperative by the occasional but very public and unpardonable exhibitions of intemperance" by the master.²¹

The Boards, too, could recommend re-examination. In November 1911 Foster was asked to have the

Motukarara School examined again before Christmas. Mr William Arnold, the teacher, wrote pointing out that as his health was not completely restored, further examination within a few weeks would "disclose nothing new". In these circumstances he asked that "he might be subjected to no such indignity as the holding of a second examination" and tendered his resignation. He died a week later.²²

The case of Mr George Wilmot lasted years. Anderson reported in December 1886 that the general tone of his school was low and the poor work showed neglect of duty. He gave specific examples of what he had found, adding that the majority of pupils were "hopelessly below any standard of proficiency which could reasonably be applied". Although a repeat examination in April 1887 found many of the same defects, some improvement was noted and Mr Wilmot remained. The next examination, in November 1887, this time conducted by Wood and Hogben, entirely confirmed Anderson's previous criticisms. In particular they remarked that the children under his direct care "acquired from him a 'low tone'". The Board decided that "after all these repeated proofs and injurious delays", and considering it had given Mr Wilmot every opportunity "to make the best of his case", he should be dismissed. Saunders, chairing the Appointments Committee which made the recommendation, said:

... no unsatisfactory teacher in the North

Canterbury district has ever been removed with greater difficulty or given more decided proof of the danger of reappointing him. There is no doubt of the fact that his wife is a good teacher and that the general respect and deep sympathy felt for her has added much to the difficulty of removing him.²³

But the matter was not over. Mr Wilmot again applied for a post but the Board refused. Then in November 1888 the Flaxton householders sent a petition to the Board in support of Wilmot. The Board agreed that as soon as it was satisfied that the causes which had led to his dismissal no longer existed, it would accept him as eligible for a smaller school. The "causes" may have had something to do with the "low tone" noticed by the inspectors, but the Board was reluctant to spell these out, saying that it would take steps to satisfy itself on the matter.²⁴

Some teachers came regularly under the inspectors' notice. Miss Kate Doherty was one. The question of undue punishment, where she had been accused of striking a child on the head with a slate, was only part of a larger incident. She had fallen out with the Ashburton Forks School Committee. Firstly she had given the children a holiday on Empire Day but had incurred the displeasure of the Committee when asking the children for an account of how they had spent the day. Underlying this, however, was the (justified) suspicion that it had been Miss Doherty who had informed the inspectors that the school had been used for dancing. The Board told the Committee that it did not know who

the inspector's informant had been, nor did it desire to know, but that as dancing had admittedly taken place it would again draw the Committee's attention to the Department's circular. It was at this point that the parent accused Miss Doherty of a new use for the school slate. Miss Doherty, for her part, complained that the Committee was employing its time manufacturing charges against her because of the dancing incident. It did not particularly matter, the Board said, because by now the School Committee had resigned.²⁵

Once a school committee's trust in a teacher was dented, it was hard for the teacher to regain standing. Miss Doherty fell foul of another committee in 1915, this time at Eiffelton. Her teaching was brought into question in the inspector's report and the Board demanded an explanation. It was not satisfied with what she wrote, however, saying that she avoided the points at issue. Deciding that attack was the best form of defence, she complained that the inspector had allowed the children a playtime after each subject in the examination. Owen, the inspector in question, pointed out that Eiffelton was treated the same as every other school and that after an hour's work the children were given a few minutes in the playground to freshen them up. The Board decided to have the school re-examined in three months and if considerable improvement were not shown, it would propose her dismissal. Miss Doherty did not wait. Within the three months she had resigned,

saying that as there were "parties who seemed dissatisfied" she had decided to leave.²⁶

This was not the path chosen by Miss Robena McGill. She had been at the centre of a long drawn-out dispute during 1912 and 1913 while at Rotherham, which had resulted in her transfer to Ouruhia in 1914. The school was inspected that year by Owen who reported gravely to the Board at the 10 June meeting that Miss McGill had falsified the register in order to place the school in a different grade. The Board demanded an immediate explanation from Miss McGill and requested her to state any reason why she should not be suspended. In the meantime the register was impounded and the Chairman was given the power to deal with the situation as he saw fit.

Miss McGill wrote that she was unable to make any explanation other than to say that because of the "long course of worry" she had had at Rotherham, "she scarcely knew what she was doing". On Saturday 13 June Miss McGill's sister went to see the Chairman but he considered her attitude so unreasonable that he could not discuss the matter with her. The suspension went ahead. On the Monday Miss McGill wrote again, applying for leave through illness. But on 23 June, just as the Appointments Committee met to consider the application, the police phoned to say Miss McGill was dead. She had committed suicide.

The Board Chairman carefully reminded the members

that it was only last May that they had transferred Miss McGill from Rotherham, where the position had become intolerable, thereby giving proof of their desire to give her every consideration. And Miss McGill had not mentioned at that time that she was unfit for work. Besides, she had been given three weeks' holiday. Falsifying registers had always been regarded by the Board and Department as an offence of the utmost gravity, and one which could not be passed over without inflicting injury on the teaching service. He felt confident that, knowing the circumstances, the members would recognise that the action was justified but would join him in deploring the untimely death of one of the Board's teachers. The Chairman's action was approved.²⁷

Inspectors' reports could certainly be hard-hitting. Wood pulled no punches in his 1887 report on Courtenay School.

Had the children not attended school at all during the year I do not see that they could have been much more backward. It seems to me hopeless to expect that they will ever make satisfactory progress under the present master, and there is no doubt about the first step to be taken if the school is to be raised to a state of efficiency.²⁸

Only one child had passed the examination. The teacher wisely resigned.

