
APPENDICES.

—

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES.

EVIDENCE

Taken before the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the working of the Public School Act, and into the statements made by the Superintendent of Education in his Report of 1879, respecting the conduct of the teachers and others.—Committee Messrs. Humphreys, Mara, Ferguson, Helgesen and Vernon.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20TH, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10 a.m. Present—Messrs. Humphreys, Vernon, Ferguson, Helgesen, and Mara.

Mr. Vernon was appointed Chairman, Mr. Mara Secretary.

MR. MCKENZIE, Superintendent of Education, was then requested to appear before the Committee.

Referring to your Report, will you state the particular quarter that you have experienced such determined opposition from; its character; name of parties offending. *Ans.*—The *Colonist* newspaper, and from one of the trustees (Mr. Thomas Nicholson) in a sort of underhand way.

Does this grievance or opposition include trustees or teachers, or both? *Ans.*—It refers to one trustee and the teachers.

If you mean certain teachers only, why this general complaint? *Ans.*—I intended to do it more kindly than single out individuals.

Give the names of offending teachers and in what way they have offended. *Ans.*—Mr. Kaye, Mrs. Hayward, Mrs. Caldwell, Mr. Pleace; and in confirmation I will call for a letter they addressed to the Provincial Secretary. (See Appendix A.)

Are these the only teachers that have given offence to you? *Ans.*—No, there are others. I will mention Mr. McMillan (Chilliwhack), Mr. Phinney (Barkerville), and Mrs. Fisher (Metchosin.)

Do you exonerate the remaining teachers in the Province? *Ans.*—I don't care to say anything more about the others. There are others; I do not wish to mention their names.

Did any other trustee treat you in the same way? *Ans.*—The trustees are universally on my side, and approve of what I have done, with the exception of Mr. Nicholson.

What do you mean by "an under-hand way"? *Ans.*—Going about talking to people; saying that the Superintendent should be examined; running me down. He has gone about trying to get people to write against me in the public papers.

What was the nature of the attack in the *Colonist*? *Ans.*—My school report was attacked; its grammar was criticised; its facts were disputed, and its suggestions were weighed in the balances and found wanting. The intention was to ridicule me.

What irregularities existed at the time you made out your report? *Ans.*—In the girls' school, Victoria, regulation 2 was not attended to, also regulation 5; regulation 6 (sub-regulation 4), was very loosely observed; sub-regulation 5 loosely kept, or not kept at all; sub-regulation 12 in the boys' school was not complied with, corporal punishment was administered wholesale, and in some cases no record kept.

Have you returned any reports to the teachers and requested them to make the necessary correction, and, if so, the nature of omission? *Ans.*—In one case I had to send back a return where the teacher reported being absent one day, when she was absent two days. The teacher is Mrs. Hayward.

Have any other teachers absented themselves in a similar manner? *Ans.*—I can't say generally. In Mrs. Hayward's case I found it out accidentally. One teacher at Nicola absented himself for 10 days and reported himself not absent. His explanation was that he had been used to doing it. I found this out accidentally. The school was not closed. He got another person to take his place. I think the trustees gave permission.

Do you get the reports regularly? *Ans.*—They are sent, but irregularly.

Have you ever received any lack of proper respect or deficiency in courtesy due to you as Superintendent of Education? *Ans.*—Never from the teachers personally, but I have received impertinent letters.

Will you produce the letters? One produced from D. M. McMillan, marked B; one from Mr. Kaye, marked C.

What do you consider are the necessary qualifications for a first-class teacher, and should he be examined? *Ans.*—I don't think there is any necessity of a teacher having taken the degree of B. A. being examined. In Ontario a B. A. is required to pass an examination to teach a common school, but not a high school. This does not apply to New Brunswick.

Would you recommend any changes or alterations in the regulations? *Ans.*—No; I should like to see some regulations about salaries. (*Vide* page 167 of my report.)

What are the short-comings of Mrs. Fisher? *Ans.*—None as a teacher. She misrepresented the way in which I conducted the examination of her school. She called my visiting her school unexpectedly an act of impertinence.

Did she say that to you? *Ans.*—No; she spoke of it in town to several teachers.

Is it customary to visit schools unexpectedly? *Ans.*—Yes; it is the proper way.

Are the scholars examined by you on such occasions? *Ans.*—Sometimes.

Is the time allowed for answering specified during such examination? *Ans.*—Yes.

Did you allow the full time in Metchosin School? *Ans.*—Yes, invariably.

Do you make a report on the efficiency of the school from such examinations. *Ans.*—My report is made up from the result of these visits, the monthly returns, and the annual reports of trustees.

APRIL 21st, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10 a.m. The members all present.

Mr. McKenzie asked to make the following statement:—The words in the School Report "Not less from teachers than from others," mean, in common English, no more than some teachers, and they certainly do not mean all teachers.

How many times have you visited Victoria Schools during the year? *Ans.*—I made 25 visits of half and whole days.

How long a time on an average did your visit extend? *Ans.*—Half a day.

What useful service was rendered by such visits? *Ans.*—My seeing the school, numbers attending, order, management, &c. It makes teachers punctual.

Is it not possible that a number of children may be absent, at the time of unexpected visits to the schools in the country districts, from sickness or stormy weather, or other causes? *Ans.*—Yes; certainly. But it is difficult to announce my visits beforehand.

Do you not think when an examination is to be held by you in any school, due notice should be given to the teacher? *Ans.*—Yes, I think so.

Would you then consider a report prepared from the result of such an unexpected examination, a fair criterion of the general progress of the scholars and of the efficiency of the teacher? *Ans.*—I do.

Would not the fact of the teacher being aware that you might visit them at any moment and hold such an examination, serve rather as a check upon them than be of much practical value towards affording correct information of the progress of the scholars? *Ans.*—It answers as a check upon the teacher, and is a pretty good test of the general state and efficiency of the school.

Have you given any instructions to teachers with regard to filling up reports so as to prevent complaints of inaccuracies? *Ans.*—The forms are made out in an intelligible shape. They require no explanation to a person who understands his business.

Have any refused to comply with your instructions? *Ans.*—No; I never charged anyone with refusing to fill them out. I said they manifested a "sublime indifference" whether they were filled out or not. Mr. McKenzie then handed in the following reports which were incorrectly filled, viz.:—Barkerville, Salt Spring Island, Wellington, Metchosin, Victoria (boys), Victoria (girls), Lake, Stanley, Cheam, North Saanich (1), North Saanich (2), Salt Spring (2).

Have complaints been made previously of a similar character to those made in your report by your predecessor? *Ans.*—Yes they have. In the year 1874, *vide* pages 8, 12, 14, 16, 17. 1875, pages 7, 8, 12, 13, 20, 24, 25, 30. 1876, pages 88, 89, 96, 100, 101, 106, 108, 109, 110. 1877, pages 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23. 1878, pages 189, 191.

Is it stated in any of the reports referred to that determined opposition was experienced by the Superintendent from the teachers with respect to any attempts to alter or improve the school system? *Ans.*—No; not that I am aware of.

Do you know of any opposition offered to your predecessor by school teachers? *Ans.*—Yes, I do.

What was the nature of the opposition? *Ans.*—I can't exactly state how. Howling, crying, and hounding at the Superintendent.

