

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION: TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

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

No. 1.

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

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

THE question of training-colleges for teachers was one of the most important questions referred last year to the Select Committee on Education, and their report, reprinted for convenient reference in an Appendix to this report (E.-1E), marks an important epoch in the history of the training of teachers in the colony. The principal points of that report, which has been adopted by the Government as the basis of action, were—first, that a training-college for teachers should be established at each of the four principal centres of the colony, viz., at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, being the University centres; secondly, that in order to avoid the expense of duplicating instruction in subjects which are taught at the University colleges, and to secure for teachers a greater breadth of view, the training of teachers in the literary and scientific work should as far as possible be provided by the University colleges; thirdly, that a two-years' course should be aimed at. Grants required to carry out the scheme were voted by Parliament last session. A circular setting forth provisionally for the present year the main features of the scheme and the conditions on which the grants would be given was issued by the Department in February, 1904; the two existing colleges at Christchurch and Dunedin have been reorganized in accordance therewith, the staffs have been strengthened, and their work is gradually being brought into line with the ideas set forth in the report of the Parliamentary Committee and in the circular referred to. These two colleges are thus ready to supply the wants of pupil-teachers and other qualified candidates for the profession in North and South Canterbury, Otago, and Southland, although, in common with the other training-colleges, they will be open to receive students from any part of the colony who intend to become teachers in either primary or secondary schools. Arrangements are now under consideration for the establishment of the two other colleges recommended, so that before long it may be hoped that the provision for the training of our future teachers may be regarded as fairly complete.

The vote for the instruction of teachers in the subjects of handwork recognised in "school-classes" under the Manual and Technical Instruction Acts was continued last year, and the grants made out of it to Boards seem to have been on the whole wisely expended. At several centres winter and summer schools for teachers have been held, with, it is believed, a fair amount of success in increasing enthusiasm and in spreading a knowledge of new methods. Probably the training-colleges will be able, when they get into working-order, to do something for the teachers now in schools as well as for those who are about to enter the profession by allowing them to attend for shorter or longer periods as may be found possible and expedient.