As the inspectors' reports had such far-reaching effects, it was not surprising that teachers, on rare occasions, tried to stifle or alter them. In 1884, even under the threat that his salary would be withheld, the master at Broadfield still refused to return the reports

to the committee.²⁹ And in 1891 the South Canterbury Board declared that Mr Buckingham's refusal to return the inspector's report to the office as requested was "strong presumptive evidence that the charge made against him of his having altered the report for wrongful purposes is correct".³⁰

There was always official protocol to follow in disseminating the information in inspectors' reports. Wood was censured in 1894 for making a report available to school committee members before the Board had considered it. The Board also considered he had "committed a serious error of judgement" when he invited three Leeston School Committee members to discuss their grievances about the school with him at the hotel and used the resulting information in making his report to the Board.³¹

In 1916 Mr Witty, M.H.R. for Riccarton, asked the Minister of Education whether he would prevent inspectors making their reports confidential, as happened in Canterbury, as it precluded the reports from being read at the annual meetings of householders. The Minister replied that if the report was to be of full value to a school, then it had to deal with many points which could often be misconstrued by others. If the reports were published, inspectors would be prevented from making "full and free suggestions". And besides, as the school committee was responsible to the householders, then their interests were "amply

guaranteed".³²

The question of what should happen to the reports had vexed the boards, school committees, and teachers for years. Despite firm resolutions by Boards, the matter never seemed to be resolved in the mind of the public. Like Mr Witty, school committees often requested that the reports be published. The North Canterbury Board answered the Southbridge Committee's request in 1911 by warning them that the decision to treat the reports as confidential was "really made in their own interests" as the Board's solicitor had advised that the person responsible for publishing the report might be made answerable for damages in cases of libel.³³ The Board continued to seek its solicitor's advice and continued to abide by it.

Teachers too, through their Educational Institute, repeatedly pressed for non-publication.³⁴ Some teachers, however, complained that they themselves had no opportunity to see the reports. Committees were reminded that the reports should be filed permanently in the schools.³⁵

"THEY SHALL BE KEEN STUDENTS"

While poor reports created a stir, it must be remembered that the majority of inspectors' comments were positive. They had the best educational interests of the district at heart and strove to help teachers

improve their performance. Gow and Bell reminded teachers of the potential benefits of continuing their education.

Themselves learners, they will assuredly have more sympathy with those they are teaching, and running streams³⁶ are ever more wholesome than stagnant pools.

Stirring up the waters was to be a joint effort between teachers and inspectors. In his report for 1881, the Minister observed that it appeared highly necessary for inspectors to devote a considerable proportion of their time to organising some of the schools and assisting and advising the less experienced teachers.³⁷ Hammond had already instituted this in South Canterbury. It had long been evident, he said in his 1879 report, that teachers required something more than the occasional inspection of their schools. It was the teachers' express wish, he explained, that the inspector should spend a day or two in their schools and demonstrate in a practical fashion how they could improve their teaching and organisation. Accordingly, the Board had engaged a certificated teacher to relieve him of office work so he could "give the material help to teachers so long shown to be necessary".³⁸

In his description of Frank Tate, Inspector in Victoria from 1895 to 1899, Selleck remarks that an inspector was brave to do this, as by actually teaching he put his credibility at risk. But surely the risk was justified, and necessary. Teachers would respect far

more the inspector who could prove his ability in the classroom, and they deserved something more than a mere inspecting gaze.

Gow and Bell agreed. During their visits they took every opportunity of giving help and guidance and were pleased with the way their criticisms and suggestions had been received.

As we go from school to school we never divest ourselves of the privilege of being teachers, and as such we aim at being something more than gaugers of the amount of knowledge of any subject that the children possess.⁴⁰

They often did this by continuing their questioning of the children well after they had assessed their level of knowledge and ability. This was done as a "lesson by example" and was therefore more likely to be effectual, they said, than a lecture on how it should be done. With grace they added, "We are learners also, and when we pick up something new and good from one teacher we are delighted to pass it on to others."⁴¹

Inspectors also encouraged teachers to observe good teaching in other schools. The "exchange of school visits" would give "impetus to professional enthusiasm", especially in the case of inexperienced teachers in isolated schools.⁴² Brock repeated the idea to the Cohen Commission. As had been suggested at an Inspectors' Conference, every teacher should spend at least one week a year in another school, which would be "very fine training for them, and would do them good".⁴³ He also favoured overseas leave for reporting on systems

of education in other parts of the world. Foster agreed. Everything was to be gained by allowing an inspector or teacher leave to go abroad on full salary once in seven years.⁴⁴ South Canterbury put the idea into practice in 1914 when Miss Lindsay and Miss Caskey from Timaru South School, and Miss Swap of Temuka District High, exchanged with three Canadian teachers from Manitoba.⁴⁵

Exchange visits were not the only way for teachers to continue their education. A number furthered their qualifications by attending university or classes at the Training College. Extended leave for this purpose was not always granted enthusiastically. Surprisingly it was Gow who complained to the South Canterbury Board in 1901 of the large number of applications for extended leave from teachers wishing to attend Canterbury College. It upset schools and many teachers did not come back to the Board's service, giving no return to the Board for keeping their places open. Nor did a locum tenens take the same interest in the school as the permanent teacher. And after all, other teachers had gained their higher certificates or degrees while retaining their posts and doing their work.⁴⁶

This tendency for inspectors to believe they could claim what spare time the teachers had, was also evident in Restell's report for 1879. The "energies of right-minded teachers, eager for self-culture", could be

harnessed through the "judicious employment of the large amount of leisure at their disposal".

It is highly important that the fullest encouragement should be given to this general desire for improvement, not merely by popular and entertaining lectures, but, further, by practical illustrations and classes for instruction, and the more especially during the harvest season of each year, when the country schools have a long vacation ...⁴⁷

As new subjects were introduced into the curriculum, teachers were expected to become proficient in teaching them. Boards held special classes for this purpose, often on Saturdays. In 1881 a pleased Hammond reported the success of a series of twelve Saturday classes in Timaru, on chemistry, physics, drawing and music. "The teachers entered heartily into the scheme," he said. In all, 67 teachers attended, at a true cost to the Board (once Departmental subsidies for railway travel were taken into account) of £42. He proposed further classes the next year, this time a series of practical lectures in the art of teaching, with model lessons.⁴⁸

The Board continued this trend, offering classes in a variety of subjects. In 1901 a course was held to prepare teachers for the new manual and technical instruction. The classes were "hailed with delight" and teachers tackled the work with enthusiasm.⁴⁹ North Canterbury held similar classes. "The interest taken by the lady teachers," the inspectors said, "is beyond all praise." Excited teachers turned up in large numbers to

classes at the School of Art, Normal School, and School of Domestic Instruction in Christchurch, as well as at a centre in Ashburton.⁵⁰

The attendance at summer classes at Timaru in physical geography in 1906 "bore splendid testimony to the zeal of the teachers"⁵¹ and the Board was equally gratified with the splendid attendance at twelve lectures on agriculture, given in Timaru by staff of Lincoln College. The lectures were published afterwards both in the Timaru Herald and in pamphlet form, finding their way to farmers in the district who found in them "food for reflection and discussion".⁵² It was not only teachers who spurned the "stagnant pools".