By whom? *Ans.*—Mr. Kaye.

Do you consider the press has no right to criticise your report? *Ans.*—They have a perfect right to criticise but not to falsify.

What has been falsified? *Ans.*—The *Colonist* stated I wanted to abolish the High School, or charge a fee, and misquoted my report.

How were you misquoted? *Ans.*—The *Colonist* stated I wished to deprive teachers of their salaries during the holidays.

When you say, on page 162, Report of 1879, that certificates have not been altogether impartially granted by the late Board of Education, and that the revocation of these certificates is imperatively called for; do you mean all the certificates granted by the Board? *Ans.*—Yes.

In your letter to the Provincial Secretary you state that "the number of applicants for situations in schools is also not sufficiently great to allow of the weeding out of the less competent teachers to the intent of supplying their places by those better qualified." What reason do you assign for the small number of applicants for situations in schools? *Ans.*—The lowness of salaries in certain cases.

APRIL 22ND, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10 a.m. All the members present.

Mr. McKenzie submitted the following statement in confirmation of his report. (See Appendix D.)

Mr. McKenzie also stated that in the reports for the month of October, 1879, the Principal of the Girls' School sent the average of her own division and that of each of the teachers under her, acting under direction, in an improper form, inasmuch as each of these averages contained between twenty and thirty figures, and that it was done as an act of impertinence.

Do you mean the average daily attendance? *Ans.*—Yes.

What do you mean by containing twenty and thirty figures? *Ans.*—In the decimal part—i.e., after the integer.

You mean that the decimal average of attendance is worked out to twenty and thirty places of decimals? *Ans.*—Yes.

Do the rules and regulations require the teacher to work out the average to any number of decimals? *Ans.*—No.

Then why do you say it was done as an act of impertinence? *Ans.*—Because there was no necessity for putting down more than two or three figures.

What steps did you take to correct that impertinence? *Ans.*—I wrote the following letter, and received the answer annexed. (See Appendix E.)

Why did you go to the trouble of working out the average to thirty places of decimals when two or three would have been sufficient? *Ans.*—It was no trouble to me to work it out; and to see if the impertinence had been well carried out.

Was there any other cause of complaint against the teacher with regard to that report? *Ans.*—No.

Do you not think it would have been more becoming in your position as Superintendent to have written to the teacher and requested her in the future to only work out the average attendance to one or two decimals? *Ans.*—I thought it best to write in the way I did. The teacher never repeated the impertinence.

Have the trustees of any school signified their dissatisfaction with any teacher during the past twelve months, or has any teacher been dismissed? *Ans.*—The trustees have signified their dissatisfaction with their teacher by dismissing them in the following instances: The Nanaimo trustees dismissed two lady teachers; all the teachers in Victoria have received notice of dismissal; the same at New Westminster; the former teacher of Salt Spring resigned by request, also others.

Do you consider the monthly reports to parents beneficial to the system of education? *Ans.*—Extremely so.

Explain how. *Ans.*—It keeps the parents informed as to the progress, attendance, punctuality and good conduct of their children.

How long will it take a teacher to examine a class? *Ans.*—From twenty to thirty minutes.

(Signed)

C. C. McKENZIE.

APRIL 23RD, 1880

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10 a.m. Present—Mr. Vernon, chairman, and Messrs. Helgesen, Ferguson and Mara.

Examination of Mr. McKenzie continued.

Have you advertised during the last six months in Ontario for teachers? *Ans.*—No, I did not, but I believe the New Westminster trustees have.

Do you approve of that course? *Ans.*—I do not, but I have no power to prevent it.

Do you consider you have done all in your power to promote the educational interests of the Province? *Ans.*—I have.

In what manner? *Ans.*—The improvements are embodied in Appendices A. B. C. D., and the changes in the School Act as set forth in page 163, of my report of 1879.

MR. THOMAS NICHOLSON.—I am a Member of the Victoria Board of School Trustees.

Have the rules and regulations of the Victoria Schools been carried out during the past year? *Ans.*—Yes, as far as I know.

Has the Superintendent done his duty? *Ans.*—I think not as a Superintendent should.

Wherein has he failed? *Ans.*—He has failed when in visiting schools to point out any defects to the teachers in their method of teaching, and school management.

Are there any defects in the method of teaching and of school management? *Ans.*—Yes, I think so.

Will you point out the defects? *Ans.*—Teachers have to give quite a large proportion of their time in endeavoring to record the daily recitations of the pupils of the different classes, as well as their standing. This necessarily takes away their attention,—attention that should be concentrated on their classes. It reduces the teachers to mere hearers of lessons. All the best authorities agree that conversational methods should be used in teaching young children, as almost every part of the text book requires explanation and illustration.

Name some of these authorities? *Ans.*—The ex-Principal of the Normal School, Toronto; the Superintendents of the schools in California; Herbert Spencer Wickersham, author of several works on education; Page and Northing. I consider that a portion of the monthly reports sent to parents are necessarily incorrect. In hearing a class recite on any subject, some will get easy questions and some more difficult ones. The same in spelling and other subjects. The Victoria School is supposed to be a graded school. Many of the teachers have never taught in a graded school before. In order to have a uniform system carried out, it will be necessary for the Superintendent to instruct the teachers in the manner, and illustrate the method of teaching. It should be the duty of the Superintendent to call the teachers together from time to time to instruct them in their duties, to ascertain the wants of the Schools, to discuss school matters, such as discipline, management, and method of teaching.

Is due courtesy paid to the Superintendent by the teachers? *Ans.*—Yes, I think so.

Does the Superintendent pay proper respect to the teachers? *Ans.*—Several of the teachers inform me that he does not.

Can you give any instances? *Ans.*—I noticed on one occasion that his manner was rough and brusque. The teachers remonstrated about the difficulty of carrying out some rules, when he told them if they didn't like it he could get others to fill their places.

Do you know if any teacher has written letters of a malicious character to the press against the Superintendent of Education? *Ans.*—I do not.

Have you written any letters yourself to the press against the Superintendent? *Ans.*—I have not. I deny having placed any obstacles or obstruction in the way of the Superintendent, or having tried to get people to write against him in the press. I have always endeavoured to assist him in every way in promoting the interests of the schools. I have differed from him, and have expressed to him and others how I differed from him.

(Signed)

THOMAS NICHOLSON.

Mr. Nicholson was requested to submit in writing any suggestions that he thinks will advance the interests of education in the Province.

MR. JAMES FELL.—I am a Member of the Victoria School Board.

Have the rules and regulations of the Victoria Schools been carried out? *Ans.*—They have not.

Have you read the Superintendent's Report for 1879, and, if so, do you think it is substantially correct as regards the Victoria School? *Ans.*—It is; and I believe that what takes place in Victoria is a fair index of what takes place in the whole Province.

Do you think Mr. McKenzie is a competent and efficient officer? *Ans.*—I think he is. I don't think a better officer can be had at the present time.

Has there been any lack of courtesy on the part of the Superintendent to the trustees? *Ans.*—None whatever. There is the greatest harmony between the Superintendent and the trustees.

Has there been any lack of courtesy on the part of the teachers to the Superintendent? *Ans.*—One of the teachers waited on me to see if I could get the examination put off. He spoke to me in a very contemptuous manner of the Superintendent, and told me what the other teachers said of him.

