

1883.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION.

WELLINGTON COLLEGE AND WELLINGTON GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL (CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO).

[In Continuation of E.—8, 1883.]

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

No. 1.

The CHAIRMAN of the BOARD of GOVERNORS to the Hon. the MINISTER of EDUCATION.

SIR,—

Wellington College, Wellington, 16th May, 1882.

The Governors of the Wellington College have the honour to report, for the information of the Government, that at the beginning of last year, finding that from various causes the attendance of scholars had very considerably fallen off, they determined upon a thorough reorganization of the teaching staff, and therefore gave notice to the Principal and other officers that their services would be dispensed with on the 30th June last. Applications were invited for a headmaster, and the choice fell upon Mr. J. Mackay, then assistant-master of Nelson College, who entered upon his duties on the 1st July. At that time the number of scholars was but 58, including 7 boarders. The number now on the roll is 145, of whom 50 are boarders, a number exceeding by 15 the largest number ever on the roll; and, as the headmaster has received applications for admission of other scholars, both as day-boys and as boarders, it is anticipated that the numbers will further increase.

As will be seen by a report from the headmaster, attached hereto, the accommodation in the present building for the increased and increasing attendance of scholars is now inadequate, and it has become the duty of the Board of Governors to endeavour to provide additions to the school buildings. The Board, having no available funds with which to make these necessary additions, are compelled to appeal to the Government to assist them; and they trust that what has been done for other cities may be likewise done for Wellington, and funds provided, so that the College may be placed in a position to carry on its work effectively.

With the increased number of scholars the Governors will be able to meet the ordinary expenses of the institution; but the interest which they have to pay upon £5,000 borrowed for the existing buildings, and for which they are compelled to pay interest after the rate of 10 per cent. per annum for the next two years, is a great drag upon their funds. Besides the reserves in the City of Wellington, the institution has two blocks of land, one in the Rangitumau, consisting of 5,150 acres, and the other at Paraekaretu, comprising 4,070 acres; but, as there are no roads to either of them, they are at present unavailable for either letting or selling.

From the foregoing the Government will see that the Governors have carried out what they undertook at previous interviews to do, namely, to place the institution upon such a basis as to make it unnecessary for them to appeal so constantly for help to meet current expenditure; but at the same time the very effect of the improved organization has been to increase the attendance at the school to such an extent that it is impossible for the Governors to carry out their trust properly without additional buildings. What is required is a new wing to correspond with the one already erected, and this, with the necessary furniture and appliances, will require a sum of £5,000.

The Governors would further bring under the notice of the Government that Wellington is behind other cities in not having any institution for affording higher education to girls. In 1878 an Act was passed with the intention of enabling the Governors of the College to establish a girls' high school, and under the provisions of that Act certain lands—namely, 2,974 acres in the Mangaone Block—were set apart and vested in the Governors for that purpose. But these lands are so situated that many years will elapse before they can produce any revenue; and, though the Governors were authorized by the said Act to borrow moneys upon the security of these lands, yet the Act provided that the maximum of interest paid should be 7 per cent., and that in any mortgage given there should be no power of sale. The Governors, therefore, have been precluded from taking advantage of the power given to them, and have up to the present time been unable to do anything towards the establishment of a girls' high school. They did endeavour to meet the want of such an institution by having classes for girls at the College, but it was found that the staff could not manage such classes in addition to the other work of the College, and so they were discontinued.

I have, &c.,

A. DE B. BRANDON,

Chairman of the Board of Governors.

The Hon. the Minister of Education.