SMALL SCHOOLS AND LADY TEACHERS

Inspectors admired the way teachers came to these classes from long distances. Rural teachers were isolated from the opportunities enjoyed by their colleagues in town, so Wood and Anderson were particularly pleased that the young rural teachers, while taking "a healthy interest in physical sports and social enjoyments", still retained "the habit and ambition of self-improvement".⁵³ Inspectors recognised that the task of teachers in the small schools was difficult, especially in trying to cover all the requisite subjects at the levels needed for the mix of pupils in their sole charge. Despite this difficulty

teachers did achieve. In arithmetic, country pupils surprised inspectors in 1907 by being "more rapid workers" and on the whole "more accurate" than those in the larger schools.⁵⁴ And it was not just the core subjects which received attention. Gow congratulated rural teachers for their efforts in teaching the "additional" subjects of recitation, drill, singing, and needlework, reminding them that the regulations stated that any work at all in these subjects in the small schools would be accepted as evidence of "praiseworthy zeal and efficiency".⁵⁵

Even so, inspectors felt that teachers in the small rural schools warranted closer supervision and help. Many were inexperienced, uncertificated, and female. Arnold has shown that in 1878 there were only 84 women teachers for every 100 male, a female minority which merely reflected the sex ratio in the general population. The "delayed feminization" of the profession, Arnold argues, must have been due in large part "to a persistence of strong male interest over the years of economic depression".⁵⁶ But women were teaching in the small schools and opinion was divided as to their competence.

In the stringent financial circumstances the Boards faced in the late 1880s and 1890s, they saw the employment of an increasing number of women, paid at a lower rate, as one practical way to save money. Wood felt this promised to be a decided success.

The somewhat popular belief that the discipline of a school must suffer in the hands of a mistress seems to me to have no solid basis for foundation, and cannot, I think, be entertained in the light of experience. None of the schools in which masters have been replaced by mistresses show the slightest signs of deteriorating, and in one at least the improvement in the conduct of the pupils is very marked.⁵⁷

It was not only discipline that improved. Gow noted in 1892 that in schools where there had been a change of teacher, the ensuing examination results were more likely to fall below the district's average if the new teacher were a man. This was a strong plea for the employment of women in preference to men in the small schools, especially as the pass rates over all testified to their efficiency. When comparing equivalent small schools with around sixty pupils, women achieved pass rates of 48.3%, and their percentage of failures was 18%, whereas men had pass rates of 42.6%, with a failure rate of 25.9%. But more than this, in the order they maintained, in the discipline they exercised, and in their influence over pupils regarding what was "true in word and act", the women, Gow asserted, were "not a whit behind the men".⁵⁸

There were those, however, who felt that women were capable with classes or schools of up to 30 pupils, but after that their control waned. Foster, when headmaster of West Christchurch School, had less compunction in adding ten pupils to a man's class than to a woman's, he said, because they could "face the

worries better".⁵⁹

Although inspectors held the work of women teachers in some regard, they did not necessarily feel they should be paid at an equal rate to men, and they said so to the 1901 Hogg Commission. This was not an unusual view at that time. The average salary for men in all occupations was nearly three times that of women; men earned an average of £92.12 compared with £33.18 for women.⁶⁰ It was more unusual that the North Canterbury Board had gone a considerable way to equality in salaries in its 1894 scale.

Wood felt that in doing this, "a large measure of injustice was inflicted on our men". He did not think that the question admitted any argument. "You must pay a man considerably more than a woman," he declared. When a man entered the profession he was there for life, whereas nine out of every ten women expected to be out of the profession within five years.⁶¹ When questioned about small schools, Wood told the Commission that although at that time men were better qualified, it was more fitting for a woman to work the small schools. "A woman at £100 is an infinitely superior being to a man in the same position."⁶² It was not her competence, but her cost, which appealed. They had some "excellent young fellows", he said, who could "beat the average woman hollow", but they ought not to be there.

They ought to be at something better. To give a man of that stamp £110 is scandalous. On the other hand, we can get plenty of good lady teachers for

these positions who are well paid at £100.⁶³

Hughes, a future inspector but at that time attending the Hogg Commission as a representative of the local NZEI, thought men and women in the small country schools should be paid "as nearly equal as possible". Foster, on the other hand, as headmaster of West Christchurch School, took a more cautious line. He trod carefully as he told the Commission:

Theoretically, the practice [of unequal pay] appears unfair; but adaptation to the environment is one of the laws of nature, and we cannot ignore the law of supply and demand and the social environment of the question. We find it much easier to fill our vacancies with efficient mistresses than with efficient men.⁶⁴

Clearly, no-one could argue with the laws of nature.

Meanwhile, uncertificated teachers were a problem. Edge warned them in 1880 that unless they made some effort to qualify themselves, they could not expect to retain their positions.⁶⁵ The Board had previously made allowances, however, for the wives of masters. If they satisfied the inspectors that they were competent to assist their husbands in the schools, then they could remain, without undergoing examination.⁶⁶ But by 1880 this leniency had disappeared. They too were warned to obtain certificates.

In later years there was a further influx of unqualified teachers. Several times in 1904 South Canterbury was left "with only 'Hobson's choice' in making appointments".⁶⁷ In 1906 Anderson, Ritchie and Foster noted grimly:

In the temporary dearth of certificated teachers it has been found necessary to accept for the present, in a considerable number of the less lucrative positions and in the more remote schools, the services of candidates possessing only slender qualifications in the way of professional training or previous practical experience.

It was not all bleak. They went on:

A goodly proportion of these, whose education has been fairly liberal, whose personal influence over the pupils is sufficiently strong, and whose earnestness of purpose and diligent effort go far to compensate for other deficiencies, show themselves deserving of encouragement, and give promise of further efficiency in the near future.⁶⁸

With others, they held no such hope. Had competition been keener, they would not be employed.