Does this bad feeling arise from personal motives, or is it against the system? *Ans.*—It is raised against the Superintendent in consequence of his attempt to carry out the School Act, and attempting to put a curb on them that was never placed on them before.

Do you think there are any defects in the method of teaching? *Ans.*—I am not in a position to judge, but as far as I know the system is a good one. The trouble is that the teachers resist what they consider additional duties imposed on them.

(Signed) JAMES FELL.

APRIL 26TH, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10.15. Present—Messrs. Vernon, Helgesen, Ferguson, and Mara.

THOMAS SHOTBOLT, a Member of the Victoria Board of School Trustees, appeared before the Committee.

Do you think the rules and regulations have been carried out? *Ans.*—I think they have. There may have been some trifling inaccuracies in the monthly reports to parents.

Do you think the present Superintendent a competent officer? *Ans.*—I think with a little better management he might make a good Superintendent.

Have you read his Report for 1879; if so do you think it is substantially correct? *Ans.*—I don't think any opposition has been placed in the Superintendent's way by the teachers. I think his management has not been good. Had he adopted a different method and explained what he wanted to the teachers he would have got along better.

Where are defects? *Ans.*—I think Mr. McKenzie would get all the returns if he went the right way to work. He ought to explain and illustrate to the teachers what he requires. He has not assisted them in any way. He tries to carry things with too high a hand. He is wanting in tact and courtesy. I think Mr. McKenzie is a good teacher.

Do you think the Superintendent has done all he could to promote the interests of Schools? *Ans.*—I believe he thinks he has done so, and has tried to do his duty.

Has there been any lack of respect shown by the teachers to the Superintendent? *Ans.*—As far as I know the teachers have not been wanting in respect to the Superintendent.

Has the Superintendent always shown proper courtesy to the teachers? *Ans.*—In October last, I attended a meeting of teachers and trustees. Mr. McKenzie was present. I considered he was overbearing in his manner. He told one teacher that if they didn't wish to do as he desired they could leave; there were other teachers to be had.

Do you know if there was any provocation? *Ans.*—I don't know of any.

At that meeting did any of the teachers or trustees question the power of the Superintendent of Education to make rules and regulations for the conduct of examination of teachers? *Ans.*—I don't recollect. I don't think that question came up.

What led Mr. McKenzie to say to one of the teachers that he could get others to take their places? *Ans.*—It arose out of a discussion about the daily registers and monthly reports to parents.

Did the teachers demur to making out these registers? *Ans.*—They did not demur, but pointed out the difficulties of filling them in correctly.

Do you consider that the teachers' time can be more profitably employed than in making up these registers? *Ans.*—I think they can. I think a weekly register better than a daily one.

Was there any reason for a general dismissal of the Victoria teachers? *Ans.*—We were not altogether satisfied with all the teachers, and, as there is to be a general examination, we thought we would dismiss all, and then select those that we consider the best.

How often do the trustees visit the schools? *Ans.*—About twice a month.

Do you think a B.A. should be examined before he is granted a certificate to teach? *Ans.*—I think so. A man may be a B.A. or an M.A. and not be able to communicate his knowledge to others. A man may be clever and well-read and not make a good teacher.

(Signed) THOS. SHOTBOLT.

APRIL 27TH, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10.15. Present—Mr. Vernon (Chairman), Messrs. Helgesen, Ferguson, and Mara.

MR. JAMES KAYE—I am principal of the Boys' Department of the Public Schools of Victoria.

Have you as a teacher carried out the rules and regulations of the schools? *Ans.*—I have.

Is there any ill-feeling between you and the Superintendent? *Ans.*—None whatever.

Have you placed any opposition in the way of the Superintendent? *Ans.*—Certainly not.

Has the Superintendent on all occasions treated you with proper respect? *Ans.*—No; he has treated the teachers as a body with great lack of courtesy.

What is the nature of his discourtesy? *Ans.*—His discourtesy is more passive than active. It is chiefly observable in his manner and general demeanour. On an occasion of a meeting of school teachers and trustees, held in consequence of his determination to cancel teachers' certificates. Mr. McKenzie was present. His manner was curt. He told the teachers that if they were not satisfied he could easily fill their places with others, and, putting on his hat, left abruptly. On another occasion, in visiting the room of one of my assistants, the teacher, after a time, asked him if he was satisfied with his method of teaching, or if he had any suggestions to make. He (Mr. McKenzie) looked at the teacher a moment, put on his hat, said nothing, and walked out.

Had he any provocation for leaving you abruptly at the meeting referred to? *Ans.*—I can think of none. He was treated with the greatest respect.

Is there any ill-feeling between the Superintendent and the teachers? *Ans.*—I don't know of any ill-feeling, but there is dissatisfaction with him as a Superintendent.

Can you state the cause of it? *Ans.*—His want of courtesy. He lacks the tact and ready address which is very necessary in a Superintendent of Education. On the occasion of his visits to the school, he says nothing, either of approval or disapproval of the management of schools or methods of teaching. He crowds upon us a prodigious amount of marking and making up a great many useless reports. These have the effect of distracting our attention to the neglect, in a great measure, of the more important duties of the school.

Name the reports you consider useless? *Ans.*—I consider the reports intended to show the daily standing of the pupil in his class to be necessarily incorrect. The monthly reports sent to parents will be necessarily incorrect, because they are based upon the former.

How long have you been a teacher? *Ans.*—I have taught school a number of years in Scotland, the United States, and six years in this Province.

Can you suggest any improvements in the system, from your experience as a teacher? *Ans.*—I would modify the school reports.

Do you consider the system of granting certificates is just? *Ans.*—I do not. A youth from the old country with a University Degree can come here and obtain a first-class certificate without passing an examination, and may take precedence of an experienced and successful teacher, though he may have had no experience as a teacher.

Do you think that a first-class teacher should be compelled to undergo an examination every four years? *Ans.*—I consider it very unfair. Take my own case. I am rusty in a great many subjects that I was well up in years ago, although I consider myself with my experience better qualified for the profession of teaching than I have ever been. Further, I complain that no credit is given to the experienced and successful teacher by the present system. Teachers are required to pass a rigid examination on subjects they are never called upon to teach. Mr. McKenzie has introduced new text books. This renders it more difficult to get a first-class certificate. Take, for instance, Hamblin Smith's Statics. It would take a man a considerable time to thoroughly master it, yet we are expected to be well up in the subjects it treats of at the approaching examination.

What credit should successful teachers get? *Ans.*—They should vary according to their records of success and experience as teachers, but it should always be a highly important consideration in granting certificates.

(Signed) JAMES KAYE.

MRS. HAYWARD—I am principal of the Victoria Girls' School.

Have you carried out the rules and regulations of the schools? *Ans.*—I have endeavoured to do so, and I think I have succeeded.

Is there any ill-feeling between you and the Superintendent? *Ans.*—None on my part.

Have you placed any opposition to the Superintendent? *Ans.*—No; quite the contrary.

Has the Superintendent on all occasions treated you with proper respect? *Ans.*—He is not very polite. He answers roughly and rudely, not at all pleasant to one's feelings. Will not answer questions put to him.

