

APPENDIX C.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF PRINCIPALS OF TRAINING COLLEGES.

AUCKLAND.

Visits to Schools.—During the year members of the College staff have paid weekly visits to city and suburban schools, with consequent profit to the College and happy results to the schools. In music, speech-training, art and handwork, physical education, remedial education, science, and geography, much valuable work has been done by a close co-operation between the practising schools and the College staff. The work in the two normal schools has been of high standard, the parallel classes and the model country schools being keenly sought by students, who realize that in these schools the real problem of organization is being skilfully solved by efficient teachers.

Third-year Students.—I feel that splendid work has been achieved by these third-year students, who have fully justified their extra year's training, and if they are appointed to positions where their gifts and special training can be used the Service will profit.

Post-primary Training.—During 1930 we have made a distinct advance in the training for post-primary students, a comprehensive programme being planned and carried out under the guidance of Dr. Wallace. Valuable help in this work has been given by the Seddon Memorial Technical College, by Kowhai Junior High School, and by the main normal school, where Dr. Wallace has taught two practising groups in Form II for French. I am looking forward to the assistance in 1931 of the local secondary schools, without whose co-operation we cannot round off the practical training of the important group of students who are specializing for post-primary work in the final year at college.

Physical Work.—Excellent work has been done during the year in physical education. In swimming and life-saving the results constitute a record for the College. All the outgoing men can swim, and all but ten of the outgoing women. While considering the question of physical work in college, I have to thank the School Medical Officers for their interest in the health of the students. The co-operation of these officers has been extremely valuable and has had a beneficial effect upon the health of the students.

Improvements.—Fine improvements have been made this year to the College grounds. Basketball-courts have been constructed, tennis-courts laid down, and the playing-areas have been extended. The approach to the College, with its close-cropped lawns, reveals a dignity that will not be without beneficial result upon the students.

WELLINGTON.

To increase the possibilities of teaching practice in country schools, the Thorndon Main School, lower division, was organized into three separate departments, containing all classes from P to Standard II. This arrangement has improved considerably this important part of student-training, and during the year practically all senior students had experience of this type of work. Since a large number of young teachers obtain at first a sole-charge school appointment or else a position in a two-teacher school, it has been our endeavour to make more of this kind of training.

The division "C" students and a few others from division "A" well advanced in their degree courses have again been given teaching practice in the secondary schools of Wellington. This aspect of training is extremely valuable, since some of these students will receive their first appointments in secondary schools.

Very full reports were received from the various Principals, and criticisms and suggestions from them were made available to the students. The College is indebted to the heads and staff of the schools concerned for this evidence of co-operation and interest in the preparation of the young teacher.

A new scheme of observational work was tried out at the Kelburn Normal School. The custom in training colleges for years has been to organize so-called demonstration lessons in large assembly-halls, where a class of pupils was taught by a demonstration teacher and a number of young teachers sat around to see how this set lesson progressed. This method does not appeal to us. It seems to run contrary to a very fundamental educational principle, that school-teaching is fundamentally a study of a child developing, and not the study of these so-called set lessons. This type of demonstration is too artificial, and very often leads to the just criticism that teachers may give such well-staged lessons with apparent wonderful success, but could not carry them out under the ordinary conditions of the class-room.

To replace such demonstrations, we have organized a scheme of observational lessons in all the standards of the Kelburn School, where at certain set times sections of students file into the class-rooms, sit down on the special seats recently provided for this purpose, and observe for a period a lesson given by the class-room teacher. To give the student a right introduction to the lesson, the Kelburn weekly scheme is typed for every student, the syllabus of work for the standard studied, the lecturer in the subject from the College is present at the lesson, and a subsequent method lecture deals with the general principles involved in the particular lesson observed. The scheme has tended to bring into closer contact the practice in the school and the theory taught in the College. The staff of the Kelburn Normal School deserves the highest commendation for the spirit in which the work has been done, and the excellent results obtained.