

REPORTS ON THE TRAINING COLLEGES.

EXTRACT FROM REPORT BY THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Wellington, December, 1884.

I have the honour to report that since the 14th September I have inspected the Training Colleges at Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, and Wellington, and most of the high schools throughout the colony. It is unnecessary to encumber this report with details as to the staff and attendance at each school, since the annual reports of the several institutions which are to be made at the end of this year will supply full statistics. The same reports will show with sufficient clearness the general character of each institution with respect to the scope of the instruction imparted, and the completeness or necessary imperfection of the organization.

The smaller and poorer schools in the lesser towns are evidently placed at a disadvantage in comparison with those that have a large attendance and a competent income. Bearing in mind this necessary difference, I find very little occasion for adverse criticism on the conduct of the institutions I have inspected. The local authorities generally exercise a very careful supervision of the affairs of the schools, and have intrusted the charge of them to very competent principals, who in their turn efficiently direct and inspect the work of their subordinates. As a rule the subjects of instruction are properly adapted to the wants of the pupils, the instruction in those subjects is adequate to the pupils' present requirements, the distribution of the school-time as among the several subjects is judicious, and the hours prescribed in the time-tables are punctually observed. Further, in most of the schools there is an alacrity of movement that may be taken to indicate habitual energy on the part of the teachers, and habitual attention to their work on the part of the majority of the pupils.

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On the 15th September I inspected the Training College at Dunedin. Since my last visit Mr. Wilkinson, a graduate in honours of the New Zealand University, has been appointed to assist the Principal in the instruction of the students, and very satisfactory arrangements are being made for the teaching of elementary science. The more advanced students attend lectures at the University of Otago.

I visited the Christchurch Training College on the 26th September. The two tutors here—Mr. Newton and Mr. Watkins—devote part of their time to the teaching of the children in the practising school in English, drawing, and music. The senior students attend lectures at Canterbury College.

I inspected the Auckland Training College on two separate days in October. I was especially interested in the large classes held on Saturday morning for the instruction of teachers in the Board's service. The work done in these classes, including, among other subjects, music, drawing, and calisthenic drill, cannot fail to exercise a wide-spread and beneficial influence on the schools of the district. The more advanced students attend lectures at Auckland University College.

I visited the Wellington Training College on the 16th instant. There is a promising group of students working diligently under careful instruction. The arrangements for the practice of teaching are, I fear, not quite satisfactory; the relations between the college and the practising school will, I have no doubt, be on a better footing when the new school on the Terrace is occupied. Drawing, music, French, and science are taught by visiting masters. The Principal alone undertakes all the other subjects, and, as the students naturally fall into two classes, it appears to me that he requires an assistant.

At all these training colleges the students devote a considerable part of their time—a much larger part than is commonly so spent in English training colleges—to the actual practice of class-teaching in the large schools attached to the colleges, and their teaching is subject to the guidance and criticism of the Principal in each college. The arrangements for such practice are different in the different colleges, but are satisfactory in all, and are likely to be of great benefit to the students and to the cause of education.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

WM. JAS. HABENS.

AUCKLAND.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Training College, March 1885.

I have the honour to submit my report on the Training College for the year 1884.

At the beginning of the year there were 10 male and 23 female students—total 33; while at the end the numbers were 9 male and 22 female students—total 31. During the session the second-year students attended lectures at the Auckland University College, and with very great success. Of four scholarships given by the University College Council, the Training College students obtained three—namely, the two entrance scholarships and one of the two senior scholarships. Six students passed the annual examination of the University College, and were accredited with having kept the terms of the year; of these, two gained a first-class both in Latin and English, while all the others, with one exception, passed in either the first or second class in the subjects in which they were examined. At the matriculation examination held in December, eleven presented, of whom nine passed, and one student also passed the first section of the B.A. degree. During the four years the Training College has been in existence every student who presented for the teachers' examination has been either successful or partially so.

The work of the students throughout the year has been very satisfactory, but the health of some who were admitted at the beginning of 1884 has been very indifferent, and consequently some have worked at great disadvantage. I think that every care should be taken to admit to the