

D AND D ENQUIRY.

Evidence Given by Dr Inch
Chief Superintendent
of Education.

SOME EXPLANATIONS MADE BY
MESSRS. WALLACE AND
BABBITT.

Auditor General Beek Tells Why
Government Grant Was
Withheld.

WAS NOT FAVORABLY IMPRESSED
WITH PROF. WOODBRIDGE'S
METHOD OF BOOK-KEEPING.

At the Deaf and Dumb school investigation Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Wallace stood aside while Dr. Inch, superintendent of education, was called. He stated that the report for the year 1892 showed that \$810 was paid on warrant but he did not know who received it. The warrants were generally sent to the treasurer, but as this was the first payment he did not know through what channel the warrants were sent. He stated that after consultation with the late Provincial Secretary Mitchell it was decided to interpret the act of 1892 very liberally as the institution was a charitable one and he had done so for several years. In later years he had carried out the law more strictly. The act called for only those pupils entitled to the grant, but he was glad to get a complete list of the pupils. The marginal notes under the column for remarks should have been more complete. It stated in some cases those not qualified, while in other cases pupils equally disallowable were passed over without remark. The work of detecting those not allowed fell on his department and was gleaned from the data supplied. He assumed that the return only contained pupils and not servants. The officials of the department had a feeling of irritation that the face of the return did not directly show who were entitled to come under the act of 1892. The feeling existed that one had to be on his guard at all times. For several years the return had only been that of Superintendent Woodbridge. He called his attention to the fact and he stated that the chairman, Sir John C. Allen, was ill. After a time it was changed so that the secretary should certify. At any time it only required the directors to certify to the return. His attention had not been called to the fact that in 1893 a pupil was returned as 19 years of age and in 1894, 18 years of age. The returns were made out on a form supplied by the department. He had on more than one occasion called up Mr. Woodbridge for explanations and some of them were not satisfactory. The marginal notes should state those who are not entitled to receive the municipal grant. The data for obtaining that information was in the return, but in some cases pupils were marked as not qualified while in other equally unqualified there was no remark, and the officials of the department had to determine the fact.

Mr. Wallace Re-called.

At this morning's session of the commission R. B. Wallace of the education office, again took the stand. He was questioned in regard to the returns showing the number of pupils attending the institution for the half year ending June 30th, 1899. The name of one Henry Robinson appeared on the list as a pupil, and Mr. Wallace stated in reply to Mr. Phinney that he did not know at the time that he was an employee of the institution. All the names on the list, he said, were returned as pupils of the institution. After the witness had answered a few questions put by Mr. Gregory, the next return, for the half year ending June 30th, 1900, was taken up. He said that nothing was paid for Helen J. Bolan, who was entered as a student and no claim had afterwards been made in her account. The name of Henry Robinson, also appeared as a student in this return, and an allowance was drawn for him up to December, 1898.

The returns for the half year ending Dec. 31st, 1900, and June 30th, 1901, were next gone into. In the last return the names of two pupils, whom Mr. Woodbridge claimed in a marginal note, were chargeable under an amended act, were disallowed by witness in the absence of Dr. Inch, who was in Europe at the time. He did not feel like assuming the responsibility of sanctioning the payments of the amounts asked for. The pupils were George Crane and Helen Bolan. The name of Della Maud Green was entered in the December return as a pupil but disallowed by the department. It came out that Mary J. Sapier, a pupil

from Kingsclear, belonged to the Indian race, and Commissioner Barry remarked that the Dominion government should have paid the allowance in her case and not the municipality. The grant for David Ferguson, a Fredericton pupil, was disallowed by the department, because as explained by Mr. Wallace, the city of Fredericton makes no contribution to the municipalities' fund. This information created some surprise, and Mr. Phinney expressed the opinion that the amount could have been collected from the city. It seemed rather strange to him, that the lawyers on the trustee board had not so advised Mr. Woodbridge. After making some further explanation in answer to questions by the counsel, Mr. Wallace was thanked for his attendance by the commissioner and stood aside.