By 1910 the situation was changing. Gow and Bell told the uncertificated teachers that they would have to stir themselves if they wanted to remain in teaching as there would soon be a sufficient number of certificated teachers eager for positions. Meanwhile, twenty of the 141 South Canterbury teachers were uncertificated, half of these being in sole charge of small schools.⁶⁹ While South Canterbury at this time had one-seventh of its teachers unqualified, it was a smaller proportion than the national rate of around one-fifth. North Canterbury boasted an even smaller proportion of one-sixteenth.⁷⁰ To a large extent the low ratio continued. In 1914 Gow recorded that South Canterbury's rate of 18% was bettered only by North Canterbury, where the proportion was 13% of adult teachers. In the rest of the Dominion the rate rose as high as 60% for Grey, Westland and

Marlborough.⁷¹

In 1911 the Otago Education Board wrote to its counterpart in North Canterbury, asking the Board's co-operation in lobbying the Department for correspondence classes for uncertificated teachers. The Otago Board's main worry was cost. The northern board, however, said that as there were no more than half a dozen of these teachers in its district who could not attend classes in one of the centres, it had no strong reason for joining the other board in its request.⁷² By the end of the year, however, it had changed its mind, agreeing with Foster's recommendation for a correspondence course for these teachers. So in June the next year, with a grant of £50 from the Department, and in conjunction with the Training College, correspondence courses in School Method, English, Arithmetic, Geography and Physiology began.⁷³ Practical work was undertaken during special summer classes. The success of these courses ensured their continuation in the following years.

"ALMOST, IF NOT QUITE, FULL-GROWN"

The push to get uncertificated teachers to upgrade their qualifications came from a desire to improve the quality of education in schools. Arnold claims that the better quality of schooling in the hard years of the economic depression was largely brought

about, however, by the exploitation of underpaid young women and girls. During the years of financial strain, he argues, boards soon discovered the possibilities of an oversupply of well-educated young women. Girls clamoured to get into teaching and boards were quick to recruit them as pupil teachers. A pool of highly trained professional labour was soon created for the needy rural districts. Eventually, over-recruitment led to the phenomenon of the "ex-pupil teacher", kept on at the same rate and therefore supplying exceedingly cheap but well qualified labour.⁷⁴

The opportunity for this cheap labour had been recognised by the Canterbury Boards from the beginning. Restell pointed out in 1880 that they were the cheapest and, next to the teachers who trained them, the most efficient arm of the service. He was not concerned with over-supply, "since the majority of them find other provision or occupation, and make the most intelligent housekeepers, mechanics, clerks and business men".⁷⁵ Evidently he saw the pupil teacher system largely as a means of obtaining immediate practical help in classrooms and not just as a way of preparing the next generation of teachers.

Exactly what their usefulness in the classroom was, is unclear. Teachers employed them in different ways. While Restell declared that pupil teachers were well capable of conducting an infant department, or of controlling and teaching classes of forty or fifty

pupils in the larger schools,⁷⁶ Hammond was puzzled by one pupil teacher's description of their role as filling ink-wells, fetching slates and books, and telling who speaks. Their employment seemed to be looked on, he observed, as "a happy means of disposing of the drudgery of teaching the lower classes" but as they received little training for this, the infant classes were "generally deplorably backward, and depressed by an utter want of tone".⁷⁷ Restell, too, believed they deserved "regular, faithful and efficient instruction".⁷⁸

This instruction was often squeezed in at the beginning or end of a tiring day's teaching and inspectors recognised that this was not the best way to achieve the "regular, faithful, and efficient instruction" needed. Before very long, Edge and Cumming maintained, something would have to be done to limit the time pupil teachers gave to actual teaching.⁷⁹ Despite the difficulty pupil teachers faced in studying effectively for their examinations, Gow beamed that their success was of the most satisfactory kind. Of those who had served their term as pupil teachers during his time as inspector, two had gone on to gain M.A. degrees, four to B.A. degrees and many others were studying "with a view to graduation".⁸⁰

By 1904 the South Canterbury Board was in a position to choose its pupil teachers even more carefully. It instituted an entrance examination to

rank the applicants. Someone achieving a high place on the list would only forfeit the chance of a pupil teacher position to a candidate who had passed the Matriculation examination. By 1905 Gow and Bell were able to say that owing to the number of applicants from the high schools and district high schools, probably most of the successful candidates would be those who had passed this examination. They emphasised the advisability of having pupil teachers who were "almost, if not quite, full grown", and sufficiently advanced in their studies.⁸¹

This would suggest either that Arnold's over-supply of educated young women happened somewhat later in South Canterbury, or that the Board no longer needed to exploit such a group, now that the hard economic times had passed. Certainly fewer pupil teachers over all were now employed by the Board. And the ex-pupil teacher had gone. In 1906 Gow and Bell commented that eight pupil teachers who had completed their period of service had now gone on to the Training College, whereas in former years they would have continued as assistants or teachers in charge of small country schools.⁸² It is interesting that South Canterbury's need for this pool of cheap labour diminished just at the time when inspectors in both districts were again complaining of the dearth of certificated teachers.

The situation continued to improve. Four years

later the South Canterbury inspectors remarked that pupil teacher and probationer candidates "of a very fine type" were now coming forward, and with one exception in the previous two years, all had matriculated before appointment. Many qualified for the D Certificate by the end of their first year. They were older too, perhaps 17 to 19 years of age, and entered their career under much happier conditions and with brighter prospects than in years past. Moreover, the education service was proving attractive enough to draw in some of the brightest boys from the secondary schools. Of the newest recruits, twelve were "young fellows of good parts and good physique". The inspectors heartily welcomed them into the profession.⁸³

Female pupil teachers always outnumbered male. Around the turn of the century, the proportion of females to males in South Canterbury was about 2:1; in North Canterbury it was 4:1. The difficulty many saw in attracting young men into teaching was the salary. The Cohen Commission in 1912 was informed by John Caughley, headmaster of West Christchurch School, that more permanence would be given to staffing if boys were induced to enter teaching but present salaries were inadequate for this. He blamed this on the large number of short-service women teachers who did not look on teaching as a profession. This meant entrance salaries were low. Even final salaries did not compare well with the Public Service. A pupil teacher, he told the

