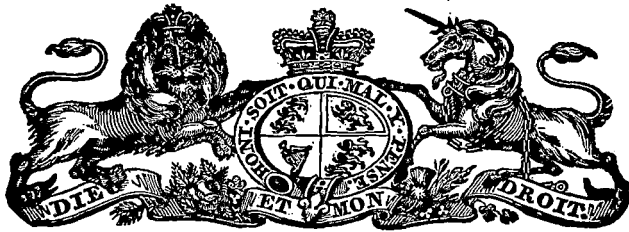


(No. 7.)



1875.

SESSION II.

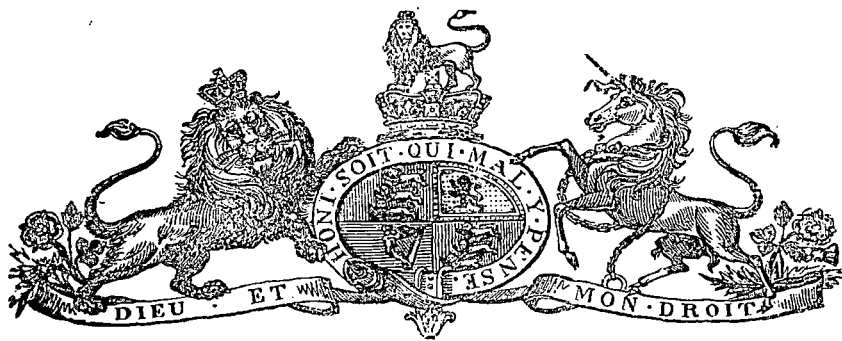
TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

TRAINING SCHOOL.

MEMORANDUM BY CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

Laid upon the Table by the Attorney-General, and ordered by the House to be printed, November 1, 1875.



TRAINING SCHOOLS.

Board of Education, Hobart Town, 12th July, 1875.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to transmit for your information the annexed extract from the Minutes of the Board of Education, dated 24th June, 1875; also copies of the Report of the Chief Inspector of Schools therein referred to regarding the question of the establishment of a Training School at Hobart Town.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

HENRY BUTLER, *Chairman.*

“Training School.—The Report of the Chief Inspector of Schools on the practicability of establishing a Training School for Teachers at Hobart Town was considered.

“The Board agreed that while the advantages of such an institution were obvious, they were of opinion that a matter involving such a large expenditure should in the first instance receive the consideration of the Executive. The papers were therefore ordered to be transmitted for the information of the Government.”

Hobart Town, May, 1875.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, in which you request me to furnish the Board with information respecting the practicability of establishing a Training School in Hobart Town.

The term “Training School” is susceptible of great variations in its meaning. If it were contemplated to establish an institution having for its special, if not sole object, the systematic training of masters and mistresses for the Public Schools on the plan adopted in England and in some of the British Colonies, it would be necessary to incur considerable expense in the erection of new buildings, the selection and maintenance of a suitable training staff, and in making provision for the support of the students during their period of training.

The cost of the necessary buildings would not be less than £5000, and of maintenance not less than £1500 a year, or thereabouts. There are other objections to this form of Training School, in the present circumstances of the country, besides those of a financial kind.

A preferable plan would be to utilise the existing buildings, with such alterations and additions as might be found necessary; to make provision therein for the operation of an ordinary elementary school upon a system which should serve as a model for the imitation of country Teachers; and to supplement this by arrangements for the systematic training of selected students, and for the instruction, on a less formal plan, of untrained country Teachers and candidates for employment.

The necessary staff would consist of a Head Master, who should be responsible for the whole of the instruction and training, under the direct supervision of the Inspector; a mistress; an infant mistress; a trained assistant qualified to take the Head Master's place as occasional teacher of the head classes; and a body of Pupil Teachers, or students in training, the number being regulated by the size and requirements of the school. The competency of all the officers for the discharge of their special duties should be thoroughly ascertained before their appointment, and only provisional arrangements made in case persons possessing the necessary qualifications should not be immediately procurable.

The above scheme supposes a concentration and improvement of the existing pupil teacher system, the defects of which are sufficiently patent, and an extension of the system of paid monitors in other schools, the best of whom would be selected, after proved aptitude for the profession, to fill the vacancies accruing from time to time in the Training School.

The cost of adapting the premises in Bathurst-street to the above-mentioned purposes need not exceed £1000. The nature and extent of the necessary additions and alterations cannot be exactly specified until all the details of the proposed scheme are settled, and before entering upon this question at all I must know what amount is likely to be available. The annual expense of maintenance would be £600 a year, or thereabouts, being less than twice the cost of some of the existing schools. The school fees—which would be on a specially arranged scale—would bring in a considerable sum, and all the principal teachers should derive a portion of their income from this source.

The country teachers admitted to the Training School should have had some previous preparation for their work, under the Inspector's direction, according to the plan described in my letter (attached) of the 3rd July, 1872, and the admission should be regarded as a privilege consequent upon merit and faithful service.

Each case would require special treatment, but the period would be short, and this branch of the work of training need not add to the annual expense of maintenance.

I have now described the objects for which a Training School is required, and have given as full an account of the means by which they may be achieved as is possible at the present stage of affairs. I am bound to add that the establishment of a Training School, or the elaboration of the Public School system in any higher form, is hardly desirable, and would certainly prove inoperative, unless accompanied or preceded by other changes including the organisation of an adequate staff of Inspectors. For many years to come the chief part of the work of training must be done by the Inspectors, if it is to be done at all. The Training School under proper management would be a most valuable auxiliary to the work of Inspectors, but can never supersede them, nor can its results be made appreciable until after the lapse of years.

The need for educational improvement is urgent, but the establishment of a Training School without the other necessary reforms, would be like the construction of half a dozen miles of a first class railway in a country altogether unprovided with roads.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

T. STEPHENS.

The Chairman Board of Education.

Hobart Town, 3rd July, 1872.

MEMO.

HAVING met with many instances of the unsatisfactory result of the appointment of unexperienced persons to the charge of Schools, I think it my duty to state, for the information of the Board, that not one in ten of those whom I report from time to time as having passed the prescribed examination is fit to take charge of a Public School without some special instruction respecting the Rules, the mode of keeping the Registers and of making Returns, the principles of Classification, and the fundamental laws of School management.

Although regular training is out of the question under present circumstances, I believe it to be possible to make a considerable improvement by requiring candidates to qualify themselves by studying the working of the Public School System before being appointed to the office of Teacher.

There is generally within a reasonable distance of the candidate's residence, or of his future School, some Public School in which more or less of the essentials of School management may be advantageously studied; and if, after selecting persons to take charge of new Schools or to fill vacancies which have occurred, the Board will refer such persons to me before allowing them to take charge, I will do my best to supply their want of experience and necessary knowledge of their business. The extra work that this will entail upon me will be more than counterbalanced by the cessation of the trouble and annoyance which I have often experienced in unteaching the errors and bad system into which newly appointed Teachers have drifted before any opportunity occurred for setting them right.

T. STEPHENS.

The Chairman Board of Education.