George N. Babbitt, deputy receiver general, was recalled and explained that he had received the amount of the county warrants for 1892, \$810, over which there had been some misunderstanding. He gave the dates on which the several amounts were paid in by the municipal authorities, but could not remember in whose favor the drafts were drawn. The \$1500 paid to the institution in 1892 was charged as the government grant, though as a matter of fact the government received back \$810 from the municipalities.

James S. Beek, auditor general for New Brunswick, was the next witness called and sworn. He said he had been auditor general of the province since confederation. He had never had any of the accounts of the Deaf and Dumb Institution submitted to him, but had received four of the annual reports. He had signed the warrants for payments to the institution and they were also signed by the receiver general. The warrant for the appropriation of last session amounting to \$500, had not yet been issued. He had objected to signing the warrant because of the very meagre information contained in the reports of the institution. The report of 1901, for instance, showed that the total amount subscribed and acknowledged for support of institution for the previous year was \$4,377.72, and the amount credited was \$3,159.33. This left a deficiency of \$1,218.19, which he was at a loss to account for. The government having ordered an investigation into the financial affairs of the institution, he thought it would be very indelicate for anybody to ask for payment of the grant while the matter was pending. He said that Mr. Whelpley and Judge Gregory had spoken to him in regard to the payment of the grant. He had been asked by members of the government why he did not sign the warrant, and he had replied that he was satisfied from the reports that the accounts were badly kept and did not disclose the information they should. Mr. Whelpley had assured him in conversation that the accounts were all right, but he had replied that he did not think that that they were kept in the way that accounts should be kept for an institution which had received such a large financial support from the government.

In reply to Mr. Gregory, Mr. Beek said he had no knowledge that every dollar received by the institution had not been accounted for. He had never asked for an explanation in regard to the alleged discrepancy in the accounts. There might have been expenses incurred in collecting the amounts paid the institution, but the accounts did not show what it was. He was only speaking from what the published reports of the institution showed.

Re-examined by Mr. Phinney, the auditor general said the report gave no detailed statement of the salaries paid to teachers of the institution, though it gave the gross amount.

Mr. Woodbridge explained that the subscribers shown in the report had not all paid up and then there had been expenses incurred in making the collections.

Mr. Phinney contended that it was wrong to enter subscriptions in the reports until they were paid; otherwise the report was nothing more than a sham.

Mr. Beek added in reply to Mr. Gregory that he had told the government that he would sign the warrant if they requested him to do so, but the government would not do that. He had never been interfered with by the government in the discharge of his public duties.

When the auditor general had left the stand, Mr. Gregory moved that his evidence be expunged from the records, as being immaterial to the case. He contended that it had no bearing whatever upon the case, and should not have been taken.

Mr. Phinney contended that Mr. Beek's evidence was of importance, it being the opinion of an experienced auditor.

Commissioner Barry was inclined to agree with Mr. Phinney, and thought no harm would be done to allow the evidence to remain on the records.

The commission adjourned for luncheon at ten minutes to one, to resume at two o'clock.

A. E. McIntyre gave evidence this afternoon.

MARYSVILLE NEWS.

(Special Correspondence to the Herald.)

Aug. 27.—The Mission Band in connection with the Methodist church are to give a 20th century parlor concert next Friday evening, Aug. 29, at the residence of Fred S. Williams, for which affair an excellent programme has been prepared, including solos by Miss Ranger of Lowell, Mass., and Miss Alice Day, our own popular singer. The concert is deserving a large attendance.

Mrs. Judson J. Libbey, who has been in St. John visiting friends, returned home the first of the week.

Harry Crowley has gone to Woodstock as a delegate to the A. O. H., which is in session at that place.

Tom—I wonder why girls are called misses? Jack—duh! That's easy. Did you ever see a girl throw at anything and hit it?

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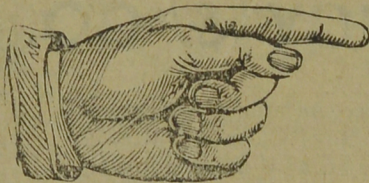
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