Is there any ill-feeling between the teachers as a body and the Superintendent? *Ans.*—The teachers do not like him; the general feeling is against him.

Can you give a reason for this feeling? *Ans.*—The rude manner in which he addresses the teachers when he visits the school. He will stand for the greater part of the morning and not speak to the teachers. He visited my school one morning and stayed from 9 till 11.45, and never said a word.

Does he instruct the teachers in the method of teaching? *Ans.*—No.

Do you think the Superintendent has done all in his power to advance the interests of Education? *Ans.*—I think he has to the best of his ability.

Do you consider Mr. McKenzie competent to fill the position? *Ans.*—No; I do not. Mr. McKenzie has not been trained as a teacher, consequently he does not know the best method of teaching. He has one method, and all who don't adopt that method are, in his opinion, wrong.

Do you consider there are any defects in the school system? *Ans.*—Improvements might be made, but they would involve expense. The objection I have to the system of reports is that it takes up a great deal of time that might be more profitably employed. It takes two days, at the end of each month, to make up these reports, besides the time taken up daily.

Do you think a first-class teacher should be compelled to pass an examination every four years? *Ans.*—I think not. Teachers are required to read up subjects that they will never be called upon to teach. When a teacher once gets a certificate it should hold good. No certificate should be issued unless to a competent teacher. Some teachers have greater knowledge than others, but can't impart that knowledge to children. No teacher would object to being examined weekly on subjects that he is engaged in teaching. I don't think lady teachers should be called upon to pass the same examination as gentlemen. The subjects to be taught are different. Lady teachers should teach sewing, needlework, and domestic economy. They should be examined on these subjects and given credit if proficient, whereas at present they are examined on subjects that they will never be called upon to teach.

SARAH HAYWARD.

28TH APRIL, 1880.

The Committee met at 10 a.m. in the Speaker's room. Present:—The Chairman, and Messrs. Helgesen, Ferguson, and Mara.

The Chairman laid before the Committee a letter from Mr. Nicholson (Appendix F.)

MRS. FISHER.—I teach the Metchosin school.

Did the Superintendent inspect the Metchosin school on the 24th of October? *Ans.* Yes.

Do you consider he conducted the inspection in a proper way? *Ans.*—No; I do not.

Will you state how he inspected the school? *Ans.*—I think his manner was exceedingly rude to me as a teacher. When I entered the school I saw him at my desk. I said, "Good morning!" but he took no notice of me. In examining the children his manner was so austere that one boy cried and the others were so frightened that they could not answer the questions. He curtailed the time specified on the examination papers. I consider punctuation from dictation to be placed in by children from 7 to 10 years of age ridiculous in the extreme. He crossed the children's slates for want of punctuation without stating whether for spelling or punctuation. In conducting the reading of the senior class he gave them "Belzoni's address to a Mummy." It is a difficult piece and one that they had never read. I asked him to let the children read another piece which they knew to show the pains I had taken in training them. He refused, saying "I haven't time." Instead of remaining till 3 he left at a quarter to 2. To show how incompetent he is as an examiner, he failed to detect copying. I think the Superintendent should give notice of an examination at least once a year and visit the schools as many times as he likes in addition. The day he inspected my school some of my best pupils were absent. It might have been three minutes past the time when I entered the school, but not more. The Superintendent's manner to the children was most discouraging and unsympathetic.

Have you sent the monthly reports regularly? *Ans.*—I have; as regularly as I possibly could.

Mrs. Fisher wished to state that she thinks the fixed standard marks of value attached to certain subjects of examination are out of proportion. For instance, whilst for reading—an essential—only 50 marks are allowed, for Greek or Latin 200 are allowed.

APRIL 30, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 9 a.m. Present:—Mr. Vernon, Chairman; Messrs. Helgesen and Mara.

MR. EDGAR MARVIN.—I was a member of the late Board of Education.

Do you know if partiality or favouritism was shown in granting certificates by the late Board? *Ans.*—Under the system adopted it was impossible for favouritism to be shown.

How were the certificates granted? *Ans.*—Before the annual examination of teachers the Board of Education would meet, and each member of the Board would select a subject upon which to prepare a paper, the Superintendent taking one subject and sometimes two. They would then prepare a number of questions upon the subjects selected. It was the general rule of the Board that one member should be present with the Superintendent during the time the candidates were filling in their papers. The papers were numbered; no names being used; when completed they were handed to the member of the Board who prepared them. Each member of the Board would place the number of marks on the paper that he considered the candidate entitled to.

(Signed) EDGAR MARVIN.

JOSEPH H. MACLAUGHLIN.—I am principal of the High School.

Have the rules and regulations of your school been carried out? *Ans.*—I have endeavoured to carry them out as far as possible.

Is there any ill-feeling between you and the Superintendent? *Ans.*—No; and I hope there will be none. I have not always agreed with the Superintendent on educational matters; I think a teacher should always be at liberty to express his opinions on educational matters, but I find that it is distasteful to the highest educational authorities here to do so.

Has the Superintendent paid proper respect to you as a teacher? *Ans.*—He has never shewn any personal disrespect to me.

Have you experienced any difficulty in making out the daily returns? *Ans.*—I believe the daily returns are a source of inconvenience to teachers. It is impossible to make them out correctly. A great deal of time is occupied in making out these returns that would be far better employed by the teacher in governing his class and imparting information.

Do you consider that a teacher holding a first-class certificate should be compelled

to undergo an examination every four years? *Ans.*—I think it would result in more harm than good. Teachers holding second and third class certificates should have an opportunity afforded them of obtaining a higher class certificate. The essential characteristics of a teacher are three fold—1st, knowledge of the subject required to teach; 2nd, aptitude, natural and acquired; 3rd, personal character, any one of which is as necessary as the other.

How long have you been a teacher? *Ans.*—About 20 years. Between 4 and 5 year in the old country; 13 years in Nova Scotia, and between 2 and 3 years here.

Was it customary in Nova Scotia for the teachers to hold conventions? *Ans.*—They were held annually, and were assisted and encouraged by the Superintendent of Education.

Do you consider the School Report of 1879 correct? *Ans.*—As respects the returns sent from my school, the report does not fairly state the position.

Were you examined by the late Board of Education, and do you consider the examinations were fairly conducted? *Ans.*—I was examined by the late Board, and believe the examinations were fairly conducted. Taking into consideration the fact that the candidates were unknown, I cannot conceive that partiality was shewn.

(Signed) JOSEPH H. MACLAUGHLIN.

MONDAY, MAY 3RD.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 9:30 a. m. Present — Messrs. Humphreys, Helgesen, Ferguson and Vernon.

MRS. WILSON-BROWN appeared before the Committee.

I teach the Second Division in the Girls' Department of the Victoria School.

