

been satisfactory, there have been several cases of irregularity because of sickness, such as materially interfered with progress.

It is desirable that our young teachers, while in the habit of study, should connect themselves with the University, and special attention has again been given to preparation for matriculation examination. The most of the students who can maintain themselves seem desirous of continuing their studies at the University, and many of those who now matriculate, but cannot afford to remain in Dunedin, will do good work for a time in the country schools, keep up their studies, and return to Dunedin to graduate, and so obtain the higher certificates of classification. Of the twenty-one senior male students, seven who had matriculated and secured the D certificate, having given satisfactory evidence in the practising school of ability to teach, received permission to attend the University of Otago, and all completed with credit their first year's term. Messrs. Bee and Campbell, the holders of the £60 Normal School University Scholarships, were among the number. Mr. Bee took a first-class in junior mathematics, second in physics, and third in junior Latin; Mr. Campbell a first in physics, second in junior mathematics, and third in junior Latin. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Simmers, the holder of an open Normal School scholarship, were equal in physics, and were each awarded first prize. During the latter part of the University session the whole of these students were set free from Normal School work. Though in all cases this may not be warranted, in theirs it might have been done with advantage at the beginning of the session. On their return to the Normal School they were placed in partial charge of large classes in Standards IV., V., and VI., and of small classes preparing for examination for the Board's junior and senior scholarships, and with these they did very good work.

The arrangements for study and for practice in teaching and school management have been much the same as previously reported, except that the practice in teaching was more extensive than formerly. The course of study was somewhat disturbed by absence on leave of Mr. Montgomery. During the first period his duties were discharged by Mr. Wilkinson and myself, and during the second Mr. Farnie took Mr. Wilkinson's place. I have to thank both gentlemen for the help so cordially given during these emergencies, and the whole staff of the practising school for their endeavours, as far as possible, to lighten my work of superintendence.

Good work has been done by the students in science-teaching, notwithstanding the poor accommodation and want of apparatus. The new science-room is now ready, amply furnished with apparatus and chemicals, and fitted with desks, seats, and experimenting tables for eight small practising classes, as well as for students' classes. I have no doubt but the work done in this room will before long tell in improved science-teaching throughout the education district. The want of apparatus is doubtless a hindrance at present; but were the Board to provide a few inexpensive materials and tools, with a few lessons from a skilful tradesman in their use, the students might make for themselves much of the simple apparatus that they need in country schools. It seems to be the intention of the Government to promote the study of science by a liberal offer of scholarships. As the details of their scheme are not yet worked out, I would suggest that a number of the scholarships at present intended for Fourth Standard pupils should be offered for competition to teachers who have obtained by examination the D certificate, and proved themselves possessed of special aptitude for scientific study. Some of the best of our young teachers might thus be enabled to proceed to their B. Sc., and thus science-teachers of guaranteed ability would be secured for the principal centres of population. Should the Board approve of the suggestion, I would respectfully request it to bring it under the notice of the Minister of Education.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Education Board.

W. S. FITZGERALD, Rector.

REPORTS OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

AUCKLAND.

SIR,—

Auckland, 10th March, 1885.

I have the honour to forward the following statement of the administration of Education Reserves in this district during the year 1884:—

PRIMARY RESERVES.—The number of new leases granted was nine, comprising 686 acres of agricultural and rural lands, and 3,056 acres of pastoral land, and yielding an aggregate rental of £95 13s. a year. By an Act of last session of the Assembly several valuable allotments at Devonport, giving a rental of £70 a year, passed from the control of the Commissioners. The revenue suffered also a reduction of £140 a year by the surrender of the lease of an allotment in the City of Auckland. The buildings on this reserve have been sold for removal, and the surface is now being cut down to a permanent level as part of certain improvements for the benefit of the neighbourhood. The loss of income in this direction will be only temporary.

SECONDARY RESERVES.—The Commissioners have appropriated during the year £250 only of the revenues from secondary reserves—viz., £125 each to the Cambridge and Hamilton District High Schools. They deem it the better course to expend this money in aiding the efforts of country settlers to maintain district high schools, rather than in contributing to the funds of the older-established secondary schools of the towns. A considerable sum therefore remained on hand at the end of the year, which has been placed on fixed deposit at interest. The sum deposited for appropriation to a secondary school in Gisborne District has now reached £139 7s. 8d.

Referring to the return of reserves for secondary education lately furnished to the department, the Commissioners desire to point out that the capital value, set down by the Assessors at £17,529, is, in their opinion, considerably over-estimated. The revenue derived from the whole is only £536 16s. 10d. a year, or a trifle more than 3 per cent. on the estimate, and there is no prospect of increase from the lands unlet, which are of little or no value for leasing purposes.

ARREARS OF RENT.—Of the sum of £1,162 7s. 7d. outstanding at 1st January, 1884, £925 2s. 7d.