

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO NATIVE SCHOOLS.

No. 1.

W. MARTIN, Esq., to the Hon. the NATIVE SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Auckland, 6th May, 1864.

In pursuance of a resolution of the Church of England Board of Native Education for this Diocese, I do myself the honor of addressing you on the subject of a Report made last year to the Native Minister by H. Taylor, Esq., then Inspector of Native Schools, relating to the school at St. Stephen's, Taurarua. The Board consists of the following persons—The Bishop of New Zealand, Archdeacon Kissling, the Chief Justice, Colonel Haultain, and myself; of whom all but the Chief Justice are also trustees of the school estate at St. Stephen's, Taurarua.

This report appears to have been laid, together with other similar papers, before the General Assembly in the late session; but it remained wholly unknown to the Board until reprinted in the local newspapers in the course of January last, since which time it has until lately been impracticable to bring the members of the Board together. It was then found to contain a charge against the trustees of a breach of the trust which they have undertaken to administer, in which charge the Board by which the school has been administered must be considered implicated. But for this circumstance you would not have been troubled with the present letter. Ordinary mis-statements the Board would have been disposed to pass by; but a charge of breach of duty, made and circulated in a sort of official way, was one which it appeared necessary to notice. If the Inspector had, before sending in his report, communicated with any member of the Board, and informed him that he considered it a part of his duty to bring forward certain complaints against the managers of the school, such an explanation would have been given at once as would have in all probability removed the necessity of this correspondence. The Board and the trustees have from the beginning acted with perfect openness and publicity. Over and above the reports and certified copy of their minutes, which they are required to lay before the General Synod of the Church of England, the fullest information has been at all times readily given to every person who has asked for it. I am therefore instructed to pray that such precautions may be taken for the future as shall prevent charges against the trustees and managers of St. Stephen's School being circulated without previous notice to them, and without any opportunity of explaining the circumstances and defending themselves.

Considering also the frequent changes of the Government, which render it possible that the Native Minister for the time being may have had no means of becoming acquainted with the facts connected with the foundation and management of St. Stephen's School, it has appeared to the Board expedient to subjoin to the above request a statement on that subject, which I proceed to make with all possible brevity.

Previously to the year 1853 certain schools for the education of young persons, Natives or half-caste, had been founded and conducted by ministers of the Church of England; also certain lands given for the most part by Natives, had been appropriated as sites, and as endowments for these schools. Crown grants had been issued accordingly. In every case, including that of St. Stephen's, Taurarua, the terms of the trust were as follows:—for the use of, and towards the support and maintenance of a school for the education of the children of Her Majesty's subjects of both races, and of children of other poor and destitute persons being inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, so long as religious education, industrial training, and instruction in the English language shall be given to the youth educated therein and maintained thereat.

In a letter dated 12th May, 1863, from Sir George Grey to the Bishop of New Zealand, His Excellency proposed that a sum of £3500 a year should be placed at the disposal of the branch of the Church of England in New Zealand, provided the same were applied in conformity with the principles stated in a memorandum therein enclosed. The memorandum contained the following provisions: "All schools which shall receive any portion of the Government grant, shall be conducted as heretofore upon the principle of religious education; industrial training, and instruction in the English language, forming a necessary part of the system pursued in such schools.

"The schools which are aided from the Government grant may be of three kinds—Diocesan colleges, central schools, or primary schools.

"Each educational district shall have at least one central school, to be made as far as possible the means of multiplying primary schools in that district."

In like manner, the most promising scholars from the central schools will be eligible for election as pupils into the diocesan college of the diocese in which they are situated, where it is hoped that ultimately it may be found practicable to qualify Native teachers for holy orders.

The annual grant to be made by the Government shall be applicable to the following purposes, in such proportion as the Educational Board in each diocese may determine:—

1. To the support of existing schools, and the establishment of new schools.
2. To provide the means of educating in the diocesan colleges or in the central schools, scholars to be trained as teachers, who, in addition to other duties which may be given to them by the Church, may also act as teachers in the primary schools.
3. To provide for the payment of sums in part payment of the salaries of accredited teachers.

The memorandum further prescribed the mode, which has since been altered, in which the Board of Education should be constituted.

The Board being so constituted, met for the first time, 19th October, 1853.

At that meeting the School of St. Stephens, Taurarua, was designated as one of the central schools.