

EDUCATION IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

We have been favoured with a copy of the *Sidney Morning Herald* of a recent date, containing the "Second Annual Report of the Board of National Education in New South Wales," dated the 30th of July, 1850. We are happy to perceive from the Report that popular education attracts so much attention at the antipodes. The number of Schools in connection with the Board appears very small; but there is every indication of a rapid increase.—The style of the *Morning Herald* does infinite credit to the press of New South Wales.

The Report proceeds to state that

From the documents annexed, it will appear—

First—That we have now in actual operation, 25 schools, and that 47 others are in course of formation.

Second—That of the sum of £3179 13s. 11d., available for the settled districts, (consisting of the sum of £2000 voted for 1849, and £1179 13s. 11d. remaining in hand from the year preceding,) we expended during the year 1849, £2090 0s. 2d., leaving in hand at the close of the year £1089 13s. 9d.

Third—That of £1500 voted for the National Schools beyond the settled districts in the Sydney District, £126 2s. 2d. were expended during the same year, leaving in hand £1372 17s. 10d.

Fourth—That of £1500 voted for the National Schools beyond the settled districts in the Port Philip District, £83 2s. 2d. were expended during 1849, leaving a balance in hand of £1416 17s. 10d.

In reporting upon the important and comprehensive question of our success, during the past year, in carrying out the great object intrusted to us, of laying the foundation of a general system of popular education in the colony, we have to lament the continuance of the serious deficiency noticed in our Report of last year, viz.: the want of a master and mistress of the requisite qualifications for superintending our Central Model and Training School, in Front Street, Sydney. An application has been made through His Excellency the Governor, to the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, for the services of a competent master and mistress, with an offer of a salary of £300 per annum, and of £150 to be appropriated to the expense of their passage to this country. The earnest desire evinced by the neighbouring population to avail themselves of the expected school, even before we could make any arrangement for opening it, had great influence in inducing us to engage teachers temporarily, until the arrival of a master and mistress from Ireland. It was opened in April last, and is attended by upwards of three hundred children, paying the regulated fees. We do not, however, regard the school, in its present state, as the Model School, for which the building is destined; and until this feature of our system shall be satisfactorily developed, we shall regard all our operations, both in Sydney, and elsewhere, as only provisional. It has been stipulated with all the teachers hitherto appointed, that they will be subject to the test of an examination at the Model and Training School, when established, and will be required to undergo such instruction and discipline there, as may be thought proper to improve their qualifications as teachers, on the system to be ultimately matured. Notwithstanding, however, this serious discouragement, we can with confidence report that our schools are already answering the enlightened and benevolent intentions of the Legislature, and satisfying the wants of the people, to an extent fully justifying the expenditure authorised for the past, and solicited for the future.

The numerous applications which we have received for assistance, in the formation of schools, have been accompanied with the most gratifying proofs of the just appreciation of the National System of education, among all denominations throughout the great mass of the community. This favourable opinion has doubtless been greatly promoted by the general diffusion of the admirable school books published by the Board of National Education in Ireland, containing as they do, in nearly every page, some palpable contradiction of the misrepresentations which have been most sedulously circulated, both here and in Ireland, attributing an irreligious spirit and tendency to the teaching afforded in these schools. In proportion to the misrepresentations, have been the surprise and reaction when the perusal of the school books, and a candid explanation of the system,

have opened the eyes of the public to the truth of the case; and hence we have reason to believe that our plan of education is often most warmly appreciated in the very places in which the opposition had been the strongest.

The views entertained by us with regard to the liberty of special religious instruction at the schools afforded to Clergymen who are willing to attend the children of their own denominations for this purpose, will further appear from two circulars, which have been lately framed by us, the one addressed to the Parents, the other to the Clergymen of the various denominations in each school district.

We are anxious, as far as it depends upon ourselves, fairly to carry out the main principle of our system, viz.: That our schools be open alike to Christians of all denominations, and that, accordingly, no child be required to be present at any religious instruction or exercises to which his parents or guardians object; that such religious instruction be, nevertheless, diffused through the general class books, so far as is compatible with the exclusion of those controversies which would violate the foregoing rule; and that opportunity be also, as far as practicable, afforded to all children to receive separately, at particular periods, such further religious instruction as their parents or guardians may provide for them. We earnestly trust that in progress of time, sufficient candour, forbearance, and charity, will be found among the various denominations of Christians, and their respective clergy, to incline them to avail themselves harmoniously of these impartial regulations.

MUNICIPAL ORDERS FOR THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.—The Municipal Council of Peterboro', which so nobly seconded our efforts last year to diffuse valuable educational information among the people of U. C., has again renewed its order for a copy of this *Journal* to be sent to each school section and school officer in that county for the year 1851. The effect of the circulation of the *Journal of Education* upon the educational interests of the schools is thus stated by the County Clerk, WALTER SHERIDAN, Esq., in his letter transmitting the request of the Municipal Council:—

"The *Journal of Education*, which circulated amongst the school sections of this county during the last year, has had the happy effect of producing the most favourable impression on the minds of all who have had an opportunity of reading it. The best proof I can give you of the facts above stated is, that you will please forward to the address of THOMAS BENSON, Esq., Superintendent of Schools for the County, one hundred copies in monthly numbers of the *Journal* for 1851—postage prepaid (same as last year).

"The Council has also placed at the disposal of the County Superintendent the sum of £20, to be distributed in rewards wherever he may see it expedient and appropriate to grant them."

The County of Carleton has also acted with much wisdom in providing each of the School sections, Town Reeves, and Municipal school officers with a copy of the *Journal of Education* for the current year. We may add that, in like manner, orders for the 4th volume of the *Journal* have been received from the Township Municipalities of North Eimsley, Woolwich and Osnabruck, and from the Boards of School Trustees in the Towns of Port Hope and Prescott, and the City of Kingston.

In reference to the importance of the *Journal of Education* as the exclusive medium of communicating the notices of the various County Boards of Public Instruction, &c., in addition to the official notices from the Educational Department, the Committee of the York County Council at its recent meeting remarks as follows:—
"Your Committee taking into due consideration the very heavy amount of expenses contingent upon the proceedings of the County Board of Instruction, with a view to conduce to their diminution on future occasions, would suggest the propriety of considering whether an equal or greater degree of publicity of the notices of the County Board might not be attained at a much less outlay of the County funds, were the same printed by contract and the notices forwarded to the Clerks of the several Townships in the County, to be by them sent to the Trustees of the various school sections therein, by them to be affixed in conspicuous places in each of the said sections; and moreover, instead of inserting the same at advertising prices in the newspapers, to confine the same to the columns of the *Journal of Education*, which is a free and willing medium for such notices."