Commission, received less than a telegraph messenger or railway cadet. The highest paid teachers, few in number, were only paid the equivalent salary of a third-grade clerk in the railway service.⁸⁴

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Even before this, salaries had been blamed for loss of teachers in Canterbury. In 1903 Wood, Anderson and Ritchie claimed that the introduction of the colonial scale of teachers' salaries, (which made salaries identical regardless of district), was responsible for the alarming and constant draining-away of the "most vigorous young men" from the district. Altogether 27 teachers had gone. They were now reduced to "sore straits" in making appointments and had had to employ "all the flotsam and jetsam" of the past twenty years. Of the fifteen male students trained at the Normal School in 1900, only five remained in the district. Most had gone to Wellington and Hawkes Bay.⁸⁵ Opportunities were evidently more numerous in the north.

In 1917 the six Canterbury inspectors remarked that the amalgamation of the four separate districts of Grey, Westland, North and South Canterbury into one, would give a brighter outlook to teachers as their promotion would be more certain. Presumably they were referring to the greater number of schools of all grades which would now be open to them. Promotion had been a

contentious issue over the decades, and had been at the core of the reforms made following the education Inquiry of 1886. The Appointments Committee then set up, dealt with all applications for positions. Inspectors commented on the comparative virtues of each candidate and drew up a list which ranked the favoured three or four according to merit. After some scrutiny, and at times some tinkering, by the Committee this list was forwarded to the school committee which was supposed to plump for the person whose name was at the top. That this did not always happen was at times a source of contention between Board and school committees.

Reflecting on the effectiveness of the Appointments Committee five years after its establishment, the Board commented that except in very few instances "where some strong local or personal feelings prevail", the school committees showed increased confidence in the recommendations of the Board regarding applicants and often preferred to leave the appointment entirely to the Board. It was conscious, however, that the best possible appointment had not always been made by committees. The Board could not always "insist narrowly and absolutely upon a selection based on its own more extended and reliable information, without some danger of destroying the confidence" of the committees that "every reasonable attention" would be paid to their wishes.⁸⁶

One factor influencing a school committee's

decision was effective canvassing by the candidates. Arnold claims that teachers were virtually forced into this practice. With two parties involved in the final appointment, teachers "could not even be given guarantees of rough justice in the development of individual careers".⁸⁷ Mr T.W. Adams, long time member of the North Canterbury Board and member of a country school committee, told the Cohen Commission in 1912 that he did not think so much objection should be made to canvassing. No one would care to appoint a teacher to any position "without some knowledge of that teacher's appearance". He could not think of any instance when one candidate had attempted to undermine the character of another. There was always enough time for each applicant to canvass if they wished, so none had an advantage.⁸⁸

Brock disagreed. The practice was well entrenched and he did not like it. He recalled an applicant who did not "go round to see some of the Committee", and was subsequently told he could not expect to get the position if he did not canvass. The member of the Commission questioning Brock at that moment was clearly impressed that there was "at least one teacher" in the district who would "not demean himself", but Brock dashed his hopes by explaining that the teacher had not wanted the appointment.⁸⁹

The financial fate of teachers often rested on fluctuations in the school roll. Having inspected

Halkett School in 1902, Wood reported that Mr William Maber, the sole teacher, was a capable and skilled teacher who used "sound methods of instruction" but regretted that he had been:

... dogged by persistent bad luck so far as promotion in our service goes. The three schools he has successively had charge of have one after the other lost the services of the mistress, through a natural falling off in the attendance, thus reducing Mr Maber's status and at the same time increasing the difficulties of his position.⁹⁰

From 1908 on, teachers in North Canterbury who had an eye on future promotion had to serve two years at a country school. This regulation had been initiated by the inspectors and eagerly taken up by Adams, perhaps with one eye on the needs of his own country school committee.⁹¹ In addressing the Cohen Commission in 1912, the Chairman of the Board said that a teacher's appointment to a country place was unlike any other appointment in any line of work. The latter would not result in the person's isolation from society to the same extent as it did in a teacher's appointment to a backblocks school.

Such teachers are taken away from social intercourse and from all educational associations, and very often their conditions of boarding are very unsuitable.⁹²

Of a similar view was Gilbert Dalglish, headmaster of Timaru Main School who was at the Commission representing the South Canterbury branch of NZEI. He claimed that great harm was done to young teachers by this isolation. He had heard the enforced

loneliness described as "positively inhuman".⁹³

Horn also talks about this isolation and loneliness in her account of country teachers in Victorian England. There however, they were due to the uncertainty of the teacher's social position. In the hierarchy of the village, the teacher's position was at best ambiguous.⁹⁴ Although New Zealand prided itself on a different social climate, teachers in country areas lived in a social glasshouse. Always under the close surveillance of school committees and parents, they had to adapt their way of living to meet the public gaze. Yet when faced with serious challenges from school committees, they were able to throw defensive stones, often successfully, with the assistance of the Educational Institute. As Simmonds puts it:

The teacher on his or her own, in an isolated country district, no longer needed to feel alone and defenceless, but could call on the finances and growing expertise of Institute officers.⁹⁵

The strength of the Institute and the esteem of the teaching profession grew together. Visiting New Zealand in 1904, Frank Tate observed that from the quality of the houses provided for teachers, he could conclude that the teacher's office was held in honour.⁹⁶ Some teachers would not have agreed. Certainly the North Canterbury inspectors, three years after Tate's visit, did not.

