

APPENDIX D.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

THREE out of the four training colleges had during the year 1908 almost, if not quite, their full complement of students ; it is to be regretted that the fourth college had less than half the full number it could accommodate. The supply of trained teachers required to fill the regularly recurring vacancies, to staff new schools, and to improve the staffing of existing schools in accordance with the provisions of the Education Amendment Act, can be maintained only if the numbers at the training colleges are maintained at the highest figures ; otherwise, the vacancies must be filled with untrained or partially trained teachers—a result it is desirable to avoid. The new regulations gazetted in December last increased the number of students who may be attending a training college at any one time from eighty to a hundred, the increase being called for by the new scale of staffing. The same regulations also increased the inducements to pupils from secondary schools to enter the teaching profession by giving to all students in Division B (non-pupil-teachers) living away from home the additional allowance of £30 a year formerly paid to only four of such students entering in each year ; the scale of payments to the staff was revised, giving salaries that are at once more liberal, and yet graded in accordance with the Amendment Act of last session ; in order to increase the opportunities for the child-study that forms so important a part of the training-college course, permission was given to each institution, with the sanction of the Minister, to establish a small kindergarten division for a limited number of children between three and five years of age ; and the course of study and training was further defined, with a view to ensuring that subjects essential to a teacher should not be neglected. It may be necessary to define the courses still further, so far as that can be done without interfering with the freedom of the several colleges to shape their own programmes, as, unfortunately, there seems to be a tendency at present to avoid the study of natural science, without which no teacher can be said to be properly equipped for his work. It is also a question whether some other modification of the regulations may not be desirable to prevent some of the students from subordinating their legitimate training as teachers altogether to the object of taking a university degree. The course of training extends over two years, and it does not seem expedient that this period should be shortened, except in the case of those who have already graduated in the University, and who may therefore be considered as requiring only professional training in the colleges ; for them one year would probably be sufficient.

The new Training College buildings at Auckland and Dunedin have now been completed, and are in actual occupation.

At the close of the year the students in training numbered 274, as follows :—

Number of students in training colleges, end of 1908 :—						Men.	Women.	Total.
Auckland	..	..	..	..	..	23	25	48
Wellington	..	..	..	..	..	14	64	78
Christchurch	..	..	..	..	..	13	59	72
Dunedin	..	..	..	..	..	21	55	76
Total	..	..	..	..	..	71	203	274