

1894.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION :
CASE OF WRIGLEY V. FISHER
(CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated 21st August, 1894.

Ordered, "That a return be laid before this House—(1) Showing the cost of the case *Wrigley v. Fisher*, lately tried in the Supreme Court at Auckland; (2) also all correspondence between the Board of Education at Auckland and the Fairburn School Committee in connection with the teachers such return to include all letters from any person other than the Committee on the same subject."—(Mr. HOUSTON.)

Department of Justice, Wellington, 28th August, 1894.

Memorandum for the Registrar, Supreme Court, Auckland.

I AM directed to request you to furnish a statement of the costs of the case *Wrigley v. Fisher*, lately tried in the Supreme Court at Auckland, so far as they are known to you.

C. J. A. HASELDEN, Under-Secretary

Supreme Court, Auckland, 4th September, 1894.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Justice, Wellington.

Wrigley v Fisher

As directed by you in your memorandum of 28th ultimo, I now forward you the information asked for, in the form of a copy of the plaintiff's costs as taxed by me, and I have further to add that the plaintiff paid in court-fees £4 17s., and the defendant same £2 8s.

HENRY C. BREWER, Registrar

THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW ZEALAND, NORTHERN DISTRICT.

Between Agnes Anna Wrigley, plaintiff, and Thomas Fisher, defendant.

Plaintiff's Costs on Judgment for £75 Damages Lower Scale.

	Costs.	Taxed off.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Fee for issue and service of writ	2 2 0	
Fee for preparing for trial	4 4 0	
Fee on judgment for plaintiff	7 7 0	
Extra allowance as certified by Judges—five days, at £10 10s.	52 10 0	
Copy subpoena, <i>ad test.</i> , for service on Thomas Shearman	0 5 0	0 5 0
The like, Carl Christensen	0 5 0	0 5 0
The like, Mrs. Elizabeth Whitehead	0 5 0	0 5 0
The like, Mrs. Dinah Coulter	0 5 0	0 5 0
Copy subpoena, D. T., and service on Vincent E. Rice	0 5 0	
The like, Walter H. Airey	0 5 0	
Court-fees and disbursements,—		
Writ and statement of claim	1 1 0	
Setting-down fee	0 10 0	
Two subpoenas, <i>ad test.</i>	0 10 0	
Subpoena, D. T.	0 5 0	
Correspondence to charges for service of writ and subpoena at Fairburn	2 0 0	
Sheriff's fee	1 1 0	
Jury fees	12 0 0	
Judgment fees	1 0 0	
Swearing four witnesses	0 8 0	
Entering judgment	0 10 0	
Appointment for taxation	0 5 0	
Filing affidavit of increase	0 3 0	
Taxation fee	0 5 0	
Carried forward	87 11 0	1 0 0

	Costs.	Taxed off.
Brought forward	£ s. d. 87 11 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0
Witnesses expenses, &c.— Thomas Shearman, farmer: Twenty-two days, at 12s., £13 4s.; travelling-expenses— Fairburn to Mangonui, 20 miles, at 9d., 15s.; steamer, Mangonui to Auckland and back, £2 10s.	16 9 0	
Carl Christensen, farmer Same as above	16 9 0	..
Mrs. Elizabeth Whitehead: Twenty-two days, at 8s., £8 16s. travelling-expenses, £3 5s.	12 1 0	
Mrs. Dinah Coulter Same as above	12 1 0	
V E. Rice, Secretary to Education Board Two days, at £1 1s.	2 2 0	1 17 0
W H. Airey, School Inspector Two days, at £1 1s.	2 2 0	2 2 0
Plaintiff, Agnes A. Wrigley Twenty days, at 10s., £10 travelling-expenses, £2 6s. 9d.	12 6 9	
	161 1 9	£4 19 0
Taxed off	4 19 0	
	£156 2 9	

Taxed and allowed at £156 2s. 9d.

HENRY C. BREWER, Registrar

5th July, 1894.

Upon the attendance of Mr. Cave for the plaintiff, and Mr. Stewart for the defendant.—
H. C. B., Regr.

Education Department, Wellington, 27th August, 1894.

The Secretary to the Education Board, Auckland.

I AM directed to send you the enclosed copy of an order of the House of Representatives, and to ask you to be good enough to furnish copies of the correspondence required by the second section thereof.

E. O. GIBBES,

For Secretary.

Education Board, Auckland, 10th September, 1894.

The Secretary, Education Department, Wellington.

IN answer to your memorandum dated the 27th ultimo, I am directed to forward to you herewith a copy of the correspondence between this Board and the Fairburn's Road School Committee relating to the late teacher (Miss Wrigley), together with letters received from the teacher and from householders and others.

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

Re WRIGLEY *v.* FISHER.

Section 1.—Copy of Correspondence between the Fairburn's Road District School Committee and the Auckland Education Board.

Section 2.—Copies of Letters from Teacher, Miss Wrigley

Section 3.—Copies of Letters from and Correspondence with Parents of Children in the Fairburn's Road School District.

Section 4.—Printed Correspondence between the Te Rahu School Committee and the Auckland Education Board, *re* Case Wrigley *v.* Fisher.

SECTION 1.—COPY OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE FAIRBURN'S ROAD DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND THE AUCKLAND EDUCATION BOARD.

SIR,—

Fairburn Road, Mangonui, 28th August, 1893.

Replying your 1709/93, duly received, in which you say that, according to the complaint of Mr Christensen, "the Committee have refused to pay the amount due to the person who has attended to the cleaning of the school during the past twelve months," I am directed to inform the Board that this is a malicious and deliberate gross falsehood on the part of Mr. Christensen. The account was not refused payment, on the contrary, it was paid on the 16th August, by cheque on the Bank of New Zealand, in friendly accordance with a mutual agreement. Mr. C. must mean that his meddlesome interference was refused. It was rejected because it is his custom to set parties by the ears, so that he may the better serve his own ends. The Committee are of opinion they can manage their affairs without being dictated to by Mr Christensen, who has, under the character of "our correspondent" to the *Auckland Weekly News* and otherwise, appealed to the public against the decision of the Board in the matter of the Fairburn School election, and, as this correspondence has repeatedly proved him to be unscrupulous and his statements untrue, the Committee would respectfully request either that his statements be ignored by the Board or that you would furnish them with a copy of his letter in which the complaint or charge is made.