There is too often a dearth of ordinary conveniences in connection with teachers' dwellings, few of which will bear comparison as to equipment with the workers' homes now being

provided by the State.⁹⁷

The teacher at Doyleston should have known better than to complain about the lack of cupboards in his house. It was pointed out to him, sharply, that he had "compensating advantages in the shape of an up-to-date residence in other respects".⁹⁸ The master at Kaiapoi Island had permanent visitors in his. Owen reported that besides the kitchen range needing repairing, the coal shed had borer and the house was infested with rats.⁹⁹ At least they all had a home. At Allandale in 1915 the teacher had a "travelling hut on the roadside".¹⁰⁰ Even that was somewhat better than the Hapuku master's residence. The School Committee wrote to the Board in 1909 renewing its application for a permanent house. The Board declined, adding insult to injury by saying that as it was impractical for the teacher to continue living in a tent during the winter his engagement would be terminated. The teacher quickly wrote on his own behalf, asking to remain until Christmas as he was quite satisfied with the tent accommodation provided. His request was granted.¹⁰¹

In considering the status and academic standing of country teachers in Victorian England, Horn comments that many supplemented their inadequate income by taking additional outside employment, but that it was all too easy for scholastic pursuits to be subordinated to these more lucrative sidelines.¹⁰² Teachers in New Zealand were also occasionally tempted by such sidelines but

incurred the sour complaint of watchful members of their communities. In 1893 the master at Hinds opened a teashop. In response, a Mr Orr of Ashburton promptly asked the Board whether Mr John McKeegan should be allowed to enter business on his own account. The Board replied that if it did not conflict with the "efficient discharge of his school duties", it could not interfere.¹⁰³ A similar reply was given to the Chairman of the Waiau School Committee in 1914. He asked whether the master had any right to earn money other than his salary, by growing vegetables for sale or canvassing for newspapers. The Board answered that outside school hours, the master's time was his own.¹⁰⁴

This was a somewhat fallacious claim as inspectors had other ideas. From time to time, they said, teachers should put one or two questions to themselves:

What am I reading in the great and ever increasing literature of education? What additions am I making to my library in the way of educational works? Am I keeping myself abreast of recent developments in the way of educational thought and progress?¹⁰⁵

Constant attention to improving their own minds and performance as teachers could only benefit the learning of their pupils. And this, after all, was the essence of their profession. Teachers were clearly responding to the call. In their 1908 report, Ritchie, Foster and Mulgan summed up by saying:

The district is fortunate in possessing a large body of teachers who fully realise the grave

importance and the far-reaching influences of their work. Their calling is a true Crusade - the eternal Crusade against ignorance, and among them are found not a few who resolutely tread the stony path of duty for duty's sake, who in modest self-effacement and in eloquent silence approve themselves worthy of the cause they have expoused.¹⁰⁶

And leading the Crusade were the school inspectors.

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CHAPTER 8

"A MORAL EFFICIENCY": SUPPORTING OR SUBVERTING
DISCIPLINARY POWER

The North Canterbury inspectors' exhortation to teachers to join their educational Crusade, makes explicit the qualities needed in any potential crusaders. They were to be modest, self-effacing and silent, and above all, resolute treaders of the path of duty for duty's sake.¹ This was a remarkable mirror of the qualities expected in the young persons completing their free, secular and compulsory schooling. Or perhaps not so remarkable, as the teacher was held as exemplar of the behaviour required in young scholars. Evidently teachers were successful in this mission. The inspectors, as observers whose interests were "not wholly submerged in the mustier details of everyday routine", felt they had reason to hope that:

... our schools may still send forth to life's battles young people whose bodies are hardened by the games they have played, who are imbued with some sense of their responsibility as future citizens, who have learned to use their talents to the best of their ability, whose self-control and experience of discipline have taught them that obedience is the way to command, and that duty is better than pleasure.²

This image captures all the elements in Foucault's depiction of the product of disciplinary power. The ultimate aim of education was to produce docile citizens. Not only did the school train the

talents of children so that they could be useful adults, it toughened them physically and morally for the struggles to come and filled them with a practised and easy obedience. It subjugated individual pleasure to the greater good and did this by demanding a transference of external discipline to an internal self-control. In Foucauldian terms, this was to be achieved through the manipulation of space, time and activity, with a superimposed system of hierarchical observation and normalising judgement.

The teachers' role in this process was clear. As both moral exemplars and moral trainers they were to provide a normalising influence. It is the inspector's role which is more obscure. Had he been captured in the organisation of the Department from its beginning, his role would have been both controlling and controlled. But he had not been fenced in securely. A legislative anomaly allowed him to tilt the palings when he felt like it, despite the Boards' best efforts to nail them into place. It remains, therefore, to locate the inspectors within this disciplinary structure of the education system.

THE PARADOX

In a recent article which traces the "genealogy of the urban teacher" in nineteenth century Britain, Jones³ uses Foucault's structure to explain the

teacher's changing role. Concern about city squalour introduced "a pedagogical machinery" to normalise it and as "an engine of instruction" the school could manufacture a disciplinary society. Within this endeavour, the teacher's role was initially minimal as the process relied on instructional monitors. The failure of this system, however, brought about a re-evaluation of the teacher's role. Teaching method became a new object of concern and the teacher's function altered from that of mechanical instructor to moral exemplar. There was now a growing preoccupation with the careful selection and proper training of future teachers, with special attention to imbuing an ethic of service. Inculcating techniques of self-regulation far out-weighed intellectual training.

Once prepared for their new role, teachers required "both a method and an architecture" which would amplify and project their moral presence. The school building with its gallery and the playground provided a space for the teachers' authoritative gaze. Now they could practise a scientific induction of morality but without corporal punishment. This was rejected not on humanitarian grounds but because feelings had to be educated to respond to rituals of humiliation.

The Revised Code heralded a partial abandonment of the teacher's role as moral exemplar by supplanting ethical transformation with regular examination. Payment by results realised "the utilitarian dream of a

regulating norm applied to both teachers and pupils".

Enter the school inspectors. Jones gives them only passing acknowledgement. Efficient instruction could only be guaranteed through independent examination, and this implied the inspector's role. Yet New Zealand did not follow the British scheme of payment by results. As the school's grant depended on attendance rather than the annual examination, there was more leeway possible in the inspectors' examining function and they made good use of this. While keeping within the general confines of the Standard regulations, they interpreted them in the way which best suited the aims of education in their districts. They could not abandon the examination as a test of efficiency, but they did protest at the use of results as its only measure. When the Department appropriated the inspectors' annual statistics as a technique in its own system of disciplinary power, inspectors vigorously objected. They had no interest in contributing to the "race for percentages", nor in condoning their Boards' belief in the "sweet simplicity"⁵ of gauging the success of a school through a list of passes and failures.