Have you any complaints to make against any officer in connection with the Schools? *Ans.*—I have a complaint against the trustees. It is chiefly in their having power beyond appeal in so large an establishment as the Victoria Public Schools. Mr. Nicholson, as Secretary, seems to take precedence and holds sole control. He is a man possessed of a little school-book text lore, and consequently he frightens the other trustees into silence, and his interference in school matters is subversive of the Superintendent's instructions. For instance, with regard to books and studies: I have used in my division Collier's British History since I first taught in the school. It is a Canadian school book suited for junior pupils, and I have the Superintendent's instructions for using it with the Canadian Reader, and this book the Secretary has forbidden the use of in my division. In his visits to the school he renders himself ridiculous by pretentious and demonstrative instructions to the teachers in the art of reading with false accentuation. The trustees have sent into the school a badly graded limit table, and that without a scale for forming a time table. Irregularities are sanctioned in direct violation of the School Act. Children under age are admitted. Interference with children who come early to school for the purpose of studying, and before the prescribed school hours. Children are called upon to form a class for singing immediately on their arrival, and punished by the Principal if found studying when called upon to sing.

Who is the Principal? *Ans.*—Mrs. Hayward. It leads to children remaining outside the school building too long. Whilst these and other irregularities are sanctioned, the trustees enforce cast-iron rules without reason or judgment, and which injure the school. Children coming in a few minutes late are sent back home, no matter how great the distance, and in case of a few hours illness or necessary absence, the class is dismissed for the day. I need only instance to-day, when, on account of the absence of myself and two other teachers, at least one hundred and fifty children will be sent home, without the least necessity for so doing, as a temporary arrangement could be easily made.

By whose order were the children dismissed? *Ans.*—By order of the trustees. I wish to say also that during the term of office of the late trustees there was a meeting of the teachers, at which I was not present, to petition the Government against the power in their hands, which document I refused to sign, as I had a personal respect for those gentlemen.

Is there any ill-will existing between you and the Superintendent? *Ans.*—Not the slightest.

Has there been a spirit of opposition on the part of the teachers against the Superintendent? *Ans.*—There has been.

What is the cause of it? *Ans.*—I believe the cause was in the passing of the new Act, the calling in of certificates, and investing the trustees with supreme power.

Do you consider it just that a teacher holding a first-class certificate should be re-examined this year? *Ans.*—First-class certificates have been granted unfairly in some instances, and I am in daily contact with an instance where a first-class certificate was given by Mr. Jessop, and where now there would be a difficulty in earning a third-class.

Do you consider the present standard of certificates too high or too low? *Ans.*—I think the first-class is too high for most ladies. It is almost impossible for any lady to acquire a first-class certificate.

Do you think the standard in force by the late Board was too high or too low? *Ans.*—I think it was sufficiently high for the Public Schools, but not high enough for the High School.

Has there been any lack of courtesy shown to you by the Superintendent? *Ans.*—Never; on the contrary.

Have you ever seen him act in an ungentlemanly manner towards other teachers? *Ans.*—Never, or the slightest approach to it.

Do you consider him a competent Superintendent? *Ans.*—Certainly. A man who has taken honours at an English University must be competent in educational matters.

Do you think he has done all in his power to promote educational interests? *Ans.*—I think he has intended to do so, but has erred in giving up his powers as a Board of Appeal.

How long have you been teacher? *Ans.*—I have taught in the public schools for three years, and previously had a private school for a least ten or twelve years in this city.

When you were appointed as teacher, did you receive any opposition? *Ans.*—Yes. A petition was circulated in the school for signature amongst the teachers, which was signed by all of them with the exception of Mr. Pope, then head-master of the High School, and Mr. McKenzie, then head-master of the Boys' Public School. The object of the petition was to exclude me from the schools.

Did you pass an examination? *Ans.*—I Did.

What certificate did you obtain? *Ans.*—The marks given to me were so low, that but for the intervention of the Board, I should have obtained no certificate. As it was, I obtained a Third Class B.

What opinion do you hold respecting the keeping of the daily report? *Ans.*—It is altogether too elaborate, and from that we are obliged to send monthly reports to the parents, which are frequently never looked at, and must be necessarily inaccurate.

Has the Superintendent ever instructed you as to what he considers the best method of teaching? *Ans.*—He does whenever he visits my class as Superintendent.

(Signed) ELEANOR V. V. WILSON-BROWN.

On motion, the Committee adjourned at 11:30 until Wednesday, 9 a.m.

MAY 5TH, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room, at 9 a.m. Present—Mr. Vernon (Chairman), Messrs. Helgesen, Ferguson, and Mara.

MISS MARY HOLLOWAY—I am a teacher in the Girls' Department, Victoria Public Schools. I have taught school two years and eight months.

Have the rules and regulations been carried out? *Ans.*—They have in my department.

Has the Superintendent instructed you in the method of teaching? *Ans.*—He has. I gained several useful hints from him.

Has he ever shewn any discourtesy to you? *Ans.*—He has always behaved in a polite and gentlemanly manner to me.

Can you state the reason of the trouble between the Superintendent and teachers? *Ans.*—Some of the principal teachers do not wish to come up for examination.

What certificate do you hold? *Ans.*—A third A.

Do you think the daily reports are useful. *Ans.*—I always make them out. I don't consider myself capable of judging of their usefulness. My pupils are from five to eight years of age. I don't award marks. Mr. Jessop and Mrs. Hayward were always opposed to my getting the school.

What reason have you for stating that they were opposed to you? *Ans.*—From the way the children spoke the first morning I entered the school. I have other reasons that I don't wish to state.

How many children are there in your division? *Ans.*—104 on the register, but from 70 to 80 attend daily. When I first took the school Mr. Jessop and Mrs. Hayward tried to disgust me by crowding in over 100 children in my room.

Miss Holloway read to the Committee the statement marked G.

(Signed) M. HOLLOWAY.

MISS A. C. RICHARDSON—I am teacher in the Girls' Department, Victoria School. The girls in my division are from 6 to 10 years of age. I hold a second B certificate. I have taught school nearly five years.

Can you assign any cause for the trouble between the Superintendent and the teachers. *Ans.*—I believe there is trouble, but I know nothing about it.

Has the Superintendent always treated you in a courteous manner? *Ans.*—Yes.

Has he instructed you in the method of teaching? *Ans.*—Always, when I have asked him. I have no complaint to make against the Superintendent, trustees, or anyone connected with the school department.

(Signed) A. C. RICHARDSON.

MR. JAMES FELL appeared before the Committee and made the following statement: I attended a meeting of the Trustee Board yesterday. A communication was addressed to the Board by the Superintendent of Education, asking the board to reconsider the resolution appointing Mrs. Wolfenden as principal of the Public School, such letter having been called for in consequence of a protest made by me against Mrs. Wolfenden's appointment on account of unfitness for such position. After considerable discussion, a letter was addressed to the Superintendent, or Provincial Secretary, stating that no alteration would be made. Mr. Nicholson objected to the letter being addressed to the Superintendent, and thought it should be sent to the Provincial Secretary.

Mr. Fell was asked if the teachers had banded together to drive the Superintendent from his position? *Ans.*—From my own observation I am satisfied that a portion of them have done so.

Where did the teachers meet to band themselves together? *Ans.*—There have been several meetings, and the most active of those are Mr. Kaye, Mrs. Hayward, Mrs. Caldwell, and Mr. Thompson. Mr. MacLaughlin has been keeping a sort of respectable distance, taking observations.

Where and when did the meetings take place? *Ans.*—I don't know.

What action has been taken by the teachers to remove the Superintendent? *Ans.*—I believe that a petition was drawn up. I have not seen it.

What was the object of it? *Ans.*—It was in opposition to the Superintendent in cancelling the certificates, and to have the time extended.

