No. 3.

TRAINING COLLEGES.

AUCKLAND.

REPORT OF PRINCIPAL FOR THE YEAR 1910.

SIR,— 20th February, 1911.

I have the honour to present my report on the work of the Auckland Training College for the year 1910.

For the first time since the College was opened, the maximum number of students allowed by the regulations was admitted. This change was brought about by a new regulation issued by the Board requiring all probationers and pupil-teachers to attend the Training College for at least one year on the conclusion of their apprenticeship. There were 18 students of the second year, and this allowed 82 students to be admitted, in order to make up the full complement of 100. Of these 82, 27 entered for one year only, but I am pleased to say that 3 of these received the Board's permission to extend their period of training to two years. Very little can be done in one year to permanently influence character, and I regard two years as the minimum time that should be allowed. Indeed, it is the third-year students in England who do the colleges most credit; and if something could be done to allow a few picked students to complete their degrees by extending their courses to a third year, I am sure that the money would be well spent.

The students were classified as follows:—

64 Division A—*i.e.*, pupil-teachers or probationers.
31 Division B—*i.e.*, matriculated students without teaching-experience.
4 Division C.
1 Regulation II.

100

For the first time, a student holding a degree was admitted. Of the 100 students, 59 were women and 41 were men.

University-work.—In order to make sure that lecture fees would not be wasted, the students were carefully sifted before the term commenced as to their fitness for university work. As the Training College exists primarily to train teachers, only those students whose previous training had equipped them in such a way that they could well afford to make the dual effort were encouraged to attempt degree-work. Close examination showed that some 29 students had a reasonable chance of passing their terms examination, and so the rest were required to devote their energies to the C certificate requirements. Of the 29 who entered for the terms examination, 26 succeeded in passing; the other 3 failed in one of the three subjects required.

The subjects taken were as follows: English, 25; Latin, 25; education, 29; mathematics, 5; political economy, 4; mental science, 1.

Three of the 29 students took four subjects, instead of the required three. The wisdom of this has been questioned by the Department's officers in a previous year, so it is interesting to note that all three passed in the four subjects, two obtaining three first classes and one second, the other two first classes and two seconds.

In obedience to regulations all students took the course in English.

The 50 students of the first year took also a course in botany and nature-study, consisting of one lecture splendidly illustrated by specimens, and one laboratory meeting of an hour and a half per week. Very good work was done in this class. Forty-five students attended for a lecture in geology for one hour per week. This corelated with the physiography course taken at the College.

Next year the University College Council has arranged for a course of lectures on voice-production and elocution to be delivered by Dr. Thomas. This was done on the initiative of Mr. C. J. Parr, Chairman of the Board of Education, and I look forward with pleasure to all our students taking the course. The correct use and preservation of the voice is an essential of a teacher's training, hitherto, owing to circumstances, somewhat neglected here. Only last year one of our ex-students, an excellent teacher, was compelled to retire from the profession by doctor's orders after a few weeks' work in the schools, owing to a defective throat. The climate of Auckland, I am told by medical friends, is particularly bad for throat troubles, so it behoves us to do what we can to give training in the proper care of the voice. The ex-student above mentioned told me that, though he had been medically examined according to regulation on various occasions, not once had any attention been paid to his throat by the medical examiner. I think the Board would act wisely in directing the attention of their medical officer to the fact that candidates for probation and pupil-teacherships, and candidates for admission to the Training College, should invariably have their throats examined—serious defect to result in rejection. It is a waste of effort to find out after two years' expensive training that the condition of a student's throat requires that he shall leave the profession.

Curriculum.—The requirements of the teachers' C and D certificate examinations largely determine the curriculum. The aim put before students is the acquisition of a C certificate by the end of the two years' training. Students of ordinary ability who are diligent in their studies can easily accomplish this, and, in fact, do so, the inability to pass the practical music test being the hurdle at which most failures have stumbled. In addition to the subjects that the regulations render compulsory the time-table shows that the following receive attention: Physiography, hygiene, commercial geography, and first aid.