It is evident he desires to embroil the Committee and the Board by keeping up an irritating triangular correspondence, in which he is sheltered behind the Board, while the Committee is made a target and the Board a tool. Threats of law are used here freely by Mr Christensen to silence any settler who might be inclined to speak of his misdeeds. I was the recipient of one of these myself on the 13th instant. We have repeatedly sought an inquiry into school matters here by the Board, and till that is done it cannot be aware of the abuses which the Committee and the general public as well desire to see here no more.

Replying your 832/93, intimating the appointment of Mr. James Meffen instead of Mr. John Trott, I have to inform you that Mr. Trott denies being a non-resident, and, as the Committee are of the same opinion as Mr. Trott, I am instructed to ask you to be good enough to state on what grounds Mr. Trott is declared a non-resident by the Board.

Enclosed herewith please find circular duly signed and filled up. It refers to religious instruction after or before school-hours.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 5th September, 1893.

I am instructed by the Committee to request your Board to appoint a male teacher to the Fairburn's Road School in place of the present female teacher.

The Committee have offered her an opportunity to resign, which she declines to take advantage of.

The Committee trust it will be unnecessary to enter into any detail to obtain from the Board compliance with their request, as it is quite hopeless to get on here without a change, and such detail must afterwards appear to the Board regrettable, and is likely to give rise to much trouble.

I remain, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Fairburn Road, 27th September, 1893.

Sorry you have not seen fit to reply to my letters—one three weeks ago, the other four weeks. The Committee are still awaiting your reply.

Yours, &c.,

The Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Board of Education, Auckland, 29th September, 1893.

I am directed to inform you that your letter, dated the 5th September, asking for the removal of the teacher, was laid before the Board at its meeting on the 26th instant, and that consideration thereof was deferred.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary.

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

EXTRACT from Letter from Chairman of Fairburn's Road School Committee, dated the 11th October, 1893, to Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

“Enclosed also is a petition from householders (and their wives) of the Fairburn's School District, expressing confidence in the present School Committee.

“Mr. Christensen claims that the Committee does not represent the school-children. Let us see: Mr. Carl Christensen, 4 children; Mr. Thomas Whitehead, 4 children, Mr. Thomas Coulter, 4 children; Mr. Thomas Shearman, 2 children total, 14 children. Mr. Gardner, 4 children, Mr. May, 4 children; Mr. Fisher, 2 children, Mr. McKay, 1 child; Mr. Rodgers, 4 children; Mr. Watson, 4 children total, 19 children.

“This shows that the majority of the children of the district is with the Committee. The children of Messrs. Rodgers and Watson do not now attend school, but would do so if we had a change of teacher

“THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.”

SIR,—

Board of Education, Auckland, 16th October, 1893.

Referring to my letter dated the 29th ultimo, I am directed to ask the Committee to be good enough to specify the reasons why they desire a change of teacher

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary.

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

(Private and Confidential.)

SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 16th October, 1893.

In reply your 1709/93 to hand, containing statements of Messrs. Carl Christensen and T. Whitehead, as follows—“J. Meffen and W. Rodgers are not qualified to be members of the Committee, as neither of them reside within the school district, nor send children to the school”—you request me to report fully to the Board. I trust the Board will have patience with me while I try to do so. In the past I have tried to be frank and exact in my statements, and I can assure you, whatever you have been told to the contrary that this Committee deserves your confidence, and their action in every particular is such as, if better known to the Board, would gain their entire and most hearty approval. I have on more than one occasion proved to the Board that Mr. Carl Christensen's statements were not only grossly false, but they were slanders assiduously conveyed to the Board in order to create a prejudice against the Committee. That he still continues in this course, and with some success, is only what I anticipated in a previous letter. The complaints above referred to are unfounded. They are the reverse of the truth, and Messrs. Carl Christensen and T. Whitehead know it as well as I do, and I have examined the whole particulars of the case. Mr. Carl Christensen made the same charge against Mr. Rodgers before, and I denied the truth of the charge on that occasion. I am now asked by the Board to report again. I report now that Captain Rodgers is in the district, and add my opinion for what it is worth that Carl Christensen should have been compelled to show he is *not* in the district before taking action on the same charge a second time. Captain Rodgers is not only resident in the district, but he informs me he has four children of school-age, and that he has already acquainted your Board that he cannot consent to send innocent children to a school in the management of which persons of doubtful character

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.

SIR,—

Fairburn s Road School, Fairburn, Mangonui, 18th November, 1893.

Your letter (1829/93) of date 7th instant came to hand on the 16th instant, delayed as shown by post-marks on envelope enclosed. On the 15th instant Mr Airey inspected this school, and, by arrangement, made at the instance of the Committee, held an interview with the teacher, at which the Committee was represented by three of its members. At this interview the question of the teacher's misconduct was gone into, and you will doubtless receive Mr. Airey's report, which, of course, I need not anticipate.

On Friday, the 17th instant, at 4 p.m., an assault with violence, and attempted beating with a heavy school "pointer," was made in the Fairburn's Road School on the person of the Chairman of Committee, who had been induced by the teacher to meet her then and there on business of pretended importance, by causing to be delivered to him a letter of which the following is a correct copy and the full text "Fairburn, 16th November, 1893.—Mr Fisher,—Sir, if convenient you will oblige me by calling at the school at 4 p.m. on Friday, as I wish to speak to you on a matter of importance. Please let me know by the children on Friday morning whether it suits you to meet me at the time I have appointed.—I remain, respectfully, A. A. WRIGLEY"

A Committee meeting will be held soon, at which this attack will be considered, and the course which the Committee decide to adopt in view of the above outrage, and other similar matters, will probably be reported to you without delay

The Secretary Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Fairburn s Road School, Fairburn, Mangonui, 21st November, 1893.

At a meeting held to-day in the school-room, Fairburn's Road, the Committee unanimously decided to suspend the teacher for gross misconduct in connection with the outrage committed on the Chairman in the school, of which you already have my report.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

Fairburn School, Fairburn, Mangonui, 21st November, 1893.

I HAVE to inform you that the Committee have decided to suspend you forthwith.

The Teacher Fairburn School.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

(Telegram.)

2nd December, 1893.

Re your letter twenty-first November Please send full particulars of alleged misconduct.

VINCENT E. RICE,

Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

Mr Thomas Fisher, Chairman, Fairburn's Road School Committee, *via* Kaitaia.

(Telegram.)

14th December, 1893.

