

may take a prominent part, and be held up as patterns for the children in conduct. Mr Carl Christensen tells the Board that the Committee are not interested in the school. I myself have two children there now, and recently three, so does Mr Alex. McKay send one child, and Captain Rodgers would gladly send four, and we are each of us members of the Committee. Mr Meffen is also a resident householder of the district, as I have before had occasion to advise you, and as such is qualified to be a member of the Committee. Mr Carl Christensen stands condemned in the fact that he is unable to show how these Committeemen are outside of the district, or if outside, then what district they are in. His motive is to cast suspicion on the Committee by making charges which, being devoid of truth, are none the less difficult to explain, and to cast dirt, in the hope some of it will stick.

I would call your attention to a letter and cutting from which I attach hereto, published in the 30th September issue of the *Auckland Weekly News and Herald*, under the heading "Fairburn. You can judge, perhaps, whether it is not slanderous and penned to influence the Board. The writer of it is Mr Carl Christensen. You will observe the school is generally going to the bad. He writes first of a "downfall"—the expression is merely for effect. (I enclose a cutting containing the letter I complain of.) Second, the writer states, "The attendance has fallen off." I deny this, not a single child has left the school since the new Committee came into office. Third, "The fencing on the school-ground is going to ruin" Again I deny this it would be absurd indeed that a wire fence, erected at heavy cost by Mr Carl Christensen's own hands, should be falling into ruins in a few months. Still, I do not say that it ever was a substantial fence, for that would not be true. Fourth, "The horses ridden by the scholars to school are destroying the ornamental (?) trees planted by the old Committee." This is just as misleading as the rest. Practically, there are no trees, and assuredly they are not ornamental. I reported on them to your Board as being in a "dead and dying condition," having been smothered in fern. After the defeat of Mr. Carl Christensen at the school election he paid himself 10s. for cutting this fern, and cut as well some of the trees down, doubtless unintentionally. They were stunted and undiscernable, and could certainly not have been very ornamental, and now he publishes that they are ornamental trees! The trees "for the year" were not planted, for the good reason that to plant under the circumstances existing at this school would be absurd, and to plant properly and properly care for the trees (120) would take more funds than the school possesses, and no one volunteered to do the work gratis when I repeatedly offered the teacher to appoint a day for planting. Besides, the school is completely surrounded by a truly beautiful and ornamental native bush, which will doubtless be ruthlessly destroyed. Lastly, he ends up his attack by saying, "It is hard for *those settlers* who have the school at heart to see things neglected in this way" "Those settlers!" He means Mr Carl Christensen, who can get three men to say "Ditto" to anything he proposes. It is only Mr Carl that is giving all the trouble. It would be ridiculous to suppose that he has the "school at heart" the teacher perhaps. He has, by prejudicing the Board against the Committee, been preparing for charges which he is in daily expectation that the Committee would make against himself and the teacher

The Committee have repeatedly asked the Board for an inquiry, and they have requested a change of teacher, but although the Board have not complied with any of their requests they have preferred to wait till after the school examination, as a change earlier must affect it injuriously

I would report another piece of vilification by Mr Carl Christensen. It is this He states that, "Since this Committee came into power they have so injured the school that, whereas the teacher was in receipt of £100 per annum, the attendance has fallen off till the amount is now only £40. This statement he made to Mr Dunn, police constable at Mangonui, who will confirm the truth of what I here say As there has been no falling-off, the statement is, of course, false and, if the figure was really up to £100, it must have been that the roll was "stuffed."

I would further report that Mr Carl Christensen has only a following of three householders—viz., Thomas Whitehead, Thomas Coulter, and Thomas Shearman, all the other householders are against him, and new settlers coming will inevitably increase the majority against him. Mr May refuses to follow him, so that if he is to get into power again it will be necessary to delude the Board into declaring the vast majority of the householders outside the district. I trust my report may serve to show the Board that if there is a wrong being done here it is not being done by the Committee, and, above all, that it may show them that Mr Carl Christensen himself, and he alone, is the cause of all the trouble, and that intentionally and by reprehensible means. I also trust that the Board will see its way to appoint a new teacher after the examination.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Fairburn's Road, Mangonui, 20th October, 1893.

Replying to your letter of 16th instant (No. 1829/93) in which you ask the Committee to specify reasons why they desire a change of teacher, they are, incompetence of the teacher, particularly inability to maintain order in school, and misconduct.

I remain, &c.,

The Secretary Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Board of Education, Auckland, 7th November, 1893.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 20th ultimo, stating that the reasons why the Committee desire a change of teacher are—(1) incompetency of the teacher, particularly inability to maintain order in the school, and (2) misconduct.

In reply, I am directed to ask the Committee to be good enough to specify the alleged misconduct on the part of the teacher.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

The Chairman of the District School Committee, Fairburn's Road.