How do you know the object of it? *Ans.*—Because I was asked by Mr. Pleace to support it. He said he was a delegate from the teachers.

(Signed) JAMES FELL.

MR. MCKENZIE appeared before the Committee and asked to make the following statement:—Shortly after I was appointed Superintendent, Mr. and Mrs. Hayward called at my house, and among other things informed me that at the time Mrs. Hayward was examined for her certificate, he (Mr. H.) heard accidentally that Mr. Jessop intended to place Mrs. Caldwell ahead of Mrs. Hayward on the examination list, but that he (Mr. H.) went to Mr. Jessop and compelled him to change the order. On examining the list as made out by Mr. Jessop there was an alteration made in the value of one of the answers for music from some other number to 15. This other number being apparently 0, and that the real value of that answer in Mrs. Hayward's examination paper was 0.

Have you shown Mrs. Hayward's papers to any person outside of the Department? *Ans.*—Not knowing music, I had to ask some one who knew music whether the answers given were correct.

Who were the persons you asked? *Ans.*—I decline to state. They were persons who knew music.

How many persons did you show the papers to? *Ans.*—Two or three.

Is there any rule that prevents you from shewing these papers to any person upon application being made to you? *Ans.*—None.

Do you feel it a part of your duty to shew these papers when asked to do so? *Ans.* No, not part of my duty, but I have done so.

Is the exhibition of teachers' examination papers calculated to injure the character and reputation of the teachers? *Ans.*—No, certainly not. I know one case where the former Board of Education acted in a similar manner.

Have you ever intentionally acted discourteously to any of the teachers? *Ans.*—Never. I wish further to state that this is a conspiracy on the part of four or five teachers and Mr. Nicholson.

What is the object of the conspiracy? *Ans.*—One object is to oust me from the position of Superintendent; another to put one of themselves in my place; another to create such a disturbance that no examination of teachers will be held this year.

Would any number of teachers conspiring be able to effect these objects? *Ans.*—I can't tell.

What proof have you that such a conspiracy exists? *Ans.*—I leave the Committee to judge of that from the evidence given against me.

How do you know evidence has been given against you? *Ans.*—From the unfriendly way those teachers have acted all along.

(Signed) C. C. McKENZIE.

MAY 7TH, 1880.

The Committee met in the Speaker's room at 10.30, a.m. Present—Messrs. Vernon Ferguson, Helgesen, Humphreys, and Mara.

The Chairman presented a Report to the Committee, which was adopted, Mr. Humphreys dissenting.

Committee adjourned.

F. GEO. VERNON, *Chairman.*

APPENDICES.

A

VICTORIA, B.C., Nov. 6th, 1879.

SIR,—I have the honour to enclose herewith a communication from certain teachers of the Public Schools, who have requested the Board of Trustees to lay the matter before the Government accompanied by such comments as the Board might think proper. The Trustees, therefore, beg leave to state that they have come to the following conclusions with regard to the matter:—

1st,—That all teachers holding certificates granted by the late Board of Education should be re-examined as soon as possible.

2nd,—That the examination should not be made apply to a few at a time, but should be made general in its application.

3rd,—That no person, whether or not the holder of a University degree, should be exempt from passing an examination in the manner prescribed for others. The possession of scholarship alone does not constitute a successful teacher.

4th,—That more prominence should be given to the Natural Sciences, and less to Classics in the programme for the examination of teachers.

5th,—That teachers be required to pass in physiology, as it is a subject that should be taught in almost every school to a greater or less extent.

6th,—That too wide a difference in attainments is made between grades A and B of the first-class. The standard for B should be raised further, and that for A lowered somewhat.

7th,—The passing in Greek, the Trustees hold to be unnecessary, as its introduction into the schools of the city is far in advance of the educational wants of the pupils.

Trusting you will bring the matter to the notice of the Government at your earliest convenience,
I remain, etc.,

(Signed) THOS. NICHOLSON,
Sect., B.T., Victoria.

C. C. McKenzie, *Esq., Superintendent of Education.*

[ENCLOSURE.]

VICTORIA, B.C., November 1st, 1879.

GENTLEMEN,—In answer to a request for an interview, the Honourable the Provincial Secretary has suggested that we formulate our grievances through you. Will you, therefore, kindly consider our complaints and forward them to the Superintendent of Education, with such comments thereon as may appear to you just and right.

1st.—We complain of a forced and illegal interpretation placed upon the School Act, 1879, by which we are harassed and annoyed, treated as holders of temporary certificates and required to submit to an examination in December next, under conditions of a most unfair and humiliating character.

2nd.—We, as holders of first-class certificates issued by the late Board of Education, under the School Act of 1872, claim that they are good. They bear on their face, "Valid until revoked." This we were distinctly given to understand meant "for life." We are advised that we have thus acquired legal rights which will stand in Equity, and which are expressly reserved in section two of the School Act, 1879. Unless this Act can be read as retrospective, our certificates must be good for at least four years from the passing of the said Act.

3rd.—By reference to the enclosed "Rules and Regulations," issued by the Superintendent of Education, it will be seen that besides raising the standard of examination very materially, he has so hedged about the attainment of a first-class certificate with conditions and traps, as to render it well-nigh impossible. By reference to the Public School Report, 1877-8, it will also be seen that the reason assigned for the re-adjustment of teacher's certificates, is that some have been obtained unfairly. Now, to call us up, *alone*, by a forced interpretation of the Act, is to hold us up before the public as guilty of what is in truth an unjust charge. We owe it to you, to the public, and to ourselves, to indignantly deny this accusation, and to strenuously resist this attack upon our characters and standing.

4th.—While we do not object to the standard being raised, we do most decidedly object to being singled out to be measured by it, and that, too, under conditions which must affect our influence and usefulness—perhaps our bread. In all fairness and justice, it is reasonable to ask that where all are accused, none should thus be singled out; and if the standard of examination be raised, all should be gauged by it.

5th.—We most respectfully ask your attention to the programme of examination enclosed, and to note the fact that the subjects, standard of marks, etc., have been arranged in direct opposition to an important provision of the Act, which requires, for the protection of the teacher, "that two examiners, along with the Superintendent, shall conduct the examination," and to note also that subjects are introduced, the text-books on which are unprocurable here to-day; that undue prominence is given to subjects not taught in your schools, the arbitrary rule exacting a certain percentage in every subject, and to the fact that no encouragement, advantage or reward can be obtained by the most successful teacher.

6th.—We complain that holders of an University degree are granted a first-class certificate without examination.

7th.—The Superintendent of Education has informed us that one of his reasons for singling us out for examination, is, that the "area of dissatisfaction might be as limited as possible." Is it just that we should suffer to shield the Superintendent from unpopularity?

In conclusion, we have to express our regret for thus troubling you, but we have appealed in vain to the Superintendent, who curtly told us that if we did not quietly submit, he could easily fill our places.

We have, etc.,

(Signed)

SARAH HAYWARD,
L. M. CALDWELL,
JOHN PLEACE,
JAMES KAYE,
R. M. CLEMITSON.

To the Trustees of Victoria City Public Schools.

B.

CHILLIWHACK, April 5th, 1880.

DEAR SIR,—I am happy to inform you that the Map of the Dominion came to hand at last, and a poor affair it is I can assure you.