LETTERS received. Will be considered by Board next Tuesday Board requires immediate returns of school-attendance. Please send by first mail Public School Register of Daily Attendance now in use, and Summary of Attendance Register, which are said to be in drawer of school-table.

VINCENT E. RICE,

Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

Mr Thomas Fisher Chairman, Fairburn's Road School Committee, *via* Kaitaia.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn Road, Fairburn, Mangonui, 11th December, 1893.

According to a report of the proceedings of the Board of Education, in the 2nd December edition of the *Auckland Weekly News*, the Secretary (Mr Rice seems to urge the Board to take precipitate action against this Committee, and also to think we are a bad lot, with our rubbish about assault, suspension, and closing school. He further said the Committee had given no particulars of the alleged misconduct. Either Mr Rice's intelligence or his candour is at fault. The report further states that the teacher (a lady) struck the Chairman. The reporter, as well as the Secretary, seems at sea in the matter. It was not alleged that the teacher (whether a lady or not) struck the Chairman, nor that she even attempted to strike him, nor even took a violent attitude. There was a party present who did "commit the assault and attempted beating"—necessarily a third party—and it is almost certain there was a fourth party present, but concealed, the concoctor of, and inciter to, all the trouble here but he did not put in an appearance, because the Chairman promptly cleared out before he had time. The charge against the teacher is that by false pretences she induced the Chairman there to be beaten by her accomplices, and a verbatim copy of her letter was sent the Board in proof.

According to the same report, Mr Christensen makes charges. They are absolute and deliberate falsehoods made only to serve an obvious purpose—viz., to make the Chairman appear as bad as the teacher and her accomplices, and he presents a 'mass of correspondence from the parents, upholding the teacher and her conduct.' Does not this "mass" look just a trifle ridiculous, seeing there are only three householders who would uphold him? as their names are as follows Thomas Whitehead, Thomas Coulter, and Thomas Shearman, all the rest of the "mass" must be spurious. If the Board would be good enough to refer to my letters of the 28th August, 1893, the 5th September, 1893, and the 11th October, 1893, they would, perhaps, see the whole subject much more clearly than at present, and if I have said therein anything wrong they could detect it but if, on the other hand, I have said what is right, they must see the need to discredit all the lying tales sent in to the Board since last Committee election, and there has—I assert it without fear of contradiction—not been a single true tale to tell against this Committee.

Under these circumstances, and with the Secretary against us, we have no hope of being able to correspond with success, and we find it useless to contradict tales which pour in faster than we can attend to them at this distance they have several weeks' start of us.

The Committee therefore demand again that the Board grant the Committee a change of teacher or an inquiry on the spot.

We cannot believe that the Board wishes to uphold a disgraceful state of affairs here. On the other hand, the householders have imposed on us a duty, in the execution of which the Board allow the Committee to be pelted with dirt by a fellow who, if the Board do their duty, will be promptly exposed, but whose cunning and adroitness generally throw the blame on other shoulders than those of the guilty party. The true character of this man is notorious in the north. Perhaps you would ask Mr. Airey for his experience of him, at which that gentleman was so indignant that he exposed his machinations to the Committee, in my presence, on the 15th November last.

I remain, &c.,

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,— Fairburn's Road School, Mangonui, 11th December 1893.

Telegram (delayed) just received. Have written Chairman, but wrote you fully before. I did not say the teacher (a lady) assaulted the Chairman. You are misinformed by Mr Christensen, and we foretold it, see our letter 28th August, 1893.

It is a legitimate result of your listening to and being directed by a man without status, instead of to the Committee, and we who know him know you will be misinformed to the end, despite the Committee's warnings, and that our only hope of justice lies in inquiries on the spot, such as has been held by Mr Airey, and have all along been demanded by the Committee, which expose him and allow the truth to be seen.

The whole of this Fairburn embroglio is a scheme of his, carried on by aid of a very few persons, partly made by interest, and no part of it would have taken place but for his constant hand to enforce it, and the Committee, and, indeed, the teacher as well, are but factors among the rest moving along an irresistible course, so long as the Board will not listen to reason, and inquire.

I remain, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,— Fairburn Road School, Mangonui, 18th December, 1893.

I am instructed by the Committee to inform the Board that the Fairburn school-room was opened on the 8th instant, and kept open from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., the object being to permit school business to be transacted by the teacher free of impediment, the teacher having applied on the afternoon of the previous day (the 7th instant) by letter to be allowed to make up the monthly returns required by the Board. Although early informed of the time of opening the school to allow her purpose to be carried into effect, she neglected to attend, nor did she go to the trouble to make any further application or arrangement, but announced her intention of leaving the district for Auckland. On the 7th instant the teacher applied to the Committee for leave of absence for a week, and was told the Committee would consider it. A Committee meeting was convened, and sat at the school from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m. on the 8th. The teacher did not trouble herself to attend, or await their decision. At the meeting it was decided that, as the teacher did not say she was ill, and failed to produce a certificate of medical examiner, as required, the Committee were not empowered to grant the leave of absence for a week as requested.

The teacher writes, under date the 12th December, threatening the Committee, complaining about courtesy persisting in refusing the Chairman possession of certain keys of the school. The Committee, as you will see from the above, have gone to much trouble, and with promptitude, to meet the teacher's requests in a reasonable way, and the only return they get is misrepresentation and abuse.

The teacher has left without "leave of absence," and announced her intention of not returning here. We make no comment. I telegraphed you yesterday, and now request you to send me copies of all letters and other communications which you have received from Mr Carl Christensen since the first School Committee election here in April last, also all from the teacher, if any

I remain, &c.,

The Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

(Telegram.)

SEND copies of all letters and other communications from Christensen.

17th December, 1893.

T FISHER,

Chairman, Fairburn School Committee, Mangonui.

The Secretary, Education Board, Auckland.

(Telegram.)

RE school-register in table-drawer Whitehead refuses the keys of drawer, teacher having so instructed him. I await your instructions. Reply whether the Board has granted us an inquiry by Mr Cooper.

T FISHER,

Chairman, Fairburn School Committee, Mangonui.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,— Education Board, Auckland, 20th December, 1893.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters, dated the 11th instant, addressed to the Chairman and Secretary respectively.

In reply, I am directed to inform you that, in the absence of the information (asked for by telegram of the 2nd instant) as to the particulars of the alleged misconduct on the part of the teacher at her interview with the Chairman of the School Committee at the school on the 17th November, the Board cannot express an opinion upon the suspension of the teacher, and deems it unnecessary to deal further with the matter.

