

schools would not be in proportion to the diminution in numbers. Ultimately the saving would be chiefly in the item of school-buildings.

2. The payment of fees would be no economy from a national point of view. It would only be introducing a far more expensive mode of collection, and one that has been found to work badly in all systems of national primary education. The payment of fees by the more advanced scholars only would be a most objectionable tax upon progress.

3. The Board does not believe that the educational system in this district could be conducted efficiently with smaller means than are now at its disposal. Any curtailment of national grants for education will have to be supplemented by school districts. This means a more expensive method of raising the necessary funds. The Board has at present a large number of applications for necessary school-buildings which there are no funds to meet.

4. While the Board is not prepared to indorse all the items of the present Syllabus, and would prefer more time being given to the thorough teaching of fewer subjects, it does not believe that such an alteration would materially affect the cost of primary education.

3rd December, 1887.

J. V. COLBORNE NEIL, Secretary.

Mr. T. KELLY, Chairman, Education Board, New Plymouth, to the CHAIRMAN, Education Committee.

Education Office, New Plymouth, 27th November, 1887.

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In conclusion I may briefly summarise my views with regard to the reduction of the cost of working the Education Act and making the administration more effective, viz. :—

1. Abolish Education Boards and School Committees, and make the Education Department do the work of the Boards, with power to delegate definite local powers to County and Borough Councils; or

2. Make one local body do all the work now done by the Education, Hospital, and Waste Lands Boards.

3. If Boards are retained let the Government nominate one-third of the members.

4. If Committees are retained let them be elected by ratepayers in the same manner as members of other local bodies.

5. Define by law the powers vested in the Board and the Committee so as to avoid conflict.

6. Make better provision for creating a lower grade of schools and a lower class of certificated teachers for such schools; also to give greater facilities of railway travelling to children.

7. Make the Inspector an officer of the department, and change his location, say, every two years. Fewer Inspectors would be required, and the system of inspection would, I think, be improved.

The SECRETARY, Education Board, South Canterbury, to the CHAIRMAN, Education Committee.

Education Board of the District of South Canterbury,

SIR,—

Timaru, 15th December, 1887.

I have the honour, by direction of the Board of Education, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th November, 1887, and, in reply, to state that the following resolutions were passed this day :—

Re paragraph 1: "That this Board does not approve of any interference with the school-age as defined by the Act, for the following among other reasons: (a) The age of five years is not too young in the case of the majority of children for the purposes of early training and discipline; (b) that raising the school-age will materially affect the average attendance of many schools, necessitating their closing; (c) and, lastly, the raising of the school-age will be of great detriment to the revenue of the Boards, and so to their efforts to follow settlement with the means of instruction."

Re paragraph 2: "That the suggestion to charge fees for the higher standards does not commend itself to the Board as being desirable. On the contrary, that it would prove injurious to the present system of education by driving a number of children at too early a stage from the schools."

Re paragraph 3: "That, if retrenchment in educational matters is necessary, the Board would consent to the following: (1) The restriction of the capitation grant to the statutory sum of £3 15s. per head; (2) that powers be given to the Boards or Committees to raise, in some just and equitable way, whatever sums they may deem themselves deficient in from time to time."

Re paragraph 4: No recommendation.

I have, &c.,

T. W. BAMFIELD,
Secretary.

James G. Wilson, Esq., Chairman, Education Committee,
House of Representatives, Wellington.

Mr. VINCENT RICE to the CHAIRMAN, Education Committee.

SIR,—

Board of Education, Auckland, 3rd December, 1887.

In answer to your circular, dated the 10th November, I am directed to state,—

1. That this Board sees no objection to raising the school-age to six years.

2. That, as payment of fees for the higher standards, unless accompanied by a remission of taxation equal to the amount paid in fees, would only be a method of exacting a further tax from the people, the opinion of this Board is that it is neither required nor desirable.

3. That this Board suggests for consideration whether teachers should examine and classify the scholars in Standards I. to IV., leaving the examination of Standards V. and VI. and the inspection of schools to the Inspectors, provided the efficiency of the schools is not impaired thereby.