

SESSION II.
1906.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

[In continuation of E.—1c., 1905.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

LAST year Parliament appropriated two sums of £5,000 each for alterations and additions to the Wellesley Street School, Auckland, and the Thorndon School, Wellington, to adapt them for the purposes of training colleges for teachers in these centres. The training colleges at Auckland and Wellington thus provided were opened at the beginning of 1906, and now with the two training colleges already for many years in operation at Christchurch and Dunedin, but recently reorganized under more liberal conditions, complete the provision of a training college for each of the four University districts. The demand for teachers in New Zealand is still so great that many ex-pupil-teachers without adequate additional training are being employed as teachers, and the needs of many of the smaller schools are still served by persons who, whatever their attainments may be, would manifestly benefit materially by even a short period of training under proper direction. The allowances to students are, however, so liberal, and the advantages of careful practical training so obvious, that the attendance at the training colleges is fast increasing, and it is expected that before long the numbers seeking admission will tax the present accommodation to its fullest extent.

The number of students during the current year attending the various training colleges is as follows: Auckland, 19 women and 9 men—28; Wellington, 42 women and 11 men—53; Christchurch, 48 women and 17 men—65; Dunedin, 65 women and 10 men—75. The total for the whole colony is 221, 174 women and 47 men, as compared with 105 for 1905.

Connected with each training college is a "normal" or practising school, which includes, besides the ordinary classes of a public elementary school, a model "country" school of forty children and a secondary department. The former justifies its existence by familiarising prospective teachers with the conditions of one of the most difficult tasks a teacher has to undertake—namely, the proper management and education, single-handed, of a self-contained school group of children of various ages from five to fifteen and at various stages of development. The secondary department will give an opportunity for training those who intend to take up secondary work either in the high schools or in the upper departments of district high schools.

Under the regulations gazetted, students of a training college take English and other non-special subjects at the University colleges, and attend lectures in the methods of teaching and in the principles and history of education under the Principal, who is also in each case by special appointment the University-college lecturer on education. Every student is required to take up practical work in at least one branch of science, special attention being directed to nature-study and elementary agriculture. Handwork suitable for schools also receives due attention; and concurrently with all this there is frequent teaching-practice in the normal school.

The salaries offered for the staff of the training colleges are, it is hoped, high enough to attract persons of good standing and experience. Pupil-teachers in any education district who have satisfactorily completed their term of service and have passed the Matriculation Examination may enter at the training college most convenient for them, the course being two years. Such students receive in addition to the amount of University-college fees the sum of £30 a year each if the recipient lives at home, and £60 a year if compelled to live away from home in order to attend the college. Advantages not quite so great are also offered to other qualified candidates who have not served as pupil-teachers. Others again may be admitted for shorter or longer periods, although they may have been for some time engaged in the practice of their profession, but in such cases no allowances are payable.

The total cost of maintenance of the four colleges in full working-order will be for 1906 about £23,000—£11,100 for allowances and fees of students, and £11,900 for salaries and house allowances of staffs. It must be remembered that this provides not only for the efficient training of over two hundred teachers, but for the instruction of over sixteen hundred children in attendance at the practising schools.

The amount provided during 1905 for the training of teachers was £16,342, made up as follows: Salaries of staffs of training colleges (two), £3,395; students' allowances and University fees, £4,323; grants for special instruction in handwork, £1,900; grants for general purposes of training colleges, £2,100; railway fares of teachers in training and instructors of training classes established by Boards, £4,624.