

Mr. J. King, being duly sworn, states: My name is John King. I reside in Auckland, and am Provincial relieving officer. On the afternoon of the first of the present month, and in consequence of information I received, I took charge at the Superintendent's office, on the first of the current month, of fifteen children, lately at the Three Kings Native institution. They were brought in by a conveyance, in charge of the driver of it, who handed me a letter addressed to me, and in the handwriting of the superintendent of the institution, the Rev. J. Wallis. This letter was drawing my attention to a resolution, passed by the Board of Management about six days previously, to the effect that it was necessary to terminate the arrangement with the Provincial Government, and to send the children away at the termination of the quarter. I can produce the original of that letter, of which I have here a copy. There had previously been intimation given of such an intention. Complaints had been made that the allowance made was not sufficient to support the children.

On the arrival of these children at the Superintendent's office I took charge of them, their names being specified in Mr. Wallis's letter, and, according to previous arrangement, I took them to the Orphan Home at Parnell, where I gave them in charge of the matron, to whom I exhibited a written authority for their admission from the Venerable Archdeacon Lloyd. I examined the state of their heads myself, in the presence of the matron. I found them clean. They did not undergo any further examination while I remained, or in my presence. They appeared healthy, and only one of them seemed to be affected with whooping-cough. The matron's name is Miss Emerson.

The Provincial allowance had been reduced from £10 to £5; but the Orphan Home is at present receiving, and has always received, from £8 to £9 per head for the children received into it. On the 21st February, 1868, a circular was forwarded from the Superintendent's office, stating that the capitation allowance would be reduced from £10 to £5 in the case of the Three Kings, the Orphan Home at Parnell, the Sisters of Mercy's School, and St. Mary's College, North Shore. Subsequently to the issue of that circular, His Honour informed me that he had received communications from most of the gentlemen written to, complaining of the insufficiency of the capitation grant, and asked me if I could suggest any way of assisting him. I suggested that he might empower me to certify for the allowance for children who might leave the institutions before ten years of age. Many were placed out in consequence, but the money allowed accordingly. In consequence, the average actually paid was higher than the £5 per head, there being allowance paid for more children than were actually in the establishment.

During the three quarters ending 31st December, 1868, the number so certified for at the Orphan Home would be about twelve quarterly; at the Three Kings school, about six; at the North Shore school, about seven; at the Sisters of Mercy's school, about three.

In all such cases children so placed out were provided with situations by the managers of the respective institutions, except in one or two instances, when they were sent to their surviving parents. Under this arrangement the average payment actually made was,—to the Orphan Home, from £8 to £9; Sisters of Mercy, about £5 10s.; Three Kings, £6 10s.; St. Mary's, North Shore, from £9 to £10 at least. The children at present in the respective establishments, under ten years of age, are,—at the Orphan Home, about fifty; Sisters of Mercy, forty-two; and at Three Kings there were nineteen, certified for twenty-four. This last was for the quarter ending 31st December, 1868.

I visited the institution at the Three Kings about two months back, and found the children clean and tidy, and apparently healthy; also improved in their education.

In reference to what I have stated respecting the allowance of capitation for children under ten years of age who had left the institution, it would not be continued after the child attained that age.

I hand in copies of the correspondence which has passed between myself and the Provincial Government and other parties in reference to the allowance of capitation to the several institutions. Early in the month of March last I recommended an increased capitation allowance to the Orphan Home at Parnell, and the Orphanage of the Sisters of Mercy, to £10 per head per annum; but I stated that I could not recommend any such addition to the then present allowance towards the maintenance or education of the children at the Three Kings or at St. Mary's school, North Shore. My reason for the distinction so made was that the former two were unendowed, and the latter two held large endowments of land. In so speaking I had referred to the acreage of the lands granted to them.

Dr. C. F. Goldsbro,* being duly sworn, states: My name is Charles Field Goldsbro. I am resident at Parnell, and am a doctor of medicine, and a member of the Royal College of Physicians. I have been honorary medical officer to the Orphan Home at Parnell for nearly five years. My attention was drawn, on the 2nd April of this year, to certain children who had been lately admitted into the Home. They were fifteen in number. These had been admitted the day previously, and no others had been so admitted, to the best of my belief, since my last previous visit. I had not examined these fifteen children before admission, but I did so on the morning of the 2nd April. I found that, of the fifteen, thirteen had the itch, some of them very badly; and six had, in addition, scab disease. In my opinion, such diseases are communicable from one patient to another by contagion, but are greatly fostered by want of cleanliness and of attention. Before receiving the summons to attend the present Commission, I had already despatched a written protest against the admission of these children without my previous inspection. This protest was addressed to the Board of Management.

In my opinion, these children could not have been in the state in which I found them without the knowledge of the persons in whose care they were, because, in some cases, the disease was in

* The Rev. Mr. Buller perused the preceding evidence of Mr. Lusk and Mr. King, and was present when Dr. Goldsbro was examined.