

WELLINGTON.

REPORT OF PRINCIPAL FOR THE YEAR 1912.

SIR,—

Training College, 13th January, 1913.

I have the honour to present my report on the work of the Wellington Training College for the year 1912.

Year and Terms.—The first term began on the 27th February and the last closed on the 29th November, thus giving a working-year of thirty-eight weeks. The Victoria College session consists of two terms of fourteen weeks, with a vacation of three weeks in July. As practically all our students take some University work, this division of the year finally determines our terms. In his reports my predecessor, Mr. Gray, frequently pointed out the disabilities this division of the year places upon Training College students, and I am in entire agreement with him in desiring some rearrangement that would obviate these long unbroken periods of work. It has been suggested that the Training College year should be conterminous with that of the Normal School. The fact that those students who do satisfactory work are exempted from sitting for the certificate examinations in January makes the suggestion a reasonable one, and though there are difficulties in the way, I purpose as far as possible giving effect to the change next year. A further suggestion has been made that students' allowances should be increased in order to attract more young people to the teaching profession. A wiser course would be to have the money spent in extending the time of training of the more promising students to three years. The initial cost is not, to my mind, the reason why more young men are not induced to become teachers—it is rather the fact that the future prospects do not seem commensurate with the hard study and the trying work the teacher is called on to undertake.

Enrolment.—Ninety-seven students were enrolled in February, and during the year three women students left the College—one to enter the musical profession, one to begin teaching, and one to accept the Jacob Joseph Research Scholarship. The final roll number was—

	Men.	Women.	Total.
First year	10	36	46
Second year	15	33	48
	25	69	94

Of this number, ninety belong to the A division, two to the B division, and two were graduate students. The various education districts were represented as follows: Wellington, 38; Hawke's Bay, 24; Wanganui, 15; Taranaki, 6; Nelson, 7; Marlborough, 3; Westland, 1; total, 94.

Twenty of our students lived at home, while the remaining seventy-four were distributed in various boarding establishments in the city. Forty students were most satisfactorily housed in the three existing students' hostels. A residential college, or some extension of the present hostel accommodation, would immensely benefit the students and relieve the staff of much serious responsibility. While it is to some extent outside the province of this report, I would like to point out that there are now probably two hundred women students in Wellington, living away from home, and the establishment of a residential school of domestic science would supply a very decided want in the present higher education of women, and, while giving a real practical training to many, might in addition give to a larger number cheap and comfortable accommodation. In older countries housewifery is considered quite as important as separate courses in, say, cookery or laundry-work, and such institutions as I have suggested are doing invaluable work in Gloucester, Cheltenham, Edinburgh, &c. They are, moreover, financially successful.

University Work and Professional Training.—The following were the numbers in attendance at Victoria College classes: English, 74; Latin, 30; French, 14; German, 1; Greek, 1; education, 34; mental science, 36; history, 6; economics, 3; mathematics, 7; physics, 2; chemistry, 1; biology, 4; geology, 10. This gives an average of just under two classes and a half for seniors and two classes for juniors. Nineteen students kept first year's terms, twelve second, and five third year's terms; while one sat for Honours, five for the pass degree, five for the first section, and three for proficiency certificates in various subjects. About 40 per cent. did satisfactory degree work, a further 30 per cent. justified attendance at University classes, while 30 per cent. were not satisfactory, whether judged by the degree standard or the purely cultural aspect of University study. This question of University work is one of the most difficult problems facing training-college authorities. The majority of new students are quite unknown to the Principal, and in sanctioning University classes more liberty of choice is allowed than results always warrant. Notwithstanding this, I still feel that even failure may have been most valuable to the young teacher, and the very fact of intimate connexion with the highest educational institution cannot but have a broadening effect on the minds it should be our first endeavour to keep out of the fatal ruts of formalism and self-sufficiency. The Education Department's policy of maintaining an intimate connexion between training college and University is a right one, and I should be extremely sorry to see any interference with that mutually beneficial connexion. It has been urged that students tend to attach more weight to University work than professional training. This is quite a natural mistake for the young and enthusiastic student to make, and would be made as between study and teaching-efficiency even if there were no University classes. It is our business to correct that wrong point of view even though we find that in the majority of cases the best teaching is done by those most eager over their University studies. Some simplification of the present Teachers' Certificate Regulations would, I feel assured, tend to counteract the undue weight now attached to purely literary ability.

Teaching Theory and Practice.—In the matter of teaching-practice the rival claims of theory and practice require very judicious balancing. Undoubtedly from outside the demands are all