It has been decided to remove Miss Wrigley to another school, and the Board will take an early opportunity to consult the Committee regarding the appointment of her successor.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

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

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 22nd December, 1893,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram and letter dated the 17th and 18th respectively, asking for copies of all correspondence addressed to the Board by Mr Christensen since the election of School Committee in April last, and also for all letters, if any, from the teacher.

In reply, I am directed to refer you to my letter of the 20th instant, and to state that, as the Board has already decided to give effect to the Committee's request for a change of teacher, further action is considered unnecessary.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

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

SIR,—

Fairburn Road, Mangonui, 30th December, 1893.

"*Re* school-register in table-drawer. Whitehead refuses the keys of drawer, teacher having so instructed him. I await instructions."

I sent you the foregoing in telegram the 27th instant. No reply received yet.

Replying to your 1969/93, I have ascertained from Mr. Prosser that the number of his section is 103, Kaiaka.

I am, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,—

Fairburn Road, Mangonui, 30th December, 1893.

I acknowledge receipt of letters of 20th and 22nd instant, in which the Board now concedes the Committee's demand for a change of teacher. The Committee, however, have been up till now slandered systematically, and intimidated. An inquiry would establish the truth, and expose the parties who deserve exposure.

I deem it my duty to request that the Board grant an inquiry, or, at least, some arrangement by which the Committee are exonerated from blame.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 8th January, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letters, dated the 30th ultimo, asking for an inquiry into matters relating to the Committee's request for a change of teacher, and to inform you that your letter will be submitted to the Board at its next meeting on the 30th January instant.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

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

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 8th January, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and telegram dated the 27th and 30th December ultimo respectively, relating to the school-registers.

In reply, I am directed to say that these documents are not the private property of the teacher; and that it was understood from Miss Wrigley that the drawer of the school-table in which they were left was not locked. The Board will therefore feel obliged if you will kindly cause the registers to be forwarded to this office as soon as possible, in order that the necessary return required by the Government may be prepared therefrom.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary.

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

SIR,—

Fairburn, 15th January, 1894.

Replying to 2169/93 letter from the Secretary of the Board of the 8th instant date, *re* school-registers in table-drawer, we cannot comply with your request to forward you the school-registers, for the very sufficient reason that we cannot get possession of them. Miss Wrigley surely could not have informed you that the drawers were open, because she knows they are locked, and we have both written and verbal refusals of the keys of these drawers. Miss Wrigley has informed me by letter that she has placed the keys in the hands of Thomas Whitehead here (her agent in the matter), so that Miss Wrigley is still in possession of the keys and drawers.

Together with another member of the Committee, I applied to Whitehead for these keys and he refused them. I then telegraphed you, and have since confirmed my telegram in letter of the 30th ultimo, asking for your instructions. You do not give any instructions. You seem not to understand, for you say, "It was understood from Miss Wrigley that the drawers of the school-table in which they were left was not locked." I can only repeat that it is locked, and the Committee has been unable to get possession.

I know the registers are not the property of Miss Wrigley, as you say, but the point is not who should have these registers and keys, it is how to get them from Miss Wrigley, who now, as in the past, seems to be able to do just what she likes, and with impunity. That she has defied the Committee all along, and now continues to do so, is not the fault of the Committee, but of the Board itself in permitting it.

I send you enclosed nominations for election to the Board of Education, Auckland.

To the Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 22nd January, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 15th instant, and to state in reply that Miss Wrigley has been instructed to communicate with Mr Whitehead, in order that the school-registers may be immediately delivered to the Committee.

Will you please see Mr. Whitehead and arrange with him accordingly, that he may remove any of Miss Wrigley's property from the school.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

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

SIR,—

Fairburn's Road, Mangonui, 24th January, 1894.

Your favour dated the 15th instant duly received, requesting me to expedite the forwarding of the school-registers. I shall be most happy to do what I can, and have given Whitehead twelve hours' notice to give up the keys, or legal proceedings will be taken to recover the keys from him. He, however, persists in refusing the keys, saying they are the property of Miss Wrigley.

The presumption of this clique is preposterous, and needs repression.

I remain, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn Road, Mangonui, 26th January, 1894.

The Board's letter of the 22nd instant date duly received. Two members of the Committee waited on Whitehead yesterday, when he again refused them the keys, and denied having received from Miss Wrigley any instructions to give up the registers. I advised you last week that the Committee have instituted legal proceedings to obtain recovery of these keys of the school, when, of course, we shall be able to forward the registers.

I remain, &c.,

The Chairman, Education Board, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 15th February, 1894.

In reference to your letter dated the 30th December, I am directed to inform you that the Board considers it unnecessary to take any further action regarding the matter in dispute between the late teacher and the Committee.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

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

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 17th April, 1894.

I have this week received some copies of letters addressed by Mr. Carl Christensen to the Board, and which the Board has hitherto refused to the Committee.

These letters accuse and vilify the Committee. They are dated the 6th September, 1893, and the 14th, 20th, 21st, 21st, and 28th November, 1893. There are others which I have not got yet.

Is it on the strength of these letters that the Board has refused this inquiry we asked for? and, if not, on what other evidence then? I submit there is no other evidence.

These letters are a mass of gross falsehoods, which could bear no inquiry here, and the Committee are willing to pay half the expense of inquiry if it fails to prove this.

The Committee were elected in 1893 by a large majority, and have retained the confidence and approval of a large majority of the householders, as will be proved again by the almost unanimous re-election of the same Committee by the householders next week. Christensen can only poll three votes besides his own.

For having turned him out, to end his evil influence, he seeks to, with the aid of the Board, work the ruin of the five Committee members who have been working in the interest of the Board solely. To expose this malice, and in the interest of the district and education, we call on the Board to do their simple duty by making an inquiry

I remain, &c.,

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn's Road School, Mangonui, 23rd April, 1894.

I have pleasure in handing you enclosed herewith a form with names of School Committee just elected at a meeting of householders held here this date.

You will see the old Committee are re-elected, and have elected me again as their Chairman. The householders' meeting was quite unanimous, thus proving that the district approves of the action of the Committee during the past year. This is quite in accordance with my letter to you of last week.

Further, I have to inform the Board that resolutions were passed by the meeting of householders of their "detestation of the malicious insinuations against the retiring School Committee, contained in the untruthful letters (just read) from Mr Carl Christensen to the Board," and "censuring the Board for unjustly withholding from the Committee a much-needed inquiry."

