

distance or otherwise, were unable to visit the College. Regular papers were sent out in the various subjects for the E examination, and the answers criticized and returned. Although this entailed heavy labour on Mr. Gifford (the Assistant) and myself, yet I am of opinion that the gain to the teachers was considerable.

The above are the leading facts in connection with the work of the Training College during the past year; but the sudden cessation of the institution warrants me in making a few remarks on the training of teachers generally. Mr. Matthew Arnold, in a recent report on Continental schools as compared with those in England, says, "The instruction is better in the foreign popular schools than in our own, because the teachers are better trained." His indirect testimony to the importance of training is borne out by the direct evidence of every educational writer of any repute in all countries where a national educational system has become an established fact. Indeed, the real progress of national education may be traced in every case by the greater emphasis laid on the necessity for training. The principle is universally adopted, though of course the means used for giving it form vary in different parts of the world. In the majority training colleges prevail—notably in Germany and in the United States, though in some parts of the latter chairs of education are established in connection with the universities. Here in New Zealand financial exigencies have brought about the termination of the training colleges. Yet the universally recognised principle that training is necessary remains unaltered by our action. How then is this principle to be carried into practice? Some suggest that the training of the teachers should be placed in the hands of the head teachers. This method has already been tried in Germany. There training pupils used to receive private instruction from schoolmasters in whose schools they at the same time assisted as pupil-teachers. The training, however, thus provided was found to be inadequate, and as the outcome of various experiments a State system of training colleges was established. This result is probably what might have been anticipated. The training of teachers is a special department of educational work, which demands special and individual attention from those to whom it is intrusted.

It is well that we should consider the efforts made in a country like Germany to grapple with this question—nowhere has it been so thoroughly and unflinchingly studied; and we may learn from what they have tried and given up, as well as from what they have thought it right to continue. At present, however, it seems hopeless to look for the re-establishment of training colleges. What, then, can be done? I venture to suggest for the consideration of the Board that at any rate in the Province of Auckland, until happier and more prosperous days arrive, a temporary machinery for the training of our teachers may be found in—(1) the maintenance of the correspondence classes; (2) the continuation of the Saturday work. One man could do the whole of this work, with a little help on the Saturday mornings; but if papers were sent out every fortnight and criticized and annotated as they should be he would not have much spare time at his disposal during the week, for it must be borne in mind that criticism here means exact and minute discussion of the principles involved in the various papers; it would be altogether insufficient merely to mark the papers as right or wrong. I would further suggest that, in addition to the regular quarterly report, there should be furnished to the Board at the end of each year a careful statement of the work done by each teacher in connection with the classes, giving not mere marks or percentage, but a brief summary of the range and tendency of that work.

It is of course for the Board to determine how far, with their present resources, such a plan as the above may be practicable; but I trust I shall not be deemed transgressing the limits of my brief if I venture again to emphasize the importance of some such plan. But for the help and encouragement which the correspondence classes afford, the country teachers would in most cases be left to their own devices. Such a system supplies a continual incentive to work and self-culture. Terminate it, and this will be wanting, with the natural result that the teachers must deteriorate and the percentage of failures be increased.

In conclusion, I wish to bear testimony to the loyal and efficient help at all times rendered me by the Vice-Principal, Mr. Worthington, the Assistant, Mr. Gifford, and, speaking generally, by the whole College staff.

I have, &c.,

E. H. GULLIVER, M.A., Principal.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

TARANAKI.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, February, 1888.

I have the honour to transmit the report of the Education Board of the District of Taranaki for the year ending the 31st December, 1887.

THE BOARD.—At the annual election in March Mr. R. G. Bauchope, Mr. F. Bluck, and Mr. W. N. Syme were elected; and subsequently Mr. E. Olson and Mr. A. G. Adlam were elected to fill the vacancies caused by the resignation of Mr. F. Bluck and Mr. J. Wade. Mr. Kelly was re-elected Chairman. The Board then consisted of the following members—viz.: Mr. T. Kelly (Chairman), Mrs. Richmond, Miss Heywood, Mr. J. Andrews, Mr. A. G. Adlam, Mr. R. G. Bauchope, Mr. H. Faull, Mr. E. Olson, and Mr. W. N. Syme. The Board held twenty-four ordinary and three special meetings during the year. The following are the attendances of each member: Mr. Kelly, 24; Mrs. Richmond, 22; Miss Heywood, 27; Mr. Andrews, 25; Mr. Bauchope, 26; Mr. Faull, 27; Mr. Syme, 16; Mr. Olson, 13; and Mr. Adlam, 9.

SCHOOLS.—The number of schools open during the year is the same as last year—viz., thirty-five; and the average attendance of children at each school, leaving out the Central School at New Plymouth, was for the year forty-two. Those who make themselves acquainted with the education system of the colony will readily understand from this that it is impossible for this district to compete with districts where the schools are large in obtaining the best teachers or in producing equal