

No. 836.—Petition of VERA DALL and Others, Dunedin.

PETITIONERS pray that the School of Mines at Dunedin may be retained as at present.

The Education Committee have the honour to report that they recommend that the petition of Vera Dall and others be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

26th October, 1904.

TRANSFER OF TEACHERS.

THE Education Committee, having had under consideration the question of the transfer of teachers, have the honour to report that they recommend that in section 57 of "The Education Act, 1904," the words "but no appointments, suspensions, or dismissal shall take place until the Committee have been first consulted" be repealed, and that in lieu thereof the following words be substituted: namely, "but no such recommendation shall be binding on the Board."

The Committee recommend that this report be referred to the Government for consideration.

2nd November, 1904.

(Presented to the House of Representatives on the 2nd November, 1904, and referred back to the Committee.)

Nos. 878 and 918.—Petitions of the NEW PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL BOARD and the MARLBOROUGH EDUCATION BOARD.

PETITIONERS pray that redress may be granted for the injustice alleged to have been done to certain candidates for Queen's Scholarships by holding the examination and awarding the scholarships under the Act of 1903, whereas the candidates had entered for such scholarships believing that they would be awarded under the Act of 1897.

1. The Education Committee, having given careful consideration to the above-mentioned petitions, have now the honour to report that in their opinion the contention of the petitioners is true as far as regards the holding of the examination is concerned, as the Act of 1903 did not come into operation until the 18th November, 1903, and the applications of the candidates were required to be sent in by the 5th November, 1903.

2. Whether or not any of the candidates will suffer any injustice depends upon certain contingencies. There were but two successful candidates from the Taranaki District, and there were no candidates at all from the Marlborough Education District. One of the successful candidates would be entitled under the Act of 1897 to a scholarship of £20 a year without free tuition for not more than two years and three months, for, being only thirteen years and three months old at the time of the examination, he could not fulfil the conditions of matriculation within two years and three months as prescribed by the first Act, seeing that he would have reached the age of sixteen years. The present Act gives him a scholarship of £10 a year and free tuition, which may be held for four years at a secondary school, and the total benefits to him are increased. The other candidate would gain equally as far as the secondary-school course is concerned; but, inasmuch as she was thirteen years and ten months old when she gained the scholarship, she might possibly have fulfilled the conditions of matriculation within the required period and so have qualified under the former Act for holding the scholarship for three years at Victoria College.

3. Such a contingency being doubtful, the Committee recommend that if it should arise the candidate should be placed in as good a position as she would have occupied if the Act had not been passed. This could be done by a grant to Victoria College to enable it to give the candidate a special scholarship of equivalent value in lieu of that which will lapse.

4. It is highly improbable that any other candidate will suffer any disadvantage, but if this should occur similar redress should be afforded.

5. The scheme introduced by the Act of 1903 presents so many advantages over the scheme of the Act of 1897 that the Committee does not recommend any amendment in the manner suggested by your petitioners.

The Committee recommend that the petitions be referred to the Government for consideration.
1st November, 1904.

INSTRUCTION IN AGRICULTURAL SUBJECTS.

THE Education Committee have the honour to report that during the progress of the session they have given attention to the question of the teaching of the rudimentary elements of agriculture and nature-study in the schools of the State. The Committee recommend that further consideration be bestowed upon the subject next year, and that this report, with the evidence attached, be referred to the Government for consideration. (For evidence, *vide* I.—14b.)

2nd November, 1904.

ORDINARY BUILDING GRANTS.

THE Education Committee have the honour to report that they recommend that Education Boards should have discretion to expend the ordinary grant for school buildings for any of the purposes for which such grant is now available with the following modification: namely, that not more than 7 per cent. of such grant may, if the Board think fit, be used for the purpose of making small alterations and additions, subject to the limitation following—that is to say, that the cost of any additions for more than 200 square feet of class-room floor-space should not be paid for out of this grant in any one year for any school of grade 8 or under, and that of not more than 400 square feet in any school over grade 8. The Committee recommend that this report, with the evidence attached, be referred to the Government for favourable consideration. (For evidence, *vide* I.—14.)

2nd November, 1904.

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