The above shows that the Committee have been truthful, and have done their duty under trying circumstances, and that the Board have been misled, and consequently have not done theirs. Is it too late to mend? or, having made a mistake, must the Board insist on refusing redress?

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

I remain, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, 7th July, 1894.

At a meeting of the Fairburn's Road School Committee held this day the following resolution was passed unanimously "That, in view of the remarks of his Honour Judge Conolly at the trial *Wrigley v. Fisher*, on the duties and responsibilities of Committees under the Auckland Education Board, this Committee instruct their Chairman to give in to the Board the resignations of the whole of the Committee without delay."

I accordingly do so hereby, and remain,
The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

Yours, &c.,

THOMAS FISHER, Chairman.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 23rd July, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 7th instant, forwarding the resignation of the School Committee. In reply, I am directed to inform you that the Board accepts the Committee's resignation, and will convene a meeting of the householders for the election of a new Committee.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E RICE, Secretary

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

SIRS,—

Fairburn, 20th August, 1894.

The householders held a meeting to-day in the Fairburn School to elect a Committee. Mr Prosser was elected chairman of the meeting, at which the following motion was proposed by John McKay, and seconded by Alexander Wallace "That this meeting express their sympathy with the late Committee, and approval of their conduct." This proposal was unanimously carried.

The following Committee were unanimously elected Alexander Wallace, W H. Prosser, James Meffen, Thomas Fisher, Alexander McKay
The Auckland Education Board.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 23rd July, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 20th instant, forwarding the names of persons elected to serve on the Committee, and stating that at the meeting of householders a resolution was passed expressing sympathy with the late Committee, and approval of their conduct.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT E RICE, Secretary.

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

SECTION 2.—COPIES OF LETTERS FROM TEACHER, MISS WRIGLEY

SIR,—

Fairburn's, Mangonui, 2nd September, 1893.

With deep regret, I have the honour to inform you, that the new School Committee, with Mr Fisher as Chairman, met on the 1st September to inform me that my services as teacher of this school were no longer wanted, and proposed that I should write to the Board to ask for removal, if not, they would, said Mr Fisher, write themselves and propose my removal, and if put to that trouble they intimated that they would represent things to the Board in such a manner that my removal would be certain and disadvantageous to me. Now, if it were the desire of the parents of the pupils to wish for my removal I would, of course, comply with their request, but, as that is not so, I have decided not to ask for removal and so go against their wishes, as so far I have been quite satisfied with my present appointment. Before closing my letter, I may state that I have been subjected to a continuation of unpleasantness and petty annoyances by the new Committee brought to bear on me through the bad feeling existing between the parents of my scholars and the members of the said Committee, they, the parents, not recognising them (so far as I can gather) as a legal Committee.

Hoping my decision not to ask for removal for the two reasons before mentioned meets with the Board's approval,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I have, &c.

AGNES A. WRIGLEY

SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 21st November, 1893.

I have the honour to inform you that the School Committee arrived at school to-day, at 3 o'clock, in order to hold a Committee meeting, after which a letter was given to me by one of the members informing me that the school would be closed from to-day, but assigning no reason for so doing. The parents of my scholars are quite unable to obtain any reason whatever for such a proceeding.

Kindly inform me at your earliest convenience what I am to do under the circumstances.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

AGNES A. WRIGLEY

SECTION 3. — COPIES OF LETTERS FROM AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN THE FAIRBURN'S ROAD SCHOOL DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 4th September, 1893.

As I understand that the new School Committee have decided to get the teacher of our children removed, and that, in my opinion, without any reason whatever, I beg the Board, for the benefit of my children, that the teacher may remain to further advance their education, which she has so successfully done in the past. Spite and private feelings are entirely the cause of this move on the part of the new Committee, which was well known would be the result as soon as they came into power.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS SHEARMAN

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn's, Mangonui, 4th September, 1893.

I believe that an application has been, or will be, made to the Board to remove our teacher, which we believe would be injurious to our children attending school and also to the school generally. I have four children attending school, and I have never had any fault to find with the teacher, and hope that the Board will not consider the new Committee's application.

The Secretary, Board of Education.

I have, &c.,

J MAY.

SIR,—

Mangonui, 5th September, 1893.

I do not wish to enter into the dispute between the last Committee and present at Fairburn. I was up there yesterday, and I can assure you the present Chairman and Committee are very respectable men. I can assure you that there requires a change, for the will of the community and teacher I would suggest sending a young man up here.

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

Yours, &c.,

W H. PROSSER.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 4th September, 1893.

I am sorry to have to complain of the new Committee when visiting the school while the children are there. I have four boys going to school, and do not like them to see such conduct in those they should respect. Our hitherto grand school they have now pretty well managed to ruin, and now, finished with that, they are, I believe, planning for the removal of the teacher, for whom we have so much respect. I hope the Board will defeat them in their unjust work.

The Secretary, Board of Education.

I am, &c.,

THOMAS COULTER.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, 5th September, 1893.

I may inform you that I have three girls and one boy attending the Fairburn's School, and children are very quick to notice any conduct that is not gentlemanly in those who are connected with and have the management of the school.

I may say that the members of the new Committee go to the school occasionally, and are anything but gentlemanly in their actions and speech towards the teacher, and I think that is a very bad example to set children. I called it a committee, but I really do not think that it can be termed so, as two at least of the members are not in the school district. I am sorry to learn that the new Committee are forming a plan to have our much-esteemed teacher removed, which would be very harmful to our children, as I consider that they have got on very well under her teaching, and I would be very sorry if the Board thought fit to remove her on account of revengeful feelings towards the parents, and for no fault of hers whatever.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I am, &c.,

THOMAS WHITEHEAD.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 6th September, 1893.

