

During the year two members of the Board, Theophilus Heale, Esq., and J. Logan Campbell, Esq., have resigned, and their seats have been filled by Edwin Hesketh, Esq., and Joseph M. Dargaville, Esq. Two members retired by rotation, as provided by the third subsection of the fourth clause of "The Auckland College and Grammar School Act, 1877;" both these gentlemen, Sir George Maurice O'Rorke, and the Hon. Colonel Haultain, were re-elected. One member, James McCosh Clark, Esq., resigned on being elected Mayor of the City of Auckland, and Thomas Peacock, Esq., was elected by the Board to fill the seat thus rendered vacant.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

JNO. JAMES, Secretary.

Enclosures.

1. The AGENT-GENERAL to the BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 22nd September, 1880.

Referring to my letter of the 7th instant, No. 769, in which I advised you of the communication I had addressed to Dr. Abbott, respecting the information required as to the method of instruction in public schools, I now have the honour to forward a copy of Dr. Abbott's reply, and of correspondence with the Rev. R. H. Quick, to whom he referred the matter. I have, as you will perceive, refrained from asking Mr Quick to take any further steps until I hear from you to what extent your Board would wish the inquiry to go.

I have, &c.,

The Chairman of the Board of Governors,
Auckland College and Grammar School.

JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

2. DR. ABBOTT to the AGENT-GENERAL.

City of London East School, Milk Street, Cheapside, E.C.,

DEAR SIR JULIUS,—

11th September, 1880.

Over-work and ill-health must be my excuse for delaying so long to answer your note of the 6th August, calling attention to a letter of the 22nd June from the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Auckland College. The man who is best qualified to give you information as to documents, reports, &c., is the Rev. H. Quick, author of "Educational Reformers," formerly an assistant-master in Harrow, whose address is Junior University Club, St. James's. To him I have forwarded the Chairman's letter, with a request that he would supply you with such information as he can. But I have no doubt that from all the great schools you will receive answers that the "special class" system is better than the "general class" system, or, in other words, that pupils ought to be "redistributed on each subject," and not "remain in one class according to their general proficiency." Mr. Macrae has pointed out the difficulties in the way of the "special class" system: it presupposes that all, or almost all, the masters can teach all subjects efficiently. Besides these difficulties, there is this to be said for the "general class" system: that the class master has more responsibility, more knowledge of his pupils, a better and more complete view of the whole of their work, so that he is better qualified to detect laziness or overwork, or any moral defects that may be gradually manifesting themselves in his pupils. Probably a very good modification of the "special class" system is the one introduced into University College School by Mr. Eve, who has arranged that every pupil, besides having his "special" master in Latin, Greek, mathematics, &c., shall have some one master to whom he may repeat the general results of his work and resort in cases of difficulty—a kind of friendly supervising master, who fills the place occupied by the class master in the "general class" system. Our traditions (and necessities) in the City of London School have always led us to teach on the "general class" system, except in German, drawing, natural science, and to some extent French. My opinion is that the adoption of either system should depend very much on the nature of the staff, and that in a day-school the "special class" system, without such modification as that introduced by Mr. Eve, is liable to the grave objection that a boy may have seven or eight teachers but no master; that is to say, no general guide and controller, except, of course, the head master, who (however energetic) is not likely to possess energy enough or time enough to be the friend and adviser of every boy in a large school.

Believe me, &c.,

Sir Julius Vogel.

EDWIN A. ABBOTT.

3. The Rev. R. H. QUICK to the AGENT-GENERAL.

DEAR SIR,—

General Parr's, Bickley, Kent, 16th September, 1880.

My friend Dr. Abbott has sent me a paper, and asked me to send you the information required by the writer of it. As far as I can gather, the information wanted is, what is the practice in English public schools with regard to the division of the boys for their different studies? I am afraid I cannot name any publication that would throw light on this point. The Report of the Public Schools Commission refers to a state of things which has since undergone great changes. Perhaps the only way is to fix on some particular schools, and to learn the practice in those schools. I shall be glad to aid in getting such information; meantime I send such as I have. University College School, London, is, as far as I know, the only great school where the boys are grouped differently for every subject taught, and where the choice of subjects is left overmuch to the parents. This is exclusively a day-school, so the masters have no responsibilities beyond their class-rooms. Where the school is not a mere apparatus for teaching a variety of subjects, there must be some recognized gradations in the boys' school rank. This has been determined till recently almost exclusively by proficiency in classics, but of late years it has been found necessary to allow increasing weight to mathematics, natural science, and modern languages. In some schools there are two distinct orders—one depending on mathematics and natural science, the other on classics, modern languages, history, and geography. In this case there are two "sixth forms," which are supposed to be of equal dignity. Both masters and boys may take a high rank in one division, and a low one in the other. At Harrow, (and I believe at Winchester) the plan is to divide the school into four parts. The whole of the sixth ranks before the fifth, the fifth before the shell, &c.; but the sixth is rearranged for mathematics, and