

Health, 2 hours a week; Modern Languages, 2 hours a week; Singing, 2 hours a week; Drawing 2 hours a week; Drill, 1 hour a week.

VII. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRACTICE IN TEACHING.—(1.) The professional students and teachers shall be sent in suitable detachments to the schools approved by the Board as practising schools, care being taken that each student shall on an average spend not less than one-fifth of his time in the actual practice of teaching. (2.) The stay of the students in the practising schools shall be one week at a time. During this period they shall work as pupil-teachers, taking their fair share of the teaching, discipline, and organization, and acting under the immediate direction of the head teachers of the schools and the supervision of the Normal Master, who shall, whenever practicable, visit the schools, and exercise, through the head teachers, a general control over the work of the students. (3.) Weekly criticism lessons shall be given by the students in turn to classes brought for that purpose into the normal lecture-room; and, in order to secure greater unity of purpose and plan between the Normal Master and the head teachers of the practising schools, the latter shall be invited to attend the said lessons and to take part in any discussion which may arise out of them. (4.) During the first year of their studentship they shall be exercised chiefly in class-teaching and discipline; and, when expert in this, they shall have opportunities afforded them of school organization and control. (5.) The master of the practising school will report weekly to the Normal Master, in a book and according to a form provided for the purpose, on each student's regularity, punctuality, and efficiency as a teacher and disciplinarian. These reports shall be copied into another book week by week, to form a continuous record of the student's progress, for future reference. (6.) Any student showing inaptitude or lack of interest in the work shall be reported to the Board as unfit for the office of a teacher. (7.) The Thorndon Public School, Murphy Street, shall be the chief practising school attached to the Normal Training School. Special arrangements shall be made for students' practice in infant-school and country-school work.

NORTH CANTERBURY.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT.

SIR,—

Normal School, Christchurch, 17th March, 1880.

I have the honor to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1880.

During the year the principal part of the work of training the students has necessarily fallen upon Messrs. Watkins and Newton, who have performed their several duties to my entire satisfaction. Indeed, I cannot too highly commend their zeal, energy, and earnest endeavour to carry out the work that has been intrusted to them. They have also rendered valuable assistance in the practising school.

The number of students attending the training department at the end of the session was 5 males and 19 females, making a total of 24. At the beginning of the session the numbers were greater, being 4 males and 30 females; but as the majority of those who successfully passed the examination for certificates in March took appointments in schools under the Board's control, and only a few were admitted during the year, the number in attendance at the close of the session was smaller than at the beginning. Those who attended have generally endeavoured to perform their duties; but, as some students had been admitted without possessing the necessary qualifications, the work performed has not been so extensive as the opportunities afforded might have led one to expect. However, the higher examination now required of all entrants will prevent any one from joining the classes who will not be able to take full advantage of the instruction imparted.

Until the present session, one important branch of female education has been entirely neglected among the female students. I refer to needlework. By an arrangement between Mrs. Patterson and myself, this subject has received that attention which its importance demands; and it is to be hoped that some permanent plan will be adopted whereby every female student will go forth from the institution with a thorough knowledge of all the branches of a subject of such importance in our elementary schools. Our female teachers should be perfectly acquainted with darning, mending, and knitting, that the same may be taught in the schools in which they labour. This the Education Act demands, and this knowledge all training schools should be able to supply. Indeed, I am of opinion that needlework should be a subject, failure in which should preclude any lady from being appointed to a situation in our colonial schools.

The method adopted in England for practice in teaching has prevailed here. On my recommendation, the Board has adopted a modification of the system pursued in the normal schools of Scotland, and the change has, in my opinion, proved very beneficial. Instead of the students being sent in sections into the practising school, to teach for a whole week at a time without receiving any instruction from the tutors or myself, special hours of the day have been appointed, when all students must take part in school work, in addition to the criticism lessons given on the forenoon of every Friday. This secures continuity of study for all, and the instruction given may fairly be expected to be more successful. The plan adopted in England has been productive of good results; but it must be remembered that the majority of those who enter normal schools there have served five years as pupil-teachers, and that during that long period they have been carefully trained by experienced teachers in those subjects which they will afterwards be called upon to teach, and that they possess a fair knowledge of the art of imparting instruction. In New Zealand, on the other hand, the reverse is the case, the greater number of our students being young persons who have not previously received any technical training or thorough grounding in the several branches of an elementary education. Instead, therefore, of the pupils being taught by such unskilful individuals, it is better that the practising school should have a full staff of experienced teachers, and that the students practise under their direction, the system followed being that recommended in the lectures on school-management delivered to them in the training department. This plan the Board has seen fit to sanction, and I feel certain that positive gain to both students and pupils will be the result; for the former will see the most approved plans of teaching, and the education of the pupils will not be intrusted to tyros in the work. The length of time devoted to practice in teaching will not be reduced, and the education of the student will not be periodically interrupted, as it necessarily must have been under the former system.