In this capacity then, they tried hard to subvert the Department's technique of disciplinary power. Yet in judging the efficiency of teaching through other means, their role as disciplinary agents is clear. And herein lies the paradox. While determinedly holding fast to the teachers' right to be assessed on the merits

of their teaching method, rather than its results, they also rigorously implemented the bureaucratic restraints on their teaching practice. Although cheerfully relinquishing their task as "examining drudges", and encouraging teachers to take full advantage of their freedom from the examination tyranny, they made meticulous inspection of registers, schemes of work and timetables. The bureaucratic paraphernalia were the Department's invisible power made visible. Teachers were drawn firmly into a permanent field of surveillance.

An answer to this riddle may perhaps be found in the inspectors' views of the purpose of education. The true function of the school, the North Canterbury inspectors proclaimed, was "to train intelligent and loyal citizens".⁶ This was best done through careful choice of syllabus subjects and the constant disciplining of the child in its work. Once Hogben assumed leadership of the Department, the inspectors' part in curriculum decisions was assured. Their visits to the schools had always provided the chance to ensure disciplined schoolwork.

The realm of moral efficiency became the central concern of inspectors. As early as 1879 Restell had pointed out that there was nothing in the new Standards system "to preclude an Inspector from observing and recording the morale of a school". A poor showing in the pupils' ability indicated laxity in discipline.

Inefficiency in the moral fails also in the mental culture. A bad school may produce a few showy and startling effects, but the best results year after year will only coincide with sound morale and a healthy tone.

Inspectors judged tone and discipline by the everyday working of the schoolroom. McGeorge points out that although the regulations did not explain to inspectors how to go about this, they might have looked to Fearon's manual of school inspection for guidance. Fearon advised the inspector to check that registers and log-books were to hand and then to sit quietly to see how long it took for the school to settle back to work after his arrival.

... but if the timetable shows that a change is at hand within a reasonable period, it is well that he should continue to watch until the change is completed. There is no such tell-tale of the discipline, order and tone, and common sense of a school as the change. Is it made quickly and quietly? Does everyone seem to know her business and do it in a simple but self-reliant manner? Are books and slates distributed or collected and put away without noise or confusion ... And through it all does the principal teacher keep her place and control the school by a look, a gesture, or a quiet word? If so, there cannot be much amiss with the order of that school.

In 1883 Edge and Cumming told the North Canterbury Board that in two thirds of its schools "good order and discipline appeared to prevail" but in the remaining schools:

... the idea of order entertained by the teachers is far too limited. The children are inattentive, sit in all kinds of postures, go through the class movements without the slightest precision, disobey commands, and, in fact, do just as they like. It is needless to say that in such schools the teachers are either uncertificated or deficient in

tact and firmness.⁹

Further signs of poor control or poor teaching, or both, were pupils' unpunctuality and irregular attendance. Edge was clearly irritated by pupils' tardiness and knew where to lay the blame.

In townships I have frequently noticed children dawdling along long after the bell had rung. It seemed to be a matter of perfect indifference to them whether they were late or not. In two schools even on examination-days the children kept dropping in from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. It is almost always the case that, where unpunctuality prevails to any great extent, the discipline and management are lax.¹⁰

It was equally of concern when children stayed away altogether. Not only did it retard their progress, discourage teachers, and disadvantage other students through the extra time and attention needed for those who were frequently absent, more importantly it created in them "desultory and careless habits".¹¹

In his inspection report on Flaxton School in June 1900, Ritchie pointed out the effects of irregular attendance.

Under such conditions children cannot receive sound preparation. A few of the brighter pupils may be dragged through their standards from year to year, finally leaving with a mere smattering of knowledge which will soon pass out of all recollection, but at the same time entirely destitute of that more important moral and mental discipline which should constitute the most desirable object of any educational system, and on which the future career of our young people must largely depend.¹²

Wilful irregular attendance was deplored. Missing school through sickness was forgiveable, although Gow and Bell, deploring the valuable time lost

through epidemics added wily:

Nor was this all; for the illness of individuals was not always coincident with the closing of the schools, and the progress of the classes was hampered by the inconsiderateness of those who would not be ill with the crowd, but required a special time for themselves.¹³

When children did manage to be at school, their attendance was carefully marked in the registers. These records, along with timetables and schemes of work, were scrupulously inspected to ensure that teachers, too, were obedient and disciplined. Their behaviour was part of the ordered fabric of the school and inspectors were careful to include them in the field of surveillance. Strict adherence to the intended timetable meant the activity of both teacher and taught was subjected to disciplinary power. A cheerful (but quiet) industry was the hallmark of a healthy tone and inspectors looked forward to finding it.

Crucial to good discipline was the effective arrangement of space. Within the classroom, children were neatly ordered, first into galleries, then later into single desks, so that the teacher's disciplinary gaze fell evenly upon them. Even in the playground the field of surveillance was extended through strict rules of supervision and in the spaces beyond the teacher's glance, the pupil's self-discipline should ensure correct behaviour. The sharp-eyed inspector knew that any scribbling on the closet walls was a certain sign of faulty discipline.

And beyond the confines of the school, good order and discipline were enhanced through homework. But this could be overdone and inspectors considered too much homework an indication of the teacher's poor organisation.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it was popularly believed that a degree of homework prevented larrikinism. McGeorge refers to the publicity Baldwin, headmaster of Sydenham School, received when he abolished homework in 1893. He decided to do this when 32 boys were sent to him on the one day to be punished for failing to complete their homework. A year later a satisfied Baldwin could report that the children were happier, punishments were fewer and most importantly, the pass rate had risen. There were some, he knew, who believed that homework kept children off the streets but that, he felt, was the parents' duty and they could always give them housework to do.¹⁵ The North Canterbury inspectors were not convinced. In 1898 they told the Board that while they knew homework could be time-consuming and arduous, "human life, after all, is not likely to become a voyage in gilded galleys across summer seas".¹⁶

Regardless of educators' opinions, children did not always complete their homework satisfactorily. Barcan comments that the introduction of homework in New South Wales with the "confident expectation that it would be done" reflected the "greater stability of family life" that had by then been achieved.¹⁷ Whether this was a factor in South Canterbury or not, Hammond

observed that "home influences" varied so considerably that the work produced was very unequal.¹⁸

Meanwhile, in the schoolroom, they had the example of the teacher to look to - and the "Good Manners" chart. Gow reminded teachers that the chart was issued by the Department "not simply as a wall-adornment, but for use".¹⁹ Teachers had other aids to help them in their work. They could always look to a handy teaching manual for ideas on method. Again, Gow reminded them that:

... books on school method should not be looked upon merely as aids to passing the examination in school management for the D or E certificate, and thereafter set apart as votive offerings, too suggestive of stress and strain to be again looked into.

