

1880.

NEW ZEALAND.

NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOL, KOHIMARAMA :

(REPORT UPON INQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT AND WORKING OF).

Laid upon the Table by the Hon. the Minister of Education, with the leave of the House.

SIR,—

Wellington, 26th August, 1880.

I have the honor to submit my report upon an inquiry undertaken in accordance with the terms of your memorandum of the 9th ultimo, directing me to make "a thorough investigation into the whole of the management and working of the Naval Training School" at Kohimarama, and to ascertain the reasons of the "frequent changes of subordinate officers" in that institution.

The correspondence (Marine Department, 80/1,428) put into my hands for my guidance consisted of (1) a letter addressed to the editor of the *Auckland Evening Star* (17th June, 1880), and signed by "H. D. Bezer, late Sub-Manager of the Naval Training School, Kohimarama;" (2) letters from Captain Breton to the schoolmaster and the cook, and from them to him, referring to statements made in Mr. Bezer's letter; and (3) a letter from Captain Breton, the manager of the school, bringing the case under the notice of the Minister charged with the administration of the Naval Training Schools Act. This correspondence I enclose.

On my arrival in Auckland, on the 13th ultimo, I found that Mr. Bezer had lately left for Whangaroa on his way to Samoa. I therefore determined to begin the inquiry by asking Captain Breton for the names of any persons in Auckland whom he believed to be dissatisfied with the management of the school. He readily afforded me information, which I found to be quite accurate, and abundantly sufficient for my purpose; and he begged me to make the investigation as thorough as possible. My first interview with him took place at the school on the 14th ultimo, and, after a cursory view of the institution, I arranged with him that I would make inquiry of the persons he had named, and that, when I had heard their statements, I would confer with him upon the questions involved in their evidence, and would give some time to personal observation of the working of the school.

Acting on Captain Breton's advice, I tried to see Mr. Cleverly. I found that he was to leave Auckland for Dunedin on the morning of the 15th July. Four times on the afternoon of the 14th I called at an office where I thought it likely I might meet with him. I also wrote to him, and in consequence he made one or two ineffectual attempts to find me, and, failing in that, he wrote to me, saying that he was under the necessity of leaving Auckland, but that he had left an affidavit for me. I afterwards learned that he had sent a petition last session to the House of Representatives, praying for redress of a grievance, the grievance being alleged wrongful dismissal from the office of sub-manager at the Naval Training School. The affidavit, however, does not relate to the matter of the petition, but is connected with another case.

Another person named by Captain Breton was Mr. W. I. Speight. Mr. Speight informed me that he had written to the "Minister for Customs" last November, complaining of the manner in which Captain Breton had dismissed him from the office of schoolmaster. Mr. Speight also gave me the names of several persons who, as he believed, were willing to give testimony adverse to the present system of management at Kohimarama.

A third person named by Captain Breton appeared likely to be an important witness; but I found him unwilling to make any statement unless I would accept it in confidence, or could issue an authoritative summons. I consider it therefore unnecessary to mention his name. I may, however, say that he is one of the two persons referred to in Captain Tilly's letter attached to page 13 of the notes of my proceedings on the 31st July, and that that letter shows that both these persons were willing to accept re-engagements in the service of the school, and both agreed in saying "that there was no reason or ground of any unpleasantness as between them and" Captain Breton.

After an interview with Mr. W. I. Speight I came to the conclusion that I ought not to proceed with the inquiry until I could obtain the official papers relating to the cases of Mr. Cleverly and Mr. Speight. I made application for the papers to the Secretary of the Marine Department, and in due course received them. They are enclosed with this report (Marine, 79/2,936 and 79/3,009).

On the 31st ultimo I took the evidence of Mr. and Mrs. Speight, and the first part of Captain Breton's evidence. On the 3rd instant I went to Kohimarama, arriving about half-past ten in the morning, and remained there until about eleven the next morning. I saw the whole of one day's work in the school, and in the garden, and in the way of nautical instruction. I was present at prayers, at meals, at the hour of awarding and administering punishment, and at play-time; I went through the