It is my painful duty again to be compelled to write to the Board about our disturbed school district. I have reported to the Board before that our new School Committee consists of members of whom two at least are out of the school district. I am aware that one member, Mr J Prott, has resigned, and that the Board (I suppose) approved of Mr J Meffin, who has taken Mr. Prott's place. I am sorry to have to inform you that Mr. Meffin is also out of the district, and sends no children to school, thus proving that the new Committee carefully avoided having any members on their Committee who are parents, and consequently interested in the welfare of the school. In fact, it would not matter to the new Committee if our school was closed

to-morrow—no, it would just complete their spite against the parents, which has its origin altogether apart from school matters. The parents have, however, so far managed to keep their children at school, although the Committee have not hesitated a moment to go to the school before closing of it and act in the most uncourteous manner before the children, which might tend to spoil the discipline that has been the very best so far. We all have the greatest respect for the teacher, and cannot afford to part with her because of an uninterested Committee with only three children on the school-roll. Our school has flourished, and the children have been brought on splendidly for the four years our school has existed, and while under control of the old Committee; in fact, the proof of that is the Inspector's reports—which, of course, may be seen at your office at any time. The Committee have started their last and worst move, to get the teacher removed—a thing they know would injure us more than anything else they could do. I therefore beg the Board, for the sake of my four children attending the school, and who are so successfully taught by her, to let her remain here to continue her duty as teacher. Trusting to the Board's favourable consideration in this important matter,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I am, &c.,

C. CHRISTENSEN.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, Mangonui, 5th October, 1893.

We, the undersigned householders of the Fairburn School District, respectfully request your Board to grant the request of the School Committee for a change of teacher for the Fairburn School.

We desire to express our approval of the action of the Committee and our reprobation of the virulent and unjustifiable attacks laid on them by Mr Carl Christensen in the Press and other ways.

ROBERT RITCHIE, Householder
C. NICOLSON, Householder.
GEORGE MARDELL, Householder
JAMES MEFFEN, Householder.
MRS. GEORGE MARDELL.
MRS. ALECK MCKAY
ALEXANDER MCKAY, Householder.

Captain W RODGERS, Householder
Mrs. E. RODGERS.
W A. GARDINER, Householder
MRS. GARDINER.
THOMAS FISHER, Householder.
Mrs. FISHER.
Mrs. MEFFEN

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

GENTLEMEN,—

Fairburn Road, 18th October, 1893.

I am informed that Carl Christensen has been writing to you stating I am not in the Fairburn Road School District. I beg to state I am within the boundary. According to the map the creek runs round the section I am living on. I was the first settler on the road—in fact, before the road was made. It was I who wrote the petition, got it signed, and forwarded it for the school. I am a true-born British subject, and my wife likewise, and we are lawfully married, and have four children which I wish to send to school, and I intend doing so as soon as there is a change in the teacher. I wrote some time back asking for a male teacher, when I stated I would not send them while Carl Christensen was Acting-Chairman of the Committee and Miss Wrigley was teacher. Carl Christensen is an alien, and living with a Maori woman, by which he has a large family of eight or nine, and there has been great talking about them through the settlement since he has been Acting-Chairman. Last year there was no legal School Committee, there was no meeting at the time appointed by the Board, and he asked me several times to go in the Committee, but I told him I would not go on clandestinely for him or any one, but if I was duly elected by the householders I would do my duty. Carl Christensen is a constant visitor every evening at Mrs. Whitehead's, where Miss Wrigley boards and lodges, and it gives room for people to talk. He cannot visit the school so often now, as he is out of office. I asked him the reason he was at the school so much while he was Chairman, and he made the excuse it was to see the roll was kept correct, as he had to sign the papers.

Last summer, one Saturday afternoon, Miss Wrigley was riding past my house, and she could not get her horse past my slip-rails. I went out and led the horse along. I asked her where she was going, and she said for a ride, but she did not proceed more than 10 chains when she met Carl Christensen, when they returned back together; and I am surprised there is so much notice taken about his writing. It appears as though he wants to rule the district by making so much fuss about the demarcation of the district. I should think we have a right to get our children educated, but mine is being brought up in ignorance, with the exception of what I teach them at night, and there is no other school within the distance of six miles. There are several settlers residing beyond me, and some in the bush, but Carl Christensen makes out that they are all out of the district. When Mr Frost was residing on the road he was appointed by the Board to act as President, but now the householder, Mr. Trott, resides in the same house he makes out he is not in the district. I think it is quite sufficient for the Board to interfere, if there are any grounds for them to do so, and not for a person like Carl Christensen. It appears he wishes to oust the Committee so that he can do as he likes, and have several in that can find themselves jobs to keep them in employment when they cannot get other work to do. And, as he is not on the Committee, I think there ought not to be any notice taken of what he writes, but simply told to mind his own business. When the Inspector comes round, if we have notice when he will be here, we can call a meeting of householders, then he can see who is in the right, as I think it is quite time this nonsense is stopped.

The Board of Education.

Yours, &c.,

W. RODGERS.

P.S.—If you write to me, please address "Captain W Rodgers, Mangonui."

SIR,—

Fairburn, 7th November, 1893.

Upon information received from the education column of the *Weekly News*, we find that Mr Fisher Chairman of the School Committee (though only by very few acknowledged to be so legally) is trying to extend the school boundaries for reasons so well known here—namely that we do not think that it would be right of the Board to go to the trouble of extending the school boundaries for the sake of securing for one man more votes at the next school election. Our objections for alterations are (1.) That an extension is not necessary whatever, inasmuch as the children living in the outskirts of the school district do not now attend it, being too far already (2.) If the Board agrees to these unnecessary alterations it must also agree before very long to remove the school-building, for, as the boundaries are now, the school is centrally situated, and the outskirts of the school district so far distant already from the school that further enlargement of the school district would prove injurious.

Hoping the Board will notice at once the ridiculous, unnecessary, and selfish design of one uninterested person to have the present school boundaries altered in order to further his own ends, and on behalf of the settlers,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

C. CHRISTENSEN.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 14th November, 1893.

A rumour is afloat in the settlement, and has come to the ears of the parents of the scholars attending this school, that the present School Committee, who has only been in power since June last, intend to use their influence (of course, they have none) with you, as Inspector appointed by the Board of Education to examine our school, to, if possible, make the examination everything but a successful one. At the present there are twenty-five children on the school-roll, out of which total three belong to the Committee now in power, and the remaining twenty-two to the parents not on the Committee. The present Committee and the parents of the scholars you are now about to examine are, and have been since election-day last June, at great variance regarding their election, as we do not recognise them as a legally-elected Committee, which variance they are trying to make bear on the teacher, who, of course, cannot help it. We are therefore taking the liberty of writing these few lines to you as Inspector, that you may be a little acquainted with the situation between the parents of the scholars and an uninterested Committee. We also have much pleasure in stating that the services of Miss A. Wrigley, as teacher of our children, has been to the greatest satisfaction of the parents, and every examination as yet taken here has also resulted in a splendid report from the Inspector. It would be very unjust if an uninterested Committee should endeavour to influence the examination whatever. We do not think they can in any way do that, but we thought we would acquaint you with the unpleasantness at present reigning between Committee and parents.

