

TRAINING.

In New South Wales there are two training colleges, one for males and one for females. The latter is residential, is beautifully placed in one of the suburbs of Sydney, has a well-appointed practising school on its own grounds, and is under the direction of a lady superintendent. The college for males is a department of the Fort Street Model School, the head teacher of which is also principal of the Training College, which is not residential, the students attending it for instruction in literary and professional work, and residing, some here, some there, in the city and suburbs. That the authorities are alive to this serious defect in the system is shown by the following recommendation made by them to the Minister: That a residential college be established at an early date.

The majority of the men and women now entering the profession enter it through the pupil-teachers' course, which is a course of four years. Those who at their final examination are successful in winning a scholarship go to one of the training colleges, where they are instructed for one or two years in the subjects they will by-and-by have to teach and in the methods and principles of education. Only a small proportion of pupil-teachers succeed in winning a scholarship; and, as few of those who fail go into training, it follows that only the cleverer of the pupil-teachers get any training beyond what is implied in the pupil-teachers' course. In other words, those who need further training most of all do not get it. I found the same defect in Victoria.

The following modification of the training system is now proposed:—

1. That every successful applicant pupil-teacher be required to undergo a preliminary training in the district model school or other specially selected school; that the period of training be for not less than six months; that during its continuance the head teacher of such school shall instruct the pupil-teacher in the subjects in which he will subsequently have to be examined, and at the same time instruct him in the art and practice of teaching; and that in the case of pupil-teachers who have to live away from home a bursary of about £30 per annum be allowed.
2. That the course of four years' training of pupil-teachers be reduced to three years.
3. That students in the Training College shall consist of three classes:—
 - (a.) Pupil-teachers who have completed their three years' course and passed their final examination;
 - (b.) Untrained teachers in charge of schools who can pass the final examination for pupil-teachers;
 - (c.) Persons outside the Service who can pass the same examination and are willing to pay the cost of their training.
4. That (a) and (b) students be divided into three grades:—
 - (1.) Those who get not less than 70 per cent. at the final examination for pupil-teachers;
 - (2.) Those who get not less than 60 per cent. and under 70 per cent.;
 - (3.) Those who get not less than 50 per cent. and under 60 per cent.

And that the following allowances be granted: £75 per annum to the first grade, £60 per annum to the second grade, and £36 per annum to the third grade.
5. That there be established "within the University" a residential Training College for both sexes.
6. That students who fail to pass the first-year course in arts be required to attend a second year in the afternoon at the Training College for instruction in elocution, in psychology in the schoolroom, and in hand-and-eye training.
7. That students who at the end of the first year of training succeed in passing the first-year course in arts and gaining a 2A certificate for practical skill in teaching be permitted to attend the Sydney University for the second-year course in arts, and be required to attend the Training College in the afternoon for instruction in elocution, psychology in the schoolroom, and for lessons in hand-and-eye training.
8. That students who pass the second-year course in arts and gain honours be awarded a third year's course at the University.

The three things I wish to direct attention to in these proposals are,—

1. That the pupil-teachers who pass their final examination are all to be eligible for admission to the Training College.
2. That the Training College is to be residential.
3. That all trainees are to get more or less of university education.

In Victoria the teacher usually begins his teaching-life as a pupil-teacher; and, unless he is endowed with good natural ability and favoured by circumstance, he passes straight from his pupil-teachership to the position of assistant or head teacher. The Education Department has provided a well-appointed residential Training College for the exceptionally gifted, but not for him, not for those who most need further literary and professional training, but for the gifted few who need it least. Out of, say, 300 pupil-teachers who pass their final examination every year it selects by competitive examination the fifty best in point of literary and professional attainments, and allows the rest to drift into the profession without any further special training. The system is neither better nor worse than the system that has until recently prevailed in the other Australian States and still prevails in New South Wales. And, indeed, we of New Zealand are in little better case. It is true that in Otago and Canterbury nearly all pupil-teachers get one year's special training in the Training College; but in most other parts of the colony they are passing into the profession without any training beyond what they receive as pupil-teachers. That there has been any training college at all in New Zealand for some years is due to the enlightened and spirited policy of two Education Boards, the North Canterbury Board and the Otago Board.