I received no official communication from my Trustees since I wrote you previously, but I understand the matter is quiet for balance of School year.

I am at a loss to know your reasons for refusing a copy of letter recently addressed to you by the Secretary of this School Board. What can your object be in asking me to ask for it through my Trustees? I expect I could get the consent of my Trustees were I to ask for it, but it would take some time to call a meeting for such a trifling affair.

I still demand a copy of it, for it is a public document,—at least it should be,—and I have a perfect right to get a copy of it. If you still decline, I must try and get it either through the Executive or by another channel. I merely want to know its contents, and it is but poor policy to keep my curiosity unsatisfied.

I am, &c.,
(Signed)

D. M. McMILLAN.

C. C. McKenzie, Esq., Superintendent of Education.

C.

VICTORIA, 24th March, 1879.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your courteous letter of the 29th inst., together with the enclosures, and have to thank you for the welcome intelligence in regard to the increase in salary.

I hand you herewith the copy of statistics I imagined you had already received from me. I wish to say to you that I believe the documents were handed by my boy Ernest to Mrs. McKenzie while she was on her way one day on a visit to her mother. It is a matter of little consequence if the delay has caused no inconvenience to you. I shall attend to the filling up and returning of your papers in a day or two. They require some thought and care and time. What is the difference between "No. of days school was in session" and "No. of days' attendance of pupils?" There's a poser for you! And I am,

Yours, etc.,

(Signed)

JAMES KAYE.

C. C. McKenzie, Superintendent of Education.

D.

NICOLA, March 3rd, 1880.

DEAR SIR,—I received your's of February 4th, last night. Having an opportunity to send this to the waggon road to-morrow by a private party, I am thus able to reply much sooner than by regular mail.

I was absent ten days in October last, as you mention. I engaged the services of a man having experience in school teaching, who conducted the schools in my absence. This arrangement was satisfactory to the trustees whom I saw, and to all the parents whom I met, otherwise I should not have gone, or, if intent upon going, should have sent in my resignation previously. I have pursued the same course previously, though not frequently, both in this Province and in Ontario, and was not aware that it was unconstitutional. I also was not aware that such an occurrence should be reported to you, else I should have done so.

Inclosed you will find the reports required. I have no doubt you will find the information the same as that contained in the ones in your possession. I can conceive of no other mistake than the misplacement of dates, and the not reporting myself absent while the schools were in operation. I have not had an opportunity to examine those sent to the trustees to see if the same inaccuracy occurs, but will do so as soon as possible.

You have sent me no forms for January.

C. C. McKenzie, Esq., Victoria.

Yours, &c.,
(Signed) A. IRWIN.

P. S.—I was absent two days in October, owing to the schools being repaired. A. I.

ROSEDALE, NICOLA.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of February 3rd, containing cheque for Thos. Matthews of \$30, received all right.

In reply to your enquiry about Mr. Irwin being absent at the races last fall. He was away for some little time, but left a competent man in his place while gone. In reference to the report you speak of, we have never (at least not since I have held office) received two monthly reports of the progress of the schools; in fact there seems little interest manifested by parents in the school, as they seldom visit them; so long as their children attend it seems sufficient for them. There ought to be something done in the way of examination, or something of the kind, to create a little more interest in our schools, both by parents, pupils, and teacher.

Yours, &c.,
(Signed) R. M. WOODWARD,
Secretary-Treasurer Trustee Board.

C. C. McKenzie, Superintendent of Education, Victoria.

E.

EDUCATION OFFICE, Victoria,
7th November, 1879.

MADAM,—I expect you, as Principal of your school, to see that the reports sent by the teachers under you are as accurate as possible. You seem inclined to make a show of your knowledge of "long division," be pleased, therefore, either to correct the enclosed yourself or get your assistant to do her work properly. By so doing, you will much oblige,

(Signed) C. C. MCKENZIE,
Superintendent of Education.

Mrs. Hayward, Public School, Victoria.

VICTORIA, B.C., Nov. 10th, 1879.

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed please find letter and report sent to me by the Superintendent of Education.

I am sure that you will not approve of this style of correspondence by a subordinate officer of your department, and I respectfully ask whether, in your opinion, anything contained in the report will justify the gross personal insult conveyed by the Superintendent's letter.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) S. HAYWARD,
Principal, Girls' Department, Victoria Public School.

To the Hon. T. B. Humphreys, Provincial Secretary.

F.

VICTORIA, B.C., April 26th, 1880.

F. G. Vernon, Esq., Chairman of Special Committee on Education.

SIR,—In answer to the request made to me by the Special Committee on Education, I beg to submit the following views with regard to the Public Schools of this Province, viz. :—

One of the first questions now asked by intending immigrants with families concerns the efficiency of our Public Schools.

This Province has made praiseworthy efforts in behalf of Education, in spending, as it does, about \$50,000 annually of its revenue in the support of Public Schools. It cannot, therefore, afford to be indifferent as to the results, hence the damage done and the expensive machinery of the Government rendered nugatory as a colonization agency by the wholesale condemnation set forth in the Superintendent's Report.

Text books for use in schools often need revision. The reading books now in use are unsuitable. Instead of containing extracts from good authors suitable for elocutionary exercises, they are filled with

romantic stories tending only to excite and distort the imaginations of the children. Lennie's grammar, the one now in use in the schools, is considered by persons acquainted with it to be one of the most incomplete and inaccurate books on the subject; and the works on Natural Philosophy are not sufficiently popular. Hamblin Smith's work on Statics for the most part consists of a series of questions taken from the examination papers of the Cambridge University, and required of candidates in passing the B.A. degree. Such a book is entirely unsuited as a text book for pupils attending any of the schools in this Province.

Inspection should be thorough and searching, and each school visited should be separately reported on.

The Superintendent should be always prepared to suggest improvements to Trustee Boards on the one hand, and to teachers on the other, and should necessarily be a man in whom all parties—Government, Trustees, and Teachers—could repose full confidence.

In Victoria City, the Public Schools are very much in need of a systematic plan of inspection.

The graded school system, without which we cannot hope for valuable progress, does not appear to be understood by the Superintendent. Pupils are, indeed, passed from room to room on a written examination on printed questions, but being passed on a printed examination *only* makes the plan worse than useless. Young children cannot understand printed examinations, and the testimony of teachers is that older ones always copy. Oral examinations cannot be dispensed with in the promotion of classes. History is thrust on children too young to understand it, and, instead of oral instruction being given on the subject by the teacher, the pupil is entirely dependant on the text book. Any person who can read can ask the questions. Natural science is wholly neglected in the Public Schools, and in the High School does not receive the attention it deserves.

To remedy this evil in the graded schools of Victoria City, I propose that the principal of the High School should be appointed—

1. To have the general supervision and charge of the schools;
2. To classify, with the assistance of the teachers, the pupils of the schools, so as to insure, as far as practicable, a uniformity in grading;
3. To visit all the departments once a fortnight, and make such additional visit to any individual as may be deemed advisable;
4. To make such suggestions to the teachers as he may deem desirable as to the branches to be taught, the method of teaching, the enforcement of order, discipline, cleanliness, and a more punctual attendance, &c.;
5. To place before the Board of Trustees a detailed report of each department as found on the occasion of visiting;
6. To have a right to examine the register, and to ask such questions in reference to each department as he may think desirable to enable him to fulfil the duties of his office;
7. To attend the meetings of the Board of Trustees and to act as their Assistant Secretary.
8. To teach at the High School during the forenoon, at least, of each school day;
9. To be prepared to perform any other duties in connection with the schools or the business of the trustees which they may, from time to time, assign to him.