Mr W. H. Airey, Inspector of Schools.

I have, &c.,

C. CHRISTENSEN.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 19th November, 1893.

In the *Weekly News* I observe that the School Committee are trying to injure the teacher of our children, their grounds being inability to teach, as well as bad conduct.

I am glad to state to the Board that, regarding ability to teach, the Committee know nothing at all about that, they having no children attending school but two girls, who, like all the other children, passed their examination successfully on the 15th instant. The examinations have always proved a great success here, so that ought to satisfy the Board what the so-called Committee are about. Regarding conduct, it is my duty to state Miss Wrigley is that of a well-trained lady with a nice disposition, and exceptionally quiet, and of ladylike character in every respect. If this Committee, as they call themselves, would only do their duty by looking out to keep the school-grounds and fences in order they would do far better than interfering with the teacher of our children, whom we have much respect for. Concluding, I may state that I am only living a few chains from the school, and surely should know a little about it. The Chairman's daughter, a girl of fifteen years of age, is supposed to keep the school clean, receiving a large share of the yearly school-allowance and what a cleaning! It was kept beautifully clean for three years, but now it will soon be necessary for the parents to take turn about to clean it, the Committee not caring, having no children there.

I am, &c.,

DINAH COULTER.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 19th November, 1893.

The so-called Fairburn School Committee and the parents of the scholars are still at variance, but, instead of going for us, it seems they are trying to make it bear on the teacher this time, who, of course, cannot help it, the *Weekly News* statement reporting her for incompetency and misconduct.

It is my duty to inform the Board that there is not a shadow of truth in either of the charges. Regarding incompetency, the Inspector's reports will surely clear that, if not, then it is my duty to state that my children have been brought on to my greatest satisfaction. Regarding misconduct, there is no more truth than there is in the first charge. My dwelling-house is a few chains from the school—in fact, within call of the school—and I claim to know something about things. I emphatically state that a lady teacher with a nicer disposition, well conducted, and thoroughly trustworthy, the Board never had. She does her school duties well, and after school time there is no flirting and riance about, like several teachers indulge in. Why, then, should two or three men who are at variance with the parents of the scholars try to injure her for whom we have the greatest respect?

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

THOMAS COULTER.

SIR,—

Fairburn's, 20th November, 1893.

As I notice in the Education column of the *Weekly News* that the School Committee are trying to make matters bear upon the teacher of our children, who, of course, cannot help the variances between parents of scholars and an almost childless Committee, it is my duty to inform the Board that I have six children attending the school, and I am most satisfied with their progress in education. In fact, under the care of a teacher like Miss Wrigley, they are almost sure to pass a standard at each examination, for the care and trouble taken with them entitles her to the utmost praise.

She has now taught my children for four and a half years, and I am unwilling, like the rest of the parents that have children at her school, to part with her

Regarding her conduct, it is that what every teacher should possess, but, unfortunately, does not. She has been, and is, leading a life here that it would be good for everybody, old and young, to take example from, and the scholars, if they will follow her teaching, will be fitted well for life's battle. Concluding, I express my sorrow the Board should allow such men to be placed on a Committee, whose desire seems to be the ruin of our hitherto grand school.

Yours, &c.,

SARAH CHRISTENSEN.

The Secretary, Board of Education Auckland.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 20th November, 1893.

I notice in the *Weekly News* that the Committee are now trying to get over the fence where it is weakest—namely, by trying to injure the teacher of our children by the way of misconduct. Miss Wrigley has now been here about four and a half years, and I hope she may be here as long again, as I am sure the Board has not got another teacher so well suited for this place as she is. Regarding misconduct on the part of the teacher, I may state that she is looked upon here by all who know her with the greatest respect; I mean by all, of course, but the so-called Committee, who, as they cannot get hold of the parents of the scholars, must try to injure the teacher, who holds a situation under the Board. The character of our teacher is that of a lady who may be trusted to any extent. She attends surely to her school duties when time is for that, and her spare time is always spent at home at homely work. She is friendly with nobody particularly, but treats everybody alike, and in a ladylike manner. I could understand, if the teacher, as some of them do, fly about from house to house in their spare time, that the Committee would try to find fault, but, a person with a disposition so nice and admirable as Miss Wrigley's it simply a shame, and absurd, for two or three uninterested men to try to mislead the Board regarding conduct. I hope the Board will treat their misrepresentations with contempt.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS WHITEHEAD.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 21st November, 1893.

On behalf of the scholars of the Fairburn School, I am instructed to inform you that the Committee has this day closed our school for no reason known to any of us but the spite existing towards the parents of the scholars. It is high time the Board put an end to such a Committee, who has got in illegally. We have continually written to the Board that the desire of the Committee to get in power was for the reason now accomplished—namely, to close our school—but no notice has been taken by the Board. Now they have done as we expected, and that without reason.

To-day some of the school-children came home in a very excitable state, and crying, saying that the Chairman (Mr Thomas Fisher) had been running after them on the school-ground, and shouting to them to "Clear out of this!" This frenzy, however, was successfully checked by the other members before he did them any serious harm. Our children are now without a school till it pleases five men with three scholars to open it again. Their proceeding has been so audacious that it is the Board's duty to utterly discharge them that order may again be obtained in our school district. For four years the school, while in charge of a Committee consisting of the parents of the scholars, was in most flourishing and well-working order. We pray the Board will at once appoint a Committee from among the parents to take charge of school matters till next April election, at which election we hope the Board will see that no one out of the school district be allowed to vote, as was the case last election, and resulted in all the present disturbances, &c.

Please reply at once to this important matter, as all the parents of the scholars are anxiously awaiting.

I have, &c.,

C. CHRISTENSEN.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,—

Fairburn, 21st November, 1893.

I notice in the education column of the *Weekly News* that the new School Committee are now directing their spiteful bullets at the teacher of our children for, if possible, to prove themselves better marksmen in that direction, of course, she holds a situation under the Board, thereby leaving an easier target to hit. I consider, however, that I should not be doing my duty if I did not, like the rest of my fellow-settlers, give her what is due to her—namely, she has brought my five children on splendid, and has always at each examination brought them a standard higher. As to conduct, I may state that the two or three men who are trying to injure her ought to be ashamed of themselves, but I am afraid such a thing is unknown to them.

