

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF) ON THE PETITION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND; TOGETHER WITH REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF SCHOOLS.

Brought up 30th July, 1908, and ordered to be printed.

PETITIONERS allege that "hygiene and scientific temperance instruction" is not given in the public primary schools with fulness; also that beer-depots on the confines of no-license areas and the "locker" system is a thwarting and evasion of the spirit of the Alcoholic Liquors Control Act; also that packet licenses are unnecessary.

The Education Committee have the honour to report that, as, in their judgment, the references in the petition of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to beer-depots, lockers, and packet licenses do not fall within the scope of their functions, that portion of the petition is referred back to your honourable House. Your Committee recommend that the petition be referred to the Government, in order that the attention of petitioners may be drawn to Regulation No. 57, and that a copy of the report of the Assistant Inspector of Schools, attached hereto, be forwarded to them.

Parliament Buildings,
Wellington, 29th July, 1908.

J. A. HANAN, Chairman.

IN the matter of the Petition of the Rev. Alexander Don and another, representing the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

HYGIENE AND SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DOMINION.

REPORT.

CLAUSE 57 of the Regulations for the Inspection and Examination of Schools, which lay down the course of instruction to be followed in the various subjects, makes provision as follows for the subject of health, and instruction of the kind indicated is treated throughout the regulations as part of the compulsory course for all classes from Standard III upwards in the schools:—

"57. Lessons on the structure of the body and on health should be given in classes S3 to S6.

"These should include such subjects as the following, treated in a very simple manner: The chief bones of the skeleton, and the way in which they form a framework for the body; tendons and muscles; the skin; the heart, the blood, and the general system of circulation; food and drink, digestion, the stomach and intestines; the lungs; the liver; the kidneys; the nerves; the brain; the eye; the sense of touch; the outer ear; the throat and nose; air, ventilation, and respiration; water, washing, and cleaning; the choice of clothing, food, and drinks; the management of health; exercise; the avoidance of evil and unhealthy habits; infectious diseases; vaccination; methods of dealing with common ailments, colds, and common accidents.

"The lessons on the structure of the body are intended not as a course in physiology, but solely to serve the practical purpose of an introduction to such a knowledge of the laws of health as every individual of the community ought to possess—*e.g.*, the study of the eye need not include a knowledge of all its parts, if it be known to act as a lens through which the rays of light pass and, forming an image on the retina, convey a visual impression to the brain. (The care of the eye should receive some notice.)

"The instruction may be given partly in the nature-study or science lessons, and partly in special oral lessons, or in lessons contained in the reading-books of the higher standards. If this be done, it will not be necessary to allot a separate place for the subject on the time-table.

"Very simple preliminary work of the same kind may be done, at the discretion of the teacher, in the lower classes."

The Department has every reason to believe that the provisions of this clause have been generally complied with, though doubtless the stress laid on the various portions of the programme outlined depends largely on the personality of the teacher. Even if set lessons are not provided in the time-table, confidence is with good reason entertained that, at the hands of every clean-living teacher of mental and moral worth, the main purpose of the instruction is steadily kept in view, and that, by precept and example, the children of the schools are under permanently persistent and effective influences guiding them towards the formation and maintenance of good habits, in close association with the necessary knowledge of the related facts.

It may be noted, further, that in the "School Journal," published by the Education Department and circulating as a supplementary reader throughout the whole of the Dominion, a course in hygiene, health, and temperance is included in the regular programme of subjects treated, the lessons in this form thus reaching practically every child in attendance of an age to make use of them. The following lessons have already appeared in the Journal under the headings—

"Treatment of Burns and Scalds": Part III, May, 1907, page 19.

"Care of Teeth": Part I, June, 1907, page 24.

"Care of Teeth": Part II, June, 1907, page 27.

"Care of Teeth": Part III, September, 1907, page 119.

"Use of Tourniquet" (Article, "Snake-bite"): Part II, June, 1907, page 18.

"Physical Effects of Alcohol": Part III, July, 1907, page 65.

Note on effects of alcohol, smoking, lack of exercise, on heart: Part III, November, 1907, page 199.

"Care of Bones": Part II, February, 1908, page 9.

"Why do we Eat?": Part II, March, 1908, page 22.

"Hydatid Disease": Part III, March, 1908, page 43.

"Fresh Air": Part III, April, 1908, page 85.

"Science and Alcohol": Part III, May, 1908, page 116.

"Hand in Relation to other Organs": Part III, June, 1908, page 157.

The means of instruction thus provided are open in the ordinary course to the pupils of every school; but, in addition, "school classes" to the number following have been formed under the regulations for manual and technical instruction, for which capitation payments are made, provided that at least half of the instruction given is of an approved practical character:—

Physiology, health, and first aid	...	...	...	53 classes.
Swimming and life-saving	...	...	...	81 "

All of these classes, with the unimportant exception of 7 and 6 respectively, are classes of pupils in attendance at public schools under the various Education Boards.

W. J. ANDERSON,
Assistant Inspector-General of Schools.