Statistical returns in any system of Public Education cannot be avoided, but when carried beyond the verge of bare necessity they become an evil. Such returns so frequently depend on fluctuating circumstances that they cannot be relied on, as state of weather on inspection day, sickness in family of a bright child, facilities for prompting, &c. Nothing can supply the want of suitable inspection. The Superintendent must be a living agent whose presence is seen, known, and felt, to be encouraging, genial, sympathising, while his superior knowledge guides, directs, and instructs the teacher, and whose proper avocation is as far removed from being a mere collector of statistics as that of a General in directing the movements of an army.

I approve of monthly examinations, and reports based on such might very properly be forwarded to parents, but from practical experience I entirely disapprove of daily or hourly marking of lessons in school, because—

1. Such marking cannot be reliable.
2. It distracts the attention of the class.
3. It absorbs valuable time of teacher.
4. It causes endless disputes among pupils.
5. The teacher is forced to ask a number of rounds, whereas one question to each pupil judiciously chosen would draw out the information of the scholar and expand his ideas better than five unpointed questions.
6. The number of questions that can be asked in a short lesson is often less than the number of pupils, hence some one gains by the failure or answering of another.
7. It tends to dwarf the mind of the scholar.
8. It reduces the teacher to a machine for hearing lessons.
9. The pupils fail to draw in the whole scope and spirit of the recitation.

Irrespective of the feeling that has sprung up lately among teachers owing to the report of the Superintendent of Education, it would be injudicious to require the Superintendent of Education to be an examiner for granting certificates of qualification to teachers. In Canada, California, and indeed in all countries, the Superintendent of Education is not one of the examiners of teachers. The examination, as a rule, is conducted by men engaged in actual teaching, and in California and other States no one is permitted by law to be appointed as an examiner of teachers who does not hold a certificate of qualification as a teacher.

The programme issued by the Superintendent of Education for the examination and classification of teachers is defective in most points. No marks or credits are given for experience and success in teaching, consequently a certificate granted to any candidate under such regulations is not a guarantee of a person's fitness to teach. Mere scholarship does not determine a teacher's fitness for a position in a school. A person may have the faculty to acquire and not to impart knowledge to others. A person may be a good

scholar and yet lack the essentials required of a good teacher. He may lack the ability to maintain good order and government in his school or to awaken and keep up a lively interest in study among his pupils. What is required in the schools are good teachers not merely good scholars. There is not a country having a system of public education but where Normal schools for the special training of teachers are not established. In the Eastern provinces, in England, and in the United States no person is eligible to receive a high grade of certificate without presenting to the boards of examiners testimonials of long and successful experience as teachers. The grade of school in which they may have taught is also taken into account. In Ontario, five years' experience is necessary to entitle a person to obtain a first-class certificate. In California ten years' successful experience, one year of which must be in the State, is required to obtain what is called there a "life diploma;" three for a State educational diploma, and two years to obtain a first-class certificate. Similar laws prevail everywhere. All persons, whether graduates of Universities or not, have to pass examination, except Normal School graduates.

The granting of certificates to graduates of Universities without examination or experience will always cause dissatisfaction. The more experienced and the more valued a teacher is, the more aggrieved will he feel to find a youth fresh from college, who often lacks the essential qualifications of a good teacher, forced into the ranks of the profession without any examination or any previous preparation for the work of a teacher. A certificate of qualification granted by a board of examiners ought to be *prima facie* evidence of a teacher's fitness.

What confidence can a board of trustees place in such certificates? I, for one, would not consider them worth the paper on which they are written.

The proposed examination is not extensive enough for 2nd and 3rd certificates of qualification, neither is the percentage of credits high enough. Teachers should be thorough in those subjects they are required to teach in the public schools, more especially in the elementary branches. There is entirely too wide a gap between what is required for a first-class B and a first-class A certificate. Too much is required at present for 1st A and entirely too little for a 1st B. One, at least, of the examining board should be a thorough, practical teacher, and no person engaged in "coaching" persons for the examination should be eligible to a seat on the board.

In conclusion, I have only to say that I regret not having the time to spare from my business to make this statement more complete. I have endeavoured to touch only briefly on some of the more essential points relating to the school question.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) THOMAS NICHOLSON.

VICTORIA, April 29, 1880.

SIR,—I respectfully submit the following suggestions for the consideration of your Committee.

(Signed) I have, etc.,
JAMES FELL.

To the Chairman appointed by the House of Assembly on Educational matters.

To prevent the incessant swaying of school matters by any agitation that may be sprung on the public by interested parties, and to steady the effect of the popular vote in the election of School Trustees, I would respectfully recommend that the Governor in Council be empowered to appoint two persons, being laymen, to be Commissioners of Schools for the City of Victoria, in whom shall be vested all the powers of School Trustees under the School Act, and, subject to re-appointment, shall hold office for three years. Said Commissioners, along with the Superintendent of Education, the School Trustees of Victoria City, shall also constitute a Court of Appeal in all cases of dispute between teachers and School Trustees arising in the Province. The decision of the said Court in all cases of dispute referred to it, should be referred to the Governor in Council for final decision.

The Board of School Trustees might, with advantage to education, be empowered to send a requisition to the Town Council for a sum of money not to exceed three hundred dollars, to be appropriated to school purposes, such as repairs to school houses and fences, apparatus for lectures in school rooms, awarding of prizes for conduct and efficiency of pupils; and it should be lawful for the Town Council to collect said amount by the usual process, to be handed over to the School Trustees.

The present system of electing Trustees should be changed by allowing only duly qualified voters to vote.

G.

I wish to state what occurred on Saturday, May 1st, when I went to see Mr. Nicholson in company with Miss Richardson to ask leave of absence for Monday, 3rd, on which day I was notified to appear before this Committee. When we asked for a half-holiday, his reply was that he had no power to grant a holiday; if the Legislature asked us we must go. Mr. Nicholson asked us the question: "How do you like the Superintendent's Report putting all you teachers under the same lash?" Miss Richardson replied: "The cap does not fit me; let those whom it fits wear it." Mr. Nicholson then asked: "Has the Superintendent ever examined your classes?" Our replies were "yes." "Did you ever gain any information from his examination?" "Yes." Mr. Nicholson then made the following remarks: "Go and give your evidence; I hope they will take it; it will go a long way to help him out, but he will yet be brought down to what he was—to beg a glass of whiskey at the bar and sell eggs." Miss Richardson replied: "I am not going to tell an untruth even if you turn me out."

Mr. McLaughlin, who was present at the interview, said: "You are pretty independent." We thought the remarks about Mr. McKenzie were very unjust and improper.

We then proceeded to Mrs. Hayward's. She asked us if we were going to complain of the Superintendent? Our answers were "no." She said: "Now, girls, I don't want to influence you, but if Mrs. W. Brown gives different evidence to what I have, I shall make an example of her."