

II. EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF PRINCIPALS OF TRAINING COLLEGES.

AUCKLAND.

I HAVE the honour to submit my report for the year 1925.

The organization for 1925 was practically the same as that for the preceding year, the annexe being used again exclusively for the women students, who worked part time there, part time at Wellesley Street. As before, we have been badly overcrowded, and some of the work has been carried on with difficulty. Under these conditions it has not been possible to develop work on the "project" system at all systematically, although some good work has been done on this plan in history. The year has been notable for exceptionally good work in physical training, a higher standard having been reached than ever before, particularly on the men's side. It has been gratifying to hear from the physical instructors, who visit the primary schools throughout the district, that the good work being done in College is making itself felt throughout the country as our students go out to take up their positions as teachers.

A distinct advance has been made this year in the study of nature. Weekly rambles have contributed to this result, and students are coming to find a deep interest in a subject that is often regarded only in a formal way. Next year we shall have an additional lecturer, who will be able to give considerable time to this important work. If we are so fortunate as to get a man capable of arousing and maintaining enthusiasm in nature-study the good work of this year will be carried further forward.

A great deal of work has been done in general science and physiography. Some modification of this will be necessary in the future in order that due attention may be paid to school gardening when the opportunity is at hand for the practical side of the work. What I reported last year in regard to the poor equipment of some students is true also for science in 1925. These find it difficult to pursue a course well within the scope of others.

It is, I think, a matter for serious consideration that so few of our students are availing themselves of the opportunity of taking a science course at the University College. The same applies to mathematics. As a good knowledge of these subjects is essential for teachers in district high schools, it is very desirable that a number should be making preparation for their future work by improving their qualifications with a University course. It is not difficult to find the cause of this weakness. The University courses in science require much more time from the students than do subjects like history, economics, and education, and attendance at laboratories is required at set hours, which are often inconvenient. As any University course in conjunction with a training-college course places on a student a heavy burden it is natural that students should avoid making it heavier than the regulations require, so they tend to avoid the sciences and mathematics and to select those subjects in which they are more hopeful of immediate success. The remedy lies, I think, in some specializing in the training for district high school and secondary work, with certain definite requirements insisted upon as to the balance of subjects selected for a course. This, together with a third year for the course, would easily effect the change desirable. As Principal it is one of my duties to approve of the subjects selected for University study by each student, and so I may be regarded as responsible for the position that is arising. I have no wish to shirk the responsibility, but I do not feel justified in disregarding the awkward conditions which lead students to decide upon a course that is often, in my opinion, too narrow for their best development.

Apart from this limitation, the University work of the year has been highly gratifying. Of the fifteen premiums awarded by the University College five came to our students, the subjects being education, history, philosophy, economics, and geology. It is gratifying to find the students of our College taking a prominent place in the University.

To return to our College work, it is a pleasure to report on the good work done in English this year. The lecturer in this subject is showing fine power of developing appreciation of literature, and much good work has been done in this direction among our second-year students. The good effect should be far-reaching.

For a second year we are indebted to Mr. D. B. Wallace for his voluntary services in conducting classes in Maori pronunciation.

In drawing there is little doubt the students are gaining power. There is more confidence, more willingness to essay the difficult and to apply the art in varied directions. In the reports received from critic teachers on the work done by the students attached to their classes it has been very encouraging to me to read of the use students are making of their blackboard drawing in lessons in various subjects. This is also true of the handwork, where the aim has not been limited to development of skill in handling various materials, but has definitely given direction to the application of handwork in many ways.

The improvement in practical teaching noted last year has been well maintained this year. Nothing could be more gratifying than the accumulating evidence from critic teachers that this important phase of College work is stronger than ever. From the outset it has been our main objective. The steady maintenance and advancement of the standard of this work reflects very favourably on our system, which pivots round model or observation lessons given in College to classes from the Normal School by six members of the staff. This year the work has been shared by the First Assistant and Headmaster of the Normal School, the Supervisor of students' teaching, the Lecturer on the teaching of infants, the Vice-Principal, and the Principal. These lessons have followed on lectures or class discussions on method, and themselves have been followed by discussions as to how far the lessons