He recommended Garlick's book, A New Manual of Method.

... and having read one chapter they may be lured on to others all brimming over with information that should prove most serviceable.²⁰

Inspectors, too, were brimming over with serviceable information. It was "vivid personal teaching" that counted and teachers needed to see it first hand. Manuals only went so far. What was required was "to see the work done, and to hear it illustrated by a normal expert".²¹ Inspectors revelled in the chance to demonstrate good teaching method on their visits of inspection and even on examination day. As the "normal experts" who had access to all schools in the district, theirs was a unique opportunity to encourage good teaching practice. It was through this,

rather than through examination, that true educational progress would be made. And all to one end, the training of intelligent, disciplined and loyal citizens of the future.

An endeavour should be made to awaken the responsibilities of the individual, to recognise duty towards our fellows, and to perform special social duties so as to serve the best interests of the community. Merely selfish motives must not dictate our actions, but conduct which finds its greatest joy in striving after the well-being of the mass.

THE PARADOX REVISITED

The inspectors' part in educating loyal and docile citizens of the future is clear. By inspecting schools for signs of discipline and good order in the classroom and playground, even in the very fabric and cleanliness of the building, they were active agents of the Department's disciplinary power, not because the regulations told them to, but because they believed in it. The future of the country depended on the correct training of its children. And it was just as important to ensure that the teachers guiding them were fit and proper to do so. They too, needed to be brought into a permanent field of surveillance, their teaching methods, attention to school sanitation, and adherence to record-keeping rules, being carefully monitored.

And although the examination might build character, the statistical data it generated should not be used as a normalising agent, either for

setting expectations of children's performance, or for controlling their teachers. On this they were adamant. What they looked for was evidence of teaching based on sound principles, and good order and discipline, both of which would help ensure the correct education of children. It was moral efficiency which counted.

It is this notion which helps explain the paradox of the inspector's place in the process of disciplinary power. Moral efficiency determined their willingness to take part. Examining children was a drudgery they relinquished with relief - unlike inspection it did not carry forward the moral efficiency of the school.

Foucault's description of the techniques of disciplinary power therefore highlight aspects of the inspector's role. It is not intended that the historical evidence included here should serve as a critique of Foucault's work. Rather, his ideas are used to help locate the school inspector in the educational scheme of the country. At the heart of (his) work was a determination to secure the best possible education for the children in his district, an education which would prepare them as good citizens of the future.

10.11.6
Inspector

Although beginning shakily with the turmoil of the first period, the inspectorate carried the educational work of the Canterbury districts through nearly four decades. As an elite corps within the education service, as "normal experts" with access to all schools, they bridged the potential gap between the

Department and the schoolroom. To do this, they accepted the long, wearisome journeys, the complaints of teachers and school committees disappointed with results, and the struggle with Boards quick to control inspectorate boundaries. They celebrated the "ordinary successes" of the teachers in their schools, encouraging them always to extend their expertise. No doubt they would have been proud to receive their own compliment given to teachers in 1909, when they quoted Arnold:

Not like the men of the crowd
Who all around us to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile;
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.²³

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. AJHR, 1908, E-1B p. 43.
2. ibid.
3. Jones, The genealogy of the urban schoolteacher.
4. ibid, p. 68.
5. AJHR, 1882, E-1B p. 14.
6. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 126.
7. AJHR, 1879, H-2 p. 88.
8. D.R. Fearon, School Inspection, 4th ed., London, Macmillan, 1879, pp. 8-9. Cited in McGeorge, Schools and socialisation in New Zealand 1890-1914, pp. 182-3
9. AJHR, 1883, E-1B p. 25.
10. AJHR, 1885, E-1B p. 29.
11. See for example NCEB IRB, 13 May 1895, 14 May 1895.
12. NCEB IRB, 4 June 1900.
13. AJHR, 1903, E-1B pp. 41-2.
14. See for example AJHR, 1880, H-1I p. 35.
15. Lyttelton Times, 28 July 1893, cited in McGeorge, p. 185.
16. Lyttelton Times, 14 July 1898, cited in McGeorge, p. 185.
17. Barcan, A Short History of Education in New South Wales, p. 132.
18. AJHR, 1880, H-1I p. 35.
19. AJHR, 1899, E-1B p. 43.
20. AJHR, 1898, E-1B p. 43.
21. AJHR, 1879, H-2 p. 89.
22. AJHR, 1914, E-2 Appendix C p. xxxiii.
23. AJHR, 1909, E-2 p. 128.

APPENDIX A. LIST OF CANTERBURY INSPECTORS, 1877-1916

North Canterbury Education Board Inspectors

Restell	1877-1882	Resigned (Became teacher)
Edge	1877-1886	Resignation required (Became teacher)
Curnow	1882	Died
Cumming	1882-1885	Died
Wood	1885-1904	Resigned (Health)
Anderson	1886-1905	Resigned (Became Assistant Inspector-General)
Hogben	1886-1889	Resigned (Became Inspector-General)
Ritchie	1893-1910	Resigned (Health)
Foster	1904-1912	Resigned (Became Principal of Teachers College)
Mulgan	1906-1910	Resigned (Became Chief Inspector in Auckland)
Brock	1908-	
Hughes	1910-1911	Resigned (Health)
Hardie	1910-	
Owen	1911-	
Mayne	1912-	

South Canterbury Education Board Inspectors

Hammond	1877-1884	Resignation required (Became teacher)
Anderson	1884-1886	Resigned (Became Inspector in North Canterbury)
Gow	1886-	
Bell	1899-1913	Resigned
Valentine	1913-1916	Resigned (Became Inspector in Grey and Westland)

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