Miss Wrigley's quiet life here is known to all, and she is also known to be a first-class teacher, and is highly respected by all who know her

I have, &c.,

C. CHRISTENSEN.

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

SIR,—

Fairburn's, 21st November, 1893.

I saw a paragraph in the Board news *re* misconduct of the teacher I may here state that Miss Wrigley, teacher of the Fairburn's Road School, has lived in my house for four years and three months.

During that time her conduct has been that of a lady in every respect. I cannot understand what part of her conduct they mean, as I can account for every hour of her time after and before school. She has made no companions in Fairburn's, while she is kind and agreeable to all. I also know the Chairman and some of his Committee, they have made it as unpleasant as they can for her, for no other reason only to spite those who opposed them at the election. The Committee have only three little children at school, and do not care how much harm they can do the school and teacher to be revenged on the parents.

Then, we all value the teacher, who is held in much esteem by us here who are mothers. I have five girls and one boy, four are going to school, so you will see why I value the teacher, whose walk and conversation is that of a lady in every respect. Only four times Miss Wrigley has been out to visit some of the parents, and returned at dark, so you see her time is spent at home in work and study with us. The Chairman has quarreled with nearly all the settlers by meddling in their business, and this is his revenge. Hoping the Board will consider the parents, and not a few disinterested men,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

E. WHITEHEAD.

SIR,—

Fairburn's, 22nd November, 1893.

I understand that the School Committee are trying to misrepresent the conduct of the teacher of our children to the Board, so as to injure her.

I am glad to state to the Board that Miss Wrigley is not deserving of that, as her conduct is that of a lady whose disposition and general character is rarely to be found.

It is simply a shame to try to find any fault, for, in the way of training, she proves herself to be an excellent teacher.

I have, &c.,

SARAH MAY

SIR,—

Fairburn's, 22nd November, 1893.

Please allow me to say a few words in reference to Miss Wrigley

I have seen nothing to condemn her character, and I consider it my duty, in justice to her, as our teacher, to make this statement.

I have, &c.,

J MAY

The Secretary, Board of Education.

SIR,—

Post-office, Fairburn, Mangonui, 22nd November, 1893.

I see by last week's paper that our teacher has been accused by the Chairman of misconduct. The only misconduct I think Miss Wrigley is guilty of is that she will not bow down and worship the present Chairman and Committee. Miss Wrigley has now been in our midst for four years and a half, and I think a better conducted or more quiet young lady it would be hard to find, and as a teacher I believe it would be hard to find her equal, for she certainly has had great patience with the children, and has given great satisfaction to the majority. The last thing they have done is to lock the door, and therefore our children are now compelled to stop from school. The parents are, naturally, very much annoyed, as there is no reason whatever for such a step. Trusting you will kindly see that our school is soon reopened, and excuse the liberty I take in writing to you, but I do not like to see an innocent person blamed wrongfully,

I remain, &c.,

SOPHIA SHEARMAN

The Chairman, Board of Education, Auckland.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, 21st November, 1893.

I feel it my duty to write to you in reference to our school. To-day the so-called Committee gave Miss Wrigley a note informing her that she is suspended from this day forthwith. No reasons given. Has the school to be closed by five men, who only have three children attending school, and we as parents have the rest? Have our children to run about when we have the teacher and school to go to, when no fault can be found with the teacher?

Yours, &c.,

THOMAS WHITEHEAD.

The Chairman, Board of Education.

SIR,—

Fairburn's, 28th November, 1893.

I am requested by the parents of the Fairburn scholars to write to the Board informing them that the so-called School Committee closed the school on the 21st day of November, without reason or notice given to any one. However, to-day we hear the chairman (of which there is really none, he along with the rest being illegally elected) had some unpleasant words with one of the lady parents of the scholars (and for which he will have to answer to at the Mangonui Court), and therefore spitefully closed the school. He gave nobody any reason nor a minute's notice of his intention, but took the keys and enclosed under lock all the private property belonging to the children as well as to their teacher, thus depriving the children from doing some home-work while the school still remains in their unjust hands. I am directed to request the Board at once to reopen the school and appoint a reliable parent as Commissioner till next April election. We also request the Board to telegraph to the so-called Chairman to at once open the school. We cannot afford to have all the children running about learning nothing because the Committee have no children them-

selves at school, and, consequently, do not care. We have continually written to the Board prophesying the result which is now proved, as it was well known here that these uninterested men had not the welfare of our school at heart.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education, Auckland.

C. CHRISTENSEN

SIR,—

Mangonui, 28th February, 1894.

Some time ago I wrote you a letter *re* Fairburn trouble, it was marked on the outside "Private" I hear you have made this public, and given it to this teacher's father I cannot believe you would do this thing. If it has got into his hands I hope you will demand it back, as I look upon it as personal between you and me. The reason I suggested the change was purely for the benefit (as I thought) of the girl. When living in Mangonui she often stayed at my house. I always looked upon her as a very respectable girl, and I thought the only way to save her from the evil influence that was at work was to write. It is reported down here you have given my private letter to this man, and he is going to go for me. I am sorry, as I believed I was doing God's will. I can leave it in His hands, as my motive was pure.

Yours, &c.,

Mr Udy

W H. PROSSER.

DEAR SIR,—

Fairburn, 31st January, 1894.

I called on Mr. Fisher, as requested by Miss Wrigley, and he would not accept the keys unless I paid expenses. I also called on Mr McKay, and he refused them. Kindly request Mr. Fisher to hand over Miss Wrigley's private property, and take the keys.

Yours, &c.,

The Secretary, Board of Education.

THOMAS WHITEHEAD.

P.S.—Mr. Fisher holds a correct copy of all school property, so that there can be no mistake.

SIR,—

Education Board, Auckland, 5th March, 1894.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 28th ultimo, complaining of the use made of the letter written by you to the Board on the dispute between the Committee and teacher at Fairburn's Road.

In reply, I am directed to forward to you a copy of your letter dated 5th September, 1893, which was not marked "Private."

I am, &c.,

Mr W H. Prosser, Mangonui.

VINCENT E. RICE, Secretary

SECTION 4.—PRINTED CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TE RAHU SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND THE AUCKLAND EDUCATION BOARD *re* CASE WRIGLEY *v.* FISHER.

[This has already been laid on the Table of the House.]

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